

11-10-2022

## Vanguards of Liberation: Progressive Catholicism, the Student Movement, and Political Culture in Latin America, 1960-1973

Sandra M. Londono-Ardila  
*Florida International University*, slond022@fiu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/etd>



Part of the [History of Religion Commons](#), [Intellectual History Commons](#), [Latin American History Commons](#), and the [Political History Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Londono-Ardila, Sandra M., "Vanguards of Liberation: Progressive Catholicism, the Student Movement, and Political Culture in Latin America, 1960-1973" (2022). *FIU Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 5147. <https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/etd/5147>

This work is brought to you for free and open access by the University Graduate School at FIU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in FIU Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of FIU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [dcc@fiu.edu](mailto:dcc@fiu.edu).

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

VANGUARDS OF LIBERATION: PROGRESSIVE CATHOLICISM, THE STUDENT  
MOVEMENT, AND POLITICAL CULTURE IN LATIN AMERICA, 1960-1973

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

HISTORY

by

Sandra Milena Londono-Ardila

2022

To: Interim Dean Shlomi Dinar  
Steven J. Green School of International & Public Affairs

This dissertation, written by Sandra Milena Londono-Ardila, and entitled *Vanguards of Liberation: Progressive Catholicism, the Student Movement, and Political Culture in Latin America, 1960-1973*, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

---

Bianca Premo

---

Jaime Pensado

---

Rebecca Friedman

---

Victor Uribe, Co-major Professor

---

Ana Maria Bidegain, Co-major Professor

Date of Defense: November 10, 2022

The dissertation of Sandra Milena Londono-Ardila is approved

---

Dean Shlomi Dinar  
Steven J. Green School of International & Public Affairs

---

Andrés G. Gil  
Vice President for Research and Economic Development  
and Dean of the University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2022

## DEDICATION

To my mother, Gloria, for her love opened all windows for me when doors were closed.

To my daughter Sofia, for her life and love fill my life with meaning.

## DEDICATION

To all committed Christians who continue to be a force of spiritual, social, and cultural transformation. To those who, in developing their apostolate, persist in their fight for social justice in Latin America.

To those who faced martyrdom as a consequence of their Commitment:

Andres, Patricio, Carlos Horacio.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is small the space to thank appropriately everybody that accompanied me at different stages in bringing this dissertation to a successful conclusion. I want to thank, first and foremost, my fabulous family and friends. Without them, making sense of and pushing forward to overcome the difficulties of this journey would have been impossible. They gave me moral, emotional, and even economic support all the way long. I am forever grateful and feel so blessed to have you all. Gloria Ardila, my mother; Javier Mejia, my husband; Sofia Mejia-Londono, my daughter; Margoth Ardila, my aunt, and friend; and Gloria Lopera, my best friend; they deserve special credit for holding the grid that allowed me to step further and reach.

I was born to a middle-class family, and I am a proud and grateful beneficiary of the Colombian university public system and the struggles of the working class for greater access to education, democratization, social justice, and equality in Colombia. Therefore, I want to acknowledge and thank the Universidad Nacional de Colombia and the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional for providing the foundations of my undergraduate and graduate formation. From the enriching experience I had during my master's in Education in Colombia, I deeply thank my dear late friend Professor Rafael Avila. He animated my first inroads into thinking about religion from a Sociology of Education perspective and introduced me to Dr. Ana Maria Bidegain, my mentor and friend. I also thank Professor Jose Guillermo Ortiz, who encouraged the first stages of my academic

journey and pursuit of graduate studies in History, and Professor Martha Herrera, whose insights on the cultural history of Education inspired me.

Furthermore, my experience as a researcher and a professor for eight years at the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional de Colombia before coming to the U.S. was meaningful in my academic journey. I give special thanks to the faculty and students in the undergraduate programs in Rural Education, in Sutatenza town of Boyacá, and Communitarian Education with an emphasis on Human Rights, in Bogota. These professional engagements shaped my research interests and commitments on an ethical and political level in many ways.

Once in the U.S., this dissertation owes great gratitude to many persons, organizations, and institutions that, with their contributions and support, made its completion possible. The History Department, the Steven J. Green School of International & Public Affairs, and the Graduate School at Florida International University generously provided four years of Teaching Assistantship to complete my doctoral degree. I also received various grants at FIU that funded my archival research. I was a recipient of the LACC-Tinker Research Field Grant and the Dissertation Evidence Acquisition Fellowship and received research funding from the Graduate and Professional Student Council. Furthermore, funding from the Mellon-funded Race, Risk, and Resilience project, the FIU Graduate Student Research Support Award, and the Dissertation Year Fellowship gave me the time to produce the final manuscript. In all these instances, I received generous accompaniment and encouragement from my

advisors, Committee members, and other faculty and staff. For this support, I am deeply grateful.

Dr. Ana Maria Bidegain deserves special thanks and credit. Besides offering her academic guidance and expert advice, Dr. Bidegain shared an important part of her life work and legacy with me. She generously introduced me to the Catholic lay student apostolate's life, experience, and networks. Dr. Bidegain allowed me to work with her personal records and facilitated my contact with contemporary organizations and representatives of the Latin American Catholic Student laity. Furthermore, she connected me to former militants and clergy advisors that shed light on and shared the minutia of their apostolic experience during the sixties. Dr. Bidegain, herself a committed professor and intellectual, and convinced of pedagogical principles of learning-by-doing, transdisciplinary and cooperative work, invited me to join in crafting both the Latin American Interdisciplinary Initiative on Religion and the Digital Archive of Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean. These two initiatives are connected to this research as a source base and a scholar network. In addition to her academic mentoring, I thank Dr. Bidegain for her personal and emotional support during the years. Her encouragement and caring became crucial throughout this researcher's many challenges while developing this work. I feel blessed and grateful for her presence in my life.

This dissertation also owes special gratitude to Dr. Aurora Morcillo. My late friend and advisor left an indelible footprint on my personal and academic life. A passionate and sharp intellectual, aware that all that is personal is political, Dr. Morcillo



hosted and inspired many theoretical reflections nuclear to this study. We both shared a taste for thinking and conceptual abstraction, philosophical and epistemological inquiry, as a key to interrogation and avoiding the mechanical reproduction of instrumental rationality in living and interpreting the world. While she opened me to new bodies of scholarship and fed my intellectual curiosity and taste, Dr. Morcillo also understood the human and personal dimensions of a migrant international graduate student with a family. I am forever grateful to her and wish this work might honor her memory.

I am sincerely thankful to Dr. Victor Uribe-Urán for his restless support throughout my academic journey as an international student at FIU. Dr. Uribe-Urán has backed me in every step since I joined the History Department as a master's student. As Chair of the Department for many years, he helped me navigate countless academic and administrative circumstances and guided me through the logic and processes of knowledge production in American scholarship. I appreciate his insightful comments and suggestions on my work as a member of my committee and, later, co-major professor. I thank the critical advice he offered throughout the different versions of this manuscript and his patient editing and polishing of my writing. Dr. Uribe-Urán also lent his support in my search for funding sources and opportunities for professional development over the years. I am grateful for his unwavering support and encouragement.

Other committee members, faculty, and staff, also contributed to bringing this dissertation to fruition. I thank Dr. Bianca Premo for her critical appraisal of my work and her continuous support of my scholarly project since I first applied to the master's

program in History. Dr. Premo's confidence in my work and project was critical to getting admission as a funded master's student at the FIU History Department and continuing to the doctoral program later. I am also thankful to Dr. Jaime Pensado from the University of Notre Dame for his all-important remarks and suggestions on my work and for welcoming me to scholarly networks of mutual interest. I am grateful to Dr. Premo and Dr. Pensado for writing letters of recommendation that helped me get financial assistance for this research. I thank Dr. Rebecca Friedman, a member of my committee, for her insightful comments and for connecting me to a job opportunity without which completion of this dissertation would not have been possible. Also, this dissertation greatly benefited from Dr. Terrance Peterson's seminar on Decolonization and the Global Cold War and his outstanding feedback on my work. Dr. Uribe-Urán's classes on Modern Latin America and Comparative History, and Dr. Bidegain's courses on Latin American Religion and World Christianity provided the bedrock for my study. Dr. Morcillo's seminars on History, Memory, Reconciliation, and Water Cartographies, offered too, crucial theoretical frameworks for this research. Dr. Okezi Otovo's class on Historical Methods opened my imagination to transnational history. I also want to thank professors Kirsten Wood and Okezi Otovo for their invaluable support in their capacity as Graduate Program Directors. They helped me navigate administrative matters, get acquainted with and benefit from available opportunities. The FIU History Department staff also helped greatly at every step. I sincerely thank Maria Ferrer Young and Luis del Pino, Graduate Secretaries in different terms, for their kindness, patience, and help.

This dissertation owes all its relevance to the Latin American Catholic Student laity. Different generations of its militancy were involved in this research in one way or another. I want to express my deep gratitude to the Latin American Secretariat of Catholic Students MIEC JECI. Many thanks to Jorge Parra and Karin Idrogo, contemporary Latin American Secretaries in different terms, and Fr. Angel Saboya, Fr. Luis Fernando Crespo, and Rosario Zapata, the current Latin American advisor team. They allowed me to consult the Secretariat's archives, which rest in two private repositories. Furthermore, they were ready to answer my questions about the functioning of the Secretariat over time and today's movements. They helped me access new information from the national bases. They welcomed me to Latin American Committee meetings and accepted me as a collaborator in the cause of recovering the Movement's memory and the archive digitization project. My deepest gratitude to the incredible people in both repository localities, Quito and Lima, for their warmth, trust, and generous welcome. In the Centro de Formación Leonidas Proaño in Quito, I counted on the collaboration and caring support of Pablo del Hierro, Yessenia Cabrera, Elsa Chacha, Maria Tanguila, and Marco Pastaz. At the Instituto Bartolomé de las Casas and the Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones in Lima, I counted on the warm welcome, time, and determined collaboration from Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, Carmen Lora, Roelfin Haack, Jose Luis Franco, and the amazing teams that accompany them. Other former militants, ecclesial advisors, and related Catholic intellectuals also made invaluable contributions to this research. Many shared their memories, personal documents, and pictures. They helped me expand the contact network, eased my access to unknown records, and generously offered their time, attention, and support. Many thanks to Rodrigo Guerrero,

Gilberto Valdez, Ernesto Katzenstein, Ivan Jaramillo, Luis Ignacio Betancur, Oliverio Henao, Alfredo Pezo, Juan Mendoza, Terezinha Franzin, Francisco (Paco) del Campo, Catalina Romero, Cecilia Tovar, Rolando Ames, Rosa Alayza, Romeo Perez, Elizabeth Muller (Guigui), Fr. Felipe Zegarra, Fr. Pedro de Gouchenere, Fr. Jorge Alvarez, late Fr. Paul Dabezies. To all my heartfelt gratitude.

Some collaborations were decisive in the success of this research. I thank Isa Llopez, a visiting volunteer at the Centro Leonidas Proaño, for her generous contribution in time and work to this research. Without her input, I would not have been able to record the documentary sources needed to develop this research during my stay in Quito. I also thank Juan Sebastian Ramirez, my research assistant, who brilliantly helped me organize a portion of documentary sources and produced metadata and information crucial to completing this project. I thank Professor Inés Valdez Tappata at the Ohio State University for facilitating my contact with her father, Gilberto Valdez, a very relevant testimony but difficult-to-get contact. Two other collaborations were critical in times of pandemic. I want to thank Mr. Norman Kremer at Misereor Archives and Ms. Shane MacDonald at the Catholic University of America Archives, who helped me with remote access to important archival sources. Thank you also to Vicky Silvera and Annia Gonzalez at FIU Special Collections, who were always ready to help. Many thanks to Jeimy Rogers and Rebecca Bakker at FIU Digital Collections, who have helped us in the digitization process of the Bidegain-Uran Collection. Remote access to these on-Campus materials became essential when the pandemic stroke.

I want to express gratitude and affection to my faith community at FIU. Recently defined as such, it has solidified previous ties of friendship and intellectual, religious, and spiritual exchange. As a community, we have always been around to supporting and caring for each other. Thanks to Gremaud Angee for our fruitful conversations on theology and the complexities of interdisciplinarity in historical research. I am also thankful to Sonia Scheuren, Ernesto Fiocchetto, Stephany Londono, and Juan Sanchez for the experiences we have gone through together. Thank you to Jeisson Oviedo and Pedro Camacho, who brought new air and helped us give a pace to our community.

Other friends at FIU have helped create a sense of belonging in my years in Miami. Warmest thanks to Professors Judith Mansilla and Grace Solis for their friendship, support, and affection. Thanks to Felix Jean-Louis, whose sharp contributions to scholarly debates in class I enjoyed during the early stages of my academic journey at FIU. I thank him also for his generous listening during my complex settlement in Miami and his follow-up and cheer on my accomplishments. Thank you to Andres Valero for your affection; thank you for your joy which is always contagious. Too many other colleagues and faculty at FIU have made me feel at home in Miami. Thank you all for your generosity and care. Beyond academics at FIU, life has brought my family and me good friends with whom we have seen our daughters grow together. They make our life more joyful. Thank you to Marisela and Jerry, Diana and Marcelo, Maritza and Victor, and Tamara and Armando for your care and love and for providing an extended family now that I am far from home.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

VANGUARDS OF LIBERATION: PROGRESSIVE CATHOLICISM, THE STUDENT  
MOVEMENT, AND POLITICAL CULTURE IN LATIN AMERICA, 1960-1973

by

Sandra Milena Londono-Ardila

Florida International University, 2022

Miami, Florida

Professor Ana Maria Bidegain, Co-major Professor

Professor Victor Uribe, Co-major Professor

Over the 1960s, a particular form of living the Christian faith bolstered student mobilization in Latin America. The Catholic episcopate supported the expansion of Catholic student organizations to strengthen the youth's evangelization and form a Catholic intelligentsia that might inform social change and counter the elites' de-Christianization. Significantly, dominant conservative views saw in these organizations the opportunity to halt Marxism in universities and society. Student organizations did not follow the latter path uncritically. They had their own agendas. Students built on multiple social theory developments, progressive theology—that reached momentum at Vatican II, and a shared apostolic method—the Review of Life. They produced common assessments of social reality. Significantly, organizations espoused the claims of their new members stemming from a social base already mobilized. Consequently, organizations crafted an

alternative path that, following the gospel, sought to change society and a model of the Church deemed complicit with structural injustice.

Vanguards of Liberation is a transnational study about the identity, intellectual and spiritual journey, and regional mobilization of the Latin American Catholic student youth affiliated with two international movements: the International Movement of Catholic Students-MIEC/IMCS and the International Young Catholic Students-JECI/IYCS. This dissertation accesses the MIEC-JECI memories through the archival sources of its regional Secretariat and testimonies from former militants. It develops with a political and intellectual history-from-below approach that recognizes subaltern subjects' agency in producing meaning and knowledge and involvement in conflicts over hegemony.

This study argues that Latin American MIEC and JECI organizations formed a transnational network and evolved into a social movement during the decade. Organizations converged around a common identity and agenda. Students' embracing of Commitment as a form of spirituality, an apostolic attitude, and a historical project prompted militants to develop a committed apostolate into the milieu and go to the poor. In this decision and amid the Cold War's unfolding, militants took many paths in a struggle for the liberation of the oppressed and engaged in varied expressions of the New Left. Consequences of this involvement, Catholics significantly impacted the region's political culture while partaking in the Liberationist Christianity that crafted a new theology.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION.....1
	Research problem, the overarching argument, and main contributions to the scholarly debate.....10
	Literature in Conversation.....15
	Catholic activism in Modern and Contemporary Latin America.....16
	Religion in the history of the sixties’ Social Movements and the Latin American Cold War.....21
	An intellectual history of Latin American Liberationist Christianity.....30
	Approach, Objects of Inquiry at Stake, and Methodological Decisions.....39
	Chapters Outline.....50
PART ONE: CULTURAL AND POLITICAL VANGUARDS IN THE MAKING OF LATIN AMERICAN CATHOLIC STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS 1900-1960.....55	
II.	CHAPTER 1. THE LATIN AMERICAN STUDENT MOVEMENT: ROOTS AND IDENTITY.....59
	1.1. The university reform movement: Cordoba’s 1918 uprising and Latinoamericanismo.....60
	1.2 The continental expansion of Cordoba’s reformist spirit.....73
	1.3 The University Student Movement’s pendulum and political concretization.79
	1.4. The ideological debate between Haya de la Torre and Julio Antonio Mella and the factionalism of the University Movement.....84
	1.5. The University Movement after 1930.....94
	1.6 Conclusions of the Chapter.....103
III.	CHAPTER 2. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND ITS PRESENCE IN LATIN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES.....106
	2.1 From Social Catholicism to Interwar Catholic Progressivism: Catholic Action and the Pioneering Efforts of Catholic Students’ International Networks... ..108
	2.2. Latin American Christendom and early unfolding of Catholic Action.....119
	2.3. CIDEDEC and Pax Romana Student Networks in Latin America, and early contacts with Catholic Progressivism.....127
	2.4. The rise of JEC International and the expansion of the JEC approach in Latin America.....154
	2.5. The Pioneering experience of the Brazilian JEC and JUC.....166
	2.6 Conclusions of the Chapter.....179



PART TWO: RISE OF A TRANS-NATIONAL LATIN AMERICAN CATHOLIC STUDENTS' NETWORK. MIEC/IMCS AND JECI/IYCS DIFFERENT TRAJECTORIES, COMPETING APPROACHES, AND CONVERGENCES 1960-1966 .....		183
IV.	CHAPTER 3. MIEC FEDERATIONS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE RISE AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE PAX ROMANA-MIEC LATIN AMERICAN SECRETARIAT .....	199
	3.1. Generational bridges at the beginning of the 1960s decade.....	200
	3.2. First Latin American Pax Romana Seminar, La Capilla 1961.....	202
	3.3. World Congress and Inter-Federal Assembly, Montevideo 1962.....	227
	3.4. The MIEC Latin American Secretariat and Methods of Action.....	240
	3.5. Relations with CELAM and Financing.....	249
	3.6. The double registry of achievements and failings by the end of the period.....	253
	3.7. Conclusions of the Chapter.....	261
V.	CHAPTER 4. EVOLUTION OF THE JECI'S LATIN AMERICAN SECRETARIAT AND MOVEMENTS.....	263
	4.1. Brazilian's JEC and JUC organizational and conceptual turns, the backdrop of the JECI Secretariat's evolution.....	265
	4.2. From the JECI-SSA definitive establishment on to envisioning the Latin American reach.....	276
	4.3. The Vilches-Talca Study Session in 1962.....	285
	4.4. JECI-SLA maturity and Latin American diffusion of the JEC approach in the face of economic precarity and frustration.....	296
	4.5. The JEC approach's reach beyond the JECI-SLA's scope in Latin America .....	307
	4.6. Conclusions of the Chapter.....	314
VI.	CHAPTER 5. MIEC AND JECI SECRETARIATS' RELATIONS, THE BASES AUTONOMY, AND CONVERGENCE.....	316
	5.1. MIEC and JECI Latin American Secretariats' early attempts of collaboration.....	318
	5.2. The 1963 Lima Seminar Towards a Reform of the University in Latin America .....	320
	5.3. From Petropolis' to Lima's agreements. The uncovering of the conflict over the meaning of the Specialization.....	346
	5.4. A joint University Pastoral for Latin America and the conflicts around a single regional Coordination of University Apostolic Movements.....	352
	5.5. Ruptures after Lima's agreement and tangled new beginnings.....	357
	5.6. Conclusions of the Chapter.....	363

PART THREE: A LATIN AMERICAN CATHOLIC STUDENT MOVEMENT. A VANGUARD OF CULTURAL, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL CHANGE, 1967-1973.....	367
VII. CHAPTER 6 COMMITMENT AND REVOLUTION. IDENTITY, COLLECTIVE ACTION, AND NEW LEFT POLITICS WITHIN THE MOVEMENT.....	373
6.1. Commitment and Review of Life.....	374
6.2. Practical forms of Christian Commitment.....	394
6.3. The intersecting roads. Student gremios, apostolic movements, and politics.....	396
6.4. The Ida al Pueblo and the crisis of the distinction of planes scheme.....	406
6.5. Going to the poor, Commitment and the New Lefts.....	412
6.6. Conclusions of the Chapter.....	447
VIII. CHAPTER 7. VANGUARDS OF LIBERATION. FLOURISH AND DECLINE OF A CATHOLIC STUDENT TRANSNATIONAL MOBILIZATION.....	450
7.1. Shaping Convergence: Common Working Bases and the Coordination Team.....	452
7.2. Working Areas for Latin America and the heyday of a Catholic Intelligentsia.....	459
7.3. The Latin American agenda: Commitment and Cultural Autonomy and the avant-gardes of the global 1968.....	474
7.4. Crises and corollaries: the reverse side of Commitment.....	486
7.5. Crises of identity: the paradox of theological and pastoral evolution and organizational regression.....	488
7.6. Heightened state repression, the raid of Montevideo’s headquarters, and the loss of the movement’s momentum.....	506
7.7. Arrival and change in Lima. The polarity Lima-Montevideo and the decline of the Latin American Catholic students as a Social Movement.....	513
7.8. Conclusions of the Chapter.....	527
IX. CONCLUSION..	530
LIST OF REFERENCES.....	561
APPENDICES.....	587
VITA.....	631

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
Table 1. Latin American student federations and movements affiliated to Pax Romana-MIEC and JECI early in the 1960s.....	192

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
Figure 1. First Pax Romana MIEC Latin American Seminar—La Capilla, 1961. A group of student attendees accompanied by Fr. Alain Birou and Fr. Nestor Giraldo....	215
Figure 2. First Pax Romana MIEC Latin American Seminar—La Capilla, 1961. Fr. Camilo Torres in conversation with Latin American students.....	217
Figure 3. First Pax Romana MIEC Latin American Seminar—La Capilla, 1961. Catholic students in a critical attitude, in conversation with Fr. Nestor Giraldo.....	221
Figure 4. Comuni3n Pascual Universitaria organized by Arequipa’s UNEC during the early 1960s.....	245
Figure 5. Spiritual Retreat and Camp, Peruvian UNEC. Students with Fr. Mario Galvez. Urubamba, Peru, 1964.....	246
Figure 6. Presumably, a Christmas Eve Celebration. Cuzco’s UNEC, Peru.....	246
Figure 7. Front Cover of the Memoires of the Second JECI Latin American Study Session in Vilches-Talca, 1962.....	287
Figure 8. The Second Latin American Pax Romana-MIEC Seminar “Towards a Reform of the University in Latin America,” Lima, 1963, recorded by local Peruvian press.....	322
Figure 9. Schedule and daily time distribution, Second Latin American Pax Romana-MIEC Seminar, Lima 1963.....	339
Figure 10. Front Cover of Revision de Vida y Compromiso. A translation by the JECI SLA of the second part of the book Dinamica existencial da convers3o, by Frei Francisco de Araujo, 1967.....	380
Figure 11. Esquema de una Revisi3n de Hechos de Vida. A methodological guide by UNEC Peru, 1965.....	390
Figure 12. Student demonstration on the occasion of Fr. Fernando Vargas Ruiz de Somocurcio’s consecration as bishop. Arequipa-Peru, 1971.....	429
Figure 13. Depicting years of social organizing behind the popular mobilization. Juan Mendoza, UNEC-Cuzco's (Peru) militant with a peasant leader promoting grassroots organization.....	440

Figure 14. The Church accompanying the experience of faith and local communities' mobilization for land and peace in the Peruvian Andean South region.....	445
Figure 15. Depicting years of social organizing behind the popular mobilization. Catholic militants accompany peasant marches in Puno-Peru in the late 1970s.....	445
Figure 16. Servicio de Documentación, a publication by the MIEC JECI SLA since 1967. Assorted Covers.....	462
Figure 17. Vispera Magazine, an MIEC publication since 1967. Assorted Covers.....	465
Figure 18. MIEC JECI Latin American Secretariat members and student attendees to the University Pastoral Seminar, Mexico City, 1967.....	477
Figure 19. Members and relatives to the MIEC JECI Latin American Secretariat by 1968.....	483
Figure 20. Salvadorian militant Andrés Campos, a portrait.....	509
Figure 21. MIEC JECI Latin American Secretariat members at the SLA facilities in Lima, 1972.....	515

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

### I. Acronyms of International and Regional Catholic Student Movements, Coordination Posts, and Networks.

PR – Pax Romana

PR-IFA- Pax Romana Interfederal Assembly

GS- General Secretariat / Secretary

MIEC- Movimiento Internacional de Estudiantes Católicos

CIDI- Center of Documentation and Information (JECI)

JECI- Juventud Estudiantil Católica Internacional

MIEC-SLA - MIEC Latin American Secretariat / Secretary

JECI -SLA – JECI Latin American Secretariat / Secretary

SCA-Specialized Catholic Action

RLM- Review of Life Method

CLA – Comité Latinoamericano del MIEC-JECI

SCH- Survey Coordinating Headquarters

SIAC- Secretariado Inter-Americano de Acción Católica

SIDEC- Secretariado Iberoamericano de Estudiantes Católicos

CIDEC- Confederación Iberoamericana de Estudiantes Católicos

### II. Acronyms of Latin American Catholic Student Movements

AUDAC-Asociación de las Universidades de la Acción Católica Argentina

JEC -Juventud Estudiantil Católica-Secondary students

JUC -Juventud Universitaria Católica.

AUC -Asociación Universitaria Católica-Chile

EUC-Equipos Universitarios de Colombia

ACU-Agrupación Católica Universitaria-Cuba

MUD-Movimiento Universitario Dominicano-Dominican Republic

CUC-Centro Universitario Católico-Dominican Republic.  
ACUG-Acción Católica Universitaria de Guatemala  
AUCA-Asociación Universitaria Católica-Honduras  
ACUS-Asociación Católica Universitaria del Salvador  
MEP-Movimiento Estudiantil y Profesional de la Asociación Católica-Mexico  
EU-Equipos Universitarios Católicos-Panama  
UNEC-Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos-Peru  
CUC-Centro Universitario Católico-Puerto Rico  
MUC Movimiento Universitario Católico-Venezuela

### III. Acronyms of Latin American Student Movements and Networks

UNEC-Union Nacional de Estudiantes de Colombia  
CEUC-Confederación de Estudiantes Universitarios de Colombia  
MRL-Movimiento Revolucionario Liberal (Colombia)  
OCLAE- Organización Continental Latinoamericana de Estudiantes  
ORMEU-Oficina Relacionadora de Movimientos Estudiantiles Universitarios  
ODUCAL-Organización de Universidades Católicas de América Latina

### IV. Acronyms of Latin American Catholic Church Institutional Councils and Departments and other international Church Agencies

CELAM-Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano  
DPU-Departamento de Pastoral Universitaria (CELAM)  
DL-Departamento de Laicos (CELAM)  
DE-Departamento de Educación (CELAM)  
LAB-Latin American Bureau of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

V. Acronyms of Latin American 20<sup>th</sup> Century political parties, and New Left Movements

PAN-Partido de Acción Nacional (Mexico)

PDC-Partido Democrata Cristao (Brazil)

COPEI-Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente (Venezuela)

OCDA- Organización Demócrata Cristiana de América

FRAP- Frente de Acción Popular (Chile)

FREP-Frente Revolucionario Estudiantil Popular (Peru)

MUR-Movimiento Universitario Reformista (Peru)

MAPU- Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitaria (Chile)

MLN-T- Movimiento de Liberación Nacional Tupamaros (Uruguay)

VR- Vanguardia Revolucionaria (Peru)

VI. Abbreviated References

Medellin-68	II Conference of the Latin American Episcopate in Medellin, 1968, which marked the reception of the Second Vatican Council and embracing of a Latin American theological turn in favor of the option for the poor.
Vatican II	Second Vatican Council
La Capilla	First Latin American Seminar PR-MIEC, celebrated in 1961 in La Capilla-Boyaca, Colombia
Montevideo-62	25 <sup>th</sup> PR-World Congress in Montevideo, Uruguay, from July 25-30, 1962.
Vilches	JECI, Latin American Study Session celebrated in Vilches-Talca, province of Chile, September 15-25, 1962
Lima-1963	Second Latin American Seminar PR-MIEC “Towards a Reform of the University in Latin America,” celebrated in Lima-Peru, from April 14-28, 1963.
CLA-I	Primer Comité Latinoamericano MIEC-JECI
CLA-II	Segundo Comité Latinoamericano MIEC-JECI



## I. INTRODUCTION

*...Liberation Theology arrive[d] ... with the force of a long national and continental process, an extremely valuable and peculiar process since it was born of exemplary commitments ... with the poor. ...Citizenship was built. In pursuing the dream of “making the poor stand up,” an important and irreversible step had been taken.<sup>1</sup>*

*Martyrs of the movement represent the greatest testimony of faith, of Commitment, ... of what we learned, and what we lived in the movement. (...) They died because of their putting those principles into practice. [Their efforts to] change the abyss of inequality in Latin America. [They] died for those ideas.<sup>2</sup>*

The documents that make up the primary archive for this research have endured a long journey. They are the remnants that survived a hierarchical instruction that had ordered their destruction. An Ecuadorian priest close to Liberation Theology and the young movements of the Church chose instead to hide the boxes full of documents in his parish’s bell tower in Babahoyo, Ecuador. Despite the intention to preserve them, exposure to the weather damaged almost half of the original number of boxes. From Babahoyo’s bell tower, the material that could be recovered was transferred seven years

---

<sup>1</sup> Juan Mendoza, “Teología de la Liberación, un acto Segundo,” *Memoria, presencia y futuro. A los 50 años de Teología de la Liberación*. CEP-IBC-Fondo Editorial PUCP, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Oliverio Henao, *Conversations by country with MIIC and FIU-LACIIR*, in preparation for *Pax Romana Centenary Celebration*, 02-04-2021.

ago to the lay-social organization *Centro de Formación Leonidas Proaño* in Quito, Ecuador, where it is hosted to this day.<sup>3</sup>

The anecdote is meaningful. The surviving of this material in a bell tower creates a powerful metaphor. It leads us to think of it in terms of the semiology of the resilient if still silent convocation and gathering of the faithful, the announcement of a message some wanted to censor, and the strength of spirited preachers who continue to deliver this message through their apostolate. However, it also creates some practical questions. What was in those boxes that some members in positions of power in the Latin American Catholic Church wanted to disappear seven years ago? Why did they despise this material? Either the material lacked importance completely, would have lost currency, and it was not worth keeping it; or, it was too valuable and contrary to particular interests. The latter option seems more likely. As a matter of fact, the anecdote of hiding and recovery of the materials seems to unveil a story of power and resistance. It reveals the persistence and even currency of a conflict. This is a lingering conflict between competing Catholic pastoral approaches and theologies and contesting narratives about the past and present of the Church in Latin America; a conflict that concerns a struggle for hegemony and a dispute over memory.

The conflict is easily recognizable. A brief description of it situates us in the ecclesial and theological strife within the Latin American Church between progressives,

---

<sup>3</sup> Pablo del Hierro, interview 05-29-2019.

later mostly known as Liberation Theologians, and Conservatives. The conflict surfaced during and after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and, further on, the Second Conference of the Latin American Episcopate in Medellin, Colombia, in 1968. First, it materialized amidst the triumph of a progressive wave within the Catholic world, which the Latin American Church not only accompanied but significantly contributed to. Later, it was part of the reaction against Vatican II and Medellin. The latter involved attempts to counter Liberation Theology's reach and the "counteroffensive" by Liberation Theologians in the Third Conference of the region's Episcopate in Puebla, Mexico (1979).<sup>4</sup> These tensions have been protracted. They materialized once more in the last two conferences of the region's episcopate (Santo Domingo, 1992, and Aparecida, 2007) and have shaped force correlations within the institutional Church in the region to this day, resulting in a polarity between clericalism-*sinodality*.<sup>5</sup>

As seen, this is an ongoing conflict. Since it entails a dispute over memory this study, *Vanguards of Liberation*, cannot be less, in the first place, than an attempt to recover the memory of the socio-ecclesial process that these archival sources attest to. As Historian Pierre Nora noted once, the historian ought to make visible the different available *representations* of the past while also recognizing his/her own entanglements,

---

<sup>4</sup>Dussel, Enrique. *A history of the church in Latin America: colonialism to liberation (1492-1979)*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1981, pp. 242-249

<sup>5</sup> Luciani, Rafael. "La sinodalidad, una forma más completa de ser Iglesia." *Revista CLAR* 59, no. 3 (2021): 114-124. For a long-term balance of the five general conferences of the Latin American episcopate since CELAM's creation in 1955, see: Ignasi Saranyana, Josep. "Las cinco Conferencias Generales del Episcopado Latinoamericano en su contexto teológico (1955-2007)." *Scripta Theologica* 54, no. 2 (2022). See also: Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano, *Las cinco conferencias generales del episcopado latinoamericano*. CELAM-Centro de Publicaciones, 2014.

conditionings, and biases. History, as a discipline and a subject's intellectual production, is necessarily a reduction of memory, narrowing/limiting, if we might say, what is to be remembered. In the problematic relationship between history and memory, "...The historian is one who prevents history from becoming *merely* history."<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, in the face of the attempt of censorship, this dissertation assumes a position of resistance. As Jacques LeGoff also pointed out, forgetting and the silences of history have the effect of unveiling dominant social groups' mechanisms to manipulate collective memory.<sup>7</sup> This call of attention goes along with the warning philosopher Paul Ricoeur issued on the uses of memory at the ethical-political level, where individual, collective, and historical memories crisscross.<sup>8</sup> Borrowing Ricoeur's words, against the "definitive effacement of traces" of this memory, *Vanguards of Liberation* approaches this set of once-silenced sources with the commitment to attempt to grasp, from the inside-out, the sinuous production of meaning this memory might have a *duty* about.<sup>9</sup>

Another portion of this primary archive is currently in Lima, Peru. It has been guarded for some decades now by the *Instituto Bartolome de las Casas*. In both cases,

---

<sup>6</sup> Nora, Pierre. "Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire." *Representations* 26 (1989): 7-24, p. 13.

<sup>7</sup> Le Goff, Jacques. *El orden de la memoria. El tiempo como imaginario*. (Trans. de Hugo F. Bauza), Paidós, Barcelona, 1991, p. 133.

<sup>8</sup> Ricoeur, Paul. *Memory, history, forgetting*. University of Chicago Press, 2004, p. 86

<sup>9</sup> For Ricoeur, the *duty of memory* is intrinsically linked to the search for justice, for "...it is justice that turns memory into a project..." While this dissertation is not such a work, it understands that the memory of the martyrdom of the laity during the period covering this study is still to be named and remembered. Ibid, p. 88.

Lima and Quito, the documents are still endangered, especially now by the passing of time and weather conditions. One more organized than the other, this overall archive amounts to more than 700 small boxes in Lima and 300 in Quito. Despite the will of current guardians, these materials have not undergone a true curating process. They exist without proper maintenance conditions and are uncatalogued. Pages begin to tear, and the ink fades away.

The recovery of the archive has aroused the interest and participation of the social base to whom the collective memory it keeps belongs. On the journey from Babahoyo to Quito, Ecuadorian Pablo del Hierro, representative of the archive's owner, led the recovery process that involved direct and indirect producers of the documentation who knew of its importance. The owner is the Latin American Secretariat of Catholic Students-SLA MIEC-JECI.<sup>10</sup> This remains an international organizational coordination instance among the organized Catholic laity gathering and animating lay student movements throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Acting as communities of faith, national student movements affiliated with the Secretariat develop a lay apostolate in their *milieus* (*viz. medio*, social environment). Recovering from a generalized organizational weakening during previous decades, currently, the Secretariat gathers six

---

<sup>10</sup> MIEC- stands for *Movimiento Internacional de Estudiantes Católicos*, in English, IMCS International Movement of Catholic Students. JECI- stands for *Juventud Estudiantil Católica Internacional*, in English, IYCS International Young Catholic Students.

movements in Latin America and operates remotely using new information technologies.<sup>11</sup>

Former and current militants of MIEC and JECI movements in Latin America have come forward and joined the effort to recover and preserve this memory. Many of them are former militants who were direct producers of these records. Some have not ceased to gather in their faith communities, which they adopted almost as a family since they were formed. Previous members of *Equipos Universitarios* in Colombia-EUC, and the *Movimiento de Profesionales Católicos*—Ex-UNEC in Peru, are good examples of surviving communities of faith. Many others from their own professional or intellectual paths have also joined the effort to recover and preserve these records. Some of them, like my dissertation co-advisor, Dr. Ana Maria Bidegain, have worked tirelessly in this endeavor since decades ago. They have played a crucial role in animating current and new activist cadres to get interested in these records. Thus, present militants have also developed an interest in knowing more about their movement's history and *temporal* (viz. earthly) commitment during previous decades. This is a story unknown to many of them. Acknowledging their relevance, the material recovery and digitization of this memory are now prioritized in the Secretariat's work plans. Around this endeavor, university centers headed by former militants or advisors of these movements have partnered; namely, LACIIR-DARLAC FIU (Miami-US), PUCP's Department of Theology (Lima, Peru), and

---

<sup>11</sup> Currently, the SLA gathers Bolivia's MUC and JEC, Chile's AUC, Ecuador's JUC, Peruvian UNEC and JEC. Colombian JEC is in reconstruction. Karin Idrogo-Estela – Current Latin American Secretary MIEC-JECI, Interview. 1-29-2022

CONICET-UBA Society, Culture and Religion Area (Buenos Aires-Argentina).<sup>12</sup> Other university instances with a scholarly interest in these records, such as the History Department at Notre Dame University and the Princeton Theological Seminary, are also part of the rising network. Economic resources are still elusive to the task. The joyous celebration of Pax Romana's centenary in 2021 was a pretext for former and current militants to gather remotely around *remembering*. These conversations have contributed enormously to solidify the movement and this research. As a means of both honoring the movement's trust and providing the scholarly community with resources to work with these endangered records, *Vanguards of Liberation* explores the documentary sources in detail. This research seeks to contribute to the movement's quest for identity by making sense of its internal inflections during the period under study and providing explanations of the subsequent outcomes.

Of course, this research also involves the researcher's own interests, experiences, and searches. I first developed a scholarly curiosity on issues concerning Catholicism and political culture fifteen years ago while pursuing a master's degree in Education at the public Colombian *Universidad Pedagógica Nacional*. Interdisciplinary research on the Colombian Church's educative initiative *Acción Cultural Popular* during the 1950s allowed me to explore the clashes and disputes for hegemony inside Catholic thought and

---

<sup>12</sup> *LACIIR* stands for Latin American and Caribbean Interdisciplinary Initiative on Religion at *FIU*- Florida International University. *DARLAC* stands for Digital Archive of Religion in Latin America, a *LACIIR* initiative. *PUCP* stands for Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, *CONICET-UBA* stands for Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas-Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina.

the relations between Catholic faith, ethics, and politics.<sup>13</sup> It also brought to my attention the dissimilar unfolding in Latin America of the Vatican's initiative, Catholic Action, that began in the 1930s. Reflecting profound personal interests and questions that motivated my first studies in Anthropology, my concerns went in the direction of attempting to grasp the complexities in the production of meaning. This involved efforts to understand hegemony and systems of thought, the micro and macro structures involved in the production of 'social orders,' power, and '*subjectivation*,' i.e., subjective, and institutional structures of coercion.

Later, acknowledging the relevance of discussions on the problems surrounding different *representations* of the past from the perspective of cultural history, I came to FIU looking to discuss social and cultural "appropriations," specifically those built on this intriguing program developed by the Vatican: Catholic Action. Thus, I aspired to grasp some of its plural unfolding and contribution to political cultures in Latin America. A history of "appropriations" is, in the language of Historian Roger Chartier,

"...a social history of the uses and interpretations [which is] brought again to their fundamental determinations and inscribed in the specific practices that produce them. Thus, [it pays] attention to the conditions and processes ... [entailed by] the operations of construction of meaning."

---

<sup>13</sup> Co-authored master's thesis. Londoño, Sandra, and Javier Mejía. *El discurso de una ética católica modernizada. El caso del programa Acción Cultural Popular (1947-1958)*. Tesis de Maestría. Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. Bogotá, Colombia, 2010.



This operation supposes,

“... to recognize ... that neither intelligentsias nor ideas are disembodied. ... [Also acknowledging] that the categories given as invariable, ... are yet to be built in the discontinuity of historical trajectories.”<sup>14</sup>

These first scholarly concerns found the intellectual advice of my cherished late friend, cultural historian, and advisor Dr. Aurora Morcillo. I also counted on the advice of my dear friend, Historian, an expert in Latin American Catholicism, and co-advisor, Dr. Ana Maria Bidegain, who introduced me to the specific experience of the progressive Catholic youth student apostolate in Latin America. Of course, some initial concerns and approaches transformed while concretizing my interest in a specific research object. Some emergent questions got complicated by my first-hand knowledge and experience of public universities in Colombia and the vicissitudes of the struggles for university reform. Also, some of my early critical views of the student movement in my home country, though non-scholarly, became entangled in this research. Other aspects of my intellectual quest stayed intact and can explain some deliberate emphases during my analysis and writing.

---

<sup>14</sup> Chartier, Roger, and Marina Sanchis Martínez. "El mundo como representación." *Historia Social* (1991): 163-175, p. 169. The original article was published in French under Chartier, Roger. "Le monde comme représentation," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 44/6 (1989). Translation of the quote is mine given that there is not available translation to English. See also, Chartier, Roger. *El mundo como representación: estudios sobre historia cultural*. Vol. 302369. Editorial Gedisa, 1999.

## **A. Research problem, the overarching argument, and main contributions to the scholarly debate**

*Vanguards of Liberation* is a transnational study that inquires on the identity, intellectual and spiritual journey, and regional mobilization of the Latin American Catholic student youth affiliated to MIEC and JECI from 1960 to 1973. The study accesses this organized youth's memories through the eyes and archives of the Latin American Secretariats MIEC and JECI. These were two international Catholic student movements' subsidiaries acting as regional organizational instances. They animated national bases' apostolate, coordinated regional experiences of apostolic reflection and action, and systematized the organized youth's experiences and developments for further dissemination.

This dissertation's overarching argument contends that the Latin American Catholic student youth affiliated with MIEC and JECI formed a multicentered transnational (Latin American) network of organizations during the first half of the 1960s. This network developed under the influence of two Latin American Secretariats, MIEC and JECI, with a different apostolic approach and a conflictive and mutually competitive relations background. Common elements in organized Catholics' ideological and political background with the long-standing university students' mobilization for university reform; and common uses and interpretations of progressive Catholic thought and apostolic practice, favored a growing collective identity among organized Catholics within the network. This identity was built on the belief in the need to transform the university and the Church, along with their role in society. Organized Catholics sought to

achieve greater democratization and humanistic education in the university while also putting an end to a ‘Christendom model’ of the Church—complicit with structural injustice—promoting instead the rise of a church siding with ‘those who suffered,’ a Church of the Poor. The agency of national bases and their claim of a shared identity pushed the Secretariats to merge with one another in the context of institutional conditions within the Latin American Church making it possible. A shared identity and agenda galvanized the path toward the network’s transition into a social movement by the middle of the decade. A generalized embracing of ‘*Compromiso*,’ –*from now on, Commitment*– as a historical project, a form of spirituality and an apostolic attitude that fed on the practice of the Review of Life Method, prompted Catholic militants to develop a *committed* apostolate into the *milieu*, and go to the poor. In this decision and amid the Cold War’s unfolding, militants took many paths in the struggle for *Liberation*. This was a struggle in favor of the poor to end structural injustice and domination so that they might take over ‘the reins of their own history.’ Amidst that struggle, Catholic militants engaged in varied expressions of the emerging New Lefts. In doing so, they taught the preferential ‘option for the poor’ and the ways to live a committed life within their *milieu*. Thus, Catholic militants impacted the region’s political culture by promoting the pursuit of Christian Commitment’s ethical values. They furnished the keys of a ‘committed’ spirituality within the university, and leftist social organizations—in which some participated, and the public debate at large—within which a consolidated Catholic intelligentsia had gained a place for itself.

*Vanguards of Liberation* sheds light on three subjects that condense its main contributions to the scholarly debate. These subjects are: Catholic student activism in modern Latin America—from *Rerum Novarum* to Vatican II’s reception; religion in the analysis of social movements during the *sixties* and the Cold War; and, the intellectual history of Liberationist Christianity in Latin America. Let us briefly outline these contributions.

First, this study undertakes a *long-durée* view that goes back to the beginning of the century to explain Catholic activism in Latin American during the *sixties*. It discusses the rise of an international network of Catholic student organizations built on previous decades’ lay activism; furthermore, it traces its evolution into a transnational (Latin American) social movement during the *sixties*. The study shows that the first experiences of Catholic student activism found an organizational form after the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891) opened the avenues for the lay apostolate. However, it was the 1930s unfolding of the Vatican’s initiative called Catholic Action, that provided the backbone for the further development and proliferation of organizations and regional networks of Catholic student transnational activism. *Vanguards of Liberation* reveals that *sixties*’s activism built on significant continuities with Catholic activist networks of the first half of the century and vital intersections with other paralleling non-confessional—even anticlerical, organizational processes. Continuities were evident in their organizational forms and their apostolic, intellectual, and political substrata. The study reveals that one crucial rallying repertoire epitomizing the continuity with previous Catholic activism was students’ sustained demand to transform a model of the Church that sided with power,

later termed a ‘Christendom model.’ The rally for the transformation of this model was to evolve into the demand to develop a ‘Church of the Poor’ instead. Furthermore, the intersection of Catholic student activism with the mobilization of Latin American university students sparked by the demands for university reform also shaped this continuity. The evidence examined shows that Catholics not only shared the concern for university reform and its *Latinoamericanista* ideological underpinning.<sup>15</sup> During the *sixties*, they also further assumed its revitalization and leadership, making the university reform a central part of its mobilizing repertoire. This study advances scholarship on the history of Catholic activism in modern Latin America by notably portraying its transnational identity and dynamics. It also enhances our understanding of this subject by unveiling vital intersections far less studied and providing evidence of the early and consistent rallying of claims that, further on, shaped the theological renewal in the region.

Second, this dissertation discusses the mobilization during the *sixties* of Catholic student organizations, and further on of the MIEC-JECI Latin American movement, as a part of the set of social movements seeking social change after the Second World War. The study joins a scholarly trend, unconventional, though gaining attention among historians. This trend introduces religion into the historical analysis of social movements during the *sixties*. This study adds new layers to the analysis of the countercultural youth

---

<sup>15</sup> We will refer to *Latinoamericanismo*, or its adjective *Latinoamericanista*, meaning a Latin American stream of thought that, since the mid-19th century, claimed regional identity on the grounds of a Latino ethnocultural entity. Drawing on independentist utopias, *Latinoamericanismo* advocated regional integration based on the perceived belonging to a common Patria (La Patria Grande), anti-imperialism, and cultural autonomy. Ardao, A. *Nuestra América Latina*. Ediciones de la Banda Oriental, 1986 pp. 64-82.

phenomenon during the long decade by highlighting the ways in which theological and pastoral transformations within the church, namely those epitomized by Vatican II, bolstered student mobilization in Latin America. The reception of a Theology of the Signs of the Times springing from the Council and developments within progressive Catholic thought and Christian existentialism sum up some of these transformations. Some other original elaborations resulting from the living, reflection, and praxis of the ‘specialized’ approach to Catholic Action and the tailoring of the Review of Life Method were also essential in Catholic activism. Specifically, considerations of Christian ‘Commitment’ as a historical project and the undertaking of a ‘Committed Spirituality’ constituted a fundamental mobilizing force. To be sure, this study shows that this religious background intertwined with long-standing ideological and secular political frameworks of reference among the Student Movement in Latin America and emergent rhetoric during the Cold war, and created a complex repertoire of mobilization among Catholics. This repertoire included creative imaginings about revolution and multiple engagements within the emergent New Left in the region. Significantly, *Vanguards of Liberation* claims that through the quotidian social action resulting from students’ temporal engagements, Christian Commitment values and spirituality left meaningful imprints on the Latin American political culture. In considering how ‘committed’ Christians acted in Latin American societies of the *sixties*, this study suggests that an ethic of Commitment permeated the social and organizational processes and layers of the public sphere in which Catholic militants participated.

Finally, given *Vanguards of Liberation's* cultural and political emphasis, this dissertation contributes to the intellectual history of Liberationist Christianity in Latin America. This monograph does so from the bottom-up perspective of the laity—the perceived subaltern subject within the dominating ‘Christendom model’ of the Church; and, from the inside-out of the movement—tracing its discussions, its own languages, concerns, and breakthroughs. While paying attention to the movement’s uses and interpretations of progressive social and Catholic thought, theology, and internal discussions on the ideological, political, and pastoral levels, this dissertation uncovers troubling issues besetting militants’ apostolic life. Significantly, these issues converged around the conflicting relations between faith, politics, and ideology. This study poses that the ways in which the movement sought to overcome these conflicts were opportunities for the political and theological maturation of the movement’s pastoral proposal. Furthermore, responses to these distressing questions were a decisive input that cemented both the unprecedented transformation of the Latin American church after 1968 and the formulation of Liberation Theology.

## **B. Literature in Conversation**

Given the three subject matters this dissertation touches on, in what follows, I shall provide a literature overview of the main bodies of scholarship this study dialogues with and further specify how it connects with each. These bodies of scholarship are, first, subjects central to works concerning Catholic activism in modern and contemporary Latin America. Second, there is the scholarly crossing roads central to studying the role

of religion in the social movements active during the *sixties* in Latin America. Finally, it examines subject matter critical to a body of works about the intellectual history of Liberationist Christianity.

## 1. Catholic activism in Modern and Contemporary Latin America

A vast body of interdisciplinary scholarship in the past five decades has addressed Catholic activism in Modern and Contemporary Latin America. Literature has mainly stemmed from political science, sociology, and the interdisciplinary field of religious studies; important contributions have also come from history. Scholars have given special attention to the years after the Second Vatican Council, the post-1965 period.<sup>16</sup> The attention arose almost simultaneously with the unprecedented transformation of the church following the reception of the council and the emergence of Liberation Theology after the Second Conference of the Latin American Episcopate in 1968. The interest in Liberation Theology, the way it challenged the status quo, animated grassroots mobilization, and social and political change, building on the ‘preferential option for the poor,’ grew over time, galvanizing a mainstream trend of inquiry around the potential of religion in fueling social change.<sup>17</sup> While this early literature, as Michael Dodson

---

<sup>16</sup> In noting this peculiarity Stephen Andes and Julia Young recognized as exceptional within the trend historian Ana Maria Bidegain’s work. Andes, Stephen JC, and Julia G. Young, eds. *Local church, global church: Catholic Activism in Latin America from Rerum Novarum to Vatican II*. CUA Press, 2016. See for instance Bidegain, Ana Maria. “From Catholic Action to Liberation Theology: The historical process of the laity in Latin America in the twentieth century.” No. 48. *Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies*, University of Notre Dame, 1985. Also, Bidegain, Ana Maria “A leiga militante na Igreja Católica, antes e depois do Concilio Vaticano II, Dom Helder Camara e o Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II” *XXX Simposio CEHILA*, Internacional do Insituto Helder Camara Recife, August 2004.

<sup>17</sup> See, for instance, the work of Smith, Donald Eugene. *Religion and political development: An analytic study*. Little, Brown, 1970; Thomas G. Sanders, “The Church in Latin America,” *Foreign Affairs* 48, no. 2



pointed out in 1979, was mainly constrained by the views and expectations of a ‘developmentalist paradigm,’ critical readings within this trend allowed a broader and plural understanding of Catholic activism in Latin America. Expressly, Dodson, interested in understanding Latin American Catholic progressivism, posed that his criticism permitted realizing that between Christian Democracy and a fully revolutionary position, there was a plural field of ideological stands and activism that had rejected both reformism and violent revolution. The same plurality might be seen on the political right.<sup>18</sup> This dissertation shares the view that Catholic political thought and activism featured plural perspectives, some of which are illustrated here.

Historians, on the other hand, have also contributed to thinking about the potential of religion in fueling social changes, though without giving up particular objects of research interest within the discipline. There is a large body of literature on Latin American Catholicism in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, focusing heavily on local and national histories. As historian Stephen Andes recounts it,<sup>19</sup> under the influence of religious historian William Christian’s work, this scholarship pushed

---

(January 1970):285–299; Turner, S. *Catholicism and Political Development in Latin America*. Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1971; Levine, D., & Wilde, A. “The Catholic Church, “Politics,” and Violence: The Colombian Case.” *The Review of Politics*, 39(2), (1977): 220-249; De Kadt, E J. *Catholic radicals in Brazil*. London; New York: Oxford UP, 1970; De Kadt, Emanuel. "Church, society and development in Latin America." *The Journal of Development Studies* 8, no. 1 (1971): 23-43; De Kadt, Emanuel. "Paternalism and Populism: Catholicism in Latin America." *Journal of Contemporary History* 2, no. 4 (1967): 89-106.

<sup>18</sup> Dodson, Michael. "The Christian Left in Latin American Politics." *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 21, no. 1 (1979): 45-68.

<sup>19</sup> Andes, Stephen JC. *The Vatican and catholic activism in Mexico and Chile: The politics of transnational catholicism, 1920-1940*. OUP Oxford, 2014.

forward the effort of researching ‘local religion’ in opposition to ‘elite religion.’<sup>20</sup> This trend produced important approaches from a social-historical perspective that have shed light on issues connecting religion and politics, the church, society and culture, and nation-state formation.<sup>21</sup>

Overall, starting in the 1970s and given the increased scholarly attention to the subjects’ agency in history and the strong influence of the ‘local religion’ approach, interdisciplinary scholarship has provided a discussion on the new roles the laity played within the new theology and the new conception and structure of the church that had risen. It addressed lay and clergy activism amidst struggles for social justice and revolution and, later, within human rights mobilization during and after authoritarian regimes in the region. This trend has also tackled the actions of conservative church sectors in countering the reach of Liberation Theology and their frequent alignment with social and political elites and dictatorial regimes.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Christian, William A. *Local religion in sixteenth-century Spain*. Princeton University Press, 1981.

<sup>21</sup>For instance, there are the works by Fallaw, Ben. *Religion and State Formation in Postrevolutionary Mexico*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013; Austin Nesvig, Martin, ed. *Local religion in colonial Mexico*. UNM Press, 2006; Londoño-Vega, Patricia. *Religion, Culture, and Society in Colombia: Medellín and Antioquia, 1850-1930*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002; Burdick, Michael A. *For God and the Fatherland Religion and Politics in Argentina*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995; Klaiber, Jeffrey L. *The Catholic Church in Peru, 1821-1985: a Social History*. Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 1992.

<sup>22</sup> Among examples are Smith, Brian H. *The Church and Politics in Chile: Challenges to Modern Catholicism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982; Sigmund, Paul E. *Liberation theology at the crossroads: Democracy or revolution?* Oxford University Press on Demand, 1992; Burdick, John. *Looking for God in Brazil: the progressive Catholic Church in urban Brazil's religious arena*. Univ of California Press, 1996; Andes, Stephen JC. "Catholicism, Revolution, and Counter-Revolution in Twentieth-Century Latin America." In Thomas Orique, David; Fitzpatrick-Behrens, Susan; and Virginia Garrard. Ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American Christianity*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015. Rowell, Nick. "Activist Christians, the Human Rights Movement, and Democratization in Latin America." In

A new trend of studies has grown in the last decade that examines Catholic activism as an opportunity to understand the intertwining between beliefs, practice, and politics, as historian Robert Weis notes.<sup>23</sup> This trend has also grown increasingly interested in the transnational character of clerical and lay activism inherent to the Catholic Church as a global institution. This trend considers the significance of transnational circulation and exchange and its relation to the ‘local.’ The global-local relationship unveils the relevance of transnational networks in putting into motion international work trends while also considering local settings. Sometimes such networks had strong linkages to the regional hierarchies and the papacy, and yet enjoyed significant autonomy. Two edited volumes have been published recently that advance this trend of scholarship. On the one hand, there is *Local Church, Global Church: Catholic Activism in Latin America from Rerum Novarum to Vatican II*, edited in 2016 by Stephen J.C. Andes and Julia G. Young. This volume showcases the new research directions, and, significantly, it addresses the need to go farther back in time than 1965 to understand Catholic activism in Latin America in all its complexity. This view allows the editors to reaffirm the notable transnational dynamics describing Catholic activism in modern Latin America while also revealing its connections over time. Thus, recognizing that “the

---

Thomas Orique, David; Fitzpatrick-Behrens, Susan; and Virginia Garrard. Ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American Christianity*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015.

<sup>23</sup> Weis, Robert, ed. *For Christ and Country: Militant Catholic Youth in Post-revolutionary Mexico*. Vol. 115. Cambridge University Press, 2019.

changes that seemed to have originated with the Second Vatican Council...were actually well underway by the late nineteenth century.”<sup>24</sup>

On the other hand, Christian Büschges, Andrea Müller, and Noah Oehri recently edited the volume *Liberation Theology and the Others: Contextualizing Catholic Activism in 20th Century Latin America*, 2021. This work also emphasizes the transnational character of Catholic activism while bringing its intersections to the fore. Notably, it pays attention to the social negotiation and implementation of new pastoral discourses and practices at the local level. Thus, it explores the intersections between Liberation Theology and the various social and cultural reception contexts. Significantly, it seeks to tackle the crossing paths of this reception, which is deemed a plural process, with discourses of development, social concerns, and practices that connect class, ethnicity, gender, and citizenship.<sup>25</sup>

This dissertation advances the available knowledge of Catholic activism in modern and contemporary Latin America by examining Catholic students’ mobilization, its continuities over time, and intersections in a transnational setting. This study traces how organizational processes, transnational networking, and political and religious concerns, which mobilized Latin American Catholic student activists during the first half of the twentieth century, persisted and evolved. It also addresses the forms in which

---

<sup>24</sup> Andes, Stephen JC, and Julia G. Young, eds. *Local church, global church*. CUA Press, 2016.

<sup>25</sup> Büschges, Christian, Andrea Müller, and Noah Oehri. Ed. *Liberation Theology and the Others: Contextualizing Catholic Activism in 20th Century Latin America*. Maryland: Lexington Books, 2021.

many of these continuities cemented Catholic student activism's collective identity and agency during the *sixties*. Furthermore, this study delves into critical intersections with other organizational social processes; also, it addresses the dynamics of circulation and exchange of theological and philosophical reflection, and theoretical and ideological frameworks that shaped students' apostolic action. Sharply, it brings attention to the uses and interpretations of progressive Catholic thought and theology and apostolic approach and method in the context of the Latin American student struggles and politicized action of student organizations or *gremios*. In so doing, it uncovers Catholic militants' development of a 'committed' spirituality amidst their growing concern for achieving a more significant (transformative) *temporal* engagement in their social context or *milieu*.

## **2. Religion in the history of the sixties' Social Movements and the Latin American Cold War.**

In a recent study, historian of modern Europe Gerd-Rainer Horn noted that religion has been mostly absent from historical accounts of the *sixties*' social movements, with a few remarkable exceptions. The neglect, Horn argues, obeys a misconception within the historical profession that treats social movements as "exclusively secular affairs."<sup>26</sup> The explanation is correct, and the claim is true also for Latin America. Despite increasing literature inspired by Michael Löwy's pioneering work on Latin America's Liberationist Christianity—referring to the "vast social movement" that

---

<sup>26</sup> Horn, Gerd-Rainer. *The spirit of Vatican II: Western European progressive Catholicism in the long sixties*. Oxford university Press, USA, 2015.

emerged early in the 1960s and evolved into what is known as Liberation Theology, this scholarship has not significantly dialogued with the literature on the Global Sixties and the Cold War. Besides Horn's explanation for this omission in European and U.S. scholarship, Argentinean historians Omar Acha and Esteban Campos seem to provide a good explanation for this omission in the literature stemming from Latin America. They claim the existence of a *memoriography*, the prevalence of the testimonial memory of a militant generation that has been "conditioning" the historiographical agenda in the field.<sup>27</sup> *Vanguards of Liberation* intends to contribute to bridging the gap in this conversation. Let us then briefly revisit how the *Sixties* Studies and Cold War Studies fields have shaped one another and the main questions under debate.

A significant array of literature has addressed the unfolding of what has been called 'the Global Sixties,' a period that, borrowing historian Erik Zolov's words, might be understood as "a period of rupture in the world's sociopolitical and cultural fabric." Also, a period that "left an especially profound mark on our (global) consciousness and during the intervening decades has continued to shape the nature of our political discourse and policy debates."<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup>Campos, Esteban. "La revista "Cristianismo y Revolución" y el problema de la memoria en la historia de la historia reciente argentina." *Revista de la Red Intercatedras de Historia de América Latina Contemporánea: Segunda Época* 1 (2014): 86-100; Acha, Omar. "Encrucijadas y obstinaciones en la distinción de historia y memoria: en torno a las prácticas memoriográficas en la Argentina." *Jornadas Internacionales: Historia, memoria y patrimonio*, 2010.

<sup>28</sup> Zolov, Eric. "Introduction: Latin America in the Global Sixties." *The Americas* 70, no. 3 (2014): 349-362.

By the late 1990s, the field of ‘1960s Studies’ underwent a significant shift. The shift consisted of both a reconceptualization of the period and the move toward a more transnational approach. As commented by Zolov, the reshaping of the historiography in the field resulted from intense and constructive dialogue between both ‘1960s Studies’ and ‘Cold War Studies’ historiography. The Cold War field moved towards stressing out the global character of the conflict’s unfolding while also integrating social, economic, and intellectual analysis into the more traditional approaches of diplomatic history and geopolitical perspectives. Notably, this trend also advanced in considering the Third World expressions within the conflict, among which revolutionary movements took shape as a reaction against imperialism.<sup>29</sup> For its part, ‘1960s Studies’ also embraced the global conceiving of the socio-cultural phenomenon that constituted the core of its concerns; namely, the social movements and countercultural expressions of the decade, among which understanding “the origins, composition, and trajectory of the New Left,” was pivotal.<sup>30</sup> Two significant developments within the field advanced this trend of scholarship at the turn of the century, corresponding to this global approach. One that Arthur Marwick first brought up pointed out the limitations resulting from approaching the period within the artificial boundaries of a decade; thus, the consequent need to think

---

<sup>29</sup> See, for instance, Karabell, Zachary. *Architects of intervention: The United States, the third world, and the Cold War, 1946-1962*. LSU Press, 1999; Westad, Odd Arne. *The global Cold War: Third World interventions and the making of our times*. Cambridge University Press, 2005; Harmer, Tanya. *Allende’s Chile and the Inter-American cold war*. Univ of North Carolina Press, 2011; Brands, Hal. *Latin America’s cold war*. Harvard University Press, 2012. McMahon, Robert J., ed. *The cold war in the third world*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

<sup>30</sup> Zolov, "Introduction." 2014

of these specific socio-cultural and political phenomena through the “long 1960s.”<sup>31</sup> Van Gosse led another development. Building on the transnational perspective, he brought up the interconnections between different social movements in the post-war years, therefore, proposing an understanding of the New Left as a “movement of movements” whose boundaries sometimes went beyond the nation as a frame of reference. In his words, it consists of a “collection of movements, ... episodically united, that made up the New Left.” Van Gosse also went further in his critique of the periodization of the field. For him, “the sixties” as a category lacked specificity because the decade “cannot carry the freight” of the mobilization that led the social change in the post-World War II era. Gosse notes that “the sixties” must be assumed instead as a phase in the history of the Cold War delimited by the dynamics of such a collection of movements that made up the New Left. This is, by Van Gosse’s observation, a field of study that stretches back to the years after World War II and forwards into the 1970s.<sup>32</sup> Overall, the field has evolved from these transformations into a more nuanced understanding of the period under the contemporary reference to the ‘Global sixties.’

Despite strong consensus in the field about the plurality in trajectories, origins, and composition featuring New Left experiments during the Global Sixties, Aldo Marchesi warns about a concomitant tension within the literature still drawing attention.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> Marwick, Arthur. *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, c. 1958-c. 1974*. Oxford University Press, 1998.

<sup>32</sup> Gosse, Van. *Rethinking the new left: An interpretative history*. Springer, 2016.

<sup>33</sup> Marchesi, Aldo. *Latin America's Radical Left: Rebellion and Cold War in the Global 1960s*. Vol. 107. Cambridge University Press, 2017.



As Jeffrey Gould also explains, conflicting views exist about the extent to which the *sixties*' protests around the world carried specific political content or were a "language of dissent" with a rather superficial political commitment.<sup>34</sup> Studies such as those by Suri, Berman, and Colburn, paid attention to the 'global disruption of 1968' while addressing this apparent superficiality in the global counterculture.<sup>35</sup> On the other pole of the controversy, however, Wallerstein, Arrighi & Hopkins argued that the 1968 global protests marked the starting point of a revolutionary cycle challenging U.S. global hegemony while also reacting to the ways and political views of an 'Old Left' incapable of dealing with it.<sup>36</sup> As Gould argues, one result of seeing the global 1968 as a superficial rebelliousness is that, in the case of Latin America, it minimizes "the importance of the preceding years of student and labor protest and mobilizations and the challenges to class divisions posed by the 1968 protests...."<sup>37</sup>

The encounter in the literature from the northern hemisphere and Latin America has been a groundbreaking milestone for both fields, Cold War and the Global Sixties, as noted by Zolov. Revisionism on the *Sixties*' literature during the first years of the

---

<sup>34</sup> Gould, Jeffrey L. "Solidarity under siege: the Latin American left, 1968." *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 2 (2009): 348-375.

<sup>35</sup> Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente*, Cambridge, Mass., 2003; Berman, Paul. *A Tale of Two Utopias: The Political Journey of the Generation of 1968*. 1st ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1996; Colburn, Forrest D. *The Vogue of Revolution in Poor Countries*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1994.

<sup>36</sup> Arrighi, Giovanni, Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein, and Terence K. Hopkins. *Antisystemic Movements*. London; Verso, 1989.

<sup>37</sup> Gould, "Solidarity under siege," 2009.

twentieth-first century and a deliberate effort to relocate Cold War Studies from a Latin American perspective contributed to further transforming the field. First, convergence with region-led projects on memory recovery of victims of military strategies under the National Security Doctrine and state terrorism during the dirty wars sparked the attention of scholars. Special attention has been given to the impact of state-sponsored violence on both macro and micro levels of society and the strength of discourses and mobilization, some of which fueled the anti-communist purge.<sup>38</sup> Second is the claim of the Latin American agency in the making of the conflict. An array of recent works has followed the publication of two edited volumes. One, *In from the Cold*, by Gilbert Joseph and Daniela Spenser, released in 2008,<sup>39</sup> Another is the volume *A Century of Revolution*, edited by Gilbert Joseph and Greg Grandin, and published in 2010. Drawing on previous considerations of long-term developments and unsolved conflict and violence in the region, these works pointed to the relevance of understanding Latin America's Cold War as "an intensified phase of a larger conflict."<sup>40</sup> Among this literature, Gilbert Joseph's claim is significant in that the Cold War in Latin America "cannot be reduced in its

---

<sup>38</sup> There are, for instance, the works by Stern, Steve J. *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: on the Eve of London, 1998*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004; Stern, Steve J., Walter D. Mignolo, Sonia Saldívar-Hull, and Irene Silverblatt. Ed. *Battling for Hearts and Minds Memory Struggles in Pinochet's Chile, 1973-1988*, Duke University Press, 2006; Stern, Steve J. *Reckoning with Pinochet the Memory Question in Democratic Chile, 1989-2006*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010; Markarian, Vania. *Left in Transformation: Uruguayan Exiles and the Latin American Human Rights Networks, 1967-1984*. New York: Routledge, 2005; Green, James Naylor. *We Cannot Remain Silent Opposition to the Brazilian Military Dictatorship in the United States*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.

<sup>39</sup> Spenser, Daniela., G. M. Joseph, and G. M. (Gilbert Michael) Joseph. *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

<sup>40</sup> Grandin, Greg, G. M. Joseph, and G. M. (Gilbert Michael) Joseph. *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence During Latin America's Long Cold War*. Durham [N.C: Duke University Press, 2010. p.17

origins or development to notions of geopolitics and strategy.” A reassessment from within is thus necessary, especially from the grassroots, that “enable us to better integrate the conflict’s domestic and foreign dimensions” and look at intersections between culture and power, matters in which social and cultural histories have much to say.<sup>41</sup> There is relevant literature steaming from this trend.<sup>42</sup>

The encounter with Latin American historiography and revisionism stemming from memory recovery and the claim of Latin American agency has also been provocative within the ‘Global Sixties’ field. The work by Erik Zolov and others has been an important mobilizer of the subfield that looks at locating Latin America in the context of the Global Sixties. Building on Van Gosse’s understanding of the ‘collection of movements’ that constituted the New Left, Zolov has advocated pushing this expanded conceptualization further to include countercultural practices outside the revolutionary-counterrevolutionary dichotomy. This approach intends to encompass violent and non-violent practices confronting political and social norms. This includes “counterculture practices, new aesthetic sensibilities, trends in film, literature, theater, music, the arts, as well as the impact of Liberation theology.” According to Zolov, the task is to understand

---

<sup>41</sup> Joseph, Gilbert M. “What we now know and should know: bringing Latin America more meaningfully into Cold War studies.” In *In from the Cold*, 2008, pp. 18-19.

<sup>42</sup> See the recent edited volume by Field, Thomas C., Stella Krepp, and Vanni Pettina. *Latin America and the Global Cold War*. Ed. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020. See also Cowan, Benjamin A. *Securing sex: morality and repression in the making of cold war Brazil*. UNC Press Books, 2016; Karl, Robert A. *Forgotten Peace: Reform, Violence, and the Making of Contemporary Colombia*. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017; Pavilack, Jody. *Mining for the Nation: The Politics of Chile’s Coal Communities from the Popular Front to the Cold War*. University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011; Blacker, O’Neill. “Cold war in the countryside: conflict in Guerrero, Mexico.” *The Americas* 66, no. 2 (2009): 181-210.

both armed and countercultural practices as “twin facets of diverse and intersecting movements” that defied the status quo.<sup>43</sup> In this trend, a stronger focus on culture and a “repoliticization” of it have looked at reconstructing the binding relation between culture and politics. By doing so, a number of works are pushing a leading contemporary trend in the field.<sup>44</sup>

Interestingly, then, a common call has come from two trends of scholarship, Modern Catholic Activism and Global Sixties Studies, to bring religion into the analyses of the 1960s’ social movements. The works by Latin Americanists Pensado and Chavez are among the contemporary leading voices in this effort.<sup>45</sup> This dissertation intends to join this endeavor. It does so by tracing the religious motivations behind a generation of Latin American students that mobilized themselves for social change. It uncovers the pastoral and political content of these students’ activism and their imaginings of social change and revolution amid the region’s Cold War. This study draws on the organizational complexities and identity evolution of a Latin American network of progressive Catholic student movements (MIEC and JECI), and uncovers its leverage at

---

<sup>43</sup> Zolov, Eric. "Expanding our conceptual horizons: the shift from an old to a new left in Latin America." *A Contracorriente: una revista de estudios latinoamericanos* 5, no. 2 (2008): 47-73.

<sup>44</sup> See, among others, works such as those by Langland, Victoria. *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Military Brazil*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013; Markarian, Vania, *Uruguay, 1968: Student Activism from Global Counterculture to Molotov Cocktails*. Trans. Laura Pérez Carrara. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2016; Pensado, Jaime M. *Rebel Mexico: Student unrest and authoritarian political culture during the long sixties*. Stanford University Press, 2013.; Chávez, Joaquín M. *Poets and Prophets of the Resistance: Intellectuals and the Origins of El Salvador's Civil War*. Oxford University Press, 2017; Marchesi, *Latin America's Radical Left, 2017*.

<sup>45</sup> See Chávez, Joaquín M. "Catholic Action, the Second Vatican Council, and the Emergence of the New Left in El Salvador (1950–1975)." *The Americas* 70, no. 3 (2014): 459-487; Pensado, Jaime M. "El Movimiento Estudiantil Profesional (MEP) una mirada a la radicalización de la juventud católica mexicana durante la Guerra Fría." *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 31, no. 1 (2015): 156-192.

the regional and international levels. It reveals their influence was felt both inside and outside the church. At the level of international coordination of these networks, the apostolic role of Latin American students was considered a cutting-edge archetype for the apostolate, exemplary worldwide. Outside the church and among the global student mobilization of 1968, these students claimed to be an international vanguard of social change and a reference for international student mobilization. By following the transnational unfolding of this network, *Vanguards of Liberation* shows that Liberationist Christianity in Latin America was significant beyond Brazil and Central America—regions that the scholarship has prolifically studied. Significantly, this study claims student activism within this Liberationist Christianity had a transnational, Latin American presence. While not massive, it greatly impacted the university, and from there, it made broad contributions to different levels of society and the region’s political culture.

Lastly, from this bridging perspective between religion and *Sixties* social movements, this monograph also wants to contribute to an important field of Latin American scholarship, currently being reinvigorated by a new generation of leading scholars.<sup>46</sup> This is a subfield of Latin American social and political history tracing the unfolding of student movements in modern Latin America. This dissertation’s input involves tracing some of the alleged continuities in national movements’ social and

---

<sup>46</sup> See, for instance, the edited volumes by Ordorika, Rodriguez-Gomez and Gil Anton (Coord) *Cien años de movimientos estudiantiles*, UNAM, Mexico, 2019; and Bonavena, Pablo and Millan, Mariano (Comp). *Los' 68 latinoamericanos: movimientos estudiantiles, política y cultura en México, Brasil, Uruguay, Chile, Argentina y Colombia*. Clacso, 2018.

political identities and within some of the period's cohesive structures—in this case, Catholic factions. This monograph points to the relevance of Catholic activists within student *gremios*, university counterculture, and, more importantly—regarding the movement's identity, the updating, and leadership of the university reform struggle in the region. Moreover, this study sheds light on paralleling activist networks—Catholics, that interacted with the Latin American Student Movement's network historical unfolding. Drawing on Catholic records, it provides elements to elaborate on the Latin American Student Movement's student and political agendas, structures, and action strategies. Furthermore, it also outlines a few aspects of its identity, choices taken amidst the radicalization of 1968, and subsequent crises that marked its decline after that year.

### **3. An intellectual history of Latin American Liberationist Christianity**

Among the large body of scholarship on Liberation Theology, intellectual approaches have been a dominant trend. This body of scholarship consists of multidisciplinary literature addressing, from the vantage point of the theological, sociological and philosophical history of ideas, the socio-historical conditions of origin and reception of Liberation Theology, first in Latin America and later in other parts of the world. As noted recently by historian Christian Büschges, research has emphasized theological and ecclesiastical debates while giving less attention to the heterogeneous trajectories of Liberationist Christianity—to use Löwy's category, referring to the heterogenous intertwining of Liberation theology and social movements that sustained

and galvanized the theological shift.<sup>47</sup> Let us then refer to some outstanding trends of this scholarly production on the intellectual history of Liberation Theology and situate our specific contribution.

Theology, philosophy, and sociology of religion have had an early and essential share in this literature since the 1970s. This is when, as mentioned, simultaneously with the emergence of Liberation Theology, an increased scholarly curiosity to understand the relations between religion and social change in Latin America was unleashed, and a *memoriography* began to be written, many times by those in exile. Beginning with foundational works, first-generation liberation theologians directly involved in crafting the theological and pastoral innovations in Latin America provided ample discussions about the intellectual crossroads on which the Theology of Liberation arose. Such are the very well-known works by Gustavo Gutierrez (1971), Leonardo Boff (1972,1987), and Hugo Assman (1973), among so many others.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, works by Latin American

---

<sup>47</sup> Büschges, C. "50 años de la Teología de la Liberación. Introducción." *Iberoamericana*, 18 (68). (50): 7-11.

<sup>48</sup> The few works referred here are Gutiérrez, Gustavo, *Teología de la liberación, Perspectivas*. Lima: CEP, 1971. The first English translation appeared as Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*, trans. Caridad Inda and John Eagleson. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books (1973). Boff, Leonardo, *Jesus Cristo Libertador: Ensaio de cristologia critica para o nosso tempo*, (Petropolis: Editora Vozes, 1972). The Spanish translation was titled *Jesucristo el Libertador* (Buenos Aires: 1974). A further English translation was available as *Jesus Christ Liberator: A Critical Christology of Our Time* (trans. R.R. Barr; Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1978; London: SPCK, 1980). Also, Boff, Leonardo, *Introducing liberation theology*. Orbis Books, 1987. Assmann, Hugo *Teología desde la praxis de la liberación* (Salamanca: Sígueme, 1973) English translation available as *Practical Theology of Liberation* (trans. P. Burns; London: Search Press, 1975, later retitled in the U.S. as *Theology for a Nomad Church* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1976). Gutierrez's and Assman's works had earlier versions of their elaborations published by the MIEC-JECI movement that is the object of this research through its Center of Documentation.

Since Theology of Liberation is virtually one of the best-documented subjects in scholarly literature, these citations are only referential. For a more thorough bibliography of early elaborations on Liberation Theology, see "Liberation" in Dahlin, Therrin C., Gary P. Gillum, and Mark L. Grover. *The Catholic Left in Latin America: a comprehensive bibliography*. 1981, pp.91-102. Thanks to work by Tombs, David.

scholars involved in the intellectual mobilization that sparked among the laity in the region are a significant milestone. Enrique Dussel's fundamental works since the late 1960s are a case in point. Dussel's early work *Hipotesis para una Historia de la Iglesia en America Latina* (1967) was critical for further systematization of the hypothesis born among mobilized social sectors of the exhaustion of a 'Christendom model' of the church and, instead, the rise of a 'popular church' or a 'church of the poor' as a result of the new theology.<sup>49</sup> Other works by Latin American scholars, ordained and among the laity involved in this intellectual mobilization, are also paramount. Many of these works were funded, hosted, and disseminated by CEHILA; an interdisciplinary commission for the study of the church's history in Latin America and the Caribbean, also a sequel of this mobilization in the mid-1970s, which Dussel himself presided for more than a decade. For instance, this was the case of Pablo Richard's edition of *Materiales para una Historia de la Teologia en America Latina*.<sup>50</sup> This is a collection of works deepening such hypothesis and showing the inflections of Latin American theology from a colonial to a liberation paradigm. Also, there are Dussel's *De Medellin a Puebla: una decada de sangre y esperanza, 1968-79*, and Richard's *Raíces de la teología latinoamericana:*

---

*Latin American liberation theology*. Brill, 2002, whose thorough bibliography serves to guide new generations of scholars.

<sup>49</sup> Dussel, Enrique. *Hipótesis para una historia de la Iglesia en América Latina*. Barcelona: Edit. Estela-IEPAL, 1967.

<sup>50</sup> Richard, Pablo. *Materiales para una historia de la teología en América Latina: VIII Encuentro Latinoamericano de CEHILA, Lima 1980*. DEI-Departamento Ecumenico de Investigaciones and CEHILA-Comision de Estudios de Historia de la Iglesia en América Latina (1981).



*nuevos materiales para la historia de la teología.*<sup>51</sup> Developments by some of these participating actors continued to bear fruits over time.<sup>52</sup>

The theological liberationist shift in Latin America has also been extensively documented by scholarly observers and later generations of Catholic militants over the past five decades, and renewed interest has arisen apropos the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of its formulation. Scholars have traced its intellectual roots and unfolding<sup>53</sup>—including extensively the dialogues between Marxists and Christians.<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> Dussel, E., *De Medellín a Puebla: una década de sangre y esperanza, 1968-79*. Mexico City: Edico, 1979, and Richard, Pablo (ed). *Raíces de la teología latinoamericana: nuevos materiales para la historia de la teología*, DEI, CEHILA, 1985.

<sup>52</sup> See, for instance, Boff, Clodovis, Hugo Assmann, Carlos Mesters, Frei Betto, Gustavo Gutiérrez, Enrique Dussel, Jon Sobrino, and Jorge Pixley. "Cristianismo de la liberación y marxismo en Brasil de 1960 a nuestros días." *Revista Casa de las Américas*, 301 (2020): 3-20; Dussel, Enrique, and John Drury. *History and the theology of liberation: a Latin American perspective*, Orbis Books, 1976; Dussel, *Teología de la liberación: un panorama de su desarrollo*. Potrerrillo, 1995; Dussel, *Beyond philosophy: Ethics, history, Marxism, and liberation theology*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003; Berryman, Phillip. *Teología de la liberación: los hechos esenciales en torno al movimiento revolucionario en América Latina y otros lugares*. Siglo XXI, 1989, Sobrino, Jon. *Christology at the Crossroads*, trans. John Drury (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1978; Sobrino, *The true church and the poor*, Trans. Mathew J O'Connell, Orbis Books, 1984; Sobrino, "La teología y el "principio liberación," *Revista latinoamericana de teología* 12, no. 35 (1995): 115-140; Marc H. Ellis and Otto Maduro (ed) *The Future of Liberation Theology: Essays in Honor of Gustavo Gutierrez*. Edited by, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989.

<sup>53</sup> Schall, James V. *Liberation theology in Latin America: with selected essays and documents*. Ignatius Press, 1982; Schall, J. V. "On "Liberating" Theology from Christianity: Religious Values and Political Philosophy." *Counseling and Values* 31, no. 1 (1986): 40-50; Carroll, D. *What is liberation theology?* Gracewing Publishing, 1987; Hewitt, W. E. "Liberation Theology in Latin America and Beyond." In Swatos Jr., William (ed) *A Future for Religion? New Paradigms for Social Analysis*, Sage Focus Editions 151 (1993); Bidegain, Ana María. *From Catholic Action to Liberation Theology: The historical process of the laity in Latin America in the twentieth century*. No. 48. Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame, 1985; Lowy, Michael. *The war of gods: religion and politics in Latin America*. Verso, 1996; Petrella, Ivan. "The intellectual roots of liberation theology." *The Cambridge history of religions in Latin America* (2016): 359-371.

<sup>54</sup> Bonino, José M. *Christians and Marxists: the mutual challenge to revolution*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1976; Löwy, Michael, John Barzman, and Betto (Frei). *Marxism and liberation theology*. Amsterdam: International Institute for Research and Education, 1988; Klaiber, Jeffrey L. "Prophets and populists: Liberation theology, 1968-1988." *The Americas* 46, no. 1 (1989): 1-15; Löwy, Michael. "Marxism and Christianity in Latin America." *Latin American Perspectives* 20, no. 4 (1993): 28-42; Dussel, Enrique. "Teología de la liberación y marxismo." Ellacuría and Sobrino (ed) *Mysterium liberationis: conceptos*

Literature has also addressed its ecumenical dialogues<sup>55</sup> and, further on, its intersections with progressive political and intellectual movements that fed the rise of feminists, black, and third world theologies.<sup>56</sup> An ambitious work on the intellectual history of Liberation Theology has been produced recently by historian Lilian Calles-Barger. While some literature takes 1968—the year of the Second Conference of the Latin American Episcopate, and 1971—the year of publication of *Teología de la Liberación* by Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, as starting points of the Latin American theological shift, Calles-Barger's work goes farther in time and scope. Her work traces first-generation liberation theologians' intellectual sources back to the onset of the twentieth century. Furthermore, this work attempts to examine contexts of intellectual production and trace global links of ideas circulation and exchange. In doing so, Calles-Barger makes an ambitious account that connects global Catholicism renewal and civil rights, feminism, and decolonization

---

*fundamentales de la teología de la liberación* (1990): 115-144; Dussel, *El último Marx (1963-1882) y la Liberación Latinoamericana*, Ediciones Siglo XXI Mexico, 1990.

<sup>55</sup> Santa Ana, Julio de. *Towards a Church of the Poor: The Work of an Ecumenical Group on the Church and the Poor. Comm. on the Churches' Participation in Development*, World Council of Churches, 1979; Bonino, José M. *Faces of Latin American Protestantism: 1993 Carnahan Lectures*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1997; Cook, Guillermo. *The expectation of the poor: Latin American basic ecclesial communities in protestant perspective*. Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2021; Bahmann, Manfred K. *A preference for the poor: Latin American liberation theology from a Protestant perspective*. University Press of America, 2005.

<sup>56</sup> Fiorenza, Elisabeth Schüssler. "Feminist theology as a critical theology of liberation." *Theological studies* 36, no. 4 (1975): 605-626; Maluleke, Tinyiko Sam. "Black and African theologies in the new world order." *A time* (1996); Ferm, Deane W. *Third World liberation theologies: An introductory survey*. Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004; Gonzalez, Michelle A. "Latina Feminist Theology: The Past, Present, and Future." *Journal of feminist studies in religion* 25, no. 1 (2009): 150-155; Bidegain, Ana María. *Participación y protagonismo de las mujeres en la historia del catolicismo latinoamericano*. San Benito, 2009; Bidegain, Ana María. "El cristianismo y el cambio socio político de las mujeres latinoamericanas." *Sociedad y Religión* 24, no. 42 (2014): 25-39.

movements to Latin American progressive movements, intellectual trends, and theological inflections.<sup>57</sup>

A relevant trend within the literature examining the intellectual and social origins of Liberation Theology is being developed by historiography on modern and contemporary Catholicism. This trend has examined the European roots of Liberation Theology going back to the transformations in the Church, theology, and Catholic thought, especially during the interwar period. It has further discussed the role of progressive Catholicism in the preparation and unfolding of the Second Vatican Council as a point of departure for Liberation Theologians. Among this latter trend, historian Gerd-Rainer Horn's transnational work stands out. Horn sheds light on the intellectual trajectories of some of the more relevant philosophers and theologians informing European Catholic progressivism and, further on, their legacy to Latin American Liberation Theology. Also, while uncovering Catholic Action as a mass movement by the early twentieth century, Horn achieves to portray European apostolic movements' early contributions to the more relevant pastoral and theological inflections of the time.<sup>58</sup>

---

<sup>57</sup>Barger, Lilian Calles. *The world come of age: an intellectual history of liberation theology*. Oxford University Press, 2018.

<sup>58</sup> Horn, Gerd-Rainer. *Western European liberation theology: the first wave (1924-1959)*. OUP Oxford, 2008. Some other works in this trend for Latin America are: Del Villar Tagle, María Soledad. "The European Roots of a Theology of Liberation: Gustavo Gutiérrez and the Nouvelle Théologie." *International Journal of Latin American Religions* (2022): 1-16; and Vila, Alice Christie Kibort. "Faith in the balance: Foundations of liberation theology in Latin American and European thought." Diss. University of Miami, 2002.

Finally, another set of studies has contributed to documenting national cases. There is a set of numerous historiographies for Latin America with a national scope; some often focus on pastoral debates, ecclesiastical actors, currents, and countercurrents, while others broaden to include the experience of lay activism and grassroots work among Christian Base Communities.<sup>59</sup> Within the effort to account for these more localized experiences, however, a more discrete, although growing body of literature explores the heterogeneous experiences of Liberationist Christianity in Latin America. These works have examined the reception of theological inflections made possible by Vatican II, the production of new religious and political meanings amid theological renewal, and the spaces and forms of their socialization, some including gendered analyses.<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> For Colombia: Bidegain, Ana María. "Bases históricas de la teología de la liberación y atipicidad de la iglesia colombiana." *Texto y contexto* 5 (1985): 35-68; Pérez-Echeverry, Antonio José. "Teología de la Liberación en Colombia. Algunas perspectivas." *Reflexión Política* 9, no. 17 (2007): 48-57; Pérez-Echeverry, A. J. *Teología de la liberación en Colombia: un problema de continuidades en la tradición evangélica de opción por los pobres*. Universidad del Valle, 2007; Pérez-Prieto, Victorino. "Los orígenes de la Teología de la liberación en Colombia: Richard Shaull, camilo torres, Rafael Ávila," *Golconda*, sacerdotes para américa latina, cristianos por el socialismo y comunidades eclesiales de base." *Cuestiones Teológicas* 43, no. 99 (2016): 73-108. For Mexico: Mendoza-Ályarez, Carlos. "La teología de la liberación en México: recepción creativa del Concilio Vaticano II." *Theologica Xaveriana* 64, no. 177 (2014): 157-179, Ruiz, Luis J. García. "La teología de la liberación en México (1968-1993): Una revisión histórica." *Clivajes. Revista de Ciencias Sociales* 4 (2015): 68-68, Del Valle, L., "Teología de la Liberación en México," in Blancarte (ed), *El pensamiento social de los católicos mexicanos*, Fondo de Cultura Económica: 230-265. For Chile: Fernández, David Fernández. "La Teología de la Liberación en Chile." *Trocadero. Revista del Departamento de Historia Moderna, Contemporánea, de América y del Arte* 6-7 (1995): 249-266, Swope, John Wolfgang. "The production, recontextualization and popular transmission of religious discourse: the case of liberation theology and basic Christian communities in Santiago, Chile." PhD diss., Institute of Education, University of London, 1992. Peña, Milagros. *The Role of Ideas in Social Movements*, Temple University Press, 1995.

<sup>60</sup> Some of these works include Ríos, Manuel. "Herejes en el Siglo XX: Cristianismo liberacionista en Nicaragua." In *XII Jornadas Interescuelas/Departamentos de Historia*. Departamento de Historia, Facultad de Humanidades y Centro Regional Universitario Bariloche. Universidad Nacional del Comahue, 2009; Lucas, Chiadini. "Cristianos por el Socialismo: los cristianos liberacionistas durante el gobierno de la Unidad Popular." In *XIV Jornadas Interescuelas/Departamentos de Historia*. Departamento de Historia de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras. Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, 2013; Dominella, Virginia Lorena. "Catolicismo liberacionista y militancias contestatarias en Bahía Blanca: sociabilidades y trayectorias en las ramas especializadas de Acción Católica durante la efervescencia social y política de los años 60 y 70."

*Vanguards of Liberation* engages these conversations from the perspective that emphasizes the socio-cultural role in the theological renewal played by the Liberationist Christianity—that Löwy speaks of; this is a renewal that, with all its plural and many times competing trends, is referred to under the label of Liberation Theology. This study does so by tracing a student mobilization within the “vast social movement” responsible for the rise of a ‘popular church’ in Latin America. Furthermore, taking into account the subaltern place of the laity within the predominant ‘Christendom Church model,’ this study thinks of itself as written in a ‘from below’ (students’ perspective) and ‘from within’ (movement’s) perspective. Therefore, this monograph sharpens its contribution by conceiving that subalterns were active producers of meaning and engaged in conflicts over hegemony.<sup>61</sup> Thus, it considers Catholic students’ intellectual elaborations and

---

PhD diss., Universidad Nacional de La Plata, 2015; Rodríguez, Enriqueta Lerma. ""¡ Alto hermano, la tierra es de Dios!" Praxis: transformaciones del cristianismo liberacionista en Chicomuselo, Chiapas/" Stop, Brother, the Land Belongs to God!" Praxis: Transformations of Liberationist Christianity in Chicomuselo, Chiapas." *Iberoamericana* (2001-) (2018): 77-96; Rodríguez, Enriqueta Lerma, and Adriela Pérez Pérez. "Dios Papá/Dios Mamá: cristianismo liberacionista en el área de mujeres de Frontera Comalapa." *Sociedade e Cultura* 23 (2020); Dominella, Virginia, and Aldo Ameigeiras. "La renovación eclesial y el catolicismo liberacionista en espacios locales y regionales durante las décadas de 1960-1980." *Cuadernos del Sur Historia* 48 (2019): 7-22; Mourelle, Lorena García. "Catholic Student Activism in Uruguay, 1966–1973." *Liberation Theology and the Others: Contextualizing Catholic Activism in 20th Century Latin America* (2021): 247.

<sup>61</sup> This historiographical approach is illuminated by Florencia Mallon’s reflections on politics and hegemony. Of particular significance is her call “to understand the role of subaltern people in history,” for which “we must decenter our vision of the historical process.” Mallon contests the historiographical tendency to separate the history from below (mainly approached from social history approaches because it is assumed the agency of popular classes resides in the social struggle) from political and intellectual history (whose making is commonly associated with dominant classes). Alternatively, Mallon proposes recognizing that subaltern classes have the same ideological and social “complexity and contentiousness” that is conceded to dominant classes. Therefore, Mallon invites a reinterpretation of political and intellectual histories, one that makes room for a political and intellectual history from below, thus, understanding the complex interaction between social forces, economic interests, and intellectual positionings in all strata of society. Mallon, Florencia E. *Peasant, and nation: the making of postcolonial Mexico and Peru*. Univ of California Press, 1995. Some of Mallon’s historiographical reflections are well pondered and contrasted by Rainer Huhle in his review on Mallon. Huhle, Rainer. “Review of Peasant and

concludes they were pivotal in the trajectories and outcomes of this renewal. Far from considering students as passive subjects in their relationship with the institutional Church and mere reproducers of finished elaborations, this story highlights their agency. While showing how these students grew intellectually and increased their political leverage upon existing structures of student *gremialismo*, the study traces students' interpretations, uses, and elaborations on both progressive Catholicism and available social theory. It uncovers the creative responses students offered to the movement's intense identity crises, which had arisen because of their temporal commitment. It shows that students questioned the institutional church and demanded from it deep transformations of both its social role and political place in society while also pushing for a change in society itself. Moreover, this study uncovers the creative ways in which, looking to expand the social significance of their apostolate, students themselves took available pastoral resources to the limit. They broke the mold of the 'distinction of planes scheme'<sup>62</sup> in their apostolic praxis and made the living of a *committed* spirituality applicable to all realms of their quotidian life.

---

Nation. The Making of Postcolonial Mexico and Peru, by F. Mallon," *Notas: Reseñas Iberoamericanas. Literatura, Sociedad, Historia* 6, no. 1 (16) (1999): 177–78. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43116881>.

<sup>62</sup> The 'distinction of planes' was an important scheme in Jacques Maritain's Integral Humanism that distinguished three planes of Christians' activity between the spiritual and temporal realms. The scheme served significantly to orient the ways and delimit the social and political reach of the Catholic laity's apostolate under the Catholic Action Vatican's initiative.

### C. Approach, Objects of Inquiry at Stake, and Methodological Decisions

*Vanguards of Liberation* contributes to a political and intellectual history from below of the Latin American student lay apostolate.<sup>63</sup> This is so, even if it entails a paradox. Students in Latin America were acknowledged since the first years of the 20th century as a vanguard of social and cultural change that gradually augmented their cultural and political leverage. Belonging to small sectors of the bourgeois middle classes, university students contested the oligarchic structure of Latin American societies. They were a source of organized social and political mobilization, advocating for greater levels of democratization. This struggle began within the universities as a struggle for university reform and soon acquired political identities. While the university's social base was amplified during populist regimes via greater access, university students continued to be a privileged minority. This minority was politically heterogeneous, and it was not rare that student sectors might side with power structures and join bureaucratic circles.

Greater access and changing social conditions demobilized the student body

---

<sup>63</sup> In this approach, as mentioned, this dissertation draws inspiration from Mallon's analysis of politics understood as "nested arenas of contestation, where hegemonic processes are at work." Mallon points to the intimate interconnection between human struggles over power and meaning in their struggle for hegemony. These are struggles that occur in the context of subjects' and groups' uneven access to power and knowledge, which through a dynamic process of conflict and alliance, tend to alter the existing balance of forces. Mallon, *Peasant, and nation*, 1995. Also see Mallon, Florencia E. "The promise and dilemma of subaltern studies: perspectives from Latin American history." *The American Historical Review* 99, no. 5 (1994): 1491-1515. Also, key in this approach are Gilbert Joseph's and Daniel Nugent's reflections on popular culture and subaltern agency, particularly on the necessity to address subalternity in "relational terms." In this regard, this dissertation understands the dynamic and tensional relations from above and below that tend to change in the struggle for hegemony. Notably is Joseph's and Nugent's "insistence" on conceiving that the experience and consciousness of subaltern subjects "may only be specified in (...) historical contexts of unequal power." In this rationale, E. P. Thompson's metaphor of the 'field of force' is of utmost usefulness for considering the processual and dynamic character of hegemony construction and, thus, its understanding as both process and outcome. Joseph, G. M., Daniel. Nugent, and G. M. (Gilbert Michael) Joseph. *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1994.

intermittently while student *gremios* retained their social relevance and political leverage. By the mid-1950s, social consequences of the ISI-model's exhaustion contributed to reactivate the student movement.<sup>64</sup> Here is the paradox. While students, because of their class origin and social and political role, would not easily be considered subaltern voices in society, within the structure of the Church, indeed they were. Although essential changes within the global Church began to recognize the mobilizing role of the laity by the late 19th century, and Catholic Action unfolded during the 1930s in Latin America, the predominantly conservative church hierarchies did little to allow the laity's full agency.

The Latin American Church's effort to limit lay agency was observable in the model of Catholic Action disseminated and the organizations and approaches to Catholic apostolate that hierarchies allowed to rise among the laity. By the onset of the 1960s, despite the remarkable role in the region of lay Catholic intellectuals of the first generation of Christian Democrats, what was termed a "Christendom model" of the Church was standing. This model founded the Church's social role and presence upon her alliance with power and oligarchic social structures. Strong clericalism reproduced the model of social domination inside the Church so that the organized laity had little say, and its role was obeying the bishops. Given the strong Marxist penetration of university student *gremios* and their substantial leverage in society, the Latin American Catholic hierarchy urged to form university apostolic movements harnessing the existing Pax

---

<sup>64</sup> 'ISI-model' refers to the Industrialization by Substitution of Imports model developed by Latin American economists at the UNECLAC and recommended as a public policy response to socio-economic diagnoses made on the region from Dependency Theory.



Romana Catholic student network. Although recognizing university student *gremios*'s mobilization capacity, the Church hierarchy thought of these university students as predominantly “naïve” and lacking serious frameworks of social interpretation. Their diagnosis pointed to Marxists’ “skillfully exploiting” these features and “students’ apathy” towards social matters. The Catholic hierarchies supported the organization of Catholic student movements and cultivated a Catholic intelligentsia that might take up the specific mission of countering Marxism and the expansion of revolutionary conditions in Latin America.<sup>65</sup>

A spoiler, *Vanguards of Liberation* shows, however, that organized Catholic students pushed forward their own stands and agendas of social change (including university reform and subverting political and social structures deemed oppressive) and even their own imaginings of revolution. Furthermore, it uncovers that students were a critical factor in transforming the Church’s ‘Christendom model’ amid the climate of theological renewal. Advocating cultural autonomy and Commitment, students pushed forward the project of building a *popular church* that might be a ‘source and not reflection.’ For this, it was needed to cut with the legacies of the Latin American Church’s colonial past.

---

<sup>65</sup> These views were expressed in an MIEC-SLA Report in 1962 to the Latin American bishops. *Informe para los Excelentísimos Señores Obispos y Asesores Universitarios de America Latina, Panama, December 22, 1962*. Box 126, Folder 1962. Archive of the *Secretariado Latinoamericano de Estudiantes Católicos-SLA* at the Centro Leonidas Proaño Repository, Quito-Ecuador, onwards SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

The paradox described above gives us the context within which it is possible and necessary to write a history from below of the lay student apostolate in Latin America. As part of such an endeavor, this study recovers the voices of students and ordained advisors who accompanied their apostolic experience. It explores the gradual evolution of MIEC-JECI Catholic students' apostolic organization, experience, and collective identity and consciousness. It traces students' uses and interpretations of Catholic thought, theology, and available social theory, which informed their apostolic role in the region. This study also approaches the dynamics of circulation and exchange of ideas, the evolution of discourses, and collective actions through which students sought to exert their power to shape society. It uncovers the intellectual and political challenges students undertook in the context of their apostolic praxis in defiance of the status quo of persisting oligarchical social structures and the 'Christendom model' of the Church in Latin America. As part of the struggles for meaning and power during the long decade, this study considers MIEC-JECI students' intellectual and political role in advancing counterhegemonic discourses, ethics, and values. It highlights students' role in subverting the region's political culture by contesting hegemony, thus, altering the 'production of consent and dissent' on existing political projects and the 'mechanics' by which Latin American polities sustained themselves.<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, it highlights how student voices imagined paths of Liberation from oppressive and unjust structures of society while also providing meaning to and expanding the revolutionary ideal in the region.

---

<sup>66</sup> Theoretical elaborations on political culture by Jacobsen and de Losada also inform this dissertation's 'political and intellectual history from below' approach. Jacobsen, Nils and Aljovín de Losada, Cristóbal, *Political Cultures in the Andes, 1750-1950*. Durham N.C: Duke University Press, 2005. p. 14

*Vanguards of Liberation* is a transnational study. It is so, not by caprice. It is so because, in the intent to capture the underlying logic and sense of being of the *object of study*—i.e., the movement, it uncovered itself as having a regional—Latin American rather than national or multi-national ethos. The epistemological effort to capture this underlying identity was also in tune with the inductive production of meaning that is distinctive of the MIEC-JECI Catholic students’ method and mobilization. The epistemological understanding driving this study coincides with Micol Seigel in that “the core of transnational history is the challenge to the hermeneutic preeminence of nations” as units of analysis. It is, therefore, an attempt to recognize the social definition of boundaries, relations, and identifications that often “spill over and seep through national borders.”<sup>67</sup> It is, in the case of this dissertation, an intent to make room for the bottom-up definition of such identities and dynamics that drove the MIEC-JECI mobilization in Latin America. While recognizing that nation-states’ political and social orders conditioned the movements’ unfolding, the effort here is to be still able to perceive how the Latin American MIEC-JECI contested those boundaries and reclaimed a Latin American identity. Thus, this monograph draws its scope from the grounds that allowed the movement to build a sense of transnational community, even if it was porous and heterogeneous. It pays attention to the dynamics of circulation, exchange, and deliberation over ideas, including frameworks of interpretation and new elaborations, as well as over forms of apostolic action throughout the region and their outcomes. In doing

---

<sup>67</sup> Seigel, Micol. "Beyond compare: comparative method after the transnational turn." *Radical History Review*, no. 91 (2005): 62-90.

so, this study does not attempt to cover up conflict, crises, and ruptures. Instead, it traces the movement's turning points and eventual repositioning that paralleled the decline and reconfiguration of the movement after 1973.

Lastly, this study is also, and necessarily, interdisciplinary in character. This is so, at least for two reasons. First, because the researcher who interprets the object of study is looking through the lenses of her multidisciplinary background. A background in Anthropology and graduate studies in Education before any training in the historical discipline have acted more unconsciously than not in shaping the questions asked and approaches chosen. Second, this study bridges two fields of knowledge usually estranged from one another. It is not only that the literature on religion and social movements has come through different paths. Neither is it solely that, as Horn claimed, the historical discipline has assumed the study of social movements virtually as secular matters. Rather, it is also that in examining the religious motivations behind a social mobilization, theology arises as a disciplinary field of obligatory dialogue. This is as far as it provides an explanatory corpus about the relation of subjects with the divine, thus, uncovering the rationale and mechanisms through which faith becomes the fueling force of the believer's action. Theology, with its dense articulation of meaning, language, and form sometimes different from what is expected in the scientific community, becomes a challenging field of knowledge with which to interact. This is true for humanities and social sciences that have grown somehow in the margins of a scientific aspiration. This dissertation advocates the necessity—even if the claim is redundant, to admit different languages and formats within the humanities and social sciences. It also points to the relevance of understanding

theology as an intellectual elaboration produced in a specific time and space; therefore, as a historical source that, with its pace and rhythm, needs to be included in the effort to conduct research on any object of study that involves the religious dimension.

According to the positioning above, some methodological decisions were in order; some of these decisions related to how to navigate the vast number of sources this research accessed and how to use them. First, *Vanguards of Liberation* chose to track down and work with available memoirs of regional meetings organized by the Latin American Secretariats MIEC and JECI during the period under study. This methodological decision responded to the assumption that regional meetings were the places *par excellence* for the circulation of ideas, debate, and hegemony construction inside the movements. On the one hand, seminars and congresses played a crucial role in the continent-wide dissemination of cutting-edge intellectual developments within Catholic thought, theology, and social theory. They were also the scenery for group analyses of apostolic matters and methodologies, discussion of previously applied regional surveys, and exchanges of experiences. On the other hand, committee meetings hosted by the Secretariats and counting with representatives of all countries' affiliates were spaces for logistics and decision-making. All these meetings were pivotal in facilitating regional consensuses and the agreement over agendas with a transnational scope. Moreover, these meetings were significant milestones in the separate but converging evolution of MIEC's and JECI's identities in Latin America. Not all and every session will be mentioned or addressed in this monograph. *Vanguards of Liberation* has selected those meetings portraying the watershed moments in the

movement's life. Numerous additional regional, subregional, national, and local events, unexplored for now, allowed the dialectical process of hegemony construction to go on at the micro-level. Appendix 1 contains a table with many of these events.

Second, there was the issue of the multilayered character of relations making up the MIEC and JECI mobilization during the long decade. One was the interaction at the regional organizational structures level, i.e., the Secretariats. This included the relations of the Secretariats with their national affiliates, the MIEC and JECI international coordination organs (General Secretariats located in Fribourg and Paris correspondingly), and the coordinating organ of the Latin American episcopate, i.e., the *Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano*-CELAM. The Secretariats established many other relations within multiple networks, including the constellation of Catholic activism, other religious denominations (particularly Evangelical), intellectuals, and students during the *sixties*.

Another was the level of national-based student organizations. These included interaction among national Catholic student organizations of Pax Romana and JECI, direct international relations with other forms of activism or organization, and relations circumscribed to the national level. Among the latter were relations with regional and local dioceses and national hierarchies, other Catholic action organizations, think tanks, the universities, and the students' movement and *gremios*. *Vanguards of Liberation* actively searched for bulletins and circular letters addressed by Secretariats to the base militancy, activities' reports, and newsletters by national movements and the Secretariats on the national and regional situations, advances of the movements, and relations. It also

includes letters and reports from the General Secretariats in Fribourg and Paris and from Secretariats' members' visits to national movements that established their situation and gave advice. Personal letters complemented the selected set of sources.

Third, this dissertation aimed to grasp the robust intellectual production resulting from the MIEC and JECI mobilization in Latin America. Besides congresses and seminars memoirs, this study uses several other documents. There are systematization documents and internal working papers containing theological and pastoral elaborations and analyses of the student movement situation and the university in Latin America. Also, there are publications, primarily, Secretariats' journals and booklets such as BIDI, *Vispera*, *Servicio de Documentación*, and SPES. Books and other material published by the SLA Center of Documentation are also included. Some other documents considered for this work address regional and national economic problems, education, development, and political parties and regimes. Overall, this intellectual production is understood to have fed the theological and pastoral reflection behind the renewal of church and theology in the region. This production also fed the social and political debate of the time, the opinion of adult Catholic intellectuals-many in key positions in society, while also fueling the student bases mobilization providing an ethical and political background for their actions. Finally, oral sources complemented and enriched immensely all three methodological sets of sources and inquiry.

Other methodological decisions in this research were related to how to write this manuscript. A brief note on this regard follows. In a take that I deem coherent with my

defense of admitting different formats and languages in humanities and social sciences, the interdisciplinary character of this dissertation, and the multiple layers and levels that described this mobilization, this manuscript has been produced in three parts. Each of them comprises chapters offering paralleling angles of the same chronological segment. A brief introduction to each of these parts would drive the reader through the overarching argument of this dissertation. In the next section, we will refer to the outline of the seven chapters this manuscript is comprised of. While I advocate for the inclusion of theology and pastoral reflection as intellectual productions that frame the reasoning and action of mobilized student Catholics, it is critical to note that I do not have any training in the theological discipline. Instead, my readings are informed by my taste for and amateur knowledge of theological and philosophical matters, which have not made this effort less challenging in all ways. Also, all quotations brought from primary sources are originally in Spanish. I assume full responsibility for interpretations of these reflections, translation of these and other primary material, and for any unintended mistakes that might have passed unseen after multiple revisions.

The list of what is missing is long. The breadth and focus of this research have left unaddressed critical aspects of the MIEC and JECI mobilization while also underrepresenting some fields of work and action. Despite some brief references, a Third World perspective that might include the Latin American movement's interactions with networks and other emerging movements in Asia and Africa is lacking in this study. Overall, the movement's international relations were insufficiently addressed. The Latin Americans' vanguard role within the international movement was underrepresented. This



includes Latin American cadres' roles at world coordination posts, congresses, and seminars. The movement's influence on the definition of world agendas, its contributions to modifying the JECI Common Bases, and Latin Americans' leadership in crafting renewed conceptions about the world student apostolate deserve further attention. Similarly, the transnational scope of this research left behind specifics of socio-political and ecclesiastical, student, and apostolic matters peculiar to national and local cases, only bringing them in to exemplify the kind of temporal engagement achieved by student militants. Many other missing topics might complete this list.

A variety of primary materials did not make it to my source base. While the entirety of the Latin American Secretariat's archive lies uncatalogued, sources in Quito have some degree of organization that those in Lima lack. Among the sources I could not use in this dissertation, there is an untapped richness that sheds light on the everyday life of intellectual and political life of Latin American student movements. Also, pandemic restrictions ultimately prevented me from accessing CELAM's General Archive materials effectively. This lacuna is offset by the exhaustivity of the MIEC-JECI Latin American Secretariat in keeping in its archive the multitude of correspondence, reports, and memories of meetings, discussions, and seminars that effectively locate CELAM into the picture. Finally, many testimonies of former militants willing to share their experience and knowledge about the MIEC-JECI movement in Latin America during the long decade could not be collected. Reasons of time and space have left these generous contributions out of the reach of this research. This dissertation wishes to be the first

endeavor in a broader research agenda in which these resources and voices might be included.

#### **D. Chapters Outline**

Part I comprises two chapters (1 & 2) covering the period from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the onset of the 1960s. They address the religious and secular, organizational and identity roots of Catholic student organizations MIEC and JECI in Latin America. Chapter 1 considers the onset of the 20th century to discuss the university reform movement and network, anti-imperialist and *Latinoamericanista* ideals, and how they informed Catholic activism in Latin America since the early decades of the century. Chapter 2 starts in the late 19th century to address the transformations brought about by Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, specifically, the official embracing by the Church of Social Catholic views and the rise of Catholic Action. The chapter then follows Catholic Action unfolding in Latin America since the 1930s. It also traces the rise of Iberian-American networks of Catholic students and later the expansion throughout Latin America of the Pax Romana network- International Movement of Catholic Students. Further, it portrays the network of Specialized Catholic Action at work and the pioneering role of Brazilian *Juventude Universitaria Catolica*-JUC and *Juventude Estudiantil Catolica*-JEC in the radicalization of the apostolic role of Catholic student movements by embracing a Committed Spirituality.

Part II consists of three chapters (3, 4 & 5) encompassing the years from 1960 to 1966. They address the organization and identity evolution, separate but convergent, of MIEC and JECI in Latin America and, significantly, the consolidation of a network of Catholic student organizations during the first half of the decade. Chapter 3 discusses the establishment in Latin America of the Latin American Secretariat of Pax Romana MIEC and the unfolding of Pax Romana's approach and methodologies for the apostolate in the region. It traces the developments and conclusions of two significant events that set the tone for the Catholic intellectual debates at the onset of the decade, articulating both the leadership of Catholic students in *social change* and their strong criticism of—what later was termed—a 'Christendom model' of the church. The chapter also uncovered existing tensions between the Secretariat and its national-based affiliates. Notably, it highlights the agency of national bases in questioning the logic with which the Secretariat was working and taking a stand against the suspected infiltration of CIA funding to *Equipos Universitarios de Colombia* during the early years of the period.

Chapter 4 examines the expansion and establishment of the JECI approach in Latin America. It follows the regional evolution of the JECI coordination organ from the Brazilian JUC's International Team to the Buenos Aires-based JECI Latin American Secretariat. It also traces the developments of one important meeting that portrays the differences between JECI's and Pax Romana's methodologies along with the most relevant theological, pastoral, and political discussions and stands that led to the embracing of a Committed Spirituality by affiliate movements. The chapter uncovers the movement's frustrations primarily due to economic precarity and the conflicts between

regional cadres and national bases that led to the temporal dissolution of the Secretariat by 1966.

Chapter 5 discusses two different levels of relationship with opposite interests. On the one hand, it addresses the conflictive relationship between regional coordination structures, MIEC and JECI, that fed from the inherited tensions of both international movements. In the context of CELAM's initiative to merge the Secretariats into one regional coordination organ, this chapter portrays the continuous clashes between MIEC and JECI regional cadres on the grounds of the movements' different apostolic approaches and understandings of apostolic *specialization*. The chapter shows, on the other hand, that MIEC's and JECI's bases in the region (national organizations) were increasingly converging around a shared identity, approach, and common agenda. Development and conclusions of a seminar on university reform left clear to these bases their leadership role within the university and, more broadly, society, given the university's *social function*. The chapter highlights the bases' agency in pressing Secretariats to merge and build a common agenda.

Part III includes two chapters (6 & 7) addressing 1966-1973 from different perspectives. Building on national-based organizations' common practice of the Review of Life Method and embracing a Committed Spirituality, Part III shows the evolution of the Catholic student network into a social movement. It follows the development of the movement's agenda, from the articulating concepts of *cultural autonomy* and *Commitment to a consecration to Liberation*, a concept epitomizing a church siding with

the poor and oppressed of the continent in their struggle for social justice. Part III examines the myriad of practical forms of Commitment through militants' *temporal* (social and political) engagements and the identity crises unleashed by such engagements. Furthermore, it shows that in the context of the Cold War anti-insurgent purge, continental containment strategies targeted the movement's role in Latin America and repressed its militants. This would be the primary cause for the movement's decline by 1973.

Chapter 6 provides a bottom-up approach to the movement's growth. Drawing primarily on oral sources, the chapter portrays how the bases' apostolic attitudes and temporal engagements shaped the movement's identity and agenda. The chapter introduces an understanding of Commitment as a form of spirituality, an apostolic attitude, and a historical project from a theological and pastoral perspective. It shows how student militants' practical forms of Commitment (their *temporal* engagements) broke the mold of the conceptual scheme of the 'distinction of planes,' i.e., the pastoral model under which Catholic Action movements should not intervene in everyday life politics. Furthermore, it examines the multiple ways in which base militants got involved with the emerging New Lefts and built imaginings of revolution. The chapter argues that, in such involvement, *like yeast in the dough*, Catholic militants contributed to the region's political culture, the keys to a committed spirituality.

Chapter 7 provides the top-down view from the Secretariat's perspective and sources. It follows the unfolding of a critical seminar gathering representatives from all

over the region that settled the bases of the movement's agenda. The chapter shows the leading role of the Secretariat in implementing the movement's consensual strategic plan of action, which included pastoral base work; education, communication, and dissemination; and the forming of a Latin American team. The chapter uncovers that the movement reclaimed itself as a global vanguard of social change among the 1968 global student mobilization and a backstage laboratory for crafting some of the more relevant pastoral and theological inflections that surfaced in the Second Conference of the Latin American Episcopate in Medellin, in 1968. Furthermore, it examines the intense identity crises lived by the movement because of militants' *going to the poor* decision. Lastly, it addresses the military harassment of the Secretariat facilities and repression of militants as part of the unfolding of the National Security Doctrine throughout the region that, by 1973, marked the movement's decline.

**PART I: Cultural and Political Vanguarders in the making of Latin American Catholic student organizations 1900-1960.**

Part I of this dissertation consists of two chapters introductory to the 1960s Catholic student mobilization phenomena. It digs into the university student activism of the first half of the 20th century to build an explanatory basis for 1960s Latin American Catholic student organizations. Chapters 1 & 2 unveil interesting intersections and continuities in Latin American Catholic student activism's organizational and identity roots and intellectual and political substratum.

The following chapters contend that Latin American progressive Catholic student organizations grew with a *dual identity*. On the one hand, they had an ecclesial origin rooted in the promulgation during the interwar period of Catholic Action. This was a global church ecclesial structure gathering the lay apostolate with the specific mission of acting in the *temporal* (i.e., terrestrial) plane to shape societies in a *Christian and Catholic manner*. On the other hand, they were also heirs and agents of the historical student struggle in Latin America. The later was featured by early politicization of university union structures (*gremios*), and regional sync of national student movements' agendas with claims of university reform that were conceived beyond strictly campus affairs. In Latin America both of these trends of student mobilization unfolded with powerful regional networks with transnational (first, Iberian-American, later Latin American) identity.

Part I show that at the onset of the 1960-decade, and as a result of complex social and political intersections during the first half of the century, Catholic student activism consolidated a minoritarian but influential faction within the Latin American Student



Movement. Moreover, as a singularity among other experiences of student apostolate in the global church, these chapters uncover that given the Latin American Student Movement social and political role, the student base of Catholic university movements that consolidated in the 1960s was already a mobilized base. Anti-imperialism, cultural authenticity, and regional integration were critical matters in student mobilizations that revealed significant consensus around *Latinoamericanista's* views and spoke to the early strength of left politics within the student movement's acknowledged factionalism. Within this mobilized base, 1960's Catholic student movements would recruit their new members and cadres.

Overall, concurring with a recent historiographical concern addressed by Stephen Andes and Julia Young, Part I undertakes a *long-durée* view and goes back to the beginning of the century to explain Latin American *sixties'* Catholic activism. In this endeavor, the following chapters unearth a series of identitarian intersections and transnational dynamics preceding the consolidation of 1960s Catholic organizations and networks. Significantly, this approach allows claiming that the 1960s Catholic student movements' trajectory and identity cannot be understood without regard to the trajectories, historical struggles, and social role of the Latin American Student Movement. The convergence of these trajectories in Catholic students' apostolic experience in the university *milieu* decisively shaped the contours of their identity and the historical unfolding of their mobilization during the *sixties*.

Chapter 1 traces the overarching evolution of the Latin American student mobilization for University Reform since its inception with the Cordoba uprising and Manifesto in 1918, its regional expansion, and the multiple efforts of regional networking. The chapter finishes with the fourth CLAE (*Congreso Latinoamericano de Estudiantes*) in 1966, celebrated in La Habana-Cuba, which formalized the creation of the OCLAE (*Organizacion Continental Latinoamericana de Estudiantes*). Chapter 1 also explores the singularity of student unions (*gremios*) and their social and political relevance in Latin America. Building upon primary sources, the chapter goes after the strings of alleged continuities and identity endurences of the Latin American University Reform mobilization, as 1960s Catholic militants and intellectuals recall it.

Chapter 2, on the other hand, recounts the significant transformations within the Catholic thought, institutional church, and the church's Social Teaching that, ultimately, made the 1960 church's involvement in university life reasonable, desirable, and possible. It shows Catholic Action as a church's response to the social crisis facing Europe during the interwar period and gives an account of its spread throughout Latin America. It addresses the rise and shifting dynamics of early Latin American and international networks of Catholic students and the installment of the first JECI (*Juventud Estudiantil Catolica Internacional*)-Secretariat in Brazil. The chapter ends by examining the anticipation of Brazilian Catholic student movements' theological, political, and pedagogical reflection that led towards their radicalization.

## **CHAPTER 1. THE LATIN AMERICAN STUDENT MOVEMENT: ROOTS AND IDENTITY.**

Chapter 1 examines the evolution of the Latin American student mobilization from 1900-1960. It tells the story of one of the earliest and more salient organized collective actions around claims of university reform in Cordoba, Argentina, in 1918. Furthermore, the chapter addresses the expansion throughout Latin America of these demands around which local and national student movements with a *gremial* character and strong political leverage solidified themselves. The chapter shows that efforts to articulate national student movements since the early 20th century created a regional network that further developed during the first half of the century. Seemingly, regional networking facilitated the genesis of common identity elements. These evolved in tension with national particularities and the movements' persistent factionalism and ideological eclecticism.

Acknowledging that shifting local political conditions gave form to specific national claims and delineated cycles of mobilization and generational ruptures within the movements, the chapter rather pays attention to continuities. It goes after enduring identity features of the Latin American Student Movements that Catholic militants in the 1960s recalled as symbols and grounds for a Latin American mobilization. Ostensibly,

Latin American movements' political identity included a shared demand for university reform along with their rejection of both oligarchical social structures and attempts of U.S. imperialist penetration to which oligarchies were viewed as instrumental. In their resistance to the neo-colonial oligarchic political order of the early decades of the century, the reformist student movements also seemed to have grown closely identified with the intellectual journey of Hispanic-American thinkers that gave rise to *Latinoamericanismo* as a stream of thought. Claims for Latin American integration grounded in the perceived belonging to a common *Patria*, and demand for regional cultural autonomy, were part too of an enduring identification that acquired strong political corollaries and animated the mobilization of new reformist generations.

### **1.1. The university reform movement: Cordoba's 1918 uprising and 'Latinoamericanismo.'**

Commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the University Reform Movement that sparked in Cordoba, Argentina, in 1918, and expanded throughout Latin America, the Magazine *Vispera*—one significant publication by the Latin American Secretariat of Catholic Students—titled its fourth issue, “*La Universidad: Entre la Reforma y la Revolución*,” (“The University: Between Reform and Revolution”).<sup>68</sup> Besides pointing at the crucial crossroads in which the 1960s' Student Movement was immersed, the issue dedicated the *Informe* (a section within the quarterly publication) to frame their (Catholic

---

<sup>68</sup> Movimiento Internacional de Estudiantes Católicos, *Vispera*, Year 1, No. 4, Montevideo, January 1968. Bidegain papers Collection. Special Collections-Green Library, FIU, hereinafter Bidegain-FIU Collection. Also available at Anáforas digital project. Universidad de la República, Uruguay.

students') ongoing mobilization. The *informe* traced the social and ideological roots and history that made the Latin American Student Movement a relevant social and political actor. Alberto Methol Ferré—*Vispera's* editor, board member, and a prominent Catholic intellectual of significant influence on Catholic students' mobilization—narrated the contemporary time as “the auspice of a second Latin American continental wave.” Methol called out to “retake at a new level, the traditions of Córdoba and its great issues, which [were their] own.”<sup>69</sup> Since the first issues, this relevant publication would suggest the identity between the Catholic student mobilization and the spirit of *Reforma*, which was the political flag of the Latin American University Movement. Other sources would reinforce this identification.

Methol's was an invitation to recall both the origins and the meaning of Cordoba, which in 1918, as it was fifty years later, had common roots. Namely, the uprising of the middle-classes against oligarchic elites who had been instrumental to the imposition of a neo-colonial order and who, in preserving their class privileges, had historically obstructed middle-classes social ascent and political participation. Methol explained that by the 1910s, a well-established oligarchic social and political order based on an agriculture-mining-exporting economy had grown at the expense of a Latin America “balkanized” in small republics. This condition had paved the way for what in the 1960s was viewed as a path of backwardness and dependency.<sup>70</sup> The significance of the student

---

<sup>69</sup>Methol Ferré, Alberto, “De Victor a Fidel, en el Epicentro de Cordoba,” in *Vispera* No. 4, 1968, p. 77. Bidegain-FIU Collection.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p 78.

movement, then and now, Methol asserted, consisted in that both represented “the fight against archaic and oppressive structures and their miseries.”<sup>71</sup> In that way, the irruption of the middle classes in the life of Latin America in 1918 found continuity in the contemporary struggle for the “de-alienation of university and society” of a colonialist culture. It was a culture which “...magnetized by foreign metropolises,” produced a “cultural superimposition and an atrocious disregard of Latin American history.”<sup>72</sup>

A historical-political sketch of the Student Movement, published by *Servicio de Documentacion* in December of 1970, also gave an overview of its history within which 1960s Catholic militants recognized themselves immersed. Carlos Horacio Uran and Ana Maria Bidegain, two Catholic student militants authoring the document, began by arguing that a complex ideological background and a class-based radicalization of the student movement were key triggers of both the 1918 Argentinean revolt and the recent spread of the *reformist*<sup>73</sup> spirit throughout the region. Anti-imperialist, anti-oligarchic, anti-positivist ideas, and an Americanism of Hispanic-American origin converged in the resistance to a neo-colonial (political and economic) order that prevented the middle classes from “giving the nation a bourgeois form,” students asserted.<sup>74</sup> In their

---

<sup>71</sup> Ibid

<sup>72</sup> *ibid.* p. 77

<sup>73</sup> The adjective “reformist” in this chapter will always allude to the University Reform Movement and ideas.

<sup>74</sup> Carlos Horacio Urán and Ana Maria Bidegain, “El Movimiento Estudiantil Latinoamericano entre la reforma y la revolución,” *Servicio de Documentación* Series 3 Document #13, December 1970, p. 5. Box MIEC-JECI II. Archive of the Secretariado Latinoamericano de Estudiantes Católicos-SLA at the Instituto Bartolome de las Casas Repository, Lima, Peru, hereinafter SLA-IBC Repository, Lima.

assessment, these ideological sources and class origin carved the Student Movement's identity with lasting repercussions until the years of the publication.

Indeed, Latin American middle and popular classes' malaise about and resistance to the neo-colonial oligarchic political order had been growing since the late 19th century. During 1890, urban labor movements arose in Buenos Aires, Mexico City, and Santiago de Chile. Also, political parties of an anti-oligarchic bent —though, significantly, not common ideology—appeared in Argentina, Peru, and Uruguay. Ideologically disconnected by their eclecticism, the defiance of the neo-colonial and oligarchic order came from various parties and sectors that ranged from conservative Catholics to revolutionary socialists.<sup>75</sup>

Early twentieth-century thinkers (*pensadores*) joined the anti-oligarchic opposition and created an intellectual and political climate relevant to both the University Reform Movement and a larger intellectual-political phenomenon. By the turn of the century, *pensadores*' anti-positivist standpoints grew and expanded their influence due to their criticism of what they deemed was the failure of Latin American governments and their “militant ideology,” referring to philosophical positivism, which had condemned the

---

<sup>75</sup> Halperín Donghi, Tulio. *The Contemporary History of Latin America*. Duke University Press, Durham and London, 1993. Edited and translated by John Charles Chasteen. On the eclecticism of the University Reform Movement see Tünnermann Bernheim, Carlos. *Noventa años de la Reforma Universitaria de Córdoba (1918-2008)*. Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO), 2008. pp. 45-46.

region to a peripheral integration to the expanded capitalist order.<sup>76</sup> According to students Uran and Bidegain, this train of thought boldened the Student Movement's denunciation that adoption of positivism in politics not only sustained despotic and authoritarian governments (the Porfiriato, the Brazilian Republic, Julio Roca's Argentina) but also "...perpetuated monoculture, indigenous servitude, and exportable production as the exclusive source of fiscal resources; and [had maintained their] own [continental] division too."<sup>77</sup>

Overall, in the following years, what was to be a developing Latin American stream of philosophy, along with the more encompassing anti-oligarchic debate, fueled the University Reform Movement. It also became part and parcel of the all too well-known *1900s-generation* thought. This generation profoundly marked the reformist youth's identity and more broadly, significantly played a key role in twentieth-century Latin American nation-building processes.<sup>78</sup> While the eclectic anti-oligarchic debate permeated the reformist movement, making it sometimes diffused and ideologically immature, students asserted, the movement recognized itself mirrored in the social and political thought of this intellectual generation. The rhetoric of profound and authentic

---

<sup>76</sup> Dussel, Enrique. "Philosophy in Latin America in the Twentieth Century: Problems and Currents," in Mendieta, Eduardo, ed. *Latin American philosophy: currents, issues, debates*. Indiana University Press, 2003.

<sup>77</sup> Urán and Bidegain, "El Movimiento Estudiantil," *Servicio de Documentación*, p.7.

<sup>78</sup> Miller, Nicola. *In the Shadow of the State: Intellectuals and the quest for national identity in twentieth-century Spanish America*. Verso, 1999.



renewal of the continent and the signaling of the youth to be the vanguard of that change strongly mobilized the reformist youth.<sup>79</sup>

The 1900 intellectual generation found common ground in their exclusion from all cultural, artistic, and political possibilities. As Latin American elites monopolized opportunities for the social ascent, they seemed to reproduce the cultural semi-colonial subjection. *Pensadores* of this generation emigrated to Europe and became some of the more outstanding Hispanic-American intellectuals. As the students' publication recalled—paraphrasing Ruben Dario—“taking America with them to the old continent,” these *pensadores* hoped America might live “...a little of the civilization that was denied [at home].” Quoting Ugarte, the students' publication continued that these *pensadores* discovered two things, “First, that [their] production was linked to a single literature; second, that individually [they] belonged to a single nationality viewing Iberian America from Europe, in a panoramic way.”<sup>80</sup>

Similarly, for Methol, this generation would have represented a sort of “Bolivarian resurrection! . . . the reopening of a new historical instance for what seemed lost.”<sup>81</sup> Overall, these intellectuals seemed to have found common identification in their “willingness to shape in the realm of the spirit what [they] . . . designated with the name

---

<sup>79</sup> Urán and Bidegain, “El Movimiento Estudiantil,” *Servicio de Documentación*, p. 6.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Methol Ferré, “De Victor a Fidel,” *Vispera*, p. 78.

of *La Patria Grande*.”<sup>82</sup> This was Bolivar’s independentist utopia of continental unity, underlaid by anti-imperialist and integrationist principles. With the generation of 1900, this utopia was to be loaded with a semantic that claimed cultural autonomy for Latin America.

Exalting its significance and lasting repercussions, Methol explained that, despite the fact their trajectories did not coincide with the rise of a university rebellion, Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre and Fidel Castro “were [both] two extremes of the same process.”<sup>83</sup> For Methol, not only was Haya de la Torre a son and direct protagonist of the 1918 Reform Movement, but also they both—Haya and Castro, had coincided in addressing “the great question of the Latin American national unity.”<sup>84</sup> Here, Methol wanted to go to the heart of the identity of the Student Movement since 1918: despite the array of coexisting ideologies and continuous generational renewal, the Student Movement stood out, since the early 1900s, as an agent of cultural and political trends of thought that evolving since the past century crystallized under the concept of *Latinoamericanismo*.

Carlos Urán, who at the time had been already a member of the Latin American Secretariat of Catholic Students-SLA MIEC-JECI, in another publication reviewing

---

<sup>82</sup> Urán and Bidegain, “El Movimiento Estudiantil,” *Servicio de Documentación*, p. 6.

<sup>83</sup> Methol Ferré, “De Victor a Fidel,” *Vispera*, p. 78.

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.*

Indalecio Liévano's book "*Bolivarismo y Monroismo*" (1969), reminded the frustrated call to unity by Simon Bolivar. Independence hero and *Libertador*, Bolivar had called to build a League of Nations for the union of Spanish America—in the *Gran Asamblea de Plenipotenciarios del Istmo*, 1824. Bolivar's call, contending "The United States [who] seem[ed] destined, by providence, to plague Latin America with miseries in the name of freedom," reclaimed unity of Latin American nations on the grounds of their common languages, customs, race, and religion.<sup>85</sup>

Synthetizing from Lievano's work, Urán stated that,

"Bolívar was not Hispanic-Americanist out of simple idealism but because he understood that the basic problems of the societies that were Spanish colonies could not be solved within the framework of the narrow regionalism which had so many advantages and attractions for those who were their adversaries."<sup>86</sup>

Back in the 1860s, it was from the pioneering ideas by Hispanic-American intellectuals that *Latinoamericanismo* as a stream of thought began emerging. Paraphrasing Arturo Ardao, *Latinoamericanismo* is better understood as a submerged concept inspired by contemporaneous Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism that resembled a self-consciousness, of a nationalist sign, of a Latino ethnocultural entity. As it early recognized that North American expansionism—explicit in the Manifest Destiny and the

---

<sup>85</sup> Quoted by Urán, Carlos H. "Bolivarismo y Monroismo" in *Vispera* No. 15, Year 4, February 1970. p. 31.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32

Monroe Doctrine—was even more dangerous for Latin American countries than the feared European re-colonizing attempts, *Latinoamericanismo* was to confront and counter in many ways the Pan Americanist rhetoric that emerged late in the century.<sup>87</sup>

The creation in Paris of the *Liga Latino-Americana* and publishing of the book “*Union Latinoamericana*” by Colombian José María Torres Caicedo was a milestone that predated other, perhaps more echoing, attempts at developing a continental mentality concerning Latin America. With significant contradictions nailed by a still ambiguous *Americanismo* of Hispanic-American origin, the term *Latinoamericanismo* was put into use, before 1890, by intellectuals such as Chilean Francisco Bilbao, Panamanian Justo Arosemena, Ecuadorian Juan Montalvo, and Cuban José Martí. After 1890, having already exposed the commercial interests of the U.S. in regards to Latin America, in the First Pan American Conference, as well as the U.S. imperialist ambitions—revealed in the war with Mexico back in the 1840s and ratified later in the Spanish-American War—the old “Americanism” unfolded into two conflictive and dualist identities, Pan Americanism and *Latinoamericanismo*. As Ardao explains, the first referred to a regionalism interested in enhancing commercial and cultural cooperation among countries in the Americas, mediating the relationship between hemispheric national states and the international community. The second, in contrast, with a sentiment of “cultural

---

<sup>87</sup>Arturo Ardao, “Panamericanismo y Latinoamericanismo,” pp. 179-196, in Karina Batthyány y Gerardo Caetano (Coord.) *Antología del pensamiento crítico uruguayo contemporáneo*. CLACSO, 2018. Accessed Oct-20-2020. <http://biblioteca.clacso.edu.ar/clacso/se/20180316022926/Antologia> . Also, in Ardao, A. *Nuestra América Latina*. Ediciones de la Banda Oriental, 1986 pp. 64-82

militancy,” referred to a common identity and a national consciousness that distinguished Spanish America from North America and Europe.<sup>88</sup>

Thus, with the character of *cultural militancy*, the *Latin American idea* seemed to have gained strength among the 1900s’ *pensadores*. Intellectuals such as Nicaraguan Ruben Dario (1867-1916), Cuban José Martí (1853-1895), Uruguayan José Enrique Rodo (1871-1917), Argentine Manuel Ugarte (1875-1951), and Peruvian Francisco García Calderón (1834-1905) served as key precursors of a rising *continental consciousness* that seemed to wake up an entire generation. For Methol, this intellectual agitation was the context in which the student youth took up *Latinoamericanismo* and became a relevant social base for it.<sup>89</sup> The role played by Manuel Ugarte, for instance, was critical in proselytizing the tenets of this thought among student and literary circles when he decidedly undertook a Latin American tour in which, between cheers or boos, he gave multiple conferences, statements, and interviews to the local press to promote the *Cuestión Latinoamericana* (1911-1913). His role as a keynote speaker at both a meeting of the *Federación de Estudiantes Secundarios* (FES) in August of 1915 and the inaugural meeting of the *Federación Universitaria Argentina* in April of 1918—only two months before the more determining events of the Reform—was later recognized by reformist

---

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Eva Piwowarski (Director), “La nación sudamericana.” Chapter 2: *Latinoamericanismo del 900. De la fragmentación a la unidad*, LíneaSurFilms, Amerigramas y Sadop, TELAM - Secretaría de Cultura de la Nación Republica de Argentina. Date published December 12, 2011, URL. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3qNp3k2oTk>

students for being crucial for their activism and summoning of the South American youth.<sup>90</sup>

Thus, the 1900s-generation and *Latinoamericanismo* significantly shaped the reformist youth political stands.<sup>91</sup> The understanding of a Latin America that was first forcibly divided—*balkanized* by colonial interests—and then maintained divided as an instrument for U.S. neo-colonial power was the most common ground for anti-imperialist, integrationist, and cultural authenticity claims. Referring to Uruguayan Jose Enrique Rodo’s work and his repercussions on the movement, and evoking the “Rodonian inspiration” of the reformist *Manifiesto*, Methol considered that the Cordoba uprising of 1918 “. . . more than a new thought, [showed] a new demand. . . [The] recover[y] of the national stature of Latin America by breaking semi-colonial alienations.”<sup>92</sup>

Hence, with a connection to the *Americanismo* of Hispanic-American seal and with the intent for their call to reach the student youth beyond the small town of Cordoba, the students’ *Manifiesto* began with a call upon “. . . the freemen of South America.” It made it clear they were “stepping into a revolution,” and they were “living an American hour.” The Cordoba *Manifiesto* initiated a new chapter in Latin American history; it

---

<sup>90</sup> Barrios, Miguel Ángel. *El latinoamericanismo en el pensamiento político de Manuel Ugarte*. Editorial Biblos, 2007

<sup>91</sup> Eva Piwowarski (Director), “La nación sudamericana.”

<sup>92</sup> Methol Ferré, “De Victor a Fidel,” *Vispera*, p. 81

symbolized the rise of a new social and political actor who "... no longer asks. [The youth] demands that the right to express their own thought be recognized ..."<sup>93</sup>

Along with the crucial resonance of the emerging *Latinoamericanismo*, the University Reform Movement sparked in Argentina seemed to have drawn inspiration from the cultural and political sequels of the Mexican Revolution, local events such as the coming to power of the Argentine Radical Party (UCR), and the events surrounding the last years of World War I, notably the Russian Revolution.<sup>94</sup> From the latter, it borrowed Marxism. The students' publication assessed that with the triumph of the first socialism in power, this ideology had become a crucial part of the ideological background moving university students' activity.<sup>95</sup>

Noting the concomitance between the strengthening of the student movement and the growing importance of Marxist ideas, Carlos Lombardi recalled in 1965 that the establishment of the Argentine Communist Party the same year of the student revolt was the determining factor for disseminating Marxism-Leninism. And the greater attraction posed by these ideas was what made revolutionary Marxism the center around which the Argentine philosophical and social thought developed.<sup>96</sup> Emphasizing the relevance of

---

<sup>93</sup> "Manifiesto de Córdoba," in *Vispera* No. 4, pp. 70-71.

<sup>94</sup> Tünnermann, *Noventa años de la Reforma Universitaria*, p. 42.

<sup>95</sup> Urán and Bidegain, "El Movimiento Estudiantil," *Servicio de Documentación*, p. 7.

<sup>96</sup> Lombardi, Carlos M. *Las ideas sociales en la Argentina*. Editoriales Platina/Stilcograf, 1965, pp. 152-153.

Marxism's influence in the University Reformist movement, Urán and Bidegain reckoned that other cases in the region fed from that concomitance. They noted that, like Argentina's case, there were other cases in which the rise of new chapters of the reformist movement occurred parallel to Marxism's rising importance. The Colombian was a case in point. The university movement had arisen at the same time that the formation by students of the first communist cells in the country.<sup>97</sup>

Overall, favored by the nationalist radicalism of Argentinean President Hipolito Irigoyen—who democratically elected put an end to four decades of Conservative hegemony—the 1918 revolt and manifesto not only marked the irruption of the youth in the political arena. Methol rightfully added that since a segment of the urban youth experienced a stage of sociability impeded to peasants and proletarians, its rise as a political actor also meant an overall social transition from a domestic to a political society.<sup>98</sup>

With the triumph of reformist proposals in 1918, in the University of Cordoba and also in Buenos Aires, and the following years, in Santa Fe (1919) and La Plata (1920) too, Irigoyen issued the new reformist statutes. They corresponded to the conditions agreed upon by the Student Congress of 1918—when the Argentine University Federation was founded. By 1921, the University of Tucuman adopted the statutes and

---

<sup>97</sup> Urán and Bidegain, "El Movimiento Estudiantil," *Servicio de Documentación* p. 10.

<sup>98</sup> Methol Ferré, "De Victor a Fidel," *Vispera*, p. 76



achieved its nationalization—a Reform Movement accomplishment.<sup>99</sup> The original proposals of Argentina’s university reform demanded student and alumni participation in university administration (co-government) to advance university autonomy. They also called for free attendance and academic freedom to allow students to attend the more idoneous lectures. Other goals involved imposing lecture-term professorship, thus avoiding life-long-lecturers and ensuring publicity of university events to ensure students were up to date on university matters. Reformist propositions also included university outreach through cultural programs to disseminate knowledge among the nation’s popular sectors and implementing student welfare policies. Significantly, the reform sought to achieve the university’s social orientation, putting the university in relation and service to the nation’s reality.

## **1.2 The continental expansion of Cordoba’s reformist spirit**

Scholar Roberto Rodriguez-Gomez refers to the debate amongst historians about whether the Cordoba reformist movement was the main inspiration for other similar student mobilizations in early 20th Latin America. This debate has also prompted the question of whether or not to address this phenomenon as a continental one.<sup>100</sup> This

---

<sup>99</sup> del Mazo, Gabriel “La Reforma Universitaria” in *Revista de la Universidad* (Tegucigalpa, Honduras) N° 2, Enero-Diciembre 1961, cited in Tünnermann, *Noventa años de la Reforma Universitaria*, p. 69.

<sup>100</sup> Rodriguez-Gomez summarizes in four the prominent historiographical positions in the debate. First is a position that gives Cordoba reformism centrality in the inspiration of the subsequent mobilizations throughout the region. In this position are mentioned the works of Gabriel Del Mazo (1941), an Argentinean reformist student leader himself, and among scholars, Portaneiro (1987), Marsiske (1989), Bergel (2008), and Tünnermann (2008). Another is a position that, while acknowledging the relevance of the 1918 Cordoba movement, emphasizes the singular character of each student mobilization national case. Van Aken (1971) and Pitton y Britez (2009) are mentioned in this trend. A third position seeks to balance

chapter privileges the perspective outlined by 1960s Catholic militants and intellectuals and even Latin-American student organizations. Thus, it focuses on continuities that do not intend, however, to silence the shifting local political conditions that gave form to specific national claims, cycles, and even generational ruptures in the mobilization—as Sociologist Imanol Ordorika appropriately suggests.<sup>101</sup> The methodological decision attempts to capture Catholic militants and their contemporaneous' views. The decision allows us to follow the threads of what Catholics claimed to be enduring identity features of the Latin American Student Movements that were among the driving motors for their mobilization. On the matter, for instance, the OCLAE (Latin American Continental Student Organization), on the occasion of its tenth anniversary, in 1976, recalled that the university student organization's regional origins went back to public deliberations and demonstrations in 1903 and 1906 in Buenos Aires-Argentina--where the questioning of university statutes began. While echoes of these events resounded in 1908 in Montevideo-Uruguay, 1910 in Bogota-Colombia—with the groundbreaking first resolution against imperialist penetration, and in 1912 in Lima-Peru, OCLAE's publication claimed that Cordoba's uprising had been the decisive factor for the

---

the regional impact of Cordoba and the particularities of national and local contexts and cases. The work of Donoso and Contreras (2017) is given as an example. A final position in the debate emphasizes the circulation of ideas and currents of thought in Latin America, which had a crucial role in fueling the Cordoba revolt and subsequent regional mobilizations. In this stance are the works by Acevedo (2006), Pitelli and Hermo (2010), Finocchiaro (2014), and Tcach (2018). Rodríguez-Gómez, Roberto "La impronta autonomista en America Latina," p.50 in Ordorika, I., R. Rodriguez-Gomez, and M. Gil Anton (Coord). *Cien años de movimientos estudiantiles*. Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Mexico (2019).

<sup>101</sup> Ordorika, Imanol. "Student movements and politics in Latin America: a historical reconceptualization." *Higher Education* 83, no. 2 (2022): 297-315. p. 301.

expansion of the reformist movement.<sup>102</sup> Similarly, Methol Ferré in 1968 and Catholic students Urán and Bidegain in their 1970 publication embraced the account of Cordoba's uprising and manifesto as a central piece in the summoning of other similar movements and projection of mobilizing ideas and demands. Thus, this chapter joins other interpretations that note the continental resonance of Cordoba's events.<sup>103</sup>

As per this account, soon after the 1918 events, similar demands to those made in Cordoba arose throughout the region. The continental reformist wave started in the late 1910s prompted new chapters over the following four decades, animated by the revolutionary impetus of the Red October and its significance in unveiling the world crisis of imperialism. With close political-ideological claims (anti-imperialist, cultural authenticity, and a Latin American integration perspective) and analogous demands regarding the revision of university statutes, the organized students' impetus seemed to evolve into one of the more relevant social movements of the region. Between 1919-20 in Lima and Cuzco in Peru, in Montevideo-Uruguay, and Santiago de Chile. After the meeting in Mexico and throughout the 1930s new movements arose in Colombia (1922), Cuba (1923), Paraguay (1927), Bolivia (1928), Costa Rica (1932), El Salvador (1933), Ecuador (1937-38), and Venezuela (1935). In the following decade the reformist youth rose up in Puerto Rico (1940), Panama (1943), and Guatemala (1945).<sup>104</sup> A latecomer to

---

<sup>102</sup> OCLAE- Organización Continental Latinoamericana de Estudiantes. *X Aniversario de la OCLAE*, Imprenta Federico Engels, de la Empresa de Medios de Propaganda, La Habana-Cuba, 1976. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima.

<sup>103</sup> Rodríguez-Gómez, "La impronta autonomista."

<sup>104</sup> Urán and Bidegain, "El Movimiento Estudiantil," *Servicio de Documentación*, pp. 10-11

the reformist spirit was the Brazilian student movement. While created in 1937 as the *Uniao Nacional dos Estudantes do Brasil-UNEB*, it made the first contact with the reformist university movement in 1957. The radicality of the Brazilian student mobilization of the late 1950s and early 1960s shall be a crucial experience with regional repercussions. Its significance consisted of pioneering the bond of student *gremialismo* with trends in progressive Catholic thought that had vehemently started to transform more traditional Catholic Action formations in Brazil.<sup>105</sup>

Observers noted that the student movement's lack of ideological unity entailed sometimes diffused objectives that made it vulnerable to political manipulation. Still, ostensibly, regional student congresses allowed it to concretize itself progressively. Conclusions of the First International Student Congress celebrated in Mexico in 1921, for instance, helped shape university claims throughout the region and oriented the political activity of Latin American students after 1918. Besides the more encompassing objectives of university autonomy, modernization, and democratization of access and government, academic freedom, and an enhanced relation between university and society, students discussed other aspects in the 1921 Congress. Critical among them were reforming the educational system and revising the methods and content of studies. Achieving a "true pedagogical and scientific innovation" and a "true popularization of teaching" became mobilizing purposes common among the student youth coming out of

---

<sup>105</sup> Souza, Luiz Alberto Gómez de. *A JUC, os estudantes católicos ea política*. Publicações CID/História, 1984, pp. 82-83

that event.<sup>106</sup> Before the end of the Second World War, four additional international events and the celebration of national congresses helped give some structure and political-ideological consistency to national student mobilizations. The First and Second Iberian-American Student Congresses were celebrated in Mexico in 1931 and Costa Rica in 1933. Santiago de Chile, in 1937, hosted the First Latin American Student Congress, where Haya de La Torre received the honorific title of “Professor of the youth” and “Citizen of America.” A subsequent Congress convened at Santiago de Chile in 1943.<sup>107</sup>

National student movements seemed to have grown from a complex factional organization in every case. Commonly, with a pyramidal structure, national student movements formed national directive cadres that rose among factional student bases that, in a permanent dialectic relationship, sought to win the representation of national movements while also advancing particular paralleling agendas. Thus, while student movements’ structure and ideological definition gradually improved, national movements with their respective cadres also appeared to have increased their influence and bargaining power in front of the national governments. Organizations such as APRI and INSURREXIT in Argentina, AVANCE in Chile, *Agrupación Estudiantil Roja* in Uruguay, *Boina Azul* in Venezuela, and the APRA in Mexico are a few examples provided by the students' publication. These portray the early factional configuration of

---

<sup>106</sup> Urán and Bidegain, “El Movimiento Estudiantil,” *Servicio de Documentación*, pp. 10-11

<sup>107</sup> OCLAE, *X Aniversario de la OCLAE*, 1976. Also see Love, Joseph. "Sources for the Latin American Student Movement: Archives of the US National Student Association." *The Journal of Developing Areas* 1, no. 2 (1967): 215-226.

the student movements who spearheaded the spread of the reformist spirit throughout the region.<sup>108</sup>

Overall, with a radicality that grew from both its middle-class origin and the ideological inspiration drawn from the nascent *Latinoamericanismo* and a Marxist vein, another critical characteristic of the reformist movement was its anti-clericalism—though, significantly, not atheistic. It is worth clarifying that the reformist spirit primarily embodied a rejection of a church predominantly associated with conservative sectors of society and that had been instrumental to imperialist and oligarchic domination.<sup>109</sup> In summary, anti-oligarchical, anti-imperialist, and anti-clerical, the reformist student movement was, paraphrasing the militant students' assessment, an expression of the radicalization of the middle-classes youth. Unable to achieve significant social and political changes in their countries, the first generation of reformists seemed to have opted to “make the revolution *in* and *through* the university.”<sup>110</sup>

---

<sup>108</sup> Urán and Bidegain, “El Movimiento Estudiantil,” *Servicio de Documentación*.

<sup>109</sup> An account made of the history of the reform movement will show that it will be after the appropriation of Maritanian and Mounerian thought within Latin American Catholicism that a Christian-inspired humanism will be significant within reformist currents of the university Second Latin American Pax Romana Seminar. “Hacia una reforma de la Universidad en América Latina” *Memoirs.*, p. 134. Box 136, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

### 1.3 The University Student Movement's pendulum and political concretization

The gradual concretization of ideological stances within the Student Movement did not end the movement's self-critique on its ideological fragility and political immaturity. Building on the memoirs of the *Seminario de Estudiantes Católicos del Cono Sur*, organized by the SLA MIEC-JECI, held in Montevideo in February of 1969, students Urán and Bidegain commented on what had been a historical denunciation by students themselves.<sup>111</sup> The “lack of self-consciousness of the movement...which had made [it] subject to the pressures of the moment or be moved by external events that decide its fate.” Also, in their view, a “lack of pedagogy that linked the different generations” and “a lack of ideological elaboration” that informed a tactic and a strategy to be agree upon among their leading cadres unveiled that the student body had historically responded to the immediacy of political action. They also noted the Movement suffered from a serious disconnection between the radicalized student elites and their bases.<sup>112</sup>

The critique about the movement's ideological disunity and lack of self-consciousness seemed to have been, in part, a matter related to the intrinsic dialectic of the university. As Methol Ferré mentioned, the *university pendulum* moved within the contradiction between the interests to socially ascend of the middle-classes—to which the

---

<sup>111</sup> Acronyms MIEC and JECI stand for *Movimiento Internacional de Estudiantes Católicos* and *Juventud Estudiantil Católica Internacional*.

<sup>112</sup> Urán and Bidegain, “El Movimiento Estudiantil,” *Servicio de Documentación*, p. 4

student body generally belonged, and their commitment to the popular classes. In his view, this oscillation tensioned the student movement between two poles. One that represented “an arrogant alienation [that, being] generator of a [sort of] illustrious despotism... [was the result of] a process of mental colonialism.” Another, which along with the need to free themselves from that colonialism, held an “...irresistible complex of guilt, out of nostalgia - distance and isolation - with its people.”<sup>113</sup> For Methol, it was from this contradiction that the diversity of political and ideological paths within the university arose. Despite its claim of being a progressive vanguard, the university was always endangered by “the risk of losing itself and finding instead, the rearguard,” who, concealing their conservatism, was ready to defend their class interests. This situation, however, Methol stressed, should not obscure the “undoubted decisiveness with which university militants stood out as political elements of the greater and more relevant Latin American popular movements.”<sup>114</sup>

The significance of student *gremialismo* as a political popular mobilizing force found an early and critical example in the APRA (*Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana*). This experience extraordinarily convoked the continent’s youth of the first decades of the twentieth century and significantly played in surfacing critical political and ideological dilemmas within the student movement. Such dilemmas were, at the same time, powerful arguments divisive of the Latin American left.

---

<sup>113</sup> Methol Ferré, “De Victor a Fidel,” *Vispera*, p. 77.

<sup>114</sup> *ibid*



By the 1920s, the crystallization of alliances among unions, workers, and students gave political definition and proved the political and geographical reach of the students' mobilization that was unfolding. The creation in Peru, in 1921, of the *Universidades Populares Gonzalez Prada* and the first student-worker front (under the name *Frente Unico de Trabajadores Manuales e Intelectuales*) were the result of the deliberations originally agreed-upon by the nascent reformist movement in the University of *San Marcos* in Lima, in 1919, and the *Primer Congreso Nacional de Estudiantes Peruanos* held in Cuzco, in 1920. While these events became regional milestones that gave a powerful drive to the regional propagation of the reform, they also planted the crucial seeds of its political awakening.

To be sure, the rise of the APRA represented the political arousal of the reform and the student movement and one of the faces of *latinoamericanismo*, along with its singular continental nationalism.<sup>115</sup> The rise of APRA was a direct outcome of the international student Congress celebrated in September of 1921 in Mexico. Indeed, the event was critical not only for broadening the scope of reformist claims initiated in Cordoba-Argentina. The Student Congress also served as a venue to subscribe to the more critical commitments made by the 1919-20 Peruvian Student Movement far beyond strict university matters. At the Congress, participating national movements spoke vehemently on “the birth of a new humanity,” the fight to abolish the “current concept of public power, . . . the exploitation of man by man, the current organization of property,

---

<sup>115</sup> Alva-Castro, Luis. “Presentación,” in: Haya, V. *El antiimperialismo y el APRA*. Lima: Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú. Instituto de Estudios Peruanos (IEP), 2013.

and [the consideration] . . . of human labor. . . as a commodity.”<sup>116</sup> The creation of *universidades populares* as a means to establish stronger links with the working classes was underwritten as a student obligation. Also, the fight for social justice, unity, and the strengthening of national ideals in Latin America was expressed as a tenet of the movement. The Congress, too, spoke up against imperialism, at the time advancing over the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, and against authoritarianism and militarism in Latin America.<sup>117</sup>

Three years after the Congress, feeding on the resulting student political agitation and his appraisal of revolutionary Mexico, student leader and former president of the Peruvian Student Federation, Victor Raul Haya de la Torre, founded the APRA. During his exile in Mexico, Haya de la Torre was invited to serve as assistant to renowned intellectual Jose Vasconcelos, a Catholic himself and firm believer of the *Latinoamericanista* utopia. Vasconcelos was the Secretary of Public Education of the Álvaro Obregón government. On May 7, 1924, at the *Escuela Nacional Preparatoria*, Haya de la Torre handed the “*Aprista* flag” to the students. The flag represented the unity of *Indo-America* (a term he used to incorporate *Indios*, *Indianos*, and the inhabitants of the West Indies under a single qualifier).<sup>118</sup> In his inaugural address, Haya de la Torre

---

<sup>116</sup> Tünnermann, *Noventa años de la Reforma Universitaria*, p. 78. Also, Urán and Bidegain, “El Movimiento Estudiantil,” *Servicio de Documentación*.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> On the historicity of *Indoamerica* as a concept see Rojo, Luis Arturo Torres. “La semántica política de Indoamérica, 1918-1941.” In *Construcción de las identidades latinoamericanas: ensayos de historia intelectual (Siglos XIX y XX)*, 2004; pp. 207-240. Indoamerica's political-historical semantic would refer to an “alternate uchronia” that alluded to revolutionary contents of the possible history of *America India*. While referring to the West's decline, this uchronia would vindicate the ideas of a new humanity, new

confirmed his leadership of the APRA as a political project for pioneering *Indo-America's* unity which was to be conducted as a multi-class struggle against imperialism.<sup>119</sup>

Pondering the relevance of these events, the 1960s *Latinoamericanista* historian Jorge Abelardo Ramos shall recount that, "...from the Latin American commotion [of the 1918 reform it had] spring[ed] the most important political and theoretical movement of the time: the Peruvian *Aprismo*."<sup>120</sup> Similarly, with a notorious sentiment, Methol commented on this sequence of events that "the reform crossed from one end of Latin America to the other ... spanning from Tierra de Fuego to the Rio Grande. We arrived at the core of the epicenter of Cordoba: Haya de la Torre and APRA. The *Bolivarismo* [the independentist utopia of *continental unity* was turning into] concrete practice."<sup>121</sup>

Haya de la Torre, himself, narrated in 1926, the advance of *Universidades Populares*—centers for educating workers and peasants in Peru, Chile, Cuba, Guatemala, and Mexico, some of which he personally advised, noting they were forming a solid vanguard that reunited the youth with manual and intellectual workers. Despite the

---

temporality, and new spirit; the hour of the *America India*. In the words of Torres-Rojo in his exegesis of the meaning given by Jose Carlos Mariategui and Victor Raul Haya de la Torre, it would be "about the original formulation of the indigenous uchronia and its apparent effectuality achieved and mediated by the Mexican revolution." p.2

<sup>119</sup> Urán and Bidegain, "El Movimiento Estudiantil," *Servicio de Documentación*. See also Planas, Pedro. *Los orígenes del APRA: El joven Haya. Mito y realidad de Haya de la Torre*. Okura, 1986.

<sup>120</sup> Ramos, Jorge Abelardo. *Historia de la nación latinoamericana*, Peña Lillo, Ed. 1968, p. 398.

<sup>121</sup> Methol Ferré, "De Victor a Fidel," *Vispera*, p. 83

importance of significant figures like José Vasconcelos in Mexico and José Ingenieros in Argentina, he added, students in Latin America had formed a “spontaneous, autonomous and rebellious ... movement in all countries of the great continent.”<sup>122</sup> Against the nationalist interests of the old generation, who they charged to be complicit with imperialism and wishful that Latin America continued to be divided into twenty republics, the young generation had declared “the ideal of the political unity of America.”<sup>123</sup> The union among students, workers, and peasants aimed to create a great movement of resistance and solidarity, he concluded, to overcome “the double circumstance which opposes its objective. [Namely,] the imperialist politics and the divisiveness that ruling classes keep alive in each republic.”<sup>124</sup>

#### **1.4. The ideological debate between Haya de la Torre and Julio Antonio Mella and the factionalism of the University Movement.**

As part of an extensive political and intellectual itinerary developed during the early 1920s, Haya de la Torre published in a December 1926 issue of the London’s *Labour Monthly* magazine, the first sketches of APRA’s political formulations under the title “What is the APRA?.” These ideas also appeared in a series of articles in *Amauta*—magazine directed by Peruvian Marxist José Carlos Mariategui. In these publications, Haya de la Torre presented the movement as:

---

<sup>122</sup> Haya, V. “El movimiento de los estudiantes en América Latina,” Oxford, 1926. Reprinted in *Vispera No. 4*, p.72

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

“...a program of revolutionary and political action... [and as a] ...united front of the toiling masses (workers, peasants, natives of the soil) united with students, intellectuals, revolutionaries, etc.... struggling against Imperialism and [its allies and auxiliaries, which are] the national governing classes in Latin America....”<sup>125</sup>

For it to work, the party, nonetheless, was to have subsidiaries in other Latin American nations. Upon assessing that North American imperialist menace was common to all Latin American countries and that imperialism could not be overthrown without these countries’ political unity, APRA’s revolutionary and political action program appointed five topics in an attempt to consolidate an Indo-American anti-imperialist party. The issues proposed were: an action against U.S. imperialism, unity of Latin America, nationalization of lands and industries, the internationalization of the Panama Canal, and solidarity with all the oppressed peoples and classes of the world. In its conclusion, the article read, “For this, our watchword is to be the following: “Against Yankee Imperialism, for the unity of the peoples of Latin America, for the realization of social justice.””<sup>126</sup>

By 1928, the book “*El antimperialismo y el APRA*” by Haya de la Torre outlined the nascent political movement’s ideological tenets with more clarity. While setting the

---

<sup>125</sup> Haya de la Torre, Victor Raul “What Is The Apra?,” *The Labour Monthly* [London], December, 1926, pp. 756-759; also included, in Spanish as “Que es el A.P.R.A.?” in Haya, V. *El Antimperialismo y el APRA*, pp.97-106

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

grounds of the APRA's disagreements with the Communist Party, the ideological factionalism and existing political contradictions within the student movement also surfaced. Indeed, the book responded to the controversy with the Cuban communist student leader Julio Antonio Mella, who in April that year, replied to the publication of the *Labor Monthly* with an article entitled "What is the ARPA?"<sup>127</sup>

The confrontation between the APRA and the Communists, which had expression within the Student Movement, was a conflict for the monopoly of the anti-imperialist fight in Latin America, in which seemingly, both ideological and geopolitical factors played. While during the early years of Haya's activism (1923-27), he was welcomed in the circles and networks of the Comintern and some of the American and European lefts, the theses of the Comintern's Sixth Congress towards a strategy of "class against class" changed that scenario. As historian Rafael Rojas explains, Haya and his *Aprista* movement were among other social democratic and nationalist alternatives excluded as the Comintern and the Latin American Communist parties abandoned the dialoguing positions of the Bolshevik period.<sup>128</sup>

Haya's proposal to build a—multi-ethnic and multi-class— "broad front" against imperialism that involved the middle classes was among the controversial positions.

---

<sup>127</sup> Mella's reply appeared in "What is the ARPA?" *The Labour Monthly* [London], April 1928. The change in the acronym from APRA to ARPA seems to have been deliberate.

<sup>128</sup> Rojas, Rafael. "Haya, Mella y la división originaria." *Telar: Revista del Instituto Interdisciplinario de Estudios Latinoamericanos* 20 (2018): 45-67.

Pointing at the differential characteristics of *Indo-America's* social classes, Haya considered not only the proletarian class but also the middle classes were both menaced by imperialism. Therefore, the latter's participation, which included the critical role of intellectuals, was necessary for the anti-imperialist fight.<sup>129</sup> Mella strongly criticized this standpoint, arguing the proposed front was a way to isolate the working classes and neglect their hegemonic role in the struggle against imperialism. Moreover, because APRA's broad front represented bourgeois' interests, Mella assured, the so-called intellectual workers were "almost always allies of reactionary national capitalism or instruments and servants of imperialism." In such a way, Mella assured, they represented "a classic traitor of all national movements for true emancipation."<sup>130</sup>

On the other hand, while expressing his coincidence in looking for a Socialist future for Latin America, Haya refuted Lenin's thesis of "Imperialism as the last stage of Capitalism." He argued that while it might have been the last stage at the core countries of industrialism, it was the first stage in countries with a primitive or backward economy. In these cases, he contended, Capitalism arrived under an imperialist form, never establishing manufacturing but extractive industries that created a slow and incomplete development subaltern of developed countries' great industry.<sup>131</sup> Thereby, Haya assured the "impracticability of the soviet model," for *Indo-America's* differential characteristics

---

<sup>129</sup> Haya V. "What Is the Apra?"

<sup>130</sup> Urán and Bidegain, "El Movimiento Estudiantil," *Servicio de Documentación*.

<sup>131</sup> Haya, V. *El antiimperialismo y el APRA*.

showed that the *industrial problem* was inferior to the *agrarian problem*.<sup>132</sup> He also argued that conditions imposed by capitalist imperialism in backward societies caused social classes not to have the strength or structure of predominantly industrial countries. Notoriously, capitalist imperialism weakened the formation of a genuinely proletarian industrial class while also causing regression and destruction of the middle classes.

Ultimately, Haya criticized what he termed the “doctrinal theorizations copied from imperial countries,” which built an image of *Indo-America* as a reflection of Europe’s history and development. These theorizations coupled *Indo-America*’s mental colonialism and “lack of creative spirit,” whereby Haya rejected the “dogmatic and infallible Marxism of the Moscow synods.”<sup>133</sup> Instead, he was appreciative of Marxism as a “dialectical, universal, and dynamic theory” that might aid in understanding *Indo-America*’s social and economic problems. In such appreciation, he claimed, “social justice without Communism and with democracy could be fulfilled in *Indo-America*.” Therefore, Haya advocated for a Latin American socialist humanism not entirely subordinated to the Comintern.<sup>134</sup> On the way of materializing this ideal, APRA’s program was for Haya an “authentic and realistic synthesis,” an essential part of which it was a theory of the “anti-imperialist state.”<sup>135</sup>

---

<sup>132</sup> Haya de la Torre, Víctor Raúl (1977). *Obras completas. Tomo I*. Lima: Editorial Juan Mejía Baca, quoted in Rojas, Rafael. "Haya, Mella y la división originaria," 2008, p. 7.

<sup>133</sup> Haya, V. *El antiimperialismo y el APRA*, p. 251

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8

<sup>135</sup> Haya V. “What Is the Apra?”



Mella reacted to these statements by assuring imperialism was an “international phenomenon,” and its generalities (which confirmed it as the last stage of Capitalism) were invariable in industrial countries and colonial societies alike. In this sense, he insisted that “The Leninist theory of imperialism [was] of universal application, not regional as some revisionists pretend[ed] to prove simplistically.”<sup>136</sup> According to Mella, Haya’s propositions built on his disregard of the proletarian parties in South, Central America and the Caribbean that existed before APRA, and affirmed that for the APRA to say—as Haya was arguing, that Marxism and, therefore, the communist party were exotic to America, it had to “be proven that there [was] no proletariat [in America]; that there was not imperialism with the characteristics enunciated by all Marxists; that the forces of production in America [were] different from Asia and Europe.”<sup>137</sup> Furthermore, Mella went on to say the APRA was “no more than a small group of students” who had grown “out of simple youth speculation” and had “dedicated themselves to attacking, in private, the Russian Revolution, the Communists, and all the truly revolutionary workers.” Mella reiterated, that the Comintern and the USSR were “the vanguard and the bulwark of the socialist movement” and the “pivot of any sincere national emancipation movement.” Ultimately, for Mella, the APRA was no more than a reformist movement, “divisive of the Revolutionary Workers Movement.”<sup>138</sup>

---

<sup>136</sup> Quoted in Rojas, Rafael. "Haya, Mella y la división originaria," p. 63.

<sup>137</sup> Urán and Bidegain, “El Movimiento Estudiantil,” *Servicio de Documentación*, p. 19

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19

The controversy continued and extended over other issues. Among them, Mella dismissed Haya's concepts of nationalization and solidarity and his views on the internationalization of the Panama Canal. In his opinion, Haya's were general and abstract allusions that, consistent with the fact that APRA was clearly and preponderantly a middle-class movement, spoke the language of reformism and populism congruent with that of capitalist states.<sup>139</sup> Mella also confronted Haya's proximity to *indigenismo* and his identification of the anti-imperialist fight of Latin America with an autochthonous past and culture. In so doing, he rejected both Haya's exaltation of a "primitive communism" of Inca origin and his lack of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy by overlooking the fact that imperialism turned the "race problem" into a class conflict.<sup>140</sup> In Mella's view, *Aprismo* was impracticable, and its followers were just "utopic reactionaries."<sup>141</sup>

Overall, while this controversy uncovered one of the faces of the intricate conflicts of the anti-imperialist fight among early twentieth-century Latin American lefts, it also exposed once more the students' movement eclecticism and factionalism. Communist, Socialist, Anarchist, and Liberal currents of thought, had all made part of the

---

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., pp. 19-20

<sup>140</sup> Rojas, Rafael. "Haya, Mella y la división originaria," p.62. Also, in Urán and Bidegain, "El Movimiento Estudiantil," *Servicio de Documentación*, p. 20

<sup>141</sup> Urán and Bidegain, "El Movimiento Estudiantil," *Servicio de Documentación*, p. 20

university reformist spirit that arose in 1918 and would continue to be influential during the following decades in the region's everyday university life.<sup>142</sup>

The very well-known Spanish anti-Stalinist communist intellectual Victor Alba pointed in 1964 the relevance of APRA's contribution to the structuring of a non-communist left in Latin American politics. Seemingly, neither the bloody suppression and proscription of increasingly popular *Aprismo* in Peru—which pushed it to clandestine actions between 1930-45, nor Haya's ideological turns—criticized for capitulating to the oligarchy and conciliating with imperialism, extinguished the reformist effervescence of multi-class movements identified with APRA's early postulates throughout the region.<sup>143</sup> Alba would observe that while the APRA lowered its continental impetus due to the authoritarian wave arising along with the economic and political effects of depression and war, other regional leaders and political movements recognized their *Aprista* ideological indebtedness. Alba comments that although there was no organic connection among them, political movements inspired by APRA claimed to lead their bases to support democratic, nationalist, anti-imperialist, and anti-communist programs to defeat the

---

<sup>142</sup>On the dispute among political-ideological trends for hegemony in the direction of the working class and the intellectual debate within the lefts in Latin America see Camarero, Hernán, and Martín Mangiantini, eds. *El movimiento obrero y las izquierdas en América Latina: Experiencias de lucha, inserción y organización* (Volumen 1 y 2). UNC Press Books, 2018, pp. 11-48. An understanding of the specific influence of anarchism within the University Reform Movement from the broader framework of early twentieth century anarchist-sindicalist movement and in connection with anarchist Italian migrants in Latin America, as explored by Steger, Hanns Albert in *El movimiento estudiantil revolucionario latinoamericano entre las dos Guerras Mundiales*, Vol. 17 Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Dirección General de Difusión Cultural, Departamento de Humanidades, 1972, is referred by Tünnermann, *90 años de la reforma*, p. 46.

<sup>143</sup>Alba, Víctor. *Historia del movimiento obrero en América Latina*. No. 04; HD6530. 5, A5. México: Libreros mexicanos unidos, 1964.

oligarchies. Romulo Betancourt and the Democratic Action Party of Venezuela, Jose Figueres and the Liberation Party of Costa Rica, and Victor Paz Estenssoro and the National Revolutionary Movement in Bolivia were among leaders and political movements who publicly expressed their Aprista ideological roots.<sup>144</sup>

From another left-wing perspective, that of a 1960s *Latinoamericanista* historian, Jorge Abelardo Ramos, the story of Haya de la Torre's capitulation would look slightly different. He would narrate these events as the complete destruction of the university reform generation due to the 1930's crisis. Haya's ideological turns were addressed as a painful "*Aprismo's* riddance of his *Bolivarismo*, *Indoamericanismo*, and anti-imperialism."<sup>145</sup> For Ramos, Haya's and his international disciples' proposals between 1930-1950 represented the *Aprismo's* renunciation to the anti-imperialist fight, embracing instead "the wonders of economic development."<sup>146</sup> In so doing, he concludes that

"The Latin American unity proposed by Bolivar at the time of the criollo landowners would fail, once again, ... [at the hands] of the university petty bourgeoisie whose most notable and tragic expression had been Victor Raul Haya de la Torre."<sup>147</sup>

Not conceding the claim of a seemingly sustained reformist generation's spirit by APRA-derived political movements in the region, noted by Alba, Ramos would comment that

---

<sup>144</sup> Alba, V. *Historia del movimiento obrero*, p. 273-276.

<sup>145</sup> Ramos, J. *Historia de la nación latinoamericana*, p. 417

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, p.418

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 419

“the world crisis of 1930 incubated other national movements, at another level, and with other perspectives.”<sup>148</sup>

While Alba ensured that APRA’s postulates and populist approach influenced practically all left-wing and even centrist parties in the region, APRA’s political neutralization made it easier for communist parties to gain renewed importance in 1930s Latin America.<sup>149</sup> As noted by Donghi, economic depression and war created global skepticism and disenchantment with economic Liberalism. Moreover, political conflicts around alternative solutions to deal with the ensuing social disequilibrium sharpened and strengthened both socialist revolutionary views as well as interventionist political models such as fascism.<sup>150</sup> In this context, while student *gremios* throbbed at the pace of political life, they became quarries for competing political forces from the left and right—some rooted in the old traditionalism. Those forces saw in these *gremios* an unparalleled opportunity to increase their social bases.<sup>151</sup>

---

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> On this matter see Alba, V. *Historia del movimiento obrero*, p. 302; Donghi, Tulio Halperín. *The Contemporary History of Latin America*, pp. 219, 228. Also see Manrique, Nelson. *¡Usted fue aprista!. Bases para una historia crítica del APRA*. CLACSO and Fondo Editorial de la Universidad Católica del Perú, 2009, p. 35.

<sup>150</sup> Donghi, T. *The Contemporary History of Latin America*.

<sup>151</sup> On competing streams of thought in Latin America, and a case in point, how Traditionalism and its variants potentiated radical right-wing ideological innovations such as those of Brazilian *Integralismo* and Mexican *Sinarquismo*, see Davis, Harold Eugene. *Latin American Thought*, Louisiana State University Press, 1972, p. 219.

## 1.5. The University Movement after 1930

During the economic depression, the rise of mass politics in the region, and populism, the university reform movement seemingly swung between triumphs and setbacks, parallel to the pendular evolution of Latin American politics. During 1930-40, the Student Movement held four international Congresses: Mexico, 1931; Costa Rica, 1933; and Santiago de Chile, 1937 and 1943. Ostensibly, as posed by Carlos Tünnermann, the movement lost strength where the middle classes achieved control of political power and might have momentarily dispersed within the social bases of populist regimes. On the other hand, it would have gained vigor where the oligarchies attempted through authoritarian regimes to contain the movement's advancement. In the latter case, the Movement got politicized and bargained with popular political parties to have the student agendas included in their programs.<sup>152</sup>

Seemingly, by the end of the 1940s, the student body had made progress as a social pressure group at the regional level and achieved tangible results. Except in countries dominated by dictatorships (Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Haiti, and Paraguay), the struggle for university autonomy and student participation in university administration (co-government) had relatively triumphed in Latin America.<sup>153</sup> That,

---

<sup>152</sup> Tünnermann, *Noventa años de la Reforma Universitaria*, p. 79.

<sup>153</sup> Contrasting information offered by Peruvian student reformist Luis Alberto Sánchez in 1949 and later by Guatemalan Jorge Mario García-Laguardia in 1973, showcased the regional shifts in university autonomy matters. By 1949, Sanchez commented, University autonomy was deemed to be a) full in Mexico, Guatemala, Cuba, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia; b) semi-full in Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay; c) attenuated in Argentina, Nicaragua and Honduras; and d) non-existent in Haiti and Paraguay. By 1973, however, Garcia-Laguardia commented only six countries

however, was not, in any case, a definitive achievement. These issues were a matter of permanent dispute with the Latin American governments that sought to recover the university's full control, given the students' mounting politicization and belligerence.

By the late 1940s, other student demands had gone in uncertain directions. In a series of conferences convened and published by the *Corporación de Promoción Universitaria* in 1969, Brazilian scholar and politician Darcy Ribeiro—a notable intellectual close to the Catholic students' mobilization, recounted this ambiguity. Ribeiro noted that while populist politics (the 1930s-1940s) had generally represented an opening for popular classes' alliance with progressive sectors of the liberal elite, student demands had found ambivalent answers. Governments' responses to students' demands were tangential and dominated by a modernizing/technical understanding of the university. As explained by Ribeiro, this had "created new problems and perpetuated old claims." Ribeiro's scrutiny stated that while there was indeed an expansion of university access in the region, the university continued to educate, primarily, the children of elites with no actual capacity to produce meaningful social mobility. Ribeiro also realized that while modernizing states introduced renewed teaching methods, they had enriched the curricula with an overvaluation of the booming educational technocracy's entrepreneurial and private ideals. He denounced that a cult of research as a mere imitative procedure, with no commitment to advancing science itself and often without any capacity for original

---

accepted university autonomy (Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Dominican Republic). In the rest of Latin American universities, autonomy had a "restrictive orientation" or was non-existent at all. Sánchez, Luis A. *La universidad latinoamericana*, 1949, and García Laguardia, Jorge Mario. *Legislación universitaria*, 1973, quoted in Tünnermann, *Noventa años de la Reforma Universitaria*, p.100.

research, coupled with the mentioned problems of access, curricula, and teaching methods. Furthermore, Latin American universities had not transformed their traditionally rigid, federative, and autarchic structure, often with consequences in duplicating and wasting administrative, teaching, and science development resources.<sup>154</sup>

The persistence of specific university education issues, the exhaustion of industrialization by the import-substituting-industrialization-ISI model (that characterized the period 1930s-1950s), and Latin American states' embracing of developmental policies, reactivated the student movement by the mid-1950s. The shifting approach to industrialization, which narrowed the benefits of economic growth and aggravated pauperization,<sup>155</sup> was the backdrop for university students' reinvigoration and even radicalization. Beyond narrow campus issues, university students' mobilization increasingly converged with that of the popular sectors. Inevitably, students' transformative vocation made the Student Movement's traditional eclecticism increasingly lean to the political left, within which Communism, despite its strategy of popular fronts, disputed its leadership with Anarchist, Trotskyists, and national-popular movements in ascent.<sup>156</sup>

---

<sup>154</sup> Darcy Ribeiro, "Hacia la nueva reforma," in *Corporación De Promoción Universitaria CPU* No. 18, Santiago de Chile, 1969. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima. The article by Ribeiro had been published previously, by 1967, in *Vispera* No. 4, pp. 84-88

<sup>155</sup> Donghi, Tulio Halperín. *The Contemporary History of Latin America*, pp.253-255

<sup>156</sup> Camarero and Mangiantini, eds. *El movimiento obrero y las izquierdas*, pp. 25-31.



On the international plane, student activism was to unfold under the social and political consequences of the Second World War. It developed amidst the Cold War rival international student organizations contest for regional influence. These included the International Union of Students-IUS, the International Student Conference-ISC, and its Coordinating Secretariat (COSEC).<sup>157</sup>

Revolutionary events in the continent also had an impact. The Cuban Revolution in 1959 certainly strongly influenced the University Movement. For the organized students, it represented a milestone demonstrating that the revolutionary option in Latin America was possible. According to OCLAE, the Revolution marked a new chapter in the political history of the continent's peoples. It "clarified the political struggle, . . . fueled the revolutionary process, . . . and dispelled the myth of the supremacy of imperialism and the inferiority of [the Latin American] peoples."<sup>158</sup>

According to OCLAE's annals, after 1950, four more international congresses marked a new direction in the movement's activism. A 1955 meeting in Montevideo was recorded as the first CLAE (Congress of Latin American Students.) For the continental organization, this meeting's relevance consisted in accomplishing the first stage of organization of the Latin American Student Movement, even if still lacking a defined ideological and political line. Significant in the agenda of the meeting were the

---

<sup>157</sup> Altbach, Philip G. "The Student Internationals. An Analysis of International and Regional Student Organizations. Final Report." (1970). Accessed 3/13/2021 <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED048091.pdf>

<sup>158</sup> OCLAE, *X Aniversario de la OCLAE*, 1976. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima, pp. 15-16.

discussions about the democratization of teaching, the relationship between university problems and the socio-economic situation of the continent, and its demand for education reform. OCLAE claimed three subsequent international congresses gradually achieved ideological definitions that decidedly steered the political aims of the organized continental student body. The Second CLAE in 1957, in La Plata, Argentina, condemned and proclaimed the fight against dictatorial governments. It denounced the imperialist domination and the looting of national wealth and exposed the situation of “low economic development” of Latin American countries.<sup>159</sup> The meeting was also the occasion for creating the *Organizacion de Relaciones Estudiantiles Latinoamericanas* (OREL) as a link between the various student associations of the continent.

The third CLAE was celebrated in Caracas-Venezuela, in 1959, nine months after the ascent of Fidel Castro to power. It declared its enthusiastic support for the Cuban revolution by arguing that its defense constituted “the defense of the true Latin American interests.”<sup>160</sup> Among the more significant resolutions, this congress agreed to advocate for the independence of Puerto Rico, repudiated the work of the OAS-Organization of American States, and formed a Latin American Anti-Dictatorial Front.

A few years later, in 1966, the fourth CLAE was convened in La Habana-Cuba. According to the OCLAE commemorative publication, this congress constituted the

---

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., p. 15

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

concretion of the continental unity ideals inspired on independentist utopias by Simón Bolívar and José Martí, which Latin American students adhered to since the *Cordoba Manifesto*. Moreover, the congress venue was deemed to be a “manifestation of the depth and maturity that the anti-imperialist and revolutionary thought had reached within the Latin American Student Movement.”<sup>161</sup> This congress inaugurated OCLAE as a Latin American organization of students whose relevance, as stated, consisted in its coordinating and unifying role of the anti-imperialist struggle of the Latin American Student Movement. As expressed in the publication, the organization’s objectives were to promote the solidarity and unity of Latin American students in their battle for national liberation and against imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism. Other goals included strengthening ties between the student movement, the working classes, peasants, and popular sectors, overcoming illiteracy, and the democratization of education and student welfare. The fight against the imperialist penetration (cultural and ideological) of the universities was also part of the organization’s founding objectives. This fight included its battling of ISC-COSEC, which OCLAE argued students perceived as a peril for cultural and ideological penetration of universities, and an instrument for both perpetuating Latin American domination and fostering division among the student movement. Finally, the student congress approved some resolutions that covered specific university problems. The OCLAE recognized the importance of the struggles for the reform and democratization of education in the region and presumed students’ increasing understanding that “the situation of higher education in Latin America was only a product

---

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

of the evils of imperial domination.” It also expressed the students’ duty and right to fight alongside their peoples against “Yankee imperialism,” and proclaimed their solidarity with all oppressed and exploited peoples of the world.<sup>162</sup>

Despite the genuinely profound impact of the Cuban revolution in the student movement, OCLAE’s claim concerning the student body’s political unity seems to have been, at best, misleading. While the organization denied legitimacy to a 1961 Latin American Student Congress in Natal Brazil, for being “sponsored by the ISC-COSEC... [in] an open attempt to ... divide the students;” and declared such aims had been a “resounding failure,”<sup>163</sup> seemingly, numerous other factions reckoned it as representative of the student body. Notably, it was a Christian Democrat-directed coalition who, by a majority of one student union, won control of the meeting and rejected the Cuban approach that caused the Marxist’s withdrawal from the meeting.<sup>164</sup> Apparently, in an attempt to affirm ideological unity as the foundation of the student body’s political force, the OCLAE’s commemorative publication obscured the factional fights within the Student Movement. Such fights, not new, had been but the very essence of the movement’s history.

---

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>164</sup> Love, "Sources for the Latin American Student Movement."

Seemingly, the Cuban Revolution's declaration to be Marxist-Leninist caused the region's mobilized students to react in opposing ways. Based on his revision of the USNSA archives, Joseph Love commented in 1967 that the Latin American student movement remained divided. *Fidelistas* and anti-*fidelista* groups fought over the representation of the student body. While *fidelistas* argued that "the popular classes [could] never receive the benefits of higher education until the social revolution ha[d] been accomplished," anti-*fidelistas* in a "more moderate" approach "defend[ed] the "traditional" program of University Reform."<sup>165</sup>

Accounts of Catholic student organizations obtained in a survey in 1962 provide a glimpse of the Latin American Student Movement's internal issues. At the same time, they show Catholic organizations acted as factions within the national movements and delegations. The Venezuelan MUC (Catholic University Movement), ratifying the schism caused by the Cuban corollary, commented in 1962 that "...the last CLAE held in Natal (October 1961), produced the rupture into two blocks of the Latin American student body. The FUC (University Federation of the Central University) [had been] one of the delegations [ who] ... joined the democratic CLAE" (from which the Communists withdrew). On the functioning of CLAE's and delegations' positions, the MUC clarified that

---

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p. 7

“The positions taken in both state and private universities in this as in other international events depend on the control that Christian democracy or Marxism eventually have of one or another *gremio*.”<sup>166</sup>

The Paraguayan JEC (*Juventud Estudiantil Católica*), on the other hand, commented that despite its traditional democratic line,

“The FUP (*Federacion Universitaria de Paraguay*) was somewhat perplexed by the division of the Latin American student body (IV CLAE issue) and support[ed] the reformist and anti-imperialist position that [the FUP] discovers in the concerns of Latin American students.”<sup>167</sup>

Thus, seemingly, the Latin American Student Movement began the 1960s decade with heightened factionalism, though—as per OCLAE’s accounts, the Catholic student organizations’ survey, and various secondary sources—with a strong consensus on reformist demands: advocating university democracy, autonomy, and student co-government, and looking to be an agent of radical social transformations.<sup>168</sup> The Latin American church would seek to increase Catholics’ influence in university, university *gremios*, and society in this context.

---

<sup>166</sup> *Encuestas y Documentos preparatorios para el Congreso Mundial Montevideo MIEC, 1962*, p. 103. Box 138, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>168</sup> Ordorika and Gil, *Cien años de movimientos estudiantiles*, 2019; Ordorika, “Student movements and politics,” 2021.

## 1.6 Conclusions of the Chapter

The Cordoba 1918 uprising for university reform propelled a regional wave of mobilizations throughout Latin America that concretized the early 20th-century unrest among the region's university youth. Claims for university reform among Latin American student movements encompassed calls for university autonomy, student co-government, the democratization of access, modernization of teaching and curricula, and demand for increased relation between university and society. The latter entailed a generalized belief in the university's mission to conduct the destiny of societies, which made students mobilized around issues beyond campus-specific matters.

The absence of solid intermediate organizations and popular political parties in early 20<sup>th</sup> century oligarchical Latin American societies made university movements develop *gremial* structures, become strong political actors, and have significant leverage in front of society and state institutions. Features of student *gremialismo* remained over time. Being an expression of the middle-class rejection of oligarchical social conditions that undermined opportunities for social ascent, Latin American student movements, fueled by the reformist spirit, found inspiration too in an intellectual-political environment created by Hispanic-American *pensadores* of the 1900s generation. This generation of *pensadores* would lay the foundations of what decades later developed as Latin American Philosophy. Anti-positivist, anti-oligarchical and anti-imperialist stands, and integrationist aspirations under the invocation of a common *Patria* made part of a claim of cultural authenticity and economic and political autonomy for Latin America.

This all would take shape under a stream of thought known as *Latinoamericanismo*. Seemingly, despite their factionalism and ideological eclecticism, the Latin American student movements of the early 20th century constituted a solid social and political base of this stream of thought. They seemed to share fundamental tenets of the *latinoamericanistas*' aspirations that found expressions among the political lefts and in innovative experiments such as that of APRA, with significant visibility in the political arena until the 1930s. While shifting political conditions and generational ruptures caused many student movements to lose mobilizing strength within populist regimes, student movements reactivated by the mid-1950. They revitalized while also waving the flags of university reform and social justice that then, as before, had made them close to workers and peasant mobilizations.

Apparently, efforts for regional networking since early in the century that concretized in Iberian-American and later Latin-American student congresses, and later in an international (Latin American) organization of students, facilitated the genesis and growth of common identity elements. These evolved in permanent tension with national particularities and the movements' persistent factionalism and eclecticism. During the 1960-decade, Catholic students claimed to be heirs of this history and mobilization. At the onset of this decade, organized lay Catholics did not have a strong presence in university *gremios*. However, some of them, predominantly Christian Democrat young cadres, formed minority factions within these *gremios*. Marxists' dominance of the university *gremios* concerned the Latin American Catholic church. Given the relevance of the university and *gremios* and the role they were to play in the historical conjuncture



that called for social change, the Latin American episcopate made significant efforts to increase its presence in university life. The strengthening of University Catholic Action movements and forming a Catholic intellectual elite would be considered an urgent necessity.

## **CHAPTER 2. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND ITS PRESENCE IN LATIN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES**

Chapter 2 addresses the transformations within Catholic thought and the institutional Catholic church that laid the ground for the rise and growth of Latin American Catholic student organizations in the 1960s. The chapter goes back to the late 19th century to show the prevalence in the church's official stands of Social-Catholic approaches that recognized autonomy to social life and prominence to the role of the laity in evangelizing tasks. It shows that the rise of Catholic Action in the early 20th-century resulted from these shifting views. The chapter argues that Catholic Action was a church effort to gather and put under control lay Catholic activism that remained divided around the social question and secularization. At the same time, it stimulated the laity's role in the re-Christianization of societies. Under the impulse of Catholic Action, Catholic student organizations' initiatives and an international body that grouped them—Pax Romana, would thrive.

In the context of the contentious rise in Europe of progressive trends within Catholic thought and apostolic work during the interwar period, the chapter shows the historical definition of two distinct Catholic Action models. General and Specialized were the two models of Catholic Action, one more conservative, another more progressive. The chapter examines the unfolding of both Catholic Action models in Latin America with different chronologies. It also addresses the historical evolution in Latin

America of regional (Iberian-American) and transatlantic (Pax Romana-MIEC and JECI) Catholic student networks. In analyzing Latin Americans' participation in these networks, the chapter unveils that youth Catholic student organizations' stands converged on some crucial matters with their Latin American Student Movement peers. Besides the *university reformist* aspiration, this convergence related to some crucial Latin American social questions. In so doing, Catholic student organizations became one of the first spaces of convergence (and experimentation) between Hispanic-American and *Latinoamericanista* ideas and the theological and apostolic renewal steaming from Europe.

The chapter examines the intellectual influence of some progressive Catholic thinkers, lay activists, and clergy in Latin American Catholic Action unfolding. It shows strong evidence of this influence among Chilean and Brazilian movements. The chapter closes with the anticipation of Brazilian Catholic student movements' theological, political, and pedagogical reflection that led towards their radicalization. It contends that Brazilian corollaries are the crystallization of a first example of the various experiences in which student *gremialismo* represented the convergence between Catholic and political militancy in Latin America.

## 2.1 From Social Catholicism to Interwar Catholic Progressivism: Catholic Action and the Pioneering Efforts of Catholic Students' International Networks

The advance of modern societies throughout the 19th-century posed crucial concerns to the Catholic church. The rise of mass societies and the secularizing threats posed by liberalism, positivism, socialism, and the industrializing world caused serious divisiveness among Catholics. Moderately put under control—that divisiveness—through the cycle of papal encyclicals that followed the 1864 *Syllabus Errorum*, there was much to do to face the advance of secularization and rectify—with a Christian direction—societies' course. The encyclical *Rerum Novarum* by Leo XIII (1891) is among the more relevant in this effort. *Rerum Novarum* developed what became known as the Social Doctrine of the Church. This was a revisionist response of Catholic doctrine to unify Catholic principles in times of increasing lay activism and divisive opinions about both the working-class question and the widespread acceptance of liberal and scientific beliefs.<sup>169</sup>

Also known as the Magna Carta of Social Catholicism, *Rerum Novarum*, which translates “of new things,” responded to growing competition with socialism for the loyalty of the growing working class. *Rerum Novarum* pioneered the exaltation of the laity's role to aid in the church's evangelizing task. It also transformed pastoral work by pointing at the need to restore priests' contact with the world and build a closer

---

<sup>169</sup> Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*.

relationship with their parishioners. In particular, it expressed the need for pastoral engagement with the working classes and appealed for support from the laity against the secularized state.<sup>170</sup> Late nineteenth-century pastoral work under these lines pushed a new conception of the parish as a group of social workers involved in a hierarchical relationship in which the priests acted as directors and the laity as assistants. These Catholic works coordinated at the national levels were an important prelude to Catholic Action.<sup>171</sup>

In the context of interwar Europe, the official promulgation of Catholic Action in 1923 by Pope Pius XI built on *Rerum Novarum*'s recognition of the laity's role in the apostolate.<sup>172</sup> Catholic Action consolidated itself as an umbrella organization for new and existing movements whose ideological diversity otherwise menaced Catholic unity.

---

<sup>170</sup> Holland, Joe. *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: The Popes Confront the Industrial Age, 1740-1958*. Paulist Press, 2003.

<sup>171</sup> Bidegain de Uran, Ana María. "La organización de movimientos de juventud de acción católica en América Latina. Los casos de los obreros y universitarios en Brasil y en Colombia entre 1930-1955." PhD diss., UCL-Université Catholique de Louvain, 1979. p. 98

<sup>172</sup> Here we adhere to the chronology provided by Horn on the evolution for several decades of Catholic Action as a Vatican's effort to impose ecclesiastical authority over the Catholic social movement. While by 1902, during Leo XIII papacy, a shift in the Vatican approach for tightening this control was already ongoing, it was a gradual process that counted on the support of various pontificates. Pius X (1903-14) gave a step forward by creating the *Giunta Direttiva dell'Azione Cattolica Italiana*. Later, between 1915 and 1919, Benedict XV enabled the use of the term Catholic Action in "the modern sense of the word." Quoting Renato Moro "Azione Cattolica," in Francesco Traniello and Giorgio Campanini (eds), *Dizionario storico del movimento cattolico in Italia, 1860-1980* (Genoa: Marietti, 1981), Horn points at Benedict XV's pioneering "differentiation between [on one hand] a strictly political organization, composed of Catholics but nominally independent from the Vatican and the episcopacy... and [on the other hand] an organization with the specific task to carry out apostolic and therefore religious, social, and cultural tasks, directly dependent on the Vatican and the episcopacy." While Benedict XV's reforms constituted the basic pattern for its functioning during the following decades, Pius XI's reforms culminated in October 1923 with new and streamlined statutes, are recognized to be the real take-off of this initiative. Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, pp. 36-38.

<sup>173</sup> Catholic Action achieved the twofold goal of subordinating the ideologically divisive Catholic activism while also investing it with the historical mission of becoming a social force for the Catholic world’s re-Christianization. From that moment on, officially, the laity played an active role in shaping the realm of the *grande politica* – “the politics of the common good,” that is, in shaping “the political conscience of citizens in a Christian and Catholic manner.” <sup>174</sup> Pope Pius XI enunciated the action in the realm of the *grande politica* in contrast to any action in the *piccola politica*– “the politics of political parties,” as a means to reiterate—in the already constraining political environment of Italian fascism— the promulgated non-partisan nature of this organization.

European Catholic Action movements outnumbered and became a mass social movement during the interwar years. Catholic philosophical and theological reflection paralleled social activism and stood out by its saliency and vivacity. These transformations obeyed not only the papal blessing of these apostolic tasks but, also, the moral crisis surfacing at the time. Intellectual and activist movements comprised Catholics who tried to make sense of their historical time and act against the alleged root cause of the horrors of the war: secularization. For that reason, Catholic Action movements embraced the Vatican’s push to move from a “Catholicism of position” to a

---

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., pp. 32-33, 37-38.

<sup>174</sup> Cited in Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, p. 43

“Catholicism of movement,” as stated by Etienne Fouilloux.<sup>175</sup> This push encompassed an overall new understanding for which confrontation was the best form of defense.<sup>176</sup>

In theological terms, two major innovations accompanied interwar Vatican endeavors to deal with what was called the “crisis of modernism” and the repercussions of the war. First, the call upon Christians to reconquer Europe’s souls for “Christ the King” and, accordingly, found the “Kingdom of Christ.” The second was the theological accent on “the primacy of the spiritual,” which primarily emphasized Catholics’ “apostolate.”<sup>177</sup> The revitalization of these concepts wholly fitted into the Church’s aspiration to influence the realm of the *grande politica*. It gave shape to the birth of a New Christendom, much more sensitive to the working classes’ suffering and distress in the living sequels of the war and the wake of the Great Depression, and much more responsive to their needs. Pius XI’s theological innovations prompted multiple and diverging interpretations and, even if unintended, favored progressive changes within Catholic thought. This is, as far as the move towards a Catholicism of Movement received equivalent responses within the conservative corporatist sectors of the Church and the laity, as it also did among emerging more progressive stands.

---

<sup>175</sup> Cited in Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, p. 41. Originally discussed in Fouilloux, Etienne “Le Catholicisme,” in Mayeur, Jean Marie, ed. *Guerres mondiales et totalitarismes:(1914-1958)*. Vol. 12. Desclée, 1990.

<sup>176</sup> Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, pp. 41-45, 56.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54-62

Two distinct models of Catholic Action arose from this manifold interpretation. One was the Italian Catholic Action (later known as General Catholic Action-GCA). The other was the Franco-Belgian model (later known as Specialized Catholic Action-SCA). These two models emerged from different lay-activist trajectories and evolved with distinct apostolic approaches and ideological commitments.

On the one hand, GCA arose from lay organizations' experience with a defensive faith approach. In Italy, it was put under ecclesiastical control in the shifting dynamics of the Vatican's dissolution (1904) of the organization *Opera dei Congressi e dei Comitati Cattolici* (founded in 1874). In its stead, Pope Benedict XV established the *Giunta Direttiva dell'Azione Cattolica Italiana*, in 1915. While building on the *Opera dei Congressi's* approach to Catholic activism beyond the traditional emphasis on charity and welfare, the *Giunta Direttiva dell'Azione Cattolica Italiana* broke the former organization's traditional support for the laity's autonomy. Instead, it tightened control and subordination of the laity to the clergy and structured the laity's activism by gender and age. Men, women, and youth, without distinctions of social background or profession, constituted the basis of parish groups that required the local bishop's approval for its functioning.<sup>178</sup> The years of Catholic Action's official promulgation under Pius XI (1923) coincided with the wake of Italian fascism. This motivated acute disputes between the Holy See and the fascist state over the education of the youth and its loyalty and subordination. Out of the intricate negotiations, the Vatican reorganized Catholic Action

---

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., p.37



in 1932 under even stricter clerical control, aligning it with traditional centralization and hierarchization and restricting any political involvement, though frequently in sync with corporatist views. Catholic Action achieved recognition by the Italian fascist state but only in a diocesan rather than an organizational form. Thus, lay parish groups regularly functioned in four branches by gender/age groups (adult men and women and male and female youth), focusing primarily on piety and liturgy. They were put under the control of clerical advisors, in turn, overseen by the bishops of each diocese.<sup>179</sup>

On the other hand, SCA was born from the pioneering pastoral experience of Fr. Joseph Cardijn in Brussels-Belgium among young workers, with whom he formed the more progressive *Jeunesse Ouvriere Chrétienne* JOC (1917). Belgian organizations, which developed both francophone and Flemish components and later a French counterpart too, evolved in the context of advanced industrialization where a growing de-Christianized proletariat dialogued with Marxism and Communism. Under the influence of these organizations' empirical work, the SCA developed a distinctive method and features that distinguished it from the general model-GCA. It achieved an organizational form, gained greater laity autonomy from the clergy's authority, and was structured according to the militants' socio-professional occupation.<sup>180</sup>

---

<sup>179</sup> Holbrook, Joseph. "Catholic Student Movements in Latin America: Cuba and Brazil, 1920s to 1960s." PhD diss. (2013). p. 53-58

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

Following JOC's structure and functioning, since the 1930s, other *specialized* groups increasingly formed among young men and women with different occupations and class origins. That was the case of JAC (Young Catholic farmers- later called MIJARC), JIC (Young Independent Catholics), and JEC (Young Catholic Students). In some regions, including Latin America, JEC was reserved for secondary students, while JUC gathered University students.<sup>181</sup>

SCA groupings relied greatly on educational work with didactic innovations that aided in giving form to a three-step methodological principle, later known as Review of Life Method-RLM. This was an inductive methodology that prompted militants to *see* (their social realities), *judge* (what they saw, applying Christian principles), and *act* (transforming their realities in pursuit of re-Christianizing their *milieu*). Sparked from the critical recognition of the link between industrialization and secularization, this method (RLM) built upon the fundamental belief that re-Christianizing the working classes was a task to be accomplished by the working class itself. Therefore, the method pointed out that it was the young workers' role to acknowledge and act over the conditions that determined their needs, whether cultural, political, or spiritual.<sup>182</sup> An early revolutionary belief that the working-class self-liberation was to be accomplished *among* themselves,

---

<sup>181</sup> Evidence from the London-based Catholic newspaper *Catholic Herald* shows that while in her international tours, Belgium activist Christine de Hemptinne, president of the FIJFC, convened young women from all backgrounds to form these organizations as early as 1937. However, it is suggested that by the end of the 1920s, they already existed. Since the Second World War hindered, in many ways, Catholic youth's activism, these organizations' growth and expansion mainly occurred after the war. [http://archive-  
uat.catholicherald.co.uk/article/23rd-december-1937/11/catholic-action-call-to-girls](http://archive-uat.catholicherald.co.uk/article/23rd-december-1937/11/catholic-action-call-to-girls)

<sup>182</sup> Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, pp. 16-17

by themselves, and *for* themselves was to have critical resonance in the future Latin American unfolding of the method.<sup>183</sup>

Furthermore, developing in a critical moment of Catholic thought renovation known as the *Second Renaissance of Catholic thought*, SCA became increasingly attentive to European progressive Catholicism ventures.<sup>184</sup> During the 1930s and 1940s, thinkers such as Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier, and theologians of the *Nouvelle Théologie*, such as Yves Congar, Henri de Lubac, and Marie Chenu, became very influential in shaping future *specialized* movements around the Catholic world.

GCA was the predominant model propagated internationally through Vatican institutional channels. For one, as historian Gerd-Rainer Horn notes, the Italian experience's significance to the Catholic world made Italian debates and realities exceptionally influential over the church worldwide. For another, although the JOC experience received Vatican approval (1925) and continuous support since the 1930s, its

---

<sup>183</sup> Previous reflections on this matter are published in Londoño-Ardila, Sandra; "Consciousness-raising and Liberation: The Latin American Progressive-Catholic Student Movements and the Regional Version of the Revision of Life Method (1955–1968)." *Journal of World Christianity* 22 October 2019; 9 (2): 151–170. doi: <https://doi.org/10.5325/jworlchri.9.2.0151>

<sup>184</sup> Pius XI's innovation during the interwar years consisted of the revitalization of concepts that had a long history within Catholic theology. In the wake of this innovation, a return to the sources and a renewal of patristic, biblical, and liturgical studies occurred beyond the search for apologetic arguments. Instead, this return sought to "discover what new things" the sources could teach Catholics in the new historical contexts they were living in, strongly shaped by the war's horrors. The return to the sources, along with a turn towards mysticism and a revived interest in the life and person of Jesus Christ, offered an opening for progressive Catholic theologians to challenge dogmatic and single-minded interpretations of biblical texts encouraged by conservative reactions drawing from neo-Thomism and neo-scholasticism. The term Second Renaissance to allude to this opening and intellectual development is borrowed from Gerd-Rainer Horn's interpretation. Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, pp. 62-80.

evolution in France frequently raised distrust among national hierarchies. Growing autonomy and self-determination in the practice of the method by faithful circles of the French JOC tended to emphasize their character as trade union organizations interested in responding to proletarian demands. This feature increased their tendency to radicalize and lean to the political left.<sup>185</sup> Because of this reason, national Catholic hierarchies, among which traditional and defensive approaches predominated, showed disinterest when not explicitly hampering this model of the lay apostolate.<sup>186</sup> Thus, GCA became the more institutional line for the laity's apostolate. In contrast, the SCA grew, first, through small emulation of pastoral work experiments that reproduced *the method* as a core element of their activism and, starting in the mid-1940s, through the action of an SCA informal network that had begun to grow.<sup>187</sup>

---

<sup>185</sup> For broader insights on the origins of the Jeunesse Ouvriere Chrétienne and of Specialized Catholic Action movements overall, in addition to considering Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, 2008, see: Cole-Arnal, Oscar "Shaping Young Proletarians into Militant Christians: The Pioneer Phase of the JOC in France and Quebec", *Journal of Contemporary History*, 1997, Vol 32(4), 509-526; or Coutrot, Aline, "Youth Movements in France in the 1930s," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol 5 (1) 23-35, 1970.

<sup>186</sup> Different reception of the Specialized approach in Latin America is observed, for instance, through the Colombian vs. Chilean and Brazilian cases. While the Archbishop of Bogota in 1941 hampered the creation of a university students' movement, in Brazil and Chile, in contrast, early circulation of Catholic progressive thought and knowledge of the method permitted existing Catholic university student associations to experiment with the specialized approach since the early 1940s.

<sup>187</sup> Gigacz, Stefan Robert. "The Leaven in the Council: Joseph Cardijn and the Jocist Network at Vatican II." University of Divinity AU, Diss. 2018, pp 64-68. The JOC experience received continuous Vatican support since the early 1930s. In the 1931 encyclical, *Quadagesimo Anno*, Pius XI—making almost explicit reference to it—prized the "marvelous zeal" of "massed companies of young workers... striving ...to gain their comrades for Christ." Pius XII's blessing of the movement in the early months of his pontificate, and his consecration of a growing number of bishops drawn from SCA movements, were also signs of this steady support. Cross-movement support and experience exchange resulted in an informal SCA network, energized primarily by the proselytism of Mons. Cardijn's himself, and Belgian, French, and Canadian (Quebec) movements. After 1950, when the specialization had already started expanding in Latin America, and particularly after the World Congresses on the Lay Apostolate 1951 and 1957, Latin American progressive bishops and specialized movements started partaking of this informal network.

Along with Catholic Action's propagation during the 1920s and 1930s, Catholic students' international organizations emerged. They built on early experiments that traced back to the 1887 formation of *l'Union Internationale des Etudiants Catholiques* pioneered by Georges de Montenach, then President of the *Société des Étudiants Suisses*, and Albert du Mun of *l'Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Française*.<sup>188</sup> The Union succumbed to the political conflicts surrounding the Roman Question;<sup>189</sup> and further attempts to organize itself in the decade of 1900 proved unsuccessful. It was in 1921, amidst the sequels of the war, that an international organization of university students finally crystallized. Catholic student associations in countries that remained neutral during the Great War—Switzerland, Spain, and Holland—made a call for the resurgence of Montenach's initiative. IMCS (International Movement of Catholic Students) or its French/Spanish acronym MIEC (*Mouvement International d'Etudiants Catholiques/ Movimiento Internacional de Estudiantes Catolicos*)-PAX ROMANA was the name of the new organization created with the approval of Pope Benedict XV who summoned other seventeen European countries, the United States and Argentina.<sup>190</sup>

---

<sup>188</sup> Ahern, Kevin. *Structures of grace: Catholic organizations serving the global common good*. Orbis Books, 2015, p.141

<sup>189</sup> Scott, Ivan. *The Roman Question and the Powers, 1848–1865*. Springer, 2012.

<sup>190</sup> Pelegri, Buenaventura, *JECI MIEC: Su opción, su pedagogía*, Centro de Documentación del MIEC-JECI, Lima, 1978, p. 3-4. SLA-CLP Repository. Also, Ahern, Kevin. *Structures of grace*, p. 142. European member countries were England, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Czechoslovakia, and Switzerland.

As was also the case of Catholic Action, Pius XI's endorsement of the organization's objectives admonished it to be "strictly religious and professional." While concerned with social questions, it was expected to develop a "non-political" mission. Four goals defined this organization since 1921. First, to spread the "Catholic ideal in all branches and activities of student life." Second, "to repudiate all liberal compromises and submit itself to the direction of the Catholic doctrinal authority." Third, to make possible "exchanges of opinions of Catholic student groups in different countries to facilitate mutual understanding." And fourth, "to encourage the study of vital questions in religion."<sup>191</sup> To achieve these objectives, a Fribourg-headquartered Secretariat was created with a local Swiss priest as Secretary-General, and a lay student president elected out of the MIEC national associates.

Fr. Buenaventura Pelegri, Latin American advisor of Catholic Movements in 1969, highlighted the significance of MIEC-Pax Romana's historical action in two primary areas. The first was the development of annual congresses and study sessions to reflect on problems of interest to Catholic students. The second was the offering of multiple services to Catholic students worldwide. Some of these services were related to aiding students' urgent needs in the aftermath of the first and second world wars, facilitating worldwide exchanges between students, and offering scholarships in Europe for students from developing countries.<sup>192</sup>

---

<sup>191</sup> Cited in Ahern, Kevin. *Structures of grace*, p. 153

<sup>192</sup> Pelegri, *JECI MIEC: Su opcion, su pedagogia*, p. 5

## 2.2. Latin American Christendom and early unfolding of Catholic Action.

Catholic Action in Latin America was propagated institutionally within a conservative and hierarchical church that tended to reproduce what was called a “Christendom model.”<sup>193</sup> That is a church model whose historical unfolding since colonial times had been linked to political power, first to the empire and, later, to the state in republican times. Despite the shared corollaries of the liberal reforms—most commonly between 1850-1900, which left weakened national churches, a series of factors sustained the Catholic institution in the region. The *romanization* of the church, an abundance of sincere Catholic affiliation among a majority of the population, and the

---

<sup>193</sup> Pablo Richard, Chilean priest, a member of *Cristianos para el Socialismo* in Chile until his exile in 1973, and later on devoted to educating pastoral agents/workers in Latin America, explained in the early 1980s the opposite meaning of two analytical concepts to designate the transformations underway within the Latin American Church. As a result of the commitment to a Liberationist Christianity that progressive Christians undertook, these analytical concepts denoted two historical models for “being church.” A Christendom model opposed the Popular Church or Church of the Poor model. This understanding became practically universal within the cultural-political spheres in which this Liberationist Christianity developed. Christendom, asserts Richard, is a historical church model “in which the hierarchy (the ecclesiastical authority) attempts to insert the church into the whole of society through the social and political power of the ruling classes while organizing the church internally according to the same models of domination. (...) The church-power relationship is Christendom’s fundamental structure, which orients the church’s presence in society.” On the contrary, the Popular Church model “attempts to insert the church into the whole of society through the oppressed groups and exploited classes, while organizing the church internally according to relationships based on fraternity and service.” Richard’s central thesis was that Christendom was in crisis in Latin America, and a Popular Church was being born; a transition that entailed the shifting of “the institutional church away from the ruling classes and power structures toward the more impoverished and oppressed sectors of society.” Richard, Pablo. “Religion and Democracy: The Church of the Poor in Central America.” *Alternatives* 13, no. 3 (1988): 357-378, p. 1-2. Richard’s original arguments appeared in Richard, Pablo, *Morte das Cristiandades e nascimento da Igreja: análise histórica e interpretação teológica da Igreja na América Latina*. Ed. Paulinas, 1984.

frequent alliance of the church with conservative oligarchies upheld the institution and allowed the continuity of this church model.<sup>194</sup>

At the turn of the 20th century, Liberal reforms had left a concerning clergy deficit. Latin American churches tackled this deficit through the coming from Europe of priests and both male and female religious congregations sent by the Vatican. Both the clergy elite's education in the *Colegio Pío Latino Americano* (founded in Rome, in 1858) and, later, the First Plenary Latin American Council (Rome, 1899) sealed the Latin American clergy's obedience to papal lines.<sup>195</sup> These lines sought to defend the church against ideological foes and to correct societies' secular turn following Christian principles.

Embracing predominantly a defensive faith approach and aligned with an *Integralist* view, although in permanent tension with other currents of Catholic thought, Latin American lay activism developed since the latter decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>196</sup> Similar to Europe, where lay activism and association grew out of mass

---

<sup>194</sup> *Romanization* refers the process of institutional centralization and unification of the Catholic Church around the Roman Curia and obedience to the Pope. In Latin America, the process of Romanization entailed the end of the *patronato* system (which had turned the kings of Spain and Portugal—and later the emperor of Brazil—into "patrons" of the Church), and the inauguration of papal concordats as a model for church-state relations. Roux, Rodolfo R. de. "La romanización de la Iglesia católica en América Latina: una estrategia de larga duración." *Pro-Posições* 25, no. 1 (2014): 31-54. For a broader understanding of the Church's situation in the midst of the liberal reforms, see Beozzo, Jose Oscar "The Church and the Liberal States," in Dussel, Enrique. *The Church in Latin America, 1492-1992*. Oates & Burns, 1992, pp. 117-138.

<sup>195</sup> Roux, R. "La romanización de la Iglesia," p. 37

<sup>196</sup> *Integralism*, a trend within Ultramontanism, is described by Stephen Andes as a European theology developed in reaction to secularization that "born from Neo-Thomism [that] united religiosity, social work and civic activism," sought to—using Pope Pius X words, "restore all things in Christs." Andes, Stephen



politics' transformations and peaked in the preamble of *Rerum Novarum* (1891), the Latin American laity also became organized. Latin American churches recruited students and workers to influence the building of Christian social orders and resist the secularizing impulse of the liberal states. Predominantly, national churches and the organized laity abided by Vatican guidelines. The church's leaders observed a diplomatic approach towards the states, and lay participation put into use liberal democratic institutions.<sup>197</sup> As young university students and workers of Catholic affiliation took a leading role between the 1850s-1920s in creating a Catholic press and Christian unions, Social-Christian thought started growing and gaining certain influence.<sup>198</sup> However, it was not until the 1930s, with the regional propagation of Catholic Action, that Social-Catholic thought

---

JC. *The Vatican and Catholic Activism in Mexico and Chile: The politics of transnational catholicism, 1920-1940*. OUP Oxford, 2014, pp. 18-19. On tensions, disputes, and controversy among Ultramontanist, Liberal Catholic, and Social Catholic currents of Catholic thought see Holland, J. *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, pp. 33-47; 170-172

<sup>197</sup> As an exception to this statement with important repercussions throughout the region, the Mexican is a case of contrast. The Cristero Rebellion (1926-29) offers evidence of how Catholic activists exercised armed opposition to the secular state. The regional reactions show how other Latin American states feared similar corollaries and sought to prevent them. Stephan Andes raises an important point in arguing that the Church-state conflict and resistance to the secular state shifted Catholics' focus away from the social question in Mexico and Chile. Andes, S. *The Vatican and Catholic Activism in Mexico and Chile*.

<sup>198</sup>In the context of a strongly hierarchical church predominantly under a *Integralist* approach, young people and adults, commonly linked to the upper social classes, formed "the laity" of the Catholic Church. They led the defense of Catholicism in fields such as the press, university teaching, and social assistance. Examples include, in Argentina, Felix Frias's founding the newspapers "La Religion" (1853) and "El Orden" (1855). He also started the "Argentine Catholic Association" and formed the first "Vincentian Conferences" to help the poor. In Ecuador, Dr. Julio Natovelle starts the "Catholic Youth Association" in 1884. Jacobs, Andrés. *Memorias de los Movimientos MIEC-JECI*, Box 267 SLA-CLP Repository, Quito, p. 2. After the promulgation of *Rerum Novarum*, other lay organizations showed greater appropriation of Social Catholic approaches which, however, clashed with the predominant conservative and hierarchical stands of the Latin American churches. Examples include the short-lived *Central Sindical Cristiana* in Argentina, and the pastoral action of F. Vives del Solar in Chile, both during the first decade of the new century. These, among other examples, constitute relevant antecedents for the rise of Social Christian thought and movement in Latin America. Alba, V. *Historia del movimiento obrero*, p. 304.

gained greater notoriety and became relevant in creating movements, unions, and educational institutions.<sup>199</sup>

The 1930s were the years of Catholic Action's institutional propagation throughout Latin America, predominantly under the General Italian model. Besides already exposed factors, the predominance of the spread of the General model in the region was related to the education of the clergy in the *Colegio Pio Latinoamericano* in Rome. Missionaries and local clergy commonly propagated the Colegio's model, which was the Catholic Action experience they had been most in contact with.

Catholic Action's 1930s propagation built upon the pioneering experience of lay organizations that had emerged at the turn of the century as a byproduct of *Rerum Novarum*. It was also promoted by other groundbreaking organizations led by clergy members who, in most cases, had recently arrived from studying abroad. The institutional inauguration of Catholic Action throughout Latin America subsumed these previous experiences and provided an umbrella organization for its implementation and functioning. That was, for instance, the case of the precursor pastoral work by military vicar Monsignor Rafael Edwards and his formation, as early as 1921, of the Feminine Catholic Action in Chile. The same went for the 1928 renewal, inspired by a Catholic Action spirit, of the Chilean *Asociación Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos-ANEC*, formed by Fr. Julio Restat in 1915. The ANEC renovation occurred under the leadership

---

<sup>199</sup> Roux, R. "La romanización de la Iglesia," p. 46

of Fr. Oscar Larson—recently arrived from Louvain.<sup>200</sup> A similar development was the creation in Rio de Janeiro of the Magazine *Ordem* and the *Centro Dom Vital* by Jackson de Figueredo, in 1921-22, followed by the archbishop of Rio de Janeiro Dom Sebastiao Leme's publication of a book on Catholic Action's organization and functioning, in 1923. Another instance was the creation in Recife of the *Uniao Dos Moccos Catolicos* in 1928 by Dom Joao Batista Portocarrero Costa, who built upon the antecedent of the *União Católica* created in 1910 in Rio de Janeiro by Fr. Julio Maria.<sup>201</sup> Significant too is the case of the early creation in Mexico of the *Union Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos-UNEC* in 1926. A reaction to the church-state conflict of 1926-1929, the Mexican UNEC came to be remembered as the church's first successful organized presence in the student world in Latin America.<sup>202</sup>

In subsequent years, following the aforementioned four-branch model divided by gender and age, national ecclesiastical hierarchies throughout Latin America led the institutional inauguration of Catholic Action, organized by parish-based groups. Official inauguration occurred in Venezuela in 1925; Mexico in 1929; Ecuador in 1930; Chile and Argentina in 1931; Brazil in 1932; Colombia in 1933; Uruguay in 1934; and Bolivia in

---

<sup>200</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p. 43

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, p.3, 43, 52

<sup>202</sup> Cited in Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p. 38. Originally appeared in Francisco Merino Rodriguez. "La Pastoral Estudiantil Mexicana, su evolución y su situación actual." *Boletín EJUC* # 5, 1975.

1939.<sup>203</sup> A case of late official promulgation occurred in Cuba in 1940, although the early formation of the *Juventud Católica Cubana* dated back to 1928.<sup>204</sup>

Other institutional channels facilitated Catholic Action's propagation. Pontifical letters to the Latin-American episcopacy frequently instructed on the necessity and conditions for developing the program under the leadership of local hierarchies and respecting the limits of and possibilities for Catholics' political participation. Notable about these letters was the explicit reference to Catholic Action's being above and outside the political terrain, even when acknowledging that political parties might use Christian cadres' formation. Also relevant was the Vatican's call to the youth, especially students, in whose hands, the holy father considered, the future rested.<sup>205</sup> The regional dissemination of specialized literature also served to shape the laity's role within the church. Written works such as those by Luigi Civardi, E. Gueri, Paul Dabin, and, later, by Joseph Cardijn, greatly influenced local churches at different levels. Dissemination of this literature followed regional patterns of propagation of ideas. Commonly, it was initiated with the reading of these works by the church's elite members and followed by their reproduction in conferences, study circles, and local publications.<sup>206</sup>

---

<sup>203</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, pp. 39-77

<sup>204</sup> Holbrook, "Catholic Student Movements in Latin America," p. 92

<sup>205</sup> Bidegain, "La organización de movimientos de juventud," pp. 57, 116-117

<sup>206</sup> Ibid. This will be a significant pattern of ideas' dissemination in the region. Its repetition over time suggests the importance of a greater understanding of centers, peripheries, and levels in the continent's written culture circulation.

European clergy and lay promoters of Catholic Action also accomplished a relevant role in this expansion. European priests, leaders of the *Jeunesse Ouvriere Christiane- JOC*, the *Fédération Internationale des Jeunesses Féminines Catholiques- FIJFC*, and later, members of the international network of Pax Romana-MIEC, toured the region giving courses on Catholic Action and advocating its expansion. Sources researched by Bidegain provide evidence of Jesuit Paul Dabin's visit to Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, and Santiago de Chile in 1936 to teach courses on Catholic Action. Dabin's courses built on the doctrinal corpus available since the First Vatican Council, pointing at the Vatican's interest concerning the engagement of the laity as collaborators under the hierarchy's authority. It emphasized Pius IX's denunciation and condemnation of "the dangers of revolutions and the invitation to the faithful to fight them with all their might."<sup>207</sup> Following Leo XIII's apostolic teachings, Dabin also promoted Catholic Action as a vast movement destined to "collect under the sign of charity and justice, the working classes who had been put on guard against the poison of theories subversive of the social order." Moreover, Dabin underscored Pope Benedict's XV's teachings regarding the necessary superior advice to develop the lay apostolate. Thereby, those "who have received from God the superiority of science and resources, ... the patriciate and the nobility... have particularly reserved functions of advice and direction within Catholic Action." On the other hand, "[the laboring masses] seemed suitable to action; [therefore,] propaganda agents should preferably be recruited among

---

<sup>207</sup> Ibid., p. 115.

the elements in closer contact with the people; a mission that corresponds to both men and women.”<sup>208</sup>

The Belgian Christine de Hemptinne, president of the FIJFC, also toured the region in 1932, 1934, and 1951. In her travels to Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia, de Hemptinne created study circles and taught courses to train young women in Catholic Action strategies for re-Christianizing modern society.<sup>209</sup> For this endeavor, she promoted creating Catholic means of communication to counter the influence of “immoral and subversive teachings.”<sup>210</sup> Hemptinne’s courses taught Catholic Action as a “mandate” and a “recognition to the laity” who could now participate in the apostolate. The courses emphasized the hierarchical nature of Catholic Action, which in contrast to other lay organizations, was to function under the direct authority and control of the church hierarchy. So that it was the bishops who were to elect lay leaders, and it was to them “to whom the [Catholic Action] laity owe their obedience.”<sup>211</sup>

After 1939 and until the war was over, the German Rudolf Salat, exiled lay activist, by then former president of Pax-Romana-MIEC, based in New York, also

---

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., p. 116

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., pp 108-117

<sup>210</sup> Christine De Hemptinne, *Curso de AC en Lima 1935*, and *Manual de Acción Católica*, Barcelona 1936. Cited in de Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 117

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

developed a remarkable work touring Latin America. In his extensive travels, Salat summoned young students to form Catholic student federations that might affiliate to Pax Romana.<sup>212</sup>

Overall, the Vatican's mandate to form Catholic Action organizations in Latin America propagated within a church grip onto a *Christendom model*: this is, hierarchical and conservative church model, as discussed. The evidence examined next shows that predominantly adult branches of Catholic Action grew within and reproduced the existing model, while young student branches embraced more progressive views. This generational rupture and receptivity of young students allowed them to partake in the anti-oligarchical and anti-imperialist debate of the time. They shared the utopia of Latin American unity while also questioning the use of the church to maintain unjust social orders. By the decade of 1940, this openness was to allow the rapid reception of cutting-edge stances steaming from interwar European Catholic progressivism.

### **2.3. CIDECA and Pax Romana Student Networks in Latin America, and early contacts with Catholic Progressivism.**

Far-reaching enough, institutional efforts to get the laity involved in the apostolate were frequently paralleled, when not overwhelmingly surpassed, by the laity's enthusiasm. The interest was exceptionally high among the Latin American youth active in the regional echoes of the mobilizations sparked around the *student university reform*.

---

<sup>212</sup> Cited in Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, pp. 77. Originally appeared in CIDECA *Segundo Congreso Iberoamericano de Estudiantes Católicos. Documentos, trabajos, conclusiones*, Lima 1947.

Catholic students were willing to lead a Christian path of change amidst the hectic social and political context of the 1930s.

As was the case of Catholic Action institutional propagation, the Catholic students' international organizations' influence also came after national lay student associations and a regional network had risen. In both cases, international structures sought to gather and eventually subsume existing local ones. Latin American students' organizations had emerged among a new generation that reclaimed and exerted greater levels of autonomy. Their agency would be demonstrated through their participation in creating an Iberian-American student organization. It would not be until the 1940s when this network disappeared to allow student organizations to depend directly on Pax Romana's coordination.

The persisting atmosphere of intellectual and political ebullience during the 1930s was common to both the University Student Movement and the rising Catholic student organizations. By 1931 these coincided in convening parallel events in Mexico. No available evidence makes it possible to cross-list participants of these events. Still, even in light of the University Reform Movement's anticlericalism, on one side, and the persistent defensive approach of much lay activism, on the other, it is interesting to note the convergence of some topics in their agendas. Despite critical disagreements between university reformists' predominant views and those of organized Catholic students, two relevant issues reflect expanding common ground among them, and indicate the latter's increasingly autonomous stand. One is the organized Catholic students' more open



attitudes towards the secularization question and the faith-defensive approach that strongly mobilized other groups, especially adult branches of Catholic Action.<sup>213</sup> Another would be the increasing politicization of their agenda that might seem to be overstepping the boundary between the *grande* and *piccola* politics.

Convened in December of 1931, with the occasion of the fourth centenary of the appearance of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexican students led by Jesuit Fr. Ramon Martínez Silva called on Iberian-American Catholic students' representatives. The meeting succeeded in bringing together attendees from Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Spain, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Salvador, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The discussions served students to assert their will to work for the *Latin American unity* they deemed lost during the independence wars. In addressing what they thought to be the unifying role of religion in Latin America, they asserted that countering religion might have been a factor in the *Patria Grande's* social and national dissolution. The meeting was also an occasion to denounce U.S. imperialism, which they considered was deployed, among other means, through "a devious and anti-national intrusive Protestant invasion."<sup>214</sup> In light of Latin American contemporary reality and conflicts, they posed that neither Liberalism nor socialism were solutions and, instead, advocated for the church's Social Doctrine as a

---

<sup>213</sup> On the changing attitude of organized Catholic students during the First and Second Iberian-American Catholic Students' Congresses see: Andes, *The Vatican and Catholic Activism in Mexico and Chile*.

<sup>214</sup> *Noticia sobre los congresos iberoamericanos de estudiantes católicos*, papers belonging to Cardinal Pizzardo. Quoted in Bidegain, "La organización de movimientos de juventud," p. 130

social and political solution. The meeting's conclusions gave rise to the *Secretariado Iberoamericano de Estudiantes Catolicos-SIDEC* with headquarters in Mexico. A new meeting was convened for 1933 in Lima to crystallize a Confederation, which might form a “true Iberian-American leading class of Catholic intellectuals.”<sup>215</sup> SIDEC produced and published its own bulletin. Issues circulated between September 1932 and April 1933 served to publicize SIDEC’s second meeting.<sup>216</sup>

The Colombian-Peruvian war caused the second meeting to be moved to Rome on the occasion of the Holy Year. The meeting was celebrated in December of 1934 in the *Colegio Pio Latinoamericano* with 34 representatives of Spain, Colombia, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic. Argentina adhered to the Congress agenda and conclusions despite not sending any representatives. The meeting transformed *SIDEC* into the short living but influential *CIDEC—Confederacion Iberoamericana de Estudiantes Católicos*. The election of the meeting’s venue made it necessary for the Vatican to approve the event’s agenda. Therefore, officials intervened in setting up the conditions for the meeting to be held. Cardinal Giuseppe Pizarro and General Wlodimir Ledochowski ensured the event was run and publicized as part of Catholic Action and tried to keep the meeting’s orientation non-political. In downplaying political nuances, Ledochowski identified some of the proposed topics and activities and assigned trusted priests to supervise them. A session honoring Simon Bolivar and another that discussed “the take-home meaning of the

---

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>216</sup> Andes, *The Vatican and Catholic Activism in Mexico and Chile*, p. 206.

Congress” were both part of the selected activities that seem to have caused concern and needed the Vatican’s close overseeing.<sup>217</sup> Nevertheless, seemingly, the meeting kept its own shape, and some other exchanges of evident political content were postponed until after the congress.

The meeting (second SIDECA) became known as the First CIDECA Congress. It divided itself into four commissions whose discussions were facilitated by European intellectual contributors who, seemingly, had also been suggested by Ledochowski.<sup>218</sup> Fr. Camilo Crivelli spoke on Protestantism; Fr. Arthur Vermeersh, on the agrarian question; Monsignor Luigi Civardi, on Catholic Action; Fr. Gustave Desbugois—Director of the French *Action Populaire*—on social action; and Fr. Joseph Gremaud – Pax Romana’s Director—invited students to join the international organization. The meeting developed with the following agenda: 1) position of Iberian-American students on the political-religious invasion of Protestantism; 2) students and their participation in social problems; 3) Catholic students and the scientific ancestry of their faith; 4) secularism in teaching and freedom of education; 5) the classical versus the current system of education; 6) crises of faith: causes, characteristics, and remedies; 7) the economic crisis and its lessons; 8) Pan-Americanism, Iberian-Americanism and the society of nations in light of Catholicism and the international law; 9) *Mestizaje* as an Iberian-American problem; 10) A bibliography for Catholic students; and, 11) The organization of Iberian-American Catholic students.

---

<sup>217</sup> Andes, *The Vatican and Catholic Activism in Mexico and Chile*, p. 207.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

The participants elected Chileans Manuel Garretón as President of CIDECA and Eduardo Frei Montalva—then president of ANEC—as Secretary-General of the *Confederación*, moving also CIDECA’s headquarters to Santiago de Chile. A new meeting was scheduled for 1936 in Montevideo, and, in the meantime, other Secretariats were formed and distributed throughout the region. A Secretariat of Organization in Montevideo, another of Social Studies in Lima, Education in Mexico, Iberian-American Culture in Spain, Philosophy and Methodology in Argentina, Literature and Art in Colombia, History in Venezuela, and Portuguese Literature in Brazil.<sup>219</sup>

Once the meeting was over, in a special audience to the students, the Pope blessed the CIDECA initiative. While recommending students persevere in organizing the Catholic student youth, the Pope reasserted Catholic Action as the best form of lay participation in the hierarchical apostolate. The Pope maintained the necessary laity’s obedience to the hierarchy, recommended the students’ careful study and dissemination of encyclicals and other church-suggested documents, and deemed the continental organization was the best method for the Student youth’s Apostolate to give lasting and effective results.<sup>220</sup>

Latin American students’ stay in Europe, made longer because of European student organizations’ welcoming, had significant effects. For one, it fostered friendship

---

<sup>219</sup> Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 133.

<sup>220</sup> *Civilita Cattolica, Pelleginatio e convegno*. Art. Cit. p.1994 cited in Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p.136

ties between Latin American Catholic students and their European peers, which created opportunities for experience exchange and learning. Their Western European tour taught them about significant lay student activism experiments and allowed them critical contact and acquaintance with cutting-edge approaches to progressive Catholic thought. One significant case, among others, was Eduardo Frei's first contact with Jacques Maritain and his philosophy while visiting France. Frei would remember on that specific episode that "In those days, ... they told me about a philosopher who gave his lectures at the Catholic Institute in Paris. His name was Jacques Maritain. I obtained authorization to attend his classes for a few days, and since then, I have felt deeply connected to his teachings and his person."<sup>221</sup> In a general sense, students' first-hand contact with cutting-edge approaches to Christian existentialism and the groundbreaking theology of the *Nouvelle Théologie* put them in an advantageous position to play a role as disseminators of this vanguard Catholicism in their home countries.

Another critical effect was the students' sharpening of their political views. Latin Americans enhanced their understanding of their historical time and developed a clearer view of their position. Visiting Italy, Spain, and Germany, for instance, they were confronted with the more authoritarian regimes of their time; while, in Frei Montalva's opinion, visiting Belgium had offered them access to "an important social and political

---

<sup>221</sup> Fragment cited in Otto Boye, "El Pensamiento de Maritain en Chile," Presentation during the *Primer Coloquio del Pensamiento Contemporáneo. Jacques Maritain*, p. 3. Originally appeared in Frei Montalva, Eduardo: "Memorias 1911-1934," *Correspondencia con Gabriela Mistral y Jacques Maritain*, Planeta, Santiago de Chile 1989.

laboratory.”<sup>222</sup> Their impressions were later observable in the platforms of the first Christian Democratic parties. However, as per the congress’s memories, above all, Latin Americans’ stay in Europe gave them a more vital perspective on the issue of *Latin American unity*.

Their views seem to have echoed contemporary *Latinoamericanista* rhetoric present among their fellow Reformist university students and the “second generation” of Latin American philosophers. Of Heideggerian bifurcation, these philosophers had denounced not only the “lack of focus” of Latin American philosophy but also embraced its ontological exigency, which led them to pose the question: “what is our [Latin American] being?”<sup>223</sup> This was a question that, building on the belief of a longstanding tradition of *Latin American thought*—which entailed a continental consciousness, insisted on finding Latin American philosophy’s authenticity. Imbued by equivalent questions and concerns, Latin American Catholic students’ experience in Europe served them to reassert their Iberian-American and further *Latinamericanista* sentiment. As one of CIDEDEC’s meeting attendees stated in 1934, “... it was in Rome, far away ... from any of the Iberian-American *Patrias*, ... only in Europe, that it was it possible to sense as deeply

---

<sup>222</sup> Frei Montalva, “Memorias 1911-1934,” p. 55. Quoted by Andes, *The Vatican and Catholic Activism in Mexico and Chile*, p. 212

<sup>223</sup> Dussel, Enrique. “Philosophy in Latin America in the Twentieth Century: Problems and Currents,” in Mendieta, Eduardo, ed. *Latin American philosophy*, pp. 24-26

as a feeling and perceive as clearly as an idea, this fundamental American unity that makes the will so prone to an alliance.”<sup>224</sup>

The Latin American students’ tour through Europe also strengthened CIDEDEC as an autonomous Iberian-American entity and contributed to its establishing friendly organizational relations with Pax Romana. CIDEDEC was to become a critical referent to the further consolidation of continental structures and the expansion of Catholic student movements throughout the region. In methodological terms, it pioneered Iberian-American congresses’ convening in the region, which the students envisioned would form “the Catholic university elite to lead society’s change.”<sup>225</sup> In organizational terms, CIDEDEC inaugurated events on a permanent basis to promote students’ exchanges and training in Latin America. As a sign of their collaborative spirit, in January 1934, Manuel Garretón and Fr. Joseph Gremaud—Secretary General of Pax Romana, signed a cooperation agreement between CIDEDEC and Pax Romana to establish common work guidelines.<sup>226</sup> Further, this collaboration framed Rudolf Salat’s tour throughout Latin America and convocation to form Catholic student federations.

---

<sup>224</sup> Cesar Rospide de la Flor, Peruvian student delegate to the *Primer Congreso de Estudiantes Iberoamericanos, Roma, 1933*. Lima, 1934, p. 10. Cited in Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 136

<sup>225</sup> Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 137

<sup>226</sup> *Report on the CIDEDEC Congress in Rome*. PAX ROMANA, Folia Periodica, ANNO IV, No. 9, July 1939, Cited in de Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 137.

Jacques Maritain's visit to Buenos Aires in 1936 made part of the intellectual mobilization that paralleled these years of discovery among Catholic students and created a reference point in their political socialization. While Alceu Amoroso Lima recalled that Maritain's influence in Latin America dated back to 1925—when the first *Centro Jacques Maritain* was founded at the School of Law in Rio de Janeiro<sup>227</sup>—an educated Catholic social base had consolidated by the mid-1930s that was willing to move away from *Integralist* thought. This social base was keen to lessen its battle against the secular state and embrace cooperation with civil society. In a general sense, Maritain's groundbreaking contributions related the opening of Catholics to a greater discernment—from Leo XIII to Pius XI teachings—of the Christian's action in both the Catholic-apostolic and political spheres. Clearly, not the same, Maritain deemed these two actions were complementary and even urgent in the degraded interwar socio-political context.

Maritain's conferences, organized by his Argentinean admirer Rafael Pividal, extended through August and September of 1936 and brought him through other Argentinean cities beyond Buenos Aires, and also to Brazil and Uruguay. His lectures were published in 1937 under the title "*Para una Filosofía de la Persona Humana*", and yet later, along with other materials, under "*Acción Católica y Acción Política*," in 1939.<sup>228</sup>

---

<sup>227</sup> Amoroso Lima, A. L. C. E. U. "Maritain y América Latina" in *Jacques Maritain: Su obra filosófica*, p. 31-37. Buenos Aires: Desclée de Brouwer (1950).

<sup>228</sup> Rilla, José. "Caminos de la herejía democrática: católicos y falangistas en tránsito." *Pasado y memoria: Revista de historia contemporánea* 20 (2020): 43-65.



In his 1936 conferences in Latin America, Maritain presented the *distinction of planes* scheme, which was to become of tremendous importance for its role in orienting the rise of some of the more avant-garde movements of the lay apostolate in the following decades. Christians' three planes of activity had been presented as an initial reflection in Spain in 1934 and refined in his book *Humanisme Integral* in 1936. One was a *spiritual* plane, where the Christian acted as a member of the "mystical body of Christ," devoted to God's affairs, and developed actions with the direct aim of expanding the Kingdom of God. Another was the *temporal* plane, where the Christian acted as a member of the terrestrial city devoted to terrestrial affairs. Lastly, was an *intermediate* plane in which the *spiritual* connected to the *temporal* with two aims: a) clarify and help the temporal work for the sake of the temporal; and b) to save in the temporal work the objects that pertained to the spiritual order.

Maritain then differentiated, for his audience, *catholic action* (lowercased) from *political action*. He explained the first was a Church matter that, having the same aims as the pastoral ministry (to be both an act of spiritual contemplation and social action that comes out from the "superabundance of the *spiritual* spilling over the *temporal*"), was accomplished in the spiritual and intermediate planes. It entailed being an action upon the world, ordained by apostolic ends. Thus, it excluded professional or economic works, cooperatives, unions, and the like, because, even if they were led by Catholic inspiration, they had specific temporal aims. A *political action*, in contrast, was a matter exclusively belonging to the temporal plane. Aiming at the common good implied the cessation of a catholic action because the political action's aim was not directly apostolic but profane

and temporal. The only exception to this understanding was the defense of certain superior matters that must be above any political party or conflicts among political forces. Although different, nevertheless, Maritain deemed both catholic and political action complementary and of almost equal relevance (always observing the temporal subordinated to the spiritual). This served him to urge Christians to get involved. In particular, he encouraged his audience to undertake political action arguing in favor of the importance of creating parties and political forces as they “pursued a concrete historical ideal ... that Christian inspiration animates and vivifies.”<sup>229</sup>

Maritain’s, in this respect, was, above all, an invitation to embrace democracy. He deemed this invitation of utmost urgency and importance not only because, in his view, democracy rose as superior to any practical political regime but also because of the contemporary context of embattled and internationally discredited liberalism and invigorated fascism.<sup>230</sup>

In this cultural and political climate, Catholic students felt deeply moved by the ideas of strengthening their work within Catholic student federations; and, they embraced the creation of the first Christian Democratic parties. However, since university students continued to represent a small group in Latin American societies and were the primary base to renew political parties’ cadres, it was not easy in many Latin American countries

---

<sup>229</sup> Maritain, Jacques, and Manuel Rio. *Acción católica y acción política*. Editorial Losada, 1939. Available at [http://www.jacquesmaritain.com/pdf/12\\_FyR/02\\_FR\\_AcCatPol.pdf](http://www.jacquesmaritain.com/pdf/12_FyR/02_FR_AcCatPol.pdf). Downloaded 3/32/2021

<sup>230</sup> Schall, James V. *Jacques Maritain: The philosopher in society*. Rowman & Littlefield, 1998.

to organize exclusively Catholic university federations. It was not until the 1960s that these federations would grow stronger.

By March 1939, CIDECE's second meeting was developed in Lima, chaired by the Chilean Jorge Vergara, Secretary Ernesto Alayza, and Fr. Oscar Larson as the ecclesiastical advisor. The call invited a spiritual reconquest of Iberian-America warning that

“The problems facing Iberian-America force us to meet to give them a Catholic solution. It is our duty to rectify the erroneous currents that invade the Iberian-American field of thought; denounce the dire consequences that its domination would entail to our countries; [while also] we demonstrate ... that Catholicism is the only solution with a true Iberian-American root.”<sup>231</sup>

The congress reunited 50 Catholic militants from ten Latin American countries and Spain and counted on the participation of Edward Kirchner, then president of Pax Romana. In this meeting, Catholic students seem to have strengthened their view of continental Iberian-American nationalism. They were convinced that while national particularities made it impossible to promote identical political solutions for all countries, it was from Iberian-American culture's affirmation—as the basis of that unity—that facing growing de-Christianization was possible. Furthermore, they made a strong

---

<sup>231</sup> *Confederación Iberoamericana de Estudiantes Católicos- II Congreso del 7 al 12 de Marzo de 1939.* DARLAC Digitized resource FI19062567 / 00001  
<http://dpanther.fiu.edu/dpanther/items/itemdetail?bibid=FI19062567&vid=00001>

condemnation of U.S. imperialism, which they blamed for conducting a cultural penetration that denying Hispanic-American “own and unmistakable self” produced its spiritual abdication turning it, instead, into a “mere Yankee appendix.” While students exalted their Hispanic heritage as the “richer and more valuable” of their culture, they regretted its loss during the independencies at the expense of the imposition of the Anglo-Saxon culture aided, subsequently, by “the fictitious and mechanical invention of Pan-Americanism.”<sup>232</sup>

Although joining the anti-imperialist fight and embracing an anti-communist stand—since communism was the greatest of the church’s adversaries, Catholic students distanced themselves from their university reformist fellows mostly reunited under the APRA’s program.<sup>233</sup> Latin American Catholic students strongly criticized APRA’s reaction to the U.S. cultural penetration and Hispanic-American spiritual abdication, or, in their words, their response to the “Pan-American attempt to infuse in Don Quixote’s body a merchant’s soul.” In their view, APRA’s *indigenismo*, while attempting to exalt Iberian-American culture, abandoned and ignored the Spanish heritage “as a determining factor in the coexistence of the peoples of the New World.” APRA’s excessive *indigenismo*, they continued, was comparable to a kind of fascist racism that, supported in the cult of race and blood, was “a consequence of the necessary exaltation of the state

---

<sup>232</sup> Quotes from the Chilean delegation to the Second CIDECON Congress, *Contenido y experiencia de la Cultura Cristiana*, p. 10, Cited in Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” pp. 145-146.

<sup>233</sup> As commented in Chapter 1, APRA stands for *Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana*, a party established in Mexico in 1924 as a continental movement and in Peru in 1930 as a national one.

as the only reality.” In this criticism, Chilean attendees openly declared themselves anti-fascists and vindicated instead, *mestizaje*, as the self of the Iberian-American culture.<sup>234</sup>

In Catholic students’ view, exalting the blending of indigenous and Spanish culture as the heart of Iberian-America was the best way to oppose both North American liberal Protestantism and the *indigenistas* and communists’ Marxism and materialism.<sup>235</sup>

Seemingly, in the meeting, conservative propositions by Spanish students—coming out from the experience of the war—clashed with more progressive, and ultimately, prevailing views of Chileans. The latter, influenced by Jacques Maritain’s Integral Humanism, advocated a radical engagement of Catholics in the temporal order and the quest for a New Christendom. Discussing the work that lay university students should develop in society, the Spaniards proposed that students should promote a corporatist and decentralized organization of society which, giving participation to the popular masses, preserved the hierarchical structure. They envisioned the extension of the Church’s power through the subordination to the Church of working-class and professional organizations. Chileans contested this proposition by asserting Catholic students should focus on the “re-evangelization of the apostate world and the reconquest of hearts for Christ through faith and charity.”<sup>236</sup> Following Maritain’s lines, this

---

<sup>234</sup> Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud.” Bidegain clarifies that while the anti-fascist statement presented by the Chilean delegation was not accepted by the ecclesiastical censor, it made however a crucial part of the meetings’ debates.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> *Congreso CIDEA: Conclusiones del II Congreso*, in *Revista Javeriana* 1939, Tomo XII, pp. 39-46. Cited in Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 152.

proposal emphasized the objective of birthing a *new culture* that would collect the different historical experiences of Christian cultures. They made a call to rethink the entire Christian life from the gospel and its demands, and not from philosophical theories. In this way, Chileans rejected both Marxism and corporatist fascism. On Marxism, they warned that more than an economic theory, it was an integral conception of the existence which, exclusive of any doctrine and based on the primacy of matter, implied an atheistic affirmation and the debasement of the Christian religion. Quoting Nikolai Berdyaev, they pointed out that despite Marx's Jewish roots and Marxism religious edges, which led observers to assimilate Marx as the “prophet of proletarian Israel,” Marxism truly represented the “stripping of supernatural attributes from redemption and the Kingdom of God, thereby, placing the theory at the service of a metaphysical atheism and immanentism.”<sup>237</sup>

Striking because of its early appearance was what seemed like the Chileans’ criticism of the ecclesial institution's historical evolution in the region. This criticism would surface strongly after 1960 as part of the Christian liberationist fight among Latin American Catholic student movements. In the context of the Second CIDEDEC meeting, in reference to Marxism and its premises Chilean students pointed out that:

“Christianity also awaits that instant of the liberation of the human creature.

Christ identified himself with the poor, the oppressed, and the despised of the

world. ... Whoever does not run to excise those chains, whoever does not seek to

---

<sup>237</sup> Quotes from the Chilean delegation to the Second CIDEDEC Congress, *Contenido y experiencia de la Cultura Cristiana*, p. 12. Cited in Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” pp.148-149.

erase injustices and alleviate pain makes a common cause with the world, which has nothing in common with Christ."<sup>238</sup>

They followed up by stating that:

“Nothing is sadder in [these] days of cooling of faith than verifying a certain attempt to use Christ and his wife [the church] as a prop for miserable interests.

In some unscrupulous cases, the church’s cause is united to that of a decomposed political and social organization, which men struggle to maintain safeguarding their private interests.”<sup>239</sup>

Furthermore, emphasizing their anti-oligarchic posture, Chileans also asserted the state could not be a single class’s instrument. Its mission, they believed, was to achieve the common good above all interests. Moreover, they added that the state must recognize the church’s sovereignty and powers on various mixed matters.<sup>240</sup>

Although Spanish and Chilean proposals were different, they agreed that while “the Church as the Kingdom of God [was] not subject to historical, cultural or political forms,” Catholics and Catholic university students were entitled to adhere to any of those *temporal* forms.<sup>241</sup> This should be evidence of the gradually changing mindsets and ignition of generalized moves towards embracing some of the reflections brought about

---

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> *Congreso CIDEA: Conclusiones del II Congreso*, in *Revista Javeriana* 1939, Tomo XII, pp. 39-46. Cited in Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 152.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

by Maritain's already mature Christian existentialism. Maritain had called for Christian action in the face of a convergent circumstance—namely, being Christian and living in history. Notably, a practical conclusion of Maritain's reflection on the distinction between the *temporal* and *spiritual* planes, would be the Christians' responsibility to radically engage in the transformation of the temporal order for the realization of what he termed a "Christian historical ideal."<sup>242</sup>

Bidegain's interpretation of these sources, on the other hand, refers to the turning point the Chilean proposal marked in the Catholic student and intellectual bodies in Latin America. Their contribution was critical to CIDEAC's second meeting's conclusions on the need to consider the political and social situation and evangelize from the poor's perspective so that a "true evangelization" would transform the existing cultural reality.<sup>243</sup>

The Lima meeting ignited the gradual weakening of CIDEAC as a convening platform. Catholic university leaders' political choices partially dismantled these early

---

<sup>242</sup> Maritain recognized that despite the impossibility of "install[ing] the kingdom of God here on earth" Christians should work "towards such a development... in the progressive conquest of the fullness of personal life and spiritual liberty." A *Christian Historical Ideal* that, as a prospective image, corresponds to the building of a New Christendom, should work towards a "type of civilization" that making realizable the "Christian ideal essence" would simultaneously value each individual person and the common good. Equality and communitarian ideals would be mainstays of such a new society. By a "New Christendom" Maritain signified a "...a new Christian order of which...the notion of integral humanism expresses the distinctive character." In Maritain, Jacques, *True Humanism*. Translated by Joseph W. Evans, University of Notre Dame Press, pp 127-255. Also see Maritain, Jacques. *The Things that are not Caesar's*, New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1931, p. 31, 85 (English translation of *Premature du Spirituel*)

<sup>243</sup> Bidegain, "La organización de movimientos de juventud," p. 150



experiences of a Catholic student organization to make up the first generation of Christian Democratic parties. The earliest of these parties included the Chilean *Falange Nacional* (1938) with Eduardo Frei and Manuel Garretón among other members of ANEC; and, the Mexican *Partido de Accion Nacional*-PAN (1939) with UNEC students among its founding members. Other Christian Democratic parties of the first generation rose during the 1940s, such as the Brazilian PDC -*Partido Democrata Cristao* (1945), and the Venezuelan *Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente*-COPEI (1946) with the *Juventud Católica* among its members and primary networks for ideological dissemination.<sup>244</sup> This first generation of Cristian Democrats—former Catholic university leaders—also played crucial roles in the subsequent organization of the 1947 and 1949 meetings in Montevideo where the *Organización Demócrata Cristiana de América*-OCDA was formed.<sup>245</sup>

The outbreak of World War II and its aftermath produced important transformations in the life of Pax-Romana and the Catholic university movements. On the one hand, Pax-Romana de-centered its vision and action, which had been so far almost exclusively European. Having had preparatory study days in Yugoslavia with Monsignor Cardijn, the 19th Pax Romana Congress (1939) was held in Washington D.C. (August 1939). That would be the first congress celebrated outside of Europe. It also featured the

---

<sup>244</sup> Mainwaring, Scott, “The diversity of Christian democracy in Latin America,” in *Christian democracy in Latin America: electoral competition and regime conflicts*. Ed. Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully (Ed) *Latin America: electoral competition and regime conflicts*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003, p. 35

<sup>245</sup> Kirk A. Hawkins, “Sowing Ideas: explaining the origins of Christian democratic parties in Latin America,” in *Christian democracy in Latin America*, p. 106

first election of a non-European president and represented the only opportunity for a Pax-Romana General Secretariat chapter to open up in another continent. As an emergency measure, the new Pax Romana Secretariat, headquartered in New York, was to operate during the war and, if necessary, temporarily assume the tasks of the General Secretariat.<sup>246</sup> On the other hand, as Fr. Andres Jacobs noted, insofar as it compelled Catholics to analyze their historical situation, the war also transformed Pax Romana's prevailing conception about Christians' action in society. "The militants felt challenged by the causes of the conflict [and] ... the great problems that arose, such as economic growth and capitalist development, the process of decolonization, [and] the expansion of socialist and communist forces in the world."<sup>247</sup>

Furthermore, along with these transformations and on the occasion of the Washington Congress and the New York Pax-Romana headquarters, contacts between Catholic Action experiences at the university level, which had been scarce or non-existent until then, were established. The Canadian JEC, a strong Specialized Catholic Action experience formed in 1935 through Franco-Belgian influence, came into contact with U.S. and Latin American students. Since 1940, these contacts took place in the U.S., notably with recently formed SCA university groups at Notre Dame University that counted on the pastoral advice of priests of the Holy Cross Congregation.<sup>248</sup> In turn, by

---

<sup>246</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p. 76

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., p. 77

<sup>248</sup> Bidegain, "La organización de movimientos de juventud," p. 176

1943, this Congregation sent three of its members to Brazil as missionaries. Their contributions were to be fundamental in creating the *Juventud Universitaria Católica*-JUC in Sao Paulo.<sup>249</sup> The Washington Congress also propitiated growing relations between the Canadian JEC and Latin Americans. It allowed tightening the previous epistolary relations with Mexican students, as well as allowing new contact with student leaders such as the Chilean Domingo Santa María Santa Cruz (from *Falange Nacional*), Manuel Matiz Umaña from the *Juventud Católica de Colombia*, and Cesar Róspide de la Flor from the *Acción Católica de Universitarios Peruanos*. Contact was also maintained with Colombian Fr. Luis Murcia, who went to Canada to pursue studies in Theology.

Further meetings allowed the strengthening of inter-American contacts. Bidegain rightfully comments that inter-American relations might have been especially welcomed in the climate of paralleling Pan-American Conferences, besides cooperation in purely religious matters. In such venues, the U.S. achieved—not without distrust and extreme caution of some of its Latin American counterparts—the hemispheric alignment against the Axis and further unanimous fight against Communism.<sup>250</sup>

Paralleling events by 1941 paved the way for the consolidation of two Inter-American Catholic networks. For one, on the occasion of the Chilean National

---

<sup>249</sup> Beozzo, José Oscar. *Cristãos na universidade e na política: história da JUC e da AP*. Publicações CID/Sociologia religiosa, 1984

<sup>250</sup> On the evolution of hemispheric relations and Pan-American Conferences in the context of the war see Halperín Donghi, Tulio, *The Contemporary History of Latin America*, pp.217-218.

Eucharistic Congress, which gathered various Latin American representatives, the idea about the importance of developing a first inter-American week gained strength. The initiative was concretized by 1944. Convened by the Chilean Catholic Action national board, the First Inter-American Week (June 1945) addressed five topics. “The apostolate among the workers,” “Communication and collaboration among Catholic Action experiences in the Americas,” “Priestly vocations,” “Faith defense and propagation,” and “Moral defense and propagation.” Significant among the meeting’s conclusions was the proposed creation of an Inter-American Catholic Action communication bureau to facilitate information exchange and propaganda circulation. With the Papal blessing, the bureau was effectively created by 1947 as the *Secretariado Inter-Americano de Acción Católica-SIAC*, with headquarters in Santiago de Chile. The SIAC functioned at the Catholic hierarchy level. To the extent it convoked Catholic Action experiences broadly, it attempted to gather adult and youth organizations alike. Once the war was over, it facilitated a closer relation among governments, the church, and multilateral organizations such as the OAS.<sup>251</sup>

Again, the meeting was a significant opportunity to amplify contacts with other Student Catholic Action experiences. On behalf of the Canadian JEC, Gerard Pelletier attended the First Inter-American week. His participation led him to ratify his early impression that Latin American Catholic Action experiences were “old-fashioned.” Pelletier’s perception referred to the Latin American experiences as mainly devoted “to

---

<sup>251</sup> Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud.”

addressing spirituality and piety,” with a Catholic hierarchy concerned that “militants should be committed to avoiding contact with couples divorced or not-married living together.”<sup>252</sup> Besides publicly stating his opposition to such approaches and an invitation to revise them from the perspective of an SCA perspective, the meeting also allowed him—and through him the Canadian JEC—to strengthen the contacts already made in Washington with members of *Falange Nacional* and create new ones, particularly, among the Feminine *Juventud Estudiantil Católica de Chile-JEC-F*.

Another inter-American event took place in Bogota, Colombia, in 1941. Unlike the inter-American week from which the SIAC emerged, this was an event organized by Catholic students’ internationals to gather fellow organizations. Convened in liaison by both parties, it counted as the third CIDECA meeting and the first Pax-Romana-MIEC Inter-American Assemble. As per Rudolf Salat’s correspondence, the meeting counted on the successful attendance of all Latin American countries’ representatives.<sup>253</sup> The creation of a Pax Romana Iberian-American Secretariat headquartered in Bogota, under the lead of Colombian Luis Murcia and dependent on the Fribourg head office, was the more critical result of this meeting.

---

<sup>252</sup> Testimony of Gerard Pelletier-President of Canadian JEC, 02/22/1978 obtained and cited by Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 179

<sup>253</sup> R. Salat, Letter to Daniel Henao-Henao, 10-24-1946. Cited in Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 202

The new Secretariat pioneered a network of relations that, soon, made fluid the communication between student movements on both sides of the Atlantic and enabled future developments of Pax Romana-MIEC in the Latin American region. Shortly after, it also permitted Latin Americans to gain influence at the highest ranks in the international movement and bestow the region's movements with increased leverage in front of international and multilateral organizations that emerged after the war.<sup>254</sup>

While the Iberian-American Secretariat ceased activities in 1943, it was re-established in 1944 after a week of studies convened by CIDEC and Pax Romana in Santiago de Chile, where the Chilean Domingo Santa Maria was designated as Sub-Secretary and Santiago de Chile as new headquarters.<sup>255</sup> To strengthen the mission of Pax Romana in Latin America, the Secretariat assumed two tasks. One was writing an Information Bulletin that would allow Latin American circulation of Catholic university

---

<sup>254</sup> The successful evolution of the Iberian-American Secretariat of Pax Romana allowed Latin American Catholic student leaders to assume leading roles in the international movement. For instance, we have the cases of Peruvian Jaime Cordova (elected General Secretary in 1958) and Colombian Luis Fernando Duque (President of Pax-Romana MIEC in 1965). Recalling in 1957 the tenth anniversary of the movement for intellectuals MIIC/IMCI, celebrated in Rome, international leader Ramón Sugranyes commented on Thaddee Szmitkowski's departure from his Assistant Secretary position and celebrated his new post at the Information Centre of Catholic International Organizations attached to the United Nations by stating "Once again our Secretariat proved to be a "nursery" for international experts!" The relation of Pax Romana with international and multilateral post-war organizations was meaningful. With papal blessing, Pax Romana headed the representation of Catholic students before international organizations and was granted special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and its affiliate UNESCO. This role was a distinction that Pax Romana both carried with pride and tapped into to increase its leverage and gain access to funding opportunities. On the latter, it is significant the role of UNESCO's traveling scholarships that frequently served to fund the mobility of international leaders from their countries of origin to the General Secretariat of Pax Romana to start their terms. Roger Pochon and Ramon Sugranyes, de Franch, *Pax Romana Down the Years 1921-1961* Fribourg: Bersier, 1961, p. 26 <https://www.icmica-miic.org/2020/07/pax-romana-1921-1961/> accessed: 12/3/2020

<sup>255</sup> *ibid.*, p. 14.

news. Another, to promote permanent contact between different Catholic university associations in Latin America and Pax Romana. In 1952, the Iberian-American Secretariat was divided into three zones, featured by different dynamics and asymmetrical results. These zones were Atlantic, Pacific, and Central America.<sup>256</sup>

Overall, the 1941-1945 period was crucial in the multiplication of Catholic Action university student organizations. In his account of this period, Roger Pochon—one of Pax Romana’s founding members— would consider it had been “implanting itself solidly” in the region. Rudolf Salat's role as “itinerant ambassador” for Latin America seemed to have been critical to achieving this success.<sup>257</sup> However, the strengthening and autonomous work of the Chilean association that merged a new generation of feminine and masculine sections of secondary and university students into the ANEC appears to have also been fundamental in that effort. That is because when Salat visited Chile in 1942, he found that the Pax Romana spirit was strong among these militants and that Chile performed as a critical diffusion center for all Latin America.<sup>258</sup> In any case, ostensibly, Latin Americans perceived the brief period of widely coordinated expansion led by Salat as an opportunity for Catholic students’ increased understanding of their apostolic role in the national life from a perspective that took into account their own

---

<sup>256</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos MIEC-JECI*, p. 83 and *Pax Romana correspondence since 1960 and Circulares MIEC*. Box 126 SLA-CLP Repository.

<sup>257</sup> Roger Pochon and Ramón Sugranyes de Franch, *Pax Romana Down the Years 1921-1961*, p.14

<sup>258</sup> R. Salat *Informe sobre trabajo realizado en América Latina*, October 1946. Cited in Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 203.

Latin American realities. As recounted by the Peruvian student leader and later General Pax Romana Secretary, Jaime Cordova, in 1961:

“Rudolph Salat consecrated the years of his volunteer exile to the foundation of Student Associations in the countries he visit[ed]. His dynamism, sense of Church, and apostolic spirit fascinate[d] all who kn[e]w him. Applying to the university ...the teachings of Pius XI on Catholic Action, he managed to present the idea of service and the university apostolate's methods, and ma[d]e the students understand its importance to the social promotion of their respective countries. [He] plac[ed] himself, especially, at the proletariat's service, thus approaching Latin America's social problem in its proper perspective.”<sup>259</sup>

Once the war was over, Salat returned to Europe with a list of twenty student federations affiliated to Pax Romana. Pochon’s account exalted the strength of the Iberian-American Secretariat and its Latin American federations affiliates by referring to the student federations’ publishing of periodicals and the Secretariat’s monthly circulars and bulletin.<sup>260</sup>

Overall, these two inter-American structures and what they represented seem to have taken inverse ways among the Latin American student youth. A second inter-American week convened by SIAC in February 1949 in Habana, Cuba, made it apparent

---

<sup>259</sup> *Pax Romana Journal*, 1961. Appeared in BIDI 52/53 (Julio-Agosto 1961), Cited by Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p. 80.

<sup>260</sup> Roger Pochon and Ramón Sugranyes de Franch, *Pax Romana Down the Years*, p. 14.



the loss of strength of this initiative among Catholic students who felt it did not represent their interests. While the SIAC was more closely related to the Latin American hierarchies and directed by adults, it continued promoting an approach to the laity's apostolate from the traditional views of the General Catholic Action model.<sup>261</sup> In the following years, SIAC continued to gather the adult male and female branches of Catholic Action (General model). It progressively became one of the Catholic student organizations' counterparts in the wide regional network of lay Catholic activism.

Conversely, within Pax Romana, both the MIEC (GCA) and JEC (SCA) increased their influence among the Latin American student youth after the war. While both organizations were to evolve at odds in terms of their reach and method for the lay apostolate, they did have in common that they were both avenues that claimed the students' autonomy in their role as lay Christians working towards the re-Christianization of the temporal structures. They both made part of the activist vanguard inspired by the Second Renaissance of Catholic Thought, Maritain, Emanuel Mounier, and theologians of the *Nouvelle Théologie*, all of whom had started to expand the conception of what it meant for a New Christendom to be born. MIEC's and JEC's student organizations' interpretation of these intellectual developments, as it can be anticipated, evolved in different directions and soon entered into competitive views.

---

<sup>261</sup> The Second Inter-American Week, nevertheless, had important repercussions for rising new social Christian experiences and Christian democracy in Cuba. Bidegain, "La organización de movimientos de juventud," pp.180-181

While the influence of Pax Romana and its Iberian-American Regional Secretariat grew, CIDEDEC also progressively weakened as a convening and organizing platform in Latin America. Pax Romana and its regional Secretariat gained predominance as the Fribourg General Secretariat supported and sometimes achieved channeling resources to financially aid Latin American students pursuing studies in Europe and regional meetings that incentivized travels and new contacts among Latin Americans. Latin American federations also grew in their publishing capacity as many more of them created and nationally circulated their own periodicals to influence the Latin American university life and the already fierce ideological debate at the onset of the Cold War.

#### **2.4. The rise of JEC International and the expansion of the JEC approach in Latin America.**

By 1946, the disparities between JEC's and MIEC's approaches within Pax Romana, which were already visible before the war, exacerbated and had practical and organizational implications. Seemingly, political divergences coming out from the war added to the sharpening of methodological discrepancies. The celebration of Pax Romana's 21st Congress in Fribourg was the scenario of that break-up. It was a massive gathering with approximately 800 delegates from 41 countries of Europe, America, and Australia. Celebrated also in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of Pax Romana, the meeting meant the revitalization of world congresses halted because of the war, and a unanimous advocacy by the student body for reconciliation and "nevermore war."<sup>262</sup>

---

<sup>262</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p.94

Besides inaugurating a new section of the movement for “intellectuals” or “graduates” under Pax Romana—known as MIIC by its French/Spanish acronym or ICMICA in English—a gathering that marked the birth of JEC International took place. JECs from Canada, France, and the U.S. called a sub-conference for JEC/YCS movements worldwide within the 21st Congress, despite Pax Romana’s reluctance. In addition to the organizers, the sub-conference event received attendees from Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Italy, and Luxemburg. As recounted by Fr. Pellegrini,

“[the organizers’] initiative did not mean a will to lead the other JECs; it did not entail either a claim to impose anything on the other Movements. But since there was not an organism which could represent all of them, it was necessary for somebody to take the initiative.”<sup>263</sup>

JEC International-JECI was born with the interest of grouping national chapters of JEC as a specific pastoral experience in the student, secondary and university *milieu*. In contrast to other movements, it had particular objectives and “a certain theological and ecclesiological view.”<sup>264</sup> More than considering these chapters as analogous experiences, they explained, their view made them distinctive, for they made up “a close community of thought.” Therefore, the founding meeting in 1946 revolved around

---

<sup>263</sup> Pellegrini, *JECI MIEC: Su opción, su pedagogía*. p. 11

<sup>264</sup> *International Bulletin JEC*, 1946, p. 1, Cited in Pellegrini, *JECI MIEC: Su opción, su pedagogía*, p. 14.

defining the “great lines of the common Spirit that bound them” and sought to outline the fundamental guidelines for its functioning.<sup>265</sup>

According to Bidegain, political debates on the occasion of the celebration of the Inter-Federal Assemble in Salamanca-Spain, early that year, also had brought to the fore political differences between MIEC and JEC apostolic experiences among the student body. In her interview with Pelletier, he would comment that:

“The Salamanca congress for the JECs was a mental aberration at the political level. The students of Pax [Salat, Ruiz Gimenes -elected general secretary, Ducret] had no political vision. They were as conservative or as progressive as the bishops were. We were neither leftist nor even non-progressives [but] what we did not want was the absolute dependence on the bishops, neither on any government...”<sup>266</sup>

The political debate had broken out by the refusal of the Canadian and French JECs to conduct the re-inauguration, after the war, of the Inter-Federal Assemblies in Spain. The refusal had to do with the implications of conducting such re-inauguration under the Franco regime's fascist tutelage. Seemingly, the Spaniards considered the JECs position an illegitimate attempt to exclude Spain from Pax Romana's experience. This situation added to further disagreements that surfaced as early Cold War conflicts began

---

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup> Interview with Gerard Pelletier-President of Canadian JEC, 02/22/1978 obtained and cited by Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 207

to unfold. The International Union of Students (IUS) invitation to Pax Romana to attend their founding meeting was a case in point. While JEC's militants wanted to participate, Pax militants refused because, in their opinion, "that was communism." They deemed Pax Romana should abstain.<sup>267</sup>

The quarrel revealed some of the political tensions within the post-World War II convulsive ideological context that shaped the lay student apostolate and challenged their method and theological and ecclesiological views. While JEC's three-prong method (see-judge-act) pushed militants to pursue a more complex analysis and understanding of social reality that uncovered ineludible political intersections, Pax's methodology, focused on celebrating the world congresses, seemed to embrace a depoliticizing agenda. This becomes clear when considering that Pax Romana sought to constitute itself as an umbrella organization to "include and represent all legitimate forms of Catholic organizations in the university world."<sup>268</sup>

The conflicts surrounding MIEC and JECI break-up also revealed the war's sequels and its impact on the movement's leadership. As Bidegain posited:

"In front of a liberal democratic position, advanced by JEC's militants ...who had suffered occupation or resisted Fascism, as was the case of the French, Belgians, and Canadians, arose the position of the old militants of Pax Romana in which

---

<sup>267</sup> Bidegain, "La organización de movimientos de juventud," p. 207

<sup>268</sup> *Pax Romana: Guía del Miec*, Fribourg, 1966. Quoted in Pelegri, *JECI MIEC: Su opción, su pedagogía*, p.4

Germans and Spaniards dominated. They had lived under the civil war, and their fear of communism was manifest.”<sup>269</sup>

After laying down their experiences and synthesizing the common bases of JEC’s spirit and guidelines, JEC’s national chapters in the Fribourg’s sub-conference agreed on creating an International JEC/YCS Center of Documentation and Information-CIDI to serve JEC groups worldwide. Also, an international commission composed of 7 members (2 Belgian, 1 Canadian, 1 North American, 2 French, and 1 Italian) was created and charged with the responsibility of serving as liaison to the hierarchy and preparing the next session in 1947. Headquartered in Paris, the CIDI published, after that, a JEC International Newspaper, which became an opportunity for experience exchange and pastoral "*irradiacion*" (viz. dissemination). As recounted by Fr. Pelegri, JECI was already a reality, although its organization as a Movement had to wait until 1954.<sup>270</sup>

In Latin America, JECI movements grew aided by the international student network formed around CIDI (JECI) and the efforts of some progressive clergy who were receptive to the ongoing theological and pastoral renewal. The latter was critical in the experimentation that chaplains and lay-student groups made with the SCA methods and views. Just as Maritain’s visit in 1936 was a watershed moment for Catholic thought renewal, the visit of Joshep Cardijn himself to Latin America in August 1946 was

---

<sup>269</sup> Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 208

<sup>270</sup> Pelegri, *JECI MIEC: Su opción, su pedagogía*, p. 17

illuminating. It conveyed a sense of theological and pastoral transformation that brought the church closer to the workers and away from the factory owners, closer to the poor, and farther from the elites.<sup>271</sup>

Cardijn's visit was part of his myriad efforts to expand JOC's (SCA) method and pastoral vision that, through the years, as claimed by scholar Stefan Gigacz, animated an informal *jocist* and SCA-linked network to grow.<sup>272</sup> If the Canadian delegation's participation in the First Interamerican Week of Catholic Action in 1945 had posed a "provocative paradigm" among the attendees—because it showed a practical realization of SCA's views<sup>273</sup>—Cardijn's visit brought the message of Vatican's blessing to these initiatives. This is, as the pope himself had recently manifested, "Our desire ... that the YCW/JOC be set up everywhere," in his understanding that "lay people were in the front lines of the Church's life." The pope had stressed that this was his desire while simultaneously signaling his will that the authenticity of Cardijn's movement be preserved.<sup>274</sup>

---

<sup>271</sup> Recalling Mons. Cardijn's words, Chilean Mons Bernardino Pinera said in 1961 "A church of the rich, a church of the factory owners, is not the Church of Christ." By the 1960s the penetration of a renewed theology and pastoral approach became evident in a new religious sensitivity evolving since the 1930s-40s. Salinas, M. "La Iglesia chilena ante la crisis del orden neocolonial," in Dussel, E. (Coordinator) *Historia General de la Iglesia en América Latina* Tomo IX, CEHILA, pp.503-504

<sup>272</sup> Gigacz, "The Leaven in the Council," pp. 64-65.

<sup>273</sup> Sánchez Gaete, Marcial. *Historia De La Iglesia En Chile. Santiago de Chile: Sociedad de Historia de la Iglesia en Chile*, Editorial Universitaria: Tierra de Hermanos, 2014, p. 266

<sup>274</sup> Gigacz, "The Leaven in the Council," p. 67

In Costa Rica, Cardijn inaugurated the First Interamerican Week of JOC Advisors and encouraged them to gather and educate young workers in a movement that “might be a school of life [for them],” teaching them a kind of apostolate *from* themselves and *for* themselves.<sup>275</sup> In Chile, Cardijn met the hierarchy, clerical advisors, and the organized laity. The recently created *Asociación de Universitarios Católicos-AUC* (1942) received Cardijn with particular interest. Also enthusiastic were members of the incipient JOC, which, though officially formed in 1942, had its real take-off after Cardijn's visit. Cardijn explained JOC-SCA's method and referred to the marginal situation of Santiago's growing urban peripheral population, stating, “here is the cause of communism.” According to Historian Sánchez-Gaete, his words resounded among the clergy as a pastoral responsibility to promote an apostolate that was oriented to denounce structural social injustice. Cardijn's made a call to practice a spirituality committed to the temporal, for which he invited to practice the Review of Life method.<sup>276</sup> In Argentina, he met with chaplains and students from the *Asociación de los Jóvenes de Acción Católica* and the

---

<sup>275</sup> Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 190

<sup>276</sup> Sánchez Gaete, *Historia De La Iglesia En Chile* p. 266. The AUC arose in 1942 as a response to the growing distance between the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the old ANEC which had evolved closely connected to the Falange Nacional. Led by the Jesuit P. Hurtado, the AUC followed a more progressive perspective that would benefit from F. Hurtado's formative experience at the Jesuit Theologate at Lovain, Belgium (1929-35). On the evolution of Chilean JOC see Jaffe, Tracey Lynn. *In the footsteps of Cristo Obrero: Chile's Young Catholic Workers movement in the neighborhood, factory, and family, 1946-1973*. Diss. University of Pittsburgh, 2009. After the visit of both Cardijn and the Canadian delegation, the Chilean JEC was formed (1947). By 1958 the JEC had an increasing insertion in the student *milieu* with prominent cadres such as those of Marta Harnecker, Juan Enrique Miguel, Neva Milicic, among others. For a brief recollection of the JEC's formation in Chile see Dick, Hilario, *Los Estudiantes siendo iglesia en América Latina, La historia de la JEC*, SLA MIEC-JECI, Quito, 1994, pp.61-69



*Vanguardias Obreras Católicas* at the *VI Asamblea Federal de los Jóvenes de Acción Católica*.<sup>277</sup>

The regional echo of Cardijn's visit certainly marked the take-off of JOC throughout the region. It also gave the needed push to some lay organizations initiated in the Specialization and others interested in pursuing the apostolate within their *milieu* and social class.

Within the CIDI network, the Canadian JEC's influence was particularly relevant, first among Chilean and, later, Brazilian Catholic student organizations. Chileans attended the Second World JECI meeting in Pontoise, France (August 1947). Significant about this participation was the assembly's critique of western politics and societies whose "indisputable values" had been both incapable of coping with the suffering of the oppressed and had "disunited the world by [a] false interpretation and application of [them]." For the attendees, it was the inefficiency of both Christianity and democracy that had paved the way for Communists to enter Western societies where they were playing the "role of bringing the message of a new world to all the oppressed." Among the event's conclusions was the need that JEC militants committed to pursuing a "service to the *milieu*, not as an anti-communist tactic but out of love for the student

---

<sup>277</sup>Dominella, Virginia Lorena. "Catolicismo liberacionista y militancias contestatarias en Bahía Blanca: sociabilidades y trayectorias en las ramas especializadas de Acción Católica durante la efervescencia social y política de los años 60 y 70." Diss. Universidad Nacional de La Plata, 2015, p. 113

environment.”<sup>278</sup> In that way, they considered JEC and its expansion worldwide might be a more effective response to communism.

Chileans' stances during the meeting were also significant as they manifested a pioneering will to attempt a dialogue with Marxism. Fernando Debesa, a Chilean representative at the meeting, stated that in Chile:

"There [was] an advanced communist movement, and the tendency of the [JEC militants] is to dialogue with it. If the attitude of the Christians was always closed-minded and defensive, preventing all kinds of contact, today [that has changed]. Among the Chilean Catholic youth, there is a more open and understandable attitude [though] without knowing [yet] what the results would be.”<sup>279</sup>

Chilean student Debesa continued by denouncing Catholicism’s tradition of inaction in the face of social injustice. He stressed the essential role JEC should play was to raise, by all means, the students’ consciousness, whether it be through “the study of Marxism, or the Church’s Social Doctrine, and [through] attention to the necessities of the student *milieu* and the *pueblo*.”<sup>280</sup>

---

<sup>278</sup> *Second Internacional JECI meeting*, Pontoise, 1947. Cited in Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 217.

<sup>279</sup> Fernando Debesa, Chilean representative to the Second International of JECI, Pontoise, 1947, pp. 30-31. Quoted in Bidegain, “La organización de movimientos de juventud,” p. 219.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*

In Brazil, Canadian JEC's influence, along with the pastoral work of missionaries of the Holy Cross Congregation and the support of the Catholic hierarchy—including financial aid, were definitive for sparking the transformation of the approach that, until then, the Brazilian *Juventude Universitaria Catolica*-JUC had. The contact of the Brazilian Catholic youth with the JEC's approach became stronger in the Third JECI World meeting (Chicago 1948). In that meeting, a JEC and JUC Inter-American week was planned with the purpose of expanding the movement throughout South America. The meeting took place in Rio de Janeiro in January 1950 with the sole participation of Chile and Brazil.

After the formalization of JECI as an international movement in 1954, a new meeting with Latin American leadership developed in 1956. The Fifth JECI World meeting was celebrated in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with members from France, Belgium, Germany, the U.S., Western French Africa, and Vietnam. Among observers were Paraguay, Argentina, and Uruguay. The absence of Canada, which was enduring a serious crisis with the Catholic hierarchy, was noticeable.<sup>281</sup> This meeting gave rise to the *JECI South American Secretariat-SSA*, headquartered in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The new secretariat emerged amid a period of considerable tension between MIEC's and JECI's internationals. Since CIDI's break-off in 1946, the MIEC had claimed that JECI represented a "countering sign" in front of the student community and the international organizations alike. In MIEC's view, JECI had created a rupture in the effort towards

---

<sup>281</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, pp. 142-143

world unity of the Catholic student body, duplicating experiences and efforts. Further disputes emerged for the Holy See not yet granting recognition of JECI, which implied it had not received a papal “mandate” to pursue the apostolate of the student laity. Seemingly, because Pax-Romana had previously acquired this mandate, it made efforts to prevent the Holy See from granting it to its competitors.<sup>282</sup> Receiving the papal mandate had further consequences that made this formality significant in the future of JECI’s networking endeavors. Having received the papal mandate, Pax Romana had acquired since 1948 an NGO consultative status to UNESCO and the UN. It headed the representation of Catholic students at the International of Catholic Organizations OIC and the Federation of Christian Student Associations FUACE, among many other youth and student international organizations that arose after the war. This status gave clear advantages to Pax Romana in the acquisition of resources of all kinds to pursue its tasks.

The Holy See sought to end the disputes between the movements with a “commitment formula.” While JECI would be charged as a lay apostolic movement for the secondary and technical student *milieu*, MIEC would continue to be the only mandated movement for the University student environment.<sup>283</sup> Although the formula did never fully function, it marked the path for the movements’ organization, expansion, and affiliation to the international student bodies and regional secretariats.

---

<sup>282</sup> Pelegri, *JECI MIEC: Su opción, su pedagogía*, p. 24-25

<sup>283</sup> Ibid.

By 1955 and, at least for a decade, the Latin American map exhibited two distinct diffusion patterns: a Pax Romana-MIEC, primarily, Pacific region and, for the most part, an Atlantic region under the influence of the JECI.<sup>284</sup> Curiously, however, the logic behind the movements' development patterns did not necessarily respond to the movements' embraced approach or methodology. Following the "commitment formula," they responded to the level of studies within which the students organized themselves, whether they be university or secondary studies. Thus, while the JECI-SSA struggled to sustain itself with little resources from its affiliates and very little support from the international HQ—who also struggled for recognition and allocation of resources—the JECI's zone of influence narrowed down during the first years. Against their will and efforts, JECI's influence was limited to the southern Atlantic countries: Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay. Throughout these countries, the SSA sought to consolidate secondary student movements while also advocating the *unity* of the student *milieu* and its corresponding "Student Movement." The claim of *unity of the milieu*, accordingly to JECI's principles, was made on the grounds that "a real and effective presence" of the church in the student *milieu* "could not occur [without] ... the intrinsic unity ...or at least the continuity [that existed] ... between secondary and university levels."<sup>285</sup> As for Pax Romana-MIEC, their Iberian-American Secretariat continued to gather university movements heterogeneous in their approach. There were as many movements still traditional in their apostolate as some others that were more progressive and adhered to the JEC's approach and methodologies.

---

<sup>284</sup> Fr. Paul de Gouchenere, interview 07-04-2019.

<sup>285</sup> Pelegri, *JECI MIEC: Su opción, su pedagogía*, p. 25-26.

While by the 1950s, almost all movements in Latin America were familiar with the JEC methodology, only a few reached some degree of maturity. Both Chileans and Brazilians stood out in developing, earlier than the rest, a new religious sensitivity. Certain particularities, however, made the Brazilian experience stronger and a first epicenter for the dissemination of the JEC approach throughout the region.

## **2.5. The Pioneering experience of the Brazilian JEC and JUC**

A sum of circumstances since the 1930s made it possible for Brazilians to achieve earlier than others in Latin America a more mature development of both ideology and method of the JEC approach. One was the early appearance of Catholic organizations and experiences of the lay apostolate with intellectual vitality receptive to the ongoing renewal of theology and Catholic thought. The *Centro Dom Vital*, under the direction of Alceu Amoroso Lima, its magazine *Ordem*, and the *Ação Universitaria Catolica*-AUC (later JUC), which started publishing the magazine *A Vida* in the mid-1930s, all were important for this renewal. They were particularly receptive to Maritain's Integral Humanism and progressive Catholic thought developments of the interwar period. The *Instituto Católico de Estudos Superiores*, founded in 1932 under Sobral Pinto and Amoroso Lima's critical influence, also played a role in the liturgical renovation that impacted the laity's apostolate and, more broadly, contributed to the Brazilian Liturgical Movement.<sup>286</sup> The institute, which later gave rise to the Pontifical Catholic University in

---

<sup>286</sup> Beozzo, *Cristãos na universidade e na política*, p. 25

Rio de Janeiro, strongly impacted AUC students' experience. It gave space to renewing figures such as German Benedictine monk D. Martinho Michler. Michler's pastoral work among students was groundbreaking through his liturgy lessons and the dialogued Catholic Mass weekly celebrations for students at the *Centro de Liturgia* formed within AUC.<sup>287</sup>

Another was the influx of renewed pastoral practices by Brazilian priests formed in Europe and incoming missionaries with solid knowledge and practice of the Specialized approach. In the first case, the chain of uninterrupted ordinations (from the mid-1930s-1941) as priests and nuns of committed AUC and JFC (*Juventude Feminina Catolica*) students is significant. Frei Romeu Dale, later national JUC advisor, and Frei Jovino Joffily—both of whom made their novitiate in France, Dona Luiza de Oliveira and Irma Maria Regina, were among the many names of university students later ordained and connected to the pastoral renewal.<sup>288</sup> Local priests returning from studying in Europe and French-Canadian and Holy Cross Congregation missionaries during the 1940s also played an essential role in disseminating their knowledge and experience with the JEC approach. Henrique de Lima Vaz, Luis Sena, Almerly Bezerra, Friar Carlos Josaphat, Friar Mateus Rocha, and the French Friar Thomas Cardonnel were among the first

---

<sup>287</sup> On the Brazilian Liturgical Movement See Leão, Fábio de Souza. “A formação litúrgica no Brasil a partir da Sacrosanctum Concilium.” Diss. 2010. Also, De Mattei, Roberto provides a perspective of the rise of the Brazilian Liturgical Movement and the unfolding of Catholic Action in Brazil, portraying the contrasting views of Alceu Amoroso Lima and Plínio Correa de Oliveira. The *Centro de Liturgia* of AUC hosted the first dialogued and *versus populum* (towards the people) Mass celebration in Brazil. De Mattei, Roberto *The Crusader of the 20th Century: Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira*, Gracewing Publishing, 1998, p. 75

<sup>288</sup> Beozzo, *Cristãos na universidade e na política*, pp. 27-29,36

enthusiasts of Brazilian progressive Catholicism.<sup>289</sup> Both local priests' and missionaries' arrival and the consecration of bishops drawn from specialized movements, which in 1952 included Fr. Helder Camara, were decisive in the growth and strengthening of the Brazilian movement and the SCA international network.<sup>290</sup>

Significantly, during the 1950s, Brazil became the epicenter of the SCA network in Latin America. Brazilian nodes (organizations, lay experiences, and pastoral practices) fed from and promoted the circulation of breakthrough developments such as the Theology of the Laity that consolidated in Europe with contributions by Yves Congar, Gerard Philips, Jacques Leclercq, and Joseph Comblin. Comblin himself was to move in the late 1950s to Latin America and become a collaborator to Dom Helder Camara.

An also significant factor was the early politicization of Catholic activism that even sought electoral influence in the context of the Brazilian 1930 revolution—through the *Liga Eleitoral Catolica*, followed by clashes between progressive and conservative Catholic sectors. Reactive responses among conservative Catholic sectors to Maritain's thought and influence and further conflicts that polarized Catholics in front of the rise of the combative militias of *Ação Integralista* were relevant antecedents to the evolution of

---

<sup>289</sup> Bruneau, Thomas C., and Margarida Oliva. *O catolicismo brasileiro em época de transição*. Ed. Loyola, 1974.

<sup>290</sup> On the rise of a SCA international network see: Gigacz, "The Leaven in the Council."



a progressive Catholic intelligentsia. This enlightened group struggled for the re-democratization of the country by the mid-1940s.<sup>291</sup>

Seemingly, the “populist pact” and particularly the middle classes’ role within it, as indicated by Sociologist Luiz Alberto Gomez de Souza—a former Catholic student militant and JECI General Secretary—also facilitated the rise and growing leverage of progressive approaches within Catholic activism.<sup>292</sup> The 1930s new Brazilian industrial bourgeoisie’s hegemonic attempt, challenged by a strong and mobilized working class, found its balance in a broad class alliance defined by the middle classes’ decisive electoral weight and a reformist social agenda. While the Church was interested in partaking in the public deliberation to influence the legal-constitutional restructuring, the middle classes, among whom progressive Catholicism found reception, played a role as intermediaries. They favored the articulation between the Church and the new power bloc. Also, since a sector of these middle classes sided ideologically with the popular classes, they favored the Church assuming a guiding function, especially among new emerging classes of rural origin who had deep-rooted religious beliefs. As recounted by Gomez de Souza, young progressive Catholic university students were to play, a few years later, a pioneering role in awakening these emerging classes so that they questioned the meaning of the Christian doctrine in front of growing demands for social justice.<sup>293</sup>

---

<sup>291</sup> Beozzo, *Cristãos na universidade e na política*, pp. 31-36

<sup>292</sup> I am using the expression “populist pact” as alluded to by Gómez de Souza. Surfacing in the 1930s, the “popular pact” was replaced in 1964 by an “authoritarian pact” when the military overthrew João Goulart’s government. Souza, *A JUC*, p. 51.

<sup>293</sup> Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 51-52, 62

Bidegain added that in Brazil, as it was also the case of other populist regimes, the Church lacked loyal political parties. Thus, the Church, devoid of partisan ties and seeking to place itself above political parties, more easily supported a theological reflection and a pastoral action that accepted the laity's autonomous role in conducting an evangelization sensitive and reflective of pressing social demands.<sup>294</sup>

JEC and JUC movements' rise and growth in the 1950s fed on the circumstances mentioned above and further developed in close relation to the conditions affecting the student movement. Besides the theological, pastoral, and lay apostolate progressive stances, the JEC and JUC movements also became energized thanks to the ideological debate that absorbed the student movement and the socio-political circumstances under which the stability of the "popular pact" increasingly weakened.

Primarily developed at the ISEB-*Instituto Superior de Estudios Brasileiros*, founded in 1955, the ideological debate feeding the student movement revolved around developmentalism and nationalism.<sup>295</sup> To the extent that Marxist influences became

---

<sup>294</sup> Bidegain, "La organización de movimientos de juventud."

<sup>295</sup> ISEB was created in 1955 by the provisional government of Café Filho and consolidated itself as an influential Brazilian think tank. Along with intellectuals articulated around ECLAC (in Santiago de Chile), and before it shut down in 1964, ISEB intellectuals such as Helio Jaguaribe, Candido Mendes, and Alvaro Vieira Pinto, contributed to debates on nationalism, developmentalism, and imperialism that later served as input to Dependency Theory. For a revisiting intellectual discussion see Bresser-Pereira, Luiz Carlos. "From the national-bourgeoisie to the dependency interpretation of Latin America." *Latin American Perspectives* 38, no. 3 (2011): 40-58.

stronger around the turn of the decade, the debate that fed a national capitalist project under the direction of an industrial bourgeoisie started giving way to demands for “grassroots reforms” and more radical stands, critical of Capitalism. Increasing contestation of the “popular pact” also came from the mobilized popular classes who sought to gain autonomy in front of the state and overcome the top-down corporatist approach characteristic of trade unions’ organizations.<sup>296</sup> Overall, increasing politicization, particularly since mid-1950, made the student movement move from addressing internal demands to contesting the country’s economic and political model. These claims and identity were one face of the JEC and JUC development that accompanied their organization, expansion, and consolidation between 1950 and 1960.

At the Church’s level, the creation of the pioneering *Conferência Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil* - CNBB in 1952 and the consecration and subsequent appointment of Fr. Hélder Câmara as its first CNBB General Secretary gave a decisive impulse to the specialized movements in Brazil. Under Fr. Câmara, distinguished by then as a progressive figure and representative of a “theology of development,” the CNBB materially and financially supported the expansion of the movements and amplified the specialized approach’s influence throughout Brazil.<sup>297</sup> Developing national pastoral plans

---

<sup>296</sup> Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 55

<sup>297</sup> On the figure of Fr. Câmara among the traditionalists, conservative modernizers and reformist currents among the Brazilians bishops and the clergy see: Löwy, Michael, *The war of gods: Religion and politics in Latin America*, Verso, 1996, p. 82

and allowing progressive bishops' direct influence even in the more conservative dioceses were instrumental to this impulse.<sup>298</sup>

During the first half of the decade, Brazilian JEC and JUC movements flourished and started developing a prolific theological-political and pedagogical reflection. As the movements doubled their number, JUC's national meetings were held annually, gathering regional representatives.<sup>299</sup> These meetings served to advance discussions that tended to raise the issues addressing the significant regional diversity of the country; and, progressively, delved deeper into the relations between the university and the "social question."<sup>300</sup>

New intellectual influences also opened up. Along with a sustained influence of Maritain, Fr. Louis-Joseph Lebret's approach, both scientific and humanist and concerned with underdevelopment and Third World solidarity, also gained traction among JUC's students.<sup>301</sup> Lebret became a close influence since he visited Brazil (1947-1954) and founded the SAGMAC, a seed of his movement Economy and Humanism.<sup>302</sup>

---

<sup>298</sup> Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 64

<sup>299</sup> Drawing on official sources from the Department of Education and JUC sources, Gómez de Souza provides statistical data on the growing of JUC movements throughout Brazilian cities. The number of JUC movements by city jumped from 13 in 1950 to 28 in 1955. By 1960 there were 52 JUC movements in Brazil. *Ibid.*, p. 90

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.114-115

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117

<sup>302</sup> SAGMAC stood for *Sociedade para Análise Gráfica e Mecanográfica Aplicadas aos Complexos Sociais*. On the matter see: BOSI, Alfredo. "Economia e humanismo." *Estudos avançados*, 2012, vol. 26,

Lebret's courses and research conclusions encouraged JUC students to move, with the practice of the RLM method, from questioning the university to examining the workers' *milieu*, as it was "there, and not in the university, that the social question resides."<sup>303</sup>

By 1954, JUC students had studied "concrete problems" identified in Fr. Lebret's research. They also acknowledged that student militants' actions and will to confront the social question surpassed any program prepared in advance, so that "it [was] essential that the militant live[d] the *milieu*."<sup>304</sup> Having recognized the value of "living the *milieu*" and possessing the will to embrace a more scientific approach to the practice of the *see-judge-act* method concerning Brazilian social problems, a series of original elaborations, ideological ruptures, and commitments occurred. It was, indeed, a pushing forward of the method's inductive epistemological approach that deepened through the use of scientific tools.

At the 1955 National Congress in the city of Fortaleza, attendees proposed using and reflecting on students' *vivencia*, a concept signifying their 'lived experience of the *milieu*.' The notion was very close to the idea of *commitment* that was to become revolutionary of JUC students' spirituality. Furthermore, the 1956 National Congress in

---

no 75, p. 249-266. Trindade, Isabella Leite. "La SAGMACS en Brasil y la construcción de un nuevo método de proyectación urbana." *Cuadernos del CLAEH*, 2015, vol. 34, no 101, p. 185-194.)

<sup>303</sup> Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 115, quoting a 1953 conversation between Plinio de Arruda JUC leader and F. Lebret.

<sup>304</sup> *ibid.*, p.117

Porto Alegre delved deeper into the inductive approach posing the necessity of decentralizing the movement and abandoning a national program.<sup>305</sup> Embracing the differences of specific social contexts, militants agreed on giving autonomy and independence to regional and local movements to formulate and pursue their particular programs. Thereafter, local movements gathered nationally, not around a shared program but around common Christian values to *judge and act*, to become an instrument of Christianizing action within the *milieu*. In line with using a scientific approach, the Congress attendees agreed to pursue the *characterization* of the *milieu* as a means to accomplish the *seeing* portion of the method, “in a more complete and global way, with its internal relations and dynamism.” Sources research by Gomez de Souza showed among JUC (university students) and even more among JEC (secondary students) that a distinction was made between the *real see* and the *ideal see* (the latter based on Christian views and values). The recognition enabled the *judging* portion of the method to be the comparison between the two. From this contrast, students obtained “a line of *action*.”<sup>306</sup>

The following years would mark a decisive growth and commitment to the temporal, i.e., *seeing, judging, and acting* on (transforming) the university *milieu*. More broadly, the students’ will to impact Brazilian social problems to whose characterization they devoted significant efforts became more profound. Strengthened during the period 1954-1958, the JEC, according to Beozzo, was to represent the seed of a more vigorous

---

<sup>305</sup> Beozzo and Gomez de Souza disagree in this being the fifth or sixth JUC congress.

<sup>306</sup> Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 121-122

generation. Once they graduated from secondary schools and in their new lives as university students and JUC militants, the new generation was willing to assume a deeper involvement in the *milieu*.<sup>307</sup> While the previous JUC generation had formed itself through a more intellectual approach to understanding reality, the new generation was more enthusiastic about taking a dialectical path. For Beozzo, both JEC's exponential growth and thoughtful work during the 1950s were the critical factors for the JUC's solidity and ideological maturity one decade later.<sup>308</sup>

The decade of the 1950s came to an end with Brazilian JEC and JUC movements on a path towards radicalization. In the 1960's National Congress—which celebrated JUC's tenth anniversary, students demanded the need to conceive a concrete Christian Historical Ideal (CHI) that responded to society's most distressing problems. JUC's CHI came as “a more or less collective longing for the will to discover a *line of total action* based on a men-temporal-spiritual synthesis.”<sup>309</sup> The move, whose repercussion in the following years was to push the movement to embrace more explicit political commitments, arose from JUC's recognition of its mobilizing capacity and real possibilities to impact the Church, the university, and Brazilian society more generally.

---

<sup>307</sup> For chronology and brief recount of Brazilian JEC (secondary branches) evolution, see Dick, *Los Estudiantes siendo iglesia*, pp 41-48.

<sup>308</sup> Beozzo, *Cristãos na universidade e na política*.

<sup>309</sup> JUC, 1960 National Bulletin quoted in Souza, *A JUC*, p. 159

Other intellectual and socio-political influences contributed to the trajectory mentioned above. The UNEB (*União Nacional de Estudantes Brasileiros*), a latecomer into the Latin American University Reform Student Movement, converged with its Latin American peers' agreed-upon claims against imperialism and neo-colonialism, and their critique of Capitalist development. It did so from the perspective of the Brazilian ideological debates, which had absorbed it from a decade, around the relations between development and nationalism and the Marxist edges that now divided it.

Within Catholic progressivism, on the other hand, the more crucial contribution came from the French Catholic thinker Emmanuel Mounier, who was also the founder and director of the influential French journal *Espirit*. Mounier's thought had sustained influence during the 1960s—first in Brazil and later in other countries of the region—and counted on the intellectual talent of and creative reflection by Brazilian Fr. Henrique de Lima Vaz, a significant figure. A pioneering impulse, in 1961, also involved Fr. Thomas Cardonnel and students from Belo Horizonte's JUC and the Rio de Janeiro Catholic University. That year, the group had published a students' manifesto which stated their awareness about the tasks that “history demanded from the active vanguards in the sense of humanizing the world.”<sup>310</sup> While Fr. Lima Vaz noted other intellectual influences from French theologians such as those of F. Yves Congar, Marie-Dominique Chenu, Henri de Lubac, and Teilhard de Chardin, seemingly the more critical influence in those first years came from Emmanuel Mounier.<sup>311</sup>

---

<sup>310</sup> Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 175

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid.*, 176



A disciple and later critique of Maritain, Mounier had developed a Christian *Personalist* philosophy espousing an activist and radical profile that included an open dialogue with Communism and Anarchism.<sup>312</sup> Mounier's *Personalist* teleological approach contended that human history was "the march of humanity toward the Kingdom of God" at the center of whose development was a decisive event—Christ's incarnation.<sup>313</sup> Drawing from Hegelian and also Husserlian philosophies—as most contemporaneous existentialists did—and sharing with Maritain the understanding of men's relative autonomy in the temporal order, Mounier considered that the *person*—whom he understood to be, above all, a "process," a "movement," and an "*élan de personnalisation*"—made history.<sup>314</sup> In so doing, men could choose to free themselves,

---

<sup>312</sup> The dialogue came to complicate the common attention both Maritain and Mounier gave to Marxism for having taken the lead in bringing to light the inequities and injustices of Capitalism. After the Second World War, Mounier and *Espirit* took a decided impulse towards leftist politics. By making a historically engaged assessment of liberal democracy as contemporaneously identified with U.S. politics, he rejected mass democracy for considering it individualistic. He also condemned both soviet Socialism and Capitalism for having engendered oppressing societies, and instead advocated for a post-capitalist, collectivist but libertarian order (a "communitarian" alternative). His critiques evolved into a deep anti-American sentiment which also convened a group of French intellectuals known as non-conformist; borrowing the term coined by Jean- Louis Loubet del Bayle in his book *Les Non-conformistes des années 30*, published in Paris, in 1969. On the subject, see Hellman, John. *Emmanuel Mounier and the New Catholic Left*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981. Also see Armus, Seth D. "The Eternal Enemy: Emmanuel Mounier's *Espirit* and French Anti-Americanism." *French Historical Studies* 24, no. 2 (2001): 271-304.

<sup>313</sup> Hill, Patrick J. "Emmanuel Mounier: Total Christianity and Practical Marxism." *CrossCurrents* 18, no. 1 (1968): 77-104, Camargo, Alfonso. "La historia humana como riesgo y aventura." *Quaestiones Disputatae: temas en debate* 1, no. 3 (2008).

<sup>314</sup> Conilh, Jean. *Emmanuel Mounier: sa vie, son oeuvre, avec un exposé de sa philosophie*. Vol. 57. Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1966, quoted in Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, p. 100.

that is, by marching towards “the rehabilitation of the historical community of men [which was] the true essence of history.”<sup>315</sup>

At the base of Mounier’s understanding of history was the concept of *Historical Consciousness*. Following Christ’s values and principles, a Christian Historical Consciousness-CHC among men opposed what he identified as the Modern Historical Consciousness-MHC.<sup>316</sup> This was perhaps one of the most relevant contributions to Brazilian, and more broadly, Latin American elaborations. The CHC was opposed to the MHC in that the absence of transcendent hope marked the latter, thus dissolving itself into pessimism. The former, in contrast, was full of grace and hope, for whenever the MHC saw the end of the world, the CHC saw instead the urgent task to end a “world marked by misery.”<sup>317</sup> Rejecting all dichotomies between thought and action, Mounier asserted the CHC understood the need for men to commit immediately to organizing and assuming their responsibility for their own collective liberation. That is, to the extent that “... the word of God announces a kingdom [which is] the collective liberation [of men] and not a consultation for the cure of souls.”<sup>318</sup> Asserting Christ’s message’s radicality in that “Christianism was not a religion for satisfied men,” but for those willing to work and

---

<sup>315</sup> Camargo, “La historia humana como riesgo y aventura,” p. 49.

<sup>316</sup> “Conciencia Histórica y Cristianismo,” *Servicio de Documentación, Serie 2 Filosofía Social*, Document # 3, MIEC-JECI, 1968.

<sup>317</sup> Camargo, “La historia humana como riesgo y aventura,” p. 52

<sup>318</sup> Quote comes from Emmanuel Mounier *Be not Afraid*, Cynthia Rowland trans. New York, Sheed & Ward, 1962, pp. 76-77, cited in Hill, “Emmanuel Mounier,” p.78.

have hope, Mounier invited Christians to pursue a “communitarian revolution.”<sup>319</sup> It was a revolution that, while rejecting modern individualism—which had disregarded men’s communitarian destiny and produced oppressive structures—embraced the common good as the realization of the gospel, all of which had as a first step siding with those who suffered.

By the early 1960s, the notion of a Christian Historical Consciousness was to be at the center of a “*spirituality of commitment*” developed by the students, which involved the discernment between *faith* and *ideology* and new takes on the relations between *faith* and *politics*. The corollaries of Brazilian students’ praxis were to crystallize as a first example of the various experiences in which student *gremialismo* articulated the convergence between Catholic and political militancy.

## 2.6 Conclusions of the Chapter

During the first half of the 20th-century, Latin American university students seemed to share identitarian features based on their middle-class origin and their struggle to sustain and ascend in predominantly oligarchical societies. Early in the century, the student mobilization sparked in Cordoba, Argentina, was both an epitome and a trigger for this identity construction that led to the crystallization of national-base Student Movements with strong political leverage. National movements converged soon into a

---

<sup>319</sup> Horn, *Western European Liberation Theology*, p. 99, and Camargo, “La historia humana como riesgo y aventura,” p. 50.

Latin American network, with the vocation to form a Latin American Student Movement. This network grew and consolidated itself over the first half of the century.

Simultaneously, and because of significant changes within Catholic thought and the institutional church, Catholic student organizations formed in Latin America. Youth Catholic Action organizations constituted the more substantial base of lay student activism since their consolidation in the decade of the 1930s. Catholic organizations also formed a regional network (Iberian-American—CIDECA) and later joined an international (trans-Atlantic) one—Pax Romana.

Student organizations, both catholic and non-confessional, seemed to share the common middle-class identity mentioned above. Common to their regional mobilization were demands for university reform, an anti-oligarchic and anti-imperialist fight, and the denunciation of cultural colonialism. An ideal that evoked the independence wars' utopia of achieving regional unity under the formation of *La Patria Grande* seemed to have permeated the identity of the Latin American Student Movement and Catholic students' organizations, alike. Arguably, on the grounds of this common identification, Catholic students coincided with their peers within the reformist Latin American Student Movement on crucial objectives while not always on the ways to achieve them.

Catholic student organizations' openness to more progressive stands distinguished them from adult branches of Catholic Action. Significant sectors among youth branches became by the 1940s spaces of convergence between *Latinoamericanista* ideas and the

theological and Catholic apostolic renewal steaming from Europe. One expression of this convergence, at the time, materialized in the first Christian Democratic parties that came out from these organizations.

By the 1950s, experimentation with the specialized model of lay apostolate (a significant component of which was the Review of Life Method) drove student Catholic Action organizations into new paths. Catholic students went onto the analysis of social realities and developed mature theological, political, and pedagogical reflections that admitted cross-ideological fertilization.

In the face of the mid-1950s' failure of developmental policies, greater awareness about the region's economic dependency and rising poverty interpellated both confessional and non-confessional student organizations. The historical conjuncture reinvigorated the Latin American student (reformist) movements as a mobilizing social force and political actor while also creating the space for a few of the organized Catholics, notably Brazilians Catholics, to "radicalize in the faith."

For Catholics, this radicalization implied the development of a *Spirituality of Commitment*, which resulted from the practice of the RLM and a specialized apostolic approach to living the Christian faith. This was a Christian spirituality committed to transforming realities based on a sincere and mature interpretation of the gospel. In biblical terms, it was a Christian spirituality committed to the "least [of their] brothers" (Mathew 25:40)—which entailed a commitment to the poor, the realization of social

justice, and the transformation of the whole church in that direction. By the late 1950s, Brazilian Catholic movements constituted a vanguard of social change that acted primarily through university student *gremios*. As will be seen in Part II, this Brazilian avant-garde began to influence other Catholic organizations in the region.

Catholics' representation within university *gremios* was not new. As a matter of fact, the evidence discussed showed that by the end of the decade, Catholic views, particularly those represented by Christian Democrats, constituted an identifiable faction within the Latin American university *gremios*. This faction was a minority in relation to the Marxist control of these *gremios*. The new radicalized generation of progressive Catholics, though, seemed to embody a new strand that differed and rather envisioned overcoming Christian Democracy.

As will be addressed in Part II, while at the onset of the 1960s the Latin American church looked forward to achieving a more significant presence in the university and the university *gremios*, the church's effort was, in all cases, parallel to the autonomous work of the student laity. In their pursuit of building Christian societies, the student-lay activism pushed forward their own stands and agendas.

**PART II: Rise of a trans-national Latin American Catholic students' network.  
MIEC/IMCS and JECI/IYCS, different trajectories, competing approaches, and  
convergences, 1960-1966.**

Part II of this dissertation encompasses three chapters that cover the period 1960-1966. These chapters' overarching argument contends that during the early 1960s, a Latin American network of organized Catholic students consolidated. Furthermore, during this period the network evolved and developed the attributes that made it later crystallize as a Catholic students' regional (trans-national) social movement. This crystallization occurred after 1967, facilitated by the merging of MIEC and JECI SLAs. Without disregarding the dynamic system of relationships and conflicts within the movement—sharpened by the multi-centered character of the network—the claim is grounded in the gradual emergence among organized Catholic students of a common identity, common interests and agenda, and a common delimitation of a method of collective action.

Part II's argument contributes and pushes forward Michael Lowy's claim that a "vast social movement" developed at the beginning of the 1960s that epitomized a *Liberationist Christianity* that "mobilized around common aims," related to the "preferential option for the poor."<sup>320</sup> While such *Liberationist*

---

<sup>320</sup> *Liberationist Christianity* is a concept coined by Michael Löwy in his *The War of Gods*, first published in 1988. The concept looks to depict the "religious culture and social network, faith and praxis" that encompassed the social and religious movements that gave rise to what was later known as Liberation Theology. Löwy criticizes the use of "Liberation Theology" as a concept representing these early movements because of its narrowness. This is because this movement (social and religious) "appeared many years before the new theology and most of its activists are hardly theologians at all." Löwy, *The war of gods*, pp.32-34. This dissertation shares this understanding and concurs with Löwy in also avoiding the concept "Church of the poor" to refer to this (social and religious) movement. This dissertation considers using this latter concept to describe the early stages of this mobilization might obscure the subjects' agency in developing a subaltern consciousness and galvanizing the profound transformation of the Latin American church, of which the "Church of the poor" was the byproduct.



*Christianity* included many other actors, this dissertation focuses on the journey of organized Catholic students.<sup>321</sup>

The chapters that follow focus on the evolution of the Latin American network of Catholic student federations and movements from 1960-66.<sup>322</sup> They trace the rise, organizational development of the Latin American Secretariats of Catholic Students' MIEC and JECI and their role in building up this network. They reveal Secretariats played a significant role in bringing together existing organizations or prompting new organizations where they did not exist. Also, they substantiate that while Secretariats struggled to build and maintain their legitimacy among autonomous organizations at the national level, Secretariats deployed every resource at hand to develop the programmatic and organizational structure of the network. Secretariats were instrumental in movements and organizations' access to available financial, intellectual, and pastoral resources. They developed a critical role in disseminating pastoral approaches and methodologies for the apostolic work and systematizing regional developments, debates, and ultimate consensus that were decisive for the gradual rise of a regional movement's identity. These chapters also uncover the sinuous convergence and progressive rise of such common identity around pastoral and apostolic approaches, methodologies, and goals within this network, which increasingly

---

<sup>321</sup> Other actors involved include priests' groups and organizations, bishops and dioceses, religious orders, intellectuals, lay rural and urban workers movements, and other religious organizations, many of them developed under the umbrella of Catholic Action.

<sup>322</sup> Part II makes a distinction between student federations and movements. Denominations responded to different pastoral approaches' conceiving of the Catholic student organization. To reduce wordiness Part II will use the noun "organizations" to encompass both denominations unless it is substantial to the argument to emphasize the difference between them.

embraced a Latin American JEC line. Part II finishes when merging the MIEC and JECI SLAs, by late 1966, which galvanized a path, not without inherent internal conflicts, to what we might call the *spring* of a Latin American Catholic Student Movement between 1967-73.

Thus, Chapter 3 addresses the rise and consolidation of the PR-MIEC SLA. Chapter 4 addresses the evolution of the JECI SLA, and Chapter 5 discusses the relations between SLAs, the tough negotiations around their merging, the bases autonomy, and their evolving converging identity.

Before addressing these various components, I shall present a long preamble outlining some organizational and institutional developments and features common to both MIEC and JECI organizations in Latin America. These are intended to serve as background information for this second part of the thesis.

\*\*\*\*

On December 27, 1962, the Chilean AUC sent a letter to all Latin American MIEC Student Federations that read:

“We ask ... that we make a renewal of our inner spirit. That we open our hearts to a spirit of fraternity, loyalty, and trust, and above all, reaffirm our will to work according to the plan we decided in Montevideo. And that all the problems that may exist are reserved for the appropriate time and the due procedures to tell us [each other] everything we think [with] a great spirit of fraternity.”<sup>323</sup>

The letter sought to address a quarreling among Latin American MIEC student federations, spearheaded by the Venezuelan MUC, who had sent a complaining missive on November 26 to all Latin American fellows over the appointment of the MIEC-Latin American Secretary. A few days before, on December 24, Rodrigo Guerrero, recently elected MIEC’s Latin American Secretary, had also sent a response to the Venezuelan MUC letter lamenting its tone was “at odds with the language that we must use in Pax [Romana],” and stating his concern on what seemed “the truly dangerous and alarming ... mistrust that ha[d] reigned towards the [MIEC] Latin American Secretariat and towards [him].” On the issue of the SLA appointment, Guerrero clarified that the quarrel had originated in some federations not knowing his appointment, which they saw “as an obscure maneuver” so that, he explained, “with good intentions, [they] devoted their efforts to prevent this maneuver from progressing.” Later the situation was completely

---

<sup>323</sup> “Letter from Chilean AUC to all Latin American MIEC Federations.” Santiago de Chile, December 27th, 1962. Box 178, Folder 1962, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

clarified, stated Guerrero, “but, unfortunately, the same spirit ha[d] continued in relation to the Secretariat.”<sup>324</sup>

The missive by the Chilean AUC, whose clergy advisor was F. Ismael Errazuriz, himself a Latin American advisor to the MIEC Latin American Secretariat (SLA), closed by stating the Chilean federation’s “full confidence in the Secretariat and especially in the person of the Secretary.”<sup>325</sup> Besides, it asked the SLA to define the tasks and responsibilities of the federations, according to the work guidelines drawn in a meeting that gathered all Latin American federations in Montevideo a few months earlier.

The above is just a case in point illustrative of the complexities surrounding the rise and evolution of the Latin American Catholic student organizations’ network, coordination, and leadership. While it was soon reckoned as a successful pioneering experience and served as an international point of reference, building the regional network and coordination was not easy; it was never free from conflicts. Claims of national-based movements’ autonomy, a bottom-up legitimacy the coordination needed to gain, paralleling organizational structures, competing pastoral approaches at the regional level, and contested

---

<sup>324</sup> “Letter from Rodrigo Guerrero, Latin American Secretary to the Members of the Directive Committee-DC, and All Latin American Student Pax-Romana Federations,” Medellin, December 24<sup>th</sup>, 1962. Box 126, Folder 1962, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>325</sup> “Letter from Chilean AUC to all Latin American MIEC Federations.” December 27<sup>th</sup>, 1962.

regional leadership went along with the network's gradual emergence.<sup>326</sup> The period 1960-66 recorded the rise of such a network of Catholic student organizations. It also witnessed the problematic achievement of unified regional coordination.

Since 1956, a JECI-South American Secretariat was headquartered in Rio de Janeiro-Brazil. It was a subsidiary of the JECI-GS that functioned in Paris, France. Similarly, the following decade began with the establishment of a PR-MIEC Latin American Sub-Secretary permanent post at the General Secretariat (GS) in Fribourg, Switzerland, and a regional liaison Adjunct Secretary and Assistant-Committee in Caracas-Venezuela.<sup>327</sup> By 1962, PR-MIEC's regional presence transformed itself into a Latin American MIEC Secretariat with headquarters in Medellin-Colombia.

As the decade started, the reality of the MIEC and JECI Secretariats in Latin America was different. The methods of their apostolate and the theological and political maturity of their movements—to a greater extent, a logical consequence of the practice of the Review of Life Method-RLM—were among the markers of this difference. Also, uneven base legitimacy, organizational solidity, and leverage with CELAM seemed to describe the Secretariats' disparate reality. Furthermore, their belonging to MIEC and JECI internationals made them part of separate international communities with distinct

---

<sup>326</sup> Part II utilizes the term *organizations* to refer to the set of both *movements* and *federations*; the former was a predominant organizational structure of JEC university apostolate, and the latter, the more frequent organizational structure promoted by MIEC.

<sup>327</sup> Roger Pochon and Ramón Sugranyes de Franch, *Pax Romana Down the Years*, p. 21. Also, Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p. 184.

identities, modes of apostolic action and mechanisms, times, and logics for collective construction. These differences jeopardized regional Secretariats' efforts to build a collaborative relationship. They marked a winding path of disputes and contingencies, eventually overcome through agreements that crystallized in the merging initiative of the MIEC and JECI regional Secretariats by early 1966.

MIEC's and JECI's identities clashed on the grounds of their different apostolic approaches. PR-MIEC, on the one hand, sought to serve as a Confederation to integrate all forms of Catholic organizations worldwide without a common identity. According to its goal of promoting "an awareness capable of awakening enthusiasm and mobilize the students' commitment" towards the problems faced by the university communities around the world, PR's pedagogy chiefly focused on developing regional and international Congresses. These events convened large numbers of Catholic students and intellectuals to reflect on matters of interest. World Congresses were convened every three years, whereas, most often with a yearly frequency, PR called Inter-Federal Assemblies-IFAs that served as PR's primary governing body.<sup>328</sup>

---

<sup>328</sup> Inter-Federal Assemblies- IFAs were considered the more substantial body of the movement, as they were governance instances. They facilitated the technical implementation of the broader thematic consensuses reached at Congresses by defining regional plans. Overall, they were the place where members took decisions, accepted new members, approved the budget, and ratified or modified the movement's statutes. *Anais do VII Congresso Nacional JUC, Grupo de Trabalhos Nacional, Regional e Internacional. Recife, Brazil, July 1957.* p. 114. Box 291, Folder 1957. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

JECI movements, on the other hand, offered intensive and personal formation through study circles and teams and the practice of the three steps *See-Judge-Act* Method (RLM). This implied the consolidation of small groups of spiritually well-formed individuals acting as “leaven within the mass of the *milieu*.”<sup>329</sup> Local movements were coordinated nationally and regionally and, at the international level, articulated to the JECI-GS, known to be the international’s executive organ integrated by former national leaders of the member-movements, under the direction of the General Secretary.<sup>330</sup> JECI organized every two years a World Council, the supreme governing organ of the movement, to conduct world study sessions and make collective decisions on the orientation of the work ahead and address statutory matters.<sup>331</sup>

In both cases, Latin American organizations became strongly connected to the distinct international Catholic student communities MIEC and JECI embodied. This

---

<sup>329</sup> Holbrook, “Catholic Student Movements in Latin America,” p. 90. Stefan Gigacz offers further insights of Cardinal Joseph Cardijn’s *Theology of the Laity* that impregnated Specialized Catholic Action movements. Gigacz, “The Leaven in the Council.”

<sup>330</sup> Inside the JEC movement there was a distinction between member and collaborator movements. The distinction referred to the former as proper members of JEC International, and collaborators as those who were waiting to be admitted as members, for which they had to have collaborated with JECI for at least one year, participating in all their work except the council.

<sup>331</sup> Regional movements carefully studied international consensuses and abided by them so that it strengthened their sense of identity with and belonging to the international movement. In the case of JECI as it was more of a pedagogical approach the *Common Bases* were studied and circulated permanently in national bulletins, promoting a sense of living spirituality. Pelegri, *JECI MIEC: Su opción, su pedagogía*.

occurred through attendance to international events, mobility of militants, significant epistolary and publications’ exchanges with the GSs.

As shown in Table 1, all Latin American countries had Catholic student movements at the onset of the decade, even if nominally or in their infancy. Their formation resulted from the deployment of Catholic Action structures promoted by both clergy’s and laity’s leaderships. It was a regionally coordinated church effort to develop apostolic work among the growing and increasingly influential young student population. It was also a response to two ongoing circumstances. For one, the negligible influence of the institution in the formation of intellectual elites who could play a preponderant role in the national political, social, and economic development. Another, the dramatic “infiltration of *Castroism* and Marxism in the university *milieu*.” Both had made “the formation and the consequent action, in the apostolic sense, of an elite of Catholics ... A Catholic University Action, properly so ... a most urgent realization.”<sup>332</sup>

Table 1: Latin American student federations and movements affiliated to Pax Romana-MIEC and JECI early in the 1960s.

Country	Federations and movements	Affiliated to Pax Romana-MIEC	Members or collaborators movements to JECI
ARGENTINA	JUC-Juventud Universitaria Católica  AUDAC-Asociación de las Universidades de la Acción Católica Argentina (reunited feminine and masculine branches and the Federación	☑	☑

<sup>332</sup> *Informe Para Los Excelentísimos Señores Obispos y Asesores De América Latina*, pp. 2-3.



	de los Centros Universitarios de Acción Católica Argentina)		
	JEC -Juventud Estudiantil Católica- Secondary students		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BOLIVIA	JUC (Formed from the merging of feminine and masculine branches of the Federación Universitaria Masculina de Acción Católica Boliviana)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BRAZIL	JUC -Juventude Universitaria Católica.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	JEC- Juventud Estudiantil Católica- Secondary students		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CHILE	AUC -Asociación Universitaria Católica-Chile	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	JEC Juventud Estudiantil Católica- Secondary students		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
COLOMBIA	EUC-Equipos Universitarios de Colombia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
COSTA RICA	JUC-Juventud Universitaria Católica Costarricense.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	MUD-Movimiento Universitario Dominicano		
	CUC-Centro Universitario Católico.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
ECUADOR	JUC-Juventud Universitaria Católica Ecuador.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	JEC- Juventud Estudiantil Católica- Secondary students since 1963		
GUATEMALA	ACUG-Acción Católica Universitaria de Guatemala	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
HAITI	JEC- Jeunesse Étudiante Chrétienne		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HONDURAS	AUCA-Asociación Universitaria Católica	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

SALVADOR	ACUS-Asociación Católica Universitaria del Salvador	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	JUC-Juventud Universitaria Católica		
	JEC Juventud Estudiantil Católica- Secondary students since 1963		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
MEXICO	MEP-Movimiento Estudiantil y Profesional de la Asociación Católica de la Juventud Mexicana strengthened by 1965		
	Sección de Estudiantes de la Juventud Católica Femenina Mexicana.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Federaciones Mexicanas de Pax Romana (Luis Sereno)		
NICARAGUA	JUC and JEC emergent groups by late 1965		
PANAMA	EU-Equipos Universitarios Católicos	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
PARAGUAY	JEC formed from SEEDAC (Sección Especializada de Universitarios de Acción Católica Paraguaya).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PERU	UNEC-Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	ACUP-Acción Católica Universitaria Peruana.		
PUERTO RICO	CUC-Centro Universitario Católico-San Juan.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
URUGUAY	JUC: Formed by 1960 from the fusion of feminine and masculine branches of FUEAC (Federación Uruguaya de Estudiantes de Acción Católica).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	JEC- Juventud Estudiantil Católica- Secondary students		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
VENEZUELA	MUC- Movimiento Universitario Católico.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	JEC- Juventud Estudiantil Católica- Secondary students since 1964		

Source: Table elaborated by the author from data available in Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos MIEC-JECI*, Box 267, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito, and other primary sources from SLA CLP and IBC Repositories.

Catholic student movements evolved throughout the decade under the influence of the MIEC and JECI Secretariats, though with no detriment to their autonomy. Cuba, though, had exceptional circumstances. Despite the fact the revolution halted Catholic Action organizations' progress when it declared itself Marxist-Leninist by late 1961, undertaking a massive clergy expulsion and dismantling of church organizational structures<sup>333</sup>, a small delegation of Cuban exiles soon formed in Miami. By the early 1960s, some movements were affiliated to both Internationals. Others followed the Vatican's "commitment formula" according to the specificity of their *milieu*, whether they be university or secondary students.<sup>334</sup> Gradual apostolic specialization of the movements and radicalization of the cultural-political climate during the first half of the decade made students increasingly demand a more profound commitment from their faith. Soon, the theological-political maturity of their apostolate provoked that the affiliation to the Internationals was increasingly driven more by their approach than the nature of their *milieu*. For this reason, the "commitment formula," as explained in Chapter 2, did not actually work much further.

---

<sup>333</sup> Holbrook, "Catholic Student Movements in Latin America," pp. 145-161. Also see Soneira, Teresa Fernández, *Con la estrella y la cruz: Historia de la Federación de las Juventudes de Acción Católica Cubana. Vol. 16*. Ediciones Universal, 2002.

<sup>334</sup> Looking to end the disputes between the MIEC and JECI Internationals, the Vatican promoted a "commitment formula." While JECI would be mandated as a lay apostolic movement for the secondary and technical student *milieu*, MIEC would continue to be the only mandated movement for the University student environment. See Chapter 2 for a broader explanation of this matter.

Generally, local and national Catholic student organizations had an unequal, arrhythmic, and not always ascendant evolution. Prolific intellectual production and apostolic reflection generated visible leading nodes within the network that changed over time as the changing national socio-political realities conditioned movements in the wary environment of revolutionary ferment after 1959. Brazil, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Uruguay, Argentina, and El Salvador, were, at some point, nodes of relevance in this multicentered network. While this multipolarity eventually created clashing theological, pastoral, and political perspectives among student militants (about which more in Part III) and contested leaderships, it nonetheless provided the conditions for the maintenance and survival of a Catholic Students Latin American Movement. In the timeframe of this dissertation, this multipolarity proved to be crucial for dealing with and adapting to the increasingly authoritarian realities of the region.

In both cases, MIEC and JECI student organizations, the clergy advisors' counsel and their summoning presence were critical in their development and evolution. Besides giving pastoral and spiritual accompaniment to organized students, advisors were the key proponents of a theological discussion on which students were not initially trained. They were critical too in corresponding to and cultivating the intellectual curiosity among students, therefore, part and parcel of the Catholic *intelligentsia* that was to flourish during the decade.

Clergy advisors also played a crucial role in preserving the movements' memory. This was particularly important when movements underwent generational renewals; and when they ceased gatherings in the context of Cold War containment policies that left no space for mobilization, which eventually caused the movements' dissolution. This accumulated memory was later to aid the movements' re-born after their crisis in 1973. With observable differences but without overstepping the students' autonomy in the movements' governance, clerical advisors were also critical in solving conflicts and promoting agreements among student organizations. They gave personal accompaniment and spiritual advice to young militants, and created indispensable bridges with local, national and Latin American hierarchies. The mediating role of advisors with the church hierarchies—facilitated by their natural institutional link to CELAM's Departments of the Laity and University Pastoral and their own dioceses—was determinant in facilitating the procurement of all kinds of resources and institutional support to the SLAs initiatives and projects.<sup>335</sup>

In Latin America, the shortage of advisory priests and, even if they were available, their lack of preparation in the early years of the decade, made decisive the accompaniment of European advisers.<sup>336</sup> Many Belgian, Spanish, and French priests

---

<sup>335</sup> On the definition and evolution of CELAM's departments see *Celam: Elementos para su historia: 1955-1980*. CELAM- Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano, 1982.

<sup>336</sup> By 1962, the *Informe Para Los Excelentísimos Señores Obispos y Asesores De América Latina* described as "acute ... the problem of ecclesiastical advisers" and commented that the university federations' advisory "can only be entrusted to specially endowed priests." It noted that "the few that exist [in Latin America, were] often overloaded with work." Regarding their lack of formation, it noted that "the vast majority of our clergy ... due to their strictly seminarian formation, lacks a sense and a university vision." Furthermore, it noted that "we cannot be content with the simplistic solution of an advisor who attends a meeting to ensure orthodoxy. The active, constant, and dynamic presence of a priest who does not

assumed this task. They exercised a relevant pastoral role that facilitated lay formation from progressive Catholic perspectives that, in the early 1960s, were not yet abundant among the local clergy. Their influence extended beyond their own dioceses favored by the exchange of experiences, the mobility of militants, and the dissemination of analysis and perspectives through the Secretariats' publications.

Having provided an overall institutional context, the following chapters will address the separate and distinct unfolding of MIEC and JECI Secretariats in Latin America, sinuous relations between them, and attempts at collaborative work that preceded their merger. These chapters will emphasize discussions and conclusions of specific regional meetings and organizational turning points that were milestones in the construction of the regional network of student organizations. Furthermore, they will highlight the student bases' agency in claiming a convergent identity and agenda that ultimately galvanized the path for the network evolution into a social movement late in the decade.

---

attempt to replace the laity but facilitates them all the means to reach Christian maturity is necessary." The bishops' report concluded that "... experience shows that the best results in the university apostolate are generally obtained with priests who have studied in Europe or who have spent some years in the university as laypeople before entering the Seminary. This situation clearly shows us the need to obtain a good number of university-trained advisers." *Informe Para Los Excelentísimos Señores Obispos y Asesores De América Latina*, pp.1-2.

### **CHAPTER 3. MIEC federations in Latin America and the rise and consolidation of the Pax Romana-MIEC Latin American Secretariat.**

Chapter 3 addresses the evolution of MIEC federations in Latin America and the rise and consolidation of the PR-MIEC Latin American Secretariat (SLA). It argues that the MIEC-SLA developed a pragmatic apostolic approach to the work of the region's federations which more easily dialogued with the church's *institutionality* and bureaucracy. This approach facilitated the MIEC-SLA to benefit from the church's institutional resources and from those she helped to bridge with. It also allowed a rapid organizational strengthening of the MIEC-SLA and enhanced its regional reach. Furthermore, the chapter exposes, on the one hand, the influence that the Colombian EUC's anti-communist militancy had on the self-denounced MIEC-SLA's politicization. On the other hand, it unveils the bases' contestation of MIEC-SLA's leadership, which made it urgent for the MIEC-SLA to renovate its regional cadres and ecclesiastical advisory by 1966.

The MIEC-SLA pragmatic approach, however, did not prevent base organizations from optimizing the regional deliberation spaces created by MIEC-SLA. These spaces helped advance persisting claims regarding the role of the institutional church and Catholicism within the university and society. Regional events for study and discussion

increasingly served grassroots organizations to mature their theological, pedagogical, and political positions and allowed them to find, gradually, the elements of regional identity and develop a common agenda.

### **3.1. Generational ‘bridges’ at the beginning of the 1960s decade**

At the beginning of the decade, a Latin American MIEC Sub-Secretariat functioned with a permanent post at the Fribourg General Secretariat under Carlos del Castillo (Uruguayan), who worked in coordination with a regional liaison Assistant-Committee. Luis Boza Dominguez (Cuba), as Adjunct-Subsecretary, Ricardo Hoffman (Venezuela), Cristian Caro (Chile), and Hector Dada Hirezi (El Salvador) made part of the regional liaison Committee in Caracas, Venezuela. Under del Castillo, two regional Congresses opened the decade that shaped the region organizations’ identity. They also set in motion de MIEC Latin American Secretariat-SLA in October 1962.

In the opinion of Rolando Ames, a Catholic layman close to Peruvian UNEC and a student activist within the San Marcos University *gremio* at the time the meetings took place, the significance of these events consisted in that they served as first-time opportunities for the concurrence of “two generations of political lay Catholics.” One, the generation that embodied a still “conservative approach to the church’s Social Teaching”—i.e., had not yet let go of a defensive attitude of the faith—and believed in Christian Democracy. Another, a younger



generation, that in the post-1959 context “opened to broader and more analytical horizons of the problems of society.”<sup>337</sup> The latter would promote new and unprecedented intellectual and theological dialogues within Catholicism (including discussions of Marxism). These dialogues gave space to the multitude of reflections later put under the umbrellas of theologies of *Liberacion* and *del pueblo*, among the most significant.

The bridge made possible by PR-MIEC events would have facilitated the convergence of current ideological diversity and creativity within those generations, which allowed that interpretations of the church’s social teaching might come to terms to address the historical moment. The meetings recaptured old claims and addressed common critiques on both the church’s historical role in the face of unjust societal structures and the role of university students in transforming them. They also allowed establishing significant continuities around the objectives of university reform and *Latinoamericanista* ideals underlying university student mobilization. In so doing, they served to shape the foundations of what was gradually to become common identities and agendas among the region’s Catholic student organizations.

The first of these meetings took place from July 22 to August 6, 1961, in the town of La Capilla, Boyacá-Colombia. It was the Pax Romana-MIEC *Primer Seminario Latinoamericano* and was to be known as *La Capilla* meeting. The second was the 25th

---

<sup>337</sup> Rolando Ames, Interview, 07-12-2019. And *Conversations by country in preparation for Pax Romana Centenary Celebration with MIIC and FIU-LACIIR*. 03-19-2021.

PR-World Congress in Montevideo, Uruguay, from July 25-30, immediately followed in the same venue by the 24<sup>th</sup> PR-Inter Federal Assembly-IFA from August 1-7, 1962.

### **3.2. First Latin American Pax Romana Seminar, *La Capilla* 1961**

Although Latin American movements had not stopped meeting regularly since the times of CIDECA, *La Capilla* was named First Latin American Seminar. The denomination responded to the fact that it was the first occasion, since the late 1940s, in which PR student federations from the three zones (Atlantic, Pacific, and Central America, and the Caribbean) came together to hold a specific Latin American Seminar.<sup>338</sup> This did not fail to acknowledge, though, that *La Capilla* was a part of the hectic yearly agenda of PR in the region, including the celebration of World Congresses in a Latin American venue over the previous decade. Latin American representatives had had the opportunity to meet in such congresses around world youth's apostolate matters.

---

<sup>338</sup> Beginning in 1952, with the PR-MIEC-GS restructuring and decentralization, the region had been divided in three zones that organized independent PR meetings. Before *La Capilla*, relevant meetings developed in these zones. Three in the Mexico, Central America and Caribbean zone; three in the Southern Cone zone; and two in the Andean zone. The Interamerican bulletin reported that from 1953-1956, PR had been actively involved in 23 countries with 34 federations involving 378 student leaders. A relevant "continental" meeting occurred in San Salvador in July of 1957, though, it did not have the characteristics of a Seminar. Future regional meetings were planned for 1958 in Buenos Aires, Quito and Panama. Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, pp. 153-156.

Previous meetings such as the San Salvador (Salvador) IFA and “continental meeting” in 1957, the Eichstatt (Germany) IFA in 1958, and later, the IFA and World Congress in Manila (Philippines) early in 1960, had posed a common world agenda around the “mission of the university” in the apostolate, and the “civic responsibility of the student.” Also, the San Salvador meeting had approved the *Plan Latinoamericano*. This plan envisioned the Regional Subsecretary’s dedicated work with the region’s student federations and its administration of surveys to inquire about both the presence of communism in Latin American universities and the mission of Catholics in student *gremios*. Conclusions of these meetings had pointed at the students’ responsibility to make a Catholic voice be heard within the university community. In other words, they advocated a Catholic students’ stand in society and before the organizations with which they collaborated. Also, students had the responsibility of generating groups in the university to create a Christian climate within.<sup>339</sup> *La Capilla*, therefore, was in many ways a point of concretization from a common international repertory.

*La Capilla* meeting had 63 attendees, 48 of which were student representatives from Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Ecuador, Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, and Venezuela.<sup>340</sup> Among the participants were also seven special guests. One

---

<sup>339</sup> Ibid., p. 156

<sup>340</sup> *First Latin American Pax Romana Seminar, ‘La Capilla’ meeting Memoirs*. Box 165. Folder 1961. SLA-CLP Repository. Quito. A hard copy of these memoirs was kindly donated by former Latin American MIEC Secretary Rodrigo Guerrero.

of them, Abraham Santibañez, from the Chilean AUC, who was beginning that year as editor of the BIDI, the *Boletín Iberoamericano de Información*—until then under the responsibility of Gustavo Gatti and Emilio Fracchia from the Paraguayan federation. Other special guests included Romualdas Sviedrys (Lituania), Dr. Rafael Machado S., Guillermo Ocampo Trujillo and Fernando Galvis Gaitan (Colombia), and Aurel Laurent (Haiti). Lastly, another attendee was Fr. Raul Martinez-Mon—Director of the Education and Youth section in the CELAM’s CLAF (*Comite Latinoamericano de la Fe*)—who was playing a critical role in bridging some of the political choices made by Colombian Catholic militants. Some of these aspects will be discussed further below.

*La Capilla* meeting took place in the atmosphere of ideological confrontation in the immediate aftermath of the Cuban Revolution and amid social crises caused by the failure of developmental policies by various Latin American governments. It also occurred in the atmosphere of renewal during the months before the starting of Vatican II. It discussed “the economic and social problems of Latin America.”<sup>341</sup> As del Castillo posed it, the novelty of the meeting’s aim was that it did not intend “to speak of religious matters, but to address technical problems from a religious point of view.”<sup>342</sup> Del Castillo warned that Latin American Catholic university students needed to know and

---

<sup>341</sup> Ibid. Carlos del Castillo, “Inaugural talk.”

<sup>342</sup> Ibid., p. 5

address the problems that countries in the region were facing but “under the light of the church’s teachings.” He made a “desperately urgent call [so that students] organized and united around the same Christianizing impulse launched themselves into action.” In his view, this was a Christian responsibility. If unfulfilled, in the advent of the final judgment students’ indifference would be condemned since it “kept [Christ] hungry by keeping two-thirds of [the] continent hungry... [and].... 70 million illiterates.”<sup>343</sup> Del Castillo reminded that if it were not them who assumed the responsibility to “solve the living sores that our peoples suffer,” it would be the Marxists. In his opinion, in that case, Marxists, extending their influence, would be the ones to solve the problems “not leaving a stone over stone, (...) banishing the scale of values that [they], in [their] freedom, [were] often not capable of defending.”<sup>344</sup> Therefore, Catholic university students seemed to have an unprecedented responsibility. In *La Capilla’s* opening remarks, the belief in the inevitability of revolution in the region surfaced, so that the warning was that “There is no middle ground: the Latin American socio-economic revolution is made with Christ or against Christ. In Catholic university students lays [the task of] tipping the balance.”<sup>345</sup>

In coping with the challenges that Latin American social realities posed to the church and Catholics, *La Capilla’s* memoirs showed the ideological confrontation, as suggested by Ames, between apostolic and pastoral approaches. The memoirs displayed an alternative conception of the relation faith-politics. On the one hand, some conceived

---

<sup>343</sup> Ibid., p. 5-6

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid., “Prologue,” p.4.

their apostolic work with a defensive-of-the-faith point of view that went along with their quasi-militant anti-communism. In contrast, others did not fear lifting the vetoes to dialogue with the political, social, and cultural reality of Latin America in all its dimensions. Thus, the meeting counted among the speakers and audience with both progressive Christian voices and other more cautious expressions whose evolution later confirmed their restraint in front of the transformations yet to come.

On one hand, among the progressive speakers' voices stood out Fr. Alain Birou. He was a member of the Fr. Lebrez's team that recently, in 1958, had delivered in Colombia the results of the mission *Economia y Humanismo* that studied the social dimensions of the country's 'underdevelopment.' Fr. Birou delivered four different talks during the meeting; "Responsibility of the laity in today's world," "What is Development?," "Rural structures and agrarian problems," and "Educating men for a New Society." Hector Morales Velandia, technical director of Frs. Lebrez and Birou's mission, also gave a talk providing comparative statistics of living standards in Latin America and 'developed' countries. Among other progressive voices was Fr. Camilo Torres Restrepo, who gave a talk about "The social effects of underdevelopment." Fr. Torres had pioneered, along with Orlando Fals-Borda, the creation, in 1959, of the Sociology Department at the *Universidad Nacional de Colombia*, the first of its kind in Latin America. While the more important events that later pushed Fr. Torres to radicalize his positions and political choices had not occurred yet, his progressive

stances were already recognizable during the meeting. As Luis Ignacio Betancur—a former *Equipos Universitarios de Colombia*-EUC militant, remembers “at the meeting, it was known already that Camilo had become a tremendously uncomfortable symbol for the [predominantly traditional church’s] hierarchy.”<sup>346</sup> In addition, Fr. Gustavo Perez, Director of the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociales de Colombia* and a close friend of Fr. Torres’s, also gave a talk on “the demographic problem in Latin America and its economic and social consequences.”<sup>347</sup>

On the other hand, among more moderate and more explicitly anti-communist speakers was Aristides Calvani, a founder of the *Movimiento Familiar Cristiano*, an independent congressman identified with Christian Democracy, and a university professor in Venezuela.<sup>348</sup> Calvani spoke on the “Communist strategy in Latin America”

---

<sup>346</sup> Luis Ignacio Betancur. Interview 04-29-2021.

<sup>347</sup> *La Capilla Memoirs*.

<sup>348</sup> In discussing changing concepts of authority within the church—that more clearly crystallized after Vatican II, though, gradually took shape since the beginning of 1960—and the political implication of church models in Venezuelan and Colombian societies, Daniel Levine highlights how concepts of authority impacted styles of organization and action among Catholic associations. In such an approach, Levine distinguishes “a concept of authority that emphasizes equality, mutuality and communitarian structures,” from another “that gives greater weight to hierarchical themes and juridical definitions, stressing the general subordination of laity to clergy and bishops.” It is within the latter concept of church authority that Catholic organizations such as Catholic Family Movement (*Movimiento Familiar Cristiano*), Little Courses in Christianity (*Cursillos de Cristiandad*), the Legion of Mary and some groups of Catholic Action, were grounded. Levine describes these as groups of “traditional pietistic kind with very close structural links to the hierarchy.” They stressed individual spirituality and obedience to the hierarchy and had limited social orientation. These were styles of lay organization and action with a strong clerical vision of the institution, with a concept of authority that stressed general subordination of the laity to clergy and bishops. Levine argues different church concepts of authority are grounded in different church models; so that a significant opposition lays between the model of “Church as Institution” and the “Church as Pilgrim People of God,” emphasized at Vatican II. Levine, Daniel H. “Authority in Church and society: Latin American models.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 20, no. 4 (1978): 517-544. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/178561?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents/](https://www.jstor.org/stable/178561?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents/). As a result of changing attitudes with respect to the relation faith-politics, Arisitdes Calvani excelled by the early years of 1960 as a founding figure for IFEDDEC-*Instituto de Formacion Democrata Cristiana*, a Christian Democracy think

and the necessary planning and coordinated Catholic action against communism. Also, Fr. Nestor Giraldo offered his views on the role of “a Christian in the University.”<sup>349</sup> Fr. Giraldo was an ecclesiastical advisor to EUC and seemingly, along with Fr. Martínez-Mon, exerted a very strong influence on EUC’s anti-communist political practices.

The student audience was similarly heterogeneous. Among attendees were, for instance, militants from the movements with double affiliation to both the PR-MIEC and JECI movements, such as the Argentinean, Bolivian, and Costa Rican JUCs and the Paraguayan SEEDAC—that the following year was to change its denomination to JEC. In addition to their own intellectual and apostolic developments, these movements had been influenced by the theological and pedagogical reflections, the practice of the RLM, and the apostolic and political radicality coming out of the Brazilian experience through the JECI-SLA. These influences promoted bridging the gap between theory and practice, conceiving university militants’ commitment as an action beyond university campuses and engagement in practical social issues. Brazilians’ and the JECI-SLA’s influence were significant in promoting the understanding of Christian students’ commitment as an action of “vanguards acting in favor of the humanization of the world.” The rejection of imperialism and a non-capitalist,

---

tank for Latin America. IFEDDEC crystallized as a key center for the political formation of Latin Americans associated to the ODCA-*Organizacion Democrata Cristiana de America*. Williams, Edward J. “Latin American Catholicism and political integration.” *Comparative Political Studies*, 1969, vol. 2, no 3, p. 327-348. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/001041406900200302>.

<sup>349</sup> *La Capilla Memoirs*, 1961.



though, democratic way of development were also considered already.<sup>350</sup> Also, the Chilean AUC and the Peruvian UNEC, while not affiliated to the JECI-SLA, had their own and different trajectories, with a close experience and practice of the RLM and an understanding of the Christian commitment as an action in the *milieu*. While Cardijn's legacy in Chile dated back to the 1940s, and the JEC formed by the following decade, in Peru, the arrival from Europe and pastoral orientation of Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, since the previous year (1960), was a landmark for a more progressive orientation of UNEC.<sup>351</sup>

More moderate positions on faith and politics that reproduced defensive approaches in conceiving the laity's apostolate were, for instance, those epitomized by the *Equipos Universitarios de Colombia*-EUC. The Colombian was not the only movement coming from deep anti-communist stands. As the case of older generations, most traditional Catholic Action youth groups came from the same roots. To be sure, many had begun transitioning to more open positions. A case in point is the Mexican MEP-*Movimiento Estudiantil Profesional*, recounted by Historian Jaime Pensado. It had a slight advantage relative to the Colombian one in its transition to more progressive

---

<sup>350</sup> Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 175, 178-79

<sup>351</sup> While a dedicated history by country of Catholic university movements in Latin America still awaits development, some details on the Chilean AUC are referred to in: Fernández Fernández, David. "Por una Iglesia junto al pueblo y sus luchas: El Movimiento Iglesia Joven en Santiago de Chile." *Anales de la Universidad de Cádiz*, ISSN 0213-1595, N° 11, 1996, págs. 45-60. Also, Gaete, Marcial Sánchez. *Historia de la Iglesia en Chile: Tomo IV, una sociedad en cambio*. Editorial Universitaria de Chile, 2014. In the same venue, on the UNEC Peru see Peña, Milagros. *Theologies and Liberation in Peru: The Role of Ideas in Social Movements*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995. Also Klaiber S.J., Jeffrey. *Historia contemporánea de la Iglesia católica en el Perú*. Peru: Fondo Editorial de la PUCP, 2017.

positions, but also came from a traditional anti-communist background.<sup>352</sup> The Colombian, however, might have been a paradoxical case since Colombia was the host country of the event that came up with such a strong progressive Latin American student manifesto. Besides, the following year *Equipos Universitarios de Colombia* became HQ of the MIEC-SLA.

The Colombian EUC, as Sociologist Juan Sierra-Vasquez comments, had developed an “anti-communist Catholicism.”<sup>353</sup> Understanding its apostolic work as countering the communist influence within Colombian university *gremios*, it had focused on promoting an alternative university student confederation to confront the current UNEC, considered vulnerable to communists’ control.<sup>354</sup> Indeed, by the

---

<sup>352</sup> Pensado, Jaime M. “El Movimiento Estudiantil Profesional (MEP) una mirada a la radicalización de la juventud católica mexicana durante la Guerra Fría.” *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos*, 2015, vol. 31, No 1, p. 156-192.

<sup>353</sup> Sierra Vásquez, Juan Fernando “Cultura, Movilización Social y Religión,” Diss. Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium, 1992 p. 19-31

<sup>354</sup> To clarify, UNEC in the Colombian case refers to the *Union Nacional de Estudiantes de Colombia*, which was not related to the church neither represented any religious affiliation. It should not be mistaken with the Peruvian UNEC that stood for *Union Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos*. According to Sociologist Sierra Vásquez, in the context of the greater belligerence of the university youth, and the emergence after 1959 of leftist university *gremial* currents, *gremial* control is configured as a primary element of dispute. The control of the university *gremio* was envisioned as a way of Christianizing the university world that was perceived as experiencing a serious moral crisis, according to a survey led by Fr. Nestor Giraldo and Raul Martinez. Also, recognizing the need to promote the University Reform, the control of the university *gremio* by Catholics sought to promote a "humanistic" University Reform opposed to that promoted by the communists. In this context, during the first two years of EUC a line of work was developed that coincided with the strengthening of a *gremial* line vs. the political line (of the communists), promoting in that way what they called a "democratic *gremialism*" that was opposed to revolutionary *gremialism* of the Marxists/Communists. Therefore, EUC's efforts starting in 1959 focused on contesting *gremial* power. These efforts crystallized, developing an indirect apostolate mechanism, in the creation, extension and strengthening of the CEUC-*Confederación de Estudiantes Universitarios de Colombia*. The creation of the CEUC was aimed at contesting the legitimacy and *gremial* control of the Colombian UNEC which, born in 1957, laid under the leadership of the MRL (*Movimiento Revolucionario Liberal*). In significant confluence with the communists, the MRL was leading the struggle for University Reform in the country and the rejection of the technocratic reform projected by the Colombian government following

first years of 1960, as Ignacio Betancur lamented, the Colombian EUC "...was stuck in the mechanics of the anti-communist fight." EUC's position stuck to the detriment of a greater theological and political reflection that might have made it possible to imagine their apostolate beyond the ideological resistance to the Soviet bloc and Cuba, and ultimately, beyond pursuit of the communist defeat.<sup>355</sup> As Betancur explains, the movement "had acted, primarily, as a reaction to the communists... who had gained a lot of advantage." And "as things were seen at that moment," continued Betancur, "as we were losing the battle .... [we] had been indoctrinated to employ the tactics of the communists, ... to use the enemy's... same weapons... aided by the United States."<sup>356</sup> Seemingly, CIA funds reached the Colombian EUC. They were facilitated by Fr. Raul Martinez-Mon with the involvement of Fr. Giraldo, and made effective by Ignacio Betancur himself, all of which contributed to EUC's deviation from their apostolate.<sup>357</sup>

---

the recommendations of the North American, Rudolph Atcon. Sierra "Cultura, Movilización Social y Religión." p. 19, 20-22.

<sup>355</sup> Betancur, interview.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid.

<sup>357</sup> In an interview with Historian Ana Maria Bidegain (AMB) in 1997, Luis Ignacio Betancur (LIB) commented that "CELAM chose me from among all of us ...at *Equipos* [EUC] to meet a *gringo* from the [US] embassy who began to fund the movement. In the contacts with him, I had to give myself the secret name of Jose Bernal. I took thousands of pesos from the time, [and] made verbal reports. Not a single letter was written [about] what we were going to do, what universities, which the organizations were, who were the leaders [etc.] That was pure and simple espionage service with a lot of McCarthyism." When questioned about the type of information they provided, LIB pointed out that their action and that of other possible informants took place within the university student councils. It was about establishing whether "he is a communist or not; he is from such a [political] party or he is not. " In an interview with the author, LIB complemented this prior interview by clarifying that, by means of forming and controlling the CEUC (*Confederacion de Estudiantes Universitarios de Colombia*) in 1959, they produced lists of the students' political affiliation within university *gremios*, which greatly served the required identification. "This was ... a sympathizer of the left... we had to keep an eye on him so that he was not elected to the student council." LIB. Interview 04-29-2021.

In his interview with AMB, he explained that "My peace of mind, as a Catholic, was that I was guided by Father Martínez from CELAM. (...) He was the one who guided me and the one with the initial contact. It was very clear to my friends from Pax Romana that I received some money that I told them that some

As Betancur recounted, these funds primarily financed students' attendance to numerous national and international events. Presumably they were also instrumental in the publication of *La Capilla's* conference and conclusions book.<sup>358</sup>

---

gentlemen gave me. They did enough to guess that I got the money from somewhere; [still, they] attributed it, I don't know if it was serious or not, to my family ties with Dr. Ospina Perez or the *Federación de Cafeteros*. They were not clear about where the money came from. I arrived with the cash, with all the underground things [that inhabited the relations between] the Catholic movement and the CIA, because [it was already clear to me] that it was the CIA. In the *Equipos'* first stage, we were too anti-communist, both due to the influence of Frs. Nestor Giraldo, Martínez, and others. ..."

LIB explained EUC contacts with the CIA facilitated through the US Embassy in Bogota were weakened as Kennedy became president of the US. As he explains, "A *gringo* came and tried to say (in a meeting that I have not forgotten) that Kennedy's policy was not entirely orthodox, and rather, the "Nixonians," so to speak, were the true orthodox, who offered more security and more money. In front of this, I was scared. They told me to speak in Medellin in an office that I still remember. They were two *gringos* passing through all Latin America, and they wanted me to go there ... I went to that office and spoke with a *gringo*. It was more abrupt because he was from a private company; he was not from the government nor the embassy. I made the decision not to continue talking to them for a perhaps very simplistic reason. I made a mental differentiation between this (*gringo*) who was from the private sector and the other (with whom I was speaking at the beginning) from the embassy—which gave me more guarantees. I do not remember, finally, who was left with the contacts when I left for England or if they continued." Historian AMB adds to the conversation that "When speaking with [former EUC militant] Luis Fernando Duque (†), he comment[ed] that through Fr. Nestor [Giraldo] he went to see a person in the José Uribe Uribe square. The guy asked him for a series of reports and things that scared [him] horribly. And Alvaro [Uribe (†), also former EUC militant] speaks of another place at *Los Laureles*. He says for him this was like a loss of virginity. Luis Fernando says that he was very scared for him and the movement. At that time, they had discovered the JEC in Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina as another type of proposal, and what he tried to do was to uncoupled the movement from this perspective and connect it more with the JEC."

Historian AMB correlates LIB's testimony with secret declassified document Doc / 82 No 002466 National Security Council, Operations Coordinating Board Report (November 26, 1958) on U.S. Policy Toward Latin America (NSC5613 / 1). According to this document, the US National Security Council, Nov 26, 1958, decided to increase its influence among the university sectors to improve the attitude of Latin Americans towards the United States, for which in 1959 they dedicated 2 million dollars. The document spoke of developing "special and intensive pro-United States programs among students because they are not only taking an active and direct role in politics but because they are a key element in increasing a broad influence among Latin American intellectual sectors." Bidegain, Ana María "Influencia de la Guerra Fría en el Movimiento de Universitarios de Acción Católica" in German Ferro Medina (comp) *Religión y Etnicidad en América Latina, Tomo II. Memorias del VI Congreso Latinoamericano de Religión y Etnicidad ALER y II Encuentro de la Diversidad del hecho religioso en Colombia ICER*, Instituto Colombiano de Antropología-ICANH, 1997.

<sup>358</sup> In the interview with the author, LIB explains further CIA funding of Colombian cadres attending student councils sought to obtain information regarding the identification of possible communist or communist-minded students in university *gremios*. This aim did not clash with EUC apostolic tasks as they needed that information to pursue control of university *gremios*. LIB. Interview with the author 04-29-2021. Regarding *La Capilla's* Memoirs book, in interview with Bidegain, LIB commented that "I don't remember if I was already leaving for England. I remember ... In any case, I had to lobby the financing of [*La Capilla's* final] document. I encountered resistance from the *gringos* because... they began to see that

It is true that Colombians' anti-communist approach and their international engagements were to mark the first couple of years of the PR-MIEC SLA, and later on, to cause conflicts among regional cadres, some of which shall be discussed below. Still, it is also apparent it did not reflect, neither did it determine, the Latin American Movement's dominant political stand then emerging.

As for *La Capilla*, ostensibly, the intricate relations and interests that met in such meeting did not diminish its relevance among student organizations and its repercussions in the future of the university apostolate. Since the infiltration of EUC by CIA funds was not necessarily known at the time by all EUC members, neither by some of the speakers nor federations attending the meeting, *La Capilla* retained its significance. Seemingly, it was a space to drawing authentic agreements capturing the majority's views and the student laity's collective will.

Thus, speaking on behalf of "the Catholic students from all over the continent...before the indifference of large segments of the student body," the student manifesto produced at the event presented Catholic students' position "in the face of a distressing Latin American reality [and] the suffering of peoples that violated the very roots of [their] spirituality." It declared,

---

things were changing... However, I succeeded; and they gave the money, but that was quite a difficult thing." Bidegain, "Influencia de la Guerra Fría en el Movimiento."

“We witness a political order not yet fully open to the great popular majorities, often corrupted by [either] military [or] class dictatorships. ... Consequently, ... we have been faced with the urgent need for a change of attitudes, leading to a change of structures with a humane orientation [and] purely autochthonous, Latin American itself... As representatives of a broad Latin American student segment, we believe that our universities must assume their true role by effectively joining the [structural] transformation process... We are responsible for the future. Whether this future represents authentic human advancement or a partial and distorting elevation of man, will depend on the degree to which we ... insert ourselves into the circumstances of our people to transform them in a new and different direction.”<sup>359</sup>

An open letter to the Latin American bishops, a circular letter to all Latin American federations, and a set of conclusions as a way of a Latin American roadmap were outcomes of the meeting’s deliberations. They concurred on the need to endow Christian leaders with the necessary social and professional formation so that they could assume the historical challenge of the time. The letter to the bishops asked for their support in urging the student laity to take responsibility and the church to aid with material conditions that might help federations in their apostolic work. It also requested bishops to provide priests as

---

<sup>359</sup> *La Capilla Memoirs*, pp. 237-238.

clerical advisors for the federations, who were knowledgeable of the intellectual problems students faced and had a solid theological formation on the role of the laity.<sup>360</sup>



Figure 1. First Pax Romana MIEC Latin American Seminar—*La Capilla*, 1961. A group of student attendees accompanied by Fr. Alain Birou and Fr. Nestor Giraldo. A photo record courtesy of Rodrigo Guerrero, a former member of *Equipos Universitarios de Colombia* and Latin American MIEC Secretary.

Conclusions of the meeting's deliberations addressed the structural causes of Latin American 'underdevelopment,' explored paths to a solution, and discussed the role of the student laity within. They also envisioned a collective new response from Catholics to communism in the region. For some attendees, the consensuses reached at

---

<sup>360</sup> Ibid., pp. 235-236

the meeting marked a new direction in the laity's embracing of a *temporal* (viz. earthly) commitment and their collective departure from mainstream positions concerning Catholicism's relation to politics. As mentioned by Rodrigo Guerrero, an EUC member at the time, "the meeting at *La Capilla* was decisive in [showing them] the importance of *temporal* affairs and politics ... to extend the Kingdom of God in [their] countries; [and]...in discovering the importance of politics to Christian commitment's practical actions."<sup>361</sup>

The gathering's conclusions also showed a collective will to push forward long-standing claims within the student body, some of which both the University Reform Movement and Catholic Students had identified with during past decades. Among such claims were the critique on the tradition of Church's and Catholics' inaction towards social injustice, the condemnation of imperialism, and demands of authenticity, regional integration and solidarity. Other conclusions sharply departed from traditional Catholic views and represented a vanguard position on envisioned alternatives to achieve the region's social, economic, and political development.

The consensuses on the critique to the Church and Catholics were a first step in the gradual collective elaboration about the caducity of a "Christendom model" in Latin America. They marked the rise, instead, of a path towards a

---

<sup>361</sup> Rodrigo Guerrero, Interview 06-22-20/ 02-04-2021.





Figure 2. First Pax Romana MIEC Latin American Seminar—*La Capilla*, 1961. Fr. Camilo Torres in conversation with Latin American students. A photo record courtesy of Rodrigo Guerrero, a former member of *Equipos Universitarios de Colombia* and Latin American MIEC Secretary.

“Church of the Poor model.” The latter was no other than the pastoral approach underlying Liberation Theology a few years later. In the meeting conclusions, the students assured that “Latin American Christianity,” which they defined as a “system,” had “already completed a historical cycle.” They added, “it was a matter of time for it to be definitively overcome.” Their critique pinpointed what had been a growing distancing between the interpretation of the doctrine and reality, due to which “Latin American Christianity” was “incapable” of responding to the problems of the modern world.<sup>362</sup>

---

<sup>362</sup> *La Capilla Memoirs*, p.241

They condemned the regional predominance of this “Christianism” because, in being imbued by a mechanical approach, it was an accomplice of the “consolidation of structures that generate misery to our peoples.”<sup>363</sup> They explained that such an approach reduced the Christian faith to a “Catholic label” to “deal with [the] world that it considers flawed, and [instead of overcoming it] in some way it works with it.” As a result, “the Christian... [acts] as a man “installed” in current structures and profoundly contrary to any... social change that affects his comfort.” In this logic, students lamented, “Latin American Christianity” reduced “...charity that is authentic love of God and our brothers, to a cold charity that seeks peace of mind for the donor rather than authentic closeness to the brother who needs us.”<sup>364</sup>

In the face of what they referred to as “Christianism’s failure,” the meeting called upon the urgency of an “authentic Christian presence” in Latin America and demanded that the laity play a renovating role in this task.<sup>365</sup> The laity’s mission was to “live the love of Christ in the world and collaborate actively and generously to the progress of *temporal* society.” It indicated that “...that same movement, would *free* [*temporal* society] from the disorder into which it fell due to the sin of man.” This collaboration implied the laity’s insertion into “a

---

<sup>363</sup> Ibid., p.243

<sup>364</sup> Ibid.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid., pp. 242-244

panoramic view of God’s Plan” and [sought] to dialogue with the whole of humanity, avoiding any “defensive ghetto mentality.”<sup>366</sup>

In the students’ assessment of Latin American underdevelopment, therefore, the above views were translated as the call upon the laity to collaborate with the “enormous mass of men who have been denied the necessary food, the conscious participation in their own government and a modicum of culture, awaiting their *liberation* and elevation to conditions of life worthy of a human being.”<sup>367</sup> That was for the authentic Christian to “be faithful to his vocation of Justice and Charity.”<sup>368</sup> Similarly, overcoming the “ghetto mentality” towards communism, which would have meant abandoning an explicit anti-communist attitude and assuming a non-communist stand, instead, was pivotal in the meeting consensus. Acknowledging the varied responses that Catholics had at the time towards communism, the conclusions stated it was “indispensable to combat, not so much communism itself, but rather the causes and factors that ma[d]e the penetration of communism possible.” Instead, the meeting proposed “to fight the errors of communism, there, [in the field]. [And fight] for the realization of a more just social order.”<sup>369</sup> For this to be accomplished, conclusions indicated, it was necessary to develop philosophical thought compatible with Christianity, for sectors that demanded a just restructuring society might embrace. Also, this approach

---

<sup>366</sup> Ibid., p.244

<sup>367</sup> Ibid., p. 246

<sup>368</sup> Ibid., p.247

<sup>369</sup> Ibid., pp.275-277

encouraged the study of Marxism to overcome it, acknowledging its successes and refuting its errors that were of both a scientific and philosophical character.<sup>370</sup>

On the other hand, conclusions also delineated the social, economic, and political transformations attendee's consensus deemed necessary for overcoming Latin American underdevelopment. For one, they embraced Lebret's notion of "integral development" that allowed the complete satisfaction of fundamental human needs.<sup>371</sup> That implied pursuing a "harmonic economy" that integrally favored man and a type of development that went beyond simple economic growth to include physical and spiritual human wellness. Also necessary, in their view, was the transformation of the notion of ownership (mainly affecting the agrarian and urban structures and companies' ownership) in a way that reinforced its social function to the detriment of ownership's individualistic view that was predominant.<sup>372</sup>

---

<sup>370</sup> Ibid.

<sup>371</sup> Out of its work, especially in 'underdeveloped' countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, F. Louis-Joseph Lebret's center of investigation and action Economy and Humanism, pioneered in developing an "integral" conception of "development." This concept considered the physical and spiritual nature of man and advocated for a comprehensive development that went beyond the scope of simple economic growth. Lebret's strong influence at the pontifical and synodal levels made of the vision of an "integral development" a pivotal concept in both *Gaudium et Spes* from Vatican II, and later in 1967, in *Populorum Progressio*. See Pope, Stephen J. "Integral Human Development: From Paternalism to Accompaniment." *Theological Studies* 80.1 (2019): 123-147 <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0040563918819798>. Also see Andes, Stephen J.C., and Julia G. Young. *Local Church, Global Church: Catholic Activism in Latin America from Rerum Novarum to Vatican II*. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2016

<sup>372</sup> *La Capilla Memoirs*, p. 266

The proposed educational reforms coincided with historical claims made by the student movement. It included the democratization of access to secondary, vocational, technical, and university levels, the transformation of educative programs that favored social mobility, and the strengthening of scientific research. Attendees especially considered the goal of overcoming illiteracy, deemed one of the most severe obstacles to economic and political progress.



*Figure 3. First Pax Romana MIEC Latin American Seminar—La Capilla, 1961. Catholic students in a critical attitude, in conversation with Fr. Nestor Giraldo. From left to right Francisco Guerra (Peru), Rodrigo Guerrero (Colombia), Fr. Nestor Giraldo (Colombia), Diego Roldan (Colombia), (presumably) Juan Guillermo Jaramillo (Colombia), and Carlos del Castillo (Uruguay). A photo record courtesy of Rodrigo Guerrero, a former member of *Equipos Universitarios de Colombia* and Latin American MIEC Secretary.*

Conclusions also suggested structural reform to the region's states, meaning administrative restructuring in the face of caducity or anachronism of some of the existing institutions. They promoted states embracing the goals of increasing economic

and social democracy and preparing the youth both for leading societies towards “better [collective] living” and, ultimately, for governing.<sup>373</sup> The suggested reform also included the international system. It rejected economic and political foreign “invasion or interference” and posed the creation of a Latin American solidary block with economic, political, and cultural effects.<sup>374</sup> As mentioned, objectives seemed not detached from the long-standing anti-imperialist, anti-oligarchic, and regional integration rhetoric. Such rhetoric had been present in the Student Movement decades before.

Finally, faced with the question of what should the attitude of the Christians be? The conclusions of the meeting stressed that

“In the same way that there are conditions that make a war morally lawful, there are those that justify a radical change of our unjust structures and their replacement by new ones respectful of man. This social change, which should be radical and rapid to make possible an authentic development, can be done even against the explicit will and violent opposition of a certain minority and privileged social groups. [This is] provided that the peaceful means of carrying it out have

---

<sup>373</sup> Ibid., p. 273

<sup>374</sup> Among the envisioned effects was the circulation of ideas, the creation of the Latin American common market, harmonization of the various national policies through durable agreements and a long-term solidarity of Latin American countries. It was also significant the rejection of the “US economic and political invasion ... which had been decisive in the formation of oligarchies and national dictatorships,” and repudiation of “any country’s arrogance” referring to imperialist aspirations of any country. The Catholic militants imagined as desirable the formation of a Latin American bloc that could negotiate with any other bloc in the world on equal terms. In their consideration, “A new form of solidarity must be born among all peoples if we want to achieve internal and external peace, which is the desire for progress.” Ibid., pp. 274-275.

been exhausted, that the evil that follows the process of change is less than that of remaining in the current situation, and that, in the most objective and scientific way possible, it can be ensured... that the objectives pursued will be obtained. ... In those conditions, we believe that a revolution is licit.”<sup>375</sup>

Despite the detailed articulation of a social and political reform proposal to face the dramatic consequences of underdevelopment and notwithstanding the clear statement of the role of Christians in it, *La Capilla*'s conclusions cannot be considered the definition of a collective agenda. The progressive Catholic student militants' network in Latin America was still weak and disjointed, and national movements were not yet fully consolidated. Still, once militants went back home, they took the reflections with them and addressed them inside their movements as best as they could, according to their takes and internal dynamics. The conclusions contributed to strengthening a Latin American perspective on Catholic students' mobilization, their organization in national federations or movements, a shared commitment to social justice, and reassured the urgency of theological renewal. As recounted by Paco del Campo, former Argentinean JUC militant, *La Capilla* inaugurated a series of Latin American seminars that significantly informed national meetings.

---

<sup>375</sup> Ibid., pp. 260-61

As he recalled, national meetings since *La Capilla* were significant

“In having turned more explicitly towards both a Latin American and a national vision of the student presence in the university. We reflected on the ... students’ insertion and commitment in the *milieu*, but with a vision of what was the national and what was the Latin American, [in order] to move towards a more just and less class-oriented society than the one we were living in. [Also, they caused] that we reflected on a more open and committed vision of theology.”<sup>376</sup>

As can be anticipated, *La Capilla* did not have the same immediate repercussion in all movements. For instance, in the case of the Colombian EUC, it did not entail a closer and immediate analysis of Frs. Lebret’s and Birou’s report. Neither did it prompt a closer relation between EUC and Father Torres’ ideology which, as sources indicate, was having a significant impact on many other facets of the Colombian student movement.<sup>377</sup> As Betancur recalls, “We did not tap that [Lebret report.] I do not remember a single meeting that we have met to say, let’s see this father, what is he saying ... we ignored it.! We got stuck in the mechanics. The Lebret report should have been analyzed with the same depth with which [in previous years] we had analyzed Fr. Congar. We neglected it. [When we organized *La Capilla*] there was a healthy concern to explore other themes,

---

<sup>376</sup> Francisco “Paco” del Campo, Interview, 6-15-2020.

<sup>377</sup> On Camilo Torres’ life see Broderick, Walter J. *Camilo Torres Restrepo*. Planeta Colombiana, 1996; on Camilo Torres’ influence in the Colombian student movement, see Archila, Mauricio. "El movimiento estudiantil en Colombia." *Revista del observatorio social de América Latina* 31 (2012): 71-103.



resulting in discussions that went beyond mechanics. Still, I pessimistically believe that [in that moment] this did not translate into a change of attitude. It was stimulating, but it did not permeate the way we acted.”<sup>378</sup> Other factors were later to push the Colombian movement to a more progressive track. This happened gradually amidst the identity crisis of EUC caused by the confusion between being a *gremial* or an apostolic organization.<sup>379</sup> Increasing EUC’s integration with other Latin American movements and the celebration of national gatherings was critical in this change of perspective. For Oliverio Henao, a former EUC militant, it was chiefly in the *Congreso de Rionegro* (1962), again with Fr. Alain Birou as the keynote speaker and the participation of Fr. Camilo Torres, where the conclusions of *La Capilla* got a further and deeper reflection. As he recalls,

“The National Congress in Rionegro, Antioquia, was the most important sequel of *La Capilla*. Because in *La Capilla*, all the elements [of reflection] were outlined, and there [at the National Congress] we debated them. The hallmark [of this event] was critical analysis... The great conclusion of that event was the *Christians’ commitment to change* in Latin America ... [and] to find the way of accomplishing in practice [the goal of] being part of [those] paths of change. The fundamental recommendation was “Get into politics.! Go beyond partisan politics; if you do not go into politics, you will not have a chance of making change possible.”<sup>380</sup>

---

<sup>378</sup> Betancur, Interview.

<sup>379</sup> Sierra, “Cultura, Movilizacion Social y Religion.”

<sup>380</sup> Furthermore, according to Oliverio Henao, Fr. Camilo Torres was later to recognize that “La Capilla” and “Rionegro” had strengthened his thinking and his line of action. Both events served to “reaffirm their Christian commitment in the [context of] demands of the 1960s Latin America; [this is] in the face of that abyss of inequality that existed.” Oliverio Henao in “La Capilla and Montevideo 62: Founding

Some contributing factors promoting the EUC's change of perspective were related to the role it assumed as the home of the SLA since late 1962. Also, the beginning of Vatican II that year and the ecclesiastical advisory of Fr. Buenaventura Pelegri. Fr. Pelegri had been trained in the pedagogy of the JOC. Starting the following year, he became the advisor for the Cali- Colombia EUC and a relevant source of theological orientation and apostolic guidance for its militants based on the see-judge-act method.

Finally, a letter to all Latin American federations was also a tangible result of *La Capilla*. It presented what was intended to be the blueprint for PR Latin American federations from then on. With the purpose of having solid and well-structured federations capable of fulfilling the responsibility of inserting themselves into and *christianizing* the *temporal* structures, the circular letter announced the creation of the new regional Secretariat with headquarters in Latin America-SLA. Besides the objective of coordinating the region's federations to achieve a "dynamic unity of university Catholics," the document envisioned providing federations with spiritual formation and a method for organization and efficient apostolic work.<sup>381</sup> The new SLA was to be integrated by a team of laymen under the direction of the Latin American Secretary and an ecclesiastical advisor. Also, an advisory committee was to form with the objective of "helping

---

Encounters," *Latin American conversations in celebration of Pax Romana Centenary, 07-31-2021*. Organized and hosted by FIU-LACIIR, SLA MIEC-JECI and MIIC.

<sup>381</sup> "Circular Letter," in *La Capilla Memoirs*, p. 239

the Secretary obtain a quick continental overview of the problems affecting the federations.”<sup>382</sup>

### 3.3. World Congress and Inter-Federal Assembly, Montevideo 1962

The following year (1962), the PR World Congress in Montevideo gave further shape to the regional scheme that came out from *La Capilla*. It also gave the necessary Inter Federal Assembly-IFA approvals for the SLA to function effectively. In preparation for the meeting, the PR GS chose Montevideo’s venue as a way to strengthening the process of decentralization that had envisioned regional Secretariats for which the Latin American was the first to crystallize.<sup>383</sup> The motion was easily approved with two Latin Americans in the Fribourg headquarters: Jaime Cordova, PR General Secretary, and Carlos del Castillo, still Subsecretary for Latin America. Peter Vygantas, President and

---

<sup>382</sup> Ibid.

<sup>383</sup> Pax Romana, MIEC Inter Federal Assembly, *Montevideo IFA 1962, Memoirs*. The General Secretary’s Report. Appendix 3, p. 38. Box 138. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito. The restructuring of the Pax Romana General Secretariat Directive Committee in 1952, which included the creation of regional coordination posts, one of those a Latin American one, meant the recognition of the movements’ autonomy and singularity. Later, since the IFA in Lisbon in 1960, the GS had committed to support the “vitalization of federations” at the regional, zonal, and national levels. In the effort of decentralization, the pioneering crystallization by 1962 of the Latin American Secretariat was seen internationally as a significant achievement. In forthcoming years, the Latin American Secretariat and cadres would assume a vanguard position for the student apostolate worldwide, and its regional cadres were offered international posts. By 1963, when the Latin American Secretariat with HQ in Medellin had completed one year of operation, Peter Vygantas, IMCS president, highlighted the Latin American experience strength. Following a trend of communication on IMCS’s unfulfilled goals, the difficulties of setting up new regional secretariats in Asia and Africa, and even the challenges of reaching a significant audience in the US in preparation for the 1964 Washington IFA, Vygantas commented on the reality of decentralization: “Let us face the reality of Pax Romana in this continent. Knowledge of and awareness of Pax Romana in this area of the world is almost nonexistent. These may be harsh words, but there is a lot of truth in them.” He continued by exalting that “...the closeness and traditions of European federations, [and]... the homogeneity of the Latin American religious, cultural and even political (student world) environment, permit a much greater exposure of our movement to those federations and that area than it is possible here.” *Circular Letter from the IMCS President to Members & Candidates of the DC-IMCS. Subject: DC Activities*, December 15, 1963. Box 126 Folder 1963. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

the Directing Committee, were also strongly supportive of the move, which was known would hasten the consolidation of the region's student federations and the MIEC-SLA as it would put in Latin Americans' hands the decisive challenge of leading and organizing the world meeting.

The Congress topic, "Social Responsibility of the University and University Students," maintained PR's line of concern since previous years.<sup>384</sup> Still, it represented an issue with particular depth and historical relevance to Latin America, namely, the relation between university and society which the Student Movement had revolved around since its inception. As Luis Boza stated in a letter to Latin American federations, "on the subject of the congress, our federations have a lot to say. In Latin America, there is no topic as debated among university students as this, neither is there a topic that so urgently needs a comprehensive approach."<sup>385</sup>

---

<sup>384</sup> In preparation for the Congress, the PR-GS elaborated and sent to the organizing federations (Latin Americans) Document #4, "The social responsibility of the university and university students." It raised that the choice of the topic to be developed in Montevideo was linked to those of previous World Congresses, e.g., in Canada "Mission of the University" 1952, "From the University to Life, Problems of the Young Graduate," Nottingham, 1955, and "Demands of freedom in today's University," Vienna, 1958. While it also noted the topic responded to its "importance and currency in all parts of the world," it recognized that the election had been influenced by the venue of the event: "where the social problem is one of the most acute." The document added that "... in that continent [Latin America], as in all the others, it is highly important to awaken the awareness of the growing responsibility that the University as an institution and the university students have in the social order." *Encuestas y Documentos preparatorios para el Congreso Mundial de Pax Romana Montevideo, 1962*, p. 181. Box 138. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>385</sup> *Circular Letter #2*. Fribourg May 8. 1962. Signed by Luis Boza Dominguez (Adjunct Secretary for Latin America). Box 126. Folder 1962.

In 1960s Latin America that was particularly true. Since its reactivation in the mid-1950s (as seen in Chapter 1), the Latin American Student Movement, whose consensus were reached at the CLAEs, had claimed the currency of the university reform ideals, one of which related to closing the gap between university and society. That was, pursuing curricular and research reforms that underscored the social function of education, and consequently, emphasized the university's and university students' responsibility in guiding Latin American societies towards progress. After all, it was around these, among other reform goals, that the Student Movement, despite its factionalism, had found long-term cohesion.

The Catholic federations' diagnosis—prepared for the Congress—pinpointed the political immaturity of the Student Movement observable in its “lacking political consciousness.” It also noted its growing sectarianism that fell under ideological and political partisan co-option. Both of these circumstances made apparent the importance that the Congress would have.<sup>386</sup>

Let us briefly digress to state the significance that since early in the decade, MIEC and JECI Congresses started to play in educating university students in the most cutting-edge sociological debates. Even further, as the decade went on, it became clear that organized Catholics were not the only ones benefiting from these educational spaces. Increasingly, MIEC and JECI Congresses and Seminars started to remarkably impact

---

<sup>386</sup> Diagnosis resulted from surveys developed by Latin American Federations in preparation for the XXV PR Congress Montevideo 1962, *Encuestas y Documentos preparatorios*.

Latin American youth education and growing political consciousness-raising during the decade.

The magnitude of the 1962 Congress seemed to have been notable in the region. The congress would be attended by intellectuals and students from all over the world. With this, progress was to be made in the consolidation of Catholic movements as nodes of opinion in the region. In preparation for the event, in his letter to the Latin American federations Luis Boza went on to highlight two requirements. On the one hand, Boza wanted to ensure that the team presenting experiences from the region's universities and establishing a Latin American position on the issue be sufficiently prepared. Application of a survey to prompt all Latin American federations to "see" and "judge" their situation was necessary for this purpose.<sup>387</sup> At the request of Luis Boza, the Colombian EUC accepted to function as the Survey Coordinating Headquarters-SCH.

---

<sup>387</sup> The survey was prepared in Santiago de Chile and included the following topics: 1. a) General Information: Number of universities in the country and relation among them, Current University legislation and access to university education in the country, and b) University as a force of social transformation: University and social consciousness: research, connection of research and education with social reality, innovation and existing university studies on the countries' vital problems; 2) University and Political Life: degree of politicization of university life among students and professors and ideological leaning of this politicization, formation of leaderships and cadres; 3) Student *gremialismo* in the country and social function: *gremio's* objectives, *gremios* and social transformation, *gremios* and politics; *gremios* and the workers' and peasants' world; *gremios* and international affairs; *gremios* and Catholic federations; 4) University and Alumni, University and Marxist tentation and infiltration, causes and consequences of Marxist infiltration, possible remedies to Marxist infiltration; 5) Role of the Catholic University in social transformation, ways to improve Catholic University's role in social transformation, ways to a greater participation of Catholic Universities. Template for the Survey, *Ibid.*, pp. 106-134.

On the other hand, the Latin American militants were required to achieve a thorough knowledge of the subject. For this, the SCH circulated selected preparatory documents among Latin American federations.<sup>388</sup> Based on this circulation, Luis Boza requested that the federations promote at least one study session among their militants to discuss the topic of the Congress. And, to intellectuals and advanced students, he requested collaboration in presenting the issues and leading discussion groups.<sup>389</sup> Overall, if something had become clear since *La Capilla* it was the need to consolidate a vanguard Latin American Catholic *intelligentsia* that might significantly impact universities and societies. Influencing the former was especially critical because universities had evolved as key political and ideological exchange centers but also as bastions of communism in the region. On the topic of the Congress, Luis Boza closed his letter hoping they might have in their hands “the most sincere, serious, and extensive study that any university movement ha[d] ever carried out in Latin America, on a subject of vital importance for the development of our peoples.”<sup>390</sup>

---

<sup>388</sup> Titles of documents sent by Luis Fernando Duque (EUC) to the federations were 1. The university in Latin America; 2. Education of men for a new society; 3. Responsibility of the university in the development of Latin America (by Chilean Professor Francisco Pinto); 4. Does the church have a temporal mission?; 5. Christian sense of the temporal commitment; 6. University and politics; 7. Reform and university spirit (by Alfonso Cobian); 8. Bases for a renewal of the university; 9. The university and the historical vocation of Brazil (by P. Fernando Bastos de Avila); 10. University student *gremialismo*; 11. Student *gremialismo* and the nation; 12. The social responsibility of the Catholic university. In this dissertation the following concepts have been translated as student *gremialismo*: *Sindicalismo estudiantil, agremiación estudiantil, gremialismo*. *Survey Circular Letters #1-3*, March 21, May 9 and 31, 1962. Box 126, Folder 1962. “Temarios para jornadas de estudio completamente estructurados aduntos a la circular #3,” *Encuestas y Documentos preparatorios*, p. 164

<sup>389</sup> *Circular Letter #2*, Fribourg May 8, 1962.

<sup>390</sup> *Ibid.*

By early 1962, EUC assumed its mission of survey coordination under the enthusiastic leadership of student Luis Fernando Duque, who faced difficulties. From March to May 1962, Duque sent a number of circular letters with portions of the requested survey and selected preparatory documents without the massive response and thrill expected from federations. Challenges faced by EUC's leaders might have reflected the lack of cohesion of some movements still in their early stages of organization. It probably also revealed the immaturity of Latin American organizations, whose abilities to conduct a collective reflection and deliberation or pursue situation analysis beyond a purely theoretical discussion were weak. The latter might have been especially true in the case of MIEC federations that were not influenced by the JECI approach—this is because reflection and deliberation were routine activities for the JECI movements. And indeed, in a letter sent by Duque to Latin American federations reminding them of the importance of having at least one study session, he asked them to “...correct the traditional and very generalized error of Catholics. [This was] to do multiple studies of reality and to know the doctrine of the church, [but] being unable to fulfill their mission as laypeople applying this doctrine in a real way, to specific problems.”<sup>391</sup>

The report of the General Secretary to the IFA at Montevideo contributes to an interpretation of the challenges faced by EUC in the organization of the meeting while also providing a glimpse of the situation of Latin American

---

<sup>391</sup> *Survey Circular Letter #5*, Box 126, Folder 1962. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.



organizations at the time. The report acknowledged that Latin American federations showed varying stages of development, and a series of problems were discernable. These included "...a) [Low] national awareness of the why, how, and to what extent Catholic students should take part in, and lead, the social, economic, cultural and intellectual life of the nation; b) [insufficient] inter-federal contacts; c) administrative difficulties concerning finances and communications; d) lack of chaplains, [and] lack of experience on group work techniques; [and] e) [Weakness to establish] international contacts with other regions."<sup>392</sup>

Finally, another interpretation of the challenges faced by EUC might also unveil the limited convening capacity and leadership the Colombian movement had among federations. EUC's lack of legitimacy among the rest of the groups could have resulted from suspicion of the CIA infiltration, or lack of a more democratic approach from its delegation as organizer—similar to the one that later prompted MUC's complaint against the SLA appointment.<sup>393</sup>

In the end, apparently, the federations' responsiveness improved after Luis Boza sent a missive to Celso Guimares, by then JECI-SLA, asking him to collaborate in explaining the federations within his purview, the importance of the Congress, and the

---

<sup>392</sup> *Montevideo IFA 1962, Memoirs*. p. 149.

<sup>393</sup> Referring to the quarreling situation initiated by the complaining missive of Venezuelan MUC about the Latin American Secretary appointment with which Part II opened. *Letter from Rodrigo Guerrero, Latin American Secretary to the Members of the Directive Committee-DC and All Latin American Student Pax-Romana Federations*, Medellin, December 24th, 1962.

necessity to get in touch with Duque.<sup>394</sup> By July 4th, three weeks away from the Congress's starting date, 14 federations out of 21 had responded, and another two sent their contributions later.<sup>395</sup>

Despite difficulties, the Montevideo Congress and IFA developed with much success. The meeting convened 226 attendees, 148 of which were Latin Americans (from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and Venezuela). Attendees also came from Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America.<sup>396</sup> Eduardo Frei Montalva, a relevant public figure who was to win the Chilean presidential elections two years later, gave the inaugural address. As described in the previous Chapter, Frei was a former Catholic student militant and an advocate of the university reformist ideals. He had been a pioneer of the Latin American movements' regional coordination through the organization of CIDEDEC and a founding figure of the Chilean Christian Democracy.

Seemingly, Frei's address marked a milestone among student attendees who felt moved by his efforts to bridge the contemporary university reflections with the historical ideals of university reform. Attendees and, later, reading

---

<sup>394</sup> *Circular Letter #2. Fribourg May 8. 1962.*

<sup>395</sup> *Survey Circular Letter #6, July 4, 1962. Box 126, Folder 1962. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.*

<sup>396</sup> Attendees were delegates, i.e., members of organizations affiliated to PR, and observers, i.e., whose affiliation request had been approved but do not have yet voice and vote. *Montevideo IFA 1962, Memoirs.* pp. 6, 31-36.

audiences of his speech, also seemed to prize his—a layman’s perspective, “doctrinarian reflection on social justice” that found the justification for the Christians’ commitment to action in light of the gospel.<sup>397</sup>

Titled “The university: social consciousness of the nation,” Frei’s speech reinforced what already seemed to be a broad consensus around the essential role of the university and the youth in “contributing to create the conditions for necessary and unavoidable change.” He did so while recognizing the currency of the anti-oligarchic struggle in Latin America and the generalized crisis of institutions, parties, and economic and social structures that represented the end of a historical stage in the region. In his opinion, it was the “financial and agrarian feudalisms ... [in which] the rights of the majority have been ignored” that had caused a “rough awakening of [the people’s] contained aspirations.” He emphasized that the acute social mobilization demanded transitioning from the current formal or restricted democracies to authentic ones.<sup>398</sup>

His balance of the Latin American university was not different from that resulting from the attendees’ surveys. He acknowledged the presence of a more demanding and committed youth in the region coming from societies that were “not only fighting for political power but also for the predominance of the intelligentsia.” A downside of this situation, which was an expression of the entire social body, was the lack of preparation

---

<sup>397</sup> Gilberto Valdez, Interview 5-04-2020/ 5-11-2020/7-03-2020.

<sup>398</sup> Frei’s inaugural speech, “The university: social consciousness of the nation,” *Documentos preparatorios y Encuestas*, pp.208-217.

and political maturity, he noted. The university had “become an active center of ideological and political struggles” whose greatest danger was due to a “mindless activism for lack of doctrine, or [because of] those who disguise their incapacity in a kind of revolutionary bohemianism.”<sup>399</sup>

“What do we expect from the University, those of us who want to continue living in a non-totalitarian, pluralistic regime while responding to the growing and just anxiety of our peoples ...?” Frei asked himself. He responded to his audience by outlining the universities’ essential role, which, due to their historical importance for social and ideological mobilization, enjoyed both the Latin American peoples’ “respect” and “admiration,” and their consideration as a “social force and [the nations’] great moral reserve.”<sup>400</sup>

Frei shared Fr. Juan Luis Segundo’s assessment concerning the “political hypertrophy” of Latin American societies, according to which “the political function... was exaggerated with respect to the thinness of the [other functions] ... which should have its own development and balance.” Frei’s assessment urged universities to “escape” from this overgrowth of the political sphere in university life and to become a neutral field for producing scientific-technical knowledge of

---

<sup>399</sup> Frei poses this issue as a straying from the conquest of university autonomy in many countries, in his words “...[university] autonomy did not mean a kind of doctrinal asepsis.” He called attention to the fact that the university had become an active center of ideological and political struggles, most of the time with a revolutionary orientation. In his view, the defense of university autonomy with respect to its extreme *Marxization* was imperative. Ibid. p.216

<sup>400</sup> Ibid. p. 211

social and economic realities. His call was to subtract the university from “superficial agitation and intentional debate.”<sup>401</sup>

Interestingly, as mentioned, other tasks that Frei expected from universities entailed a connection with the historical struggles for university reform and the *Latinoamericanista* ideals (i.e., cultural decolonization and search of authenticity, regional integration, and anti-imperialism) that had been championed by Frei’s and his predecessors’ student generations. Among them was advancing university’s democratization by allowing less classist and more meritocratic access. Another was the call to keep up the level of scientific research to permit professionals their advancement and, especially, the university’s active participation in one of the more sensitive priorities—namely, economic planning.

Furthermore, Frei’s concern over the role of universities in keeping cultural autonomy and authenticity of Latin American societies was notable in his speech. He explained to his audience the historical arguments around the university’s mission of promoting the nations’ own identity quest, i.e., by saving, enriching, and defining the heritage of each nation so as not to fall into a “monochord world,” and instead, embrace plurality. While the claim of cultural authenticity explicitly condemned (cultural) colonialism, Frei clarified, that “...It is not that I think of a hemispheric provincialism or deny the universal influence of [certain] events. But I do think that the time has come for

---

<sup>401</sup> Ibid.

us to stand on our own feet and think with our own heads to be able to find a solution to what is ours and express something that, because it is authentic, shall have value.”<sup>402</sup>

Frei argued on the importance of the university in providing both ideas and intellectual cadres whence the ruling elites might come from to guide the social transformation of the continent. For Frei, these cadres needed to have “a vision of the world and a vision of our own America ... that [while it] has to look for an expression...cannot look for it in isolation.” Apparently, this was a new invitation to retake the lost ideals of Latin American integration about which he explained

“It is already a commonplace to talk about our economic integration, whose timid advances are disheartening, but we speak little about political integration. [This is] because, unfortunately, any big step scares us and we live more immersed into the internal grievance, feeding misgivings and mistrust that exhaust [us.] (...) We are witnessing the passage from states to supra-national communities, which imply power (...) It is not just about expanding the market (...) it is about something deeper; creating a human environment that [shall] give us greater scope in vision and makes us grow and have a voice in this world.”<sup>403</sup>

---

<sup>402</sup> Ibid. p. 213

<sup>403</sup> Ibid p. 213.

Moreover, Frei voiced the persistent consensus of both *La Capilla* and the Montevideo meetings. Namely, the commitment to form a Catholic *intelligentsia* that might inform the region's revolutionary change that seemed inevitable. Faced with the question of what attitude Christians should have in universities, Frei affirmed, "we fight for our ideas to be the ones that penetrate and inform the new society being forged. But we reject the methods and the existence of a totalitarian state and its reflection in the university." In so doing, Frei reasserted his support to the exclusive disjuncture that arose within the University movement between the "communist way" and the "Christian way" among which the youth looked "for an effective channel [to] realize ... [its] revolutionary wishes."<sup>404</sup> Furthermore, following a "Christian way," Frei called on the students to commit themselves to reaching a high degree of preparedness in their chosen discipline and "to applying" the Christian doctrine for which it was necessary to correct a common weakness among Christians—namely, not to have elaborated a "philosophy of action." Christians should recognize, Frei argued, that theoretical training was only the first link in an action chain that should lead to reflection and confrontation with the historical situation. Therefore, his was a stand that asked the Christian to stop preaching theories rather than embody them, for ideological elaboration and application of new knowledge was "one of the highest expressions of love for the neighbor to whom it was necessary to procure conditions of life and dignity."<sup>405</sup>

---

<sup>404</sup> Ibid.

<sup>405</sup> Ibid., p. 216

### 3.4. The MIEC Latin American Secretariat and Methods of Action

During the days following the Montevideo Congress, the IFA confirmed the decision to create the Latin American Secretariat. The IFA minutes explained the details of the new coordinating structure, which would develop as a “nucleus” the Latin American church would count on. Its goals as they effectively materialized were: a) to promote the education and information of national federations through a documentation service, the organization of seminars, distribution of books and publications; b) to deepen the knowledge of Latin American universities and social reality so as to facilitate the definition of pastoral concerns and elaboration of techniques for the apostolate; and, c) to strengthen the bonds of Latin American solidarity towards the realization of the regional federations’ common duty, and promote the exchange of experiences and human and financial resources among federations. These goals were closely aligned with the discussions of the late congress. They looked to “incarnate” Christianity in the reality of a Latin America that was understood as “in-transformation,” a clarification that denoted the international movement’s awareness of the revolutionary climate the region was immersed in, and that also showed their agreed commitment to a theology of action.<sup>406</sup>

---

<sup>406</sup> “Appendix 25,” *Montevideo IFA 1962, Memoirs*, pp. 102-104.



The document also reasserted that federations had the function to: a) organize the life of the church and orient the pastoral work at the university level; and, b) prepare Christians and give them the necessary strength for them to commit to the *temporal* order. Nonetheless, this item clarified that “care must be taken not to implement solutions of a concrete nature to the problems of the university or to organize unions or groups of students. This is the task in which *temporal* movements as such are engaged—tasks which do not properly belong to an organ of the church, which is what a federation is.”<sup>407</sup> Arguably, on this latter matter, the reality was to supersede the norm. Student *gremios*, as shall be seen in the following chapters, provided the privileged space for federated Catholic students’ political engagement beyond the suggested boundaries.

In October 1962, the PR-MIEC SLA was to begin operations in Medellín, Colombia. For a short time, the SLA functioned under student Rodrigo Guerrero who was succeeded the following year by student Luis Fernando Duque until mid-1965. CELAM designated monsignor Marcos McGrath (Auxiliar Bishop of Panama) as Latin American Advisor for both PR branches, MIEC and MIIC. And FF. Ismael Errazuriz and Nestor Giraldo were to act as advisor chaplains for the new Secretariat. The first was to serve South America (except Colombia), and the second—as he was to stay at the SLA HQ—to serve Colombia, along with Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean.<sup>408</sup>

---

<sup>407</sup> Ibid. p. 102

<sup>408</sup> *Informe Para Los Excelentísimos Señores Obispos y Asesores De América Latina*, p 4.

From late 1962 to 1966, the SLA MIEC continued developing subregional gatherings and seminars for militants and advisors in the Atlantic, Pacific, Central American, and Caribbean regions.<sup>409</sup> According to its mission, the MIEC-SLA also offered and improved methodological tools for the grassroots work and growth and consolidation of national federations. Among the MIEC-SLA suggested methodologies for its affiliates were *Cursillos de Cristiandad* (Little Courses in Christianity) and the establishment of *Parroquias Universitarias* (University Parishes). These were encouraged along with the RLM for those who had joined the *Equipos de Accion* (Action Groups) and undertook a committed Catholic militancy.

MIEC federations tailored the RLM according to their needs and combined it with diverse and creative versions of *Cursillos*.<sup>410</sup> In a document titled “*Sistema de Pedagogía para Nuevos*,” the MIEC-SLA recounted different versions of the *Cursillos* offered in Colombia, Uruguay, and Puerto Rico. A commonality among them was that *Cursillos* were offered to groups already functioning as “communities of discovery, assumption, and revision of *temporal* commitment.” It was an “initiation” exercise at the end of which the students joined the federation.<sup>411</sup>

---

<sup>409</sup> Some of these Seminars can be found in the Appendix No. 1 of this dissertation.

<sup>410</sup> Different versions of *Cursillos* are recounted in *Sistema de Pedagogía para Nuevos*. Box 126, Folder 1962, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>411</sup> *Ibid.*

The MIEC-SLA also offered a traveler team to advise national movements and facilitated the visit of experienced militants to federations to stay for some time providing help in the organization. It also developed courses in Medellin and other venues in the region for both student militants and clergy advisors. Courses for national federations were offered to those wanting to strengthen their university work or needing grassroots work. These were courses of several weeks that sought to “give national leaders a clear vision of what an apostolate movement is, what its theological bases, its objectives, its methods were, etc.”<sup>412</sup> Similarly, courses for foreign clergy advisors sought to contextualize them in the Latin American reality and make them aware of the peculiarities of the region’s “university world.”<sup>413</sup> Overall, the MIEC-SLA developed an eclectic methodological approach for the university apostolate. It was a pragmatic approach in terms of both responding to the significantly diverse regional cultural and social contexts and including all organized expressions within the university, whether specialized or not. Though, they recognized the increasing tendency towards the specialization of the university apostolate in the region. By utilizing this approach, the MIEC-SLA achieved rapid and successful consolidation of communities committed to the university apostolate in Latin America. Not all national MIEC federations, though, developed the same methodologies. And even when implemented, they did not have the same results among the student body.

---

<sup>412</sup> *Informe de la Reunión de Panamá*, August 20-24, 1963. Box 126 Folder 1963, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.* Also, *Circular Letter #4*, Caracas, February 14, 1963. Box 126 folder 1963; and *Circular Letter #11*, Medellin, September 18, 1964. Box 126, Folder 1964, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

*Parroquias Universitarias*, for instance, were one of the most relevant developments, for they evolved as spaces that eventually informed CELAM's lines of the university pastoral.<sup>414</sup> They were envisaged to bring the parish closer to the University, given the limited scope with which the territorial parishes managed to reach the students due to lack of priests.<sup>415</sup> Commonly, the *Parroquias universitarias* developed Sunday or daily worship, as well as conferences and courses. Some of them also offered services such as theater, cinema, and study rooms.<sup>416</sup>

The *Comunión Pascual Universitaria*, offered once a year at Easter, was one of the *Parroquia*'s most significant activities convening massive mass rituals, in some places of up to 1,000 student attendees in each celebration.<sup>417</sup> While federations tended to consolidate as small groups of committed militants, the *Parroquia Universitaria* and the *Comunión Pascual Universitaria* were spaces for

---

<sup>414</sup> *Esquema del Plan Latinoamericano del Movimiento Internacional de Estudiantes Católicos* 1964-1966. Box 126 Folder 1966, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>415</sup> The *Esquema del Plan Latinoamericano* explained that in Latin America, the territorial parishes had an approximate coverage of 2 priests for every 30,000 inhabitants. This situation made it impossible to offer adequate attention to university students. Additionally, it pointed out the need for students from Provinces—approximately 30% of the student body, who had no possibility of connection with their territorial parishes—to gain access to the parish. The University Parish sought to contribute to solving this situation. *Ibid.*

<sup>416</sup> *Formas de Presencia Cristiana en la Universidad*. Box 126 Folder 1967, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>417</sup> Juan Mendoza, Interview 07-18-2019.

broader convening where militants developed the first level of their grassroots work. Besides these spaces, spiritual retreats and camps, and Christmas Eve celebrations were also organized by established federations in their effort to reach more students in their apostolic task and recruit new militants.<sup>418</sup>



Figure 4. *Comuni3n Pascual Universitaria* organized by Arequipa's UNEC during the early 1960s. A photo record courtesy of UNEC Peru.

---

<sup>418</sup> Ibid.



Figure 5. Spiritual Retreat and Camp. Students with Fr. Mario Galvez. Urubamba, Peru, 1964. A photo record courtesy of UNEC Peru.



Figure 6. Presumably, a Christmas Eve Celebration. Cuzco's UNEC, Peru. A photo record courtesy of UNEC Peru.

Juan Mendoza, a former UNEC-Cuzco militant, province, and national president in 1965 and 1966, commented on his experience, which might offer a glimpse into the local unfolding of MIEC federations' methodologies. He recalls that,

“The activity was very interesting, [UNEC] ... was a university movement recognized by the church, with very good relations with the hierarchy. It was part of the heritage of Catholic Action. It was very well located. We had a place, and we had a Parroquia Universitaria.... That was extraordinary.!

We had the key to the temple! and Father Mario Galvez celebrated a mass on Sundays [specifically] for university students.... As part of our work, we invited people to mass. And there was a Christmas celebration that was a very classic one at the University that UNEC organized. Christmas for all the university students who did not have a family. It was beautiful. But the top was the *Comuni3n Pascual Universitaria*, which was part of the movement's schedule. We invited the university students to participate in an Easter communion. It was quite an event because you would go out and stand on every corner to discuss with the communists, steering wheel in hand. Still, we had an experience in that case — because we were [also political] leaders [at Cuzco, in the Southern Andean region.] We had a different style. And we would stop to discuss whether or not God existed. It was a [invitation] for university students to come to communion... We painted walls, took out posters... In that *Comuni3n Pascual*, there were 1,300 students. 900 received Communion.”<sup>419</sup>

---

<sup>419</sup> Ibid.

To the extent that *Parroquias universitarias* sought to respond to specific student needs, their activities and achievements were heterogeneous throughout the region. Different social and political contexts in which they existed conditioned parishes' evolution as spaces where students deepened their engagement with the *milieu* and radicalized their militancy. The results were varied. For instance, while an SLA document in 1967 criticized university parishes because of their service's general and massive approach that did not allow to "motivate [students'] commitment with the university and national reality, neither to accompany their maturation in the faith," other experiences tell different stories of the parishes' accomplishments.<sup>420</sup> The recounting of experiences in the Peruvian Southern-Andean region, or Cordoba, Argentina, showed some university parishes achieved a significant engagement with the *milieu* and became spaces for the students' socialization and reflection of the intricate relations between faith and politics.<sup>421</sup>

---

<sup>420</sup> *Formas de Presencia Cristiana en la Universidad.*

<sup>421</sup> "La Intervención en las Universidades Argentinas," Series 3, Document # 1, *Servicio de Documentación*. Box Documentos MIEC-JECI II. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima. The document presents a letter addressed by the *Parroquia Universitaria Cristo Obrero*, city of Cordoba, to all university students and Christian community, about the hunger strike (by then lasting 15 days) to witness their protest in front of the "arrogant intervention" of the state universities by the military government. In publishing this letter, the SLA "pa[id] a tribute of admiration to all Argentine university students ... persecuted for their love of justice. And in saluting the *Parróquia Universitaria* de Córdoba for their courageous testimony, [the SLA] hopes that the MIEC movements in Latin America spare no effort and prayers to demonstrate their solidarity."



### 3.5. Relations with CELAM and Financing

Overall, during the first half of the decade, the SLA-MIEC reached significant organizational robustness that allowed the growth and strengthening of MIEC federations in the region. SLA's strength built on the gradual maturation and consecutive re-formulation of the *Latin American Plan*, which entailed dense pastoral and theological reflections on the role of the young laity in the apostolate. These reflections, which involved SLA-MIEC leaders and student militants, chaplains, and bishop advisors, resonated on the internal reorganization of CELAM's Sub secretariats into Departments, something that happened under Mons. Larrain's presidency.<sup>422</sup> Its regional relevance in leading the university apostolate earned

---

<sup>422</sup> Since the first conference of the Latin American episcopate in 1955, the Council of the Latin American Episcopate-CELAM was created with five secretariats. Among them Education and Youth, and Apostolate of the Laity. Later, at the end of 1963, during the presidency of Mons. Manuel Larrain, CELAM modified its structure. The five undersecretaries turned into ten Departments. Due to their apostolic relevance, the Youth and Education split into the departments of University Pastoral-DPU and Education-DEC. Similarly, the Secretariat of the Lay Apostolate became the Department of the Lay Apostolate-DAL under Mons. Dammert Bellido (bishop of Cajamarca, Peru). This structure would have a new transformation in 1969 during the CELAM XII ordinary assembly in Sao Paulo, November 1969. The DAL and DPU merged, giving rise to the Department of Laity under Paraguayan Mons. Roman Bogarin Argaña. Overall, the evolution of CELAM's leading figures within the presidency was favorable to the progressive perspectives of theology and the church. The promotion line in 1961 showed figures who would be fundamental during the decade in supporting the work of the movements of university apostolate. Bishop Larrain was First Vice President, followed by Bishop Helder Camara as Second Vice President. Then, during 1964-65 and 1966-67, Bishop Larrain served as president of CELAM. During the period 1968-69, Bishop Marcos McGrath (Panama) arrived at the collegiate structure of the presidency as Second Vice President and Bishop Eduardo Pironio (Argentina) as General Secretary, both with a history of work and support for university movements. McGrath had had important roles in the Latin American advisory of university movements and later in the direction of the Department of the Laity. A broader review of the structure of CELAM during the decade shall show how other leading figures of the Latin American Council, were pivotal also in supporting the work of the SLAs and Catholic university movements. For instance, Bishop Leonidas Proaño (Ecuador) in the direction of the Pastoral Department of CELAM from 1964-69 and the IPLA (Latin American pastoral institute IPLA); and Fr Segundo Galilea as Secretary; Bishop Candido Padin in the direction of the Department of Education; and, Mons. Gerardo Valencia Cano (Colombia) as director of the Department of Missions in 1966-67 and 1968-69. There was also Mons. Ramón Bogarin, in the last period, as director of the Department of Laity replacing McGrath, among many others. See *Celam: Elementos para su historia*, CELAM.

MIEC-SLA Mons. Larrain's request that it assumed the functions of the executive organ of the University Pastoral Department-DPU in late 1964. Secretary Luis Fernando Duque accepted after consulting with the PR-GS.<sup>423</sup> Later, in 1965, clarity was to be made that while accepting the entrustment, the MIEC-SLA could not assume the entirety of the University Pastoral but only that referred to the lay apostolate on university matters, emphasizing that this did not entail losing the group's lay character.<sup>424</sup> The discussions happened amid debates on the nature and role of the Latin American SLAs, MIEC, and JECI, and the reiterate propositions for their fusion into a unified organ (about which more below). The entrustment, however, represented a new stage in the relationship between CELAM and PR. This was a relationship previously jeopardized by the distrust the latter sparked among the traditional hierarchy and aggravated by an incident with a CIF article publication that involved Fr. Errazuriz the year before.<sup>425</sup>

---

<sup>423</sup> *Informe de Actividades del SLA de Pax Romana*, N/D; *Letter from Luis Fernando Duque to P. Vygantas (President), Kuriakose P.T. (General Secretary), Rev. W. Ferree (General Advisor), R. Ames y L.A. Meyer (DC Members)*, Medellin, June 4, 1965, *Circular Letter # 6* Medellin, June 3, 1965, Box 126 Folder 1965. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>424</sup> *Letter from Luis Fernando Duque to F. Giraldo and Margarita Lagos*, August 27, 1965; *Circular Letter # 7*, September 22, 1965. Box 126 Folder 1965, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>425</sup> Fr. Nestor Giraldo commented in a report that before the SLA was established in Medellin, Bishop Felix Henao Botero, president of the Pontifical Bolivarian University, had told him that presidents of Catholic universities in the region expressed reservations about Pax Romana. Seemingly, Catholic university presidents looked at it with suspicion. According to the letter, the problem worsened in 1963, among other reasons, due to an article published in CIF Reports (Center of Intercultural Formation Magazine of the Church in the Americas) in May of that year. As per the report, while not having wide circulation at that time, the article "contained inaccuracies and inexact generalizations about Catholic Universities." The article appeared in English under the title "The University in Latin America," by authors F. Ismael Errazuriz, Fernando Sanhueza (Organization of Catholic Universities of Latin America (ODUCAL)), and F. Mario Zanartu, S.J., along with Claudio Orrego (Secretary of the Liaison Office of University Student Movements ORMEU), and Fernando Tagle (Association of Catholic University Students). The article also cites Juan Orellana, a student council leader in Santiago, to coordinate the work. According to Fr. Giraldo, the article came to the knowledge of Bishop Hengsbach "... at a time when ADVENIAT was studying aid to the Catholic Universities. Since the introduction to this article says that one of the people with whom it

Definitive for the relevance of the SLA's apostolic role in Latin America and evidence of its organizational strength was the dedicated work of a permanent team of *liberados* and a sustained offer of services for national federations—which, as has been said, encompassed the training of militants in courses, congresses, and publications, the development and dissemination of methodological tools, and the enabling of student mobility and exchange.<sup>426</sup>

These would not be accomplished were it not for the funding that made possible

---

was discussed was Fr. Ismael Errazuriz (LA Advisor to Pax Romana), the conclusion [was] drawn that the article reflect[ed] Pax Romana's opinion on Catholic Universities." The conflict worsened with the subsequent publication of the article in Spanish in the CELAM Bulletin. Fr. Giraldo added that "At the meeting in Puerto Rico, the presidents of Latin American Catholic Universities sp[oke] about the problem of Pax Romana and consider[ed] that it [was] creating a spirit of insubordination in the students and encouraging them to ask for co-government in those universities." *Informe presentado por el P. Nestor Giraldo al SLA, Problema Pax Romana-ODUCAL*, January 27, 1964. Box 126 Folder 1964. SLA-CLP Repository. Troublesome among presidents of Catholic universities in the region had been, for instance, the article's characterization of Catholic universities as "clubs of the upper bourgeoisie" due to higher tuitions. Other irritating assertions included that Catholic universities "indirectly favored the development of private education." This was so because they "reflected more than state universities the class structure of Latin American society." Also, the article asserted that Catholic Universities in Latin America offered "very insufficient religious training [which did] not correspond to the Christian needs of the students in the current era." Interestingly, some characterizations the CIF article made on the Latin American universities were also addressed in the Second Latin American Seminar "Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en América Latina," developed in Lima, Peru, April 14-28, 1963. Fr. Errázuriz gave multiple explanations and disclaimers, exempting Pax Romana from liability for the assertions made in the article. A description of the controversy was offered in a *Letter by Fr. Errazuriz to Fr. Felipe MacGregor (president of the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Peru, PUCP) on October 17, 1963*. Fr. Errazuriz asserted the document submitted to Mons Illich and published by CIF was "a very brief and provisional sketch by the haste of time." Also, a *Written complaint to Mons. Illich by Fr. Errazuriz, Fr. Zañartu and Fernando Sanhueza was sent on October 29, 1963*. The authors recalled that the document had a confidential character, and the alleged summary of the paper Mons. Illich had made, had distorted the original one. Other related documentation on the issue was the *Circular Letter from the IMCS President to Members & Candidates of the DC, Subject DC Activities, February 24, 1964*. Also, *Letter by Luis Fernando Duque and F. Nestor Giraldo to Mons. Hugo Polanco Brito, (President of Mater et Magistra Catholic University)*. Box 126, Folders 1963 and 1964, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>426</sup> *Liberados*, literally translates "released persons." This is a term widely used by the movements, meaning militants who accepted full-time dedication to the apostolic tasks within the SLA and received a small stipend to live. Most of the time, the stipend was a very modest sum of money. Former militants commented, for instance, by 1974, an amount of US\$ 30 a month. While it was insufficient to cover all expenses, SLA members after the MIEC-JECI fusion lived together in a residential space inside the SLA HQ.

the realization of planned activities. Taking advantage of its leverage among cooperation agencies for development and resources received from them, the PR-GS also secured scholarships for Latin Americans, allowing them to pursue studies in Europe, and in some cases, join the international PR work at the HQ in Fribourg. It also funded Latin American meetings that took place in the context of IFAs, and the publishing of BIDI, at least until the mid-1960s, when the MIEC-SLA started to apply directly to external agencies for new funds.<sup>427</sup> The PR-GS's role was notable in connecting the SLA to European funding agencies and backing their projects.<sup>428</sup>

According to MIEC-SLA records, ADVENIAT, organization of the German episcopate for cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean, played a significant role in financing projects from both the Secretariat and the national movements, which besides the support of PR-GS, should count on the sponsorship of their respective

---

<sup>427</sup> *The Montevideo IFA 1962, Memoirs*, p. 2 under "Financial Accounts 1961" provides evidence of PR-GS allocation of Fr.s.\$38,620.17 (Swiss Franc) for *La Capilla* Congress, and of Fr.s.\$4,316.77 under the item "mutual aid" for PR activities in the region. Also, a report by Cristian Caro, by then President of the Chilean AUC explains BIDI was, by then, fully funded by Pax Romana-MIEC through the MIEC SLA. A total of US\$ 5,281.33 had been sent to secure the following ten editions. Funds were being used to cover printing, packaging, postage, distribution, and payment of salaries. In his report, Caro called attention, however, that "every day it becomes more necessary for the BIDI to have its own financing (since the SLA must obtain the money for each period, without any certainty of permanent obtaining)." He called upon the urgent task to work towards the independence and continuity of the Magazine through increasing subscriptions and including paid propaganda. *BIDI Report, by Cristian Caro, AUC national president*, Santiago de Chile, February 1965. Box 126 Folder 1965, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>428</sup> PR consultative role to UNESCO and the UN, and its role in the representation of Catholic students in front of many youth and student organizations worldwide, gave PR, particularly in Europe, significant leverage in front of the church and organizations (both church and secular) for development. In exerting this leverage, PR's role was notable in procuring funds for the regions. (More on this topic in Chapter 2).

bishops.<sup>429</sup> Other essential funding sources were the Catholic cooperation agency MISEREOR (German) and the LAB-Latin American Bureau of the US Episcopal Conference.<sup>430</sup> All three organizations provided funding that guaranteed the mobility of the MIEC-SLA team throughout Latin America and the development of congresses and courses. Also, and significantly, they provided the funds for securing the SLA's physical HQ and maintaining the working team, through the coverage of basic needs and a small stipend for militants who usually left their countries behind to live at the Secretariat's facility with their colleagues. LAB also administered a program of scholarships for young Catholics through LASAS—the Secretariat of Academic Services. This program worked in interdependence with other USCCB programs and services for Latin Americans in the US.<sup>431</sup>

### **3.6. The double registry of achievements and failings by the end of the period**

By 1965, a report of the activities of the MIEC-SLA signed by Bishop McGrath summarized the result of the MIEC-SLA's work and the state of the movements in Latin

---

<sup>429</sup> *Informe de las Actividades del Secretariado Latinoamericano de PR*. Box 126 Folder 1965. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito

<sup>430</sup> Valdez, Interview. Also, F. Paul Dabezies' (†) Interviews with the author, 05-04-2020 / 06-23-2020. Remote consultation of MISEREOR's Archives provided a glimpse of this organization's support to MIEC and JECI Internationals and other regions' movements, including Latin America. A sample of this support is, for instance, *Project #603-005-0004*, "Aid for the travel expenses of participants from developing countries to the JECI World Conference from August 7-23, 1970, in London." The project provided DM \$20,000 (Deutsche Marks). The value was paid to the JECI *Secrétariat Général* in Paris, as a co-funding amount, to provide a subsidy towards the travel costs of participants from developing countries to the JECI World Conference. As per the records, 30 Latin Americans attended the Conference. MISEREOR Archives Aachen #603-005-0004.

<sup>431</sup> *Letter by F. Pedro de la Garza-director of LASAS- to Mons. McGrath*, August 10, 1964; *Letter by Mons. McGrath to F. de la Garza*, Santiago de Veraguas, August 16, 1964; *Letter by MIEC-SLA to Mons. McGrath Ref: LASAS*, Medellín October 16, 1964. Box 126 Folder 1964. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

America. The report celebrated that at the last IFA in Washington (1964), “...Latin American university leaders have observed with satisfaction that ... the action of the SLA [had] resulted in a greater sense of responsibility on the part of national leaders, and in the steady progress of federations that recently started working.” The report added that a “very valuable factor [had been] the contact between leaders from across the continent achieved at these meetings, with the healthy exchange of experiences and the healthy emulation that this implies.” Mons. McGrath pointed out that “in this period, it [had] been possible to establish a university apostolate movement in countries where it did not yet exist, or where it was incipient.”<sup>432</sup> The report cited the development of seven training workshops in the period 1963-65 too. Four of them developed in the Central American and Caribbean region, one in the Andean region. One was a workshop of University Pastoral involving both militant laity and clergy advisors, and, another, was specifically for advisors of the Caribbean. One was a meeting of Latin American lay leaders after the IFA in Washington and, lastly, there was a three-week-study event developed, mainly, for consolidating the university pastoral in Central America.<sup>433</sup>

---

<sup>432</sup> *Informe de las Actividades del Secretariado Latinoamericano de PR*, 1965

<sup>433</sup> See Appendix 1. Deliberate emphasis on Central America had responded the bishops and Catholic leaders concern for the region because of *Castroism's* and *Marxism's* infiltration and the lack of chaplains, both difficulties the hierarchy tirelessly attempted to address. By 1962, in the *Informe Para Los Excelentísimos Señores Obispos y Asesores de América Latina*, the SLA had informed the recent visit to Central America of Mr. Berny Kreutz from Colombia, on behalf of the SLA, whose report had shown "the extremely dangerous situation of the university environment ... and the need for a well-planned action." The report also commented on the later visit of Mr. Cristian Caro, a member of the SLA, who had developed a tour throughout the region's six countries. Mr. Caro had carried out training sessions on university Catholic action, organization of the movements, and description of the university *milieu* in general, militant definition and formation, and training on special apostolic methods such as the university

Among other accomplishments, there was also the continuous publication of the BIDI, the successful financial support by ADVENIAT, and the role of the MIEC-SLA in mediating economic support by the German organization to Latin American national movements.<sup>434</sup> Similarly, the report exalted the arrival of four Belgian advisors for El Salvador (2), Lima (1), and Brazil (1). It also announced the preparation of courses at the MIEC-SLA HQ for advisors and movements. On the work of visiting MIEC-SLA members to federations throughout the region, the report commented that successful experiences had started already. For weeks, Chilean leaders had lent advice to Paraguayan and Dominican Republic federations, while Peruvian leaders had visited Costa Rica. Similar collaboration was expected to be carried out in Ecuador, Panama and Nicaragua.<sup>435</sup>

---

parish, the RLM, *Cursillos*, methods to plan an annual program, and the like. Mr. Caro's report regretted that the Central American situation had aggravated because of the lack of chaplains, which worried the hierarchy as its existing groups risked becoming disoriented or discouraged. In the *Plan para Centro América, 1963*, the region's reality was described by referring to the difficulties faced by the church in the university *milieu*. These difficulties could be summarized as: 1. the barely nominal character of many apostolic university federations in the region; 2. the small number of Catholic student leaders and the little training of the existing ones; 3. The serious existing confusion of ideas and an inconvenient mix of *gremial*-political and religious fields and activities; 4. Insufficiently prepared ecclesiastical advice; finally, 5. a dire communist threat because of the intense circulation of *Castroist* propaganda, along with the high mobility of young people to Cuba where they received training to work in their respective countries. Also, the *Plan* insisted on the existence of a Catholic nucleus that needed guidance and the need to coordinate activities on a Central American scale. Therefore, by 1963 the MIEC-SLA recommended at least three concrete tasks. To follow-up on the work already done, actively work on getting European chaplains, and coordinate actions with JECI, who had worked actively in the region. *Informe Para Los Excelentísimos Señores Obispos y Asesores de América Latina, 1962*; and *Plan para Centro América, 1963*. Box 126 Folder 1963, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>434</sup> On this matter also the *Circular Letter to the Advisors of the PR Latin American Federations*, Medellín, January 13, 1965. Box 126 Folder 1965, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>435</sup> *Informe de las Actividades del Secretariado Latinoamericano de PR, 1965*

Furthermore, in regard to Latin American movements by mid-decade, the MIEC-SLA synthesized its appreciation of Central and South American federations, which gives us a glimpse of the reality of MIEC federations at the time. In a circular letter to all federations on May 3, 1965, sent in preparation for a further meeting to define SLA services, the MIEC-SLA distinguished two types of Catholic Action university movements according to their greater or lesser structure and maturity. On the one hand, with greater maturity—and not a coincidence that most of them had stronger links to JECI—Peru, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil, to whom the SLA asked what services it might provide to strengthen their reflection and exchange. On the other hand, at a lesser level, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Paraguay, stating that while they were all not at the exact same level, the MIEC-SLA might provide collaboration, whether directly or in association with other movements of the region.<sup>436</sup> The document does not specify it, but this collaboration might be suggesting SLA members visits or stronger federations’ militants’ exchange, which were two strategies that—as mentioned—had proved successful to help movements attempting to consolidate.

By the Summer of 1965, Luis Fernando Duque, MIEC-SLA, became President of PR-MIEC at the Fribourg HQ, replacing Peter Vygantas, who had completed his fourth term in that position. His appointment was one of many that epitomized vanguard developments in Latin America, as seen from the

---

<sup>436</sup> *Circular Letter*. “Proposición de una Agenda.” Medellín. May 3. 1965. Box 126. Folder 1965. SLA-CLP Repository. Quito.



international perspective. By then Latin America had built a reputation of creative innovation and successful regional expansion of the university apostolate that followed PR's approach. In the context of the troubled search for a merging solution with the JECI-SLA, Paraguayan Luis Alberto Meyer, so far a member of the PR-DC, was elected Latin American Secretary.<sup>437</sup>

Despite the reported MIEC-SLA achievements at the international and regional levels, the new Secretary uncovered other facets of the MIEC-SLA's recent developments. Two months after assuming the position, Meyer was already aware of tensions facing the SLA. In a letter to PR-GS P.T. Kuriakose, Meyer explained that, beyond accomplishments, discontent was growing among federations around the existence of two paralleling international secretariats. Meyer explained, as they evolved, the movements were demanding the merging with the JECI-SLA; and, that the recurrent failure to achieve it was generating "uneasiness and skepticism with the international work." Also, Meyer put at the center of concerns the "distrust and prejudices that provoked having a PR [MIEC-] SLA identified with a person or a country." Furthermore, he warned that while participating in a Lima meeting convened by DPU to discuss the MIEC- JECI fusion proposals, he had observed "skepticism on the work of the SLA- MIEC and a very strong censure concerning the money wasted in travels and meetings

---

<sup>437</sup> *Circular Letter #7 by the MIEC- SLA to Latin American Federations.* Medellin, September 22, 1965. Box 126 Folder 1965. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

without positive results.”<sup>438</sup> He added that there was a “general feeling that the persons and [perspective] of the MIEC-SLA ha[d] to change, [because there was] the impression that personal convenience [had played] an important [role] in the whole work of the SLA.” Overall, Meyer concluded “many things [had been] carried in a political way and not [as a result of] a Christian dialogue.”<sup>439</sup>

While he explained that the efforts around the possible fusion with the JECI- SLA had absorbed the SLA’s work, which entailed failing to “properly service,” therefore, creating discontent among federations, chances were that other issues were originating discontent. In the context of the apparent international publicity about the alleged filtration of CIA funds to Pax Romana, it might be possible that past EUC’s relations with the CIA, which reverberated in the MIEC-SLA, were having repercussions on the situation of PR-MIEC by the end of 1965.<sup>440</sup> In his letter, Meyer explained that “many things in the past were [turning into] something like an unconscious reaction against Medellin by [some]

---

<sup>438</sup> *Letter by Luis Alberto Meyer MIEC-SLA to GS-PR*, p. 2, Medellin, November 12, 1965. Box 126 Folder 1965, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>440</sup> *Circular Letter #2 by MIEC-SLA to all Latin American Movements*, April 27, 1967, Box 126 Folder 1967, SLA-CLP Repository. On the matter, Item 7) *PR-CIA*, the SLA clarified that despite the international publicity on the alleged CIA funding of Pax Romana, “In no newspaper it was published that the SLA has received financing from the CIA, therefore, SLA does not seek to make any kind of clarification or dismissal.” The letter also asserted that at the international level “. . .the GS [was] making a judicial appeal to request remedy of damage and reputation, for false accusation.” Whether or not future regional cadres in 1967 were informed of the early CIA infiltration among Colombian EUC that affected the MIEC-SLA’s performance in Medellin, it is apparent other sources also revealed CIA infiltration in myriad student organizations, including Pax Romana. Agee, Philip. *Inside the company: CIA diary*. No. 327.1273 A3. 1975, p. 74.

federations of South America.”<sup>441</sup> He added that “I found a general desire of changing the [perspective] and structure of the SLA of Pax Romana if the “*Secretariado de Coordinación*” [(referring to the merging solution)] cannot [become a prompt] reality.”<sup>442</sup>

Evidence on this issue points to the fact that MIEC-SLA had not escaped, during its early years, the CIA’s enormous efforts to achieve US cultural hegemony during the Cold War. As Historian Patrick Iber recalls, it was a part of the cultural diplomacy strategy within superpowers’ competition that targeted students, among other intellectual actors, even artists, in the understanding they “would play important roles in influencing public opinion and form the vanguard of social change.”<sup>443</sup> In this story, however, evidence points to CIA efforts failing to co-opt the broader and mutually agreed development of the Movement or its political positions. While, for those interested in this episode, this conclusion does not discard the need to consider the particular evolution of the movement’s national chapters, strong arguments substantiate the dominant position of the movement to reject any CIA involvement in

---

<sup>441</sup> *Letter by Luis Alberto Meyer MIEC-SLA to GS-PR*, p. 2, Medellin, November 12, 1965.

<sup>442</sup> Other documents in the SLAs archive contribute to this interpretation of the issue. By October 1966 Luis Meyer described in a letter to Luis Fernando Duque that he had found inconsistencies in the SLA’s financial accounting, besides the already known debt that had been recognized by Fr. Giraldo in the amount of USD 15.000 that among other consequences had jeopardized ADVENIAT’s trust in the MIEC-SLA. (*Letter by Luis Alberto Meyer to Luis Fernando Duque*, October 18, 1966). On the issue, Meyer commented Mons McGrath was to conduct an exhaustive investigation which might led to juridical consequences. Duque fully clarified his knowledge and lack of responsibility on the issue while Fr. Giraldo’s debt issue still dragged on at least for another year. *Letter by Cesar Aguiar to Carlos Horacio Uran*, Bogota, August 7, 1967. Box 126 Folders 1966 and 1967, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>443</sup> Iber, Patrick. *Neither peace nor freedom*. Harvard University Press, 2015.

their apostolate. The majority of Catholic student organizations began getting closer to the JEC approach. In doing so, they gradually tended to concur around a *Spirituality of Commitment* that expressed itself increasingly in political terms, especially in the common rejection of structural social injustice and institutional complicity in its reproduction. Claims of substantial democracy in favor of the majorities to the detriment of surviving oligarchical structures, rejection of internal colonialism, and cultural, political, and economic imperialism also started to become the majority's position. Both the growing New Left political opportunities that increasingly attracted Catholic militants and created an open dialogue with Marxism, and even more fundamental, the rejection of any instrumentalization of their faith, caused the majority position of the movement to reject any CIA involvement in their apostolate vigorously. This was to the point of base movements' requesting a public statement that might clarify to public opinion that the movements were not infiltrated by the CIA.<sup>444</sup> The brief CIA involvement in the early years of the MIEC-SLA, facilitated by the political options of some of the EUC's militants and advisor, however, reveals the internal contradictions the movement had to overcome. Beyond that, it underscores the agency of national and local movements to defend the apostolic agendas they had envisioned.

---

<sup>444</sup> *Circular Letter #2 by MIEC-SLA to all Latin American Movements*, April 27, 1967, in response to the grassroots movements request of clarification.

### 3.7. Conclusions of the Chapter

From 1960-1966 PR-MIEC expanded exponentially throughout Latin America. This expansion resulted from a coordinated church and lay leaders' effort to develop an apostolic work in the university that was deemed essential for forming intellectual elites and countering Marxist infiltration. PR-MIEC Seminars and Congresses since the beginning of the decade created essential bridges among mobilized Catholics' different theological and political perspectives that allowed them to come to terms to address the historical moment. Consensual viewpoints looked at *incarnating* Christianity in the reality of Latin America and showed a growing commitment to a theology of action. Furthermore, PR-MIEC events also allowed significant continuities to build between generations of organized Catholic university students around *latinoamericanista* and University Reform ideals.

Acknowledgment of the relevance of university students and universities in the public debate and the social and political life of the region made a priority the consolidation of a vanguard Latin American Catholic *intelligentsia*. The expectation was such vanguard might significantly impact universities and societies. Accordingly, the creation of the Latin American Secretariat MIEC-SLA set the tone for consolidating and strengthening MIEC university federations in the region and, ultimately, ensuring the rise of a Latin American network of Catholic student organizations. Federations in the network benefited from the MIEC-SLA apostolic services such as education on the university apostolate and its methods, and on Latin American social reality. The MIEC-

SLA promoted Catholic student mobility and experience-exchange among federations and facilitated the pursuit of the needed resources to develop their apostolate in the university *milieu*. Vigorous regional apostolic mobilization, publications and experience-exchange-opportunities permitted the gradual growth of a regional identity around common agendas and convergent perspectives on the role of the church and Catholics, especially university Catholics, in front of ‘underdeveloped’ and revolutionary Latin America.

The MIEC-SLA developed a methodologically eclectic and pragmatic approach to the university apostolate. This approach included apostolic experiences from diverse cultural and social contexts and organized expressions within the university, whether specialized or not. It also facilitated the MIEC-SLA access to financial and institutional resources that allowed it to experience a rapid organizational strengthening and enhanced its regional reach too.

Infiltration of CIA funds to Colombian EUC federation early in the decade, arguably impacting the MIEC-SLA’s apostolic work, alongside base apostolic organizations’ frustration over the SLAs’ failure to achieve the regional fusion, created discontent among the bases at the end of the period. The episode uncovered the internal contradictions the movement had to deal with and the agency of base organizations who, in contesting the MIEC-SLA’s leadership and defending the regional apostolic agendas, made it urgent for the MIEC-SLA to renovate its cadres and ecclesiastical advisory by 1966.

## CHAPTER 4. Evolution of the JECI's Latin American Secretariat and Movements.

Chapter 4 addresses the evolution of the JECI Latin American Secretariat. It shows that although a less organizationally solid structure than its MIEC counterpart, the JECI Secretariat achieved greater strength in terms of the theological, pedagogical, and political reflection and *temporal* engagement that made up its apostolic approach and praxis. The chapter shows the Secretariat's journey from its rise as an international commission within the Brazilian JUC, its definitive establishment as SSA, and later its consolidation with a Latin American agenda as SLA. In such a journey, the Brazilian intellectual and pastoral input was ubiquitous. This input galvanized the JECI-Secretariat's work during the early years and was to fuel, later, the consolidation of a *JEC Line* in Latin America.<sup>445</sup> This line included the pedagogical tools, reflections, conceptual turns, and a *Committed Spirituality*, pioneered in the region by Brazilians JEC and JUC.

Early regional tours in 1956 and 1959, SLA JECI publications, and correspondence were pivotal for the regional dissemination of the JEC Line. Also critical were periodic encounters with member movements of the Rio de la Plata region and

---

<sup>445</sup> "JEC Line" will be used in this dissertation as a language formula to refer to specific Latin American conceptual appropriations, elaborations, and particular positionings on the JEC approach, which will surface in the JECI Latin American Secretariat's experience. Specific positionings relate to the ways of practicing the Review of Life Method, embracing methodological eclecticism, and certain sociological positions on Latin American reality. The author's interpretation from the *interview with Fr. Paul Dabezies. 06-23-2020.*

contacts with other movements made by the JECI-SLA taking advantage of Pax Romana's regional events. Weak support from the Latin American Catholic hierarchy and difficulty in reaching external funding, however, caused the JECI-SLA economic precarity, which by 1966 had undermined its organizational structure. While the university team within the JECI-SLA briefly dissolved amidst financial and organizational crises, it did not overshadow the strength with which the JEC Line had summoned Latin American Catholic student movements throughout the region.

Arguably, growing collective (regional) identity construction among Latin American Catholic militants energized convergent stances (apostolic and political) *committed to action* at the edge of increasing pre-revolutionary conditions in Latin America. JEC Line's approach and praxis offered such an apostolic path. It offered the embracing of a *Committed Spirituality* that was not afraid to undertake a radicalization in the faith; a *total incarnation in the temporal* that advocated "humanization" and siding with the poor. After 1967 this shall lead to generalized Catholic student organizations' leaning towards the JEC approach.



#### 4.1. Brazilian's JEC and JUC organizational and conceptual turns, the backdrop of the JECI Secretariat's evolution.

At the onset of the 1960s, the reality of JECI-South American Secretariat-SSA significantly differed from the PR-MIEC-SLA's. Its establishment in Brazil in 1956 had given the JECI-SSA its first impulse and, above all, shaped its apostolic presence throughout the region. This was particularly favored because the JECI-SSA's initial organization arose as a commission within Brazilian JUC.<sup>446</sup> Less organizationally robust but more mature in terms of their theological, pedagogical, and political reflection, the JECI-SSA, later SLA, fed, until the events of 1964, on Brazilians' dedicated practice of the RLM.<sup>447</sup> Brazilians, marked by their close relation to student *gremialismo* and popular mobilization, developed an apostolic approach with a strong emphasis on social action that determined the evolution of the JECI-SSA. Crucial of the Brazilian movements' influence over the regional Secretariat was the approach taught to construct a new spirituality. Stimulated by avant-garde philosophical and theological discussions

---

<sup>446</sup> Brazilian JUC was acting as coordinator movement for Latin America as per the assembly's decision at the JEC International Council in Rio de Janeiro in July 1956. An International Team was formed within Brazilian JUC to undertake specific tasks related to regional coordination. *Anais do VII Congresso Nacional JUC*, Recife, July 1957, pp. 113-115.

<sup>447</sup> Consensus exists in the literature about the conservative realignment of the Brazilian Church hierarchy in support of the *coup d'etat* that overthrew Joao Goulart's government in March 1964. Realignment represented a break from the support that JUC movements enjoyed in the previous period. While by 1961, JUC cadres took command of the *Uniao Nacional Dos Estudantes-UNE* (Brazilian Student *gremio*) with the participation of the communist faction of the student movement, the UNE became one of the more relevant centers of the *Frente Nacionalista e Popular*, and strong focus of resistance to the military coup. Once the military government rose to power, detention and repression of student leaders began soon after, creating a wary environment for progressives' student mobilization. Seemingly, the coup might have accelerated a decision previously taken at the Recife regional committee to move the JECI-SLA HQ to Buenos Aires, Argentina. On Student Politics in Brazil, see Martins Filho, João Roberto, and John Collins. "Students and Politics in Brazil, 1962-1992." *Latin American Perspectives* 25.1 (1998): 156-169. On the Brazilian JUC and the UNE, see Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 81-85. On the realignment of the Catholic Church hierarchy by 1964, see Krischke, Paulo J. "The role of the church in a political crisis: Brazil, 1964." *J. Church & St.* 27 (1985): 403.

that prompted conceptual turns and a dialectical process of reflection in the faith, by 1963, Brazilian militants' praxis had provided the foundations for the living and conceptualization of what was known as a *Spirituality of Commitment*. The regional JECI Secretariat envisioned the dissemination of this intellectual and spiritual path as its primary role.

Let us, thus, go into the minutiae of Brazilians' turns' influence in the regional JECI unfolding. The maturation of Brazilian movements' reflections and spirituality built on developments they had accomplished since the mid-1950s. These embraced the diversity of social contexts and eventually developed measures such as *decentralizing* the movements' programs and pursuing *characterizations* to "see" the students' *milieu*, as seen in Chapter 2. It was since 1960, however, that Brazilians' reflection and conceptual turns were to cement their radicalization, i.e., their decided *commitment to action*, which was attached to a *Committed Spirituality*. No doubt this happened under the impetus of Catholic theological and intellectual vanguard avenues in the preamble to Vatican II and the Cuba 1959 aftermath, which channeled in many ways the region's generational countercultural dissent that echoed and resonated from and into the *global 60s* phenomenon.<sup>449</sup>

---

<sup>448</sup> Souza, *A JUC*.

<sup>449</sup> In his *The Spirit of Vatican II*, Gerd-Rainer Horn reminds us of the relevance of Vatican II in breaking through and "positively engage[ing] with the hopes and the challenges of the modern world." Without Vatican II, he rightly points out, the Second Wave of Left Catholicism, both in Latin America (Liberation Theology) and Europe (which he traces through the experience of worker-priests, the rise and fall of the Christian Solidarity International Congress, and contributions of Left Catholicism to student movements and radical workers' movements in the wake of 1968), would have never come about. Significantly, these experiences portray some of the more relevant religious dimensions into the overarching social and youth mobilization in the *long sixties*. Horn, Gerd-Rainer. *The spirit of Vatican II: Western European progressive*

Brazilians' conceptual turns and inductive reflection found expression at consecutive JUC meetings, which fed the JECI-Secretariat's regional presence and apostolic action.

One of these relevant meetings was the Brazilian JUC's National Congress and Tenth Anniversary, in 1960, in Rio de Janeiro. It was a massive national meeting that gathered 500 Brazilian attendees and international representatives from Uruguay, Argentina, and Colombia. The meeting was the venue for the militants' critique of "purely theoretical knowledge" as this kind of knowledge did not commit itself to transforming reality.<sup>450</sup> Militants advocated for overcoming the distance between theory and practice and affirmed their Catholic Action movement's vocation to be a "missionary action" and an "action on structures," which, given the critical social reality, demanded from them "a total incarnation in the *temporal*."<sup>451</sup>

Also, as recounted by former Brazilian late militant and Sociologist Luis Alberto Gomez de Souza, conscious of their influence in Brazilian church and society, militants

---

*Catholicism in the long sixties*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2015. On the issue of Cuba and its impact on the Latin American *sixties*' generation, is significant the argument that while Cuba was not the starting point of Latin American politics' radicalization and revolutionary momentum, it did provide social alternatives to a young political generation who "challenged the traditional ways of doing politics and proposed new forms of social, political and cultural mobilization." Against the backdrop of increasing US interventionism in Latin America and economic crisis after the failure of industrializing projects under the ISI (import substituting industrialization) model, the Cuban Revolution offered, a practical example of a replicable model of revolution; a new regional scenario that called to "renew repertoires of contention." Marchesi, Aldo. *Latin America's Radical Left: Rebellion and Cold War in the Global 1960s*. Vol. 107. Cambridge University Press, 2017. pp 2,6,25. On this issue and in the context of the broader Latin American Cold War conflict see Grandin, Greg. *The last colonial massacre: Latin America in the Cold War*. University of Chicago Press, 2011.

<sup>450</sup> JUC *Ideal Histórico*, *Boletim Nacional*, 1960. Cited in Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 153-164

<sup>451</sup> Beozzo, *Cristãos na universidade e na política*, p. 89.

advocated for the definition of a *Christian Historical Ideal* (CHI). This definition responded to the collective visualization of a shared ideological horizon with concrete religious, economic, and political expressions. As mentioned in Chapter 2, this was in sync with Brazilians' pursuit of a *line of total action*.<sup>452</sup>

Borrowed from Maritain's *integral-humanist* perspective, Brazilians' Christian Historical Ideal entailed, in religious terms, the need for a more significant commitment to the evangelical exigencies in the *temporal* and the encouragement of priestly vocations—which, indeed, eventually led to many militants undertaking religious vows. In economic terms, militants outlined their commitment for an option for development, though, also the need of overcoming Capitalism—an apparent necessary conclusion considering an option for development that advocated harmonic economy and a commitment to promote the interests of the less favored and exploited classes. Furthermore, in political terms, militants expressed their support for more mature positions regarding nationalism and their own positioning within Brazilian democratic left factions that swung between the paths of Christian Democracy and a non-capitalist way.<sup>453</sup>

---

<sup>452</sup> Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 153-164

<sup>453</sup> The timidly raised proposal in the 10-year Congress on overcoming Capitalism was radicalized in the Natal Congress a year later. There, documents such as “The gospel, source of the Brazilian revolution” were discussed that addressed underdevelopment, revolution, and revolutionary political measures for Brazil, which started from the need to overcome the system's contradictions. The evolution of the discussion and the events in Natal were strongly marked—as Gomez de Souza shows—by what Frei Romeu Dale, in a letter to Dom Helder Camara, called an “organic” awakening to Catholicism's social dimension and the leadership role Catholics had acquired within the student *gremio*. This awakening had opened Catholics to imagine the relevance and urgency of a systematic and coordinated political action in the plane of student political militancy. The discussions held in the Natal Congress stirred the spirits of the Catholic hierarchy that chose to separate Natal's JUC from the national movement. This measure would

By 1962 Frei Romeo Dale defined the repercussions of the Tenth Anniversary's Congress in the following terms. In his view, the occasion had helped the movement "gain a global consciousness of... fundamental points that seem[ed] to mark a step forward in the life of the Movement...in line with a layman's spirituality *in* the world and *for* the world." He went on to explain that the discussions of the Congress had been one step along the way towards "integrating the various aspects of the meaning of the movement," and the urgency to take a Christian stand in respect of what he called a "bourgeois mentality" and "materialist atheism."<sup>454</sup> Thus, he pointed, the Congress had allowed work for

"Integrating [JUC's different dimensions] into a whole organic vision. [Among them,] a) the union, and perhaps even the simultaneity of *temporal* missionary tasks; b) the complementarity of the work of the university with action [on] other social structures; c) the conscious, lucid insertion into the ecclesial life; [and] d) the awareness of the importance of the economic factor in the life of the man and humanity, linked to the rejection... of its primacy, consciously or unconsciously, in human life. It is urgent [he warned] to open our eyes to [the] profound anti-evangelical [nature] of bourgeois mentality. We cannot hide everything that

---

mark the beginning of the crisis of the Brazilian JUC with the Catholic hierarchy and later its institutional disappearance in 1966. Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 161-163, 182-86. Beozzo, *Cristãos na universidade e na política*, p. 53.

<sup>454</sup> Frei Romeo Dale, o.p., *JUC do Brasil: Uma nova experiência de Ação Católica*, 1962, pp.16-17. Box 286, Folder 1962, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

materialist atheism, wherever it comes from and whatever clothes it wears, entails as a radical opposition to the message of Jesus Christ.”<sup>455</sup>

Conceptual turns, however, consolidated after 1960, which seemingly added further discernment to the JUC’s line of action. These gradually arose from collective reflections that were voiced since the 1961 Rio de Janeiro Student Manifesto. Namely, consecutive meetings in Santos (1961), Belo Horizonte (1962), and Salvador (1963), and the publication of the Magazines *Brasil Urgente* and later *Ação Popular*.<sup>456</sup> The Third National Study Seminar at Aracaju, Brazil, in 1963, was later the venue for consolidating such turns, the more significant of which was abandoning the intent of understanding JUC’s’ ideological horizon as a *Cristian Historical Ideal* (CHI). The meeting, whose memories were circulated regionally by the JECI-Secretariat in its *Curriculum* Informative Bulletin (1963), and that were to sediment new reflections later, in 1968, when reproduced in the publication *Servicio de Documentacion*, exposed the limitations of this definition. The meeting's discussions built, instead, on Mounier’s concept of *Christian Historical Consciousness* (CHC) to understand JUC militants’ spirituality and agency in society.<sup>457</sup> Overall, the discussions portrayed Brazilians partial abandonment of

---

<sup>455</sup> Ibid.

<sup>456</sup> Souza *A JUC*, pp. 175, 198

<sup>457</sup> *Curriculum # 1*. Box 13 Folder 1963, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito; “Conciencia Histórica y Cristianismo,” *Servicio de Documentación*.

Maritain's *Integral Humanism* elaborations and rapprochement to the *Personalist-Communitarian* conceptualizations of Emmanuel Mounier.

The Aracaju 1963 seminar presented Fr. Henrique de Lima Vaz's discussion on *Historical Consciousness* and *Christianism*. Subtopics within this broad theme were the relations between historical consciousness and culture; culture, ideology, and Christianity; and the contrasts between Modern and Christian historical consciousness. Fr. Lima Vaz presented the critiques on Maritain's Christian Historical Ideal-CHI, explaining that it posed the conceptual danger of an "immobilization of [such an ideal] as a purist essence" that, by "representing ... a [escape] from real history," implied the peril of "lacking reality." Therefore, for Fr. Lima Vaz, Maritain's CHI constituted an ideology—in the *Manheimian* sense of the term. That was because that ideal had no meaning other than the one given by the mainstream trends of the historical consciousness of the time.<sup>458</sup> Conversely, Fr. Lima Vaz argued that Mounier's concept of Christian Historical Consciousness-CHC made it possible to address an effective image of reality, an authentic *seeing* "with all its contradictions and unfolding." He added that it was, precisely, the analysis of that unfolding that had to guide a "lucid option," which contrasted with the rigidity of ideologies that resulted from

---

<sup>458</sup> Referring to Karl Manheim's theory on ideology, Fr. Lima Vaz explained that while historical ideals are a prolongation of the mainstreams of the historical consciousness of the time—i.e., the subjects' consciousness of the world—they are, in fact, ideologies, thereby wrapped in an immobilizing tendency, as pure essences. In Fr. Lima Vaz's view, the Christian Historical Consciousness is a concept that overcoming any religious naturalism, grounded instead in an anthropological biblical perspective, allows understanding a particular *epoch* not as a "realizable essence" but in its effective, contradictory, and problematic nature. "Conciencia Histórica y Cristianismo," *Servicio de Documentación*, pp. 8, 12-13

ideals that, in losing their heuristic function, had become alienating.<sup>459</sup> For this reason, Fr. Lima Vaz clarified that Christianity did not propose a historical ideal but a particular type of historical consciousness, namely, a consciousness that, overcoming any religious naturalism, prolonged a *historical culture* whose origin lay in the Hebraic people.<sup>460</sup>

The justification of Maritain's CHI vs. Mounier's Christian Historical Consciousness-CHC difference had further relevance, given the sociopolitical context after 1959. That context had accentuated inquiries such as that of the relationship between Christianity and ideology. In front of this question, an important takeaway from Fr. Lima Vaz's discussion would clarify that, indeed, within "Christianity there can be, and there have been, various ideologies, dependent on different appreciations and different times and spaces."<sup>461</sup> This first acknowledgment would respond to a besetting concern among Catholic militants during the decade. It clarified that it was legitimate for Catholics to make ideological choices in the *temporal* plane. Another takeaway, however, was yet the discernment that Christianity could "not be degraded into ideology." On this matter, Fr. Lima Vaz went on to provide a definition. While "ideology is oriented towards practical ends, [and] ... necessarily limited [by] time and space...

---

<sup>459</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>460</sup> Ibid.

<sup>461</sup> Ibid.



Christianism, however, transcends [these] limitations.” Thus, while the historical consciousness, to the extent it was social, “tended to express itself in ideological perspectives,” to the extent it was personal, “it had the right to criticize and transcend group ideological conditionings.” Thereby, the CHC was called to criticize dominant ideological constructions based on a *personalist* understanding of history and the relationship between men and the world.<sup>462</sup>

These conceptual turns illuminated multiple aspects of Brazilian *Juventude Universitária Católica*-JUC’s developments—until its dissolution in 1966, amid the intense conflict with the hierarchy and censorship under the military coup. Reflections evolved as theological and pedagogical positionings that, far beyond, were also epistemological and political. For instance, Fr. Lima Vaz’s discussions, which, as mentioned, had the precedent of various other meetings that followed the Student Manifesto in 1961, were at the foundational underpinnings of the Brazilian movement *Ação Popular* (1963). This was a political movement of *personalist* inspiration that, while primarily formed by Christians—most of them coming out from the JUC ranks, presented itself as non-confessional. Siding with a socialist option, *Ação Popular* defined itself explicitly as “the expression of a generation that translated into revolutionary action its fundamental options to respond to the challenge of reality.”<sup>463</sup>

---

<sup>462</sup> Ibid., pp. 3, 8-12.

<sup>463</sup> Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 177, 199

On the other hand, within JEC and JUC movements, reflections also contributed to raising awareness that the Christian Historical Consciousness opposed the dominant historical consciousness of modern times—*Modern Historical Consciousness*-MHC. This was because, as Fr. Lima Vaz explained, the CHC sought to rescue the subjects' ethics and consciousness, both in the production of knowledge and history, that the MHC had subsumed under its dehumanizing "universalism and excessive rationalism." Furthermore, the CHC opposed the MHC's excessive search for objectivity which had "dispense[d] the ethical evaluation by the subject... and [acted] only in the realm of effectiveness, seeking success and not the truth."<sup>464</sup>

Significantly, to the extent that the movements' reflections tended to subvert dominant forms of knowledge production, espousing subaltern's interests in that production, both reflections and praxis were planting the seeds of what later became a *prophetic attitude* and model of the *apostolate*. This is what was to be at the base of a new sort of spirituality, a new conception of the church, and a new understanding of the role of university apostolic movements.

Brazilian movements of the early 1960s seemed to have set the tone for a pastoral evolution further during the decade. It was what Fr. Gilberto Gimenez - Paraguayan JEC advisor—later synthesized as the overcoming of the traditional

---

<sup>464</sup> "Conciencia Histórica y Cristianismo," *Servicio de Documentación*, p.5.

Christendom and transitioning from Social-Christian thought and perspectives toward a *Catholicism of diaspora*.<sup>465</sup> This was a model of university apostolate that was breaking with both the *ecclesiocentric* conception of the church and *dualist perspectives* on the *spiritual-temporal*. Conceiving the church as a deeply traditional, juridical, and vertical institution, the former (*ecclesiocentrism*) monopolized the grace and the means of salvation and centered on worship. For the latter (*dualism*), in turn, the *temporal* mattered insofar as it was at the service of religious ends.

Instead, *prophetic* movements raised the argument that against any dualism, there was the “unity of the plan of creation and redemption,” pointing out that there was “a *single history* internally worked by grace from the beginning.” Building on a reflective and consciousness-raising pedagogy—i.e., the RLM considered, more than a method, a way of life—*prophetic* movements also tended to overcome “cosmological,” “static,” and “objectivist” religious thought. They favored an anthropological perspective with a “creative and revolutionary vision” in which “men acted transforming the world in pursuit of themselves.”<sup>466</sup>

Fr. Gimenez was to add to his description of this model of the apostolate, militants’ growing commitment to understanding Latin America as a peripheral and underdeveloped region in a situation of dependency—defined by an imperial and

---

<sup>465</sup> “Introducción a una Pedagogía de la Pastoral Universitaria,” *Servicio de Documentación*, Series 1, Document #14, 1968. Box Documentos MIEC-JECI II. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima.

<sup>466</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-15.

neocolonial reality—whose “fundamental challenge laid in ... [achieving a continental] consciousness of its own *liberation*.” As a response to this reality, Fr. Gimenez explained that because in the *prophetic perspective*, “the church adopted a disinterested centrifugal position, the pedagogy of the faith turned creative and reflexive, [in so doing] it helped the Christian to reposition himself in the world and history.” Fr. Gimenez went on to clarify this might occur through a *dialectic reflection in the faith*, only possible where a *historical consciousness* existed.<sup>467</sup>

Overall, as Fr. Gimenez also later pointed out, JUC and JEC movements in Latin America had constituted “the vanguard of the presence of the church in the university and [university student] *gremial* leadership.”<sup>468</sup> And seemingly, it was their *prophetic* attitude that distinguished them from other forms of university apostolate in the region.

#### **4.2. From the JECI-SSA “definitive establishment” on to envisioning the Latin American reach.**

The discussions above, which had the characteristic of being inductive and collective elaborations, constituted the backdrop of the JECI’s regional Secretariat-SSA’s work. This was so because the JECI-SSA had initially surfaced as an instance within the

---

<sup>467</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>468</sup> “Apostolado Laico,” *Servicio de Documentación*, Series 1, Document #1, 1968, p. 2. Box Documentos MIEC-JECI II, SLA-IBC Repository, Lima.

Brazilian JUC, namely, one in charge of its international projection. From among national JUC cadres, by the second half of 1956, an “international team” had formed under Vera Areas and Luis A. Gomez de Souza.<sup>469</sup> Besides leading the regional expansion of the JEC approach, the team oversaw Brazilian JUC’s participation in all international meetings, including those organized by Pax Romana, from which Brazilian JUC was also a member.

While after 1958, the SSA initiated a more autonomous work with respect to that of the national JUC team, Brazilian cadres and ecclesiastical advisors kept being a majority within the Secretariat since its inception until it was moved to Buenos Aires, shortly after the 1964 coup.<sup>470</sup> While the maturity of both reflection and praxis seemed to be the primary reason for appointing Brazilian students, pervasive economic shortages also made it difficult to afford international students’ living expenses, hindering their participation. That was the case, for instance, of Jorge Segreto, an Argentinean student militant that, while appointed to the Secretariats’ permanent team by 1962, could not join the team because of economic insolvency.<sup>471</sup>

---

<sup>469</sup> During the first half of 1956, the international team was under Lamartine Correa de Oliveira for a brief period. By 1957 the international team starts a slow delinking from the JUC team. Lucia Ribeiro de Oliveira, Eduardo Portella Netto, Lourdinha Santos, Maria Margarida Bittencourt, and Lucia Mello, with the ecclesiastical advice of Frei Romeu Dale op., also made part of the international team between January 1956 and July 1957. *Anais Do VII Congresso Nacional, Recife JUC*, July 1957, pp. 149.

<sup>470</sup> *Carta al Komite#2*, June 1964, p. 6. Box 13, Folder 1964. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>471</sup> *Carta al Komite#1*, 1963, p. 2-4. Box 13, Folder 1963. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

Limited budget, especially during the early years of the SSA, also restricted the geographical scope of the Secretariat's influence. In this, JECI's regional Secretariat's team agency was critical for making the most of the resources at hand. As the memories of the 1957 Recife National Congress show, in the early years, the JECI-SSA benefitted from the financial support received by the Brazilian JUC from multiple sources. Contributions from the Brazilian hierarchy and sub-regional Brazilian centers—that grouped JUC and JEC movements throughout the country—funded the SSA, as it also did the JECI-GS, which received economic resources from Europe's ADVENIAT and MISEREOR.<sup>472</sup> Also, the SSA took every opportunity opened by Brazilians' attendance to international events to make possible South American coordination and exchange. Both JECI World Study Sessions and Pax Romana-PR Congresses seemed to have been tapped as opportunities for the SSA to network with regional militants and hold brief coordination meetings. Significant was Brazilian JUC membership to the PR-*Rio de la Plata* subregion, which included Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Through this membership, the JECI-SSA assured close contact with the subregion member countries, making them its primary zone of influence, and disseminating among them most Brazilian developments. Beyond the *Rio de la Plata* region, budgetary limitations restrained contacts to correspondence, publication exchanges, and, as mentioned, the opportunities created by continental and world meetings. By 1957, for instance, Lúcia Ribeiro de Oliveira, by then JUC cadre and a member of the *international team*, recounted to the National JUC Bulletin her responsibilities of maintaining remote contact

---

<sup>472</sup> *Anais Do VII Congresso Nacional, Recife JUC*, July 1957. On the organization of sub-regional Brazilian centers see Beozzo, *Cristãos na universidade e na política*, pp.57-58.

through correspondence and publications with countries such as Cuba and Bolivia, while, on the other hand, being able to maintain permanent and personal contact with Paraguay, Argentina, and Uruguay.<sup>473</sup>

By 1958, under student Cosme Alves Neto, the JECI-SSA reached its “definitive establishment” by achieving partial organizational autonomy from the Brazilians JUC without weakening its intellectual nourishment from Brazilians’ experience.<sup>474</sup> This marked a second stage in the Secretariat’s development. Seemingly, now able to directly get funding from the cooperation agencies with the support of the JECI-GS, the JECI-SSA inaugurated its first internal publication for regional circulation and was able to convene regional meetings and send representatives to proselytize the region in the practice of the JEC method and development of specialized movements.

Thus, by 1959 and thanks to a scholarship donated by UNESCO, JECI-SSA member Celso Mendes Guimaraes visited national movements throughout Latin America on a tour that lasted five months. Guimaraes visited Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Cuba, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Argentina, and Mexico. In the latter, he also attended the Fifth International Week of Catholic Action.<sup>475</sup> The same year the JECI-

---

<sup>473</sup> *Anais Do VII Congresso Nacional, Recife JUC*, July 1957, pp. 113-114

<sup>474</sup> *Dimensão Internacional do Movimento*, p. 2. Box 286, Folder 1963. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>475</sup> *Boletim de Informações*, June 1959. p. 2. Box 13, Folder 1959. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

SSA circulated the first *Boletim de Informações* among member and collaborator movements.

A consequence of Brazilian JUC's and JEC's spiritual and intellectual maturation, by 1961, under Celso Mendes Guimaraes, the JECI-SSA shifted into a Latin American organization, now JECI-SLA, according to the resolution reached at the JECI's World Congress in Germany.<sup>476</sup> Significantly, it was a moment of achievement by the JECI-SLA, who, in sync with the more relevant conceptual turns of the Brazilian JUC, increasingly understood their apostolic work from a Historical Consciousness perspective. That is, Brazilians conceived of their leading role in expanding the JEC approach regionally as part of the "responsibility" and "awareness" that came with the movements' growing "historical consciousness of their time."<sup>477</sup> This implied an opening to a perspective of *totality* of Christian life, a global conceiving of their reality, and awareness of the international dimension of the movement.<sup>478</sup>

Amidst the radicalization of Brazilian movements and a political and intellectual atmosphere that filled the collective imagination with ambitions of structural change, Brazilians increasingly developed a "continental" consciousness. They grew aware that "the fight for Brazilian revolution was not

---

<sup>476</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p.168.

<sup>477</sup> *Dimensão Internacional do Movimento*, p. 1.

<sup>478</sup> On the Historical Consciousness perspective as perspective of *totality* see "Consciencia Historica e Sentido do Movimento," in *Boletim Nacional JUC* No. 1, 1963, p. 57. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito, Box 286, Folder 1963.



isolated [but] insert[ed] in a Latin American context; [and] even more, in a context of underdeveloped regions and a global problem.”<sup>479</sup> As recalled by Gomez de Souza in 1963, this had been a gradual understanding that prompted the Brazilian JUC’s embracing of the JECI approach’s “world vocation.”<sup>480</sup> This was an evolution, whose “neuralgic point” had been the educative process that through the *see-judge-act* had “led the militants to an ... organic and dynamic discovery of reality, not in theory but in action.” Moreover, it had been an apostolic reflection that had helped them to *see*— “in increasingly larger concentric circles and organic growth, the dimensions of the real.”<sup>481</sup> Overall, this meant Brazilians’ considering “the global identity of Brazilian problems with [those] of other Latin American countries.” Therefore, their understanding that these problems’ solution was not detached from one another. Besides, their regional projection seemed to have a sense of duty imposed by “the universality of Christianity [that] urge[d] [them] to overcome historical conditionings, which are ...a worldwide reality.”<sup>482</sup>

Around the formalization of the more encompassing Secretariat’s reach, the SLA had formulated a Latin American plan for 1959-1961. The plan included a new regional tour, the celebration of regional gatherings for the movements’ experience exchange, and

---

<sup>479</sup> *Dimensão Internacional do Movimento*, p. 1.

<sup>480</sup> Luiz Alberto Gomes de Souza, “JUC, Movimento Pedagógico,” in Brazilian *JUC Bulletin* No. 1, 1963, p. 38. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito, Box 286, Folder 1963.

<sup>481</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38-39.

<sup>482</sup> *Dimensão Internacional do Movimento*, p. 1. These reflections were already present by 1957, though, still in a mainly theoretical perspective. See *Anais Do VII Congresso Nacional, Recife JUC*, July 1957, pp. 113-115. Also, *Boletim Nacional JUC* Brazil, 1957-No 4-5, p. 20. Box 291, Folder 1957. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

local publications.<sup>483</sup> Consecutive meetings addressed the JEC's spirituality and pedagogy, specifically, tackling both the reciprocity between *formation in action* and the *action in the milieu*, and guidelines for the *Nucleacion* and *Team's* composition.<sup>484</sup> Among such activities was the Second South American JECI Study Session (1959) in Rosario (Argentina). Besides the pedagogical discussion, the meeting addressed student politics, services, international organizations, and South American work. The Session hosted 160 attendees from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay.<sup>485</sup>

Also, the First JECI-South American Camp (1960) was developed in La Floresta, Uruguay, gathering participants from Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Chile. This was an opportunity to address the JEC apostolate's techniques and reinforce some of the topics developed in the Study Session in Argentina.<sup>486</sup>

Furthermore, in July 1960, a South American Encounter took place that addressed

---

<sup>483</sup>Summary of JECI-SLA Activities between August 1959-August 1960 in *Letter to Fr. D. Carlos Alfaro Odio CELAM, signed by Luiz Alberto Gomez de Souza JECI-GS and Mabel Campanella- Latin Americana Liaison, September 7, 1960*. Serie 3, Box 4, Folder JECI *Correspondencia & Comunicados*, 1959. Bidegain-FIU Collection.

<sup>484</sup> *Nucleacion* activities consisted of conversations with new or aspirant militants (natural leaders) that exploring their views on the student *milieu* sought to raise their awareness and commitment to the *milieu's* needs and problems. The *Nucleacion* activities began with the location and personal contact of a leader (it was assumed he had a natural group of influence). This contact, which must be of a giving attitude towards the leader, were to make him discover his environment, his person and then, the church. Upon becoming aware of the church, he might become a JUC/JEC militant. Second JECI Latin American Study Session, *Vilches Memoires* 1962, p. 31. Box 63, Folder Vilches-Talca Study Session. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>485</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p. 157. Relevant correspondence exists regarding the vicissitudes that surrounded the scheduling of this study session as it involved tensions with PR MIEC Sub-Secretariat. *Circular letter, A todos los movimientos universitarios de America Latina*, from Luiz Alberto Gomez de Souza, JECI-GS, Paris, December 3, 1959. Series III, Box 4, Folder JECI *Correspondencia & Comunicados*, 1959. Bidegain-FIU Collection.

<sup>486</sup> *Boletim de Informaçoes*, June 1959. p. 2; and Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, pp. 164-165.

the topic “The South American student *milieu* and the militants’ international consciousness.” This event received delegates from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Uruguay.<sup>487</sup>

Further planned activities included JECI-SLA representatives’ short visits to the member countries, a new Latin American tour by the JECI-GS in preparation for the next JECI World Session, and an expansion plan through Central America. The latter was a region whose apostolic accompaniment by the JECI regional Secretariat had long been a pending aspiration since Gomez de Souza’s trip to Central America in 1956.<sup>488</sup> Therefore, a Central American JECI Session was scheduled for October of 1960. An important number of publications, including the memories of the Study Session in Rosario, Argentina, and the JECI’s *Common Bases* translated into Spanish, were planned, for local circulation, under the financial responsibility of the member countries.<sup>489</sup> Also, scheduled

---

<sup>487</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p. 165.

<sup>488</sup> *Reportagem sobre a viagem de Luis Alberto, Boletim Nacional JUC Brazil*, 1957-No. 6. Series VI, Box 6, Folder *Boletines, 1957-1967*. Bidegain-FIU Collection.

<sup>489</sup> Along with the statutes, the *Common Bases* were adopted by the JECI international movement assembly during the First World Council in Belgium in 1954. The *Common Bases* was the primary guiding document whose relevance lay in that it indicated the *common spirit* that all member movements were to live by. The JEC was defined in the *Common Bases* as a *Specialized Catholic Action Movement*. This meant reasserting the laity's role in both the student *milieu* and the church and reaffirming the movement's commitment to pursue an effective and organized action in that *milieu*. In accomplishing such an action, it was the militants' duty to engage *with others*, in such a way *giving testimony* of their life in Christ. While making explicit one method to accomplish the objectives above, namely, the Review of Life, the document emphasized that more than an organization and a set of techniques, the JECI was above all *Spirit and Life*. In the living of the method, the team was the basic cell of the movement. A reflection of the inductive nature of the method, both *Common Bases* and statutes were dynamic guidelines opened to discussion and reformulation throughout time in response to base movements' needs, reflections, and elaborations. Pelegri, Buenaventura. *JECI MIEC Su opcion, su pedagogia*, pp. 18-19. The JECI-SLA project of translating the *Common Bases* into Spanish was effectively concretized after the Broummana World Council and utilized in forming student militants and advisors. *Bases Comunes, Consejo Mundial de Brummana, Agosto de 1964. JECI-SLA-Seminario Centro Americano de Asesores, El Salvador, 1967*. Box 126, Folder 1964, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

publications aimed at the diffusion of the JEC's method, techniques, and spirituality, and the hierarchy's thought about the schools' apostolate, which concerned the movements.<sup>490</sup>

Seemingly, many specialized movements appeared in the early 1960s due to the JECI-SLA's efforts to diffuse the JEC approach. Many others increasingly made an eclectic use of methodologies from both MIEC and JECI models of the apostolate. The Uruguayan JUC, for instance, was born in 1960 from the merging of the feminine and masculine branches of the FUEAC. Similarly, the Argentinean JUC did so from the ranks of the AUDAC and, apparently, also from the Federation of the University Centers of Argentine Catholic Action of Buenos Aires. Also, in Paraguay the SEEDAC (*Sección Especializada Estudiantil de Acción Católica*) gave rise by 1961 to the JEC with the impulse of Fr. Gilberto Gimenez as advisor.<sup>491</sup> By 1962 many movements, some of which had implemented *Parroquias Universitarias*, had also started working with *Equipos de Base*. As the JECI-SLA informed, the strategy to form *Equipos* (viz. teams) was later ratified, at the Vilches meeting, as the fundamental condition to “deepen the dynamism of the method” and overall, for the “JEC [approach to] be present.”<sup>492</sup> As

---

<sup>490</sup> Summary of JECI-SLA Activities in *Letter to Fr. D. Carlos Alfaro Odio CELAM, signed by Luiz Alberto Gomez de Souza*.

<sup>491</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p. 165, 175, 188.

<sup>492</sup> *Curriculum #2*, June 1963. Box 13, Folder 1963. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito

mentioned in the previous chapter, the Chilean and Peruvian movements were good examples of such a development.<sup>493</sup>

### 4.3. The Vilches-Talca Study Session in 1962

One regional event excels in the memory of former militants for galvanizing the JECI-SLA's regional diffusion early in the 1960s that, therefore, deserves greater attention.<sup>494</sup> As it was also the case of Montevideo-62, the Second Latin American (Third South American) JECI Study Session fed on the avant-garde theological, and pastoral takes of Vatican II. The event was held in Vilches-Talca, province of Chile, September 15-25, 1962. Overall, the meeting was the venue for further pedagogical discernments that more clearly unpacked for the attendees the JEC approach's vocation to be "the yeast in the dough."<sup>495</sup> The last two days served to hold the JECI's Regional Committee meeting. The meeting hosted 80 attendees, 65 of whom were militants from member movements (Argentinean JEC, JUC and AUDAC, Brazilian JEC, JECF, and JUC, Chilean JEC and JECF, and Uruguayan JUC), collaborators (Bolivian JEC, JECF and JUC, and Uruguayan JEC and JECF), and movements the JECI-SLA had relations with

---

<sup>493</sup> Memoirs of the Chilean AUC Militant Camp, developed in the last days of February 1962, already talked of the work with *Parroquias Universitarias* along with the constitution of the *Equipos* (teams) to unfold an approach of the church as *fermento* (viz. leaven). *Camp for AUC Militants*, Chile, February 1962. Box 178, Folder 1962. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito. Later in 1965, a bulletin that presented the participation of the Peruvian UNEC in a joint meeting with the Chilean AUC that took place October 8-11, 1965, proposed a, seemingly, mature scheme of simultaneity of the operation of the *Parroquias Universitarias* with the constitution of the *Equipo*, considered the latter as a *célula* (viz. cell) of UNEC's educational structure. *Boletín del Centro de Lima-UNEC* #2. Box 1, Binder 1. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>494</sup> Paco del Campo, interview.

<sup>495</sup> *Vilches Memoires*.

(Colombian FEDUC-University, UES-Secondary, and Peruvian UNEC-university, JEC and JECF).<sup>496</sup> The movements' advisors, the SLA team, and the JECI General and Deputy General Secretaries, Gregoire Reginald and Mabel Campanella, were all present.

Drawing common regional diagnoses with those of Pax Romana's *La Capilla* and *Montevideo-62*—the latter celebrated a couple of months earlier—the Vilches Study Session built on a collective reflection by the student attendees, through *carrefours*, on the “Student Life,” as a way of *seeing* the *milieu*.<sup>497</sup> The diagnosis pointed out the relevance of student *gremios* for both university and society in Latin America. It posed the concern that the student *milieu*, subjected to ideological disputes, had been permeated by “Marxists and opportunists.” It recognized, though, that the primary ideological opposition within *gremios* was that of Marxists vs. Christians.<sup>498</sup> Significantly, the diagnosis also pointed to the lack of *unity* of the student *milieu* in the region. This issue was to be relevant to the JEC movements' approach and identity and a matter of disagreement with the SLA-MIEC (About of which more in Chapter 5).

As *La Capilla*'s student manifesto one year earlier, the diagnosis of Vilches also raised awareness of two realities. First, the indifference of a large student mass about the problems of the university, which corresponded to those of a university system limited to be a vehicle for *personal* rather than *community* promotion. Also critical of an

---

<sup>496</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-8, 64-67

<sup>497</sup> *Carrefours* (French) were specific moments for focal discussion within the meeting.

<sup>498</sup> *Vilches Memoirs*, p. 2.

encyclopedic teaching system, the diagnosis denounced that universities in Latin America separated academic programs from the real needs of societies. The document pointed out that although societies were at the time witnessing the recent emergence of a greater awareness of the university's mission in Latin America, Catholic universities were on the fringes of the evolutionary movement of university structures in the region. In so doing, Catholic universities were "contributing to the formation of alien Christians and disengaged from that reality."<sup>499</sup> Overcoming this weakness posed a critical goal to reach that was equivalent to carrying the university reform to Catholic universities. Efforts in this direction would bear fruits later, by 1967, through two meetings in Buga-Colombia that laid the foundations for the transformation of Catholic universities in the region (more about this in Part III). Second, was the criticism of the Church's model of Christendom centered on an "infantile" faith, "rites and practices, where individuals pursued the selfish goal of salvation of their souls." Moreover, the diagnosis lamented the parish, beyond administering the sacraments, "did not present a message and a pastoral action that bring a true solution to the world's problems; especially when the Christian is sometimes attached to unjust structures in the *temporal*, against which he must fight if he really loves his neighbor and seeks Justice."<sup>500</sup>

Vilches's observations agreed with much of the consensuses exposed at MIEC's *La Capilla* and *Montevideo-62*. This was not news bearing in mind that many of the same movements attended all MIEC's and JECI's events, whether as members or as guests.

---

<sup>499</sup> Ibid., pp. 3-4.

<sup>500</sup> Ibid.

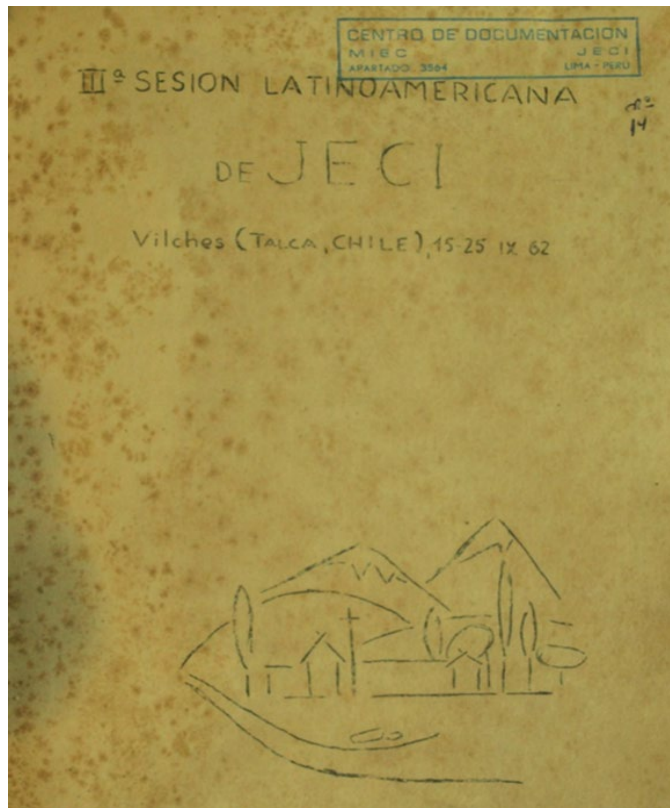


Figure 7. Front Cover of the Memoires of the Second JECI Latin American Study Session in Vilches-Talca, 1962. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

However, what followed might provide evidence of the elements that started to cement Latin American Catholic student movements' gradual leaning towards embracing JEC's approach and spirituality instead. Those elements allowed them to build an identity and sense of community and undertake methodical work and common conceptualizations that strengthened them as a social movement and underpinned their collective action. This regional leaning became stronger in the following years.



Overall, the meeting developed interspersing exposition and experiences' exchanges. It built on collective diagnosis, a *carrefour* on the meaning of the JEC movement, and militants' expositions. There were interventions by SLA members Celso Guimares on "the meaning of dialogue" and by Maria do Carmo Ibiapina on "the meaning of evolution, revolution, and regression in Latin America." Fr. Pascale's presented his views on the "Theological meaning of work" and Fr. de Sena's on "The biblical meaning of the Movement." Experience exchanges sessions on *Collective Action* and *The Teams* (the meaning and functioning) followed, led by national militants from Uruguay and Brazil who presented their cases for discussion. Finally, "The role of Advisors" was addressed by Fr. Pascale (Argentinian Advisor) and F. Chiavone-Cavallero (Uruguayan Advisor).

Vilches' memoires showed not only a different "way of doing" by more decidedly giving an experience's exchange format to the Study Sessions. Above all, it showed JECI's focus on an eminently *pedagogical process* that, building on the international movement's *Common Bases* and more recent Brazilian constructions around a *spirituality of action*, allowed the collective definition of the meaning of both the *militant* and the *movement* in Latin America. The meeting provided the theoretical and practical elements of a biblical conception that defined the *movement* (International / Latin American Catholic student apostolate) and the *teams* (national JUCs, JECs, and other affiliated denominations that followed the JEC approach) within.

The *teams* were considered the *cell* of the *movement* and, from a biblical perspective, an epitome of the meaning and projection of *unity* and *alliance*, through love and charity, fundamental values constitutive of humanity's Christian vocation.<sup>501</sup> This is, to the extent that the greatest Christian command were love, charity, and reconciliation of men among themselves and with themselves, the church and—for the dimension that interest us here—, the *movement* and *teams* were apostolic communities with the vocation to be a universal community of salvation (reconciliation) aimed at reconstituting the *vocation of unity* of men in God's kingdom (history).<sup>502</sup> *Movements and Teams*, thereby, were not natural communities but ones that arose in the common life in Christ. They were a fraternal community of persons “destined to the restoration of things in Christ.”<sup>503</sup>

*Apostolic communities* (Movement and teams) were to permeate every aspect of the militants' life and give testimony of their presence in the world.<sup>504</sup> Therefore, they articulated *personal action* (of militants, understood as natural leaders with natural groups of influence) and *collective action* (of the movement).<sup>505</sup> This is, to the extent

---

<sup>501</sup> Fr. de Sena's and Uruguayan team exposition. *Ibid.*, pp. 35, 53

<sup>502</sup> Accordingly, the church has a vocation to be a *universal community* in the sense of *overcoming particularities* (ethnic, temporal, geographical, moral, ideological, political, etc.). Any particularism betrays the church. The church summons all men, therefore, calling to overcome the Christian ghetto formed in an attitude that seeks to avoid being "contaminated" with the experiences of the world. *Ibid.*, pp. 41-43

<sup>503</sup> Uruguayan team exposition “El Equipo,” *Ibid.*, pp. 52-54.

<sup>504</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>505</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

that, for one, the apostolic community shaped the action by the individual (militant) in his natural group of influence, allowing him to grasp new dimensions of reality. For another, the apostolic community was a source of collective action for it permitted to “deploy the true dimensions of the action, as a service and as a testimony of the [movement’s] presence.” In this way, the apostolic community developed new solutions, obtained greater human and material resources, made better use of personal gifts, and facilitated the progressive responsibility of the movement’s commitment to the *milieu*.<sup>506</sup>

A pedagogical consequence of this articulation was that the apostolic community formed its members. Still, in the same process, the community also formed itself. In such a process, the life within a *Team* acquired a fraternal meaning which meant “taking responsibility before God for the lives and values of those around them (militants).”<sup>507</sup> The salvation (reconciliation) of the world, as a communitarian work, became, according to the Uruguayans’ exposition on this matter, a collectivist reaction to the church’s intransigent individualism of the past.<sup>508</sup>

Furthermore, for organizational matters, *Teams*—as an expression of the *Movement*—were also “the place of meeting, reflecting, and planning.” And being a “community of students that bec[ame] aware of their living *milieu* and were willing to

---

<sup>506</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>507</sup> Ibid.

<sup>508</sup> Ibid., p. 54

work organized in that *milieu*,” the movement/teams were to follow the RLM (Review of Life Method) as the base of all formation, of all personal, and collective action.<sup>509</sup>

Discussing the movement’s collective action, a team of the Uruguayan university students of medicine shared their experience with the Vilches assembly breaking up the steps of the RLM. Interestingly, among their reflections were some of the learned lessons from Brazilian experimentation with the method, such as the *characterization to see the milieu* and identify an *ideal see* to be contrasted during the judging step with the *real see* (as discussed in Chapter 2). They added that a *pedagogy of action*—which would lead to tracing a line of action—would begin with identifying feasible objectives linked to more general ones and clear milestones articulated into an organic program. In developing this program, the movement and teams were to have a “*fermentative kind of action.*”<sup>510</sup> This is, militants were, in theory, not to lead or assume the promotion of the *milieu* but to make the *milieu* aware of its values, needs, and responsibilities and achieve the *milieu*’s self-promotion. Therefore, the militant’s role was meant to awake initiatives, provide the starting impulse to them, and move on to other activities that needed such support.<sup>511</sup> For instance, in their account, Uruguayan students described the challenges they faced while developing the apostolic promotion of their university *milieu*. While they realized this promotion necessarily implied collaborating with the *gremio* and considering that the

---

<sup>509</sup> “Qué es el Movimiento JEC?” *Carrefour*, Ibid., p. 30

<sup>510</sup> Ibid., p. 32-33

<sup>511</sup> Ibid.

existing group did not offer the necessary conditions, the students commented, various militants committed themselves, on a personal basis, to create a new *gremial* organization. Once the initiative was successful, they moved to other activities yielding the direction of the *gremio* to other students out of JEC's militancy.<sup>512</sup> Significantly, though, it was reality and particular material conditions of apostolic experiments that made practice digress from theory. While this is a topic of later development, it might suffice for now stating that the student *gremialismo*'s articulating role was in much of cases the spark that connected Catholic and political militancy, which proved to be significant in various experiences of the New Left in Latin America. Within these experiences, militants never abandoned their spirituality, neither their commitment to giving testimony of their faith.

Finally, on the advisors' role, FF. Pascale and Chiavone reiterated their contribution—as the bishop's delegates—in the spiritual guidance of the laity and in facilitating contact with doctrinal and spiritual resources from the church.<sup>513</sup> This was to occur without weakening the laity's autonomy in the direction of the movement. Their discussion of the matter specifically stated that the advisor had the mission of helping the militant discover his spirituality, i.e., “placed him in God's plan. Help him to discover God ... and the church, and his mission in the *temporal*.”<sup>514</sup> Moreover, the advisor's

---

<sup>512</sup> Ibid.

<sup>513</sup> Ibid., p.55.

<sup>514</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

presence at the teams' directive level was deemed to help leaders be "loyal to their bases... [and] the church, [...] Be authentic in their willingness of [service; and] loyal to the communitarian spirit and the team's needs."<sup>515</sup> Fr. Pascale insisted that while the priest's role as advisor gave him the quality of educator, he was educable by the laity too. In his view, the laity might help the priest "grasp the density of life" and "discover the world he returned to after his life at the seminary."<sup>516</sup>

Aside from the meeting's development and memoirs, it is significant to underscore that while the more conservative clergy within the hierarchy always contested the movement's autonomy, the understanding of the advisors' role presented at Vilches seemed to have prevailed among JEC movements. This led more times than not to horizontal relations between advisors and militants. Thus, although in not a few cases the movements' call for autonomy was the reason for clashes and efforts to restrain the reach of the student mobilization, the movements mostly achieved to develop a cooperative environment of collective work and significant autonomy within the church. The fact that many advisors were young priests that returned from studying in Europe, where an open conflict had arisen between episcopate and JEC, arguably helped break inertia and subtly subverted some of the traditional ways of clerical control that had characterized Catholic Action.<sup>517</sup>

---

<sup>515</sup> Ibid., p.57.

<sup>516</sup> Ibid., p. 62

<sup>517</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p.213.

After the Vilches meeting, national movements continued their apostolic mobilization adapting the JEC approach to their living realities. In Brazil, their experimentation with the JEC approach increasingly led to growing radicalization in what the movement deemed to be pre-revolutionary Latin America. By the last months of 1962, the JECI-SLA celebrated a meeting in Rio de Janeiro that resulted in a welcomed overlap with leaders of other specialized movements in Latin America, namely, JOC and MIJARC. The gathering inaugurated opportunities for action plans' exchange and study of the Latin American reality.<sup>518</sup> These contacts would continue amidst their common aspiration to develop a collaboration plan that might work as a regional coordinated JEC, JOC, and JAC Action Plan during the decade. Beyond that, they gave perspective to the JECI-SLA and affiliated movements' work on the worker-peasant-student reality and the church in Latin America. It is apparent, though, that a growing process of *elitization* amidst student movements was to prevent stronger coordination and joint collective action among them.<sup>519</sup> A significant output of the apostolic movements' collaboration and their mobilization, however, was to be their eventual contribution to the formulation of CELAM's joint pastoral on the lay apostolate.<sup>520</sup>

---

<sup>518</sup> *Curriculum* #1, 1963, p. 3; and *Carta al Comite* # 1, 1963, p. 9.

<sup>519</sup> The tendency to the movements' apparent "*elitization*" is an explication formula by late Fr. Paul Dabezies to refer to the movement's increasing estrangement from, and separation from the mass. A process resulting from the movement's growing politicization, since 1965. This is a topic of further development (Part III) on which for now it is enough to say that it pushed the movement to assume itself as a vanguard that was to develop a specific function within the region's revolutionary process. Fr. Dabezies, interview.

<sup>520</sup> *Memoirs of the Meeting of the Latin American Secretariats JOCI, JAC (MIJARC), JECI*. October 2-3, 1965. Annex 1 in *Carta al Comite, 1965*. Box 13, Folder 1965. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

#### 4.4. JECI-SLA maturity and Latin American diffusion of the JEC approach in the face of economic precarity and frustration

The JECI-SLA achieved significant pastoral and political maturity at the Brazilian movement's shadow. Maturity was palpable in the evolution of publications, and the quality of the reflections that illuminated both their Second JECI Latin American Committee—to meet further at Olinda-Recife in July of 1963; and, later, their report to the IV JECI World Council in Broummana-Lebanon—celebrating the JECI Tenth Anniversary, in August of 1964.<sup>521</sup> Solidity, however, was compromised by financial difficulties that brought upon recurrent frustration and disappointment. By 1966, these difficulties had ended up undermining the JECI-SLA organizationally. Still, the seeds of a *Committed Spirituality*, as a mobilizing force, had been planted already.

By 1963, JECI-SLA's publications portrayed a more explicit regional consciousness and projection. Early that year, the Secretariat had abandoned the *Boletim de Informações*. Instead, it began circulating, with a Latin American scope, *Curriculum*, as an informative tool, and *Carta al Comité* to discuss the movements' internal concerns and problems. As per the JECI-SLA's presentation, the publications were an intent to be a "source of fraternity and reflection by the JEC movements in Latin America."<sup>522</sup> And

---

<sup>521</sup> *Carta al Comité, Número Especial sobre la Sesión Mundial de Estudios y el Consejo de la JECI*, June 1964. Box 13, Folder 1964. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>522</sup> *Curriculum* #1, 1963, p. 2.



overall, they aimed to create a “real link, [among movements] achieved by the unity of concerns [and] work, [and] by the unity of the movement in Latin America.”<sup>523</sup>

Significantly, both publications appeared now in Spanish—though a rough translation, the Spanish version contrasted with previous publications, including *Boletim*, which had been published exclusively in Portuguese.

Seemingly, the new publications and the language change had to do with the effort to “de-Brazilianize” the JECI-SLA’s work.<sup>524</sup> As the first *Carta al Comité* stated, the lack of representativeness of the JECI-SLA worried its members. Due to financial precarity, the JECI-SLA had had almost only Brazilian members and mainly contacted Brazilian movements. Therefore, the relevance of the new publications consisted of consolidating the JEC apostolic community in the region and helping thrive both already developed movements and those “seeking their specialized vocation.”<sup>525</sup> With this, the JECI-SLA ratified their vocation of service while reasserting their goal of achieving an increasingly Latin American vision of the movement.<sup>526</sup> Furthermore, a bimonthly *Boletín Latinoamericano* was scheduled at the Recife’s meeting, with the member and collaborator movements’ commitment to circulate it among the diocesan bases.<sup>527</sup>

---

<sup>523</sup> *Carta al Comité # 1*, 1963, p. 1.

<sup>524</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>525</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>526</sup> *Ibid.* p. 7

<sup>527</sup> *Ibid.*

The reflections that accompanied the preparation of the Recife Committee meeting and the World Session in Broummana-Lebanon also reflected the maturity reached by the JEC movements despite all odds. In preparation for the Committee to meet at Recife, *Curriculum* reminded JECI's statutory bases on regional committees and the significance of their deliberations, and circulated the objectives traced for the forthcoming meeting. Besides logistical questions—regarding travel, publications, cadres' exchanges, regional meetings, discussion of the regional plan, relations to other movements, and the election of a new JECI-SLA team—the committee meeting was to have three broad goals. They were to reflect on the Movement's meaning and method, seek greater unity of the movements for more organized action, and pursue the integration of new movements into the regional work.<sup>528</sup>

The meeting's call seemed to summarize how the movement understood itself. On this occasion, the JECI-SLA raised the militants' awareness that the movement's mission in Latin America's current situation "must be the search for paths that are more appropriate to the historical mission of the Latin American student environment." That was so because "It [was] from reality itself from where [such] paths [for] overcoming the problems [were to] unfold." The mission of the movements was "not to create finished projects but to act according to the needs." Moreover, the SLA's reflection pointed that "the Latin American reality ... demand[ed] positive, immediate, and urgent action." And it warned, "We always run the risk of sinning due to delay or misunderstanding of the

---

<sup>528</sup> *Curriculum* #2, June 1963.

historical moment ... or we settle in, denying our vocation of “nonconformity” ... that puts History ahead.” The call closed by asking the militants’ attention to the sense of urgency their action had, because in Latin America, “the man who suffers cannot wait any longer, neither can he suffer our sluggishness.”<sup>529</sup>

Furthermore, recognizing their place and role within the church, the JECI-SLA’s convocation published in *Curriculum*, asserted that

“[w]e are responsible for our *milieu*, but we are not the only ones. Our field of action does not exhaust the demands of work in the Work of Salvation.

Consequently, the church and our region no longer stand disorganized action, without broad and clear objectives, nor isolated action turned on itself.”<sup>530</sup>

Seemingly, the latter was an assessment of the organizational status reached by the JECI-SLA and the maturity of its goals. It appears to be also a confirmation of what previous meetings had anticipated. Namely, an understanding of the church beyond the institutional and clerical boundaries, and of the movement’s self-perception as a lay vanguard of the church and society that advocated a new church model. Overall, the demand for a new church that should side with the suffering people and commit to the exigencies of the historical moment.

Seemingly, in preparation for the Broummana meeting the following year, the Latin American JEC movement had identified a path that was “appropriate to the

---

<sup>529</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>530</sup> Ibid.

historical mission of the Latin American student *milieu*.” It is worth reminding that, because of the specific historical trajectory of the region's Student Movement and the historical moment to which JEC Latin Americans tried to respond, the understanding of the *milieu* exceeded in much the boundaries of the university. In contrast with other regions' JEC movements, this *student milieu* encompassed society as a whole given that its definition derived from the understanding of the *university's social function*. A discussion that while thriving internationally, Latin America had spearheaded with advantage. Thus, JEC Latin Americans explicitly set out the path of a “poor church” and embraced a “*Committed Spirituality*.”<sup>531</sup> This a kind of spirituality that, surfacing within Brazilian movements, had reached a regional stand, to a significant extent, thanks to the JECI-SLA’s work.

As the Broummana report asserted, “The Latin American movements made an option for a poor church, and chose a pastoral option based on the Latin American reality.” It was an option to pursue a “structural work in a humanizing dimension, procuring to boost the discovery of the Latin American men in the *milieu*.” Furthermore, it explained that such a path entailed an option for a poor JEC, “a JEC with no power... [which] does not own that which is the *milieu*’s, but a JEC that is a service” to it. Such a temporal engagement, the report asserted, implied the “discovery of a new spirituality, [namely,] a committed [one].”<sup>532</sup>

---

<sup>531</sup> *Informe del Secretariado Latinoamericano de JECI 1961-1964*, partially reproduced in Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p. 204.

<sup>532</sup> *Ibid.*

As mentioned, after the events of Vilches the movement faced myriad financial challenges that hindered the unfolding of the JECI-SLA's agenda. By 1963 the sense of precarity was neat. The Recife's meeting had left exposed the paradox of the SLA's goals' maturity while at the same time the uncertainty of accomplishing them without the needed financial conditions. The JECI-SLA members had described the Secretariat's economic situation as "ridiculous in all its aspects."<sup>533</sup> They had commented that while member movements could not comply with their financial contributions to the SLA, the work accomplished had only been thanks to the help they had received from various sources. Among funding sources, the Brazilian Catholic Action had provided the headquarters and working material. The support of Bishop Helder Camera, Auxiliary Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro, had mainly contributed to the realization of the Recife Committee meeting. Other contributions from a few member movements had come in small cash amounts up to a total of USD\$ 180. They regretted that the situation was so precarious that each JECI-SLA member received a monthly stipend of USD \$4, which was not enough to pay for transportation in Rio de Janeiro for one month.<sup>534</sup>

At the Recife meeting, JECI-SLA members regretted the little possibilities of accomplishing the Secretariat's plan due to slight travel opportunities and a small team composed of only two part-time members (Celso Guimaraes had to leave the group).

---

<sup>533</sup> *Carta al Comite #1*, 1963, p. 4.

<sup>534</sup> *Ibid.*

They had concentrated, therefore, on correspondence and publications' exchanges. While they highlighted that the "team life's intensity and depth" made individual growth and teamwork possible, they regretted failing to gain an in-depth knowledge of Latin American reality and movements. On the latter, they commented, "it had been impossible because they lacked the three indispensable means: traveling, documentation, and time."<sup>535</sup>

Indeed, the JECI-SLA seemed to have not received the same institutional church support as the MIEC-SLA, including the needed endorsing of their funding requests to cooperation agencies. This situation hindered the accomplishment of critical projected milestones. Seemingly, the Church hierarchy's weak support of JECI-SLA's projects had to do with both SLAs' assumed duplication of actions in the university *milieu*. On this issue, the prevailing criteria seemed to have been abiding by the "commitment formula."<sup>536</sup> According to the formula, the MIEC was mandated to work in the university *milieu*, whereas the JECI in the secondary and technical *milieus*. While the JECI had promoted and continued to advocate the *unity of the student milieu*,<sup>537</sup> the apparent collision might have hampered receiving funding for their apostolic

---

<sup>535</sup> Ibid.

<sup>536</sup> Pelegri, *JECI MIEC Su opción, su pedagogía*, p. 25.

<sup>537</sup> Since its inception, the JECI defended the idea of the unity of the student milieu, which included both university and secondary student branches. According to Fr. Pelegri, JECI's advocacy of such unity by 1956, when the Vatican proposed the commitment formula, already entailed the defense of the corresponding "Student Movement." Fr. Pelegri defines the latter as the "portion of students who are more socially and politically aware and capable of mobilizing and organizing themselves as a force to defend their rights and struggle for the transformation of society." Ibid.

initiatives.<sup>538</sup> Also, CELAM's priority seemed to have been the SLAs' merging solution. This was a matter that CELAM encouraged in consecutive meetings that followed the University Pastoral meeting in Lima in June 1965, a gathering which resulted from within the SLAs' multiple efforts of collaboration since 1959. (See Chapter 5).

For instance, the expansion through Central America that had been so critical to the JECI-SLA for so long was frequently postponed for lack of funding. The Plan of Extension for Central America—agreed at the Lebanon Council, 1964; and the Missionary Plan—approved by the JECI Third Latin American Committee meeting in Lavallol, Argentina, March 1965, had consisted in that JECI leaders made long visits to Central America looking to energize the movements. Both were a mere paper exercise.<sup>539</sup>

---

<sup>538</sup> Details of the correspondence between Mons. McGrath, president of the University Pastoral Commission, and Fr. Pedro de la Garza, director of LASAS—which functioned under the sponsorship of the Latin American Bureau of the National Catholic Welfare Council (NCWC)-United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)—reveal for instance that in the relation between the SLAs, CELAM, and external offices and cooperation agencies, a hierarchy existed for the purpose or coordinating relations on behalf of the university *milieu*. In an August 16, 1964, letter, Mons. McGrath explained to Fr. La Garza that with the purpose of assisting Latin American Catholic youth leaders by obtaining academic scholarships, as well as coordinating attendance, and providing pastoral services for more than twelve thousand young students who by then resided in the United States, Fr. La Garza should coordinate with the Latin American Secretary of PR MIEC in Medellin, Dr. Luis Fernando Duque. This clarification sought "serving to see [CELAM's] lines of operation" according to the new statutes. Mons. McGrath also made clear that PR MIEC-SLA "represented all the Catholic university student movement." The JECI-SLA and its affiliates were not mentioned. After all, the PR MIEC-SLA had recently accepted to act as executive organ of the University Pastoral Department-DPU as recounted in Chapter 3. *Correspondence between Mons. McGrath-DPU/CELAM and Fr. Pedro de la Garza-LASAS, August 10 and 16, 1964*. Box 126, Folder 1964. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito. On the relation between LASAS and the NCWS-USCCB see The US Catholic newspaper *The Monitor*, Volume CIV, Number 46, 15 February 1963 <https://thecatholicnewsarchive.org/?a=d&d=tmon19630215-01.2.178&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN-----> More on the relation USCCB and LASAS is available in the *Records of the Office of the General Secretary of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops* at the Special Collections of the University Libraries at The Catholic University of America <https://libraries.catholic.edu/special-collections/archives/>

<sup>539</sup> Recounting the reasons for the Missionary Plan's failure, the SLA team under student Nelly Saavedra stated that after the Lavallol Committee approval, "the budget for the [*Plan Misionero*] had been presented

Again, the JECI-SLA had to tap every resource at hand to survive.<sup>540</sup> Looking to expand their influence, it continued to take advantage of JEC militants' attendance at various regional meetings to strengthen contacts and attempt a better understanding of Central American and northern South American movements' reality and needs. By 1965, not being able to have direct contact with these movements, the JECI-SLA had decided to use the occasion of the PR MIEC-SLA meeting in Puerto Rico (in July 1965) for such a task.<sup>541</sup> Other solutions of the kind arose during these years. Seemingly, it was just until after 1964 that the JEC movement finally took off in Central America thanks to the arrival of some clergy advisers from Europe.<sup>542</sup> Later on, funding opportunities opened

---

to CELAM, and [we were] only awaiting confirmation before its implementation." In May 1965, Luis Fernando Duque-MIEC-SLA visited the JECI-SLA in Buenos Aires and offered to implement the plan jointly. For this, the JECI-SLA had to "renounce any hint of infiltration in Central America, even though all the leaders, eventually "missionaries" belonged to JECI." Overall, two reasons are recounted in the document as associated with the plan's failure: "1) The budget never arrived, and CELAM denied having received it; 2) Pax Romana put as a priority the coordination of both movements in a common organ [i.e., the merging solution]." *Memoria periodo Marzo 1965-Marzo 1967 Secretariado Latinoamericano JECI*. Box 126, Folder 1967. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>540</sup> A curious anecdote provides a glimpse of what seems to have been a handy and a regular-basis-used resource for JECI militants' attendance to regional committees and other meetings. Faced with financial difficulties, the JECI-SLA recommended the option of traveling in airplanes of the Brazilian Airmail, a service that the militants usually took advantage of prior written recommendation of the bishop who would sign a written letter taking advantage of his position. In preparation for the Committee meeting to take place July 20-30, 1963, in Linda, Recife, Pernambuco-Northeast Brazil, for instance, the JECI-SLA team regretted that "[transportation] constituted the major problem" for the militants' attendance because of the long distances. Therefore, it encouraged militants to use Brazilian Airmail flights. An attached letter from the Brazilian Ministry of Aviation had to be presented, in this case, at the *Correio Aereo Nacional* offices, in the Brazilian Embassy. This service would give them up to four passengers per country. Otherwise, the JECI-SLA team recommended using regular airlines asking for discounts. In the latter case, they advise "bring, if possible, a letter from the bishop or someone influential." *Curriculum # 2*, p. 6, June 1963.

<sup>541</sup> *Plan de Trabajo del JECI-SLA, 1965*. Box 126, Folder 1965. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>542</sup> *Carta al Consejo #3 (1967-1970)*. Cited in Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p.206.



by the constitution of the Secondary team within the JECI-SLA in August 1966 also contributed.<sup>543</sup>

Although new funding was to come to foster Secondary movements, before being received it had already created strong tensions within the JECI-SLA among both University and Secondary teams. Tensions over financial autonomy, regional representativeness, questioning on the purpose and need of the University team within the JECI-SLA, and antagonistic views on the *unity* of the student *milieu*, culminated in rupture. By October 1966, the JECI-SLA University Team briefly dissolved, and, instead, a new inexperienced Secondary Team was to take charge of the JECI-SLA. While all mentioned antagonisms counted in this dissolution, the correspondence of Paco del Campo (former Argentinean militant and, by the time, JECI-GS), with Miguel Angel Sejem (JECI-SLA University Team) and Patricio Pino (JECI-SLA Secondary Team), reveals that the lack of funding was the main factor. Until the middle of the decade, economic shortage frustrated the possibilities of promotion and expansion and organizationally weakened the JECI-SLA.<sup>544</sup> After the temporary disaffiliation of the Uruguayan JUC amidst the unfolded conflict, Sejem explained to the GS that “we had always talked about promoting the JEC [approach and movement], but we never could,

---

<sup>543</sup> Details on the constitution of the JECI-SLA Secondary students’ team in *Epistola No. 1 del Equipo de Secundarios a los Equipos Nacionales de América Latina*, September 1966. Box 126, Folder 1966. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>544</sup> *Paco del Campo’s Correspondence (JECI-GS, Paris HQ) with Miguel Angel Sejem (JECI-SLA University Team) Letters on October 16, 1966; October 22, 1966; and Patricio Pino (Secondary students Team) Letters on September 30, 1966; October 18, 1966; October 20, 1966; November 15, 1966; November 25, 1966; December 11, 1966.* Box 126, Folder 1966. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

due to lack of [money].” He went on to add, “we could not continue with an SLA to coordinate two movements [referring to Brazil and Argentina] in hopes of one day getting the money for the expected promotion.”<sup>545</sup> He added to his frustration what seemed to confirm the organizational crisis of the JECI-SLA and the grounds that had justified the University Team dissolution—namely, “the lack of material conditions [that] had turned the SLA into a superstructure [in which] professionals of reflection [had grown distanced] from the bases.”<sup>546</sup>

Interestingly, the organizational weakening of the JECI-SLA by 1966 did not interfere in the development of national JUC movements (or other denominations following the JEC approach), where they existed, or in the strengthening of their apostolate. Their growth, where it happened, was possible thanks to favorable balance of forces within national hierarchies and the self-procurement of internal and external resources. As national hierarchies fostered them, they could request resources from cooperation agencies through their dioceses and were not subject to the commitment formula.

Overall, the JECI-SLA’s organizational difficulties, as seen inextricably related to budgetary issues, would only be solved by merging with the MIEC-SLA. Thanks to its

---

<sup>545</sup> *Letter from Miguel Angel Sejem (JECI-SLA University Team) to Paco del Campo (JECI-GS, Paris HQ), October 22, 1966. Box 126, Folder 1966. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.*

<sup>546</sup> According to Sejem, the financial issue had transformed the JECI-SLA into a structure that "makes the people who are part of it, professionals of reflection and, while it achieves a richer reflection, it has a negative aspect. [Namely,] that it becomes very difficult to transmit to other levels, transforming this work into something purely bureaucratic ... with the consequent departure from the bases." Ibid.

ties with Pax Romana, the latter counted on the recognition, connections, and leverage to achieve the resources needed for its apostolic project and logistical operation. It is also interesting to notice that, as will be seen, the merging did not mean the movements' embracing of the MIEC pastoral approach. On the contrary, a growing and a rather majoritarian inclination of the movements was already underway towards adopting the JEC approach, the pursuit of Christian commitment, and the practice, albeit eclectic, of the RLM method.

#### **4.5. The JEC approach's reach beyond the JECI-SLA's scope in Latin America.**

Despite the JECI- SLA's frustrated expansion, the JEC international approach, particularly the Latin American JEC developments—JEC Line seemed to have already transcended the JECI-SLA's geographical zone of influence by the mid-decade; apparently, somehow inadvertently to the Secretariat cadres.<sup>547</sup> Arguably, Latin America's pressing reality and the challenges it posed to Christians seemed to have made Catholic movements more attracted to the nature of Christian commitment as advocated by the JEC approach. This is, the realization of the idea of Christian commitment, at that time ubiquitous within the transformative context of Vatican II, had found a more coherent *way of being implemented* through the RLM and the JEC Line. This line

---

<sup>547</sup> Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez recalls that amid the tensions between PR MIEC and JECI SLAs for the possible fusion and the disputes that arose around the nature and approach of a new "coordinating organ" for the university apostolate –on which more in Chapter 5, JECI-SLA representatives were "jealous [with representatives of the MIEC-SLA] of the techniques and method of RLM." During a meeting promoted by the DPU-CELAM in Lima, on August 30-31, 1965, Fr. Gutierrez recalls the JECI-SLA team was skeptical that other MIEC movements would present progress on the application of the RLM, stating that "we are the ones that have that methodology." For Fr. Gutierrez, the anecdote was already funny at that time because the Peruvian-UNEC (an MIEC affiliate) had been working with the method for a fair amount of time. Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, Interview, 07-15-2019.

included the pedagogical tools, reflections, conceptual turns, and *committed spirituality*, which southern cone's JEC movements had adopted as a line of action already thanks to the work of the JECI-SLA.

The evidence shows that JECI-SLA's work, particularly, that which might have been accomplished through the early regional tours of 1956 and 1959, publications, correspondence, regular encounters with member movements of the *Rio de la Plata* region, and occasional contacts with other movements at international events, was pivotal for the JEC Line regional diffusion. However, given the JECI-SLA economic precarity that soundly undermined its organizational structure solidity and hampered the accomplishment of planned goals, it is unlikely that the JECI-SLA would have accomplished this task on its own. Other concrete circumstances would have facilitated the overrun of the JECI-SLA's geographical scope until then.

In the first place, growing collective (regional) identity construction among Latin American Catholic militants would have facilitated a convergent apostolic and political posture at the edge of increasing pre-revolutionary conditions in Latin America.<sup>548</sup> It would have been a posture coincident with a form of apostolate that could effectively affect reality. This seemed possible by embracing a *committed spirituality* that was not afraid to undertake a radicalization in the faith, a *total incarnation in the temporal* that advocated for "humanization" and sided with the poor. This circumstance might have

---

<sup>548</sup> The presumed collective identity gradually developed by Catholic students in Latin America should not obscure its dynamic and contested character. As Part III will show, the movement's identity was sinuous, and grew out full of conflicts and contradictions.

leveraged the effect of informal encounters, publications, and correspondence –among movements and with the JECI-SLA—in the diffusion of the JEC Line.

In this vein, it is significant to note that by 1963, the seeds of such an identity seemed to be growing. The Second Latin American Pax Romana Seminar in Lima, in 1963, on the subject of “University Reform,” (about which more in Chapter 5) and which was equally attended by MIEC and JECI movements (given their double affiliation), was an important precedent in this construction. Also evident in this seminar, militants’ dual status as university and Catholic federated students would have been essential in defining their identity. Arguably, their belonging to one significant faction of the Latin American Student Movement (which already had a transnational identity and organizational structure-OCLAE), and their participation in the struggle for University Reform, contributed to consolidating the Latin American Catholic Student Movement’s identity. Such identity grew aside from the tensions between the SLAs. Indeed, as the MIEC-JECI SLA later claimed, in a 1971 meeting with the CELAM-DPL; in organizational terms, the Catholic Student Movement recognized “its full identity” with the Latin American Student Movement.<sup>549</sup>

Moreover, the movement’s rallying for pastoral and ecclesial transformation—in the conciliar context, would have given further cohesion to the movement’s collective identity. In such a role, the movement rejected the church’s excessive clericalism and

---

<sup>549</sup> *Informe de la Reunión de Expertos del Departamento de Laicos, CELAM, 1972*, p. 23. Box 137 Trabajo de Base 1960-1972, Folder Relación CELAM Documentos 1972. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

complicity with social injustice and instead advocated for a church that sided with the oppressed. This was the first level of grassroots work conceived by Catholic militants and here laid the seeds of what later thrived as a *church of the poor* in rejection of a church's *model of Christendom*.

In the second place, ecclesiastical advisors' work and influence at the local and regional levels would have been one of the strongest ways of the JEC's approach diffusion. This certainly involved the regional "SCA informal network" that had been gradually evolving.<sup>550</sup> Ecclesiastical advisors' role excelled at seminars and meetings organized by CELAM that, bringing together local and regional advisors of all kinds of movements—indistinctively of their apostolic approach—created the venue for theological debates that disseminated and built upon vanguard regional developments. Like every other meeting of the kind, these were spaces of debate, contestation, and hegemony construction where, eventually, the seeds of theological and pastoral renewal grew. While the role of advisors in disseminating the JEC approach seemed critical, it should not be overlooked that progressive clergy continued to be a minority within the Latin American episcopate. An in-depth analysis of the situation of the Latin American progressive clergy, which is not the objective of this dissertation, might, however, reveal that during the 1960s, such a minority within the clergy tapped a window of opportunity. The window would have been opened by Vatican-II, as a condition of possibility—which favored the cultural climate for revision of the church's social teaching and gave the

---

<sup>550</sup> The notion of an "informal network" of Specialized Catholic Action growing in a transnational setting is taken from Gigacz, "The Leaven in the Council."

needed legitimacy to progressive apostolic experiments. Also, the accumulated developments of Catholic progressivism in Latin America—that had reached high maturity—were critical for tapping this opportunity. Both circumstances permitted that progressive Latin American figures managed to build hegemony and make it to the collegiate presidency of CELAM. Progressive figures in critical positions within CELAM helped Catholic student movements thrive, a hypothesis that would need further work.

Among advisors with regional influence, some figures stood out for their role in sparking new student communities, guiding militants in the practice of the RLM, and disseminating some of the more acute ruptures and elaborations of the JEC Line in Latin America. Among these figures, for instance, was the Spaniard Fr. Buenaventura Pelegri, whose work since 1963, while he was a local advisor in Cali, Colombia, was critical for EUC's change of perspective towards a *personalist Christianity*—as commented by Sociologist Sierra Vasquez.<sup>551</sup> This change of view was also essential for the SLA-MIEC—being Colombia the venue of the regional PR Secretariat. Fr. Pelegri's influence was even more significant while he became a Latin American advisor in 1969 when the SLAs had already merged.

Also critical was Brazilian Fr. Luis de Sena's influence. Local advisor of the Recife movement, his work was significant ever since the more critical years of discovery, conceptual shifts, and international projection of the Brazilian movement. By

---

<sup>551</sup> Sierra "Cultura, movilización Social y Religión."

1961, Fr. de Sena was the regional advisor of the JECI-SLA—when the SLA continued to feed from Brazilians’ theological and pedagogical maturation and political radicalization. After 1964, he became the international advisor to JECI at the Paris HQ. From this position, his influence remained vital to the SLA, the Latin American movements, and the church, as he actively participated in the heated theological debates, accompanying study sessions, and Latin American Committee meetings.

Outstandingly, a decisive figure among the student apostolic movements—both MIEC and JECI— and critically involved in the final outlook of the merging solution was Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez himself. After his return from Louvain in 1960, Fr. Gutierrez was appointed national advisor to UNEC Peru. Because of his background, he was designated by Mons. McGrath in various tasks of Latin American advisory. Later, in 1965, he was appointed regional advisor to MIEC and MIIC—the movement of Catholic intellectuals that received graduate cadres who continued their Catholic militancy after concluding their studies.<sup>552</sup>

Furthermore, Fr. Gutierrez exerted significant pastoral influence within the university that was recognized at the time. A 1963 CIF article assessed that Fr. Gutierrez had evolved as a “center of gravity” within the university community.<sup>553</sup> From his post

---

<sup>552</sup> In 1965, Fr. Gutierrez was assigned as advisor to initiate the MIIC in Latin America. Later, the DPU-Episcopal Commission presided by Mons. McGrath reorganized the movements' international advisory by assigning Fr. Gutierrez the responsibility over the elaboration and adaptation of biblical and theological doctrine for the university apostolate. *Informe de las Actividades del Secretariado Latinoamericano de PR*. Also, *Circular Letter # 6 Medellin, June 3, 1965*. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>553</sup> Errazuriz, Zañartu, and Sanhueza, “The University in Latin America,” *CIF Reports*, May 1963. Box 126, Folders 1963, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.



as a professor at the PUCP (*Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú*) and his frequent presence and talks at the state's San Marcos University, Fr. Gutierrez got close to the solid Peruvian student movement, among which he recruited many militants to UNEC.<sup>554</sup> Under Fr. Gutierrez, UNEC became one of Latin America's more solid movements by the middle of the decade and an active diffuser of the RLM and a Committed Spirituality. This was even though the Peruvians approach promoted an eclectic version of the method. They raised the possibility of methodological simultaneity between creating small Teams and Study Circles for the practice of the RLM while also working from university parishes and actively participating in the regional conference formats promoted by Pax Romana.

Many other regional and local advisers and progressive clergy (even if not movements' advisers) played significant roles, and countless clergy meetings were relevant pieces in spreading the JEC approach in Latin America during the first half of the 1960s. The Second Conference of the Episcopate (Medellin-68) would see many of these developments at work. Advisers and progressive clergy names, including Dom Helder Camera, FF. Almerly Bezerra, Bosco Salvia, Gilberto Gimenez, and Paul Dabezies, Mons. Bogarin and Partelli, and others, must be understood as linked to the extensive informal network of the SCA that Gigacz speaks of.<sup>555</sup> Describing this network

---

<sup>554</sup> Fr. Gutierrez, interview.

<sup>555</sup> Gigacz, "The Leaven in the Council."

in Latin America and scrutinizing its particular unfolding is a task that remains to be written.<sup>556</sup>

#### 4.6. Conclusions of the Chapter

Between 1960-66 the JECI South American Secretariat-SSA, established in Brazil in 1956, evolved into a Latin American one (SLA). Amplification of its scope happened because of the methodological and conceptual choices made by the Brazilian JUC. Embracing a *Historical Consciousness perspective* and greater *awareness* that Brazilian problems were above all Latin American, the Brazilian JUC fostered an *international team* that envisioned expanding the JEC approach throughout the region as their historical *vocation* and *responsibility* in promoting the university apostolate.

A less organizationally solid structure than its MIEC counterpart, the JECI- SLA reached instead greater theological, pedagogical, and political maturity. Feeding on Brazilians JEC and JUC conceptual turns and experimentation with the RLM, the JECI- SLA played a vital role in the regional diffusion of a *JEC Line* that lay the foundations of what Fr. Gilberto Gimenez later termed a *prophetic* attitude and model of the apostolate. The latter was an attitude that animated a spirituality *committed to action* in a context conceptualized as *structurally unjust*, which made the fundamental challenge for both the Latin American society and the church to be *siding with the poor* and *raising-consciousness* of the need to pursue *liberation*.

---

<sup>556</sup>An important pioneering effort in this direction is Bidegain, Ana María, comp. *Obispos de la Patria Grande. Pastores, profetas y mártires*. (Bogotá Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano-CELAM, 2018.)

An acute economic and organizational crisis by 1966 caused the dissolution of the JECI-SLA's University Team amidst strong tensions and disagreements with the recently created Secondary Team. These difficulties might only be overcome through the fusion with the SLA-MIEC, discussed since the previous year. Merging between the MIEC and JECI SLAs would be a point of concretion after complex and tense relations, attempts of cooperation, and conflicts between the MIEC and JECI in the region that had begun since 1958. The fusion, however, was the condition for the flourishing of the Catholic Student Movement between 1967 and 1973.

## **CHAPTER 5. MIEC and JECI Secretariats' relations, the bases autonomy, and convergence.**

Chapter 5 discusses two levels of the relations between MIEC and JECI in Latin America. One, the regional organizational structures level, among the Secretariats created in the early 1960s—with the support of the movements' internationals, and their relations with the Latin American episcopate under CELAM. Another, the level of interaction among national-base student organizations. The chapter provides evidence that the two levels were not necessarily in sync with one another. First, while secretariats attempted to overcome differences and inherited international tensions through collaboration and joint action plans, these were soon compromised. CELAMs' initiative for the SLAs' fusion caused Secretariats' disputes over the apostolic approach and understanding of the *specialization*. Also, unequal access to institutional support and funding, and persisting tensions at the international level, rarefied the relations between the Latin American Secretariats.

Second, at the level of the bases, i.e., national Catholic student organizations, affiliates to MIEC or JECI, the chapter reveals that a growing convergence and collective transnational (Latin American) identity construction

already had started to settle by 1963. Despite the Secretariats' disputes, the bases seemed to be permeated by common realities and concerns that eased this convergence.

Arguably, besides looking to represent a vanguard within the church willing to overcome the "Christendom model" (as explained in Chapters 3 & 4), common grounds about their leading role within the university and student *gremios*' emerged among the bases. These common positionings mobilized them and were a fundamental link to their identity construction.

Ostensibly, MIEC and JECI national base organizations' convergence and growing construction of a collective identity passed almost unnoticed by the SLAs. These were absorbed by their disputes over the approach, regional leadership, and organizational matters. Significantly, the evidence shows that the bases' agency and demands frequently steered the wheel of the regional movement's direction. By early 1966 base movements of Chile, Uruguay, Peru, and Colombia took a "hard position" on demanding the unity of MIEC's and JECI's apostolic experiences on pain of their withdrawal from Pax Romana.

At the SLAs' level, CELAM's proposal to create a unified regional movement's coordination sparked serious negotiations. Responding to such negotiations and to the bases' demand, Secretariats, who were both undergoing intense crises with their bases, finally agreed to merge into one socio-ecclesial organ by 1966.

### 5.1. MIEC and JECI Latin American Secretariats' early attempts of collaboration

Since the “definitive establishment” of the JECI-SSA in 1958, both regional organs—by then, the PR structure was still the Latin American Sub-Secretariat—made efforts to develop cooperative work. While that was the prevalent spirit, multiple attempts to cooperate did not escape the climate of competition and conflict inherited from the rough conditions in which JECI had broken off from Pax Romana MIEC in 1946. These two groups had since rarefied their relations.

This was so much so that, by 1959, the JECI-SSA found it necessary to clarify a misunderstanding that had led PR GS to think the JECI-SSA had scheduled a meeting on the same date that a previously agreed upon *Rio de la Plata* region-Pax Romana session. Brazilian Luis Alberto Gomez de Souza, by then already JECI-GS, explained the details in a letter addressed to Latin American movements while also asserting it was not the JECI's wish to “revive the controversy and augment the difficulties.”<sup>557</sup> The details of the anecdote clarified the quarrel and revealed, as an aside, the bottom-up relationships that operated between movements and Secretariats. It had been the movements (bases) who had decided to ask for such modification of schedule because of their interest that “more countries [referring to university movements], as well as secondary movements, could participate, and [that] the *Jecista* method could be studied in depth.” Also, Paraguay's

---

<sup>557</sup> *Letter to university Catholic movements in Latin America signed by Luiz Alberto Gomez de Souza JECI-GS, Paris December 3, 1959. Serie 3, Box 4, Folder JECI Correspondencia & Comunicados, 1959. Bidegain-FIU Collection.*

movement, which was to be the hosting venue of the PR meeting, had declined its availability because of the ongoing political situation in the country.<sup>558</sup> Differences of approach among the international movements MIEC and JECI attempted to be settled by affirming the Secretariats' autonomy. Other mechanisms were efforts for collaboration that included frequent correspondence and exchange of diagnostic materials and publications.<sup>559</sup>

This state of affairs antedated the PR-Latin American Sub-secretariat's request for help from the JECI-SLA in 1962, when difficulties arose due to the poor response to the regional survey preparatory of the World Congress in Montevideo—as narrated in Chapter 3.<sup>560</sup> The occasion served as a first opportunity to invite JECI-SSA's members to one of the PR-MIEC regional meetings and World Congress.<sup>561</sup> Overall, the Montevideo-62 meeting inaugurated a chapter of collaborative relations between the SLAs and their affiliates. New opportunities for exchange and joint action opened the following year, in February 1963, when the Brazilian JUC invited the MIEC-SLA to its National Congress. In turn, the MIEC-SLA invited the JECI-SLA affiliates to the PR-MIEC Second Latin American Seminar in Lima. Further, the JECI-SLA hosted a SLAs' activities coordination meeting in Petropolis-Rio de Janeiro.

---

<sup>558</sup> Ibid.

<sup>559</sup> By 1961, Peruvian Jaime Cordova—MIEC GS, and Brazilian Luis Alberto Gomez de Souza—JECI GS signed a first working document that eased the relations, though tense dialogue seemed to have persisted between movements. Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p. 169.

<sup>560</sup> Letter signed by Luis Boza to Celso Guimaraes (JECI-SLA), Medellin, May 8, 1962.

<sup>561</sup> Letter from Celso Guimaraes-SLA JEC to Luis Boza, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 1962. Box 126, Folder 1962. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

These last two events had critical importance for the evolution of the rising regional network of Catholic student organizations. The Lima Seminar, which addressed the topic “Towards a Reform of the University in Latin America,” contributed early reflections that cemented a path towards a convergent identity of Catholic student organizations in the region. The Petropolis meeting, for its part, inaugurated a series of conversations, jointly coordinated actions, and discussions that outlined the future of the University Apostolate in Latin America and ultimately, and against all difficulties, led to the fusion of the Secretariats into a new socio-ecclesial organ by 1966.

## **5.2. The 1963 Lima Seminar “Towards a Reform of the University in Latin America”**

Even before the organization of Montevideo-62, it was clear for Pax Romana, a movement still trying to consolidate internationally, that the critical issue at stake in the life of Latin American universities was University Reform. Peruvian Jaime Cordova, MIEC General Secretary, Uruguayan Carlos del Castillo, Latin American Sub-Secretary, and the region’s delegates to the Directing Committee helped greatly with such contextual reading at the Fribourg HQ.

Despite the setbacks in the 1962 regional call, the survey among Latin American Catholic student organizations, coordinated by Colombian Luis Fernando Duque from Medellin, had provided an exhaustive regional characterization of the life of Latin American universities. While the survey informed many of the discussions in



Montevideo-62, on the place and role of the student laity worldwide, it was the following year when a proper systematization of the survey and a region-focused discussion permitted tapping the results. The survey results substantiated an extended concern among many Latin American social sectors—namely, the exaggerated university *gremios*’ role and participation in Latin American politics that was detrimental to their capacity to address university-specific matters. This appeared as an aggravated issue in the new revolutionary setting.

The Second PR-MIEC Latin American Seminar “Towards a University Reform in Latin America” put the finger on the sore spot. Despite financial difficulties<sup>562</sup> that put at risk its realization, as Peter Vygantas, PR president, commented, the meeting was “quite successful.” As he explained, the fact that it was able to “gather such diverse representatives” from over the region had been a “good indication” that Pax Romana was consolidating itself as “the proper meeting place internationally for Catholic students.”<sup>563</sup>

---

<sup>562</sup> *Letter to Catholic student organizations Caribbean Area signed by Rodrigo Guerrero-SLA MIEC*. Medellin, May 7, 1963. Box 126, Folder 1963. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito. As records indicate, after overcoming financial difficulties, the MIEC-SLA allocated 44 scholarships to attend the meeting. Thirty-three scholarships were issued to Central American and Caribbean militants. High numbers of Central American and Caribbean allocations coincide with MIEC-SLA’s and CELAM’s priority of impacting a region considered highly vulnerable due to communists’ infiltration of student *gremios*. Scholarships usually consisted of a subsidy for travel and lodging, and its award implied the MIEC-SLA close coordination with the PR MIEC-GS for tapping cooperation resources. The PR-MIEC asked that the awardee be a leader and had trajectory within student organizations for its allocation. Seven of the scholarships awarded in Central American and the Caribbean were for women. Three in other countries. While an analysis of gender relations is beyond the scope of this dissertation, this information is relevant for a further study on the avenues women pursued in gaining greater public and political participation in Latin America during the 1960s. Second Latin American Pax Romana Seminar, *Hacia una reforma de la Universidad en América Latina, Memoirs*, pp. 22-28, Box 136, Folders II Seminario Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en América Latina 1-3. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito. Also *Letter to Latin American federations from Rodrigo Guerrero, Medellin, February 19, 1963*. Box 126, Folder 1963. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>563</sup> *Letter from the president IMCS to the Directing Committee. Subject DC activities*, May 23, 1963. Box 126, Folder 1963. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

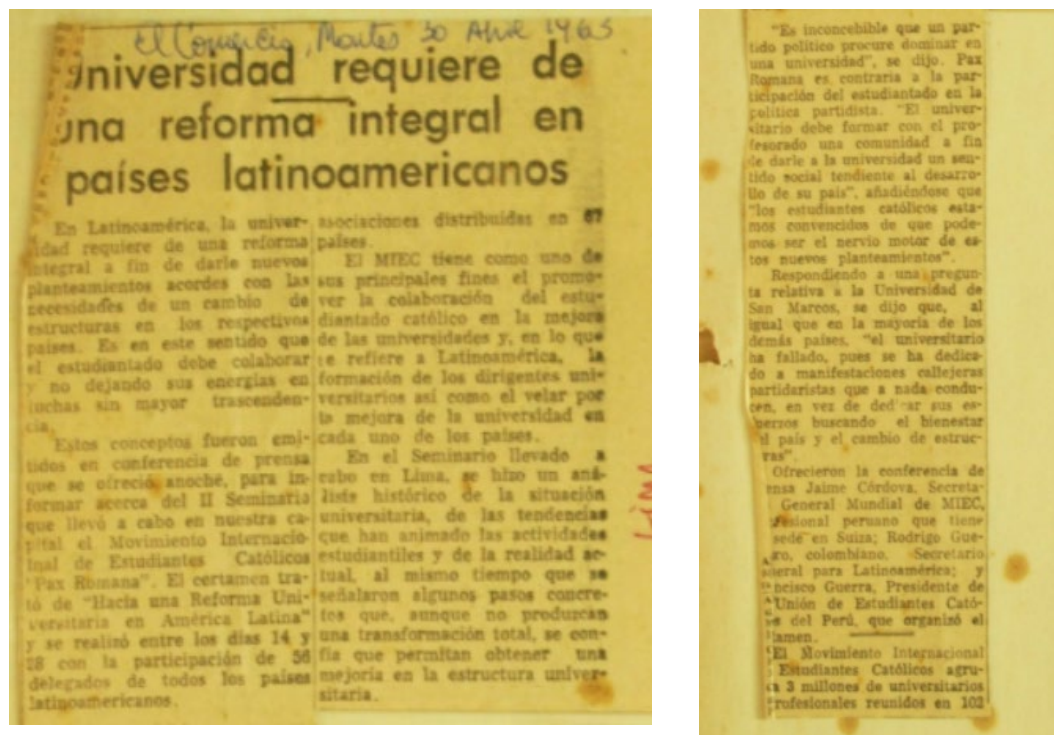


Figure 8. The Second Latin American Pax Romana-MIEC Seminar “Towards a Reform of the University in Latin America,” Lima, 1963, recorded by local Peruvian press. *El Comercio* newspaper on Tuesday, April 30, 1963. Box 136, Folders *II Seminario Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en America Latina* 1-3. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

Under the call of the recently established MIEC-SLA with Rodrigo Guerrero as Secretary, the meeting developed in Lima, Peru, from April 14-28, 1963. The event counted 83 attendees from South and Central America and the Caribbean. Significantly, as accomplished in the two previous PR encounters in the region, the Seminar served as a bridge among generations and approaches within Latin American Catholicism. Attendees came from all Catholic ideological nuances and both General and Specialized Catholic Action organizations. Chilean AUC’s militants Manuel Antonio Garretón Merino, with a

Christian Democrat and University Reformist mindset, and Abraham Santibañez, recently appointed BIDI editor, were among attendees. Also present were Fr. Ismael Errazuriz, PR-SLA advisor, and Fr. Mario Zañartu, spiritual advisor to the Chilean Institute of Christian Humanism. Both Errazuriz and Zañartu, along with ODUCAL and ORMEU, authored the controversial article to appear the following month in CIF Reports and that was eventually censored by the rectors of the region's Catholic Universities.<sup>564</sup> On the other hand, delegations from the Brazilian and Bolivian JUCs, the former a member, and the latter a collaborator movement to the JECI-SLA, were also present. Argentinean Humberto Lanzillota, a student leader within the Secondary branches of the JECI-SLA, and Bayardo Garcia, a leader within the early groupings of the Nicaraguan JUC who was to become a member of the MIEC-JECI SLA in 1967, were among attendees too.

Also, a Peruvian UNEC delegation with 30 attendees, already hinted at the growing node within the movements' network. Albeit not a member of the JECI-SLA, under the advice of Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, Peru's UNEC was already attentive to JEC-International developments.<sup>565</sup> Other attending delegations came from Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Puerto Rico,

---

<sup>564</sup> Attendance to the Seminar. *Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en América Latina, Memoirs*, pp. 7-19. The article in reference is "Esquema de la Realidad Universitaria Latinoamericana," *CIF Reports*. A description of the controversial circumstance of its publication is detailed in Chapter 3.

<sup>565</sup> Four months after the *Second PR-MIEC Latin American Seminar*, the Peruvian UNEC met for its Second National Study Meeting. Discussions revolved around the latter Seminar and *La Capilla's* developments while also analyzing firsthand materials circulated by the JEC-International Bulletin. Among them the *JEC, Bulletin International, Topic: "Pastorale D'ensemble des jeunes scolaires"* Vol. XV-No. 5 December 1962. Binder 3. Document *Segundo Seminario de Estudios UNEC*, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

Dominican Republic, Salvador, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Significantly, an exiled Cuban delegation residing in Miami also attended the meeting.

The event seems to have galvanized the construction of Catholic students' collective identity in the region around their envisioned leadership within the university and university *gremios*. Their role was thought of as to reinvigorate and retake the flags of *university reform*, working towards constructing *university communities* and rebuilding the *ethos* of the university in Latin America. In so doing, Catholics might work in channeling the student impetus many times "wasted" in "futile activism."<sup>566</sup>

The MIEC-SLA sent the student organizations a study dossier to prepare for the meeting.<sup>567</sup> Within the dossier was the systematization of the 1962 survey results by Humberto Rojas, a first Sociology cohort student at the recently created Department of Sociology in the *Universidad Nacional de Colombia*. It revealed blunt information.<sup>568</sup> Out of 14 countries surveyed, only 2 (the Dominican Republic and Guatemala) enjoyed university autonomy. Despite the long-term achievements in the region in students' co-

---

<sup>566</sup> *Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en América Latina, Memoirs.*

<sup>567</sup> *Letter to Latin American federations from Rodrigo Guerrero, Medellin, February 19, 1963.* Box 126, Folder 1963. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito. The dossier contained the survey results along with another eleven documents. Significantly, among them were the 1918 Cordoba University Reform Student Manifesto, a comment of the Latin American University Reformist Movement by ISC-COSEC, an account of the historical evolution of the Latin American universities (F. Francois Houtart), an analysis of the crisis of the universities (by the first generation reformist student Gabriel del Mazo), the memories of *La Capilla* alongside Frei's and Calvani's conferences in that event, and a document on Church and Lay Apostolate by Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez.

<sup>568</sup> *Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en América Latina, Memoirs, pp. 72-82.*

government, there was a significant intervention of the state as the primary source of public universities' funding. In fewer cases, other social sectors such as the central banks, industry, unions, the church, and political parties participated in university government.<sup>569</sup> While political parties' incidence in university government was low, it was instead frequent they had university sections within university *gremios* that influenced the latter's performance. Moreover, the survey reported that the high politicization of universities had made administrative and teaching positions to be used as sectarian political instruments.<sup>570</sup> Also, persistent limitations in university access, as shown in the survey, maintained democratization as a goal to accomplish. Economic constraints (costs of books, materials, and living expenses in the cities) made it impossible for many qualified students to enroll and attend.<sup>571</sup> In fewer cases, ideological or religious limitations hindered this access.<sup>572</sup>

---

<sup>569</sup> The church intervened in seven cases out of the fourteen surveyed, according to the survey results. Of these, six were Catholic universities. Only in one case (Colombia), the church's participation was generalized in both private and public universities. The document stated that according to the Colombian respondents "in the *Universidad Nacional* [public university], the church has its representative [and is] an entity of first order." And added that "although this participation moralizes and avoids politicization, it is nevertheless, the cause of increased anticlericalism." In the case of Catholic universities, the survey answered by Nicaragua stated that "due to this participation [there was] an identification between the ecclesiastical hierarchy and university directives." *Ibid.*, pp.72-73.

<sup>570</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 77, 79

<sup>571</sup> Survey results substantiated limitations of economic order were due not only to "the exorbitant cost of books and study materials [but also] the living expenses in the capitals where the universities [were] located." The document acknowledged that although a scholarship system could solve this obstacle, only one country (Dominican Republic) seemed to have a modest scholarship system. Other existent strategies in the region to solve this issue consisted of installments of different amounts and payments after completing studies. These existed in Colombia, Peru, Mexico, and Guatemala, although with a little social impact. The survey analysis added that in many cases, economic impediments imposed a limitation "in terms of the social class of the applicants [and] in general, although the limitation [was] valid for all universities, it [was] more notorious in private ones because they receive less official aid." *Ibid.*, p.74.

<sup>572</sup> According to the survey, there were access limitations to the university in Colombia, of an ideological nature. Chile had them too, but of a religious character. *Ibid.*

Furthermore, a regularity in the region's universities was the apparent lack of actual incidence in their social reality. Universities failed to provide a qualified interpretation of vital national problems.<sup>573</sup> Surveyed student organizations agreed on universities not being a source of effective social transformation. They considered that neither did universities develop an "intellectual leaven" that might animate such transformation.<sup>574</sup> On this issue, the analysis estimated that universities were disconnected from communities' development plans. In none of the countries surveyed, was university education considered a service to society.<sup>575</sup> Moreover, distorted *gremial* activity caused students not to know the *gremios*' function. While some had undertaken direct social transformation actions, they were ineffective in demanding universities' meaningful involvement in innovation and socially committed research.<sup>576</sup> Lastly, the survey ratified the political-ideological tendencies in university *gremios*. It asserted the prominent presence in their midst of Marxism, followed by other leftist tendencies, nationalist trends close to *indigenismo* in Andean countries, social-Christianism, and Christian democracy.

---

<sup>573</sup> According to the survey results, universities produced insufficient research on critical topics for Latin America, thus undermining universities' vocation to be the consciousness of the nation. Among these topics were agrarian reform, educational reform, industrialization, integration of indigenous masses, and international aid for development. The analysis concluded that scanty research led to the inability of the university to interpret national realities. *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76, 77.

<sup>574</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75

<sup>575</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>576</sup> *Gremios* of six countries (Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Peru, and Venezuela) responded that they felt responsible for social transformation. Some developed community work such as literacy instruction, community organization through *Accion Comunal*, civic campaigns, social assistance for workers, and the like. *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81

Considering the survey analysis, speakers at the Seminar outlined the challenges and role that apostolic movements might assume within universities. Students' participation was pivotal to the seminar debates and conclusions, perhaps more than in previous events. Strong engagement of national and regional cadres showed that a promising regional intellectuality was standing out already. For instance, there were Peruvian student leaders from San Marcos University Hugo Echegaray, Francisco Guerra-Garcia, and Rolando Ames. The first was Lima's president of UNEC, later ordained as a priest. He became influential in the evolution of the Peruvian lay movement and circles of Peruvian liberation theologians. Guerra-Garcia, UNEC's national president, and Ames were relevant university *gremio*'s leaders. The latter was to become editor of the *Vispera* Magazine, university professor, and renowned "*charlista*" (viz. speaker) among the *popular* church movement in Peru.<sup>577</sup> Both were to become influential Peruvian congressmen later too. Other speakers were Otto Boye from the Christian Democratic Youth in Chile and a Catholic University student. Argentinean Jorge Bogo was a student leader at the University of Buenos Aires, and Luis Boza and Saul Irureta, were already members of the MIEC-SLA with notable contributions to the laity mobilization then and in years to come.

Among the most critical points of debate and conclusions at the Seminar was the meaning that the University Reform had for the 1960s youth generation. Also, the

---

<sup>577</sup> *Charlistas* was a denomination for lay leaders who were busy and frequent speakers at *popular* (grassroots') organization and mobilization events. Ames, Interview.

necessary position apostolic movements were to assume in the new revolutionary setting. On these issues, making sure to define his speech as a contribution through his experience and knowledge, Jorge Bogo began by asserting, "...I am a student, same as you...." He was a veteran of his student generation's struggle for university reform in Argentina.<sup>578</sup> Bogo recounted the story of the *reformist movement's* accomplishments and setbacks while also adding criticism to the fact that the reformist movement lacked both in 1918 and in their present time of a doctrinal conception. He noted it had been rather a predominantly diffuse movement. Borrowing words by reformist author Carlos Cossio, Bogo shared that the university reformist was "essentially a mass movement, of an instinctive democratic tradition."<sup>579</sup> He added further criticism by indicating that a gradual process of politicization of the University Reform agenda had regrettably transformed it into a political booty that instrumentalized the student movement.<sup>580</sup> Bogo pointed out what seemed a common conclusion. Namely, that the University Reform agenda lacked vital impulse, for it had lost its creative meaning and became, instead, a movement to preserve early conquests and the prevailing university order.<sup>581</sup> The Cordoba University Reform, Bogo explained, was exhausted in its originality, for it had failed to adjust to the new realities. "It cannot be said that [in its physiognomy] the

---

<sup>578</sup> *Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en América Latina, Memoirs*, p.134.

<sup>579</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>580</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>581</sup> *Ibid.*



university today is essentially different and substantially better. [Also,] The social mission of the university remain[ed] unfulfilled, he commented.”<sup>582</sup>

Luis Boza, on the other hand, delivered remarks on the impact that the Cuban Revolution had on the “Latin American University” and the position of apostolic movements in the new revolutionary regional setting. He asked that Pax Romana in Latin America “undertake the task of developing doctrinally clear positions on this point,” for the university was integrated into society, and the Latin American one was “living a revolutionary moment.”<sup>583</sup> For Boza, the universities of underdeveloped Latin American countries had “essential similarities,” therefore, the criticism that the Cuban Revolution had made to the Cuban University was extensive to all Latin American ones.<sup>584</sup> One of those criticisms was the lack of clarity regarding the objectives of university reform. The Revolution, he added, rightly had pointed out the two goals of the university both in the short and long run. The short-term goal was the “conversion of the university into a positive factor for Latin American, national, and regional processes [of social change].” In the long term, the objective was the “overcoming of the current social order and its substitution for another more humane.” Boza asked: “Will the university be able to disregard, [or] forget, that its mission is to collaborate through all its means to implementing a more humane order?” We might say, he responded to this question with a

---

<sup>582</sup> Ibid., p.151.

<sup>583</sup> Ibid., p. 152-154

<sup>584</sup> Ibid., p. 154.

second criticism, stating that “the Latin American university had not felt its reform sufficiently dependent on social base reforms.”<sup>585</sup> For Boza, the question of the relationship between university change and social-base change had not been formulated seriously. Boza pointed out that the University Reform was to be understood as a process of constant adaptation of the university to reality for which conceptual and institutional flexibility was needed. Neither the concepts of autonomy and liberty of the reformist rhetoric nor universities’ institutional structures, including *gremios*, had the required flexible and adapting attitude, he concluded.<sup>586</sup>

Another critical topic addressed in the meeting related to the role both the youth and University *gremios* were playing in Latin American societies in the context of political “underdevelopment.” On the matter, Fr. Mario Zañartu and student Otto Boye built upon the characterization of such kind of underdevelopment provided by Fr. Juan Luis Segundo, ecclesiastical advisor of the Uruguayan Catholic student organization. Fr. Segundo had spoken in the Montevideo-62 World Congress and had published his reflections in the Chilean periodical publication *Revista Mensaje*.<sup>587</sup> As discussed before (Chapter 3), his conceptualization revolved around what he termed the *hypertrophy of the political function* in Latin American societies.

---

<sup>585</sup> Ibid., pp. 154-155.

<sup>586</sup> Ibid., pp.156-157.

<sup>587</sup> F. Segundo, Juan Luis. “Diagnóstico político de América Latina,” *Revista Mensaje*, 11(115): December 1962, p. 656-661. <https://www.mensaje.cl/biblioteca/?swpquery=juan%20luis%20segundo&criterio=autor>

In general terms, such conceptualization explained the political instability of Latin America because of the “dysfunction of politics” in the region. While specialized sectors of society (e.g., economic investment and markets, science and research, and the like) could not solve specific problems, they ended up looking for “the political function” to solve them. Fr. Segundo argued, “It is not ‘political passion’ as superficially attributed to Latin Americans.”<sup>588</sup> Instead, it was that politics, which ought to be “the last instance of the common good,” became the primary resource to solve problems that were not of its competence. Thus, “political hypertrophy” degraded politics to the extent that it disfigured its meaning, making it into a “privilege distributor,” that is, putting politics at the service of private problems and interests. In turn, private individuals retributed privileges through bribes, prestige, and (electoral) political support. In all cases, asserted Fr. Segundo, the *hypertrophy of the political function* of Latin American societies was a descriptor of its oligarchic composition.<sup>589</sup>

Fr. Segundo’s interpretation of this hypertrophy and the role Catholics and the university should play in Latin America seems to have been representative of the views of a significant sector of Catholic students. His analysis of the two development schemes outlined in the region to overcome such political dysfunction appears to have been particularly important. He uncovered that both paths guarded an implicit risk of tyranny. As Fr. Segundo explained, historical examples had shown, for one, that the decentralizing

---

<sup>588</sup> Ibid., p. 657.

<sup>589</sup> Ibid., p. 658.

(liberal) scheme of development had the tendency of “gradual accumulation of all forms of power (steaming from the economic power) [concentrated] in the hands of a few.” Thus, what had begun as a political democracy evolved towards the overt disregard of inequality as an economic problem, and in that way, towards authoritarian projects in the form of dictatorships. For another, the centralizing (socialist) scheme had shown very clearly the totalitarianism within the pretended “popular democracy” in socialist experiments in the form of the “dictatorship of the proletariat.”<sup>590</sup> Without giving definitive answers, Fr. Segundo stated that before the issue of *the means* to achieve the goal of overcoming political hypertrophy, “the Christian shall propitiate those that do not hurt the fundamental rights of the human person.”<sup>591</sup>

Let us briefly digress to point out that further insight into Fr. Segundo’s analyses might provide a glimpse of the questions and concerns behind Catholics’ quest for a third way. It also serves to foresee that in the active search for answers, neither an immediate nor a homogeneous response was provided. This made the envisioning of many and even divergent alternatives possible in the whole Catholic apostolic experiments in the region.<sup>592</sup>

---

<sup>590</sup> F. Segundo, Juan Luis. “Los caminos del desarrollo político latinoamericano.” *Revista Mensaje*, 11 (115): December 1962, p. 701-707. <https://www.mensaje.cl/biblioteca/?swpquery=juan%20luis%20segundo&criterio=autor>. Citation comes from p. 707.

<sup>591</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 701.

<sup>592</sup> On this matter, it is interesting to note that a Catholic middle ground in Latin America between persistent oligarchical capitalism in the post-war years (in countries where populism did not break the trend) or resurgent authoritarianism (where the post-war democratic spring was halted and even reversed as the Cold War rose), on the one hand, and communism, on the other hand, found multiple and even divergent expressions. The case of Colombian ACPO is a good case in point to portray a centrist, or more

Significantly, following the evolution of this story, Part III will show that the quest for alternative paths to social development among MIEC and JECI students, led them to craft responses predominantly within the non-communist Left in Latin America. Evidence will add substance to a seemingly overlooked aspect, namely, Latin American MIEC's and JECI's contribution to the formation of the New Lefts.<sup>593</sup> Interestingly, it will show left-wing Catholic factions actively partook in providing meaning to and expanding the revolutionary ideal. Their version of revolution, though, would have many times contested and even challenged other simultaneous attempts by other factions. As Historian Rafael Rojas noted, not one but multiple concepts of revolution coexisted in the

---

of a center-right position. Building on Maritain's integral humanist views, ACPO rejected the deep inequalities of an oligarchical society and advocated for democracy and a path towards capitalist modernization. This path strongly diverged from the one MIEC and JECI students undertook, which gradually leaned and found ways within the political left. On the case of ACPO see Roldán, Mary. "Popular Cultural Action, Catholic Transnationalism, and Development in Colombia before Vatican II." *Local Church, Global Church: Catholic Activism in Latin America from "Rerum Novarum" to Vatican II* (2016): 245-274. Also, Londono-Ardila, Sandra. "Catholicism and Modernization: Acción Cultural Popular and The Rise of a Centrist-Catholicism in Colombia." *World Christianity, Urbanization and Identity* 3 (2021): 257. On the historical unfolding of democratic spring and its undoing in post-war Latin America see Spenser, Daniela., and G. M. Joseph. *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008. Print.

<sup>593</sup> Chávez, Joaquín M. "Catholic Action, the Second Vatican Council, and the Emergence of the New Left in El Salvador (1950–1975)." *The Americas* 70.3 (2014): 459-487. While dialogues between Marxist and Christians, and particularly, the role of progressive Catholics in Central American mobilizations after 1970 have been addressed widely, the role of Catholic students in shaping the political cultures of the New Left since the early 1960s seemingly has received less attention. For an insider view of the ethics of Liberation and dialogues between Marxists and Christians see Dussel, Enrique. "Encuentro de cristianos y marxistas en América Latina," in *Cristianismo y Sociedad* 74 (1982): 19-36. On progressive Catholics role in Central American revolutions see Berryman, Phillip. *The religious roots of rebellion: Christians in Central American revolutions*. Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004. Recent works addressing the relation between progressive Catholics and the 1960s Latin American New Left include Levenson-Estrada, Deborah. *Trade Unionists Against Terror: Guatemala City, 1954-1985*. UNC Press Books, 1994. Also, Maria Gracia Castillo Ramirez, "Jovenes catolicos de izquierda revolucionaria (1965-1975)," in *Violencia y sociedad: Un hito en la historia de las izquierdas en America Latina*, ed. Veronica Okion and Miguel Urrego (Morelia: IIH-UMSNH/EI Colegio de Michoacan, 2010), 111-40. And Chávez, Joaquín M. *Poets and Prophets of the Resistance: Intellectuals and the Origins of El Salvador's Civil War*. Oxford University Press, 2017.

region, even after 1959. Revolutionary projects were not monolithic but plural and diverse. As Rojas asserted, the richness of the Latin American revolutionary legacy resides in its diversity and not in the persistent homogenization that is sometimes pretended.<sup>594</sup>

While these are relevant discussions that more broadly speak to the role of Catholics in the Cold War ideological competition, they shall be further discussed in Part III. For now, it suffices to uncover the kind of questions and concerns that beset early 1960s MIEC and JECI student organizations and which made part of the grounds for the gradual construction of a common identity. Therefore, let us return to the points Fr. Zañartu and student Otto Boye made on Latin American “political underdevelopment” thus understood.

Fr. Zañartu commented that the fundamental idea he wanted attendees to take away from his talk was that “*intermediate organizations* must exist between the isolated men and the state (semi-all powerful).”<sup>595</sup> Therefore, any political development strategy for Latin America had to be a strategy for strengthening such organizations that were to acquire the needed leverage to assume a role of denunciation and demand before the state. The root of political underdevelopment, he asserted, resided in the internal weakness of such organizations or intermediate clusters. The remedy, he continued,

---

<sup>594</sup> Rojas, Rafael. *El árbol de las revoluciones: Ideas y poder en América Latina*. Turner, 2021.

<sup>595</sup> *Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en América Latina, Memoirs, p.192.*

consisted in the development of those *intermediate societies* in which *the person* develops. For instance, he added, one strategy “that we are currently projecting as a Christian solution is what we term development of *base-organizations* (*organizaciones de base*).” These were “groups of people with a common necessity, conscious of that common need, and determined to work along to find a solution.”<sup>596</sup> He warned, however, that base organizations usually fail because of “lack of technique in their direction, lack of leaders ...and lack of formation of their members.” Therefore, “a second recipe,” he added, is the formation of the bases and leaders for these organizations.<sup>597</sup>

A “third recipe,” Fr. Zañartu continued, had been already thought of. The creation of *organizations of service* for the base groups. These would lend services of management, accounting, markets, and buying of raw materials for base organizations that lacked personnel well-trained in those areas.

Overall, Fr. Zañartu called attention to the fact that:

“What I am saying today, in theory, are things being done in practice. So, the fundamental development mode for Latin America has to be, for us Christians, putting the accent on grassroots organizations in which we [might] all take responsibility for our destiny in solidarity.”<sup>598</sup>

---

<sup>596</sup> Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>597</sup> Ibid.

<sup>598</sup> Ibid., p. 199.

Arguably, these 1963 discussions on the role of Catholics within the Student Movement and the meaning of University Reform at the time were important antecedents of what progressive lay Catholics would do later. This is true for both what was called the “*ida al pueblo*” and the strategies of the apostolate within the “Church of the poor” approach—posited by the Second Conference of the Latin American Episcopate, years later, in Medellin (1968).<sup>599</sup> Overall, 1963 discussions confirm what is already a common understanding: namely, that an *inductive logic* dominated how *Christian commitment* effectively developed, and thus, that the 1968-announced transformations within the Latin American Church were not novelties but the culmination of previous developments. Slowly and gradually, they had been envisioned and put into practice through the apostolic renewal that had counted on young vanguards to work for the transformation of Latin American social realities. For the purposes of this chapter, though, it is interesting to note that the fact that a common *vivencia* (experience) of Christian commitment

---

<sup>599</sup> The “*ida al pueblo*” was the name given to the practice of *going to the poor*. That is, the practice of breaking with an ecclesiocentric conception of the church that sided with oppressive social structures. Instead, the “*ida al pueblo*” entailed a movement that, on the one hand, raised the laity as a central part of the church that, in their apostolate carry the church with them. On the other hand, it involved a changing conception of a church that went out from itself to those in need. The dominance of inductive logic in how the *Christian commitment* unfolded explains that this practice antedated any formal declaration by the institutional church. Phillip Berryman, a dedicated pastoral worker and scholar on Liberation Theology, explains that in the 1960s, “significant efforts to come closer to the poor” implied new questions and issues along with “a continual effort of moral imagination [to] keep present the reality of the poor.” Berryman asserts, “Liberation theology is the outgrowth of [these] efforts.” Berryman, Phillip. *Liberation theology: essential facts about the revolutionary movement in Latin America—and beyond*. Temple University Press, 1987. The reference to the new strategies of the apostolate posited by the Second Conference of the Latin American Episcopate in Medellin (1968) relates to the formal declaration by the Latin American church of embracing a “church of the poor” approach and the consecration of Ecclesial Base Communities -CEB. The latter responded to the will to renovate the church’s pastoral structures. The Latin American Episcopate described the CEBs as the “initial cell of ecclesial structuring and focus of evangelization.” *CELAM, II General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate. Final Documents of Medellin*, p. 53. In an additional scholarly publication, Jose Comblin explains further details on the CEBs being born simultaneously since the early 1960s, although in different forms, in Brazil (where the CNBB officially adopted it by 1965), Panama, and Chile. Comblin, Jose. “The Church and the Defence of Human Rights.” in Dussel, Enrique. *The Church in Latin America, 1492-1992*. Oates & Burns, 1992.



emerged before any declaratory by the church or the MIEC and JECI Secretariats about how that commitment should look like speaks to how a bottom-up apostolic identity was being forged. To the extent that the bottom-up construction strengthened this identity, it would have created the conditions for what I claim was the rise of a transnational Catholic Student Movement.

Otto Boye's remarks, on the other hand, called attention to the fact that the youth did not fully exercise the dynamic role it was meant to assume in Latin America. He pointed out that "the great mass of youth [was] alien," and even more, "insensitive" to the Latin American historical process, for it lacked "...ingrained social conscience." Boye noted that only a minority sector of the youth, especially the university youth, had greater sensitivity. That was the reason why, he went to explain, the universities, particularly the *gremios*, were "at the forefront of the social struggle in Latin America."<sup>600</sup>

Boye explained that in the face of 'political underdevelopment,' often, Latin American student *gremios* "by the force of events, fill[ed] the gap created by the lack of intermediate bodies ([*intermediate organizations*, as explained by Fr. Zañartu])." And added criticism to the fact that, "...there [were] cases where the virtual absence of popular political parties ... [led] the *gremios* to carry out that complementary task that [did] not correspond to them." In other cases, Boye recounted, student *gremios* had become the only opposition force in authoritarian regimes. Boye summarized his point by

---

<sup>600</sup> *Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en América Latina, Memoirs*, p. 236.

stating student *gremios* represented political pressure groups in Latin America that exerted political influence comparable to that by the armed forces, the church, private corporations, the press, and political parties.<sup>601</sup>

Boye furthered his criticism by adding a typology on the region's student *gremialismo*. His diagnosis on the matter showed little *institutionalization* of university unionism, the restrained scope of *gremios*' activity to political issues to the detriment of other campus-related affairs, and the low level of *ideological richness*.<sup>602</sup> Moreover, Boye highlighted student *gremialismo*'s "great inefficiency, its revolutionary verbalism, its great superficiality, [and] its incredible repetition of common places that have not changed since it was born."<sup>603</sup> Despite its multiple defects, its enormous influence on national politics, Boye explained, turned it into a booty for ideological plunder and dispute. In his view, *gremios*' influence explained "the significant presence of Marxists [and] how Christians had become interested and made their appearance in the struggle."<sup>604</sup> Boye concluded his remarks by portraying three ongoing trends of debate that the interest in influencing *gremios* had provoked both in Latin America and international student organizations. First, a stream expressing individualist and more

---

<sup>601</sup> Ibid., p. 238.

<sup>602</sup> In Boye's typology, *institutionalization* referred to the existence of a national union of students with a diverse range of student activities (besides politics) developed by the free and spontaneous initiative of the students. Likewise, in this typology, *ideological richness* was related to "the ideological level reflected in the discussions and debates." Ibid., pp. 240-241.

<sup>603</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>604</sup> Ibid., p. 239.

PAX ROMANA-MIEC  
 II Seminario Latinoamericano  
 Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en América Latina.  
 LIMA, PERU.

**II SEMINARIO LATINOAMERICANO**  
 "HACIA UNA REFORMA DE LA UNIVERSIDAD EN AMÉRICA LATINA"

**PROGRAMA**

**CICLO I.- EVOLUCIÓN DE LA UNIVERSIDAD LATINOAMERICANA**  
 Conferencia 1.- Tendencias en la evolución histórica de la Universidad Latinoamericana.  
 Conferencia 2.- Análisis de la problemática planteada por la Nueva Universidad Latina en la Universidad.  
 Conferencia 3.- Las Universidades Privadas en América Latina: Aspectos, evolución y balance. (Se repartirá escrito).

**CICLO II.- FUNCIONES DE LA UNIVERSIDAD EN LA VIDA DE LA UNIVERSIDAD LATINA**  
 Conferencia 4.- Desarrollo científico y social.  
 Conferencia 5.- El subdesarrollo cultural y político.

**CICLO III.- SITUACIÓN DE LA UNIVERSIDAD LATINOAMERICANA**  
 Conferencia 6.- Aspectos científicos y académicos de la Universidad actual.  
 Conferencia 7.- Análisis del Gradualismo Estudiantil.  
 Conferencia 8.- Análisis de la inserción social de la Universidad actual.

**CICLO IV.- PROSPECTIVAS EDUCACIONALES PARA LA UNIVERSIDAD LATINOAMERICANA**  
 Conferencia 9.- Doctrina de la Iglesia sobre educación.  
 Conferencia 10.- Plana de la Universidad como Comunidad y como Institución.  
 Conferencia 11.- Función Social de la Universidad.  
 Conferencia 12.- Universidad y Política.  
 Conferencia 13.- Gradualismo Estudiantil.

**CICLO V.- CAMINOS PARA UNA REFORMA DE LA UNIVERSIDAD LATINA**  
 Conferencia 14.- Reformas estructurales.  
 Conferencia 15.- Reformas docentes.  
 Conferencia 16.- Reformas administrativas y generales.

**CICLO VI.- LOS INSTRUMENTOS ADMINISTRATIVOS Y LA UNIVERSIDAD**  
 Conferencia 17.- Fundamentos Teológicos. (Cuatro Conferencias).  
 Conferencia 18.- " " " " " "  
 Conferencia 19.- " " " " " "  
 Conferencia 20.- " " " " " "

PAX ROMANA MIEC  
 II Seminario Latinoamericano  
 Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en América Latina  
 LIMA, PERU

**DISTRIBUCIÓN DIARIA**

7:30 Levantada  
 8:00 Desayuno  
 9:00 TRABAJO  
 11:00 TRABAJO  
 12:30 Almuerzo  
 15:00 TRABAJO  
 17:00 TRABAJO  
 18:30 Meditación  
 19:00 Misa  
 20:00 Comida  
 23:00 Acostarse

NOTA: Esta distribución se alterará algunos días por motivos especiales y se avisará oportunamente.

PAX ROMANA-MIEC  
 II Seminario Latinoamericano  
 Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en América Latina.  
 LIMA, PERU.

**PROGRAMA**

**DOMINGO 14:**  
 7 p.m. Inauguración del Seminario. Programa Especial

**LUNES 15:**  
 9-10:30 Estudio del Tema: Evolución histórica de la Universidad Latinoamericana.  
 11-12:30 CONFERENCIA 1.  
 13-14:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 1  
 17-18:30 CONFERENCIA 2.  
 19-20:15 Meditación y MISA  
 21-23 Libro

**MARTES 16:**  
 9-10:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 2  
 11-15 Plenario sobre el Ciclo I  
 15-16:30 CONFERENCIA 4  
 17-18:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 4  
 19-20:15 Meditación y MISA  
 21-23 Libro

**MIÉRCOLES 17:**  
 9-10:30 CONFERENCIA 5  
 11-12:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 5  
 13-15 Comisiones Preparatorias del Plenario.  
 16:30-18:30 Plenario sobre el Ciclo II  
 19-20:15 Meditación y MISA  
 21-23 Libro

**JUEVES 18:**  
 9-10:30 CONFERENCIA 6  
 11-12:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 6.  
 13-14:30 CONFERENCIA 7  
 17-18:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 7  
 19-20:15 Meditación y MISA  
 21-23 Libro

**VIERNES 19:**  
 9-10:30 Estudio de la Conferencia 3  
 11-12:30 CONFERENCIA 8  
 13-14:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 8  
 17-18:30 Estudio  
 19-20:15 Meditación y MISA  
 21-23 Libro

**SÁBADO 20:**  
 9-10 Comisiones Preparatorias al Plenario  
 10-12:30 Plenario sobre el Ciclo III  
 14:30 Escarifica  
 16:30 Novación Politécnica

**DOMINGO 21:**  
 8:30 Libro  
 13-14:30 CONFERENCIA 11  
 17-18:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 11  
 19-20:15 Meditación y MISA  
 21-23 Libro

**LUNES 22:**  
 9-10:30 CONFERENCIA 9  
 11-12:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 9  
 13-14:30 CONFERENCIA 10  
 17-18:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 10  
 19-20:15 Meditación y MISA  
 21-23 Libro

**MARTES 23:**  
 9-10:30 CONFERENCIA 12  
 11-12:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 12  
 13-14:30 CONFERENCIA 13  
 17-18:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 13  
 19-20:15 Meditación y MISA  
 21-23 Libro

**MIÉRCOLES 24:**  
 9-10 Comisiones preparatorias al Plenario  
 10-12:30 Plenario sobre el Ciclo IV  
 13-15 ~~MISA~~ ~~Escarifica~~ ~~Novación Politécnica~~ sobre el Ciclo V.  
 16-17:30 Meditación y MISA *Conferencia 17*  
 18-23 Libro

**JUEVES 25:**  
 9-12:30 *Conferencia 18*  
 13-14:30 *Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 18*  
 15-16:30 *Comisiones preparatorias al Plenario*  
 16-18:30 *Escarifica* *Novación Politécnica* *Conferencia 19*  
 17-20:15 Meditación y MISA  
 21-23 Libro

**VIERNES 26:**  
 9-10:30 CONFERENCIA 20  
 11-12:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 17  
 13-14:30 CONFERENCIA 18. Plenario  
 17-18:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 18  
 19-20:15 Meditación y MISA  
 21-23 Libro

**SÁBADO 27:**  
 9-10:30 *Trabajo sobre el ciclo V*  
 10-11:30 CONFERENCIA 19  
 11-12:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 19  
 13-14:30 CONFERENCIA 20  
 15-16:30 Comisiones sobre la Conferencia 20  
 17-18:30 Meditación y MISA  
 19-20:15 Libro  
 21-23

**DOMINGO 28:**  
 8:30 MISA  
 10:30 Cierre del Seminario Latinoamericano.

Figure 9. Schedule and daily time distribution, Second Latin American Pax Romana-MIEC Seminar, Lima 1963. Handmade corrections are original. Box 136, Folder II Seminario Hacia una Reforma de la Universidad en América Latina 1-3. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

commonly conservative or liberal parties' views. This trend argued in favor of depriving student *gremialismo* of any political involvement and "any activities alien to student life." Boye explained this view had dominated ISC-COSEC international conferences, though it did not have significant followers in Latin America.<sup>605</sup> The second was a current expressing the view of Marxists. It upheld the primacy of political over any other matters within university *gremios*, as they were considered an "effective instrument at the service of the proletariat's cause."<sup>606</sup> The third stream, Boye recounted, was that of Christians. While he warned it had not yet fully developed, it became, therefore, a task on which to work unitedly. As described, this position sought to value both the political and the strictly University-related matters without excluding any of the two aspects.<sup>607</sup>

Another critical topic addressed in the hectic 14-day-long Seminar might be summarized through the participation of Peruvian student *gremio* leader Rolando Ames. His contribution seems to have been particularly significant because of his broad knowledge of student *gremial* life and activity, his role as a lay activist, and his participation in all recent Pax Romana events in Latin America. Ostensibly, his continuous involvement in these venues and such capacities allowed him to have some of a panoramic view of the work ahead for Latin American Catholics. Ames warned that his, was a contribution "more experiential than theoretical." Furthermore, he clarified what

---

<sup>605</sup> Ibid.

<sup>606</sup> Ibid.

<sup>607</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

seems to have been a takeaway from the Seminar— namely, that a Christian vision of the university was not detached from the consideration of the university’s social insertion; or rather, that:

“a Christian vision of the university ...does not exist as such, [and] that [it] cannot exist because the university problem is situated within the social problem. Within, dogma and revelation are not detached from answers arisen.”<sup>608</sup>

Ames coincided with Fr. Zañartu and others on the critical role of the university and students in aiding the development of grassroots (intermediate) organizations. He went on to supplement it by emphasizing Christians’ role in rebuilding the *ethos* of the *Latin American University*. A new university ethos, not to be thought of as a utopia but rather as an idea to which to tend, was pivotal, commented Ames, to overcoming university’s political and ideological instrumentalization, and overall, recovering the centrality of the university’s education meaning in the region. Thus, this new ethos ought to be an “independent and mature” one capable of critically “assessing society’s ideological flows.” The construction of said independence would be essential, Ames explained, to develop the social function of the university. This was accomplished by allowing it to produce “objective knowledge,” what he called a “search for truth,” a “scientific truth,” on fundamental problems of society.<sup>609</sup> University’s ambition for truth was conceptualized from a perspective of *ethical neutrality* and *scientific value*. This was

---

<sup>608</sup> Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>609</sup> Ibid., pp. 274-275.

an argument on which Ames seemed to agree with the French Oliver Lacombe, who also gave a conference on the topic at the event.

Part and parcel of that new ethos was the reinvigoration of the *University Reform*. Ames recalled these ideals and emphasized the role of Christians in this task. On the *relation between University and Society*, Ames argued that:

“More than a function, or an end, [this relationship] ... is a *sentido general* (viz. a principle) that encompass[e] all the purposes of the University because all university life... [and work] have to be pursued in accordance with society. The very structuring of the university, the academic and administrative structuring, have to be done according to the needs of the country.”<sup>610</sup>

And he went on by denouncing what was recognized as a form of cultural colonialism that jeopardized the possibilities of the university to comply with its social function. He explained that Latin American universities that had embraced developing models deemed cutting edge “had turned the University into a professional school.” According to Ames, these were “anachronistic molds, copied from strange realities,” which caused the university to fail to be of service to society by not responding to the country’s needs.<sup>611</sup>

---

<sup>610</sup> Ibid., p. 276.

<sup>611</sup> The Latin American states’ efforts to pursue a technocratic reform to the Latin American university found a significant source of inspiration in the “Atcon Plan.” These were a series of recommendations made in the document “The Latin American university; a key for an integrated approach to the coordinated social, economic and educational development of Latin America” (1962) by Rudolph P. Atcon, advisor to UNESCO. According to scholar Alvaro Acevedo Tarazona, the plan advised the “qualification of the human factor” as a key to accomplishing the modernization of traditional societies and effective progress. Acevedo Tarazona, Álvaro. “Educación, reformas y movimientos universitarios en Colombia: apuestas y frustraciones por un proyecto modernizador en el siglo XX.” *Revista de estudios sociales* 53 (2015): 102-111. On the resistance to the Atcon Plan as a mobilizer of the student youth in Latin America, see Bonavena and Millán, *Los 68 latinoamericanos*.

For Ames, it was necessary to discern university education from technical and professional education. He stressed that, unlike a professional school whose objective was to be of “nuance refinement” and “a means of economic and social ascent,” the university's dominant trait was to provide a *humanistic education*. This was a kind of education that sought to “open the university student to all the problems of human knowledge [starting off from] the concrete situation in which he finds himself.” In so doing, university education had a social orientation function that was also responsible for the country’s cultural conservation, transmission, and renovation.<sup>612</sup> Therefore, he stressed that the struggle for university autonomy went far beyond the defense of the university’s physical infrastructure, many times violated by the Latin American states’ military. The demand for university autonomy related, more fundamentally, to the possibility of the university to comply with its social function. The latter implied freedom of thought, speech, free development of men at all levels. This is because “there cannot be a university where directed thinking should be imposed; where certain conclusions should be drawn, where certain conclusions ...in all fields of thought [should be ignored].”<sup>613</sup>

Ames concluded that building a university ethos as a function of society’s needs, and fighting for university autonomy, in the broad sense explained above, needed an

---

<sup>612</sup> Ibid., pp. 275, 277.

<sup>613</sup> Ibid., p. 277.

internally strong institution. For this, building a *university community* (of faculty and students), then lacking, was necessary. A *university community* implied awareness about the university's function and shared responsibility for its evolution by the actors involved. "There must be a personal identification of University members with the institution's purpose. An awareness, participation, [and] personal identification that can make [members] feel that what the university ought to accomplish is something that [every member] must do," explained Ames. In this context, continuing to fight for student *co-government*, he went on to argue, was also a means to achieve this shared identification and responsibility, and, moreover, to "ratify an inherent principle: that the university depends too on the student."<sup>614</sup>

Finally, Ames pinpointed what seemed to represent Catholics' most significant challenge in university life and addressed some aspects concerning the update of the reformist ideal. From an apostolic movements' perspective, the task was to collaborate to build the university community, which would benefit from "a motivation like ours.... that beyond the immediate interest has a consciousness of fraternity."<sup>615</sup> And within that community, the task would be to build the new ethos. As mentioned, it ought to be responsive to society's needs, be founded on the consideration that university's education was to be a humanistic one and that it looked for "the personal and social ascent of men while at the same time working on the structural matters."<sup>616</sup> These were common

---

<sup>614</sup> Ibid., p. 278.

<sup>615</sup> Ibid., p. 279.

<sup>616</sup> Ibid., p. 278.



objectives to both a university community and a work of Christian inspiration such as the University Catholic Action's, concluded Ames.<sup>617</sup>

Arguably, the discussions and conclusions that surfaced at the 1963 Latin American Pax Romana Seminar were a link in the chain towards Catholic organizations' construction of a convergent identity. This identity would have been built around their role as vanguards of social change. Without forgetting that Latin American MIEC and JECI organizations were apostolic movements, it is apparent they embarked on the development of a pedagogical-political work within and from the university. This work included that Catholic militants would assume a leading role in revitalizing the regional mobilization for university reform. They deemed this effort not only compatible but coherent with their apostolate.

Since 1963, this work was envisioned and started developing in directions that deepened and were more clearly discernible after 1967. Interestingly, as will be shown in Part III, Catholic MIEC and JECI student militants increasingly started to perceive their vanguard role as part of the Latin American revolutionary process.

---

<sup>617</sup> Ibid.

### **5.3. From Petropolis' to Lima's agreements. The uncovering of the conflict over the meaning of the *Specialization*.**

A few months after the Seminar on University Reform, the will for cooperation was strong at the regional organizational level. Shortly thereafter, though, MIEC's and JECI's differences jeopardized these efforts. Distinct apostolic approaches and understanding of the *specialization*, unequal access to institutional support in front of funding agencies, persisting tensions at the international level, and ultimately, the conflicting terms surrounding CELAMs' initiative for the SLAs' fusion, in 1965, were all expressions of the growing discomfort.

From July 10-13, 1963, representatives of both SLAs met at Petropolis, Rio de Janeiro, for a first SLAs meeting that attempted to formalize their collaboration. After the meeting, Rodrigo Guerrero—SLA-MIEC—exalted in a circular letter “the climate of extraordinary fraternity ... [and] extraordinary similitude of thought [which made] the movements ... complement each other.”<sup>618</sup> Indeed, this was a refreshing point of view given historical tension dominating relations among the MIEC and JECI internationals. The resulting document signed by both SLAs at Petropolis showed the movements' consensus on various matters while also asserting the movements' distinctiveness. Specifically, it stated that MIEC aimed to coordinate any and every apostolic university movement, regardless of their nature and approach, if the national hierarchies had approved it. On the other hand, that JECI aimed to coordinate and promote secondary and

---

<sup>618</sup> *Circular Letter #6, From the SLA MIEC to All MIEC Latin American Federations. July 28th, 1963. Box 126 folder 1963. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito,*

university movements with a specific method that “more than a technique implied a whole vision of the world.”<sup>619</sup> Therefore, the document stated there was no opposition between the movements but an understanding that they were of a different order, yet complementary to one another.<sup>620</sup>

The SLAs also agreed on their view that the ongoing historical conjuncture made it indispensable that the church acquired “all its historical dimension as a community of salvation.”<sup>621</sup> Not new, this had been a reflection stated before at *La Capilla*, Montevideo-62, and Vilches meetings; and seemed to sync the movements’ view on the church’s expected role in the region. In concrete terms, the reflections at Petropolis called for a new church that was willing to face the ongoing situation, which the SLAs described as “anguishing in the social, economic, and political orders.” MIEC and JECI Secretariats agreed that this transformation demanded from the church and, thereby, from lay movements, a new approach. Namely, an overcoming of a “situation of Christendom” and instead “incarnating” the evangelical message into “the situation of underdevelopment that oppressed Latin America... where demographic explosion, illiteracy, and hunger clearly showed.”<sup>622</sup>

---

<sup>619</sup> *Encuentro de los Secretariados Latinoamericanos de JECI y Pax Romana en Petropolis*. Meeting minute and agreements, pp. 2-3. Box 126 Folder 1963. The recount by JECI of this meeting was circulated in *Carta al Comité 1963*. Box 13, Folder 1965. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>620</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3

<sup>621</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1

<sup>622</sup> *Ibid.* p.1

Furthermore, building a church as a “dynamic community determined by historical coordinates and depositary of the message of Christ” required considering the different *milieus* in which different communities lived their faith. It was, therefore, a matter that involved building a pastoral according to setting (*viz. por ambientes*, “*pastoral ambiental*,” [sic]): worker, student, and peasant *milieus*, responding to particular needs and circumstances.<sup>623</sup> This reflection pushed the SLAs into the consensus about the necessity of promoting a joint pastoral for the university *milieu* in Latin America that might orient the university apostolate in the region. With such goal in mind, they proposed jointly organizing a Seminar on Pastoral University in Latin America. The event would materialize effectively, in August 1965 in Lima—with the participation of all movements and federations.

Also, the Petropolis document contained various agreements, including publications exchange, temporal cadres swapping to learn about the other SLA’s work, and a commitment to promoting both SLAs among their member movements who might have different vocations. Some days after the meeting, however, the JECI-SLA clarified that it was not the responsibility of the SLA-JECI to promote contact of its member movements (specialized vocation) with the SLA-MIEC.<sup>624</sup> This was the case notwithstanding the fact that the SLA-MIEC was to relate movements with a “vocation of specialized Catholic Action” with the SLA-JECI, and the SLA-JECI was to connect

---

<sup>623</sup> Ibid.

<sup>624</sup> An *erratum* was circulated in *Carta al Comite*, 1963, p. 5. Box 13, Folder 1963. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

movements “with no specialized Catholic Action” to the SLA-MIEC. The anecdote might seem meaningless but, in fact, reflected one of the primary controversies that jeopardized the SLAs’ relations in the coming years—namely, that the SLA-MIEC claimed to be a *specialized* movement because it narrowed the scope of its apostolate to a specific sociological group: university students.<sup>625</sup> Conversely, the SLA-JECI doubted MIEC’s specialized character as they lacked what seemed to be the main feature. They lacked the *world view* beyond the method, beyond the mere RLM’s technique.<sup>626</sup>

Mexican Luis Sereno Colo, a member of the SLA-MIEC in 1964, expressed his views on the complexities surrounding the relations among MIEC-JECI movements and his encounter with the SLA-JECI after a meeting in Cochabamba, Bolivia. His fragment reveals insights into regional cadres’ life inside the SLA’s dynamics. It also unveils the nature of the relations among SLAs and some of the regional perceptions about the JECI-SLA. Significantly, again, it uncovers the base organizations’ agency in that it shows the bottom-up governance of the movement and, thus, that the SLAs’ legitimacy was not granted but earned.

---

<sup>625</sup> *Encuentro de los Secretariados Latinoamericanos de JECI y Pax Romana en Petropolis*, p. 2.

<sup>626</sup> *Letter to Paco del Campo’s (JECI-GS, Paris HQ)*, (Seemingly, from Roberto Scordato, Member of the SLA-JECI) Buenos Aires, October 22, 1966, pp. 1-2, *Carta al Comité Julio 1966*, p. 3, *Documento presentado por el SLA de JECI en la reunión realizada en Montevideo del 1-5 de Julio conjuntamente con la Comisión Episcopal Latinoamericana de Pastoral Universitaria, el SLA de JECI y el SLA de Pax Romana*, p. 2. Anex II Carta al Comité Julio, 1966. Box 13, Folder 1966. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

Commented Sereno Colo that,

“The work was hard, as it always was and will be, ... loneliness, anguish, responsibility, politics ... at least prevented us from getting bored.

A Latin American meeting was held in Cochabamba (Bolivia) on the topic “pedagogy of initiation” ... It was my first appearance as head of the team ... I still see the participants who came from many cities in Bolivia ... As always, there were problems. The Bolivians [(a collaborator movement to the SLA-JECI)] wanted their method to be followed. We wanted to remain faithful to the scheme proposed by the Secretariat [(referring to the SLA-MIEC’s)] ... We [were] accused of wanting to impose a certain line when it was up to the bases to decide ... Meetings, discussions until late, at night.”

Later, regarding relations with the JECI-SLA, Sereno Colo commented:

“Coming from a country where the JEC did not exist, I had no prejudices, and it amazed me that two church movements in Latin America were consecrated to the university *milieu*. I was always convinced that it was necessary to coordinate efforts... We had to give testimony of our will through deeds.

The visit to the SLA-JECI in Rio de Janeiro was organized. On the plane, I felt restless; the mission was difficult. The JEC had a well-defined working method, the Review of Life, and strong groups. As for the MIEC, it did not have a well-defined and unitary line, its ways were ambiguous ... however, we also practiced the methodology of the Review of Life; it was a point in common ...

We were well determined to start a dialogue from practice—not from pre-established positions—and the perspective of joint work. I dreamt of what we could do if we put our teams together ... The first meeting with the JEC leaders took place in a cold and tense environment ... [We] gained strength before negotiating ... That night I could not sleep ... The next day, things got complicated. Luis Fernando had to return to Medellin ... I was left alone in front of the powerful JEC team. What happened? Little by little, the tension gave way to amiability, and the common goal was reached: Work in Latin America. The two SLAs were in agreement. It was necessary to unite and coordinate our forces. But how? Which way to go? It was not clear, but together we would discover it.”<sup>627</sup>

Sereno Colo’s perception about JECI’s movements being stronger than MIEC’s added to Rodrigo Guerrero’s impressions when, after the Petropolis meeting, one year earlier, the SLA-MIEC delegation had the opportunity to attend the last days of a UNEB meeting in Bahia, Brazil. The topic was “The role of the students in the underdeveloped world.” Since Catholic Brazilians’ presence in UNEB was strong, Guerrero asked, seemingly with some nostalgia, “When would Christians be sufficiently represented [in Latin American student federations]?”<sup>628</sup> Indeed, Guerrero’s were the times when Colombian EUC’s anti-communist Catholic militancy was starting to shift towards a

---

<sup>627</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, pp.199-200. Originally appeared in "Un long parcours en Amerique Latine" in *Convergence* 3/4 1981, 2. Box 267 SLA-CLP Repository, Quito

<sup>628</sup> *Circular Letter #6, July 28th, 1963. From the SLA MIEC to All MIEC Latin American Federations*. Box 126 Folder 1963. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

Catholicism of *Personalist* strand. The bishops were projecting the functioning of the MIEC-SLA, the strengthening of Catholic students' federations, and the penetration of student *gremios*.<sup>629</sup> However, in the southern countries, Catholics' presence—in student *gremios*—was already notorious, and the Brazilian experience was setting the tone.

While Sereno Colo's comparison was made in the context of Christian commitment ubiquity, this is, when "commitment" seemed to be talked about everywhere within the church, it was clear, particularly in the MIEC's federations, that *commitment* was still more of a projection looking to materialize. In the movements affiliated to or collaborators of the SLA-JECI, this *commitment* was already a practical matter. By then, Brazilian JUC militants within the UNEB were already significantly engaged in the *Movimento de Cultura Popular*, the *Ligas Camponesas*, the *Centros Populares de Cultura* (CPC), the *Movimento de Educacao de Base* (MEB), and generally, in workers-students alliances.<sup>630</sup> Some of them were linked to Paulo Freire's literacy programs.<sup>631</sup>

#### **5.4. A joint University Pastoral for Latin America and the conflicts around a single regional Coordination of University Apostolic Movements**

The tensions between the SLAs and the controversy for the real meaning of the *specialization*, as claimed by the JECI-SLA, were to resurface later. This occurred around

---

<sup>629</sup> *Informe Para Los Excelentisimos Señores Obispos y Asesores*, pp.1-3.

<sup>630</sup> Souza, *A JUC*, pp. 83-84, 176, 208.

<sup>631</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.



CELAM's initiative to form a single Latin American Coordination of University Apostolic Movements that was to imply the SLAs' fusion.

The MIEC-SLA had included Petropolis's conclusions, particularly the joint initiative to develop a SLAs' University Pastoral Seminar, into its MIEC-Latin American Plan agreed at the Washington IFA in July 1964.<sup>632</sup> The latter plan set various preparatory meetings by subregions (Atlantic, Pacific, and Central America) and invited the JECI-SLA and its member and collaborator movements to participate.<sup>633</sup> Furthermore, the MIEC-SLA, in its role as the executive organ of the recently created CELAM's DPU, asked this Department to "assume [the meeting] as its own."<sup>634</sup> During the upcoming months, Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez and Luis Fernando Duque—MIEC-SLA Secretary, worked closely to prepare the meeting scheduled for August 21-29, 1965, in Lima, Peru.

The JECI-SLA, for its part, following Petropolis's agreements, informed the JECI-GS about the joint Seminar. Furthermore, in its report to the 1964 Broummana JECI Council, the JECI-SLA explained the priority of collaborative action of both JECI and MIEC movements to develop the apostolate in the university *milieu* in the region. For

---

<sup>632</sup> *Circular Letter #6, June 3, 1965. From the SLA MIEC to Latin American Federations.* Box 126, Folder 1965 SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>633</sup> *Circular Letter.* "Proposición de una Agenda." To the participants of the SLA upcoming meeting. Medellin, May 3, 1965.

<sup>634</sup> *Circular Letter #6, June 3, 1965.*

the JECI-SLA, efforts had to respond to “reality [which] demanded something more concrete, that could be an answer for Latin America.”<sup>635</sup>

The months of preparation for the Seminar served to advance reflections on what had been a revolving question: the meaning-content, or better the guidelines, of the Latin American Coordination of University Apostolic Movements and the ecclesiological matter pertaining to it. In other words, the University Pastoral that, within the theological and intellectual mobilization and the pastoral action variously approached by the SLAs, had been arising as a specific field. The opportunity was taken by all involved. For both SLAs, the move represented the beginning of the materialization of their demand for a bottom-up church transformation that Vatican II was making possible.

A series of consecutive preparatory meetings were spaces of a difficult negotiation. On June 1965, CELAM-DPU set a meeting with both SLAs to discuss their projects<sup>636</sup> and address some considerations regarding the functioning of the SLAs.<sup>637</sup> Considerations included the impression that both SLAs worked similarly. They also involved concerns and possible solutions on some issues DPU had identified in the SLAs’ work—which had counted on the input of the MIEC-SLA as its executive

---

<sup>635</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p. 247.

<sup>636</sup> *Circular Letter* #6, June 3, 1965. p. 2; *Circular Letter*. “Proposición de una Agenda,” May 3, 1965.

<sup>637</sup> *Circular Letter* # 7, *From the SLA MIEC to Latin American Federations* Medellin, September 22, 1965. Box 126, Folder 1965. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

organ.<sup>638</sup> Among the concerns were: a) the scarcity of well-formed leaders in Latin America, which diffculted sustaining two regional teams; b) that the existence of two different plans demanded doubling the funding; and, c) the geographical distance between the SLAs that hindered efficient coordination among them. Therefore, DPU proposed three possible solutions: a) the removal of one of the SLAs; b) the integration of JEC to PR in Latin America; or, c) the removal of both SLAs and the creation of one new team that might exert the functions of executive organ for the University Pastoral in Latin America. The latter would continue serving their affiliates according to the orientation of the international MIEC and JECI GSs. While conscious that any solution had to count with the international GSs' input, the DPU had leaned in favor of the third option.<sup>639</sup>

During the meeting, other considerations came up about the bottom-up processes in which this Pastoral Line should be constructed. Among others, consensus existed that “a real coordination should start from a reflection on the pastoral opinions in Latin America and consider the student *milieu* and the exigencies it posed to the church.” Besides, there was agreement that the coordination “should be a service for the Movements and current and future pastoral initiatives.”<sup>640</sup> The June meeting finished

---

<sup>638</sup> Seemingly, the MIEC-SLA was judge and party in this negotiation. While the MIEC-SLA acted as DPU's execute organ, concerns and possible solutions presented by DPU during the meeting came in significant part from the MIEC-SLA view. *Letter from Luis Fernando Duque (SLA MIEC) to P. Vygantas (President), Kuriakose P.T. (General Secretary), Rev. W Ferree (General Advisor), R. Ames, and LA Meyer, (Members of the DC), Medellin, June 4, 1965.* Box 126 Folder 1965. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>639</sup> Ibid.

<sup>640</sup> *Circular Letter # 7, From the SLA MIEC to Latin American Federations Medellin, September 22, 1965.* Box 126, Folder 1965. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

with the agreement that the SLAs were to consult with their bases. They were expected to prepare a response for the following discussion to take place immediately after the Seminar in Lima.<sup>641</sup>

After the week-long joint University Pastoral Seminar in Lima created the occasion for the MIEC and JECI movements to share their experiences and pastoral options, the SLAs met for a second time with the DPU Episcopal Commission. This was a two-day (August 30-31) meeting at the same venue, held immediately after the Seminar ended.<sup>642</sup> The SLAs presented their thoughts on the meaning and function of the Latin American coordination and reached the first agreement to merge the SLAs into one team.<sup>643</sup>

---

<sup>641</sup> *Circular Letter # 7, September 22, 1965*. Seemingly, in this same DPU meeting the Episcopal Commission within the DPU had requested to suspend, until the agreements between the SLAs might be reached, the execution of major projects, which included a tour of Central America, and the South American Ecclesial Advisors Seminar scheduled for July of that year. *Circular Letter #6, June 3, 1965*.

<sup>642</sup> *Circular Letter # 7, September 22, 1965*, p. 4. The recount by JECI of this meeting was circulated in *Carta al Comité 1965*. Box 13, Folder 1965. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>643</sup> A few days away from the SLAs meeting in August, Luis Fernando Duque, who had assumed as international PR President, wrote anxiously about his impossibility to join the meeting in Lima and the PR Directing Committee (DC) disagreement with some of the considerations made earlier at the DPU meeting. Duque retold some of the DC clarifications and warnings regarding CELAM's University Pastoral entrusted to the SLA-MIEC. The DC left clear that while the movement was a lay movement, it could not assume the entirety of the University Pastoral but only what referred to the lay apostolate in university matters. Furthermore, it recalled an earlier communication with Mons. McGrath in which it was left clear the movement would not lose its character of being a movement for the lay apostolate at an international scale. Lastly, the DC did not agree on the merging of both SLAs with such varied organizational and institutional linkage which would derive into a "diluted responsibility." Also, the DC demanded prudence. In view that the proposed solution had come from the SLA-MIEC, the DC recommended that the SLA-JECI might first be allowed to state its opinion. Nonetheless, the DC believed that the best formula was for the SLA-JECI to be subsumed into the SLA MIEC as a specialized organ, holding its own personality but coordinated by MIEC. *Letter from Luis Fernando Duque (Incoming PR President) to F. Nestor Giraldo (MIEC-SLA Advisor) & Ms. Margarita Lagos (Member of the MIEC-SLA), Medellin August 27, 1965*. Box 126 Folder 1965. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

A constant in these meetings was JECI's call to create a coordination instance in Latin America that could interpret and elaborate on the movements' *vivencia* (lived experience), build on the "movements' originality," and "assume and live the movement's pedagogy."<sup>644</sup> Overall, their invitation was to act "according to realities and not only ideas. This [meant] having in mind the bases, i.e., the persons and the movements with their working line and pastoral option."<sup>645</sup>

### **5.5. Ruptures after Lima's agreement and tangled new beginnings.**

Early in 1966, a dispute arose around the "Secretariat of Coordination," the name given to the merging initiative. The conflict revealed that along with the importance that JECI's pastoral approach and pedagogy and their advocating of the *unity* of the student *milieu* had for the JECI-SLA in this negotiation, a JECI-SLA's call for respect, equality, and autonomy also carried weight. Furthermore, both SLAs' ongoing crisis exposed they were risking their legitimacy with their bases. It was clear that the bases were superior to their coordination teams in both cases. As mentioned before (Chapters 3 and 4), while the JECI-SLA's budgetary crisis coupled with the bases' questioning of its representativeness, the MIEC-SLA was urgently in need of renovating its cadres and

---

<sup>644</sup> *Respuesta del SLA-JECI a la Commission Episcopal del DPU del CELAM, Anex II in Carta al Comite 1965.*

<sup>645</sup> *Documento presentado por el SLA-JECI en la reunion realizada en Montevideo del 1-5 de Julio conjuntamente con la Comision Episcopal Latinoamericana de Pastoral Universitaria, el SLA de JECI y el SLA de Pax Romana. Anex II in Carta al Comite 1966, Julio 1966, Box 13 Folder 1966. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.*

ecclesiastical advisory, taking distance of the “political way” in which things seemed to have been functioning.<sup>646</sup>

During a DPU meeting with the internationals of PR-MIEC and JECI in Rome in December 1965, the PR-GS stated his disagreement with the solution reached at Lima; therefore, DPU sent a new proposal to the SLAs.<sup>647</sup> This time, the proposal call for both teams to work independently but established in the same city and facility, with a common ecclesiastical advisory. The JECI-SLA rejected this proposal on April 11th. On April 19th, both SLAs had reached a new agreement. Based on the critiques expressed by the JEC base movements, though, this was later revoked by the JECI-SLA on July 5.<sup>648</sup>

As recounted by MIEC-SLA’s Luis Alberto Meyer, the issue had been practical and, overall, a misinterpretation of the PR-GS’s position, namely the JECI-SLA perception that PR did not want any coordination with JECI. Furthermore, while Brazil and Argentina (affiliates to JECI) were about to disaffiliate from Pax Romana,<sup>649</sup> Chile,

---

<sup>646</sup> *Personal Letter from Luis Alberto Meyer to Mr. P. T. Kuriakose. Medellin, November 12, 1965, p. 2.* Box 126, Folder 1965. JECI-SLAS’ account of the matter was circulated in *Carta al Comité, April 1966*, p. 3. Box 13 Folder 1966. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>647</sup> *Carta al Comité, March 1966.* As mentioned before, Pax Romana DC’s reservations had been manifested before the SLAs and DPU meeting in August that year. Although Fr. Giraldo and Margarita Lagos might have been informed by Luis Fernando Duque at that time—if the courier delivered the letter on time, it is apparent, PR-DC’s position was not aired during the meeting in Lima. Pax Romana’s criticisms were later ratified in a meeting in December 1965 in Rome between PR GS and JECI GS with DPU.

<sup>648</sup> *Declaracion del Secretariado Latinoamericano de Pax Romana ante el problema de la Coordinacion del apostolado Laico Universitario, Montevideo 1-5 July 1966.* Annex III in *Carta al Comité July 1966.* Box 13 Folder 1966. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>649</sup> On this issue the letter presumably signed by Roberto Scordato (a member of the JECI-SLA) to Paco del Campo explained the reason for Argentina and Brazil to disaffiliate from Pax Romana. As he stated, it was

Uruguay, Peru, and Colombia (affiliates to MIEC), on the other hand, had taken a “hard line” regarding the fusion. Seemingly, these movements thought “there [was] not a sincere desire [by PR-DC] to solve this problem.” These movements were vigorously working for the unity of the apostolate experiences of MIEC and JECI and, according to Meyer, “if PR SLA does not do something they shall [withdraw] from PR.”<sup>650</sup>

On the other hand, in the opinion of JECI-SLA, the matter was more complicated. The discussion on the Secretariat of Coordination’s line of work was “at a dead point.” The JECI-SLA regretted that they had not found an “effective method of communication to make [their] thoughts be understood.” Furthermore, they added that [they did] not see in PR “attitudes indicative that they valued the pedagogical steps that ha[d] been demanded in all the conversations.” Trying to make further sense of the crisis with PR, they added that “PR’s movements ha[d] a different life attitude towards the world and the university *milieu* than JECI’s movements.”<sup>651</sup> They argued that within university Catholic Action movements, “there [were] more than one line of action,” namely, of “temporal commitment, institutionalizing, *sacramentalizing*, triumphalist, etc.” As JECI movements opted for “evangelical poverty,” they recognized themselves immersed in an option of *temporal commitment* to overcoming the “underdeveloped” reality of Latin

---

necessary “to take into account the lines of work and not just being specialized [because] Pax [Romana] no longer coordinates us [(referring to Argentina's JUC)], despite being specialized, as they claim to be.” *Letter to Paco del Campo's (JECI-GS, Paris HQ), (Seemingly, from Roberto Scordato, Member of the SLA-JECI) Buenos Aires, October 22, 1966, p. 2*

<sup>650</sup> *Personal Letter from Luis Alberto Meyer to Mr. P. T. Kuriakose. Medellin, November 12, 1965, p. 2.*

<sup>651</sup> *Carta al Comité 1966, Julio 1966, pp. 2-3.*

America.<sup>652</sup> Therefore, the JECI-SLA's proposal to push forward the Secretariat of Coordination consisted of confronting the different lines. This confrontation should prompt a "process of enrichment and search for common lines of action."<sup>653</sup>

In organizational matters, the JECI-SLA demanded equal treatment, respect, and autonomy of their decisions.<sup>654</sup> Two issues seemed to animate this exigency. First was JECI's insistent claim of *unity* of the student *milieu*. Seemingly, this was an issue that CELAM had initially left behind in the Secretariat of Coordination proposal formulation.<sup>655</sup> The student milieu's *unity* was a claim that was strongly felt in Latin America while a part of the international JECI Common Bases. Roughly, it spoke to the existing continuity between secondary and university studies within the students' life experiences and the "vocation and commitment" common among student movements which constituted "the very core of their originality."<sup>656</sup> Since the last years had been of significant growth of secondary JEC movements in Latin America, the JECI-SLA defended this *unity*, not as "something brought from Europe," but as part of the

---

<sup>652</sup> *Documento presentado por el SLA-JECI en la reunion realizada en Montevideo del 1-5 de Julio conjuntamente con la Comision Episcopal Latinoamericana de Pastoral Universitaria, el SLA de JECI y el SLA de Pax Romana. Anex II in Carta al Comite 1966, Julio 1966, p. 1.*

<sup>653</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>654</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>655</sup> *Carta al Comite 1965, p. 2*

<sup>656</sup> This is a rough explanation about the unity of the student *milieu* by Paco del campo (JECI-GS) to Secondary branches student leader Patricio Pino in response to the internal conflict unleashed in the JECI-SLA around leadership, representativeness, and the autonomy of the secondary team. *Letter from Paco del Campo's (JECI-GS, Paris HQ) to Patricio Pino (head of the recently created SLA-Secondary team), Paris, November 15, 1966, p. 2. Box 13, Folder 1966.*



originality of Latin American movements' experience.<sup>657</sup> Because of this reason, i.e., the belief in the *unity of the milieu* as part of the movements' originality, and following the mandate of the last Porto Alegre Latin American Committee meeting (April 1966), a Secondary team was to form within the SLA.<sup>658</sup>

The second issue was respect for and autonomy of the Latin American movements in front of both the MIEC and JECI internationals and CELAM itself. Seemingly, the JECI-SLA's rejection of CELAM's proposal on April 11 was motivated by "CELAM's unilateral modification of the Lima resolutions" and the fact that the JECI-SLA was not adequately informed but "had to hear about it through extraofficial means."<sup>659</sup> An additional reason was the fact that the modification of the Lima resolutions had responded to the PR-DC disapproval while the position of JECI-GS had been "to respect the decisions of Latin American movements and the SLA." Thus, the JECI-SLA's move to reject CELAM's proposal was seemingly an attempt to remind the others involved of the need to acknowledge and respect the movements' autonomy. In this respect, Mons. McGrath's letter to JECI-SLA's Miguel Angel Sejem in July 1966 is significant in recognizing his involuntary omission concerning not having sent the official letter communicating the proposed changes.<sup>660</sup>

---

<sup>657</sup> *Carta al Comité 1965*, p. 2.

<sup>658</sup> *Carta al Comité, April 1966*. Box 13 Folder 1966. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>659</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>660</sup> *Carta Entregada por Mons. Marcos Mc. Grath a Miguel Angel Sejem luego de la Reunion realizada en Montevideo del 1-5 de Julio*, Annex V in *Carta al Comité July 1966*.

After a messy relocation and amidst the JECI-SLA's internal conflicts, both SLAs started functioning in Montevideo in late 1966.<sup>661</sup> As recounted by Fr. Pelegri, the relationship between the MIEC and JECI movements in Latin America progressively intensified. MIEC movements that were not members or collaborators to JECI increasingly leaned towards assuming JEC's approach regarding their presence in the *milieu* and methodology.<sup>662</sup> The conditions initially posed as a tryout period remained and became stable—at least until 1970 when new changes would be made to the SLA coordination team. Seemingly, the renovation of regional cadres, particularly among the MIEC-SLA, facilitated the leap; and once consolidated, the joint experience of MIEC and JECI regional Secretariats became a pioneering world experience. Two different MIEC and JECI SLA teams, a collaborative plan of action, a unified budget, and common ecclesiastical advisory started to function and galvanized what we might call the *spring* of Catholic student movements in Latin America.

---

<sup>661</sup> In recounting the JECI-SLA ongoing difficulties by 1966, Miguel Angel Sejem told Paco del Campo that Luis Meyer (MIEC-SLA) had been invited to the Buenos Aires Committee meeting held on October (taking advantage of the gathering propitiated by the *Primer Congreso de Apostolado Laico* October 7-9, and the *Sexta Semana Interamericana de Accion Catolica*, October 10-12). Sejem recounted that Luis Meyer "took the floor at the meeting saying that we should put aside the formal discussions of the problem of coordination between the two movements and, rather, start coordinating based on common activities." On this new take by the MIEC-SLA, Sejem commented that "After two years of discussions, they had arrived at the [initial] position that JECI[-SLA] supported in Lima [(referring to the meeting in August 1965)]. [Namely], to respect the pedagogical steps." With this new take, the problem with Pax Romana seemed "overcome or at least have changed perspectives." *Letter from Miguel Angel Sejem (JECI-SLA) to Paco del Campo (JECI-GS, Paris HQ), October 22, 1966*. Box 13 Folder 1966. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>662</sup> Pelegri, *JECI MIEC: Su opcion, su pedagogia*, pp. 26-27.

Fr. Paul Dabezies, by the time a young seminarist collaborator to Uruguayan movements' advisors who felt already very close to the movements' discussions in their new stage in Montevideo, commented that:

“The convergence occurred following the JEC Line, [which implied] having assumed a movement (JEC's) rather than a federation (MIEC's) model. Base teams and the practice of the RLM proliferated. Some movements took a little longer; others took a little less. [Overall] my impression is that the Latin American convergence, one of whose most important fruits is the installation of the Secretariat in Montevideo, was carried out in the form of the international JEC. That is a hypothesis.”<sup>663</sup>

It is apparent that the gradual identitarian convergence among national base Catholic organizations significantly played in the generalized leaning towards the JEC's approach. While Catholic students increasingly reached a shared understanding of their apostolic role *within* and *from* the university, they started to find in the JEC Line's approach and praxis the path towards a *Committed Spirituality*, a total incarnation in the temporal and a radicalization in the faith.

## **5.6. Conclusions of the Chapter**

By 1966 a multicentered network of Latin American Catholic student organizations had arisen. Since the beginning of the decade, two regional organizational

---

<sup>663</sup> Fr. Dabezies, Interview.

structures—MIEC and JECI Secretariats, convened and stimulated the rise of these organizations throughout the region. Secretariats, who were subsidiaries of two international movements of Catholic students, stimulated regional organizations' growth according to their distinct apostolic approaches—though both being Catholic progressive.

While regional secretariats maintained a tense and competing relationship, they developed efforts for collaborative work early in the decade. Whether autonomously or cooperatively, secretariats offered national-based Catholic student organizations opportunities for apostolic formation, spiritual development, and exchange experiences. Regional congresses and seminaries, publications, camps, spiritual retreats, university parishes were all venues for these opportunities. Congresses and seminaries had particular significance as they brought students together from all over Latin America to think about their apostolic role. Similarly, they permitted the construction of regional consensuses, which raised and sustained the transnational network.

Facing common realities such as underdevelopment, a revolutionary regional circumstance, and crises of Latin American universities, network members reached a shared understanding of their apostolic role. Animated by the renovating church spirit of Vatican II, this role was envisioned as one of leadership seeking to raise a vanguard for social change. Thus, MIEC and JECI students demanded a shift within the church. Critical of the “Christendom model” that dominated and in line with the recent developments at Vatican II, students rejected the Catholic church’s inaction towards

social injustice. Moreover, they disowned a so-called Christian faith inscribed in that church model, that being complicit with injustice, justified believers who played by the rules of social oppression; thus, disfiguring the meaning of Christian charity and love. MIEC and JECI students advocated jointly for overcoming the “situation of Christendom” and embracing a church model centered on evangelical poverty instead. This was an attitude and an apostolic view that put the church on the side of the poor.

Also, Catholic student organizations embraced a Christian “commitment to their *milieu*.” This *milieu* included the university, university *gremios*, and the society at large, as they deemed the university was integrated into society and, further, that it had a social function. Thus, students agreed upon the necessary apostolic tasks *from* and *within* the universities from a “commitment to the temporal” perspective. Catholic students pledged to build a university community and rebuild the university *ethos* too. The latter was to be achieved on the grounds of both attributing a humanistic nature to university education and ethical neutrality and scientific value to university-produced knowledge. These were goals that were intrinsic to reinvigorating the flags of University Reform and overcoming university and university *gremios*’ ideological and political instrumentalization.

Conscious of the social role of university and university *gremios*, Catholic students would have assumed two specific tasks. One, contributing to shaping university *gremios* from a middle-ground position between divergent views, thus, responding to both the political and the strictly University-related matters. Another task was contributing to the raising of social base organizations. This was a strategy of political

development in the region that surfaced to aid in breaking the regional ‘political hypertrophy,’ oligarchic in nature. In developing these goals, the formation of university leaders, *gremios*’ cadres, and social leaders inside social base organizations was undertaken as a consciousness-raising task central to Catholic students’ apostolate.

Eventually, this convergent agenda and embracing a relatively common apostolic approach and method of collective action, which we have referred to as a Latin American JEC Line, led national base movements to establish the grounds for building a collective identity. The story after 1967 would create the conditions for a transnational social movement to rise.

**PART III: A Latin American Catholic Student Movement. A vanguard of cultural, social,  
and political change, 1967-1973.**

Part III includes two chapters offering paralleling addressing of the 1967-1973 period. These chapters tell the story of the consolidation and peak of a Latin American Catholic Student Movement MIEC-JECI until its eventual decline. Building on a complementary view from an *identity paradigm* and *resource mobilization theory* of Social Movements,<sup>664</sup> Part III argues that two circumstances were the primary factors in consolidating the multicentered student network as a Latin American social movement by 1967. One is the identity convergence of MIEC and JECI national-base movements around a common method and model of apostolate—JEC Line, which crystallized in a common agenda and historical project: *Commitment*.

Another is the SLAs coordination structure and resources. Specifically, the SLA MIEC's leverage, organizational strength, and regional and international position were critical as this structure lent the needed operative requirements for the movement to thrive. The SLA MIEC's organizational attributes permitted high-level dialogue with the

---

<sup>664</sup> A classical sociological elaboration on an 'identity paradigm' in the study of Social Movements builds on the work pioneered by Touraine, A. and continued by Melucci, A., and Pizzorno, A., among others. For an expanded understanding of this approach, see Touraine, Alain. *Return of the actor: Social theory in postindustrial society*, 1988; Touraine, Alain, and David Macey. *Can we live together?: Equality and difference*. Stanford University Press, 2000; and Touraine, Alain. "Los movimientos sociales." *Revista Colombiana de Sociología* n. 27, 2006, pp. 255-278. Critical contributions by Castells, M. are relevant in these analyses, which were first published in 1997. See Castells, Manuel. *The power of identity*. John Wiley & Sons, 2011. On the other hand, the 'resource mobilization theory' is considered here through organizational (McCarthy & Zald 1977) and political (Tilly, 1978, and Tarrow, 1994) branches developments from the early 1970s to more recent analyses. A useful balance of the evolution of this theory is Edwards, Bob, and Patrick F. Gillham. "Resource mobilization theory." *The Wiley-Blackwell encyclopedia of social and political movements* (2013). Some classical works pioneering this theory are McCarthy, John D., and Mayer N. Zald. "Resource mobilization and social movements: A partial theory." *American journal of sociology* 82, no. 6 (1977): 1212-1241; Tilly, Charles. *From mobilization to revolution* Addison-Wesley. Reading (Mass.) (1978); Tarrow, S. *Power in Movement*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994.



institutional church, channeling economic resources, and operative and logistic conditions. They galvanized the regional work of the integrated MIEC-JECI SLA, which served as a catalyst for national-base movements' strengthening, conflict resolution, regional discussion and consensus, systematization of experiences and elaborations, and region-wide dissemination of these developments. All of this, in turn, reinforced the movement's identity and reach.

The following chapters take up the invitation by Van Gosse and Eric Zolov to go beyond the 'sixties' historiographical category to understand the social movements that carried the "weight of social change in the post-World War II era" and went into the 1970s.<sup>665</sup> These chapters deem illuminating, their proposal of comprehending these movements' unfolding as a phase in the history of the Cold War instead. They agree, too, with the importance of considering the diversity and plurality of these movements that posed a challenge to existing social structures and conceive their political significance under a broader conceptualization of the New Left.

Significantly, Part III highlights that the Latin American Catholic Student Movement MIEC-JECI made part of these intersecting social movements that Gosse and Zolov refer to. Even more, these chapters elaborate on the circumstance that made Latin America's prevalent model of the Catholic church and traditional religiosity a crucial piece of the status quo that the younger generation defied. Thus, this part of the

---

<sup>665</sup> Quote come from Gosse, Van. *Rethinking the new left: An interpretative history*. Springer, 2016. Reference is also made to Zolov, Eric. "Introduction: Latin America in the Global Sixties." *The Americas* 70, no. 3 (2014): 349-362.

dissertation shows the ways in which the Latin American MIEC-JECI played critical challenges to political and social structures and claimed to be partaking in the Latin American revolution. Part III unveils that the Latin American MIEC-JECI played such a role by pushing forward a three-folded conciliar pastoral-apostolic concept: ‘Commitment.’ This concept defined a particular kind of spirituality, played as evangelizing approach, and structured a historical project that the movement embraced in a militant way.

The following chapters reveal that by contesting the prevalent ‘Christendom church model,’ the Latin American MIEC-JECI movement consolidated as a church’s lay vanguard and crucial agent of the more relevant church renovations of the late 1960’s decade. These chapters argue that the movement played as a laboratory for theological and pastoral reflection and discussion that cemented the pastoral renovation that crystallized in Medellin-68 and, later, the formulation of a Theology of Liberation.

Furthermore, Part III addresses militants’ practical forms of Commitment amidst the high politicization of the university *milieu*. It examines how these ‘practical forms’ intersected with New Left’s formations and contributed to contesting imaginings of revolution. The following chapters show these intersections happened insofar as the movement’s national bases’ greater involvement in student *gremios* created spaces for countercultural expressions and connected them to the popular social mobilization, New Left political parties, and insurgent organizations. Part III claims that, through such

*temporal* engagements, militants contributed the keys of a Committed Spirituality to Latin American political culture.

Part III concludes by revealing the reasons for the movement's decline by 1973. Internal identity crisis, and militants' estrangement from university parishes and teams due to the new obligations they assumed with the popular social movement and political parties are some of the explanations for the movement's organizational weakening. The opposition of conservative church sectors also contributed to such failure. However, evidence show that the fierce state repression during the unfolding of the National Security Doctrine throughout the region, was the ultimate apparent reason causing such downfall.

Thus, Chapter 6 examines the pastoral-apostolic concept of Commitment and its implications as a political-pedagogical horizon for collective action. It addresses Latin American MIEC and JECI organizations' identity convergence around this concept from a bottom-up perspective, giving voice to oral testimonies from grassroots militants. The chapter scrutinizes student militants' practical forms of Commitment and the intersections of their temporal engagements with the New Left's formations. It also examines the ways in which militants committed apostolic praxis contested and added content to the imaginings of revolution.

Chapter 7, on the other hand, addresses the role of the Latin American Secretariat—SLA MIEC-JECI in achieving a shared agenda and strategic action plan that

were decisive for the consolidation as a social movement of what had been a multicentered network until then. It examines the movement's rise in tandem with the emergence of an identity crisis among the grassroots militancy due to the ethical and ideological controversies unleashed by the students' *ida al pueblo*. The chapter finishes by showing state repression as the definitive factor for the movement's decline by 1973.

## CHAPTER 6 COMMITMENT AND REVOLUTION. IDENTITY, COLLECTIVE ACTION, AND NEW LEFT POLITICS WITHIN THE MOVEMENT.

Chapter 6 addresses the deepening process of identity convergence of national-based MIEC and JECI network organizations that had started during the first years of the decade. Arguably, this confluence cemented the transition from what had been a multicentric network of organizations to a transnational Movement—a movement of movements. The movements’ convergence occurred around *Commitment*.

Drawing on SLA MIEC-JECI’s systematization documents, publications by the SLA Center of Documentation, and oral history recollection, the chapter uncovers “*compromise*” or *Commitment* as an apostolic attitude, an evangelizing approach and a historical project devoted to transformative action in the *temporal*—i.e., realizing the Kingdom of God. Stemming from conciliar theological ruptures and reflections, *Commitment* seems to have been an expression of the ‘turn to the temporal’ and a *prophetic* theological line. Also, the concept seemed to uncover the importance that *jocist*’s postulates had for the Council.<sup>666</sup> In the convergence of MIEC and JECI movements in Latin America, embracing *Commitment* was a concrete expression that the movements had espoused the JEC Line and the world view behind it. The concept arose as a synthesis of the process of evangelizing praxis posed by the RLM—as practiced by Latin American movements. Namely, a reflection-questioning-revision of lived

---

<sup>666</sup> For a broader consideration of the influence of Mons. Joseph Cardijn’s theology and inductive method in the Vatican II Pastoral Constitution see Gigacz, “The Leaven in the Council.”

experience, the prophetic line, a concrete temporal involvement vis-a-vis a spirituality incarnated in reality, and the principle of evangelical poverty, were some of the elements that became nuclear to the movement's identity.

The chapter examines the practical forms of Commitment embraced by student militants. From university *gremios* to political parties, from parishes pastoral work to the involvement with the *popular* social movement, the chapter ultimately shows that many of these engagements intersected with the configurations of the thriving New Left in Latin America and added content to the imagined revolution.

### **6.1. Commitment and Review of Life**

By 1971 the Latin American Secretariat MIEC-JECI, under the Peruvian student leader Gilberto Valdez, recognized the existence of what they called *five political lines* (or paths) of Christian Liberation in the region. The recognition entailed acknowledging that “in some movement [in] some country, or even in the Secretariat, someone came from that side,” or in other words, that Catholic militants were working with a Christian Liberationist perspective through the opportunities that these paths opened. The lines (paths) were those being provided by nationalist, socialists, communist, Christian Democratic parties, and the New Left.<sup>667</sup> Amid debates about the movement's identity (more in chapter 7), the SLA's recognition, which sought “to respect political pluralism

---

<sup>667</sup> Valdez, interview.

and autonomy of national processes,” came with the conviction that “whoever it is, there are five perspectives here, all respected. And the party is not the movement, and the movement is not at the service of the party.” While further conceptualization is needed to understand such a strong statement, as Valdez explained, the insertion of Catholic militants in these lines responded to the *option* of their *commitment*.<sup>668</sup> *Commitment* was the key pastoral-apostolic, sociological-religious concept and epitome of an incarnated theology driving mobilized progressive Catholics with critical political-cultural repercussions for 1960s Latin America.

The MIEC-JECI SLA circulated among national movements the translation from Portuguese to Spanish of the second part of the book “*Dinamica existencial da conversão*,” entitled “*Revision de Vida y Compromiso*,” published by Brazilian Frei Francisco de Araujo (also known as Frei Chico) in 1967. The book offered a helpful conceptualization on the topic.<sup>669</sup> *Commitment* was defined as “the insertion of the historical conscience [of men] ...[into] the mak[ing] of history, join[ing] the struggle for

---

<sup>668</sup> Ibid.

<sup>669</sup> *Revision de Vida y Compromiso* by Frei Francisco de Araujo. A translation by the JECI SLA of the Second part of the book *Dinamica existencial da conversao*, Livraria Duas Cidades, Sao Paulo, Brazil, 1967. Box 126 Folder 1967. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito. Fr. De Araujo was Prior of the Order of the Dominicans at the *Convento das Perdizes* in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The *Convento* hosted progressive Catholic clergy and led mobilizations for social justice between 1961-64. It served as a space for a progressive community of lay Catholic activists to grow. Among critical mobilization initiatives was the journal *Brasil Urgente*. The journal had touched on the relationship between gospel and social revolution and was censured after the *coup d'etat* to Joao Goulart in 1964. Members of the *Convento* were intensely persecuted after 1967 for their role in calling for social mobilizations for justice and peace. After 1969, *Convento*'s friars were detained and tortured by the military regime for their believed connections with the *Ação Libertadora Nacional* revolutionary movement. About the journal *Brasil Urgente* see Gomes de Souza, p. 177. On the repression of the *Conventos*' friars, see Betto, Frei. *Batismo de sangue: guerrilha e morte de Carlos Marighella*. Editora Rocco, 2006. Important historical resources are available at <http://memorialdaresistencia.org.br/acervo-digital-memorial/>

the realization of man in the immense task of transforming the world, giving it *sense*” (viz. *Sentido*, which is to say meaning and direction). Fr. de Araujo clarified that from a Christian perspective, Commitment did not mean an active adherence to whatever historical project but a specific one. It expressed “fidelity to a vision of the world that was a concrete expression of the struggle for a project of universal liberation and fraternity.” From the perspective of a Christian Historical Consciousness, Fr. de Araujo commented that history’s direction was defined by the Gospel, which entailed the celebration of the decisive event of Jesus Christ’s incarnation, meant to signify *temporal incarnation*, i.e., in history. “It is in the gesture of God who commits himself radically to men, to the world, to history, that the Christian must find the meaning and the theological content of his Commitment.”<sup>670</sup>

On the other hand, Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez and Fr. Felipe Zegarra had also offered reflections on the matter in a Peruvian UNEC Study Session, held on October 22-23, 1966. Taking up the developments of Vatican II, the study session concluded that an authentic Christian commitment was possible only through an understanding of “one’s own Christian life.” Fr. Gutierrez explained that the New Testament had raised a *prophetic* theological line fundamental to understanding the Christian commitment in history. In this line, the Kingdom of God appeared in history as a *seed*. Thereby, the *Kingdom* became *history’s direction*. He added that the New Testament was in line with a final stage of human history fulfilled to a certain extent— “because men are in direct

---

<sup>670</sup> Ibid., pp. 14, 20



contact with God”—but having men in charge of its full realization. Men’s task was heading towards history’s final stage: the Kingdom. Then, Fr. Gutierrez summed up, History was “the meeting place with God; men would be judged according to their actions on it.”<sup>671</sup>

Theologically, these reflections posed the issue of the relation between the history of salvation and profane history and further allowed us to clarify whether the Kingdom, as the destiny, and thereby, commitment to work for its realization, as a Christian responsibility, were individual or collective. Fr. Gutierrez explained that there are not two histories (i.e., salvation and profane) in the prophetic line but only one. He added that

“Human history is mediation that allows men to find God; she is all holy.

Therefore, what a man does in ‘profane’ history counts for his salvation; every historical fact has a meaning of salvation. The Christian, who is not in history, is not in contact with God.”<sup>672</sup>

Concerning the issue of personal and collective destiny and commitment, Fr. Gutierrez added that

“The final stage of history already begins in each man's heart when he acts out of love for others. [This is because] ... the final stage, the eschatology, is the

---

<sup>671</sup> *UNEC -Union Nacional de Estudiantes Catolicos, Centro de Lima. Los Cristianos en la Historia. Jornada de Estudios, Chaclacayo, 22-23 Octubre, 1966. Charla 2 Historia y Trascendencia, Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez. Binder 3, p. 9. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.*

<sup>672</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10

relationship with God. [Hence] the man does not enter into a relationship with God while not into a relationship with others.”<sup>673</sup>

Here, the *Personalist* concept of the *person* might clarify the issue. From this perspective, the *person* is “the central concrete point of reference for all human praxis” but, nonetheless, has a “communitarian destiny.”<sup>674</sup> Thus, in their *autonomy*, men choose to work towards their and humanity’s common destiny: salvation. Arguably, in this line, Christian Commitment was an individual person’s *option* that, only in her relationship with others, might work towards the realization of human history in an eschatological sense.<sup>675</sup> In other words, given the individual and social dimensions embedded in the *person*, the individual might choose but only realize with others the germination of the seed of the Kingdom.

Indeed, for Fr. de Araujo, the Historical Consciousness had a social dimension insofar as it was configured in “the reciprocity of consciousnesses” of human beings that, due to their creative capacity, recognize themselves as capable of knowing and transforming reality. In this dimension, historical consciousness was the “communication of consciences in the search for a universal meaning for human existence.” For this

---

<sup>673</sup> Ibid.

<sup>674</sup> Fossati, William J. “Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier on America: Two Catholic Views.” In *Truth Matters: Essays in Honor of Jacques Maritain*. Also see Hellman, John. *Emmanuel Mounier and the new Catholic left, 1930-1950*. University of Toronto Press, 1981.

<sup>675</sup> UNEC. *Los Cristianos en la Historia*, p. 12.

reason, Commitment had a collective dimension. It was a task in which “men twinned in the task of transforming the world and discover[ed] a global meaning for their existence.”<sup>676</sup>

Significantly, if Commitment referred to the struggle of the historical consciousness for the orientation and meaning of history, the opposite of Commitment was *alienation*, which is defined as the “emptying of sense, [i.e.,] false consciousness.” This is,

“The process by which the human conscience is lost in a false sense of its historical journey; the deviation ... from the realization of a universal project of reconciliation and liberation of man. Alienation is a process of dehumanization of the committed man. Alienation is the man lost among history's oppressive and destructive forces.”<sup>677</sup>

Therefore, Fr. de Araujo affirmed, *Commitment* was an *ideological option*. This is upon the understanding of ideology in a twofold way, as the affirmation and struggle between forms of men’s culture for “the conquest of meaning for their existence” and the “strategic and tactical articulation of an action that seeks to carry out a historical project.”<sup>678</sup> In this sense, Commitment, commented Fr. de Araujo, was a “phenomenon of

---

<sup>676</sup> *Revision de Vida y Compromiso*, p. 17

<sup>677</sup> *Ibid.* p. 14

<sup>678</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 12

a strictly human dimension, properly ethical, by which man assumes in the depths of his consciousness the commitment to the historical realization of a people, of all humanity.”<sup>679</sup>

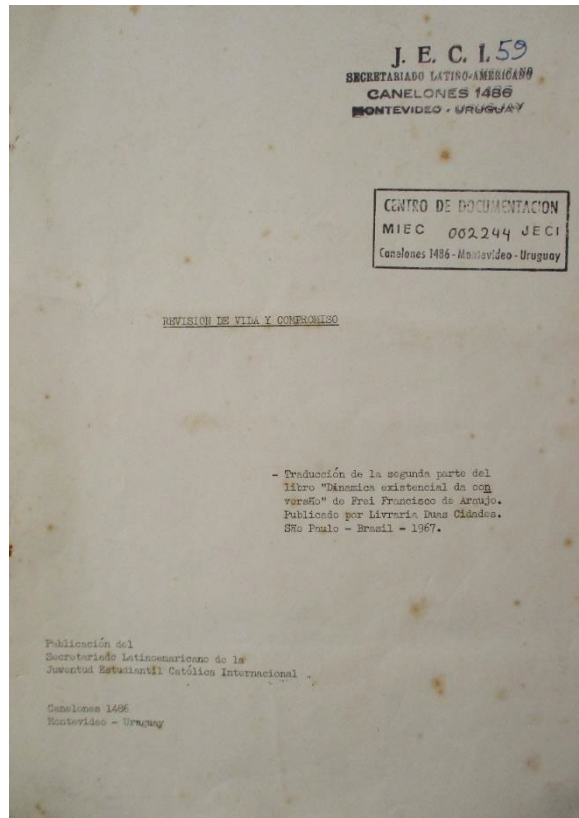


Figure 10. Front Cover of *Revisión de Vida y Compromiso*. A translation by the JECI SLA of the second part of the book *Dinamica existencial da conversão*, by Frei Francisco de Araujo, 1967. Box 13 SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

---

<sup>679</sup> Ibid., p. 12

Commitment, as ideology, contested other alienated ideologies or historical projects which were “based on the struggle to defend the interests of groups, classes and empires, ... marked by inhuman orientations such as the exploitation of work, totalitarian oppression, the struggle by the supremacy of one race over another.”<sup>680</sup> Therefore, Commitment fought for a project of “humanization of the world, a project of reconciliation of men among themselves, a program of transformation of the earth, for it to be ... a place worthy of men.”<sup>681</sup>

Fr. de Araujo went on to explain the relation between Commitment and action. “Action is the battlefield on which the fate of history is decided. Action is the risk and chance of the universal human march,” therefore, Commitment is also action, namely, men’s action to realize a historical project.<sup>682</sup> And in this sense, the greatest challenge for the committed man, Fr. De Araujo went on to explain, is political action. This is because the latter entailed the construction of social life “in its more profound and meaningful call for justice, freedom, fraternity, and peace.”<sup>683</sup>

Notable here is the understanding of political action in the realm of everyday life. In this respect, Fr. de Araujo commented that the breadth of man’s Commitment was

---

<sup>680</sup> Ibid., p. 15

<sup>681</sup> Ibid., p. 12

<sup>682</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>683</sup> Ibid., p. 16

measured by the decision-making capacity in the historical process, but above all, by the concrete possibility of “giving meaning to the common struggle [(viz. referring to the struggle of ordinary man that is also collective)] for the construction of social objectives...”

“Whatever the opportunities for intervention in social reality [are], the levels of awareness and experience, [or] the diversity of the fields of action (from the kitchen to the factory, from the clubs to the unions, from the neighborhood leagues to the political party, from the parish-based teams to the great centers of decision making in the life of the church).”<sup>684</sup>

Therefore, he warned, the breadth of Commitment did not depend on occupation but on the active insertion of men in the “project of the world’s ascent.” Fr. de Araujo added that the risk is that everyone, and all who have the leverage to orient the historical process, “conformed with the daily routines without concretely proposing the objectives of building the collective historical destiny.”<sup>685</sup> The document concluded that since one of the sharp exigencies of effective action was organization, the committed man’s authentic action expressed itself through organized collective action. For this reason, Commitment also entailed “the mobilization of men that work together in the effort to transform the social landscape to collaborate in the universal ascent of humanity.”<sup>686</sup>

---

<sup>684</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>685</sup> Ibid., pp. 17, 18.

<sup>686</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

For both individual and collective maturation of the faith and organized action, Fr. de Araujo stressed, the Review of Life Method was an effective tool. At all levels of Christian life, he deemed the method helpful for achieving “a permanent confrontation of [the] family, professional, cultural, and political life with the Gospel; with the dimensions of a living and fully mature faith.” Notable, he reckoned, all *committed* Christian groups were using the method to engage in the construction of a “new historical project in which men can live reconciled with one another, in a world based on justice, fraternity, and peace.”<sup>687</sup>

Despite the relevance of Fr. de Araujo’s reflection on Commitment and the SLA’s effort to translate it into Spanish and circulate it among national movements, the sources available do not tell us about the document’s reach nor how far it informed Catholic militants’ concrete practices of Commitment. This acknowledgment is critical when trying, for instance, to dimension how universal were sensitive issues—which might be polemic, such as the consideration of Commitment as an ideology. Reckoning with the possible limitations of a universal meaning of this concept within the movement is critical, especially amidst further debates on the relations between faith and politics and faith and ideology that were decisive for the movement’s identity (on which more in Chapter 7). Given the dominance among the movements of inductive forms of apostolic reflection (strengthened through the practice of the method) and reiterated allusion to the bases’ agency, what the cited Peruvian and Brazilian texts can tell us is a hint of

---

<sup>687</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

underlying continuities. These continuities would concern the movements' signification of the concept of "Commitment" and the patterns guiding concrete forms of its realization.

The reference to the Review of Life Method-RLM is crucial among these continuities and broadens our understanding of Commitment. This is because the RLM was Christian Commitment's pedagogical and apostolic foundation. A 1967 systematization document that made part of the MIEC-JECI SLA Center of Documentation summarized some of the more crucial reflections on "the movement's pedagogy" and the "mechanics of the RLM." The document defined the method as the result of a maturation process, a *tailored version*, if we might say, that "[took] up the orthodox genesis [pioneered by Mons. Cardijn and the JOC] and includ[ed] in it the qualitative historical advances of the movement."<sup>688</sup>

In recounting this process of maturation, the document cited the gradual abandonment of the Social Doctrine of the Church and the crisis of "the naive humanist conception," which had occurred in the face of the changing realities and the incorporation of new categories of thought coming from various sources. On the one hand, the document cited the influence of Maritain's *integral humanism*, which emphasized the temporal commitment with a human end and not just a religious one. On the other hand, it referred to Mounier's Christian existentialism, which, "based on the

---

<sup>688</sup> *La Revision de Vida*. Box126, Folder 1967, p.3. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito



phenomenological method,” encouraged to account *from* “the things themselves,” from lived experience and existence. Also, building on theological inflections that led to and deepened at Vatican II, the document mentioned the more historically and socially grounded Theology of the Signs of the Times as part of this evolution.<sup>689</sup> This theology interpreted historical events in the context of the people’s pilgrimage towards “the final glorification.” Hence, events were signs through which God sends men a message, an invitation to discern, which might better inform men’s response.<sup>690</sup>

The consideration of more effective categories of social interpretation, the document recounted, also came from the social movements themselves. It came especially from the JAC, ( the Agrarian Youth) which was more in contact with a pre-capitalist reality and culture, and the JEC, (the student youth) “a petty-bourgeois movement” that “unscrupulously” made contact with various social theories. Although in different ways, both had prompted the methodology’s contact with Marxism. While in doing so, the methodology came under continuous relativization, questioning, and revision. Thus, the document contends, the methodology came to be a “critical reflection of the evangelizing praxis.” The cross-fertilization, the document goes on, facilitated

---

<sup>689</sup> On the Theology of the Signs on the Times see Dorr, Donal. “Reading the Signs of the Times.” *The Furrow* 59, no. 10 (2008): 547–52. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27665816>. Also Himes, Michael J. “Reading the Signs of the Times: Theological Reflections.” *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America* (2002).

<sup>690</sup> *La Revision de Vida*, pp. 1-3

locating the reflection “within the polarity oppressors-oppressed, domination-liberation.”<sup>691</sup>

As a result of this historical evolution of the method, the document defined the RLM as “a place [(viz. *Lugar*, space of)] of confrontation [among] consciences’ synthesis between faith and life.” Building upon the consideration of the historical man, who was both a byproduct and protagonist of history, the RLM started up from the militant believer’s very life “in all its complexity and depth.” That is, it entailed the lived experience (viz. *vivencia*) and the deepening of man’s faith.<sup>692</sup> For this reason, the document argued, the RLM was a dialectical tool that, recognizing the “presence of the Lord” in the temporal, served to “recognize, deny, question, and [ultimately] recreate ourselves.” Therefore, the document noted that the RLM called for conversion “not only spiritual, not only ideological but practical,” so as to overcome the contemplative stagnation, heading instead “to immerse ourselves in the transformation, where we make our faith objective.”<sup>693</sup> Overall, the method as a tool of critical reflection was thought of as contributing to building a “society in line with the integral development of men.” This was, the Kingdom of God—which, as already mentioned, marked the continuity between human history and the history of salvation.<sup>694</sup>

---

<sup>691</sup> Ibid., pp. 2, 3.

<sup>692</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>693</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>694</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

Notably, the cited intellectual reflections on the RLM and its “mechanics,” which were further described, confirmed previous considerations made on Commitment and the historical evolution of the pedagogy in contact with the realities of the movement. It is also striking that within these reflections, intersections, permeability, and common semantics with circulating ideas of the revolutionary humanism in vogue surfaced. Particularly significant were those concerning the imperativeness of social and cultural transformation towards “a new society” and the birth of a “new man” who, in his historical action, “realizes his capacity and strength to learn not to submit.” Quoting Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff, the document draws attention to the fact that “there is a sense of liberation of a mystical nature, within a regime of captivity, which is nourished by a great hope and small but real modifications.” Later it highlights, “the importance of [their] incipient practice [which is] embryonic source of unity, struggle, and power.”<sup>695</sup>

Furthermore, the “mechanics of the method” described a process of “evangelizing praxis,” which started with a reflection on concrete reality, not an abstract discussion of it. Instead, it started from and revolved around *the event*, referring to the method as a Review of Life’s Events—*Revision de Hechos de Vida*. The *event* referred to the militant’s lived experience of his *committed action in the milieu*. That is, a reflection that started “from a critical reflection of [his/their] transformative action, which is the place in

---

<sup>695</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

which [he/they] live [his/their] faith.” In this reflection, the document calls to analyze the deep causes, the factors responsible for social problems, avoiding generality. The document also calls to foresee the more likely consequences, avoiding political idealism and the pessimism of the “unrealizable utopia.” Finally, it invites identifying “what stands out.” In other words, out of the core elements of the analyzed event, perceiving the deep complexities: “the spaces of collision between the interest of the oppressed and oppressors, the ideological struggles, [as well as] the roots of the church in the people, the people who walk to the Kingdom, etc.”<sup>696</sup>

Discussing *the militant’s lived experience on his committed action in the milieu*, i.e., *the event*, the suggested mechanics also underscored that the practice of the method, which started from reality and aimed at influencing it, entailed a twofold invitation to the Christian. One was to reinterpret his faith from a mature perspective that overcame mere contemplation. Another, to which we referred already, was to assume himself as a “new man,” inserted in the *milieu*, “like yeast in the dough that will be fermented,” and “fruit of the action” through which he realizes his capacity and strength: “the object dies, [and] the subject is born.”<sup>697</sup>

Eventually, the description of the mechanics of the method stressed some of the points already raised on Commitment. As mentioned, the method encouraged to start

---

<sup>696</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>697</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

from the *Christian engagement with reality*: the review was to be over the “lived events” (viz. *hechos de vida*). “We are to analyze our action in the *milieu*; our lived experienced of the faith and our making it explicit,” the document pointed out.<sup>698</sup> The document also ratified the collective dimension of Commitment. While it reminded the movement’s pastoral line was defined by the small community, i.e., *the team*, it clarified that the evangelizing praxis (reflection and action) involved the individual, the *team*, and the *milieu*, to the extent that militants were inserted in it. In that sense, the committed action, asserted the document, was to be a collective one: “the militant has to discover the problems, [also] make [possible] for others to discover them and act...” together. The document further warned that “...success is a consequence of the help of others. Self-sufficiency is diluted in the participation of others; nothing can be achieved without the active participation of [them].”<sup>699</sup>

Furthermore, Commitment was to engage with the realization of a historical project: God’s Kingdom, that is the fraternity wished by God. This was because “If having faith is acknowledging the Lord’s presence in human history... we believe that his call to liberation, justice, and peace requires us to take a stand, an option, a commitment.” Subsequently, the document added observations on the importance of *making explicit the faith*. It stated that “...if we make this explicit, then we have an evangelizing action, [that is also] transformative...and a church-building action” On the latter matter, the document

---

<sup>698</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>699</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

clarified, “our testimony of deep commitment, is a gesture that confirms our faith. Words make [this commitment] intelligible, but the testimony always precedes the word because it makes it credible.”<sup>700</sup>

Finally, these reflections also coincided in understanding that since Commitment was a transformative action of the *milieu*, it was, in turn, considered also a pedagogical action. That is because

“Action with others is a means to educate and modify the structure. [For instance] If politics is the action that works on the conjuncture, there must be thoughtful praxis to more effective action.”<sup>701</sup>

On this latter matter, in terms of the pedagogical reach of Commitment, the document alludes to what was already commonplace among JEC’s pedagogy. The action was to be a “*fermenting*” type of action (as explained in Chapter 4) which might achieve the *milieu*’s self-promotion. In such a way, “...small actions should slowly improve without transcending those that the *milieu* can achieve. This is the educational vehicle for new actions. Action is the path of transformation.”<sup>702</sup>

---

<sup>700</sup> Ibid., pp. 6

<sup>701</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>702</sup> Ibid.

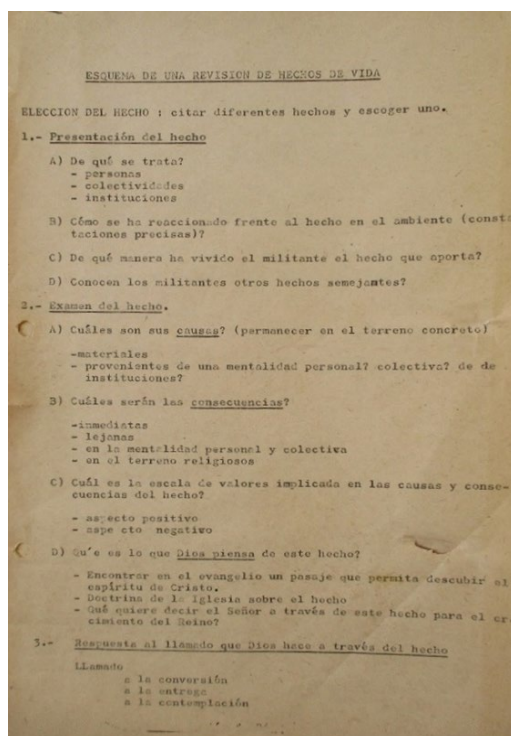


Figure 11. *Esquema de una Revisión de Hechos de Vida*. A methodological guide by UNEC Peru, 1965. Box 1, SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

Significantly, other documents and oral testimonies suggest the method's *tailored* version was indeed practiced in various countries in the region. Therefore, presumably, such documents might confirm that the understanding of Commitment that this version implied had indeed broad circulation. Briefly, let us digress to comment on two cases that resemble the SLA's systematization of the method's mechanics. On the one hand, there is a 1965 UNEC-Peru document entitled *Esquema de una Revisión de Hechos de Vida*. On the other, the oral testimony of Carlos Alberto Payan, a member of the Colombian EUC between 1964 and 1969. Both narratives agree on conceiving the *See* portion of the method as a broad analysis of a *lived event*. This first step called on other students to

share similar experiences on the analyzed event to “overcome subjectivity.”<sup>703</sup> Also, according to both sources, the collective examination of the event was to include “persons, collectivities, and institutions.”<sup>704</sup> For Payan, the inclusion of both formal and informal, internal and external actors and institutions—namely, the student movement and *gremios*, state institutions, unions, and revolutionary movements that had a presence inside the universities—permitted a broad examination, crucial for “opening the individual gaze to university life and society in general.”<sup>705</sup> This kind of comprehensive analysis of the collective lived experience of an event “led [movements] to taking positions towards the inside as well as the outside of universities.”<sup>706</sup> Also, in both cases, the *judging* portion of the method seems analogous to the SLA systematization. It analyzes causes, consequences, the implied values’ scale, and a reflection in light of the Gospel. Finally, the *acting* portion of the method inquired, in both cases, about militants’ “response to God’s call through the event.”<sup>707</sup> Payan highlights that following these mechanics was a way of “grounding [militants’] religious practice to Commitment [in the] *temporal*.” And in such a way, militants ended up “play[ing] important roles as

---

<sup>703</sup> Carlos Alberto Payán, “Centenario de Pax Romana, Conversatorio La Madurez Pastoral y Teológica de Los Movimientos,” interview with DARLAC/ FIU, *Secretariado Latinoamericano* MIEC and MIIC, 08-28-2021.

<sup>704</sup> *Esquema de una Revision de Hechos de Vida*. Binder 3, 1965, p. 1. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>705</sup> Payán, interview.

<sup>706</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>707</sup> *Esquema de una Revision de Hechos de Vida*, p. 1.



leaders in the student movement, popular neighborhoods, political parties,” and the like.<sup>708</sup>

Overall, going back to Gilberto Valdez’ explanation of militants’ options of *Commitment*, what appears to be clear is that to the extent that organized Catholic students increasingly embraced the JEC approach and, therefore, the RLM as the basis of their apostolic action, they carried out a systematic reflection on the historical-social praxis based on the Gospel. As a result, they developed a *spirituality committed* to a Christian historical project of humanization, reconciliation, justice, and fraternity. Militants’ individual Commitment choices carried them through various social engagements that entailed a double registry. For one, as an apostolic action, they were a testimony of militants’ faith that they ought to make explicit—*la explicitacion de la fe*, to make it into an evangelizing action; that is, an announcement of the Gospel, and the Kingdom. For another, and part and parcel of representing the avant-garde of a new conception of the Latin American church, these engagements carried a critical political-cultural registry for the region. Like *yeast in the dough* and driven from their small faith communities, militants increased their social and political influence. They endeavored to have a more significant presence within the university and university *gremios*. They also joined various grassroots-social, intellectual, and political spaces and projects to advocate and work for social justice and liberation from the perspective of Christian Commitment.

---

<sup>708</sup> Payán, interview

In so doing, and amidst the historical conjuncture, they contributed the keys to a *Committed Spirituality* that nurtured the revolutionary ethos in the region.

## 6.2. Practical forms of Christian commitment

A 1968 SLA systematization document on the purpose of university Catholic Action movements confirmed what the discussion on Commitment has already told us. Namely, that all [(committed Christians)] had “the same vocation to [be at] the service of the Kingdom of God, but this call [had for everyone] a different dimension, [which was] personal.” For this reason, “freedom of choice of the specific field of activity [had to] be respected.”<sup>709</sup> The document addressed the objectives of the *incarnated* apostolic action within the university *milieu*, asserting that students’ participation in the organization of both *temporal* structures and the Catholic Action movement were not mutually exclusive tasks. Instead, it reckoned them as legitimate and authentic. The document also acknowledged that it was a regularity that, in almost all movements, there was the militants’ simultaneous participation in the apostolic movement and the university *gremios*; it was a way in which the apostolic task within the *milieu* was being undertaken in-depth. Moreover, it noted that “our movements ought to lead their efforts towards the essential work, the most important in the task of transformation;” therefore, the validity of the temporal Commitment, whether in the *gremio* or political groups.<sup>710</sup>

---

<sup>709</sup> *Finalidades de los movimientos de Acción Católica Universitaria*, p. 4. Box 112, Folder 1968. SLA-CLP Repository-Quito.

<sup>710</sup> *Ibid.*

According to the document, the movement's apostolic action's objectives were to arouse, disseminate, and strengthen a *Spirituality of Commitment*. Furthermore, an additional goal was to doctrinally guide the students' political and university *gremial* action through the impulse of university cadres with "clear criteria... on the nature of the university, the role that the *gremio* play[ed] within, and the task of politics in the action for the common good."<sup>711</sup> These tasks were to be achieved through personal dialogue and contributing to the organization of what might be massive services such as retreats, courses, and liturgical acts. Specifically, on guiding students' political and *gremial* action, the document noted that the movement could give this orientation by training those who participated in the direct temporal action, offering courses, conferences, and publications. Complementary objectives were to raise consciousness about the social and humanist orientation of education and the rise of a community of faith and charity among university students. In these tasks, the University Parish was deemed essential. Finally, objectives also included disseminating the Gospel as "a response to [university students'] search for meaning in life." For this, making the Catholic militants' everyday life into an evangelizing task was crucial, and this endeavor should include non-Christians.<sup>712</sup>

The latter document provides a window to describe what was happening among Latin American MIEC-JECI national movements by the mid-1960s. In a pre-revolutionary social and political-ideological environment, the movements' gradual

---

<sup>711</sup> Ibid. p.3.

<sup>712</sup> Ibid. p.1.

convergence around the JEC approach and methodology and their apostolate within the university and university *gremios* had deepened Catholic students' commitment to their *milieu* and understanding of the historical conjuncture. Indeed, the mid-60s MIEC and JECI militants represented a new generation of Catholics with a renewed sense of what Christian commitment meant. They had undertaken the challenge of embodying and disseminating a *Committed Spirituality* and realizing the historical project of the Kingdom from their everyday lived experience of their *milieu*. Generally, this generation gradually started to distance itself from Christian Democracy's views and aspirations to embrace other new political scenarios that included, though not exclusively, electoral politics. MIEC-JECI militants increased apostolic presence in university *gremios* was a crucial bridge that promoted ideological cross-fertilization. *Gremios* streamlined the already opened dialogue between Christians and Marxists, which interpellated Catholic students in a way that helped them transform their own aspirations about their role in the *milieu*.<sup>713</sup> University *gremios* would also have shortened the gap between the Catholic militancy and the politics of the thriving New Lefts.

### **6.3. The intersecting roads. Student *gremios*, apostolic movements, and politics.**

Seemingly, the crisscrossing of roads involving student *gremios*, apostolic movements, and political engagements occurred spontaneously, facilitated by the high politicization of the university environment. For some Catholic militants, greater involvement in the *gremios* was a way of deepening their Commitment within the

---

<sup>713</sup> On the “historical encounter” between Marxism and Christianity in Latin America and differences with the European more “theoretical encounter,” see Dussel, Enrique. “Encuentro de Cristianos y Marxistas en América Latina,” *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, 74, México, 1982, pp. 19-36.

university *milieu* and getting in contact with real transformative options. For some others, already involved in the *gremios* and political factions or parties, getting involved with progressive Catholic groups was a way of pursuing their (personal) spiritual searches; in many cases, a way to reconcile their religious traditions and faith with a new and more consistent way of living them. The latter cases are particularly interesting. They remind us of the personal and lived dimension of faith, a phenomenology of faith and spirituality, which is usually a realm missing in historical records.

On the matter, Peruvian Gilberto Valdez commented, for instance, that

".... My beginnings at UNEC-Arequipa were through politics. In 1964, I entered the public university. At that time, it was strongly politicized to the left; we would say, "*Marxized*." ... [These were] years of expansion of what was then called communism... and the communists [held] the power of... the university [*gremios*]. And ... I was spontaneously interested [in] politics [and] university *gremialismo*, but I did not feel attracted to... communism.

First, I approached the Christian Democratic Youth. The Christian Democracy had a movement called the University Reformist Movement-MUR. I got close to that group, and in that group, a young Christian Democrat who was also a member of UNEC... told me: Why don't you come? .... He invited me to UNEC, and I felt interested...

Once I joined UNEC, they invited me to what, at that time, was called a "cell" of new militants...

We began to read church documents and methodological guidelines. An explanation about the Review of Life [Method], social encyclicals, social texts, and Ad Hoc texts from the Gospel: Matthew 25, the Nazareth discourse, the beatitudes, and the Exodus from the Old Testament. [In that moment] it was [still] something very traditional...

The year 1964 ended. I was 'new' [at UNEC]. In 1965, I returned intending to leave: This does not convince me, [I said,] there is not much political action. They told me there would be a community [and that] 'you will no longer be among the new ones.' So, I stayed. [At that time] Fr. Francisco Alarco was the national advisor. And Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, vice advisor, was beginning to mark the spiritual line...

And Commitment appeared, which was the big theme because what distinguished UNEC was that it was a group looking for laypeople who might commit to reality. The big word back then was 'Commitment,' as we can say today, 'the Church of the Poor.' Methodologically speaking, the axis was the Review of Life Method... Well, I stayed. And indeed, things got more interesting with the idea of Commitment... So [that] it fit perfectly with my Christian Democratic activism. I found a link there, and in that way, a Catholic militancy, of faith, and ... a political militancy began to work [for me]. That was the Commitment. There was no anti-communist sectarianism in the movement [UNEC] or the MUR, but [we were] non-communists. And yes, we were politically opposed and competitive."<sup>714</sup>

---

<sup>714</sup> Valdez, interview.

The presence and leadership of Catholics within university *gremios*, as Valdez added, remained limited in comparison to those of communists. However, these did not prevent Catholics from exerting significant influence within the *gremios* and, occasionally, winning some representation. From his experience over the competition for the leadership of university *gremios* and how he lived the transformations within the Christian Democratic Youth, Valdez recalls that,

“In 1966, we founded the FREP-*Frente Revolucionario Estudiantil Popular*, [though] we were still in contact with Christian Democracy. [Sharing the transformations within Chilean Christian Democracy that had led [these] sectors to support] Allende's front, which was called FRAP-*Frente de Accion Popular*, we formed the FREP. We were no longer MUR-*Movimiento Universitario Reformista*. Now, we were revolutionaries... But we were a student front to confront *The Reds*—the communists. And, as I say, there was nothing anti-communist about this climate. We were all friends. ... After the assemblies where we beat each other, we would go have a beer together...

We, Demo-Christians, were called “four cats” because we were few. In 1967 we won the election against the Marxist left [in the university]!. We won the federation. The only movement that had gained [in Peru] a federation at that time from communism, [and] achieved hegemony. We won the presidency and 4 of 7 general secretaries at the university. Since we won both the FREP and beat the

Reds in the election at the university, we met in an Economic Sciences classroom and began to chant: Four cats have won! Four cats have won!”<sup>715</sup>

The overlapping of religious and political militancy facilitated by the unifying role of student *gremios* meant defiance of the *distinction of planes* model adopted within Catholic Action movements. Valdez's testimony also highlights Catholic students' agency in this challenging approach. He commented that,

“Almost... all the university political militancy of UNEC [Arequipa] was in the FREP. ... We had a very strong student militancy, very innovative, combative, and effective. It was an ecclesial militancy, and we were also opening ourselves up to the political world. The movement's richness was enormous...

We, who were in the south [of Lima] ... did not ask anyone's permission to do what we did. And despite the 'division of planes,' we remained committed to Christian Democracy... And when we won the FREP ... I was responsible for the propaganda campaign. Which was the mimeograph we used to do all the advertising? The one from UNEC! ... Night and day, I worked with UNEC's mimeograph to win the FREP... If I had told Don Gustavo, he probably would have said... that it was not ok. [This is] to give you an idea of how things were flexible, despite the theology.”<sup>716</sup>

---

<sup>715</sup> Ibid.

<sup>716</sup> Ibid.



Cuzco-Peru's militant Juan Mendoza offers us another perspective. This was, as mentioned, that of the subjective and lived (experience) dimension of faith, which filled in with *meaning* the students' social and political life. He noted that,

“My perspective is provincial, in contrast [for example] with [that of] Lima.

Lima was always a different thing...

I graduated high school in 1965. We... were a generation of highly politicized young people. I [had been] elected student president of [high] school on the side of *The Reds*, and in this program, more than atheists, we were anticlerical.

By 1966, the Communist Party...had divided itself...between the pro-Chinese and pro-Russians...and we stayed in the center...in one nucleus: The *red nucleus*.

And we entered the university. Curiously, in that process, [we might say] all atheists became Christians, and all Christians became atheists.!

And there was a Salesian priest, Fr. Capela; we invited him to talk around coffee.

He was cultured [and] logical, and since atheism is very Thomist [and] dogmatic, he knew how to debate. And one day, he showed us that God existed. ... We were in trouble!

So, we had a [question] that he knew how to answer: Great!... the chair exists, the room, the beer, God exists, and what does it matter to us?!

In that transit, I was president of first-year university students at my school [at the university student federation]. There, I was invited to UNEC. A boy, who saw me as a leader, invited me to a [spiritual] retreat. And there, I met Fr. Mario Galvez and Fr. Gustavo [Gutierrez]...

But curiously, from Christianity, I liked the non-political part...

Because I was [already] a politician.... That you must commit yourself politically.... How is that? ... because my grandfather had been a leader of the workers' federation. Politics was for me [the everyday life] ... that's why [the idea of] going for political commitment sounded like [weird] to me. I [said:] I come here to pray.!...

Later, I had a very nice approach. Fr. Galvez had studied in Leuven. He opened our understanding to prayer [and] to spirituality. And I liked the liturgy. Fr. Galvez had very modern training, very rational. One thing that I love... has always been... how.... the faith-science relationship is [discussed]. That experience with Fr. Mario was very nice because it was a formation in the dialogue between faith-science, faith, religion, and spirituality, which is very important.

That, politics does not give you.!

Amidst [the debate between idealists and materialists,] I believe that Fr. Mario accompanied that very well... [the position was] 'We are Catholics, and Christ is historical.' We had a discourse against rustic atheism... and that was why we discussed it in the streets...

There is this thing, 'faith,' which is revealed to you. The faith which [makes] you commit, feeds you, gives you a type of life, of peace... All this theology invites you to live in peace with God, your family, [and] yourself... Be good, be truthful. Little by little, you settle in, [and] you start feeling comfortable. There comes what I always say to people: one's encounter with God has a very profound *personal dimension*.

When I left the movement for a while, I dedicated myself to the *militancy of my faith* in a broader community, [in the midst] of popular traditions.

The Virgin of Cocharcas [is a case in point,] there you see that very clearly; ‘a history of the Christian.’ It is a place of pilgrimage; it is a sanctuary in the Andes. Once a year, pilgrims [come].... Then, [you see] a peasant, sitting with a candle next to the wall. Alone. I mean, he has made a [very long] trip! He lights his candle, and there he is. Then, there is that encounter; it is the personal dimension. Immediately ... there are two, three, five, seven, more, and it is a sea of lights. There is another dimension.! That he is not alone, there is the faith of the other. There comes the ‘we are *the believing people*’—*El pueblo creyente*.”<sup>717</sup>

Other oral histories confirm both the student *gremios* as places of ideological cross-fertilization and political socialization, and the MIEC and JECI movements as places where militants reconciled their traditional religiosity with the options offered by living a “mature” Christian faith. Coincident with the story in Part I and II, in which Southern-Cone countries received the anticipated and robust influence of the pioneering Brazilian JUC and the SLA-JECI's experience (the late 1950s and early 1960s), these testimonies show the generational renewal within the JUCs. In this case, MIEC-JECI movements also appeared as socialization places for a new JEC generation. The latter was highly receptive to Brazilian Catholic progressivism and left-winged intellectual influences on developmentalism and nationalism; and they were more willing than late-

---

<sup>717</sup> Mendoza, interview.

1950s pioneers to embrace the revolutionary moment. On these matters, Uruguayan Ernesto Katzenstein, former MIEC-JECI SLA member, commented that,

“I come from a very conservative Catholic family... I was 13 years old and [participated in activities organized at] the San Juan Bautista Parish... There was a progressive priest, Fr. Arnaldo Spadaccino. [His pastoral practice had] a social commitment, the commitment to the poor was clear. ... He encouraged us to create a JEC group in my school... [It was] 1961, I was in my second year [of middle school] ...

[Among that] group of people, I found many things: human solidarity, human warmth. I found people of different kinds... young men and women from all over Montevideo's neighborhoods, poor, several wealthy, and middle-class neighborhoods...

I lived in a very limited [traditional Catholic] world in my family, and there [JEC], I really found a way of interpreting religion that gave me more satisfaction...

Well, I started to feel a place for myself. ... In 1964 and 1965, I was a leader in the Montevideo JEC team. [Later, between] 1965 and 1966, I became a member of the JEC national team.

[By then] I was [already] enrolled in Preparatory School—the last high school years. ...There was a lot of political life.... I got engaged in militancy in the student groups. ... I started reading Marxism. I connected with anarchist groups, and ... there was a ‘melting pot.’ There were...all kinds of ideas, Socialist, Communist, Christian. ...

After the coup (1964), refugees arrived from Brazil, ... I encountered a sector of them who were leftist Christians, people linked to the government of Rio Grande do Sul, which was very progressive, the projects of Paulo Freire, [and] the universities. Third-Worldism was very strong... Gunder Frank had written about 'the development of underdevelopment.' ...

There was [also] a group of Christians that had emerged within Montevideo's JUC. They called it the Community of *La Teja*. ...Through the University Parish, I had a lot of contact with [them]. They had gone to live in a popular neighborhood and lived in a community. It was about making true the message of 'blessed are the poor,' of being together with the people and with 'the younger of my brothers.' All that idea! ... I was not in that group, but I was close, let us say on the border, in that environment....

We read, among others, Lebreton, Mounier, Quist... and the [university] parish was a hive of ideas. ...

In our little corner of the JEC ... we were more radical. I already had some *gremial* and political experience, [the same] as others. The JUC people ... were more established in society or on the way to settling in. We were freer in a way... [The theme of] Commitment was central... To be a Christian was to be a person of action, not a contemplative one. But naturally, there was a continuum, a spectrum of attitudes and values, and the youngest people (JEC), I think we moved on that scale without having a fixed position. But there was an urgency to act. Spirituality [was] important and lived within a group. It was a source of inspiration and

strength. The ‘self-giving’ and the ‘honesty’ in the commitment meant giving oneself openly, without folds, without half measures.”<sup>718</sup>

#### **6.4. The ‘*Ida al Pueblo*’ and the crisis of the ‘distinction of planes’ scheme**

In his outstanding and now classic book *Teologia de la Liberacion* (1971), Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez recounted the pastoral and theological process for which the Maritain scheme of the “distinction of planes” got exhausted and ultimately overcame within the Latin American theological turn.<sup>719</sup> This turn crafted slowly in the concatenated apostolic work among priests, apostolic lay movements (students and intellectuals, peasants, and workers), and theologians, was ultimately embraced by the region’s episcopate in Medellin, Colombia, in 1968. Many attempts followed to counter its scope and reach, though.

As referred by Fr. Gutierrez, the overflow consisted in that the scheme that had oriented Catholic Action movements with relative success during the last decades, had ceased to capture the essence of their apostolate. To the extent that lay movements, notably the youth’s, adopted clearer and more committed positions in response to the problems of their *milieu*, Fr. Gutierrez commented that the conceptual scheme was deemed insufficient because of its narrowness and alleged “asepsis.” In other words, the ambition of separating a spiritual plane from a temporal plane, which confined lay

---

<sup>718</sup> Ernesto Katzenstein, interview and written communication with the author, 10-08-2020.

<sup>719</sup> Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *A theology of liberation: History, politics and salvation* (Rev. ed.). Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988.

Christians' action to an evangelizing mission in the latter (*temporal*) without intervening directly or getting involved in everyday life politics, cracked. The agency of the lay movements in front of the pressing social reality was both cause and explanation of the impracticability of the model. As Fr. Gutierrez put it,

“...because of the very dynamics of the movement, the members felt compelled by circumstances to make more definite commitments; this necessarily led to a political radicalization incompatible with an official position of the Church which postulated a certain asepsis in temporal affairs.”<sup>720</sup>

Overall, a greater consciousness of the generalized situation of injustice and poverty in 1960s Latin America, interpreted from Marxist conceptual frameworks as a situation of oppression and alienation, unveiled the false ideal of a Church not intervening in *temporal* matters, as implied by the “distinction of planes” scheme. More sharply, it uncovered that the church's silences in front of injustice guarded a position that made her side with the oppressors and the established order. In Latin America, as Fr. Gutierrez explained, “the distinction of planes model [had] the effect of concealing the real political option of a large sector of the Church—that is, support of the established order.”<sup>721</sup>

---

<sup>720</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>721</sup> Ibid., pp. 40-41

As a result of progressive Catholics' growing awareness about the church as a historical institution, a new theological base arose in Latin America. The new theology provided new meanings to the Church-world relationship and other matters such as the autonomy of the temporal, secularization, and salvation. No doubt, therefore, about the agency of the laity—the perceived subaltern subject within the dominating Christendom model of the church—in this transformation. The Latin American Church and its specialized apostolic movements, as it did happen—even if fiercely combated by conservative sectors of the hierarchy and society—committed to creating a more just society and siding with the poor. The praxis of a *Committed Spirituality*, in time, was what implied the overflowing of both Catholic Action as a platform and the 'distinction of planes' as a framework for the laity's apostolate.

The discussion about the exhaustion of the *distinction of planes* scheme in the face of the students' growing *temporal* commitment is relevant insofar as it emerges as an explanation from the inside out of the tensions and vicissitudes in the everyday life of apostolic movements. It also shows that the theological turn formalized in Medellín-68 was as much a point of departure as it was too an arrival, in which apostolic student movements had significant agency. As a matter of fact, the denunciation of the church's false asepsis and its "tradition of inaction" to social injustice was not new among organized students. As the evidence in Parts I and II show, by the mid-1960s, the criticism had made a long itinerary appearing first during Catholic student conferences linked to CIDECA, all the way to the 1960s Seminars at *La Capilla*, Montevideo-62, Vilches, and Lima. Even more, the denunciation and bet to transform the church from the



inside out had acted as an agglutinating element, significant among others, in the Catholic student movement's identity.

While the movement's decision to *go to the poor*—amidst critical debates on the movement's identity (on which more in Chapter 7)—was formalized in the First CLA—*Consejo Latinoamericano MIEC-JECI*, celebrated in Cali, Colombia, in 1970, the truth is that, in practice, what was known as the *Ida al Pueblo*, had been an apostolic attitude already in practice since the mid-1960s. This was an attitude illuminated by the progressive church coming out from Vatican II to whose theology and ecclesiology Latin American reflections had also significantly contributed. Therefore, following the inductive logic of action and reflection, which we have sufficiently insisted on, the CLA consensus in 1970 has to be understood as a point of arrival, a systematization and general embracing, we might say, rather than a normative guideline.

Juan Mendoza remembers his role in this decision in 1967 as a breaking point for Cuzco's UNEC. He recalls that,

“At that moment, Vatican II is entering: the preferential option for the poor, structural violence, Matthew 10:34. Are you in favor, or do you leave everything? The Samaritan.... Do it today, not tomorrow; renounce wealth.! .... Theology becomes a call to action. It revolutionized [everything]!

That is where I come in with my generation.! Fr. Gustavo likes that anecdote: The moment [in which] the action for the poor was being voted on in the movement. It was 11 pm. I stopped and told them, ‘Wait a minute, this is very serious. Right

now [supposedly] I have to go to be a good professional, as usual, well-trained, but here [what we have to do is] going to the poor, so this is voted on, raising your hand and standing. And we voted for it, with our hands raised and standing. .... We voted and left. Do you see? I left with that [idea of] going to the poor. There was a pre-revolutionary situation. I could be a good professional; my parents were happy that ... I was a good student, and I was to be a great person, and suddenly, the [point] was not being a professional, the [point] was: *Going to the poor*. Live like them, be one more. Wow! Can you imagine? I did not graduate [at that moment]. I dropped out from the university at 21, and the day I dropped out, I told my father that I would live in the countryside... I went there for 17 years.”<sup>722</sup>

Gilberto Valdez’s memories add to this chronology and apostolic experience, and further detail his generation’s ruptures. Theologically and politically, alternatives were being crafted, and not everybody was willing to commit. His testimony shows, too, the participation of the movements in preparation for Medellin-68. Arguably, in this regard, movements were laboratories for theological and pastoral reflection and discussion. He recalls that,

“In 1966, I am elected president of UNEC-Arequipa. ... [By then] it was already clear that we had to commit to reality. In the language of the time, you had to come out of the university... We go to the *barriadas* (suburbs).

---

<sup>722</sup> Mendoza, interview.

In one of the movement's assemblies... I say: well, ... priorities and the movement have changed. It is not that we are leaving the university, but we are going to open ourselves up to reality and work in the slums with the poor, ... not only with university students...

And well, that was approximately in October... When we started next year, the directive commission and the assembly of leaders were ten people. [What happened?] General disbandment.! This commitment to reality. ... People left.! Everything was fine while we were at the university. Let us say: in part, we were a kind of club. [Being in the university] ... did not require much. [The] commitment occurred in [our] natural place...

I was very impressed because people began to leave in silence. And [if] we were at the university, everything was fine, but working in the slums did not appeal [to everybody]. If [we calculate] ... we went from 90 [militants] to 40 in a few months. In other words, the radicalization of the option meant decantation [of the movement] and a kind of 'this is who we are.'

In addition, [this happened] at a time when we did not have a theological foundation because the 'division of planes' had worked [before], but [now what?]

There was no alternative. I mean... 'what is the theological proposal?'

In 1967, for example, [UNEC] National Seminar consisted of studying the documents before Medellín. In [preparation for] Medellín, the Church ...formed several commissions ... over different topics [in various Latin American cities].

And each of these commissions presented a final document. And in the Seminar of 1967, we dedicated ourselves to discussing the papers before Medellín.

Because there was no theology, and certainly Don Gustavo was racking his brains trying to [think] What is the next step?"<sup>723</sup>

### **6.5. *Going to the poor, Commitment and the New Lefts***

By the mid-1960s, Latin American MIEC and JECI movements had started to share common identitarian elements. The central core agglutinating concept of this shared identity was Commitment. The movements' common practice of the RLM, the rise of a Committed Spirituality among them, and their members' increasing engagement in the student *milieu* and university *gremios* contributed, in turn, to an ideological cross-fertilization and more profound reflection on their *milieu* and historical conjuncture. These series of encounters, this research has contended, bridged the Catholic militancy and the politics of the thriving New Lefts.

Here a brief conceptualization of what we refer to as a New Left is needed. This dissertation coincides with Erick Zolov and others in that a new chronology and a broader understanding of the New Left is required to include the set of countercultural practices during the long-1960s beyond those that embraced violent political change and thus took part in armed revolutionary activities. Instead, both those inside the armed resistance loop and those outside of it are "twin facets of diverse and intersecting movements."<sup>724</sup> As

---

<sup>723</sup> Valdez, interview.

<sup>724</sup> Quote comes from Zolov, Eric. "Expanding our conceptual horizons: the shift from an old to a new left in Latin America." *A Contracorriente: una revista de estudios latinoamericanos* 5.2 (2008): 47-73. On this shared conceptualization see Zolov, Eric. "Introduction: Latin America in the Global Sixties." *The Americas* 70.3 (2014): 349-362. Van Gosse, "A Movement of Movements: The Definition and Periodization of the New Left," in Jean-Christophe Agnew and Roy Rosenzweig, eds., *A Companion to Post-1945 America*, London: Blackwell, 2002. Gould, Jeffrey L. "Solidarity under Siege: The Latin

Zolov notes, these facets would have posed radical challenges to political and social norms, confronted state power and patriarchal norms. In addition, we should also specify, some of these facets contested the traditional religiosities complicit with the status quo. More sharply and particularly addressed in this dissertation are practices that challenged a traditional and colonial expression of the Catholic Church and theology (Christendom model), which were historically instrumental to political power in Latin America.

At least three implications that we see as derived from this conceptualization give us a window to analyze progressive Catholic students' interactions with the New Lefts. One is the *ideological diversity implicit in countercultural practices* brought upon by what Zolov refers to as the "larger picture, ... of a generational shift" that involved "cultural practices, discourses, and aesthetic sensibilities."<sup>725</sup> As he puts it, in 1960s Latin America, being *on the left* meant more than choosing among competing ideological strategies steaming from the Soviet Union's approach to peaceful coexistence and reformism, China's radicalism, or even Cuban *Foquismo*. In this sense, the countless Guevarist, Trotskyite, and Maoist splinters within communist parties and other region-specific ideological elaborations showed that a more ideological diversity was in play. The literature on Latin America's Cold War has also rightly pointed out this diversity.<sup>726</sup>

---

American Left, 1968." *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 2 (2009): 348–75.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/30223783>.

<sup>725</sup> Ibid., p.55.

<sup>726</sup> Authors such as Gilbert Joseph, Greg Grandin, Hal Brands, Tanya Harmer, among others have drawn attention to the need of considering Latin American local actors' agency in the unfolding of the Cold War in the region. This implies moving away from seeing Latin America as a mere reflection of superpowers' geopolitical and ideological competition, and considering, instead, the series of long-running and overlapping conflicts and struggles, that escalated in intensity as the global conflict unfolded. One

Historian Rafael Rojas, for instance, notes that some of the ideological diversity came from within the region's own "revolutionary tradition," in which the paradigm of the Mexican revolution, revolutionary nationalisms, and populist and democratic elements of the first half of the century, ended up weighing more than any communist modality within the left.<sup>727</sup>

Arguably, the experience of 1960s MIEC and JECI students concurs with the historiographical consensus and provides a case in point to portray this ideological diversity. As a matter of fact, *Commitment*, as a conciliar pastoral-apostolic concept and evangelizing approach, as has been said, was the central piece feeding 1960s progressive Catholic students' counterculture. Also, as seen in Chapter 5, echoes of *Latinoamericanista* elements persisted at the foundations of the struggle for University Reform, where Christians had pledged to have a leading role.

Another path, among ideological influences less discussed during this and previous chapters, came from within the transformations among the bases of Christian

---

implication of this view is considering the intersection of local and global elaborations and dynamics in the making of the region's Cold War, which accounts for the circulation, reception, adaptation of ideas, and transnational ideological linkages. Hal Brands, for instance, has made the point that global dynamics such as Decolonization and the rise of Third-Worldism exacerbated and intersected with Latin American anti-imperialism and nationalism. Interestingly, within these intersections and regional ideological crafting, he points out that Liberation Theology "had momentarily disruptive implications. It framed everyday disputes in religious terms, adding a strong ideological element to these conflicts." Brands, Hal. *Latin America's cold war*. Harvard University Press, 2012, p. 86.

<sup>727</sup> Citing Tanya Harmer's work, Rojas notes that "...at the margin of the greatest or lesser ascent of the Cuban leadership over revolutionary processes that responded to their own causes, the political regime built by the few leftist projects that rose to power [from the Cuban Revolution up to the Nicaraguan one] ... did not reproduce the isle's socialist project." Rojas, *El árbol de las revoluciones*, p. 24. Translation of the quote is my own. Harmer's work cited corresponds to Harmer, Tanya. *Allende's Chile and the inter-American cold war*. Univ of North Carolina Press, 2011, pp.24-27 and 266-288.

Democratic parties. These transformations, telling of the ideological shifts led by the new generation and the revolutionary conjuncture feeding Christians' political culture, seemed to have represented the progressive wing embraced by a sector of the movement's militants. Speaking of the "continental crisis" of Christian Democracy, in 1969 Romeo Perez-Anton, a Uruguayan progressive Catholic and established writer of the *Vispera Magazine*, suggested the reasons for the exhaustion of the Christian Democracy's reformist impulse, as attested by the outgoing Chilean experience. Disconnection from the historical moment, and sterility of elitist doctrines with solid theoretical and ideological development but lacking social foundations, were mentioned as the background of a generational divide that described the crisis. Within the divide, one of these generations, according to Perez-Anton, still sought the third way, neither capitalist nor socialist; and, another, younger and more connected to the historical moment, saw itself as a political agent capable of delivering on a socialist revolution in Latin America.<sup>728</sup>

In the same *Vispera* issue, Rodrigo Ambrosio, a member of the Chilean Christian Democracy, presented points of view exchanged by the Latin American Christian Democratic Youth in two ideological-political seminars in 1968 and 1969. His explanation of the crisis confirmed that the situation caused by dependent capitalism, which "had risen as a system of domination in Latin America," confirmed the limits and sterility of the utopia once imagined by the Christian Democracies. He stated that "...the

---

<sup>728</sup> Perez-Anton, Romeo. "Hacia un aporte liberador. Informe: La DC ante su crisis," *Vispera*, No. 11, año 3, Julio 1969, pp. 50-55. Also, Romeo Perez-Anton, interview with the author, 04-09-2020.

[Christian Democratic] young people intended to claim socialism, not only as an utopia but as a concrete historical project, the product of the theoretical and practical experience of the people.” In this struggle, Ambrosio added,

“Marxism, stripped of its omniscient pretensions, purged of its circumstantial dogmatism, incorporated into contemporary science and culture, ceased to be an ‘enemy philosophy,’ [and began] to constitute a fundamental methodological contribution to the scientific analysis of our societies and a fruitful guide for revolutionary action.”<sup>729</sup>

Interestingly, on the matter, Gilberto Valdez commented how, amid the mentioned circumstances, *making the revolution* had become what we can call, in Pierre Bourdieu’s understanding, an *enjeu* or symbolic asset in dispute.<sup>730</sup> From his experience, Valdez states that,

“We, who [originally came from the Christian Democracy] wanted to show that... a non-Marxist revolution, [or] at least one not commanded by Marxists, was possible, ... We could not allow... that they appropriated the word ‘revolutionary’... We [also] wanted [and] thought of a revolution...[though] we had no idea what society would be like or anything like that. We were youths.”<sup>731</sup>

---

<sup>729</sup> Ambrosio, Rodrigo (*Relator*). “La DC y los caminos hacia una nueva sociedad. Informe: La DC ante su crisis,” *Vispera*, No. 11, año 3, Julio 1969, pp. 60-72.

<sup>730</sup> The notion of “*enjeux*” or “stakes” comes from Pierre Bourdieu’s theory and philosophy of action. See: Bourdieu, Pierre. *Practical reason: On the theory of action*. Stanford University Press, 1998.

<sup>731</sup> Valdez, interview.



Certainly, in discussing ideological variety within the movement, a decisive influence came from the various appropriations of Marxism. By the mid-1960s, the dialogue Christianity-Marxism seemed crucial in nourishing many progressive Catholic students' political options. In this respect, a 1972 issue of *Servicio de Documentacion* that was soon censored after its publishing—amidst internal disputes over regional leadership and the identity of the movement (on which more in Chapter 7)—shed some light.<sup>732</sup> In this issue, Ivan Jaramillo, by then a member of the SLA MIEC-JECI, explained the different marxisms that unfolded among the Catholic student militancy MIEC-JECI. Discarding a monolithic appropriation of Marxism within the movement, Jaramillo's document intended to be a systematization of a series of recent regional meetings and discussions on the relation faith-politics which, with the *Ida al pueblo*, had dominated the movement's agenda and concerns during the last years. The document reiterated what we have already pointed out—namely, the articulating role of the student *milieu*; and an aspect we have further specified, *gremios*, in the students' experience of faith and politics that facilitated ideological cross-fertilization and politicization of militants' Commitment choices.

---

<sup>732</sup> The reference is made on Jaramillo, Ivan. "La coyuntura del movimiento hoy: Vision historica II." *Servicio de Documentacion, Documento 1*, September 1972. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima-Peru. A digitized copy of the first part of this issue was kindly shared by Maria Tereza Franzin, Brazilian JEC militant and SLA member from 1971-1973. The Montevideo-Lima polarity was to make visible competing views and lines of action. Amidst disputes and controversy about the movement's identity, which included the possibility of terminating the SLA, the publication of this issue of *Servicio de Documentacion* faced strong censorship by Peruvian members of the movement. According to Gilberto Valdez, this was "the last *Centro de Documentacion's* document" they published. They read it, and they deemed it "unpublishable... it was an article on another theoretical line." Regarding censorship, Valdez stated, "The pressure was terrible, terrible, terrible.... we decided to remove the text from circulation." Valdez, interview.

According to Jaramillo, the *Ida al pueblo* within the movement was significantly informed by the Marxist-Christian dialogue in two lines. One was the “mechanistic Marxism” (*foquismo*) which had indeed captured many militants for being a practical scheme and easily connecting with “radical humanism” and “a faith in Christ taken to its ultimate consequences.” In this line, the process of radicalization and short insurgent experience, and the perennial martyrdom of Fr. Camilo Torres had a decisive regional influence.<sup>733</sup> Another was the “masses line,” seen in the pedagogical and humanist Marxism of Paulo Freire that supported the idea of consciousness-raising—*Conscientizacion*. This Marxism, Jaramillo explained, provided a practical method and “made us feel like *el pueblo* [and] collaborators with the most radical revolution of all because it change[d] man.” It was, therefore, a Marxism that articulated very well with the evangelization within the experiences of grassroots education.

By the beginning of 1970, Jaramillo commented, the failure of these first two appropriations came because of their “ineffective pragmatism.” *Foquismo* failed as it limited itself to being an “adventurous militarism;” and *Concientizacion* because, in his opinion, quickly transformed itself into populism. A reaction to this failure, Jaramillo explained, pushed militants to look for revolutionary theory. He commented how both

---

<sup>733</sup> Fr. Camilo Torres' options and martyrdom had immense resonance among MIEC and JECI students. A glance of Fr. Torres' influence can be observed through the *Vispera's Informe: Presencia y Memoria de Camilo Torres*, published *in memoriam*, one year after his death. *Vispera* No. 1, *año 1*, Mayo 1967. An account of Fr. Torres' life and apostolic choices can be found in Broderick, Walter J. *Camilo Torres Restrepo*. Planeta Colombiana, 1996.

Marta Harnecker's "*Los conceptos elementales del materialismo historico*" (1969), an Althusserian approach to structural-epistemological Marxism on the one hand, and Mao's *Little Red Book* and his *Four Essays on Philosophy*, became frequent readings. Harnecker had been herself a leader of late 1950s Chilean AUC. Her work, because of her initial Catholic activist trajectory and her pedagogical presentation, seemingly became for many the way to enter into contact with Marxism<sup>734</sup>.

On the other hand, Jaramillo commented, Maoist readings would have animated Christians to engage with groups and *guerrillas* of this orientation, because it tackled the problem of the masses, even if this forced to carry a clandestine faith. Ideological consistency, however, appeared to have been another reason. Ernesto Katzenstein, for instance, recalled that Uruguayan Maoists offered him “greater ideological solidity” than the Tupamaros-MLN-T, whom he had engaged with a year before. The latter, he recalls, exhibited a more empirical and pragmatic approach. For Katzenstein, who came from the solid intellectual environment of Catholic activism, one of their mottos, “the word separates us, and the weapons unite us,” was “nonsense.” In any case, many of the Uruguayan JEC militants ended up joining the MLN-T.<sup>735</sup>

---

<sup>734</sup> The reference is made on Harnecker, Marta, and Louis Althusser. *Los conceptos elementales del materialismo histórico*. Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1971. On the relevance of Harnecker's work and trajectory for the Latin American Lefts see Ellner, Steve. "Marta Harnecker (1937–2019)." *Science & Society* 84, no. 3 (2020): 416–419. Also, on Harnecker's trajectory during 1960s-1970s and her influence in Southern Cone countries' radical left movements, and transnational dialogs among militants of the region's New Left see Marchesi, *Latin America's Radical Left*, pp. 117-120.

<sup>735</sup> Katzenstein, interview. For Katzenstein, Camilo Torres's option of Christian Commitment had been decisive among MIEC and JECI and the student movements. When “they killed Camilo Torres ... it was a bomb! Everybody [started to think] ok, what we have to do here is [join] guerrillas, because there is no other way! [His death] was a huge shake!” See Marchesi, 2019, pp. 43-47 on the MLN-T's emphasis on morality and commitment along with a prominence of “*doing*, over the paralyzing ideological debates of

Jaramillo continued by alluding to other Christians with no formal revolutionary affiliation. More concerned by the problem of the masses and revolutionary practice, these militants, led by their Christian Commitment, would have formed what was known as “progressive or revolutionary Christian sectors.” They acted as “strategic allies” even though they were not part of the ranks of any political or insurgent movement.<sup>736</sup> Finally, another of the Marxist appropriations was Gramsci's “philosophy of praxis.” This strand, Jaramillo recapped, articulated itself well with the apostolic movements' Thomistic stands. This is as far as it presented itself as a method “...to interpret, live and transform the world” and a way in which the revolutionary man might “embody himself into the masses and their praxis.”<sup>737</sup>

Commenting on these involvements, Ernesto Katzenstein recalled in his interview that “the Cuban Revolution revolutionized many heads in Latin America.” Many Catholic militants chose the *guerrilla* path with different ideological accents. At the same time, other people with the strong influence of the Marxist-Christian dialogues started to look

---

the left”. Apparent “dualism between thinking and acting, between ideology and commitment” would have marked, however, a striking contrast with the progressive Catholics reflections on Commitment. For Vania Markarian 1968 Uruguayan student activism involved an “intersection of class and culture, the discovery of the social other and a personal transformation” which in her view portrays, among other factors, the significance of Catholic activism's social work and solidarity tasks in the rise of the MLN-T. Markarian, Vania. *Uruguay, 1968*. University of California Press, 2016. Also, a relevant account of MLN-T's identity is offered in Aldrighi, Clara. *La izquierda armada: ideología, ética e identidad en el MLN-Tupamaros*. Ediciones Trilce, 2001.

<sup>736</sup> Jaramillo, “La coyuntura del movimiento,” *Servicio de Documentación*.

<sup>737</sup> Ibid.

for a non-Cuban way to revolution. Many began to depart from Social-Christianism, for it “seemed very lukewarm to them.”<sup>738</sup> Sharply, on this issue, Gilberto Valdez asserted in his testimony that the five *lines of liberation* identified by the Secretariat already showed the diversity of Catholic militants’ choices. Nationalists, Socialists, Communists, Christian Democratic, and New Left (parties and insurgent paths) made all part of the Catholics’ practical ways of Commitment. He recalled that the Cuban Revolution of the first years, which raised the possibility of making a revolution without the need for communism or even Marxism, had opened up important options for many Catholic militants. This was the case in Southern-Cone countries where there was a pronounced nationalism. Valdez comments, for instance, Peronism, which received many Catholic militants “and was quickly becoming a guerrilla ... shouted, *Neither Yankees nor Marxists, Peronists!*” Valdez ratified that not all militancy had the same political orientation. At the national level, the emphases were different, and the value of naming these five lines consisted in that “we recognized the political expressions of the continent.”<sup>739</sup>

Nevertheless, Valdez concurred that the dialogue Marxism-Christianism was, indeed, crucial. The communist parties’ “loss of intellectual property over Marxism” after the Sino-Soviet split and the early years of the Cuban Revolution, he recalls, opened the door to new appropriations of Marxist theory. In doing so, it served as a decisive input

---

<sup>738</sup> Katzenstein, interview.

<sup>739</sup> Valdez, interview.

contributing to Catholics' radicalization; he pointed out. On the vanishing perception of a unique way to Marxism, he comments,

"[The loss of this intellectual property] made Marxism become a theory that was available. And people of my generation... started to study Marxism. And ...one began to discover that there was Marx, ... [but also] different authors who [showed] the contradictions of Marxism. [And indeed] the radicalization [of the movement more or less] since 1967, generated an opening to Marxism... [especially] as a method of analysis."<sup>740</sup>

In this way, Valdez's memories also sharply added to unveiling the limitations of the Cuban model in the region, as also noted by Harmer and Rojas.<sup>741</sup> Regarding the possibilities of regional reproduction of the isle's project, his reading of the historical moment, as MIEC-JECI Latin American Secretary by 1971, was that:

"Cuba was a model, but it had not [enough] weight [regionally]. When it came to sending people to train, it had political and ideological weight. But [the Cuban model] did not have a powerful Latin American [appeal]."<sup>742</sup>

---

<sup>740</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>741</sup> Rojas, *El árbol de las revoluciones*, p. 24; and Harmer, *Allende's Chile*, pp.24-27 and 266-288.

<sup>742</sup> *ibid.* On the issue of the criticism steaming from progressive Catholic views around Cuban Foquismo see Methol-Ferre, Alberto "La Revolución verde oliva, Debray y la OLAS" in *Vispera* No. 3, year 1, October 1967, and "Precisiones sobre la crítica al foquismo" in *Vispera* No. 5, year 2, April 1968. While Methol-Ferre's criticism was not MIEC-JECI's official position at all, the Latin American nationalist critique did represent one stream of objection. The fundamental criticism, as explained by Methol, laid in the ignorance of "the Latin American national question" that because of the misunderstanding of the Latin American historical process distorted the Latin American balkanization and reduced the struggle for liberation to a strictly military issue." *Vispera* 3 p.19. Also, the allusion to a "Continental Revolution" was halfway to the "National Latin American Revolution" and the goal of "Integration... ha[d] taken on a whiff of technocrats, a false apolitical and neutral air." p. 17 *Vispera* 5, p.17.

All in all, “I think that Christians made every possible choice,” Ernesto Katzenstein concluded.<sup>743</sup> And as various oral testimonies recall, it is not that the MIEC-JECI movement had an explicitly political purpose but that *committing* to the *milieu* amidst the 1960s historical conjuncture made the apostolic action inseparable from political practice. On the matter, Valdez commented,

“Our role [at the Secretariat] was not partisan-political. We did not encourage anyone to enter any political line. We encouraged what was called, back then, Commitment. Get involved in one of these lines.! We animated in the evangelical sense... to commit. [Though] we did not impose anything...”<sup>744</sup>

Arguably, in the context of these myriad involvements, Catholics acted as cultural brokers of Commitment. Amidst conversations facilitated by university *gremios* over the united fight for social justice, Catholics would have disseminated interpretative frameworks and practical implications of a historical project committed to the liberation of men, with a preferential option for those oppressed. Furthermore, through such interactions, progressive Catholics would have actively partaken in the envisioning and

---

<sup>743</sup> Katzenstein, interview.

<sup>744</sup> Valdez, interview.

making of the revolution; they also would participate in the rising networks of transnational revolutionary political culture and solidarity.<sup>745</sup>

A second implication of the proposed conceptualization of the New Left is considering a broader concept of *the political* beyond parties and institutions. This is, as far as we ponder countercultural practices, *the everyday life and subjectivities* acquire meaningful analytical weight as spaces in which the redefinition of social orderings also occurs.<sup>746</sup> Significantly, an array of recent historiography shed light on issues of subjectivity, sociability, the everyday life, and counterculture in Latin American Catholic student movements' activism. Dominella, Mourelle, Chavez, and collections edited by Andes and Young, and another by Büschges, Müller, and Oehri are part of this effort.<sup>747</sup>

---

<sup>745</sup> On the unfolding of these networks and the transnational scope of political culture and solidarity see: Marchesi, Aldo. *Latin America's Radical Left*. Also, Mor, Jessica Stites, ed. *Human rights and transnational solidarity in Cold War Latin America*. University of Wisconsin Press, 2013.

<sup>746</sup> An intellectual tradition that builds on Hanna Arendt's political philosophy and stretches to Bourdieu's theory of action and contemporary post-structuralism by scholars such as Mouffe, Laclau, and Lechner has offered relevant elaborations on this matter. They uncover the dynamics through which subjective structures are socially produced. Moreover, they reveal how subjective structures sustain objective structures of society through cultural reproduction, though they are also capable of challenging them. Furthermore, they argue in favor of considering conflict as an "integral dimension" of social relations, therefore, reasserting politics as a place of conflict. For a broader exposition on these matters see Mouffe, Chantal. *The return of the political*. Vol. 8. Verso, 2005; Laclau, Ernesto, and Chantal Mouffe. *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics*. Vol. 8. Verso Books, 2014; Lechner, Norbert. *Los patios interiores de la democracia: subjetividad y política*. Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1990.

<sup>747</sup> Reference is made on Dominella, Virginia Lorena. "Catolicismo liberacionista y militancias contestatarias en Bahía Blanca;" García Mourelle, Lorena. *Militancia juvenil católica en Uruguay (1966-1973): un acercamiento a sus estrategias de incidencia en la Universidad*. 2020; Chávez, Joaquín M. *Poets and Prophets of the Resistance*; Andes and Young, eds. *Local church, global church*; Christian Büschges, Andrea Müller and Noah Oehri, eds. *Liberation Theology and the Others: Contextualizing Catholic Activism in 20th Century Latin America*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2021.,



While examining Catholic militants' and movements' everyday life escapes the analytical emphasis of this research, this chapter has uncovered spiritual, ethical, and political contours of Commitment that fed militants' daily life engagements and political culture. The discussion, for instance, of how the deepening of students' commitment broke the mold of the "distinction of planes" is already an affirmation of the relevance of students' everyday entanglements and their capacity to reshape the known social/apostolic order.

Also, in their publications and reports, the MIEC-JECI SLA recorded a myriad of examples of militants and local movements' countercultural practices within the different processes they engaged in; from *parroquias universitarias* and diocesan teams to *popular* pastoral experiences and participation in student *gremios*, grassroots social processes, intellectual work, and public activism. Among these various engagements, it is notable how local movements took advantage of critical *political opportunities* to carry out collective actions that were both disruptive of the existing balance of forces within the mechanics of social consent and dissent, and affirmative of their position on the side of "just causes." Besides being a testimony of their Commitment to the *milieu*, through the practice of the RLM, these collective actions had the effect of gradually forging and consolidating the movements' identity around shared values.

For instance, a 1969 issue of *Servicio de Documentacion* replicated a letter by Fr. Pelegri (advisor) to the Cali-Colombian EUC militancy, commenting on the strong participation of EUC in the *Universidad del Valle's* student movement strike in defense

of the “cultural autonomy of the university” and to express “rejection of U.S. imperialism.” Specifically, the mobilization occurred to counter “North American influence in the Colombian University, on the occasion of a training course that professors at the university gave to 80 members of the Peace Corps.” Fr. Pelegri recalled that EUC was “a group of Christians who [came] together to help each other better live their Christianity... and to bear testimony through life and word 24 hours a day.” He highlighted the challenge that this involvement had meant for a reflection in light of faith. He warned of the intensity of the internal dynamism of the student action while also giving recommendations on carrying out a Life Review of that *lived event* that filled the student environment and that, due to its intensity, made Christian judgment difficult.<sup>748</sup>

For Oliverio Henao, a member of EUC in Medellin-Colombia, political opportunities that were taken by Catholic student movements were formative of their identity. They were a means by which Christians achieved consensus on the interpretation of the reality they lived in, on the side of history that Christianity and the church should be on. It was also a way to show within the University that not only Marxists but Christians “were people who participated in the ideological [debate] and the conflicts affecting University life.”<sup>749</sup> Commenting on the EUC’s milestone experience at the *Universidad de Antioquia’s* strike in 1965, Oliverio Henao recalled that,

---

<sup>748</sup> “1968: Los Cristianos en la Universidad del Valle (Cali, Colombia),” *Servicio de Documentacion, Sub-serie 3, documento 4*. MIEC-JECI, 1969. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima-Peru.

<sup>749</sup> Oliverio Henao, interview with the author, 01-20-2022.

“We led that strike. We had penetrated the leading structures of the university and achieved being among the directive cadres of university committees. [So] we organized and led the strike [through] the Student Federation and forming a Strike Committee... We acted together with the Marxists... [and] summoned the workers... The strike had begun in solidarity ...for the death of a student due to police repression. We initiated the strike in Antioquia, and it spread throughout the country...

We had produced a newspaper called *Foro Libre*... it showed our criteria, what we agreed with and what we did not [in relation] to the limitations of the hierarchical order of the church....

What we did in EUC is very important because we showed that we were where there were just causes. In those [actions], we had the opportunity to meet with other sectors. For example, the unionist sector... support[ed] many of these student demonstrations. [Also] EUC began to be highly respected by students in the university, and obviously, [also] by Marxists."<sup>750</sup>

On the other hand, resistance to a clerical and hierarchical church allied with existing social orders and, instead, promoting a *church of the poor* was one of the more common and extended countercultural practices among progressive Catholic student movements. By the mid-1960s, almost all movements had experiences to share about demonstrations, pilgrimages, or performances that sought to unveil the caducity of the

---

<sup>750</sup> Ibid.

existing church model. These demonstrations intended to challenge clericalism and overtly defy the authority of conservative church authorities. Ernesto Katzenstein, for instance, recalled the transgressing action of 1964 Uruguayan JUC militants as a way of protesting the conservative approach of the Nuncio or pope's ambassador, Monsignor Raffaele Forni. Katzenstein recalls the scandalous graffiti painting on the walls of the apostolic nunciature with the message of "*Beato Pauperis*" (blessed be the poor) and the whistling by JUC militants at one of his public interventions.<sup>751</sup>

Similarly, Gilberto Valdez recalled the 1971 Arequipa-Peruvian UNEC demonstration demanding the Catholic church "to renounce power." On the matter, Valdez comments that,

"On the occasion of the appointment as Bishop of conservative Fr. Fernando Vargas Ruiz de Somocurcio, the Movement organized a demonstration. Very funny because the young Jesuits of that time had [access to] intelligence information... Surely the government had told them that UNEC was planning something. They were very alert to care for the bishops... UNEC prepared flyers and banners, and [UNEC] entered the mass. The bishop came in. ... Nobody improvised. And the girls handed out the flyers from the front row to everyone [as if it was] a school class... [The flyers read] 'For a church that is just and in solidarity ... with the poor. Not institutionalized. Away from power, etc.' And, at

---

<sup>751</sup> Katzenstein, interview.

the moment of the communion, [UNEC] displayed the banners that said: ‘for a church with the poor’ ... So, the priests... were desperate.! They took UNEC out, of course.! Afterwards, we laughed at the moment when the girls handed—let us say ten—flyers to the lady in the front row, dolled up lady, [they were] pure aristocracy! ... military generals in front, etc. They themselves passed the flyers out!”<sup>752</sup>



Figure 12. A student demonstration demanding the Catholic Church “to renounce power” and advocating a “poor church.” On the occasion of Fr. Fernando Vargas Ruiz de Somocurcio’s consecration as bishop. Arequipa-Peru, 1971. A photo record courtesy of UNEC Peru.

Other more subtle cases confirm the relevance of *everyday life* in the construction of *the political*—namely, that which occurs mediated by the pedagogical experience and

---

<sup>752</sup> Valdez, interview.

involves collective agency in the production of both subjectivities and aspirations for social conviviality and order. Experiences involving students' assistance with parishes' pastoral work and educative and grassroots promotion were both opportunities taken by Catholic students to push forward the historical project inherent to a Committed Christian spirituality—namely, the *siding with the poor* perspective.

Rosa Alayza, a member of the Peruvian UNEC in the 1970s, recalled the materialization of the *ida al pueblo* and the *siding with the poor* perspective in her work for as long as seven years, assisting the pastoral work with young people and neighborhoods with small communities in the parish of Vitarte—a historical working-class and peasant community on the outskirts of Lima. While Vitarte's parish priest had not committed to a Liberationist perspective, Rosa Alayza highlights the impact caused by parish activities that “we organized but to which we [students] input the perspective of the option for the poor.” Activities included large religious processions that, by “having stopped the central highway” and accompanying strikes with labor demands of the villagers, constituted a way in which the lay apostolate ascertained its pedagogical and political dimension. Occasionally, the accompaniment of villagers' demands would have made deliberate use of religious semiotics to bolden their significance. She recalled that “we convinced [the priest] to invite his friend Cardinal Juan Landazuri to give the mass. ... The cardinal gave the mass, and that was a boost [to the people’s demands]. The Cardinal gave a sermon in favor of the people, asking for peace and against violence.”

Indeed, these experiences, as Alayza noted it, drew the news attention and confirmed to public opinion that the church was on the side of the poor.<sup>753</sup>

On the other hand, Paulo Freire's Liberating Education model and literacy method through *conscientización* and *problematización* had a critical influence on progressive Catholics' activism. As shown by consecutive publications of *Servicio de Documentación* in 1969, Freire's model significantly informed experiences of literacy, consciousness-raising, and grassroots promotion through the empowerment and mobilization of peasants and workers, developed by MIJARC in Southern Cone countries. The publication presented experiences that, building on preceding Brazilian experiments, developed in Argentina and Uruguay in which MIEC and JECI students would have also been involved.<sup>754</sup>

Also, oral testimonies confirm this influence. For instance, Cecilia Tovar, a former Lima-Peru UNEC militant in the 1960s, comments on consciousness-raising and literacy programs developed for impoverished populations in Peru. While many of these experiences, especially in Peruvian provinces, were practical forms of Commitment that preceded militants' further political and insurgent involvements, in other cases, particularly in Lima, they embodied a rejection of the insurgent solution. This singularity

---

<sup>753</sup> Rosa Alayza, interview with the author, 07-06-2019.

<sup>754</sup> "Concientización (1) Una Experiencia de Concientización con M.I.J.A.R.C. en el Cono Sur," *Servicio de Documentación, Serie 2 documento 7*. MIEC-JECI, 1969. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima-Peru.

distinguished the militants' experience in Lima from the provinces where more radical forms of Commitment were embraced.

As Cecilia Tovar comments, in UNEC Lima, there was a consensus that “it was not the path of violence that could transform the unjust system” because, explained from the same perspective as Freire, “the oppressed had to liberate themselves and not only be directed or liberated from the outside.” She added that,

“We used to say that the poor must be the agent of their own destiny... to work through popular organization and not through leading cadres who direct a revolutionary process from very small parties... Before Medellin [-68], we were already clear that violence is not the way because it can cause the leading cadres to get empowered rather than all the population.”<sup>755</sup>

Cecilia Tovar exemplifies UNEC-Lima students' involvement in literacy and grassroots promotion through the government's program of *Cooperación Popular Universitaria*, which some UNEC students took advantage of to develop their Commitment experience. She comments that Catholic students took the opportunity opened since Belaunde's term in office (1963-68) and later deepened under Velasco's military regime (1968-1975) to both infuse an ethical-political perspective in agreement with the *siding with the poor* perspective and add meaning to the unfolding of literacy

---

<sup>755</sup> Cecilia Tovar, interview with the author, 07-10-2019.



programs and agrarian reform. According to Tovar, Freire's Liberating Education and Method concepts were critical in this task. As Cecilia Tovar remembers,

“It was a time in which students discovered that there was a country beyond the university. There were the country's problems...[vulnerable] women, illiterate people, and peasants... In short, [this] brought about the politicization of the students. ...

This [literacy] experience was not massive. Still, it was very important. ... [In Lima and its surroundings, there were experiences that since 1964] UNEC and the FEPUC [*Federacion Estudiantil de la Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Peru*] organized together. ... [I participated by doing] a survey [in one of those experiences in the Comas district, to the north of Lima] ... we found out the living conditions and whether people knew how to read and invited them to form groups.”<sup>756</sup>

Lastly, the third implication to consider over the New Left's conceptualization is a relational perspective that acknowledges the mutual influence of all collective actors involved. Therefore, it is to recognize the *mutual permeability of social processes* in which actors shaped one another and, within, acknowledge the impact on the region's political culture of the Catholics' decision to “go to the poor.” A matter of interest for this research is progressive Catholics' and the New Left organizational experiences' reciprocal definition. An example of this porosity has already been commented on in this

---

<sup>756</sup> Ibid.

chapter when referring to the movement's tailoring of the methodology of the RLM. As mentioned in the SLA systematization document, the dialogue with social processes involving peasants', workers', and students' mobilizations, in some of which political and ideological leftist expressions prevailed, seemed to have been key in promoting openness to new social theories and a singular redefinition of the mechanics of the method in the region. Needless to say, the very definition of the theological renewal in progress was *per se* the result of the dialogues between the theological conceptions, apostolic, and pastoral work with the cultural and social circumstances of the *milieu* and intersections with leftist intellectual and social organizational expressions, among other sources.

In all cases, it is meaningful to consider that both militants' *fermenting* type of apostolic action and the expectation that they would *make their faith explicit* while involved in the *milieu* were crucial—pedagogical—*mediations*. These mediations would have allowed their Committed Spirituality to permeate social processes, revolutionary and countercultural actions in which they engaged.

It is out of the scope of this research to address fully the strength with which Commitment, as a Christian apostolic attitude—and presumably ideology, if we might want to embrace Fr. Araujo's approach—resonated within the new political paths among the Lefts. While this issue opens avenues for further research, it is crucial to acknowledge this intersection as a peculiarity in the configuration of the New Left in Latin America. The relevance of this recognition consists of reckoning with how the intimacy of spirituality played in the construction of social relations, interacted with other ideological

stances, negotiated the nature of their historical project, and built common grounds for crafting projects of social change. This consideration entails addressing the relation between ethics, religion, and the public sphere. In so doing, it contests the “secularization thesis” while stressing the significance of faith-driven actions in the analysis of the long-1960s countercultural youth experience and the Latin American cultural Cold War.<sup>757</sup>

Despite the limitations to further developing this argument here, we state that in their intersection with the New Left, Catholic militants left meaningful imprints on the Latin American political culture. They promoted the pursuance of Christian Commitment’s ethical values and taught the preferential option for the poor and the ways to live a committed life within the *milieu*. Moreover, they contributed to empowering and organizing grassroots communities by unfolding their strategy of raising consciousness among grassroots sectors and acting as *organic intellectuals*. They animated and accompanied the poor to “take the reins of their own history.” In doing so, they ultimately worked for the expansion of citizenship and democracy in the region.

Still, we can provide a case in point out of the experiences of double militancy of former Peruvian UNEC militants. Alfredo Pezo comments on some of the complexities that, in his view, were implicit in the intersections between a Catholic militancy of

---

<sup>757</sup> On the contestation of the *secularization thesis* see Casanova, José. “The secular and secularisms,” *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 76.4 (2009): 1049-1066. Also, Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 1994; Calhoun, Craig “Secularism, citizenship and the public sphere,” in: Calhoun, Craig, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Jonathan Van Antwerpen, eds. *Rethinking secularism*. OUP USA, 2011

Commitment and political militancy within New Left organizations. Pezo was a UNEC-Arequipa militant while also engaged with the Peruvian New Left party *Vanguardia Revolucionaria-VR*. Pezo highlights the intense politicization among provincial UNEC movements by the late 1960s, the relevance of the Christian-Marxist debates, and the resonance of some circulating revolutionary narratives with UNEC's identity. He comments that by 1969, the nuclei of UNEC were well-formed both in Peruvian public and Catholic universities. And after having embraced Commitment, they found themselves amidst the heated debates in which the New Lefts were configuring and envisioning a socialist future for Latin America. He comments that,

“I joined [UNEC] in 1969, and I found myself in that environment. ...many social progressives were dominating UNEC and were beginning to assume more pro-Marxist and pro-socialist positions...but at the same time, there was very strong criticism of pro-Chinese and pro-Soviet positions for their dogmatism and atheism. ... The interest in the *popular* was already palpable in UNEC... and we began to take a more leftist position. ...

There was [an] atmosphere of political debate with the dogmatic left, progressivism that appeared as a product of the changes, the reformism and nationalism [of the military regime] of Velasco Alvarado, and the Cuban Revolution. [These] brought us to the debate on Socialism....

The myth of the New Man... was very strong. We needed to form the New Men to cope with the situation [of Latin America], and the New Man had to have a profound social dimension.”<sup>758</sup>

Pezo insists, however, that it was not only about the formation of a New Man, in a humanist sense, but also including the religiosity of the Latin American people. In this respect, he points out that,

“The only way to understand Latin America is that [there was] not only the exploited men. The Latin American people were exploited and believers. That [was] the underlying thesis.... Engage with a partisan political option in Latin America is to accept an ideology of a people [that is both] exploited and believer... Because we [were] all against exploitation, but not all of us were with the belief. And many times, we take away the belief of the people... when [rather] we should have reinforced it so that from [there] they were... more coherent.”<sup>759</sup>

By the end of the sixties, and as a result of these intersections, Pezo points out that the idea of forging a New Man had penetrated deeply into the movement’s identity.

“UNEC’s identity [had consolidated around four elements.] One, the idea of forging the New Men; two, maintaining the unity of faith and politics: the people are believers and exploited; three, the protagonist is *the popular*, the people.

---

<sup>758</sup> Alfredo Pezo-Paredes, interview with the author, 05-27, 28 & 29 -2020.

<sup>759</sup> Ibid.

[Finally] the space is the community.... So, our life had to respect those four areas.”<sup>760</sup>

On the influence of the New Lefts on the movement and UNEC-Peru militants’ political commitments, Alfredo Pezo comments that,

“The political currents that influenced the national UNEC movement were three. The MIR [with a UNEC’s minority group of adherents within] had an approach to *the popular* promoting the military struggle. [Very few other militants] within communists pro-Chinese and pro-Soviet [currents]. The third current, which was the one that dominated, was *Vanguardia Revolucionaria*—VR....

When I was UNEC-Arequipa’s president, I did not need [to get militants for the party because] I already had my militants. The majority of those from UNEC were VR militants.”<sup>761</sup>

Pezo explained why most UNEC students would have found in VR an option for their political commitment. He said that in the context of the UNEC militancy’s criticism of the dogmatism and atheism of pro-Chinese and pro-Soviet positions,

“We took an independent [political] position. And VR adapted to that [positioning]. While the pro-Chinese and pro-Soviet Communist parties

---

<sup>760</sup> Ibid.

<sup>761</sup> Ibid.

demanded militancy and adherence from us, these [VR] respected political independence a little more.”<sup>762</sup>

Moreover, Pezo recalls that, by the early 1970s, there were three ideological leanings within the Latin American Left and explains which was the dominant position among progressive Catholic students. The Catholic movement’s experience of raising consciousness among the grassroots seems to have been critical.

“The dispute was over the intensity [of the Latin American situation]. It is summed up in the following: is it time... already, for the seizure of power?... [There was the line of] Lenin of the assault on power, Gramsci's with the siege to achieve power, and the other, [which had recently emerged along with the Chilean experience, was] the electoral route to become government and power. We were more for the position of preparing the conditions for the seizure of power. Why do they accept us [in VR]? Because we were the bridge! ‘We are talking about a labor movement [the bases], and you are [talking] about armed groups. Where is your peasantry?’ We were there to show them social organization... UNEC was a broader expression of a call for a more Gramscian revolution, more social, more [of construction] of social hegemony than taking power. That is why it focuses on the person, the community, and relationships. And the protagonist is not the party, but the people.”<sup>763</sup>

---

<sup>762</sup> Ibid.

<sup>763</sup> Ibid.

Juan Mendoza, a UNEC-Cuzco member who joined VR in 1967, also contributes valuable insights from his double militancy experience. He adds details on the work within grassroots communities by Catholic militants who had also joined VR. In grassroots engagements, he explained, Christian militants would have assumed the role of *organic intellectuals* that aided community organization and leadership. They, however, needed the accompaniment of local leaders to legitimate their leadership. Furthermore, Mendoza adds insight into how the relationship between faith and politics and a church deeply committed to grassroots communities also transformed the Catholic movement.



Figure 13. Depicting years of social organizing behind the popular mobilization. Juan Mendoza, UNEC-Cuzco's (Peru) militant with a peasant leader promoting grassroots organization. 'Peasant rally in Santa Rosa district, Melgar-Puno, 1979.' Photography: Alvaro Villarán. Archivo IPA, Alvaro Villarán (Avillaran) Benno Frey (BFrey). A photo record courtesy of Juan Mendoza.



Commented Juan Mendoza that,

“We did organizational work... organizing and organizing... The intellectual and peasant leader [had to go side by side]. If [the intellectual] goes alone, they do not believe him.! So, we always worked in pairs... We did technical training, rallies, community work... accompanied strikes, etc... What happened in the southern Andes did not occur in other parts of Peru!...

[This is how] the movement comes out from itself and inserts into the local churches...with progressive hierarchies, and... we got together [with] the people, and a very interesting *popular pastoral* model emerged, which had, on [the other] side, politics.

There were not many in the movement, but they were lay cadres, trained; we inserted ourselves into this theological reflection... It was about accompanying the people’s experience, ... the exploited and believing people ... Do you see? Then, there is no longer specialized pastoral... Another theology of the relationship with the people, of the people’s faith, was emerging.”<sup>764</sup>

Seemingly, within Catholic students’ daily activism there existed practices common to the overlapping processes of militancy. This, however, did not compromise each of these spaces’ autonomy. In Peru, a shared intellectual universe that included “readings of Marxism, the works by Mariategui, and developmental currents of Latin America,” among other sources, was part of the university’s intellectual cosmos, which

---

<sup>764</sup> Mendoza, interview.

was also addressed in training processes within the party (VR). Although contrasted by theological, biblical, and ecclesiological discussions, these same referents were also discussed at UNEC. For Alfredo Pezo,

“[militancy constituted] bridges and [there was] autonomy of spaces. So, you lived in two spaces, a space of praxis, social-political change, and a space of community, personal exchange, social, human, and family life, because the axis of UNEC’s task was the Review of Life Method.”<sup>765</sup>

Juan Mendoza also comments on the intersecting intellectual exploration in student life. Significantly, he highlights the role of UNEC and the movement’s advisors in contributing, through dedicated reflection, to militants’ gaining greater theoretical clarity and awareness about the *transcendence* of the ideological disputes that surrounded the student life.

“[When], the Left started to split...the movements also began to split up ... there were different expressions, [and] there is the weight of the advisers who managed to build a higher floor for a reflection that sometimes ...

Gustavo's role was very important! To know how to transcend. There were issues on the agenda that transcended. We studied a lot of Marxism in the movement; I remember Fr. Gustavo gave us a course on Marxism... [and] we studied Mariategui, and what I learned at UNEC from Father Mario was the bible. ...And from Fr. Pedro! the bible, the bible! Manage it, talk about it, understand it.! There

---

<sup>765</sup> Pezo-Paredes, interview.

was a solid formation on that. So, you had, that the movement maintained its communities, and the most dynamic sector at that time were the cells that were politically militant.”<sup>766</sup>

Despite the apparent strength that UNEC militants could offer the political party in the formation—mainly through a consciousness-raising approach—and organization of unions and peasant communities, Alfredo Pezo and Juan Mendoza comment on the difficulty of making their faith explicit. While many subsisted with a clandestine faith, others achieved acceptance of their faith. On the subject, Pezo recalls that,

“When I entered the central committee of the Party, they told me: you must decide between being a [Christian] believer or [party leader, because] we cannot have any [Christian] believers here ... [There was] suspicion that the Christians were infiltrating. ... Then I answered: ... I don’t think there is incompatibility. Let me explain... And I talked for two hours about Liberation Theology. They were silent. ... I had won the ideological battle.”<sup>767</sup>

Juan Mendoza adds some nuances. He comments on what might have been a feeling of double exclusion—namely, from the church’s hierarchy and UNEC-Lima due to his option of commitment: political militancy; and, from VR because of his faith. On the matter, he commented that,

---

<sup>766</sup> Mendoza, interview.

<sup>767</sup> Pezo-Paredes, interview.

“Christian commitment is romantic, so [you need the] effectiveness [of politics.] ... To have a revolutionary commitment, you had to be in a [political] party. And we joined the [political] party. Although they rejected us [because we were Christians] ... We were second-class militants... but little by little, we became [party] leaders. ...

Sometimes, [also,] within the church, we were seen as if we were using it. We were also [seen with] mistrust by the hierarchy. But we were there. ...Liberation Theology called for action, and UNEC transformed itself into communities with neighborhood and union commitment...

[Also] in [UNEC] Lima...[sometimes] they said we were communists [because] we were active and public leaders in leftist parties. In Lima, they did see a conflict with us. But [in the Andean south] ... the bishops of the south... they had seen us since we were little... .... in the *Comunión Pascual*, praying, [organizing] things... they had no conflict with us.”<sup>768</sup>

Inquired about taking stock of the revolution they envisioned, Alfredo Pezo comments, through a personal anecdote, that part of the revolution consisted in having recognized that,

“It is possible to break the church from within. ... Making it possible for the Peruvian church to move from a traditional conservative position to a progressive one ... We managed to capture the church’s power, as they say!”

---

<sup>768</sup> Mendoza, interview.



Figure 14. Depicting years of social organizing behind the popular mobilization. The Church accompanying the experience of faith and local communities' mobilization for land and peace in the Peruvian Andean South region. Monsignor Albano Quinn (Bishop of Sicuani) with local communities on a pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of the Lord of Qoyllority, 1980. Photography: Archivo IPA, Alvaro Villarán (Avillaran) Benno Frey (BFrey). A photo record courtesy of Juan Mendoza.

“Between 1971 and 1973, the most important strength of this progressive, popular movement of Catholicism, of the left, of Christians, [of the] middle class, is expressed in... having taken over the hierarchical power structure of the church. ... [Or more properly], it was not the capture of power [but] the experiences of empowerment, of social counterpowers that arose: [i.e.,] Gramsci!  
[In other words] ...in a reactionary state, there might be a profoundly progressive church that opposes it. As power to power. ... Being [this progressive church] a representation of a social [not clerical] movement ... A movement from below,

social, communitarian, that made it possible for the authorities of the Peruvian Church ... to have an affinity to Medellín and pro-Liberation Theology.”<sup>769</sup>



Figure 15. Depicting years of social organizing behind the popular mobilization. Catholic militants accompany peasant marches in Puno-Peru in the late 1970s. Photography: Archivo IPA, Alvaro Villarán (Avillaran) Benno Frey (BFrey). A photo record courtesy of Juan Mendoza.

For Juan Mendoza, who had gone to Andahuaylas in the southern Peruvian Andes at the age of 21 to fight against the large landowners and organize unions, one of the most outstanding achievements of the revolution undertaken was that,

“We seized the lands! ...

There was an agrarian reform from the state that left large properties intact,

leaving peasant communities on the margins... but we radicalized it! We worked

---

<sup>769</sup> Pezo-Paredes, interview.

with those excluded from the agrarian reform, with the communities! ...The legitimacy that we built was very significant. These were peasant insurrections. ... People see the day of the land occupation, but [behind, there were] seven years of organization, so you had gigantic mobilizations...

We settled in the peasant communities and went to the roots. Not negotiating; let us seize [the lands] ... and that is it! We swept everything! ... It was a democratic movement, not a military one, [it developed] without deaths...

First, I went... to the Andahuaylas' land occupations. Then, I went to Cuzco, and [afterward] they appointed me director of the IER (Rural Education Institute), a peasant training center in Puno [where we conducted the larger number of occupations] ...

We have three generations of *Indios* who do not have landowners here! This country is extraordinary! ... That is why I see my militancy as terrific (*bestial!*) because it was not a defeat; it was a victory!”<sup>770</sup>

## 6.6. Conclusions of the Chapter

From 1967 to 1973, Latin American national-based MIEC and JECI organizations increasingly converged around the JEC Line: an apostolic movement model and the practice of the Review of Life Method—RLM, and Commitment as a historical project. This convergence became the condition of possibility for the consolidation of a Catholic Student Movement MIEC-JECI with a Latin American identity and reach.

---

<sup>770</sup> Mendoza, interview.

Commitment was the core pastoral-apostolic, sociological-religious concept and the epitome of an incarnated theology driving mobilized progressive Catholics by the mid-1960s. Stemming out from conciliar discussions, theological reflections, and ruptures within which Latin Americans were key players, Commitment entailed a synthesis. This is, one, which implied the process of evangelizing praxis posed by the RLM—as practiced by Latin American movements, a *prophetic* theological line, a spirituality incarnated in the *temporal*, and the principle of evangelical poverty. All of these became nuclear to the movement's identity. Moreover, Commitment was formulated as a historical project that pledged fidelity to universal liberation and fraternity, realizing God's Kingdom in history. Since its formulation went hand in hand with a *prophetic* theological line, Commitment became the more coherent way of living a mature faith that overcame mere contemplation. To a certain extent, Commitment also became a Christian's duty. That is because the Kingdom appeared in history as a seed, and its realization depended on men's actions in it. Therefore, men would be judged according to their actions in history. Amid the Latin American historical conjuncture and in contesting other competing historical projects, Commitment was a call to organized collective action, for Christians working together might collaborate in the universal ascent of humanity.

Since the mid-1960s, student militants' practical forms of Commitment showed a generalized move towards *going to the poor*. Different Commitment choices gave life to an *Ida al pueblo* apostolic attitude that ultimately challenged the *distinction of planes* scheme—which had oriented with relative success Catholic Action movements during



preceding decades. In front of the pressing social reality, lay movements' praxis made the old model insufficient. Lay movements, within which students played an outstanding role, uncovered that the false ideal of a Church not intervening in temporal matters concealed her siding with the oppressors. Moreover, they showed that Commitment implied a church, not institutional or clerical but *popular*, siding with those who suffered. Individual choices of Commitment carried Christians through various social and political engagements. These engagements intersected with different countercultural, social, and political expressions of the thriving New Lefts. In so doing, they ended up contributing meaning to the revolutionary imaginings of the late 1960s and 1970s in Latin America. Also, they furnished the keys of a Committed spirituality to Latin American political culture.

## **CHAPTER 7. Vanguard of Liberation. Flourish and Decline of a Catholic Student Transnational Mobilization.**

Chapter 7 addresses the flourish, crisis, and final decline of the Latin American MIEC-JECI as a *transnational social movement* between 1967-1973. It claims that the consolidation of MIEC and JECI's multicentered network of organizations into one social movement occurred based on two factors. One was the Latin American organizations' shared identity. A common apostolic-political-pedagogical horizon for their social action—namely, Commitment; a shared spirituality, apostolic approach (JEC Line), and agenda shaped the MIEC-JECI as a collective actor mobilized around a Christian process of Liberation. Another factor would be the mobilization of resources. Especially, the SLA MIEC leverage, organizational strength, and regional and international position would have been decisive for the movement's consolidation.<sup>771</sup>

The chapter shows the leading role of the Latin American Secretariat in implementing a strategic plan of action that included pastoral work strategies, communication and dissemination among its militant base, and the strengthening of a Latin American work team. As a result of the movement's flourishing and the significant

---

<sup>771</sup> On the 'identity paradigm' and the 'resource mobilization theory' of Social Movements, we have cited the classical elaboration of Touraine, A., continued by Melucci, A., and Pizzorno, on the one hand, A., with critical contributions by Castells, M., among others. On the other hand, we have also referred to the pioneering works by McCarthy & Zald (1977) and Tilly (1978), and Tarrow (1994). For further details of these theoretical resources, see the introduction to Part III.

impact of the regional work, the chapter shows the consolidation of a Catholic intelligentsia that grew and reproduced itself within a new generation of students. The movement's strategies led by the Secretariat allowed the significant expansion of opportunities for base militants to educate themselves on social, political, pedagogical, and theological issues. Furthermore, some also found opportunities to contribute to conjunctural analyses achieving regional diffusion, exchange, and debate. This intelligentsia would have built a common language and converged around working hypotheses that propelled the theological, pastoral, and socio-political elaboration on the region's realities from a Christian and Latin American perspective.

The chapter portrays the movement as an avant-garde of the global 1968. Finding new forms of struggle and greater radicality, the Catholic youth embraced the decision to turn to the *pueblo* and go to the poor. While doing so, the movement aspired to be an agent and become a "critical consciousness" of the revolutionary process of Liberation.

Militants' embracing of Commitment, and consequently, greater political and pedagogical involvement in the popular mobilization and New left organizations and parties, produced intense identity crises within the movement. Even though identity crises weakened national-based movements organizationally, these crises created essential opportunities for maturation. They were the backdrop of theological growth and a crucial repositioning of the movement in the social-pastoral spectrum. State repression, however, would have been the ultimate factor in the decline of the MIEC-JECI as a social

movement. Varied strategies of counter-insurgent containment targeted base militants and regional cadres closing their spaces to carry on a militant life.

### **7.1. Shaping Convergence: Common Working Bases and the Coordination Team**

The memoirs of the Latin American JECI-SLA Committee meeting held on March 11-13, 1967, in Montevideo, and a subsequent SLA-MIEC Circular Letter dated April 27, confirmed the coming together of the MIEC and JECI regional coordination. Both Secretariats communicated to their militancy the agreement reached after “long years of negotiations.”<sup>772</sup> The Circular Letter presented the Common Working Bases that sought to “deepen and extend the missionary pastoral line of testimony;” and assume the commitment “to communicate an experience of Christian life inserted in the historical process, [which might be] conscious in the faith.”<sup>773</sup> MIEC’s and JECI’s Common Working Bases posed that Secretariats should be instruments responsive to Latin American reality on two levels: the church and the world. In such an understanding, a shared reality stood out: ‘Underdevelopment’ and the ongoing transformation of a sector of the Catholic church. This was a reality they described as “a [situation]... of hunger, misery, and injustice... [In front of which] a maturation of the conscience that demands liberation, justice, and the full realization of men [had also arisen].” This correlation and

---

<sup>772</sup> *Circular #2, A los Movimientos del MIEC en America Latina*, Montevideo April 27, 1967. Box 126, Folder 1967. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>773</sup> *Bases para un trabajo en comun de los Secretariados Latinoamericanos* de JECI-MIEC. Annex 1 in *Circular #2, A los Movimientos del MIEC en America Latina*, Montevideo April 27, 1967. Box 126, Folder 1967. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

common reality grounded, in their view, the need for a unified Latin American coordination of the student lay apostolate.<sup>774</sup>

Thus, on the one hand, the document called attention to the fact that “[In the] historical situation of underdevelopment, [and] men who seek new forms of social coexistence, more just and humane, is where the church is called to live, to be present, to give a response [that is] significant to the yearning of men.” Furthermore, it declared that “[such a] situation, [which became] radicalized by serious imbalances and injustices, demand[ed] from the church a more radical living experience (*viz. vivencia*) of its mission.”<sup>775</sup> On the other hand, the document noted the persistence “... in our continent, of a clerical church, allied to conservative forces and with dualist features that still make the temporal [plane] a mediation for the spiritual.” In the face of this church reality, committed Christians ought to make a “living and incarnated preaching of Him who is Truth, Justice, and Love.” Furthermore, they were to “concentrate all efforts” on their “commitment to the poor, the realization of justice, and overcoming any form of exploitation or domination of men.”<sup>776</sup>

Significantly, the agreement reached between the SLAs also insisted on “avoiding the institutionalization of [their apostolic] experiences.”<sup>777</sup> Let us briefly digress to

---

<sup>774</sup> Ibid, p. 1.

<sup>775</sup> Ibid.

<sup>776</sup> Ibid.

<sup>777</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

express that this avoidance was crucial in the growing social dimension of the movement that this dissertation wants to emphasize, and which grew in parallel with its ecclesial character. The movement, as an ecclesial movement, connected the pastoral work with the realities of student life. As a social movement, it was an apostolic response to that reality *from within* the student *milieu*, which sought to be “authentic” and respectful of its “originality” and historical trajectory. The claim of avoiding institutionalization was, for this reason, an affirmation of the movement’s autonomy. It reflected the ongoing push of a sector of the laity to depart from the prevalent understanding of a clerical church and a *sacramentalizing* type of apostolate, rather recognizing the laity and the *temporal* in their autonomy. Thus, the movement’s position was to consider “the dialectic among person-reality-faith” and reaffirm their option for deepening and promoting a “missionary pastoral line [that was] testimonial [of] commitment.”<sup>778</sup> In such a doing, the claim of not institutionalization sought “not tying [their] experiences to specific historical formats *a priori* and instead allowing the search for original formulas.”<sup>779</sup> On this issue, the Department of the Laity, later created in 1969, was to clarify that “neither CELAM nor that Department had any jurisdiction over the SLA, or the appointment of advisors.” The Department ratified itself as “an organ placed at the service of the episcopal conference and the lay movements to lend guide, interpretation, accompaniment, and support.”<sup>780</sup>

---

<sup>778</sup> *Lineas de Orientacion dadas por el Comite para el Trabajo del SLA, especialmente a lo que se refiere a la Coordinacion con el MIEC*. Annex 3, p. 1 in *Comite Latinoamericano de la Juventud Estudiantil Catolica Internacional* Montevideo, March 11-13, 1967. Box 13 Folder 1967. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>779</sup> *Bases para un trabajo en comun de los Secretariados*, 1967.

<sup>780</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, p.55

Coming back to the documents that crystallized the SLAs merger, it is significant to note that the Common Working Bases was a reworked version of the original JECI-SLA proposal. The resulting document, reflecting the common ground among both SLAs' views, was put under the consideration of the Internationals for its approval.<sup>781</sup> Interestingly, though, the original proposal from the JECI-SLA Committee regarding social reality used a more radical language. Arguably, it reflected the living situation of JECI's more established member movements in Latin America (Brazil and Southern Cone countries). The original proposal exposed without hesitation that the reality of underdevelopment in Latin America was associated with more complex issues of imperialism, militarization, and repressive structures. These "demanded a presence [of the church which ought to be] of a revolutionary type not only at a national but also a Latin American level. [This was because] the liberation of each country [might] only be achieved with a Latin American revolution." While JECI's standpoint might have reflected Southern Cone's surfacing conditions for what was to be a crisis of social domination<sup>782</sup> in the years to come, it is also true that other movements throughout the region might have found the JECI-SLA view appealing. As seen in Chapter 6, many national movements throughout the region had embraced Commitment, and myriad intersections with the New Left were emerging. This is a new reminder of the movement's bottom-up relationships and construction of meaning. National-base

---

<sup>781</sup> The MIEC Circular Letter #2, in 1967, recounts the process of elaboration of the Common Working Bases document which had the proposal of the JECI-SLA Committee as the basis. Subsequent agreements produced the final document, which had already been approved by PR-DC and was awaiting PR-GS confirmation at the time of the Letter. *Circular #2, April 27, 1967.*

<sup>782</sup> Reference is made to the phenomenon of "crisis of social domination" in the Southern Cone countries as conceptualized by Guillermo O'Donnell in *Bureaucratic Authoritarianism, Argentina, 1966-1973 in Comparative Perspective*, University of California Press, 1988.

movements were the living vanguard of the overall movement, while Secretariats came after in their systematization effort.

Logistical and operative aspects of the JECI-SLA proposal remained intact in the subsequent Common Working Bases. They were a fine summary of the agreements reached after several setbacks. The agreement reasserted the Secretariats as a service platform for national movements. It looked at facilitating the exchanges of leaders, militants, and ecclesiastical advisors, celebrating meetings among movements experiencing similar problems, and regional meetings and seminars for joint elaboration around the Latin American movement's vital points. The service platform also looked to offer an information service that "allowed continuity of the exchange of reflections and experiences effort" while also providing regional mobility of Secretariat members to provide advice to national movements. Moreover, the agreement proposed having a group of specialists (experts) who could advise the SLAs and national movements on crucial matters, prioritizing theological reflection and analysis of social reality. Finally, considering the unity of the student *milieu* and the "transient situation of the university militant," the SLAs were to "stimulate the proximity between the secondary and university movements and the promotion of a reflection that links the militant with his future task as an intellectual, teacher and professional."<sup>783</sup>

---

<sup>783</sup> *Bases para un trabajo en común de los Secretariados*, 1967.



By the time the Common Working Bases were agreed upon, regional cadres of MIEC and JECI had settled in a house in Canelones Street in Montevideo-Uruguay. After the agreement, they formed a unified “Coordination Team,” sharing the same facilities, work instruments and materials, and ecclesiastical advisory. Also, regarding financing, the agreement stipulated that while each SLA might apply for and manage its own budget, a single financial plan would apply to the work of joint programs.<sup>784</sup> Overall, in Latin America, what occurred while strengthening the Coordination Team, as Fr. Dabezies explained, was that while formally MIEC and JECI cadres continued to be elected to form their own Secretariats, in practice, they acted as unified teamwork. From 1970 onwards, the practice was to be formalized. Only one Secretariat team representing MIEC-JECI was elected. Persisting differences within the team were not related to the methodological or apostolic approach but to particularities of the secondary and university *milieus* to which the Secretariat tried to respond.<sup>785</sup>

As stated in previous chapters, while the movements’ convergence had been initially prompted by CELAM and, seemingly, primarily for pragmatic reasons, it only crystallized because of the internal dynamism of the movements. On the one hand, it happened thanks to the gradual identitarian convergence of the Catholic student organizations around the JEC Line (apostolic approach and method) and Commitment. On the other hand, it occurred because of these bases’ agency. They had demanded the

---

<sup>784</sup> Ibid, p. 4

<sup>785</sup> Dabezies, 6-23-2020. Also, Pelegri, *JECI MIEC: Su opción, su pedagogía*, pp. 26-27.

merging of the Secretariats to galvanize an apostolic approach and regional coordination that might be an authentic response to the *milieu*. They had also called for the SLA-MIEC to renovate its regional cadres and for the SLA-JECI to address the distance from the bases that put the Secretariat at permanent risk of becoming a superstructure (Part II).

Significantly, in the new stage of unified work, the identitarian convergence around a JEC Line, as stated by Fr. Dabezies, also implied the generalized embracing of a movement (JEC) rather than a federation (MIEC) model.<sup>786</sup> As explained by Fr. Jacobs, this shift would have consisted of going from an organization “concerned with a homogeneous unit that rejects any political-social preoccupation that could divide its members,” i.e., federation, towards another model. This other model was one that “conceiving its testimony only through a social-political option with a particular strategy” described a movement.<sup>787</sup>

Since 1967, the crystallization of the SLAs’ unified work was to have international effects. These created a favorable climate for the upcoming regional work and ratified the region’s avant-garde among the world students’ apostolate. The discussions of joint work between MIEC and JECI had been, ever since 1965, a Latin American pioneering proposal. As recounted by Fr. Pelegri, following the Latin American impulse, the joint working proposal also crystallized at the GS’s (international)

---

<sup>786</sup> *Dabezies, 6-23-2020.*

<sup>787</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, p.10. According to Fr. Jacobs, with the impact of the 1968 events, both models of Catholic student organizations (federations and movements) started to coexist in Tanzania and some regions of Europe.

levels. It did so amidst the student *milieu's* revolutionary wave that started after the French May—a phenomenon strongly felt by both internationals in Europe. By then, Argentinean Paco del Campo—JECI-GS proposed to “start a collaboration based on the problems of the student *milieu* and the experiences of the two movements.” This implied “leaving the issues that ‘oppose’ them to one another to be discussed when it has been shown that they can both work around areas of interest that unite them.” A suggestion that Jurgen Nicolai, MIEC-GS, accepted.<sup>788</sup> Seemingly, this episode marked a precedent in the history of the movements and reassured, once more, the leading role that Latin Americans had occupied since the beginning of the decade, explaining why many of their cadres were increasingly offered positions at the General Secretariats level. Overall, Fr. Pelegri explains this inflection “allowed to start a completely different stage” in the MIEC and JECI life. One of a “constructive” nature.<sup>789</sup>

## **7.2. Working Areas for Latin America and the heyday of a Catholic Intelligentsia.**

Arguably, the muscular structure and leverage developed in recent years by the MIEC-SLA, which is worth remembering, had acted in past years as CELAM’s University Pastoral executive organ, served to guarantee the organizational, logistical, and budgetary structure necessary for the thriving of the Secretariat’s work team. Meanwhile, the accumulated apostolic reflection of the JEC Line that called for a new

---

<sup>788</sup> Pelegri, *JECI MIEC: Su opción, su pedagogía*, p. 27.

<sup>789</sup> *Ibid.*

theology and provided new understandings of the relation faith-politics would have provided the direction in which the movement grew.

By December 1967, the SLAs MIEC-JECI presented an evolution of their joint work during the last year in a report. They highlighted that because of previous agreements, they had achieved the “total unification of the work in Latin America and a full integration,” which had also implied a relative increase in their budget, moderate though it was. Their work prioritized three areas, “pastoral base work, formative instrumentation and dissemination, and the Latin American Team.”<sup>790</sup>

The first of these areas, namely, the *pastoral base work*, included regional and national study sessions, seminars, and exchanges of militants and advisors. The unfolding of this strategy took much of the SLAs’ effort and time during its short spring until 1972. At the end of 1967, the MIEC-JECI Coordination Team had aided or developed more than nine national or regional events, numerous militants’ exchanges, and SLA cadres’ visits. Among these events were a Study Session in Toledo, Montevideo-Uruguay (January 23-February 11, 1967), and a Latin American Seminar about University Pastoral in Mexico (July 14-26, 1967), followed by a Latin American Committee meeting (July 26-30, 1967). Other significant events were the participation of Latin Americans in the MIEC Inter-federal Assembly-IFA in Bochum, Germany (August 1-11,

---

<sup>790</sup> *Informe de Actividades Secretariado Latinoamericano del Movimiento Internacional de Estudiantes Catolicos (Pax Romana)*, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1966- December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1967. Box 126, Folder 1967. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito, p.2.

1967), and the development of a Central American seminary on student *gremialismo* (December 25-31, 1967).

Furthermore, the 1967 report highlighted the support and participation of the MIEC-JECI Coordination Team in developing several national meetings (namely, in Paraguay, Chile, and Venezuela), and facilitating militants' and advisors' exchanges throughout the region. While the Colombian EUC, with Fr. Pelegri's advisory, had become a solid regional node, this movement started to play an essential role in militants' exchanges from the north of South America and the Caribbean. Colombian EUC received militants from the Dominican Republic and Venezuela, while Colombians traveled for partial stays to Quito's and Guayaquil's JUCs. Similar exchanges were happening in the Southern Cone. By 1967, Argentines and Paraguayans had assisted the realization of the Chilean AUC's national meeting. Several other exchanges had taken place in Central America. According to the report, these strategies had significantly helped launch new movements or strengthen existing ones while also "disseminating the different elaborations [achieved at the regional level] and recollecting [local] problems for experts' evaluation."<sup>791</sup>

Under the strategy of *formative instrumentation and dissemination*, the MIEC-JECI Coordination Team consolidated three services. First was *Servicio de Documentacion*, a booklet for periodical dissemination started by the MIEC-SLA back in

---

<sup>791</sup> Ibid. pp. 5, 23.

1964. Three series had been taking form since late 1966 that compiled experts' different approaches to topics. The 1-Series addressed issues on Theology and Pastoral; the 2-Series on Social Philosophy; and, the 3-Series on Latin American Reality.<sup>792</sup> By August 1967, the publication was streamlined by creating a sub-series in all three topics to include the movements' elaborations from their "own living perspective of reality." As explained in an SLA circular letter, these materials were not finished elaborations on specific subjects but were susceptible to systematization.<sup>793</sup> Accordingly, a permanent invitation to all movements to contribute to the monthly publication was extended by the SLAs MIEC-JECI ever since 1967.<sup>794</sup> Per the report and other available records<sup>795</sup>, the SLAs printed around 2,000 copies of *Servicio de Documentacion* that year. They were distributed, free of charge, among national movements' grassroots teams, clergy interested in the University Pastoral, other specialized lay apostolate movements, and documentation centers, among others with interest in the publication.<sup>796</sup>

---

<sup>792</sup> *Servicio de Documentacion 1-8*, 1967, Box *Documentos MIEC-JECI II*. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima.

<sup>793</sup> *Circular Letter from the SLAs MIEC-JECI to All militants*, February 1968, Box *Documentos MIEC-JECI II*. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima.

<sup>794</sup> *Especial Letter to MIEC Movement*, August 15, 1967, Box 126, Folder 1967. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>795</sup> *Circular Letter #1 from the Center of Documentation*, 1969, Box 112 Folder 1969. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>796</sup> *Informe de Actividades*, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1966- December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1967, p.2.

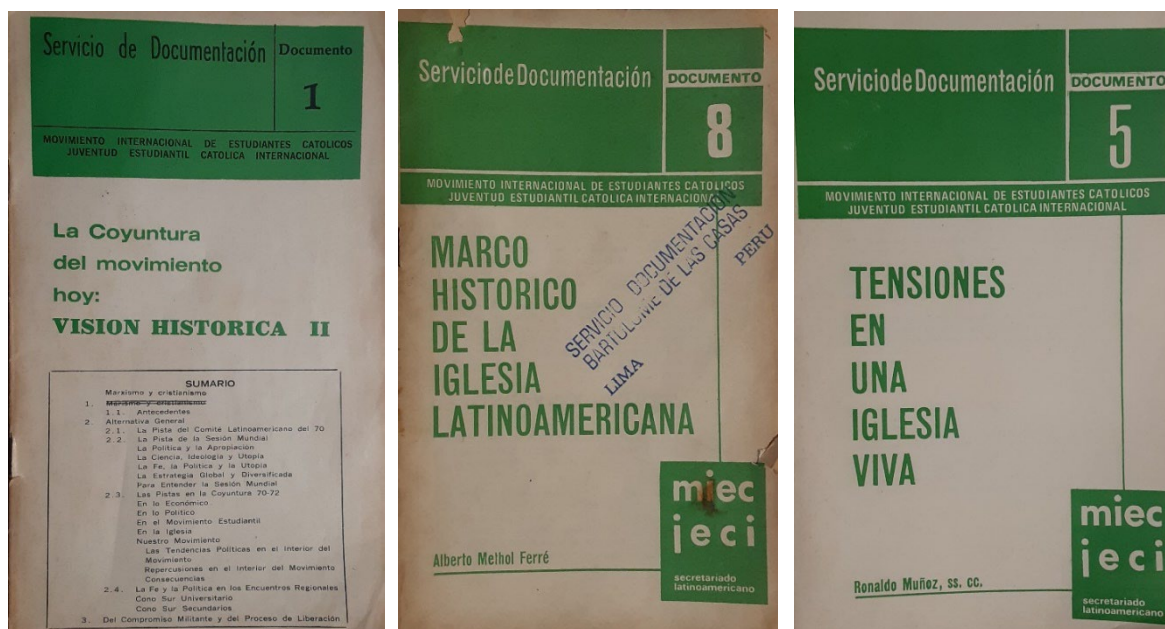


Figure 16. *Servicio de Documentación*, a publication by the MIEC JECI SLA since 1967. Assorted Covers. A photo record by the author.

On the other hand, the magazine *Vispera* was also, since 1967, a service of formation and dissemination. While offered with the economic support of MIEC, the magazine sought to be a space of debate and intellectual elaboration among MIEC and JECI movements, and other progressive Christians in Latin America, with an ecumenical perspective. *Vispera* was a quarterly publication gathering young Catholic intellectuals, political militants, theologians, and university leaders of the region.<sup>797</sup> The publication's editor, Hector Borrat, was a lawyer, journalist, and biblical scholar. Borrat and Alberto

<sup>797</sup> Ibid., pp. 32-34.

Methol-Ferre—an influential Uruguayan intellectual figure who acted as co-editor and established *Vispera* writer—marked the theological and political line of the magazine.<sup>798</sup>

According to Borrat, *Vispera's* dissemination responded to needs resulting from two dimensions of the same urgent renewal task. Such dimensions were “the profound changes that urge[d] the entire continent [on one side], and the new attitude that the process of secularization demand[ed] of our churches” in the post-conciliar context, on the other. This was because, for him, the Catholic “aggiornamento [could] not be separated from the Latin American revolution.” Or, in other words, Christians’ presence in the revolution would not be complete without that “aggiornamento.” For Borrat, both dimensions mutually implied and demanded Catholics’ active presence in “the

---

<sup>798</sup> According to Romeo Pérez Anton, under the influence of both Borrat and Methol-Ferre, *Vispera* grew with a *Latinoamericanista* intellectual and political line (anti-imperialist, integrationist—following the utopia of *La Patria Grande*, and claiming cultural—theological authenticity). Rightly summarized in a recent article by Kayel and Medina, the editorial board found identity following “a non-Marxist progressivism line that coexisted with the Marxist position of some contributors.” In theological and ecclesiological terms, *Vispera* thrived as a progressive Catholic publication with strong advocacy of an institutional position of the church. While the publication turned into a relevant forum for Christian views on theological, social, and political change that significantly fed the movement, specific stands within the editorial board created in time a rift between the MIEC-JECI movement and *Vispera*. As Gilberto Valdez commented, Methol’s defense of the institutional church and strong opinions against some Marxist expressions within the student movement and the church, might have increased the divide. The movement had grown amid intense questioning of clericalism and “called for a less institutional church, less apparatus.” Methol, on the other hand, “did not believe in that.” Also, while the movement firmly pledged to the Latin-American work and identity, diversity was ubiquitous. Therefore, the movement would not have assumed the *Patria-Grande* ideal militantly while indeed pursuing systematization of such variety. The result of this effort by 1971 was identifying the five lines of liberation within which militants were encouraged to participate. The gap between *Vispera* and the movement had grown by 1972. According to a 1972 report of an experts’ meeting at the Department of the Laity of CELAM on the results of a consultation with the Latin American Secretariat of Catholic Students the year before, the difficulties between both were because the magazine did not respond to the movement’s needs, while *Vispera* argued they were due to the movement’s distancing from an institutional line (Pax Romana) and proximity to a pedagogical line (JECI). *Informe Reunion de Expertos Departamento de Laicos*, p.25. Reference has been made to Valdez’s interview and Romeo Perez-Anton, Interview with the author 4-9-2020. Also, Kayel, Bárbara Díaz; Medina, Mariana Moraes. “Intelectuales y Lecturas de la izquierda católica Latinoamericana en las páginas de la revista Vispera.” *Caderno de Letras*, 2021, no 39, p. 83-102.



universities and, more widely, [throughout] the Latin American nations,” working to raise consciousness and address the unavoidable social changes.<sup>799</sup>

Borrat stressed that *Vispera* pursued overcoming “the time of apologetics in Catholic magazines, [as well as] the ghetto [mentality’s] isolationism, and the myth of the Catholic continent.” In this sense, the magazine was to be pluralistic to recognize the “...wide diversity, among Latin American Catholics, of theological perspectives and lines of action” and, in so doing, become a place for debate, mutual knowledge, and integration of efforts. To “speak from many voices and the varied situations of Latin America” and make *Vispera* into a continental publication rather than a Southern-Cone one, the editor gathered seven representatives throughout the region. They formed an editorial board that assumed responsibility for selecting publishable material from each zone and submitting it to the magazine headquarters located in the SLAs facilities in Montevideo.<sup>800</sup>

According to the 1967 report, *Vispera's* print went from 4,000 to 4,500 copies in the first year and, due to increased demand, the SLAs expected to duplicate it for the coming issues.<sup>801</sup> The magazine was distributed through local liaisons in Latin America

---

<sup>799</sup> *Circular Letter from Hector Borrat, Un nuevo servicio del MIEC.* Box 112, Folder 1968. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito

<sup>800</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>801</sup> *Informe de Actividades, December 1, 1966- December 31, 1967.*

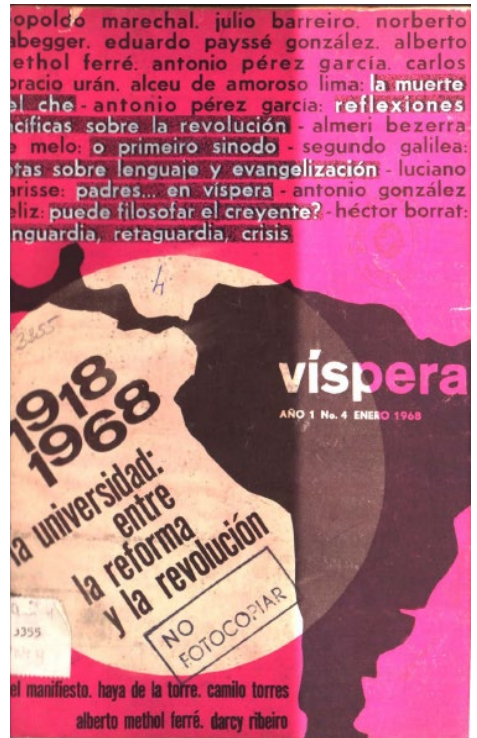
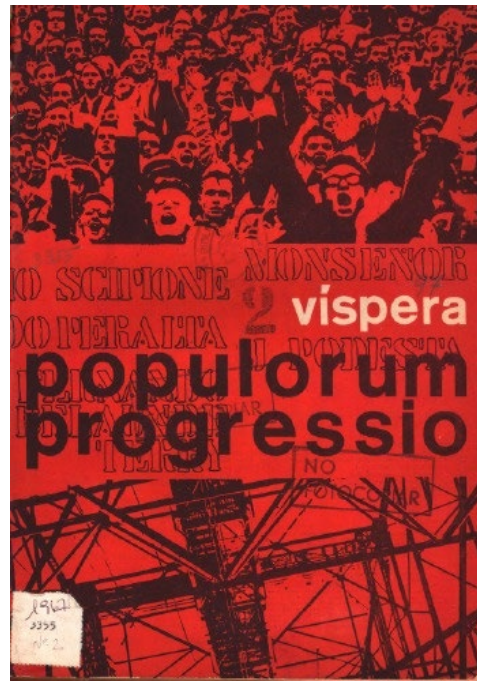


Figure 17. *Vispera* Magazine, an MIEC publication since 1967. Assorted Covers. Images are taken from Anaforas digital project, Facultad de Información y Comunicación, Universidad de la República, Montevideo, Uruguay.

that Borrat himself had delegated in an earlier trip he made throughout the region to network and promote the magazine.<sup>802</sup>

Finally, the Center of Documentation was another among the *formative and dissemination* strategies. Since 1967, it has become a service to “committed militants” and assumed the coordination of all SLA publications. Besides avoiding duplication of efforts by keeping the records of all *Servicio de Documentacion* and *Vispera* issues, it established relations with other Centers of Documentation, research, and academic centers and acquired by exchange or subscription relevant Latin American and world publications. It also had the specific objective of collecting base movements’ documents and experiences from all over Latin America, systematizing them, and making them available for publications and study seminars. Many records were compiled by SLA members during their visits, while others that were illustrative of the dynamics of the student movements and organizations were sent by base movements.<sup>803</sup>

Significantly, a crucial outcome of these strategies was cultivating a regional Catholic intelligentsia that grew and reproduced within a new generation of students. This is one reason for choosing to understand the years 1967-1972 as a flourishing time for the Latin American movement. The period showed the exponential growth of

---

<sup>802</sup> *Letter to key Latin American contacts advising of Hector Borrat’s tour throughout Latin America (a general template), December 24, 1966.* Box 126, Folder 1966. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>803</sup> *Informe del Centro de Documentacion al CLA-I, December 1972.* Binder 15. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

opportunities for base militants to educate themselves on social, political, pedagogical, and theological issues. Moreover, for some of them also opportunities to contribute to conjunctural analyses achieving regional diffusion, exchange, and debate. At different levels, both *Servicio de Documentación* and *Vispera* served as platforms for the exchange of ideas, discussion, and theoretical elaboration on relevant topics from a Christian point of view. Thus, it was acknowledged by the 1967 SLA report. According to the SLA, these strategies were significant in establishing “a common language and working hypothesis” throughout the region’s movements. They had increased national-base movements’ collaboration and were “channeling a vanguard theological and ideological elaboration in Latin America.” While *Servicio de Documentación* had become the primary means of formation and communication for the movement to the inside, *Vispera*, on the other hand, had turned into a Latin American forum where, in the quest for social change, problems and theses were voiced. It had also crystallized as a fundamental dissemination tool that had “allowed Latin American intellectuals and Christian university students to present to the *milieu* Christian thought and action for the first time.” The report noted that the best indicator of its success was the increasing collaboration of non-Christians and the welcoming attitude towards *Vispera* by all Latin American militant circles.<sup>804</sup>

Thus, *Servicio de Documentación* received numerous article contributions from national-base movements and reproduced pieces from their internal publications. It also

---

<sup>804</sup> *Informe de Actividades, December 1, 1966- December 31, 1967*, pp. 29, 32

received collective input by the SLA, usually systematizations, and individual entries from regional cadres, such as Silvio Sant'Ana, Rosendo Manzano, and Carlos Horacio Uran—SLA members at some point. Elaborations by advisors were also frequent. Among them were those by Paraguayan JEC advisor Fr. Gilberto Gimenez, from Peruvian UNEC Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez and Fr. Felipe Zegarra, from Colombian EUC Spanish Fr. Buenaventura Pelegri, from Uruguayan MUC the French theologian Fr. Benoit Dumas, and from Chilean AUC Fr. Pablo Fontaine. The publication also connected and allowed the base militancy to get acquainted with cutting-edge developments by progressive Latin American and world theologians and referents of the conciliar church. Whether direct contributions or reproduction of other publications, elaborations appeared in *Servicio de Documentación* by Lucio Gera, Hugo Assman, Henrique de Lima Vaz, Jose Maria Gonzalez Ruiz, Karl Rahner, Johann Baptist Metz, Paul Blanquart, and Harvey Cox. Published articles also connected base militants to other relevant Christian publications, research, academic centers, and think tanks. Among them, the Chilean magazine *Mensaje*, the Argentinean *Enlace*—organ of communication of *Sacerdotes para el Tercer Mundo*, and Venezuelan SIC. Among think tanks were Mexican CIDOC (Information Documentation on the Conciliar Church Center), Chilean ILADES (*Instituto Latinoamericano de Doctrina y Estudios Sociales*), Uruguayan *Centro Pedro Fabro*, and Uruguayan ISAL (*Iglesia y Sociedad en America Latina*) with its *Cristianismo y Sociedad* magazine of the Uruguayan Federation of Evangelical Churches. Many further significant elaborations on Latin American reality were disseminated. Topics of education and pedagogy counted with key inputs by Ernani Fiori, José Luis Fiori, Paulo Freire, Raul Velozo Farias, Darcy Ribeiro, and Pierre Furter. Other sociological,

philosophical, and economist discussions reproduced contributions by Marialice Foracchi, G rord de Bernis, Edgard Mor n, and Raymond Barillon.

Meanwhile, *Vispera*, as mentioned, received the more varied contributions, for the most part, from an already mature Christian intelligentsia. However, it also gave room for new cadres' input, many of whom came from the specialized apostolate movements. Among the more established writers were Hector Borrat, Alberto Methol Ferr , Antonio P rez Garc a, and Enrique Dussel. Also, there were leaders of the Uruguayan Christian Democratic Party such as Bryan Palmer, young cadres like Romeo Perez Anton, and Priests such as Dar o Ubilla and Jos  Gaido. Coming from different generations of the student base movements were Guzm n Carriquiry, Luis Carriquiry, Rolando Ames Cobian, C sar Aguiar, Bayardo Garcia, and Carlos Uran. Other contributors were well-known intellectuals and theologians, lay or ordained, whose works were published by *Servicio de Documentaci n* and had been mentioned already. Some who have not been listed yet are Luis Alberto Gomez de Souza, Eduardo Vio Grossi, Nestor Garcia Canclini, Jose Miguel Bonino, Paulo Shilling, Jose Manuel Quijano, and Luis Eduardo Wanderley. Among ordained contributors were Mons. Carlos Partelli, Mons. Marcos McGrath, Mons. Sergio Mendez Arceo, Dom Helder Camara, Fr. Francois Houtart, Fr. Juan Luis Segundo, Fr. Almey Bezerra, Fr. Ernesto Cardenal, among many others. (Appendices 3 and 4 provide a content list of *Servicio de Documentaci n's* and *Vispera's* issues, with some of these names.)

The last of the SLAs' prioritized work areas consisted of forming a strong *Latin American Team* of lay students and advisors to coordinate regionally, and giving support nationally to the pastoral base work and the formative, communicational, and dissemination services offered by the SLAs. Also, the team aimed to advance in strengthening the organization, growth, and maturation of movements throughout Latin America. Such a task was to be accomplished by educating on and promoting the use of the common methodology (the Review of Life Method), fostering an organizational scheme, apostolic reflection, and giving "clarification" when needed. These were especially helpful when national movements were in a stage of crisis or maturation.<sup>805</sup>

By 1967, the SLAs highlighted that the Latin American Team had developed a crucial role by promoting militants' exchanges, sending relevant material, visiting movements, and giving feedback and suggestions over previous observations. The report noted that given the increasing maturity of national-base movements, the Latin American Team had also committed to organizing exchanges among neighboring countries and ensuring a rapid and realistic response to their needs, including some economic attention. Significantly, the mentioned work was also expected to prevent the SLAs team's "bureaucratization and disconnection" from national base movements.<sup>806</sup> Thus, besides the SLAs' permanent staff at Montevideo, the Latin American team was formed by five more laypeople and five additional advisors living in their own countries and giving

---

<sup>805</sup> *Informe de Actividades, December 1, 1966- December 31, 1967.*

<sup>806</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6

attention to movements. By 1967, this team involved representatives from Mexico (2), El Salvador (1), Colombia (2), Paraguay (1), Peru (2), Puerto Rico (1), and Guatemala(1).<sup>807</sup>

In the 1967 report, the SLAs declared total expenses of US\$78,146.38. Out of that total, US\$ 41,375.90 corresponded to pastoral base work developed, and US\$14,454.35 to formative instrumentation and dissemination strategies advanced. Also, US\$9,800 was to cover staff in Montevideo (including two full-times, three-part times, one full-time advisor, and two office assistants), and US\$ 3,282 was used for office expenses such as correspondence and cables, office supplies, light, water, and phones services, and maintenance. The operation of the Latin American team, which included short trips, additional expenses of correspondence and cables, and the development of one administrative meeting in La Floresta-Uruguay with the MIEC-DC, had related costs of US\$4,252.63. Finally, the setting up of SLAs headquarters in Montevideo had included acquiring typewriters, recorders, furniture, and expansion of the premises to give space to the JECI SLA and the Center of Documentation. It had a cost of US\$4,981.50. The total of the SLAs' spending was covered thanks to an ADVENIAT donation for US\$ 50,000, an available balance of US\$ 39,550.10, and the payment of a pending debt in favor of JECI-SLA for US\$ 6,998.48. A surplus of US\$ 18,902.20 would be available for the following year's activities. Nonetheless, the reported accounting clarified that that year had included extraordinary expenses related to the organization of the Center of

---

<sup>807</sup> Ibid., p. 36. By late 1967 this extended team was formed by Frs. Mexican Francisco Villasenor, Salvadorian Esteban Alliet, on behalf of Colombian EUC Spanish Fr. Buenaventura Pelegri, Paraguayan Gilberto Gimenez, and Peruvian Gustavo Gutierrez. Among the laity, Mexican Alberto Villasenor, Puerto Rican Angel Pacheco, Guatemalan Catalino Mejicanos, Peruvian Alberto Giesecke, and Colombian Eduardo Barragan.



Documentation and *Vispera* and the intensity that servicing Brazilian and Argentinean movements required, given their challenging national contexts. Colombian Eduardo Barragan signed the report as MIEC-SLA and Uruguayan Fr. Bosco Salvia MIEC-JECI as SLAs advisor.<sup>808</sup>

The MIEC-JECI team in Montevideo began to produce joint circular letters to all Latin American militancy in 1968, and this move reflected the crystallization of all efforts. The team pledged to go beyond past outreach. Therefore, the February 1968 Circular Letter stressed that they were to reach all militants onwards, and not only national or diocesan teams as usual. Instead, they wanted to get to “the base of [the] movements, their very life.”<sup>809</sup> A culmination of this effort would also be the celebration of joint Latin American Committee meetings that would begin at the onset of the decade.

Some of the SLA’s permanent team cadres had changed early in 1968. Colombian Eduardo Barragan had recently joined, replacing Paraguayan Luis Meyer, who was offered the Vice-presidency of Pax Romana; and Nicaraguan Bayardo Garcia in lieu of Uruguayan Cesar Aguiar, who would now be in charge of the Center of Documentation. Notwithstanding these changes, the line was maintained. The circular letter reasserted the SLAs’ commitment to “create a Latin American community that [was] capable of breaking down national barriers and could beg[in] to think in common.” As presented, it was about promoting the coming together of the different base movements’ experiences

---

<sup>808</sup> Ibid.

<sup>809</sup> *Circular Letter from SLAs MIEC-JECI to All militants*, February 1968.

and recognizing “the common substratum of [their] problems despite the different countries’ nuances.” According to the communication, those exchanges would make the militancy gain “a global vision of the Latin American reality.” They would ensure that the community was “not based on structures (which would be unreal) but on the daily work of the militant in his *milieu*; a work that was, ultimately, what made up the movement.”<sup>810</sup> Beginning in August 1969, a new publication surfaced. Thereafter, the *SPES* Bulletin substituted the Circular Letter that was produced with the internal movement news.

### **7.3. The Latin American agenda: Commitment and Cultural Autonomy and the avant-gardes of the global 1968.**

As mentioned, the Latin American University Pastoral Seminar held in Mexico City on June 15-25, 1967, had been one of the activities developed jointly by the MIEC and JECI SLAs within the pastoral base work strategy that year. Seventy-two students and 18 advisors from 16 Latin American countries attended the meeting.<sup>811</sup> Uruguayan Cesar Aguiar (SLA member) and Fr. Gilberto Gimenez (a member of the Latin American team) coordinated the event that also featured talks by Paraguayan student Luis Meyer (leaving MIEC-SLA), FF. Mexican Agustin Desobry, Puerto Rican Antonio Gonzalez, and Uruguayan Bosco Salvia. Mexican Mons. Rafael Vazquez Corona gave the inaugural speech. The seminar analyzed university and university student realities and the church’s

---

<sup>810</sup> Ibid.

<sup>811</sup> Attending countries were Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay and Venezuela. *University Pastoral Seminar Memoirs*, Mexico 1967. Box 149 SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

responses, building on critical elements of reflection sketched in two previous meetings that year. One was a MIEC Study Session in Toledo, Uruguay, from January 23 to February 10; and, the other, the Episcopal Meeting on University Pastoral that had taken place in Buga, Colombia, on February 12-18.<sup>812</sup>

The first of these meetings (Toledo) had tackled the challenges Catholic student militants faced amidst university state-led technocratic restructurings and the ideological and political radicalization of the *milieu*. It had developed in three sessions. One, theological, with Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez as coordinator, addressed the pastoral attitudes of the Latin American church, looking to identify the theological lines involved. Two Brazilian experts coordinated a second session: philosopher Ernani Fiori and sociologist Luis Alberto Gomez de Souza (former GS JECI). It addressed an “anthropological characterization” and “typification” of the Latin American men’s “alienations” as a point of departure for a liberating education. Brazilian anthropologist Darcy Ribeiro coordinated the third session. It analyzed the different models of Latin American universities and made a stack of the Student Movement and the agenda of University Reform.<sup>813</sup> Fiori, de Souza, and Ribeiro would be part of the experts’ team convened by the SLAs, while Fr. Gutierrez had continued acting as a regional advisor for the international movements. Significantly, Fr. Gutierrez’s dialogues and elaborations during

---

<sup>812</sup> *Informe de Actividades, December 1, 1966- December 31, 1967.*

<sup>813</sup> *Ibid.*

this study session were one of many anticipatory developments of the theological and pastoral arguments presented in Medellin-68.<sup>814</sup>

The Buga meeting, the second one influencing Mexico's seminar, had been considered by Catholic students of the region as equivalent to a new "Latin American Catholic university reform." In it, amidst a climate of unrest unleashed in Catholic universities, student activists relying on recent theological and ecclesiological elements introduced by Vatican II, had achieved that CELAM and the presidents of these universities agreed on substantial changes in university teaching. In continuity with historical struggles of the student body, Catholic student demands had included raising the quality of education, modernization, democratization, and recognition of the university's function as social.<sup>815</sup>

---

<sup>814</sup> Elaborations of this study session were published in various books by the SLA MIEC-JECI Center of Documentation. Fr. Gutierrez's conference gave shape to his *La pastoral de la Iglesia en America Latina*. Other books were Fiori, Ernani, *Bases para una Antropologia Personalista*, Gomez de Souza, Luis *Ideologias en America Latina*, Ribeiro and Carlevaro, *La Universidad Latinoamericana*. Ibid., p.10.

<sup>815</sup> Under the leadership of CELAM's Department of Education, the Buga meeting "based the debate on an anthropological vision of the cultural activity of man ... embodied in our century and sensitive to the signs of the times." It also undertook a theological approach to the church's mission in the university from a service perspective, "revealing the meaning of history and planning the dynamism of human effort." During the meeting, the region's episcopate had committed to raising the quality of universities in the region, looking to avoid "pragmatic and mediocre immediatism" and, instead, to assure there might be "serious and disinterested cultivation of science" and allow the "authentic elaboration of culture... in an environment of trust, freedom, authentic love for truth, and respect for the human person." Moreover, building on essential theological and ecclesiological innovations agreed upon by Vatican II, the Reform sought to extend the internal dialogue of the university with society within which the latter had a mission. This was not a mission being juxtaposed to other functions, but essential. Thus, "There is no social function of the University but [it is rather that] the function of the University is social." Furthermore, while the university ought to promote living contact with society to produce authentic culture and science and a humanized technique, it was also understood it had the responsibility of diagnosing the social problems and offering models to solve them. The meeting had settled the bases for new Catholic universities with enhanced academic performance and opportunities for student access, and education of faculty. "La mision de la universidad catolica en America Latina," in *Vispera* No 1, pp 9-19, Juan Luis Segundo "Un Nuevo

As seen above, Mexico's seminar seemed to have had a strong background behind. As recorded by the event's memoirs, it was an important milestone in the evolution of the movement's agenda. Moreover, for the SLAs, it had been the "culmination of a three-year pastoral base work ... [which] had settled the common bases for a Latin American endeavor."<sup>816</sup> Two leading topics seemed nuclear to the agreed horizon of intellectual, social, and political mobilization. First, advancing a reflection on a Theology of Commitment; and, second, the Latin American university mobilization for Cultural Autonomy. Because we have already discussed various elements that would be constitutive of a Theology of Commitment in Chapter 6, let us address those on Cultural Autonomy.

During the seminar, Cesar Aguiar gave a talk titled "The University Situated," recognizing the specificity of the Latin American university, i.e., the university of an 'underdeveloped' society. Building on a theoretical perspective defined as *personalist anthropology*<sup>817</sup> that included a comprehensive understanding of culture, which involved material and meaning production and mediation, Aguiar addressed the issue of "cultural alienation." For Aguiar, this problem described Latin America and all 'underdeveloped'

---

Comienzo," in *Vispera* No 2 pp. 39-43, and Luis Carriquiry "Bugá: La Nueva Reforma," in *Vispera* No 5, pp.69-77.

<sup>816</sup> *Informe de Actividades, December 1, 1966- December 31, 1967.*

<sup>817</sup> Developments by Ernani Fiori and Henrique de Lima Vaz were cited to refer to this theoretical perspective. According to Aguiar, this was based on a phenomenology of consciousness and articulated concepts such as the transcendental nature of consciousness, mundaneness, temporality, and historicity. Other intellectuals such as Roberto Fernandez Retamar and Darcy Ribeiro were cited to discuss economic dependency in terms of alienation. *University Pastoral Seminar Memoirs*, Mexico 1967.



CESAR AGUIAR... la generaci3n anterior trata de cerrarles la puerta a los j3venes como dirigentes...



LUIS MEYER... estamos sujetos al imperialismo yanqui, como se ha patentizado en Brasil



UNA DE LAS MESAS REDONDAS... el 54 por ciento de la poblaci3n latinoamericana est3 compuesta por j3venes...

Figure 18. MIEC JECI Latin American Secretariat members and student attendees to the University Pastoral Seminar, Mexico City, 1967. Above are SLA Members, Uruguayan, Cesar Aguiar (Left), and Paraguayan, Luis Meyer (Right). Below is a discussion group. Source: *Señal Magazine*, July 27, 1967. University Pastoral Seminar Memoirs, Mexico 1967, Box 149 SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

societies. This was a process in which societies lived in a divested world, where they had been stripped of the ability to express, know, and communicate themselves. Overcoming this situation implied a “cultural dis alienation” process in which the university would play an essential role. Achieving cultural autonomy meant the possibility of societies’ self-projecting and peoples’ realizing as subjects of their own history—the latter was a definition that increasingly began to be equated with the struggle for the liberation of men. For Aguiar, the Latin American university was challenged by the task of contributing to fulfilling this mission. For this matter, and for “the university to play a positive role in the liberation of our peoples,” the university had to take a position regarding the question: to what extent could the university play a positive role in social revolution? This implied transforming—the university itself—into a liberating university.

According to Aguiar, various structural elements of the Latin American university system were involved in reproducing a status quo of cultural alienation. These included, for instance, insufficient access—a situation worsened by unequal urban-rural distribution. Another factor was the “bourgeois teaching contents [that were] neither democratic nor democratizing.” Beyond the opportunities offered to a particular social class, these structural elements did not allow the peoples’ full participation in creating the culture and national consciousness. Amid such a situation, the university was called to achieve autonomy in terms of democratization, projection of the people’s own culture, and therefore, self-determination of educational contents, including scientific and technological knowledge necessary to dominate the productive system, which was, until then “dominated by imperialism.” As noted during the event, this view sided with the

Marxist theoretical maturation that sought to overcome the deterministic view conceiving the superstructure as a reflection of the infrastructure, without any role for agency. Thus, for Aguiar, the university work was to be done on the superstructure and was eminently political. In his words, “we maintain that the specificity of the university task ... is profoundly political. The university’s transformation towards a liberating University is an [essential] political commitment [and moreover, it] demands a certain ideological vision of the social process.” Paraphrasing developments by Paulo Freire and Gomez de Souza, Aguiar asserted that for the university to fulfill a liberating role it had to “educate free men,” and because Latin American people were in conditions of dependency the task should be “giving them instruments of liberation.” In other words, it meant “educating for the subject-man and not for the object-man.” Not imposing cultural elements but “raising awareness, discovering new forms of expression potentially implicit in the culture of the people.” And thus, “freeing the energies of the people who would have to assume their responsibilities as subjects of history.” As Gomez de Souza did, Aguiar also warned that it was expected that dominant groups would judge an education for liberation as “something subversive [because it] destroys the established order that maintains them.”<sup>818</sup>

Seemingly, a Latin American agenda had been sketched. In consecutive press conferences given to Mexican CENCOS A.C. (*Centro Nacional de Comunicacion Social*) students Luis Sereno Colo (President, MEP-*Movimiento Estudiantil Profesional*), Maria

---

<sup>818</sup> *University Pastoral Seminar Memoirs*, Mexico 1967.



del Carmen Uribe (MEP-Vicepresident), and Francisco Merino (MEP-Head of Press) summarized the objectives and reach of the Pastoral University Seminar. “For an authentic university conscience,” “University Students’ will plan the conquest of cultural autonomy for Latin America,” and the “Need for an authentically humanistic education” were some of the headlines describing the event. Also, other national newspapers registered the development of the “continental seminar,” heading their news variously: “[The] Voice of Catholic student leaders before the current excessive *technification*,” “Catholic rejection of foreign intervention,” and “Cultural colonization in America denounced by leaders of 19 nations.” Even the well-known anti-communist magazine *Señal*’s headline was telling: “Latin American students boil[ed] in renewing impetus.”<sup>819</sup>

All in all, the meeting also served to endorse the new joint continental work plan of the Secretariats. The following four days, July 26-30, the Latin American Committee, with the participation of the SLA regional cadres and 20 more national delegates, discussed and assigned criteria for the implementation of the plan, scope, and methodology and defined the crews responsible for each of the strategies. Accepting the seminar’s recommendations, the committee scheduled a high-level theological workshop for the university movement’s advisors the following year. The event would respond to the need to “confront serious existential and theological problems that the Latin American clergy and university advisers, in particular, are going through.”<sup>820</sup> CELAM

---

<sup>819</sup> These headlines appeared in Mexican newspapers CENCOS A.C. on July 13 and 19, 1967, *La Prensa* on July 14 and 17, 1967, *El Herald*o on July 24, 1967, and *La Señal* on July 27, 1967. Ibid.

<sup>820</sup> Ibid.

would have sponsored and assumed the costs of the seminar to be held later in Ykwa-Sati, Asuncion-Paraguay, from July 1-17, 1968. It addressed the phenomenon of global student protests and the relations between Christian faith and commitment giving special attention to the situation brought to the fore by “[young Christians] who have managed to integrate their faith into the revolutionary commitment...[and] who perceive the content of faith...as a requirement of a commitment *with* and *for* men within an option [that] alludes to a new appreciation of faith and in particular of its cultural experiences.”<sup>821</sup>

In subsequent Circular Letters, both topics, building cultural autonomy and deepening Commitment through the strong linkages between *gremios* and national movements, were patent as hinges of the coordinated regional work. Further regional study sessions and seminars encouraged militants to deepen their “analysis of the totality of social, economic and educational structures conditioning the university, which having been at the service of classist elites, [had] decoupled from the masses.” Consensuses went in the direction of “integrating the masses to the universities as a fundamental aspect of achieving cultural autonomy,” so that, universities would express the autochthonous values currently neglected.<sup>822</sup> As seen in Chapter 6, these consensuses were taken to

---

<sup>821</sup> “America Latina: Protesta Estudiantil y Fe Cristiana,” in *Ykwa-Sati Document, A synthesis by CENCOS A.C.* Published by the Documentation Center MIEC-JECI. *Advisors Meeting, Memoirs 1968*, p. 5. Box 289 Folder 1968 *Advisors Meeting*. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>822</sup> Among critical meetings that pushed forward this line of action were the *Central American Seminar on Student Gremialismo* held in Costa Rica on December 28-31, 1967, and a *Southern Cone Encounter the Seminar on Student Gremialismo* held in Montevideo-Uruguay on February 20-28, 1968, which discussed political radicalization, problematizing the church's presence in the *milieu*. *Circular Letters 1968-69*. Box *Documentos MIEC-JECI II*. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima.

their limits at the level of national base movements. In many of them, the relation between the university, the movement, and the masses had already prompted a radicalization of Commitment through the decision to go to the poor (*ir al pueblo*).

By the time the French May had a global impact, the Latin American Catholic student movement had reacted with indignation to the reading that the media and the adult generations made of the Latin American protest. In front of the media's interpretation which described 1968 demonstrations and strikes as "snobbery" and "imitation of the French," the SLAs reclaimed that "more than joining [the French] process... Latin American students continued what had already begun, with new attitudes and forms of struggle [and] a greater radicalism." They claimed that theirs not only were not "Frenchified imitations" but that ongoing protests were the result of their "long and deep tradition in the student struggle." They also answered by saying that in the context of the youth protest, they "dare[d] to say that... it ha[d] been the old continent, who ha[d] copied from the new continent."<sup>823</sup>

While they lamented both the tragic losses in Mexico's Tlatelolco protests and generalized repression of youth demonstrations, they exalted as a materialization of their

---

<sup>823</sup> *Circular Letter from SLAs MIEC-JECI to All militants, August-October 1968*, reproduced in *Jacobs, Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, p.10.



Figure 19. Members and relatives to the MIEC JECI Latin American Secretariat by 1968. In a celebration at Maria Luisa Aldabe's home. From left to right, some names are Florencia Gaínza (JEC Montevideo), Fr. Buenaventura Pellegrí (Advisor), José (Pepé) Rodríguez (Uruguayan JUC former militant), Luis Carriquiry (Vispera editorial board member and former militant of the Uruguayan JUC), María Luisa Aldabe, (Office Assistant to Vispera), and César Aguiar (SLA Center of Documentation). In the back-left, presumably, Carlos Alberto Payán (EUC Colombia) and Rosendo Manzano (SLA Member). In front, Ana María Bidegain (MUC Uruguay), Carlos Horacio Urán (SLA Member), Ivan Jaramillo (SLA Member), Luis Jose Pimentel (Dominican JEC). A photo record courtesy of Ernesto Katzenstein (former SLA JECI Secretary).

renewing spirit the new hope that the Medellin-68 conclusions represented for the life of the Latin American church and society. The Medellin-68 conclusions were received as an expression of the church's will to "be an authentic transforming presence in our America, our *Patria Grande*." Furthermore, they also deemed the conclusions concurred with the concerns of the youth and the denunciations of the student movement because the

announcement of the “message to the peoples [had emphasized] the liberation of our America, which is sought as a vocation and at the cost of any sacrifice.”<sup>824</sup>

The progressive Catholic student mobilization and their claim to be part of a Latin American vanguard of global change concur with a scholarly stand in the historiographical discussion on the Global Sixties—namely, Latin Americanists’ “new approach,” which suggests the region should be seen as “an incubator *for* and a progenitor *of* the imagery, actors, ideas, and soundscapes that constituted the Global Sixties.” Besides and beyond considering Latin America’s anti-imperialist struggles, the evidence presented here takes a position, as Zolov explains, among those asserting the Third World would have played as a “progenitor of change, rather than as simply the historical backdrop against which the sixties transpired.”<sup>825</sup>

On the other hand, in conversation with the historiographical debates on the Latin American Cold War and the political history of revolution in the region, the evidence shows the Catholic student movement claimed to be partaking in the Latin American revolution. A part of it consisted of transforming the Latin American church from a Christendom model to a Church of the Poor model, from a hierarchical and clerical institution siding with the oligarchies to a popular movement of the laity siding with social justice. After all, as explained by former Peruvian UNEC militant Alfredo Pezo,

---

<sup>824</sup> Ibid.

<sup>825</sup> Zolov p, 355 Zolov, Eric. "Introduction: Latin America in the Global Sixties." *The Americas* 70, no. 3 2014, pp. 349-362.

one way to describe the transformation would be that it represented the church's takeover by the laity.<sup>826</sup> The analysis of the evidence provided coincides with Rafael Rojas' conceptual historical approach on the matter that looks to overcome the simplification of the Latin American revolutionary legacy and instead recognizes it as complex and heterogeneous. While doing so, it acknowledges the various and distinct revolutionary horizons of change and processes that, while unable to or uninterested in taking the state's power directly, had a significant impact on the history of the region in materializing hopes and proposals of social transformation.<sup>827</sup> The SLAs claimed Medellín-68 had been one materialization of that struggle.

#### **7.4. Crises and corollaries: the reverse side of *Commitment*.**

Successive crises within the movement were already visible by 1969. Although intertwined with one another, some were related to the movement's identity, and others were associated with the organizational feasibility and militancy within. In both cases, crises were the byproduct of the generalized embrace of Commitment by Catholic militants and, therefore, their turning towards popular mobilization and New Left organizations.

On the one hand, identity crises uncovered militants' questions about the limits and possibilities of their apostolic work and theological and pastoral reflection. In many cases, a radical embracing of Commitment caused the de-structuring of national-base

---

<sup>826</sup> Pezo-Paredes, interview.

<sup>827</sup> Rojas, *El árbol de las revoluciones*.

movements. This is, to the extent that paralleling militants' social and political engagements tended to absorb their daily schedules hindering their capacity to contribute to processes of *nucleación*<sup>828</sup> and to further the teams' reflection. In some other cases, identity crises brought about militants' intense crises of faith and prompted their abandoning militancy.

On the other hand, there were organizational and militancy feasibility crises. Two main circumstances would have caused these crises. First, the strong opposition by traditional sectors of the church's hierarchy intensified in the face of militants' radicalization and weakened the movements. Traditional church sectors sought to hamper pastoral resources available to the movements and cause fragmentation. However, the ultimate and decisive factor of organizational and militancy crises was the states' greater stigmatization and repression, which is the second circumstance to consider. This is to the extent that the Latin American states raised levels of censorship, the *containment*<sup>829</sup>

---

<sup>828</sup> *Nucleación* refers to the process of mature cadres leading of the teams' reflection, practicing the methodology (Revision of Life), constructing a sense of community as a team, and working within the *milieu*. The movement considered the *nucleación* as the first phase of the process in which national-based organizations were to reach "political maturity and a commitment in the faith." A phase of *nucleación* was followed by other phases such as *extensión*, and *consolidación* or *dinaminización*. See more about the process of *nucleación* and "the teams" in Chapter 4. *Informe de la Reunión de Expertos del Departamento de Laicos*, p. 24

<sup>829</sup> Reference is made to "Containment" as used by Greg Grandin as a "conservative backlash against postwar social democracy ..." in Latin America and the embracing of a "reactionary if not fully 'counterrevolutionary' response to third-world nationalism" beginning in 1948. In the context of the founding of the Organization of American States-OAS, the US interpretation of the reaction to Jorge Eliecer Gaitan's death and his legacy in Colombia as the advancing of communism, and absent a Marshall Plan for the region, the US pushed instead for a hemispheric pro-stability diplomacy policy. In practice, this policy implied a "formal switch in the wartime pan-American alliance from fighting fascism to containing Communism." Fortified with the rhetoric of the Cold War, Latin American governments responded by "persecuting not just Communists-who in many countries were indispensable to democratic advances-but, eventually, all reformers." Grandin, Greg. "What Was Containment? Short and Long Answers from the Americas." *The Cold War in the Third World* (2013): 27-47.

strategy targeted Catholic militants. Overall, the rise of a National Security Doctrine<sup>830</sup> increasingly closed their possibilities for leading and participating in public gatherings, publishing, organizing social processes, and, in general, carrying on a militant life.

### **7.5. Crises of identity: the paradox of theological and pastoral evolution and organizational regression**

As Gilberto Valdez explained it, the radicalization of the movements—in an evangelical sense—meant their embracing of Commitment. This became more generalized throughout the region around 1967, as shown in Chapter 6.<sup>831</sup> While the movement’s approach (JEC Line) had built on the understanding of their apostolate “with a sign of fidelity to reality,”<sup>832</sup> as per Paraguayan Carlos Alborn, elected SLA MIEC-JECI in 1970, the political radicalization of the student *milieu* “...[could] not fail to have repercussions on the MIEC-JECI movements that from their origin ha[d] been defined as student youth.”<sup>833</sup>

---

<sup>830</sup> As Brands noted, the National Security Doctrine informed Latin American states' security policies following the Cuban revolution. It consisted of “a collection of ideas based on the need for a centralized, integrated approach to fighting subversion.” This implied the growth of the national intelligence apparatus, and an expanded definition of what subversion was. Significantly, the latter included considering any ideas contrary to the established order as terrorism. Brands, Hal. *Latin America's Cold War*. Harvard University Press, 2012. pp. 72-73.

<sup>831</sup> Valdez, interview.

<sup>832</sup> Fr. Buenaventura Pelegri “Pedagogía de la Explicitación de la Fé,” *Servicio de Documentación # 20-21, Box Documentos MIEC-JECI II*. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima.

<sup>833</sup> *Report from the SLA to Pope Paul VI presented by Carlos Alborn, November 3, 1970*. Reproduced in Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, p. 60.



Arguably, identity crises were the obverse of theological and pastoral evolution. The more the Commitment deepened, the more acute crises became, placing difficult-to-resolve tensions between faith, politics, and ideology at the center of the debate. However, the maturation and the way of overcoming these tensions would be decisive for the unprecedented theological and pastoral elaborations that were key to the ongoing transformations of the Latin American church. As a matter of fact, we might say crises of identity created critical opportunities for the political and theological maturation of the movement that cemented the formulation of a Theology of Liberation.

The paradox of theological and pastoral evolution matched by organizational regression was well reflected in the First Latin American Committee meeting-CLA I, celebrated in Cali, Colombia, on March 20-30, 1970. While the meeting showed the apostolic evolution of the movement in that it accompanied and validated the experiences of Commitment among national-based movements, during the event also surfaced what seemed to be growing fragmentation among the bases. The latter, in the face of identity questions deriving from the complexities that political radicalization posed to the church's presence in the *milieu*.

Thus, the committee's report confirmed the dynamic role that the Catholic movement had been playing within the Latin American Student Movement, in particular the commitment it assumed with the *milieu*. This was a role faced with the decisive challenge of getting the average bourgeois disengaged and elitist university student to commit and participate in the consciousness-raising of the people (*viz. el pueblo*) who

were the actual agents of the revolution. By virtue of this acknowledgment (*el pueblo* as the revolutionary agent) came the reasoning that “the crisis of the student movement [was due to its intention of] wanting to liberate the *pueblo* without knowing it, without living like it, without going to it.” Therefore, the committee embraced the change of attitude that was underway among national-base movements’ apostolate. It consisted in that the committed student integrated himself into the people’s struggle at the same time that he incorporated the people into his own. In sum, it was a validation of the national-base movements’ decision to go to the poor (*ir al pueblo*) and, in so doing, give the necessary militants’ testimony of their faith (*la explicitacion de la fe*).<sup>834</sup> The decision reasserted that the movement “as a community of faith should be coherent and consistent with the demands and needs of the historical process of Latin American Liberation.” Accordingly, the committee also confirmed the movement’s need to “accentuate its political commitment as much as the ecclesial one.” This was because “this is what faith demands from us” amidst the revolutionary process in which the JEC had a prophetic and evangelical role, one lived as a vanguard within the church.<sup>835</sup>

Overall, as per the committee, the movement appeared to advance in solving challenging questions on the militants’ commitment and apostolic attitude and declared, as a transnational apostolic community, their will to *ir al pueblo*. However, other critical matters seemed to be endangering its organizational base. They included generalized

---

<sup>834</sup> *Informe del SLA al Comité-Equipo Latinoamericano, CLA-I*. Binder 15. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito. Also, Dabezies, Interview.

<sup>835</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, pp. 49-53.

politicization of its grassroots bases and, as explained by Ernesto Katzenstein in his resignation letter to the SLA, strong criticism towards the institutional church and theological approaches that insisted on the *division of planes*. These appeared to some militants as an insurmountable test. For Katzenstein, while “the ruling class of the church... was not willing to accompany the process of history,” the *division of planes* approach “...does not work because it cannot work... Because the problems that the revolutionary process raises... vastly exceed [this] dualism, and distancing from the church becomes inevitable.”<sup>836</sup>

By November 1970, Carlos Albornó succeeded at ensuring Pope Paul VI would receive his visit. Albornó took the opportunity to elaborate a brief report on the reality that Catholic student movements were facing, which depicted some facets of the crisis well. As he explained:

"Today, the students and the student movement question their identity. And this phenomenon appears when this movement becomes a social movement whose expression is the protest and political commitment tending to radically change the global social situation. Here, the student movement becomes aware of the class character of the university and teaching in general. The university is characterized as an apparatus at the service of the *status-quo*. ... The student recognizes himself as privileged in this society. It is here that the student movement discovers the

---

<sup>836</sup> *Informe Ernesto Katzenstein al CLA-I*, pp.4-5, 8-9. Binder 15. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

role of the people (viz. *el pueblo*) ... [At the same time] he finds [both] the bourgeois ideological mechanisms [and] the mystifying theories at the service of the dominant social group, and its own conditionings.

...To the extent that conflicts become more acute in Latin America... we discover that only transformative action, which is political, can allow us to build a new society. [This] causes us to question the relationship between faith and political commitment. This is the core of the conflict for the militant believer.

Our movements, ... [which are] a meeting place in the faith, where we review our way of being in the world, strive to help discover that this way of being [in the world] is not separated from how we live, and we celebrate faith... If there is a place where faith and political commitment are questioned, it is in action, which is an expression of charity. ... [Faith and political commitment] that are inseparable; they cannot be confused. That is why we say that we have a double meaning and double bottom existence. It is in the same action on which we work for the integral development of every man and all men that God acts to realize his Kingdom.

This is our concern, Holy Father: To live and communicate the faith. And to the extent that we affirm ourselves in this experience, we affirm ourselves as a church. Only in this way can we experience repression and torture as finished forms of our charity.”<sup>837</sup>

---

<sup>837</sup> *Report from the SLA to Pope Paul VI presented by Carlos Alborno.*

Seemingly, the conflicts had a greater scope and encompassed the questions around the assumed class character of the global student youth's struggle. However, it had acquired particular nuances among Latin American Catholics, making the relationship between—what was seen as—unavoidable political action and their faith and Christian commitment the core of such conflict. The issue was later explained in an SLA report recollecting the pieces of the movement's "critical repositioning." To the extent that the commitment to the university reality happened "in the same terms that other sectors of the student body understood [that reality]," the movement had ended up "launching" its militants, ideologically "disarmed," to partake in a politically revolutionary process. The result was that militants had "attempted to make of faith and its doctrinal expression a revolutionary ideology... wishing to make of both the movement and the church a political instrument to channel the process." This result, the SLA explained, had implied failures, ruptures, and confusions that had made militants "lose sight of the specifics that the church and [their] faith had."<sup>838</sup>

Thus, identity conflicts within the movement, which revolved around the uneasy relationships between faith-politics and faith-ideology, were structured on two poles of tension. On one side, the aspiration of making the movement into a presence of the revolutionary process within the church. And, on the other, achieving the movement to be the church's presence within the revolutionary process. Underlying this tension was the progressive church's vindication of Theology as historical. And therefore, the demand of

---

<sup>838</sup> *Informe del Secretariado Latinoamericano*, 1971. Reproduced in Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, p. 73-76.

making the theology response to the Christian praxis, thus, to the relation of the believer to reality and his commitment.<sup>839</sup>

Again, the First Latin American Committee meeting seems to have made important contributions to untying the knot of these conflicts. The discussions on the relationship between faith-politics brought to the fore by national-base movements' representatives at the meeting showed an expanded conceptual framework on politics that militants claimed to be open to "utopia." Utopia understood as a means of "appropriation," a process for which "the world ... [was] not exterior to men anymore." Therefore, it was a process of "owning himself, society and nature." Hence, politics ought to be a "global process of appropriation." As a utopia, it was to be open to the "imagination and criticism of the existing society, and creation of an image of another possible society." This was in opposition to a rival conception of politics based on empiricism, only interested in facts and overly pessimistic about men.<sup>840</sup>

Out of the conceptualization brought to the fore by the movements—of politics as utopia— emerged an understanding that politics were a space of creation in which God would have invited men to participate.<sup>841</sup> It was also where man became a subject of history (profane), which, within God's plan, became one with the history of salvation

---

<sup>839</sup> Ibid.

<sup>840</sup> *Texto Definitivo del Informe de Orientación, CLA-I*, pp. 5-8. Binder 15. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>841</sup> Ibid.

(Chapter 6). Thus, faith and politics were inseparable insofar as both converged to realize God's plan. They would nevertheless be unmistakable, given that in an eschatological sense, the final reconciliation of man was not historical but transhistorical.<sup>842</sup>

Overall, despite the significance of the conceptual discernments from which the relationship between faith and politics might appear somehow clear, student militants commented that at the level of everyday militancy, students faced the tensions brought upon by their immersion into reality. Thus, while their commitment questioned their faith, their faith relativized their commitment.<sup>843</sup>

On the other hand, there was the students' search to materialize their commitment ideologically and politically, which, as they had recognized previously, implied "a thorough fight for humanism."<sup>844</sup> As Fr. Dabezies recalled, various takes offered responses in moments of students' profound existential inquiry and urgency of their generation of materializing social change. But we had to remember that, as noted by Fr. Dabezies, "...beyond the temptations... the movement was not a political group but an ecclesial space!" The ultimate question was "...if the movement was defined by a class option (for the poor... which, in many cases, entailed abandoning the movement

---

<sup>842</sup> *UNEC -Union Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos, Centro de Lima. Los Cristianos en la Historia. Jornada de Estudios, Chaclacayo, 22-23 Octubre, 1966. Charla 2 Historia y Trascendencia, Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez. Binder 3, p. 10. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.*

<sup>843</sup> *Texto Definitivo del Informe de Orientación, CLA-I, p. 8.*

<sup>844</sup> *Finalidades de los movimientos de Acción Católica Universitaria, Box 112, Folder 1968. SLA-CLP Repository-Quito*

completely to get organized and work); or, instead, by the evangelization of the university *milieu*”, without renouncing an option for the poor—which was still an ongoing elaboration.<sup>845</sup>

Indeed, the question about the relationship between faith and ideology had been formulated amid the immersion of Catholic militants in the *milieu*, which produced identifications and positionings within the popular struggle and the desire to achieve concrete results in the fight for liberation. Their questioning of the others’ commitment was also seemingly behind that crucial question. Fr. Dabezies explained that “Che Guevara [had emerged] as a prototype of a militant... and questions began about... what does faith give us? [What] is the...reflection on [our] commitment when there are others who without any faith, without a church movement...[seem] to have [even greater] commitment than us?”<sup>846</sup> Again, crucial questions delineated since previous regional meetings also came to the 1970 CLA-I meeting that, for many militants, seemed to put their militancy in check: What is faith’s contribution to political commitment? Is faith an obstacle to the demands of revolutionary commitment? Is faith alienation?<sup>847</sup>

Fr. Dabezies commented that various sources informed students and advisors as they debated these questions. On the one hand, there was the regional influence within

---

<sup>845</sup> Dabezies, interview.

<sup>846</sup> Ibid.

<sup>847</sup> Notes on the 1969 Southern Cone Meeting, in *Circular Letter, December 1968-January-February 1969*. Box *Documentos MIEC-JECI II*. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima.



the movements of Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, who since 1966, in a Study Session, had warned about the perils of “reducing Christianity to something purely natural, to a temporary messianism, that is to say to ideologize [it].” This was a dilemma that Fr. Gutierrez recommended had to be faced by understanding that “the supernatural (the religious... [which is] the relationship between man and God)” does not exist outside of history. On the contrary, it occurs in history “giving it sense (viz. meaning and direction) ... [though] without modifying its laws.” Within the already mentioned understanding of the unity between profane history and the history of salvation, it was understood the supernatural (the religious element) entailed the ultimate meaning of profane history. Hence, arguably, Christianity was understood to be above and beyond and did not intend to partake in the ideological struggle that responded to the autonomy of the temporal.<sup>848</sup>

On the other hand, there was the strong influence of early Brazilian developments on the matter, e.g., those led by Fr. de Lima Vaz, which became known regionally by that time. De Lima Vaz’s work on the issue, as commented in Chapter 4, was a call of attention to the fact that Christianity as a faith transcended the limits of time and space and the practical ends of ideology, making explicit that Christians could make ideological choices in the temporal plane, though.<sup>849</sup> According to Fr. Dabezies, since these elaborations followed the transitions within the Brazilian JUC, they referred to early departures from traditional definitions of the church. In this sense, they helped to

---

<sup>848</sup> *UNEC, Los Cristianos en la Historia, Charla 2 Historia y Trascendencia*, Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, 1966.

<sup>849</sup> “Conciencia Histórica y Cristianismo,” *Servicio de Documentación*.

overcome binaries typical of a Christendom model, for example, between church-world, church-society, commitment-faith, and ideology-faith. They would also have taught the movement lessons about its identity by helping to distinguish between a political instrument and a pastoral instrument.<sup>850</sup> Fr. de Lima Vaz's reflections appeared in *Servicio de Documentacion* in 1968.

Other elaborations were also significant. Some came from other Christian denominations, some of which had their own intellectual and publishing projects and platforms. Developments by protestant theologian Detrich Bonhoeffer were seemingly among these. They were presented by Julio de Santa Ana, editor of the magazine *Cristianismo y Sociedad*—ISAL. These circulated among Catholic militants through *Servicio de Documentacion*, too, a fact which protruded as a display of the ecumenical dialogues that the SLA and other sectors of the progressive church were promoting. Santa Ana's reflection on the topic defended the thesis of the legitimate and, furthermore, critical character of the Christians' participation in the ideological struggle and their consequent action to the extent that they could work towards a humanization project. This is, to the extent that it contributed to “the liberation of man from everything that oppresses and prevents him from becoming what corresponds to him according to his dignity as a human being.”<sup>851</sup>

---

<sup>850</sup> Dabezies, interview.

<sup>851</sup> “Fé Cristiana e Ideologías,” *Servicio de Documentación*, Series 2 Social Philosophy, Document # 4. Box *Documentos MIEC-JECI II*, SLA-IBC Repository, Lima.

Fr. Dabezies recalled another take of seemingly vital significance within the movement, which fed its “critical repositioning” amidst the complex conjuncture. It was one that brought to the fore the understanding of the condition of “gratuity of the faith.” On the matter, Spanish theologian Jose Maria Gonzalez-Ruiz’s influential book "*El Cristianismo no es un Humanismo*" (1966), which collected the general lines of a Theology of the World outlined in Vatican II<sup>852</sup>, seems to have offered essential lessons. Gonzalez-Ruiz reflected on the relationship between faith and ideology by pointing out the “abuses in the use of the concept of *grace*,” the latter (grace), that is “the divine presence in cosmic and human evolution,” which belongs to a different order from that of nature. Gonzalez-Ruiz pointed out the biblical condemnation of any “attempt to immanentize grace in order to make it a tyrannical rival of nature.” In this way, he qualified any attempt to impose Christianity as an absolute bearer of values on the ethical heritage of the human world as an “attack against the gratuitousness and transcendence of grace.” While Christianity did not seek to “overshadow the autonomy of man” but to push forward human development, it represented “the gratuitous presence of God in history,” a “saving gratuitousness” that extends to all believers and non-believers.<sup>853</sup> As can be deduced from Fr. Dabezies, the nut of the problem was the

---

<sup>852</sup> Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Prologue* in Gonzalez-Ruiz, Jose Maria. *El Cristianismo no es un Humanismo*. Ediciones Peninsula, 1966, pp. 5-7.

<sup>853</sup> Significantly, amidst the dialogue with Marxist Humanism, Gonzalez-Ruiz stressed the relevance of asserting Christianity was faith and not a religious alienation. Thereby, Christianity sought the "intra-historical human transcendence," "the freedom of movement of the ascendant evolution of man," and not be a dogmatic response that would lead to such alienation. Gonzalez-Ruiz. *El Cristianismo no es un Humanismo*, pp. 24, 29-30.

universal character of faith's gratuitousness, which involves all men, not only those who profess the same ideology.<sup>854</sup>

Moreover, Gonzalez-Ruiz noted, while "it [was] necessary to present the message of gratuitousness in a climate of absolute gratuitousness," this message "[could] never be confined to the intrinsic plot of the human adventure." In this sense, he stressed, "The church must always flee from the danger of presenting itself among men as an essential and intrinsic component of social behavior. The religious option must always be fully free and must never be mixed with other temporal commitments."<sup>855</sup>

Overall, for Fr. Dabezies, who had conducted multiple militant retreats and meetings building on these reflections, Gonzalez-Ruiz's was an approach that made it possible to "distinguish things, without denying or opposing them." Noting the transhistorical meaning of men's history, which is to say, "the unfinished character of the human project by death,"<sup>856</sup> he commented that,

"Discovering the gratuity of both faith and the ecclesial space [made us realize] that we were not in the church for its [immediate] utility. ... We worked for it to be as useful as possible to the processes of liberation, justice, peace [in the

---

<sup>854</sup> From the dialogue with Fr. Dabezies, interview.

<sup>855</sup> Ibid., pp.81-83, 96, 120.

<sup>856</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

temporal order] ... but we have received a call. We responded... Those are deeper, [and] more gratuitous motivations.”<sup>857</sup>

Gradually, crises of identity ended up impacting national-base movements considerably. Manifestations of malaise were as varied as the responses to the issues at stake. “Crises of faith” ensued as militants’ desires to develop “an authentic apostolate collided with a bourgeois church,” as explained in a report.<sup>858</sup> Other cases entailed members’ abandoning the movements without renouncing their faith and instead with a sentiment of taking the practical implications of their spirituality to the limits. Also, as mentioned, consequences of the *ida al pueblo*, such as militants holding paralleling engagements—joining popular processes or New Left organizations—caused a discontinuity in the movements’ internal reflection and generational renewal. Senior militants—who carried with them solid theological, pastoral, and ideological elaborations—became disconnected from the movement’s everyday life and thus affected the capacity of movements to reproduce these key elaborations among the new generations. Also, conflictive relations with the church hierarchy arose in many dioceses due to Catholic militancy becoming a target of military containment.

According to the annotated compilation of sources by Fr. Andres Jacobs and some available reports of the movements’ visits conducted by SLA members, the situation of the national-based movements in 1970 described diverse realities, albeit having in

---

<sup>857</sup> Dabezies, interview.

<sup>858</sup> *Informe del SLA al Comité-Equipo Latinoamericano, CLA-I*, p. 32.

common their high politicization. Diversity included heterogeneity among different national realities and regional tensions within national movements. Also, hostile responses from the traditional church hierarchies uncovered that the movements had indeed achieved putting the church's hegemony at stake.

In the center and south of South America, the movements in Argentina, Uruguay, and Bolivia struggled to reaffirm themselves as evangelizing and prophetic movements in the context of the generalized turning of the militants to the *milieu* that had resulted in their devotion to the political struggle.<sup>859</sup> In Uruguay, apparent disinterest for a "pastoral of the *milieu*" (*viz. pastoral ambiental*) among the hierarchy had ensued in a reduction of the number of advisers, which in turn had weakened the coordinated action between Montevideo and other regional dioceses. In Argentina, besides reducing diocesan advisers, the hierarchy had withdrawn the JEC national adviser, thus promoting fragmentation into regional teams and weakening national coordination. As a JEC report mentioned, "problems ar[ose] mostly from relations with the hierarchy because they want[ed] to maintain the old structures of Catholic Action." However, against these actions, in Buenos Aires, a significant number of advisers (60) had resisted by forming regional teams. Also, an alternative way to strengthen national coordination was being projected.<sup>860</sup> In Chile, the movement had seemingly failed to reignite its organization by 1970, after the generalized movements' disbandment towards political activism, the

---

<sup>859</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, p.56.

<sup>860</sup> *Informe Secundarios*, Box 112, Folder 1968. Also, *Trabajo de Base, 1970*. Box 289, Folder 1970. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

clashes between Christians and Marxists within the church, and the ongoing crisis of Christian Democracy that had given space for the rise of MAPU.<sup>861</sup> Overcoming successive identity crises, only *Parroquias Universitarias* had strengthened as a “line of service.” Prejudice by the hierarchy to support the movements added to the withdrawal of the JEC national adviser and the rejection of *Vispera* for being “too socializing and politicizing.”<sup>862</sup> This did not necessarily prevent the circulation of *Vispera* to which progressive Catholic intellectual figures continued to contribute. Yet, it shows the resistance of a hierarchical church to continue supporting the committed student lay apostolate that had arisen. In countries like Paraguay and Brazil, radicalization had already made them targets of the authoritarian regimes’ repression, leaving little room for the reflection groups. While the hierarchy had shut down the Brazilian JUC in 1966, the self-called *Ex-JUC* (*viz.* former JUC) organization found no gathering space, except clandestinely.<sup>863</sup>

In the north of the continent, the experiences of Colombia and Peru continued to be strong; the secondary groups had multiplied, although, among university students, there was an intense *gremial*-political commitment and radicalization. These countries served as a reference for others in the growth process, such as Ecuador, that since 1968

---

<sup>861</sup> On the transformations within the Chilean Church by 1970 and the clashes between a developmentalist vs a revolutionary church that can be extrapolated for the region, Ives Vaillancourt “La crisis de ILADES,” in *Vispera* No 22, año 5, Abril 1971, p. 18.

<sup>862</sup> *Informe Patricio Leon, Trabajo de Base* Box 289 Folder 1968. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>863</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, pp. 19-20, 56-60.

was advancing in understanding “commitment as a task of transforming the world and as the liberation of men within a perspective of faith.”<sup>864</sup>

In Central America and the Caribbean, regions where specialized movements had started late, vigorous movements such as El Salvador, Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua took hold. These had an intense *gremial*-political activity and raised the need for a radical commitment. Dominican Republic’s movement had been significant in igniting Panama’s *Equipos Universitarios*, while all three countries had sent representatives to the SLA. However, the onset of the 1970s showed that politicization challenged their stability. Reports by the SLA commented that Nicaragua’s JUC, for instance, which was the main dynamizing force of the university *milieu*, was being absorbed by political militancy. Interpretation by the SLA of this phenomenon, not exclusive to Nicaragua but affecting the region widely, usually pointed at a weak or insufficient practice of the Review of Life Method that made it challenging to reassert a commitment in the faith.<sup>865</sup> Thus, Nicaragua’s JUC was turning into a movement “for action [rather] than for reflection.” The Nicaraguan hierarchy would react in open alliance with the government to this reality. Countries like Costa Rica, Honduras, and Venezuela seemingly lacked a solid community experience and theological reflection. Rather, their cadres’ radicalization made processes of *nucleación* difficult and hindered generational renewal within the movements. Also, according to Fr. Jacobs, after the

---

<sup>864</sup> Ibid.

<sup>865</sup> *Relatorio Encuentro Cono Sur*, Box 112 Folder 1968. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.



intense radicalization of the student body in 1968, the Mexican movement had mainly turned to political activism, which made it challenging for advisors to accompany its politicization process.<sup>866</sup>

Overall, while identity crises gradually weakened national-base movements organizationally until 1971, they created an opportunity to refine arguments and mature the theological and pastoral proposals.<sup>867</sup> To the extent that militants had to make critical re-positionings over multiple issues at stake, identity crises prompted the sharpening of previous elaborations. Once again, the movement proved to be a laboratory for Christian reflection and praxis. The evolution of an agreed-upon line of work around commitment and cultural autonomy (Mexico Seminar, 1967) that involved epistemic, ethical, social-economic, and political dimensions increasingly took shape as a commitment to the liberation of the poor and oppressed. Recognizing the essential role that the university and university students would have in the revolutionary process by promoting a kind of epistemic sovereignty and contributing to the consciousness-raising of the people had come along with a series of criticisms. Contempt towards students' *embourgeoisement*—which led to their loss of critical sense in favor of installation in the status quo, elitism, and pretended vanguardism—that left behind the recognition of the *pueblo*, including their forms of knowledge and religiosity, had been later recognized at the First CLA. This

---

<sup>866</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, pp. 19-20, 56-60.

<sup>867</sup> Elaborations out of the theological and pastoral ruptures and “repositioning” can be traced in Gustavo Gutierrez, “La pastoral de la Iglesia en America Latina,” and “Hacia una Teología de la Liberación,” in *Servicio de Documentación Series 1 Theology and Pastoral* # 15, 16. Also, informative to the movement was Hugo Assman “Teología de la Liberación,” in *Servicio de Documentación Series 1 Theology and Pastoral* # 23-24. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima.

last meeting also validated practices of Commitment and reflections advanced by the Latin American militancy and projected them as the regional line of action. As detailed in Chapter 6, at the level of national bases, myriad practical forms of commitment embodied the collective decision to go to the poor and offered different responses to common identitarian dilemmas. The long spiritual journey and praxis of the Latin American Catholic student movement had been all the way through a place of elaboration of the sharper ruptures with the traditional, clerical, and hierarchical church and pastoral line, epitome of a Christendom model. With such a role, the movement had been a key agent in crafting Liberation Theology, with all its internal tensions and transpiring its competing formulations.

#### **7.6. Heightened state repression, the raid of Montevideo's headquarters, and the loss of the movement's momentum.**

Arguably, the Latin American movement had resisted the partial weakening of its social base that had ensued because of identity crises. Besides, despite the hostility among traditional church hierarchies, it had capitalized on the maturation of its theological and pastoral proposal to take hold and survive. However, heightened state repression at a regional level, which had also disarticulated the student movement, made progressive Catholic advisors, militants, and cadres targets of "containment."<sup>868</sup> This profoundly eroded the Catholic student movement's structures. Destabilization of the Secretariat also brought to the surface internal tensions between competing theological

---

<sup>868</sup> As mentioned, the concept of *Containment* is used in the sense referred in Grandin, "What Was Containment?" 2013.

and apostolic approaches that served as grounds for challenging regional leadership and even the usefulness of a Latin American coordination organ by 1972.

Repression of progressive Catholic militants and national and regional cadres increased as university students almost indistinctly had become a social group perceived as a threat to the vision of an “orderly, stable society.”<sup>869</sup> The National Security Doctrine claiming to defend the social order had served the states to justify identification, vigilance, and extrajudicial action against perceived threatening elements. It was also used to unleash state terrorism and, in general terms, to dissuade and preempt via repression student mobilization and the upsurge of popular protest in urban and rural areas.<sup>870</sup> Containment of Catholics worsened as they became a group receiving particular attention. As the Rockefeller Report on the Americas assessed, drawing on the Medellín-68 Conclusions, the Catholic church was perceived by the US as “vulnerable to subversive penetration.”<sup>871</sup>

A series of events showed the impact of military containment on the gradual erosion of the movement’s structures. After 1968, the repression of student movements throughout the region equally affected the Catholic militancy, menacing their structural stability. In Brazil, during the five years following the coup, the student movement,

---

<sup>869</sup> Brands, *Latin America’s Cold War*. p. 82.

<sup>870</sup> Ibid.

<sup>871</sup> Keeley, Theresa. "Medellin is ‘fantastic’: drafts of the 1969 Rockefeller Report on the Catholic church." *The Catholic Historical Review* 101, no. 4 (2015): 809-834.

within which the JUC cadres and bases had a crucial role, had risen as a democratic vanguard strongly repressed by the state.<sup>872</sup> Military repression reached the progressive clergy that supported the youth's claims for social justice, as recorded in the case of the *Convento de Perdizes* between 1967-69.<sup>873</sup> In May of 1969, the reality of militarism started to feel dangerously closer to the movement with the detention, torture, and murder of Fr. Antonio Henrique Pereira Neto, Recife JUC advisor and secretary of Dom Helder Camara. By February of 1971, Uruguayan Fr. Uberfil Monzon, a former Latin American advisor, was kidnapped and brutally tortured by security forces of the Paraguayan dictatorship of Stroessner. Three days later and after emphatic denial by the Paraguayan government of his detention and under insistence by Mons. Ramon Bogarin—President of the CELAM Department of the Laity, officials recognized the priest had been detained under accusations of alleged links with Uruguayan Tupamaros-MLN.<sup>874</sup> Later that year, and seemingly after months of “systematic control and violation of the SLA’s correspondence,” on October 20 and 22, Uruguayan security forces raided the facilities of the SLA under the suspicion that “...15 people who entered the facility were Tupamaro’s militants.” During the inspection, police determined that visitors did not relate to the SLA but worked for the anarchist press *Comunidad del Sur*, a renter of the facilities’ basement.

---

<sup>872</sup> Snider, Colin. "Catholic Campuses, Secularizing Struggles: Student Activism and Catholic Universities in Brazil, 1950–1968." *Local Church, Global Church: Catholic Activism in Latin America from Rerum Novarum to Vatican II*.

<sup>873</sup> Freire, Americo. “Dominicanos, 1968” in Nunes, Paulo Giovanni Antonino, Pere Petit, and Reinaldo Lindolfo Lohn, eds. *Utopia e repressão: 1968 no Brasil*. Saga Editora, 2018.

<sup>874</sup> *Comunicado del Departamento de Laicos del Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano CELAM sobre la detencion del sacerdote Uruguayo Uberfil Monzon*, March 8, 1971.  
<https://episcopal.org.py/publicaciones2/48-%20Comunicado%20del%20departamento%20de%20laicos%20del%20%20CELAM%20sobre%20la%20detencion%20del%20Sacerdote%20Uruguayo%20P.%20Uberfil%20Monzon..pdf>

Authorities confiscated tapes, documentation, and literature on topics of church and theology that were in line with the liberationist line, which the official in charge deemed not subversive at that time.<sup>875</sup>

While things seemed to have cleared up, these events were yet the preamble to a more aggressive targeting by security forces and severe destabilization of the SLA's structure. On November 24, 1971, after attending a meeting in Colombia, Fr. Buenaventura Pelegri, Latin American advisor, was deported—without any documentation of the process—when attempting to return to Montevideo. Authorities redirected Fr. Pelegri to Buenos Aires.<sup>876</sup> The next day, the Salvadorian student and member of the SLA Andrés Campos' entry to Uruguay from Chile was also rejected. Campos was redirected to Sao Paulo-Brazil, where he was extrajudicially detained, disappeared, and tortured almost to death for nine days. Campos was accused of being a “suspect of terrorist activities and at the service of subversive bishops” and put under pressure to involve Dom Helder Camera as a facilitator of interactions between Tupamaros and the Brazilian guerrilla. Campos did not cede to torture. Desperate efforts to find him by the SLA members under Secretary Gilberto Valdez and Fr. Pelegri, Dom Pablo Evaristo—Archbishop of Sao Paulo, Mons. Benedicto Ulhoa—Vicary General de Sao Paulo, Dom Ivo Lorscheiter—Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro and CNBB Secretary, Mons. Ramon Bogarin—president of the Department of the Laity, Mons. Carlos

---

<sup>875</sup> *Informe del Secretariado Latinoamericano del Sector de Pastoral estudiantil del Departamento de Laicos del CELAM, ante los hechos ocurridos los dos ultimos meses en Montevideo*, December 9, 1971. Box 150. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

<sup>876</sup> *Ibid.*

Partelli—Archbishop of Montevideo, and the Apostolic Nunciature, among many others, bore fruits. Campos was legally processed and set free on December 6, 1971. (Appendix 5)<sup>877</sup> That same day, Peruvian student Gilberto Valdez, SLA Secretary, was detained in Buenos Aires, accused of being an international guerrilla leader, albeit afforded “fair treatment,” and let free after two days.<sup>878</sup>



Figure 20. Salvadorian militant Andrés Campos, a portrait. The photograph was published before in Franzin, Maria Tereza. *Por onde andei* (1971-1974), CIP, Sao Paulo, 2022. A photo record courtesy of Tereza Franzin (former SLA member).

---

<sup>877</sup> *Testimonio de Andres A. Campos acerca del trato recibido en Brasil*. Box 150. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito. In honor of committed Christian militants who faced state repression and in remembrance of Andres Campos, who passed, seemingly in confusing circumstances in 1990, a transcription of this testimony is included in Appendix 5.

<sup>878</sup> *Informe del Secretariado Latinoamericano ... ante los hechos ocurridos*, December 1971.

Amidst the confusing situation, the SLA team had to rush and prepare to move the Secretariat's facilities. However, the SLAs' archive, the *Vispera* Magazine headquarters, and the Center of Documentation were to remain behind. Early the following year, on April 18, 1972, a new military raid was conducted at SLA's former facilities. During the procedure, the military police detained Fr. Arnaldo Spadaccino, Pastoral Vicary of the Archdiocese of Montevideo, who, not a member of the SLA, had presented himself as the person responsible for the church facilities in the diocese. This time, all materials in the facility were seized, and officials accused the SLA of having a "hidden printing press" in which a "clandestine newspaper" was published. On top, suspicion about the origin of the SLA's funds turned into false accusations of the SLA "financing a printing and distribution center for Latin America" of all kinds of literature "on guerrillas, subversive and revolutionary actions." Moreover, distortion of the SLA's nature and function in the region continued with accusations that the SLA was a "center from which the sale of weapons to the continent was directed, and the illegal entry and exit of people from the country facilitated."<sup>879</sup> Notes of protest by the Apostolic Nuncio, the Episcopal Conference of Uruguay, and even a member of the Republics' Senate, against the false accusations and damage to the good name of Pax Romana followed. These criticized the government for not correcting false accusations and insisted on clarifying the nature of the SLA's work and the origin of the literature in the facility. They also explained that the newspaper "*Lucha Popular*" was a publication by the *Comunidad del Sur*, a renter of the

---

<sup>879</sup> *Comunicado No. 80 de las fuerzas conjuntas en lo que se refiere al procedimiento militar sobre la ex-sede del SLA de Pax Romana*. Accusations were disseminated to the public opinion widely as it was recorded by the newspapers "*El Comercio*," "*Ahora*," and "*Accion*," among others. Box 150. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.

facilities, and was not a “clandestine publication” as argued. In fact, it had been a newspaper of public circulation and “for all to see” for a long time.<sup>880</sup>

SLA’s interpretations of the recent military harassment of the movement were part of the reports submitted. Among these, a hypothesis pointed that the current events were a part of preconceived repression against the church, particularly against CELAM and the Secretariat’s liberationist line. Conclusions became credible that, under the pretext of the extraordinary security measures promulgated by the Uruguayan government during the electoral period, preconceived actions materialized. Among the elements supporting this hypothesis were recent and reiterated attacks from the government and the country’s elites against the pastoral line of the Uruguayan church and the Secretariat, and the conclusions of the Rockefeller report. There were also, the mentioned vigilance over the SLA’s correspondence, the Uruguayan police support to Paraguayan officials to accuse Fr. Monzon, and the apparent generalized interest in tying the Latin American church to guerrilla activities, among others. These elements let the SLA notice that a Southern Cone governments’ coordinated action was indeed underway.<sup>881</sup>

---

<sup>880</sup> *Comunicado a la opinion publica de la Conferencia Episcopal Uruguay. Discurso del Senador Juan pablo Terra “Como pegarle a un hombre atado”* Box 150. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito. On the issue, a complete report was made in “En ocasión del allanamiento,” *Vispera Magazine* n. 27, p. 3.

<sup>881</sup> *Informe del Secretariado Latinoamericano ... ante los hechos ocurridos*, December 1971. Significantly, although the historiographical record cites the 1975 intelligence conference in Santiago as the more formal starting point for the Condor Operation, Catholic Students’ records suggest countersubversive operations’ earlier coordination. As per Andres Campos’ testimony of his disappearance and torture, his Brazilian military captors raised their “prerogatives as an international gendarme” and their belief that “in the name of the continental security,” they might “intervene militarily” in other Southern Countries (e.g., Chile and Uruguay). Andres Campos Testimony, Box 150 SLA-CLP Repository. On the chronology of the Condor counter-subversive operation and its understanding as a “clandestine inter-American counterinsurgency



### **7.7. Arrival and change in Lima. The polarity Lima-Montevideo and the decline of the Latin American Catholic students as a Social Movement.**

Since mid-1971, the SLA had recognized that the Uruguayan political situation had gradually impeded the Latin American movement and Secretariat to operate freely. Eleven raids of Montevideo's *Parroquia Universitaria* between 1970-71 and the Uruguayan army's assassination of Julio Sposito, a militant of the Uruguayan JEC and member of the student federation, while he was participating in a peaceful march, added to the perception of the democratic closure.<sup>882</sup> Since June of that year, the SLA had contemplated the transfer of its facilities and its extensive work material. Mexico and Lima appeared as alternatives, although, apparently, the Department of the Laity under Mons. Bogarin advised not to move it to Mexico because it implied geographical distance and possibly dissociation from the movement's vanguard that had developed in south of the continent. Thus, arrangements began to be carried out in Lima instead.<sup>883</sup>

After the two consecutive raids of the facilities in Montevideo in October, the SLA team was left divided. Four members were still in Montevideo, while the other five, including the advisor Fr. Pelegri, were in Buenos Aires. The anti-insurgency command of the Uruguayan army had ordered not to let any SLA member enter the country. Further,

---

system," see McSherry, J. Patrice. *Predatory states: Operation Condor and covert war in Latin America*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012. Also, Lessa, Francesca. *The Condor Trials: Transnational Repression and Human Rights in South America*. Yale University Press, 2022.

<sup>882</sup> *Sitios de Memoria Uruguay* <https://sitiosdememoria.uy/sposito-vitali-julio-cesar>. Also, Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, p 80.

<sup>883</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, p. 84.

after the events involving Andres Campos, Mexican Francisco Merino, and Uruguayan Humberto Migliorisi—two of the SLA members in Montevideo were briefly arrested by Uruguayan security forces.<sup>884</sup> The other two members in Montevideo went into hiding, protected by local clergy and nuns as a precautionary measure. By then, the team sought to accelerate the necessary measures to transfer the SLA to Lima and retake the preparations for the upcoming Latin American Committee meeting scheduled to be held in that city the following year. On December 24, four months before the third raid in which the SLA material was seized, all documentation was packed and ready to be transported. But since clearing up the accusations raised in the last military raid took time, the first portion of materials only arrived in Lima more than a year later, by June of 1973.<sup>885</sup> Support by CELAM-Department of the Laity and the Vatican Council of the Laity was crucial in solving this situation. These instances sent the Spanish lawyer Joaquin Ruiz-Gimenez so that on their behalf, he would clarify before the Uruguayan authorities the strictly apostolic mission of the SLA MIEC-JECI. Ruiz-Gimenez, a former president of Pax Romana during the war and converted Demo-Christian after having been related to the Franco regime in the past, was by 1972 a recognized international figure and president of the International Catholic Organizations. He requested Uruguayan officials return the occupied properties and allow the SLA members' free movement. Also, it was Ruiz-Jimenez who managed to transport the Documentation Center to Lima.<sup>886</sup>

---

<sup>884</sup> Franzin, Maria Tereza. *Por onde andei (1971-1974)*, CIP, Sao Paulo, 2022, p. 13.

<sup>885</sup> Ibid.

<sup>886</sup> Franzin, *Por onde andei*, p. 28. Also, Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, p. 100.

Interestingly, Brazilian Tereza Franzin, a member of the SLA at the time, recounted in a biographical book some details about this moving. Arguably, it was a response to the climate of strong censorship and what the Vatican and CELAM thought to be as necessary confidentiality of the information given the persecution displayed against the progressive church. As commented by Franzin, the documentary material was brought as a diplomatic shipment avoiding any inspection. That was something that intrigued the members of the SLA at that time. As Franzin recounted it: “what did they think was in those boxes?”<sup>887</sup> Seemingly, the institutional church felt that, given the ongoing situation, it had to handle matters of the *temporal* commitment of the lay apostolate with a grain of salt.

The SLA’s arrival in Peru brought significant changes and exacerbated difficulties within the movement. Amid the still sensitive effects of the events in Montevideo and for security reasons, the SLA members deemed it necessary to give the SLA a non-governmental international organization and diplomatic status.<sup>888</sup> This would be a decision not taken alone. Latin American progressive church figures and the hosting Peruvian UNEC and advisor would have recommended this proceeding. The move contributed to the return to a more institutional profile of the SLA and the movement, and with it, an attempt to de-politicize the SLA’s work. As Franzin put it, “self-criticism ... made everyone agree that the situation had to change with the SLA’s formalized existence and activities before the [Peruvian] government ... This also referred to not

---

<sup>887</sup> Franzin, *Por onde andei*, pp.28-30.

<sup>888</sup> *Ibid.*

exercising any political militancy or participating in political events in the country. Thus, in many marches and acts, we watched from the sidewalks and repressed the immense desire to participate. ... It seems like a no-brainer today. However, in the 1970s, for convinced militants, it represented a sign of hard-earned maturity.”<sup>889</sup>



Figure 21. MIEC JECI Latin American Secretariat members; Brazilian Terezinha Franzin and Colombian Ivan Jaramillo at the SLA facilities in Lima, 1972. The photograph was published before in Franzin, Maria Tereza. *Por onde andei (1971-1974)*, CIP, Sao Paulo, 2022. A photo record courtesy of Tereza Franzin.

---

<sup>889</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

The formulation of annual projects became jeopardized as multiple difficulties arose with the financing agencies. LAB eventually withdrew its funding. According to Franzin, “influential people had dedicated themselves to boycotting the work, whispering to funding agencies that the team was a group of inconsequential [youths] dedicated to tourism with the funds that should be donated to churches and pastorals.”<sup>890</sup> Seemingly, LAB perceptions had also become loaded with distrust and filled with the perception that regional cadres were living with excessive luxury. As Valdez recounted it, during an unexpected visit of someone sent by LAB, they could observe that their way of life “could not be more austere. My bed’s mattress we discovered was filled with paper..., my bedside table was made with the wooden crates where the books from Montevideo had arrived..., my wardrobe was my suitcase on the floor. That was all my furniture... as everybody else’s.” By the end of 1973, however, funding agencies had completely cut the funds; only Adveniat remained as a financing source.<sup>891</sup>

The arrival to Lima also brought underlying tensions to the surface within the movement for the SLA’s leadership. The conflict unfolded along the lines of the polarity between Lima vs. Montevideo. From both perspectives, the conflict expressed resistance to the imposition of one’s theological line over the other. This is because at least two theological interpretations had emerged as correlates to the perspective of Commitment

---

<sup>890</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>891</sup> Valdez, Interview.

to the poor, turning into a common struggle for social justice, liberation from oppression, and overcoming a situation of structural injustice.

On the one hand, the Uruguayan, resembling the Southern Cone's take, would have been significantly influenced by Fr. Juan Luis Segundo's approach to a Theology for the Adult Laity and by more profound processes of secularization in the region's countries. Seemingly, and in broad lines, interpretation of this theology had led the movement to interpret itself as a vanguard.<sup>892</sup> This was an elite that had more or less reached a "mature faith," with a key role in leading the consciousness-raising process among the people (*viz.* the popular masses, *el pueblo*) who professed a popular religiosity considered "alienating."<sup>893</sup> As Gilberto Valdez explained, the Southern Cone's take was also strongly permeated by the nationalist ethos without strong Marxist theoretical leanings. However, it interrogated intensely the relationship faith-politics-science.<sup>894</sup> According to Ivan Jaramillo's 1972 account, the tendency stemmed from the dominant

---

<sup>892</sup> Dabezies, interview. According to Fr. Dabezies, both the movement's understanding of this theology and "the political evolution of the continent" led to the Uruguayan movement's "certain *elitization* and separation from the masses," which also included the Catholic masses. This generated a kind of "movement's estrangement from the real church" that translated into disconnection from the current pastoral shift, which was to be important later for a political and ecclesial transformation. An example presented by Fr. Dabezies recounted that by 1968 a Conciliar renovation had started led by Archbishop Partelli, who, along with his team, had launched a joint pastoral work and formed more than 10,000 ecclesial base groups. But "the movement in Montevideo was living like in another world.... they had not realized what was happening." Someone later expressed that the formation of ecclesial base groups in Paris was "something very interesting.... and barely believable." "But no one reacted, no one..." was the comment concerning the militants' losing sight of previous and more profound transformations occurring in their own country.

<sup>893</sup> Franzin, *Por onde andei*, p. 57.

<sup>894</sup> Valdez, interview. As commented in Chapter 6, this publication was censored by influential figures of the Peruvian movement, for "being of another theoretical line."

trends within the *milieu* that, within leftist circles conceived of Marxism as a science/theory of the revolutionary praxis. This conceiving opened militants to posing a critical interaction between the three notions. Following Jaramillo, Southern Cone meetings would have delved deeper into the rationale that “faith was a different category from those of praxis and science, but it dynamized both of them, realizing itself without getting exhausted, and in turn, criticized by them.” Therefore, within the movement’s life, faith-science-praxis ought to describe a relationship in which they criticized, dynamized, and relativized one another.<sup>895</sup> An important outcome of these reflections had been raising concern about the need for a more thorough understanding of the church’s history; that was an epistemic issue over which the movement declared insufficient knowledge. Following the dialectic faith-science-praxis, critical addressing of the church’s history would be vital for the faith to “understand it and assume a commitment to transform this history.”<sup>896</sup> Embracing such dialectical relation had further implications. Because the concept of praxis raised a new way of knowing, Southern Cone’s elaborations would have posed a harsh critique of the Review of Life Method-RLM and its epistemological, methodological, and ontological assumptions. Part of this criticism would be calling for the development of a ‘new and encompassing’ pedagogy (*viz. pedagogía superadora*). While theoretical reflection seemed to advance on these

---

<sup>895</sup> Jaramillo, Ivan. “La coyuntura del movimiento hoy: Vision historica II.” *Servicio de Documentación*, Documento 1, September 1972. SLA-IBC Repository, Lima-Peru. Dominant trends within New Left groupings had taken up a Gramscian approach (“philosophy of the praxis”). In doing so, they had attempted “to strip Marxism of its mechanicism and positivist materialism and [instead] Latin-Americanize Marxism, freeing it from imported schemes that do not respond to our reality.” p. 5.

<sup>896</sup> These reflections were later retaken in *SPES Bulletin*, n. 22-23, January 1974, Reproduced in Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, Part II, pp. 112-13.

epistemic issues and involved the whole movement, Southern Cone's disappointment had seemingly arisen for the practical immobility of the movement. As Jaramillo put it, "the line of uniting without confusing faith and politics worked up to a certain point. To the point that the scientific truth is to be known by the parties but not by the movement [who takes it] as a simple 'reference' and without questioning it, [thus revealing that] the real line was more to put one over the other, but without achieving the critical interaction between the two."<sup>897</sup>

On the other hand, the Peruvian perspective had seemingly grown critical of the movements' elitism and, somehow, paternalism towards the masses—a claim that echoed the generally acknowledged exhaustion of *foquismo*. Apparently, due to students' greater involvement with the strong Popular Pastoral developed in *pueblos jóvenes* and rural areas, their take was rather appreciative of the popular religiosity considering it key to the liberation process.<sup>898</sup> The Peruvian perspective, commented Valdez, resembled the Brazilian. This was because of a more substantial theoretical presence of Marxism, which for the SLA coming from the Southern Cone's experience was perceived "with a certain theological and ideological harshness."<sup>899</sup> On the relationship between faith-science, Peruvians seem to have leaned toward an attitude that exalted the supernatural dimension of faith and the limitations of science to interpret such an experience. This perspective,

---

<sup>897</sup> Jaramillo, "La coyuntura del movimiento," *Servicio de Documentación*, p.25.

<sup>898</sup> Important insights on the Popular Pastoral work developed in *pueblos jóvenes* in Peru are discussed in Peña, Milagros. *Theologies and Liberation in Peru. The Role of Ideas in Social Movements*, pp. 93-119. Temple University, 1995.

<sup>899</sup> Valdez, 5-4-2020.



which apparently would prevail henceforward, stated that “by living the [faith's] gratuity, the militant leaves the scientism that suffocates faith. By discovering the multidimensionality of man, he rather discover[ed] the movement as the meeting place of the faith.” Furthermore, while having a critical attitude towards the RLM, their take pointed out that if the militant “turns science as absolute in the method, [and] does not reinterpret faith based on his experience... he [would] stay behind and be left by the wayside.”<sup>900</sup>

On December 4-16, the Second Latin American Committee-CLAI meeting took place. The first ten days were devoted to a Study Session to discuss the region’s MIEC-JECI movements’ apostolic presence, for which interpreting “the complex Latin American reality in its social, political, and economic dimensions” was crucial. Also critical was pondering “the reality of the church, and that of the student and popular movements.” Eleven countries attended the meeting: Brazil, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Uruguay, and Honduras. The last two days served for representatives of the national-based movements and the SLA to attend the committee meeting and make decisions on specific “orientations” and “reframing” of the movements to attempt to overcome the existing challenges.<sup>901</sup>

---

<sup>900</sup> *SPES Bulletin*, n. 19, p. 17. From the personal collection of Ana Maria Bidegain. Also, details on the particularities of the movements from the north vs. the south of Latin America are addressed in *Circular Letter, December 1968-January-February 1969*, p. 2.

<sup>901</sup> *Segundo Comite Latinoamericano SLA MIEC-JECI CLA II, Memoirs*. Binder 16. SLA-CLP Repository, Lima.

The SLA's report on the situation of the movement revealed that "with the sole exception of Peru, where the UNEC show[ed] clear signs of vitality, all the others [were] either in dismemberment, restructuring or paralyzed in the initiation stage." Ivan Jaramillo, who presented the report, warned that "this is not being pessimistic but objective. ...[Currently] our movement is a community of minorities in many cases... marginalized from the local church."<sup>902</sup> As mentioned, the long-lasting identity crisis had consequences in articulating the relation faith-politics. It was also characterized by poor theological reflection, the movement's disarticulation from the local church, and crises of faith or overt disinterest in the church evangelizing mission. Opposition from the church hierarchy and, ultimately, political repression appeared to have given the final blow to many movements. Commenting on this situation, Fr. Dabezies noted that "there were people who were still very strong because of their militant experience, but there was hardly any place where they were active, except in hiding."<sup>903</sup>

During the Committee meeting the Peruvian and Uruguayan approaches faced intense discussions. Discrepancies deepened as mutual distrust grew over the other's suspected attempt to use the Secretariat to universalize their own theological proposal. As recounted by Franzin, "Contradictorily, in this rivalry, [the two respective national groups] united against the Latin American Team." They questioned the need for any Latin American coordination at all and proposed closing the Secretariat or "breaking it up

---

<sup>902</sup> *Informe al Segundo Comité Latinoamericano SLA MIEC-JECI*. Reproduced in Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, p. 103.

<sup>903</sup> Dabezies, interview.

regionally rather than letting the other dictate the line.”<sup>904</sup> Amidst strong arguments and high emotionality, the proposal was not approved. “Two-thirds of the vote was required for the approval. There was not a majority.” As Peruvian Gilberto Valdez recalled, “I took off my Peruvian shirt and firmly opposed it in my Latin American Secretary shirt. I confronted the Uruguayan-Peruvian motion and ...with the votes of the other movements we defeated it.”<sup>905</sup>

The committee finally agreed on a three-pronged line of action that included continued support to reignite and invigorate, where possible, national movements. Also, the committee decided to strengthen the movement’s identity as an evangelizing community among students committed to Liberation; therefore, building a bridge between the church’s global pastoral and the political vanguards in the revolutionary process. Thus, two tasks were prioritized. One, was to establish the movement as a “critical presence” within the revolutionary process by contributing “elements of relativization” to militants from different political lines. Another was building a tighter bond with the church’s pastoral to “transmit” the richness of reflections and dynamics from within the liberation struggle. On these two tasks, the committee had reached the shared understanding that lack of balance, consisting of the movement’s neglect of its ecclesial condition while it established a strong articulation with political vanguards had

---

<sup>904</sup> Franzin, *Por onde andei*, p. 60.

<sup>905</sup> Valdez, interview.

caused the militants' departure from the movements to politics.<sup>906</sup> The mentioned bridge attempted to correct such disbalance. Finally, a third goal was to strengthen the theoretical, scientific, and theological reflection to accompany the living of mature faith and reframe the movement's pedagogy in a way that responded to stages of politicization and more elaborate modes of thought.<sup>907</sup>

Despite the clarity of the proposal stemming from the 1972 Committee meeting, it was not possible to carry it out. In this regard, Fr. Dabezies recalls that "it was not easy to implement. [For instance, in the Uruguayan case,] official security forces intervened the University. Nothing could be done. Any proselytizing work, be it religious, political, social, whatever it was, was penalized at the university with the loss of university status. We kept meeting [in hiding] for a while; we might have been a group of twenty including secondary students," but with much difficulty.<sup>908</sup>

As Fr. Andres Jacobs noted, beginning in 1973, the SLA, which continued to renew its cadres, stuck to the line and pushed forward the last Committee's decision about the movement's "rediscovery as a church movement." Because of this, the SLA's work and its small but resilient student communities integrated into the church's Joint Pastoral (viz. *Pastoral de Conjunto*) that expressed differently in the countries of the

---

<sup>906</sup> *Letter from Andres Campos to Luis Alberto Gomez de Souza*, summarizing relevant discussions during CLA-II meeting. Reproduced in Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos*, pp. 106-108.

<sup>907</sup> In CLA II, the idea had emerged that the practice and what was required from the Review of Life Method was different in the politicization phase than in the initiation-consciousness raising phase. *Ibid.*

<sup>908</sup> Dabezies, interview.

region according to various contexts' specific needs, be it the Popular Pastoral, Parishes or the Specialized Pastoral.<sup>909</sup>

After the *coup d'état* in Chile, the authoritarian solution in Latin America was radicalized. The states' praetorian response expanded exponentially in the Southern Cone and continued to work its way through other formally democratic regimes in the region using the National Security Doctrine. Between 1974-1978 repression, increasing technocratic control of education, deinstitutionalization of student *gremios*, and dilution of the student bases into popular mobilization or leftist parties and organizations made the student movement disappear as a political force in Latin America.<sup>910</sup> Arguably, this disappearance and the greater institutionalization of the MIEC-JECI apostolate caused disconnection with the student *milieu*, losing the characteristics that had made it into a social movement during the last years. To be sure, the movement continued to be a Church movement and also and student-lay international one, but it lost the attributes of being a social movement that it had acquired during the 1960s.

As a result, the movement ceased to capture an authentic response from the student *milieu* to the social conflicts that affected it. The destruction of the student *milieu*,

---

<sup>909</sup> Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos* Part II, pp. 129-130. According to Dabezies, it will only be until 1978 when specifically, student apostolic groups re-emerge stronger. Dabezies, interview.

<sup>910</sup> For national based cases review see Archila "Entre la Academia y la Política," Castaneda "Luchas estudiantiles" and Mancebo "Universidad del Estado de Rio de Janeiro," in Marsiske, Renate, and Lourdes Alvarado, *Movimientos estudiantiles en la historia de América Latina*. Vol. 1. Plaza y Valdes, 1999. Also, Zermeno "Los demócratas primitivos," and Pogliaghi, "Estudiantes en la reconstrucción democrática Argentina" in Ordorika, Imanol, Roberto Rodriguez-Gomez, and M. Gil Antón. *Cien años de movimientos estudiantiles*. (2019).

whether because of the disappearance of university spaces for internal deliberation, the weakening of the student movement, or its dilution into the popular movement, made the student body lose its political leverage. Similarly, disaggregation of the MIEC-JECI groupings prevented the militants' responses to the social *milieu's* problems from configuring a coherent collective response as a social actor. Amid the crisis, the disappearance of apostolic structures within the movement, such as university parishes, worsened the discontinuity in the internal reflection and generational renewal already provoked by the militants' *Ida al Pueblo*. As Juan Mendoza lamented, "We should never have abandoned our university parish," which, in his Southern Andean Peruvian experience, was the critical mechanism of reproduction: "[the university parish represented] the repetition of form." With the closure of University Parishes in those years, "we lost that relationship with the university world."<sup>911</sup>

Beyond the generalized crisis of MIEC-JECI movements that by 1973 hardly retained its militancy, militants' *Committed Spirituality* continued to resound within the Latin American political culture. While MIEC-JECI movements would lose their brief but significant impetus as a social movement, the role of former militants in promoting the living of this spirituality was critical among various layers of society in which spirituality turned into committed praxis. Many former militants played critical roles in raising Ecclesial-Base Communities.<sup>912</sup> A Catholic intelligentsia continued growing and

---

<sup>911</sup> Mendoza, interview.

<sup>912</sup> Dussel, Enrique. *Resistencia y esperanza: historia del pueblo cristiano en América Latina y el Caribe*. Ed. Dep. Ecueménico de Investigaciones (DEI), 1995. pp 255-56.

being influential in universities and think tanks in Latin America and other regions connected through the international Catholic student and intellectual networks. Also, as Chapter 6 exemplified, former militants were essential companions of the *popular* organization and mobilization for social justice. They also accompanied New Left parties and movements, some of which, as Marchesi recounted, were giving “the decisive round” in Latin America’s revolution.<sup>913</sup> As Commitment was, above all, “a way of life,”<sup>914</sup> committed Christians kept convoking and participating in communities of faith where the utopia of Liberation continued to live. Like yeast in the dough, their spirituality animated a multi-layer social struggle for social justice and democracy and laid at the bases of other popular social movements that became the social base for Liberation Theology.

## **7.8. Conclusions of the Chapter**

From 1967 to 1973, the MIEC-JECI multicentered network of organizations formed during the early 1960s transitioned into a transnational social movement. This claim finds supporting elements in a complementary view of both the ‘identity paradigm’ and ‘resource mobilization theory’ of Social Movements. On the one hand, this view highlights the progressive convergence of Latin American Catholic student organizations around common meanings. These would have caused, in the first place, this collective actor to come into being. They also sedimented a shared identification within the existing system of relations and motivated a coordinated collective action. Thus, common ways

---

<sup>913</sup> According to Marchesi, “after the coup in Chile, Southern Cone groups on the radical Left felt that their thesis of the inevitability of armed struggle gained new ground on the Left.” In their view, the Chilean corollaries did not mean a defeat of revolution but of the reformist way of leading it. Marchesi, Aldo. *Latin America's Radical Left*, p. 147.

<sup>914</sup> Franzin, *Por onde andei*, p. 31

and goals of MIEC-JECI apostolate (JEC Line) within the student *milieu* and adherence to a shared historical project and spirituality (Commitment, a poor Church, and a *prophetic* pastoral) shaped the contours of the movement's collective social action. They also fed its militancy's feeling of belonging to a transnational apostolic community that fought for Latin American Liberation.

On the other hand, the coming together of MIEC-JECI student organizations into a movement unquestionably benefited from the expansion and use of resources provided by an organizational platform resulting from the fusion of the secretariats. While JECI's accumulated apostolic reflection provided the direction in which the movement grew, the MIEC-SLA's muscular structure and leverage facilitated the financing of both the regional coordination and the national-based movements. It also favored the communication and exchange among base militancy and movements and the systematization and dissemination of experiences. Significantly, this organizational platform strengthened the leadership and coordination capacity of the SLAs at the regional level while also tightening and catapulting a Catholic intelligentsia with national and regional influence.

The conceptualization of the MIEC-JECI as a social movement detailed in Part III takes into account that the MIEC-JECI was also an ecclesial and an international student movement. However, Part III has shown that a 'disbalance' consisting of neglect of its ecclesial condition while it established a strong articulation with political vanguards



caused the movement to behave as a social movement and to undergo an intense politicization during the period.

The embracing of 'Commitment' as a historical project in the context of the Latin American Student Movement's *ida al pueblo* prompted Catholics to engage in varied expressions of the rising New Lefts. From partaking in countercultural demonstrations, intellectual projects, popular organization, and mobilization, or New Left parties, organizations, and insurgence, militants gave testimony of their faith. In doing so, they taught the preferential 'option for the poor.' They also advocated in favor of the liberation of men, understood as 'the taking by the subject of the reins of his own history.' In this sense, the liberationist project represented both a dimension of the transhistorical process of salvation and an accompaniment in the faith of the ongoing revolutionary process. Like yeast in the dough, Catholic militants contributed the keys of a committed spirituality to the region's political culture.

## V. CONCLUSION

Over the 1960s, a particular form of understanding and living the Christian faith bolstered student mobilization in Latin America. The expansion of Catholic university student organizations early in the decade counted on the support of the Latin American Church, which was interested in consolidating previous efforts for evangelizing the youth. Forming a Catholic intelligentsia among the youth and from the universities was pivotal in this effort. It was a way of overturning—what the bishops thought to be—the de-Christianization of the Latin American elites. Also, it was a way to influence the impetuous winds of social change in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution. To be sure, among the predominantly conservative views, Catholic student organizations were crucial in halting Marxism’s influence on universities and society. The episcopate considered that deterring Marxist influence had to be done from the universities. This is because at universities was “where the acute problems that placed [Latin America] in the category of countries in the process of development and that ma[de] ‘explosive’ the Latin American situation, [were] debated ardently and with realism.”<sup>915</sup>

Moreover, universities were critical too because Marxists controlled university *gremios* or student organizations. While student *gremios* had retained their significance

---

<sup>915</sup> *Informe Para Los Excelentísimos Señores Obispos y Asesores De América Latina.*

as a social pressure group with strong social and political leverage since the first decades of the century, under the influence of Marxists, the Church was not only ignored but also vigorously combated.<sup>916</sup> Thus, this was another reason why a more significant presence of the Church in universities was needed. The prelates considered infiltrating student *gremios* pivotal to tilt the balance in favor of the social rejection of Communism. Overall, with these intentions, the bishops found it appropriate to support the further expansion of Catholic student organizations linked to the international network Pax Romana-International Movement of Catholic Students (MIEC).

The Pax Romana-MIEC network had Latin American affiliates since the mid-1940s when a Pax Romana ambassador toured the region promoting the organization. However, while counting on influential leaders and some significant experiences of collective action, many of them still animated by a faith-defensive approach, its organization in the university *milieu* was weak. Catholic student organizations had been relevant in Latin America in the 1930s when Catholic student activism propelled the first Iberian American network of Catholic student organizations, CIDECA. However, at the end of that decade, these organizations shifted their focus to politics and made up the first generation of Christian Democratic parties in the region. The support of the Latin American hierarchy was now critical in the revitalization and expansion of the early 1960's Catholic student MIEC network in the region.

---

<sup>916</sup> Errazuriz, Zañartu, and Sanhueza, "The University in Latin America," *CIF Reports*

The path envisioned by the predominantly conservative Church was not the one eventually followed, though. Despite traditional sectors of the episcopate's intention to use the expansion of Catholic Student organizations to halt Marxism, students had their own agendas and interests. The agency of student activists drew on a series of circumstances that help us explain the alternative path ultimately traversed. They included the call to hold the Second Vatican Council, Vatican II for short, that put progressive views about doctrine and ecclesial matters at the forefront. Also, the appointment as advisors to these organizations of a new generation of priests who had been educated in Europe on progressive Catholic views. Other circumstances also included Pax Romana's own opinions about lay autonomy. There was also the decisive fact that the recruitment of new Catholic organizations' cadres and militants occurred among a student base already mobilized around the issues of university reform. Finally, it was that, over the decade, Catholic students consolidated an active and creative intelligentsia that dialogued with multiple developments of social theory, progressive theology, and apostolic practice.

Another story also had unfolded in the last years of the 1950s that paralleled that of the MIEC student organizations. It was the more discrete growth within the universities of the JEC approach—drawing on Mons. Joseph Cardijn's *see-judge-act* method. As Stefan Gigacz has shown, the expansion of the approach relied on an informal network. It drew on the everyday work of priests, prelates, and the laity who, since decades earlier, had made the Specialized Catholic Action approach the foundation of their work, finding in the 1951 and 1957 World Congresses on Lay Apostolate a way

to work together.<sup>917</sup> The *specialized* approach in the student environment (JEC) was being practiced in Brazil, and from there, the method was being disseminated, especially among neighboring countries.

The paralleling growth of the two movements' Secretariats for the student lay apostolate, MIEC and JECI, by the early 1960s, nested a thriving network of student organizations in the region. Despite Secretariats' clashes around the apostolic approach and the meaning of the *specialization*, apostolic and political identity convergences among national-based organizations created the conditions for a transnational (Latin American) Catholic student movement to consolidate itself in the region.

This dissertation examined the consolidation of the MIEC-JECI network and its evolution into a transnational social movement from a political and intellectual history-from-below approach. It targeted its contributions within three fields of scholarly debate. Let us briefly summarize how the evidence presented in this manuscript enhances the available knowledge.

### **Catholic activism in Modern and Contemporary Latin America**

*Vanguards of Liberation* agrees with Andes and Young, and the contributors to their recently edited volume, in that the analysis of Catholic activism in Latin America

---

<sup>917</sup> Gigacz, "The Leaven in the Council."

displays important continuities over time that dilute the apparent historiographical ‘page break’ before and after 1965.<sup>918</sup> This is without diminishing the relevance that Vatican II had for bringing the Catholic Church and theology in line with the realities of the modern world, including a new doctrine, and a new ecclesiology that entailed significant transformations in the nature and constitution of the church. Instead, it is, as Gerd-Rainer Horn also notes, that Vatican II made official in the doctrine “... the demands and expectations [of an] earlier generation of Catholic reformers,” referring to the “first wave of Left Catholicism” from the 1930s-1950s.<sup>919</sup> This dissertation acknowledges these continuities. It also uncovers relevant intersections, some that accentuated the transnational reach of the Catholic student mobilization in the region and highlights Latin American students’ agency within the framework of regional and global Catholic activism.

Among continuities, the evidence in this dissertation has shown that students were among the more dynamic and organized sectors of Catholic lay activism in Latin America since the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This is a feature that remained until the early 1970s decade. Both Catholic Action since the 1930s, and intersections with paralleling organization and mobilization of the student body throughout Latin America for university reform that had started before, in 1918, were critical in providing needed organizational platforms and fostering students’ mobilization dynamism over time. On the one hand, Catholic Action, first in its general approach and later in specialized form,

---

<sup>918</sup> Andes and Julia Young, eds. *Local church, global church*.

<sup>919</sup> Horn, *The spirit of Vatican II*, pp. 9-13

provided the lay apostolate access to cutting-edge intellectual and pastoral resources, spiritual guidance, and methodological approaches. On the other hand, university reform's immediate claims and more ambitious ideological and political underpinnings that blended anti-imperialism, cultural authenticity, and regional integration claims, fed Catholic student mobilization ethos and transnational character.

Being the students, primarily, of a bourgeois, middle-class origin, and active in the search for political formulas of social change in front of persistent oligarchical social structures, the formation of an intellectual and political vanguard was the more significant component of their activism until the mid-1960s. This intellectual and political Catholic activism exhibited a Latin American projection over time. In fostering a Catholic intelligentsia, Pax Romana, since the 1940s—when Latin Americans affiliated with the network; JECI—a decade later; and also the Latin American Secretariats—during the *sixties*, were all critical actors. They facilitated significant resources for forming new student generations and further consolidating senior generations of students. They offered students spaces for intellectual elaboration and exchange (congresses and seminars); theological, pastoral, social, and political analyses that started from the perspective of the student *milieu*; and, workshops for discussing apostolic methodological matters. These resources were pivotal in facilitating the laity's involvement in crafting creative responses from the church, social and Catholic thought, and a theology fit to the changing Latin American realities.

By the mid-1960s, Catholics, embracing an apostolic attitude and historical project of Commitment, became a leading force in significant sectors of the university student body to ‘go to the poor—go to the people’ (*ir al pueblo*). Amidst the unfolding Cold War and under the revolutionary impetus ignited by the Cuban Revolution, Committed Catholic activists took what had been their predominantly intellectual role and turned it into praxis. Students assumed several *temporal* [viz. earthly] engagements and became organic intellectuals within popular organizational processes and inside multiple expressions of the New Lefts.

*Vanguards of Liberation* has also presented evidence of critical intersections regarding Latin American Catholic student activism. Building on MIEC-JECI’s own definition of its militancy, these intersections should consider three levels: as a student, an apostolic, and an international movement.

On the one hand, let us refer to the first two levels. This dissertation has shown that the crossing roads of Catholic student activism with the Latin American student mobilization for university reform and its OCLAE network were critical, significantly because Catholic activism recruitment drew from an already mobilized base. As mentioned, university reform’s political and ideological underpinnings—the demands for ample university democratization and self-government and *Latinoamericanista*’s ideals, which also entailed a regional reach—significantly contributed to shape the aspirations of Catholic students’ apostolate since early in the century. Also, during the years of more effective organization, i.e., the thirties, forties and later the sixties, Catholic student



activism made up small but influential factions within the self-defined Latin American Student Movement. From there, Catholics sought to dispute hegemony. They propelled a Catholic way of social change that might harness the possibilities of the student body as a social pressure group and galvanize the political leverage of *gremios*.

Furthermore, during the *sixties*, while students' evangelizing role was to be pursued within their *milieu* and their apostolate was understood as a *fermenting action*, the university and *gremios* became relevant spaces of cross-fertilization. They were critical places for ideological, political, and religious socialization. Thus, while committed Catholics approached *gremios* as a first step to unfolding a spirituality committed to action within their *milieu*, many other students previously involved in politics came to Catholic movements to find forms for living 'a mature' Christian faith. During the second part of the 1960s, the deepening of Catholic student activists' Commitment and evangelizing action got them involved with grassroots organizations and different expressions of the New Left. In such an involvement, Catholic student activists developed a pedagogic role primarily through consciousness-raising processes oriented by the belief of being involved in an apostolic action of *liberation*. In other words, educating popular sectors by giving them "instruments of liberation" through which they might recognize "their conditions of dependency" and "assume the reins of their own history."<sup>920</sup>

---

<sup>920</sup> *University Pastoral Seminar Memoirs*, Mexico 1967.

On the other hand, as mentioned, we ponder the intersections prompted by Catholic student activism's regional projection since the 1930s and as an international movement and 'community of apostolic action' a decade later. First, with a protruding Iberian-American identity, Latin American Catholic activism of the 1930s took part in creating the CIDEC network with the goal to influence social change in Latin America from a Catholic perspective. Catholic activists, such as the case of Eduardo Frei's generation, acted as critical cultural brokers in disseminating progressive Catholic thought and views in Latin America while also extending their role in the political arena. Later, as part of the Pax Romana and JECI international networks, Catholic student activism spearheaded the creation of regional secretariats. In both cases, activists' solid intellectual, pastoral, and political formation, and successful avant-garde apostolic experience, opened leadership opportunities for Latin Americans at the international Catholic activism level. Latin Americans occupied important posts at the General Secretariats from the 1950s onwards. Their contribution was also influential in the definition of international agendas while being significant too in the redefinition of JECI's Common Bases.

As for other intersections, this dissertation has also referred to the critical relations that the Latin American Secretariat MIEC-JECI and its Center of Documentation established with regional networks of religious and secular student activism during the *sixties*. Among them were Latin American student organizations such as ORMEU and ODUCAL, think tanks such as ILADES, ISAL, and CIDOC, priests' movements, various religious and secular intellectual projects, and multiple publications.

Also, it is important to mention other exchanges. Among these are Latin Americans' relations to global networks of youth activism that emerged during the Cold War, such as IUS and ISC-COSEC, and that occurred as part of the broader phenomenon of religious activism from a dissenting generation of youth.<sup>921</sup> The base source of this research provides some traces of these relations whose in-depth consideration might be part of a future research effort.

Lastly, this dissertation has also emphasized students' agency within regional and global Catholic activism, the international and regional church, and Latin American society at large. Many elements of this agency have already been highlighted. Among some other elements not yet presented, the autonomy of Latin American Catholic students within both structures of regional Catholic Action and existing Eurocentric lay activism is notable. In the first place, the evidence examined in this dissertation shows three generational bridges that picture students as an avant-garde of Catholic activism in Latin America. One, the 1930s generation, which fed from the university reformism impetus and *Latinoamericanismo*, galvanized the creation of CIDEC and served as a cultural broker of progressive Catholicism in the region. Second, it is the generation of the late 1940s who broke with adult branches of Catholic Action that gathered in SIAC, instead giving room to the influence of both MIEC and JEC international networks for

---

<sup>921</sup> We are referring to the World Assembly of Youth- (WAY), World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), World Student Christian Federation, The Youth Department of the World Council of Churches, Young Christian Workers, International Catholic Movement for Agricultural and Rural Youth, World Federation of Catholic Young Women and Girls, International Federation of Catholic Youth, Catholic Guides and Scouts, Youth for Christ, International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, among other youth organizations active during the long decade.

the lay student apostolate. Third, the early 1960s generation, which, while critical of both the ‘Christendom model’ of the church and the Catholic ghetto mentality toward Communism, would open itself to ideological cross-fertilization and the development of a Committed spirituality. This generation would experiment with progressive Catholic thought and the Review of Life Method and be ‘radicalized in the faith’ embracing Commitment as a historical project. In so doing, it would epitomize the transition from a ‘developmentalist’ to a ‘revolutionary’ church in Latin America.

In the second place, the evidence examined in this dissertation shows the autonomy of early Latin American Catholic activism from the existing Eurocentric lay activist structures (Pax Romana). Indeed, the consolidation, early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, of Catholic student organizations and the setting in motion of an Iberian-American network by 1931—SIDECA, later on, CIDECA—paralleled the Pax Romana’s one, which had arisen in 1921. It was not until the 1940s that CIDECA disappeared to allow student organizations to depend directly on Pax Romana’s coordination. Later, during the *sixties*, as mentioned, Latin Americans’ creative and autonomous forms of committed apostolate became archetypal for international student lay activism.

### **Religion in the history of the *sixties*’ Social Movements and the Latin American Cold War.**

*Vanguards of Liberation* set out to contribute to including religion in the historical account of the *sixties*’ Latin American social movements. From the perspective of

progressive lay activism, this necessarily meant setting up a conversation between a history of Liberationist Christianity and Latin America in the context of the global sixties, an effort that others have already started. This dissertation traced the journey of the Latin American Catholic student movement MIEC-JECI from such a perspective.

On the one hand, this study took up the already mentioned Michael Löwy's concept of Liberationist Christianity to refer to the heterogeneous social movement behind the rise of Liberation Theology in Latin America. This was a movement involving, first, sectors of the institutional Church, such as bishops, priests, and religious orders, and, second, sectors of the laity, including urban and rural youth, workers, and intellectuals. Later, it also included pastoral networks, ecclesial base communities, peasant and workers' unions, and women's clubs, among others.<sup>922</sup> *Vanguards of Liberation* followed the journey of a sector of the organized youth within this multitude of voices.

On the other hand, this study also took up Van Gosse's broad periodization concerning the *sixties* and his elaborations on the heterogeneous nature and plural character of the interconnected mobilizations that, "episodically united," gave shape to what we understand as a New Left.<sup>923</sup> Furthermore, this dissertation also embraced Eric Zolov's elaborations on the Latin American New Left.<sup>924</sup> Of particular importance is the

---

<sup>922</sup> Löwy, *The war of gods*.

<sup>923</sup> Van Gosse, *Rethinking the new left*.

<sup>924</sup> Zolov, "Introduction." Also, Zolov, "Expanding our conceptual horizons."

consideration of an expanded conceptualization that encompasses both armed revolutionary expressions and non-armed radical political and social challenges, interpreting them as “twin facets” of the intersecting social movements that shaped the region’s New Left.

From the perspective of this historiographical crossroads, the evidence examined in this dissertation shows the evolution of a Latin American network of organizations gathering national experiences of Catholic student activism inspired by both General and Specialized Catholic Action apostolic approaches. It portrays the journeys and intellectual and political referents upon which Catholic student organizations gradually departed from faith-defensive approaches and increased their challenging attitude toward the status quo. Considering the continuities in Catholic activism’s apostolic and political substratum since the 1930s, this study shows that Latin American Catholic student mobilizations during the *sixties* were far from the “language of dissent” devoid of political depth that Jeremi Suri speaks about.<sup>925</sup> On the contrary, as mentioned, the evidence shows Catholic students’ mobilization had a profound and cemented political engagement. Throughout the long decade, this activism counted on strong apostolic, intellectual, and political formation. This formative component allowed young students to discern their ongoing socio-political situation and acknowledge the ideological and political grid supporting long-lasting *Latinoamericanista* and university reform claims.

---

<sup>925</sup> Suri, *Power and Protest*.

Thus, they converged around a common agenda that led them to act with deep conviction from an apostolic framework that preached fidelity to the gospel.

Furthermore, in examining Catholic students' mobilization as part of the "movement of movements" Van Gosse speaks of, this study traced the evolution of MIEC and JECI affiliates' heterogeneous repertoire of social and political change over the long decade. In the face of militants' common critique of the inequities of developmentalism, a Church complicit with structural injustice, and a university that had lost its social function, this study uncovers the intellectual and apostolic elaborations and social engagements through which Catholics envisioned a path to fight for social justice. Having developed a particular kind of spirituality, namely, a *committed* spirituality, and embracing a historical project of Commitment, Catholic militants embarked on a collective mobilization for Liberation. This mobilization worked out critical theological and ecclesial bases for the rise of Liberation Theology while also interacting with other contemporary social movements in the making of the New Left in Latin America. *Vanguards of Liberation* argues that, in such interactions, *like yeast in the dough*, Catholic militants contributed to the region's progressive political culture, the key to a *committed* spirituality.

This dissertation concretized the analysis of MIEC-JECI Catholic mobilization's intersections with the region's New Left by examining three aspects derived from the encompassing approach posed by Zolov. These aspects were, first, the ideological diversity featuring the Latin American New Left. A second one relates to the inclusion of

countercultural practices, whether they had a more or less formal affiliation to the New Left constellation of movements. Lastly, this study considered the mutual permeability of social processes that were seeking social change and the impact of this intersection on the region's political culture. This study provided evidence of Catholics' involvement in each of these aspects. Following, I will summarize the more relevant conclusions.

First, the evidence examined in this study contributes to showing, as it is also argued by Zolov, Marchesi, and scholars of Cold War studies, that the “repertoire of dissent”—to use Marchesi's expression, counted on a broader ideological diversity than that represented by Soviet, Chinese, and even Cuban *foquistas*.<sup>926</sup> As historian Rafael Rojas points out, populist, nationalist, and democratic ideological elements made part of the Latin American “revolutionary tradition” that subsisted within the region's revolutionary political culture.<sup>927</sup> Amidst this diversity, progressive Catholic students would be active players in the ideological crossroads during the long decade, and *gremios* would be critical places of cross-fertilization. To be sure, the greater involvement of Catholics in university *gremios* since the early years of the long decade facilitated their participation in the creative ideological intersections and blending that surfaced in the social experiments of the New Left.

---

<sup>926</sup> Reference is made on Zolov, “Expanding our conceptual horizons,” Marchesi, *Latin America's Radical Left*. Among Cold War scholars, see for instance, Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*.

<sup>927</sup> Rojas, *El árbol de las revoluciones*.



Indeed, Catholics made ‘every possible choice,’ as Ernesto Katzenstein, a former Uruguayan militant, recalled. Evidence from this dissertation showed, for instance, how prolific dialogues between Christians and Marxists prompted some MIEC-JECI militants to be a part of the Christian Democratic Youth avant-garde that exposed the exhaustion of the reformist impulse in the region and envisioned the delivery of a socialist revolution instead. Feeding from Paulo Freire’s developments—which had nested within the MIEC-JECI movement, and in line with a pedagogical and humanist Marxist approach, many other Catholic militants took up consciousness-raising approaches to work among the grassroots. Further on, and given the apparent ‘failure’ of these two takes, some other Catholics integrated themselves deeper with the transnational revolutionary political culture and solidarity networks arising in the region, which Marchesi speaks of.<sup>928</sup> Some of them indeed embraced *foquismo* in its original Cuban formulation. Some others contributed to its creative implementation in urban settings, as in the case of Uruguayan Tupamaros. Disenchanted by the Tupamaros’ pragmatic approach, though, other Catholics went on to join Maoist groups. Some others rearticulated the nationalist revolutionary tradition into new belligerent experiments, such as the case of the Argentinean Montoneros. Amidst the growing revolutionary climate and the student body’s radicalization, some other Catholic students got involved with social sectors known as ‘progressive or revolutionary Christians.’ While not having formal affiliation to any political or insurgent movement, these ‘progressives’ or ‘revolutionaries’ would have

---

<sup>928</sup> Marchesi, *Latin America's Radical Left*.

acted as ‘strategic allies’ of revolution—as explained by Colombian Ivan Jaramillo in an SLA MIEC-JECI publication.

Significantly, among these various involvements and ideological crossroads, *Vanguards of Liberation* considered Catholics’ specific ideological input within *gremios*’ conversations, and other social interactions that envisioned the united fight for social justice during the long decade. This study argued that MIEC-JECI students acted as cultural brokers of Commitment. They would disseminate interpretative frameworks (ethical and political) and practical implications of a historical project *committed* to the liberation of men, with a preferential option for the poor.

Second, as mentioned, this dissertation provided evidence of multiple expressions of Catholics’ counterculture. Significant about these practices was their challenging of both the social and political status quo and the conservative Church that materialized in the ‘Christendom model.’ *Vanguards of Liberation* shows that national-base militants harnessed conjunctural political opportunities to carry out collective actions that were disruptive of the existing balance of forces, thus contesting hegemony in society and the church. They played leading roles in countercultural collective actions, such as marches and strikes, steaming from the universities gathering all dissenting factions within. Similarly, they led demonstrations and collective actions disruptive of conservative Church events that appeared to represent a reproduction of clericalism and alliance with power and wealth.

Furthermore, oral sources also uncovered the pedagogical substratum of countercultural practices in constructing and strengthening national-base movements' identities. While these collective actions helped to consolidate a place for Catholics within the dispute for hegemony in the university *gremios*, they also solidified a sense of community among Catholics. To the extent that these collective actions had the effect of prompting common assessments over local, national, and regional situations, they created opportunities for Catholic militants to consolidate further and reproduce a set of shared values. To be sure, these values were those constitutive of the Committed Christian and, further, of the Liberationist historical project. In consolidating and reproducing Committed Christian values, this pedagogical substratum would have been, in turn, a cohesive force, contributing to develop a broader sense of an MIEC-JECI community that had a transnational character.

Third, this study discussed the mutual permeability of social processes, specifically, the intersection between Catholic students' activism and other social processes and movements seeking social change during the long decade. Furthermore, the study elaborated on the impact of this intersection on the region's political culture.

This dissertation portrays progressive Catholics' and other New Left organizational experiences' reciprocal definition of each other by touching on one specific example. Namely, that of the Peruvian movement *Vanguardia Revolucionaria* (VR) and local organizations of UNEC-*Union Nacional de Estudiantes Catolicos* in Arequipa and Cuzco. Students' simultaneous political and Catholic militancy in these two

localities contrasted with other Peruvian and regional cases that, following the pastoral scheme of the ‘distinction of planes,’ deemed this involvement contrary to the apostolic role of students. However, this case reflects other myriad experiences of effective involvement and achieves portraying some of the mechanics of the participation of Catholic militants in these organizations throughout the region, some of them already mentioned.

On the one hand, this study uncovers that circulating revolutionary narratives, for example, those about the conditions for the revolution to be successful, resonated within the identity of Arequipa’s UNEC. Evidence shows how ideas about forming a “New Man” from the Guevarist repertoire, for instance, were incorporated into UNEC’s identity, though intertwined with the elaborations of the new prophetic pastoral that was arising. As historian Lilian Calles-Barger notes, the appeal to Catholics grew on the Marxist premise that one’s historical duty was “not merely [to] interpret the world but to transform it.” Therefore, Catholics developed a strong consensus with Guevara’s call that “the goal was a new man and a new woman built on new material foundations, and a new consciousness [that would ... overturn] the alienated individual of capitalist societies.”<sup>929</sup> The ‘prophetic’ line of the rising pastoral among the progressive church would interpret this new man and woman as not only able to acknowledge and overcome social alienation, but also to recognize and be appreciative of the religiosity of the Latin American people. In doing so, it would think of the need to cultivate a ‘mature’ faith

---

<sup>929</sup> Calles-Barger, *The world come of age*, p. 25

while also considering the singularity and richness of popular religiosity. This one might overcome a relation to the divine and the Church that, derived from a Christendom model, had been instrumental in reproducing oppressive social structures. In this sense, the evidence examined suggests the relevance of the laity's temporal engagements, which, along with many other ecclesial reflections, contributed to a complex reformulation of the church's pastoral.<sup>930</sup> This new pastoral would have superseded the concept of the specialized approach, i.e., formulated by 'environments' (viz. *milieus*), to think, instead, of a 'popular pastoral' devoted to 'accompanying the peoples' experience' in their fight for liberation from all dehumanizing conditions.

On the other hand, building on the same example, the evidence presented in this dissertation suggests that intersections between Catholic militants and New Left movements created the space for Catholics to act as organic intellectuals and cultural brokers of Commitment. Identifying with positions closer to Gramscian concepts of revolution, Catholics would have envisioned themselves as facilitators of consciousness-raising and organizational processes among the grassroots bases, a capacity that was proper to their method and apostolic approach. Evidence examined shows that New Left movements might have harnessed Catholics' devotion and ability to work at the grassroots to fill a void connection between leading and military structures of New Left movements and the social bases they aspired to represent.

---

<sup>930</sup> Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *Líneas pastorales de la iglesia en América Latina*. Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1976.

Overall, as it has been made clear, from the perspective of Zolov's expanded conceptualization of the New Left, Catholics' involvement would not only imply their participation in armed or unarmed social organizations, grassroots insurrections, or political parties. Their influence in other various layers of society—notably within the student movement, and other intellectual projects and positions, also played as countercultural practice. This dissertation argues that from all these diverse positions, Catholics offered significant input to the region's political culture. Catholic militants' evangelizing role, which in apostolic terms implied a '*fermenting*' type of action, would be significant in disseminating a Catholic liberationist ethical-political framework. This is, in their capacity of acting as organic intellectuals, facilitators of consciousness-raising and organizational processes, intellectual politicians, or leaders of opinion, Catholics would be intermediaries of a set of values identified with the historical project of Commitment and later—and amidst ongoing elaborations—of Liberation.

Furthermore, Catholics' participation in these multiple capacities would contribute to shaping both the public sphere and aspirations of social change in Latin America. They contributed to fostering forms of communal association and strengthening their identities, leading and dynamizing popular and student arenas for the formation of public opinion, and contributing in the public sphere to the discussion and definition of common social projects. By doing so, Catholics participated in a multi-layer social struggle for social justice, building citizenship, and expanding democracy in the region.

## **An intellectual history of Latin American Liberationist Christianity**

This dissertation unfolded with a political and intellectual history-from-below approach, which understands the agency of subaltern subjects in the production of meaning and knowledge and their involvement in conflicts over hegemony. Focused on the evolution of student lay MIEC-JECI organizations' network into a social movement with a convergent identity and agenda, this study provides evidence of the assessments students made of their social reality. It portrays the intellectual sources inspiring such elaborations. Furthermore, it delves into the uses and interpretations that shaped students' views about ongoing matters critical to both the movement and the society it attempted to change. Moreover, it shows how students took intellectual elaborations to the realm of praxis and how they dealt with emerging intellectual, religious, and political challenges that turned themselves into existential queries with implications for the movement's identity.

*Vanguards of Liberation* traces the content of Catholic student congresses and seminars, publications, and other relevant sources as a way to access the elaboration of ideas that, since the middle of the 1950s, contributed to cementing, among student sectors, the Liberationist Christianity in Latin America. This study uncovers that MIEC and JECI organizations grew, building upon earlier generations of Catholic students' and intellectuals' activism in Latin America. By opening to Catholic integral humanist views, primarily developed by the influential figure of Jacques Maritain, these early generations had moved away from Catholic Integralism. Activism from this perspective was critical

for overcoming faith-defensive approaches to the lay apostolate and embracing instead democratic ideals. Significantly, expressions of this progressivism had been crucial as a form of contention of fascist drifts within Latin American Catholicism.

Thus, this research reveals that MIEC organizations, on one side, and JECI affiliates, on the other, were both influenced by the wave of European Catholic progressivism, though under different rhythms and intensities. These European developments had arisen during the interwar period, spearheaded by the work of theologians of the *Nouvelle Theology* movement and Christian existentialist philosophers. Later, during the 1950s, these developments had cemented various theological takes that crystalized, as Historian Gerd-Rainier Horn traces out, under the encompassing perspectives of a Theology of the Laity and a Theology of Terrestrial Realities.<sup>931</sup>

Upon the basis of these commonalities, this dissertation uncovers that the rising network of Catholic student organizations MIEC and JECI was a nest for militants' intellectual growth and development. However, their evolution was diverse and asymmetrical.

First, the evidence examined sheds light on the pioneering role of Brazilian pastoral, theological, and political reflection and apostolic praxis that made JEC and JUC movements and the progressive church in Brazil the epicenter of avant-garde

---

<sup>931</sup> Horn, *Western European liberation theology*.



developments in Latin America early in the 1960s. Moreover, this study shows that Brazilian JUC militants were important intellectual brokers in the leap from pastoral and apostolic reformist views toward a *committed-to-the-milieu* praxis that years later was significant in the rise of Liberationist stands.

In the context of the political instability of the mid-1950s Brazilian Populist Republic and the increasing politicization involving the student movement, sectors of the church, and mobilized popular classes demanding grassroots reforms, Catholic students played a vanguard role. Although disarticulated from the Latin American university reform mobilization, JUC militants played leadership roles within the Brazilian student movement UNEB-*União Nacional de Estudantes Brasileiros*. The evidence crisscrossed shows that their input was critical in promoting intellectual and political discussions. To be sure, JUC students were active cultural mediators of circulating intellectual elaborations. This is, in addition to the influence they received from progressive theology and Christian philosophy, they were also active receptors of the scientific and humanist approaches developed within Catholicism and social theory. The work of Fr. Louis-Joseph Lebret, concerned with underdevelopment and Third World solidarity, was significant in this regard. They acted as facilitators within Catholic and student circles of Dependency analyses steaming from think tanks such as ISEB-*Instituto Superior de Estudos Brasileiros*. They also actively partook in and led important debates within the student movement on the relations between developmentalism, nationalism, and the more significant reception of Marxist views that led the student movement to contest the country's dominant economic and political model.

Furthermore, this study shows that by experimenting with the Review of Life Method, Brazilian JEC and JUC movements developed an apostolic praxis that prompted significant elaborations. Their practice of the method was the basis of the production of inductive knowledge that provoked important theoretical ruptures and original developments. The value students attributed to their apostolic ‘*vivencia*’ (viz. lived experience) in the *milieu* and the particularity of specific social contexts and needs were important innovations. Moreover, the incorporation of *milieu* characterizations as bottom-up knowledge to depart from, along with acknowledging their emancipatory potential, were breakthrough developments. These elaborations would have animated, in the apostolic plane, the rise of a spirituality *committed* to the *milieu*—particularly to the impoverished contexts resulting from social, economic, and political underdevelopment. In epistemological terms, it entailed validating ordinary people as producers of knowledge about their own reality, making them participate in transforming it. This would be a transformative knowledge that might come *from* themselves as it was *for* themselves.

Moreover, evidence shows that Brazilian students, accompanied by important progressive theologians that served as advisors of JUC and JEC movements, embraced conceptual turns decisive at the onset of the 1960s. These consisted of a partial departure from Jacques Maritain’s philosophy, undertaking instead personalist approaches of Emmanuel Mounier’s existentialism. The more important shift was about renouncing to envision a Christian Historical Ideal, for it posed the conceptual danger of an

“immobilization of [such an ideal] as a purist essence” that, by “representing ... a [escape] from real history,” implied the peril of “lacking reality.”<sup>932</sup> Instead, JUC and JEC movements embraced the understanding of a Christian Historical Consciousness that, while portraying an authentic image of reality, permitted working towards a Christian historical project. Besides posing a sharp critique of the drifts of a Modern Historical Consciousness that subsumed under a ‘dehumanizing universalism and excessive rationalism’ that was contrary to God’s plan, the movements’ embracing of a Christian Historical Consciousness was decisive in another sense. It fostered a ‘continental consciousness’ of social problems that acknowledged that underdevelopment and revolution were situations involving not only Brazilians but also all Latin Americans. This consciousness would significantly motivate the diffusion of Brazilian apostolic approaches and developments throughout the region. A meeting in Talca, Chile, in 1962 would work out methodologically the JEC approach from a regional perspective, emphasizing that Catholic students’ action within the student *milieu* was to be of a ‘fermenting’ character: to be like *yeast in the dough*.

Second, this study traced the unfolding of Pax Romana MIEC organizations’ intellectual elaboration. It uncovers that, in building upon earlier generations of Catholic activism, Social Catholic and *Latinoamericanista* ideas, along with political claims supporting the regional mobilization for university reform, were at the foundations of students’ views of their social reality. Thus, anti-imperialism, regional integration under the perceived belonging to a common *Patria (La Patria Grande)* and claims for cultural

---

<sup>932</sup> “Conciencia Histórica y Cristianismo,” *Servicio de Documentación*.

authenticity for Latin America went along with beliefs on the need to modernize, democratize, and achieve self-governance for the universities. While close to their peers claiming university reform from secular student organizations, Catholic students' views had contrasted early in the century. The main arguments establishing this contrast referred to their rejection of both liberalism and socialism to embrace instead the Church's Social Doctrine as the social and political solution to the problems facing Latin America. Otherwise, however, they shared with their reformist peers a critical view towards both clericalism and the church's position of 'inaction' in front of social injustice.

This study shows that efforts from Pax Romana-MIEC to foster a regional network of intellectual activism early during the 1960s created the conditions for a generational bridge to crystallize in Latin America. This bridge connected a generation of Catholic intellectuals and politicians, primarily reformist Christian Democrats, many of them university reformists, with a new generation of Catholic progressives that envisioned a revolutionary social change. Materialized in the course of the long decade, the discussions and conclusions from various seminars and congresses show the more relevant aspects of this intellectual bridge. The evidence examined uncovers that uses and interpretations of conciliar theologies surfaced, by 1961, in the meeting of *La Capilla*, celebrated in Boyaca-Colombia. These uses primarily translated into a call for students to launch themselves into concrete action, transformative—of the temporal structures—in the face of Latin America's economic and social problems. Also relevant to debates during this meeting were the analyses of underdevelopment from Fr. Lebreton's economic

and humanist perspective. Significantly, also, this meeting portrayed a change in Catholics' attitude towards Marxism. While predominant positions called to overcome lagging faith-defensive approaches in Catholics' lay apostolate, they also insisted on abandoning a 'ghetto mentality' towards Marxism. This consisted in rejecting the causes and factors which made the penetration of communism possible, rather than Communism itself. Of similar relevance were the critique of both traditional religiosity and the position of the Church that sided with power structures, and the consideration of revolution in Latin America as something legitimate. The former involved a critique of the Church's model and traditional religiosity that distorted the meaning of Christian charity by playing along with the rules of inequality. The latter, represented an embrace of the consideration of the inevitability of revolution in the region and the belief that there existed moral conditions that justified a radical change in Latin America.

The examined sources reveal that two further meetings crystallized more deeply the intellectual generational bridge. A 1962 Pax Romana World Congress in Montevideo, Uruguay, was the space for student militants to confirm their commitment to action. Notably, it cemented the belief that the university was 'the social consciousness of the nation,' and thus the consensus around the essential role of students in leading change in Latin America; for this, Catholic students' role within university *gremios* was paramount. Similarly, a 1963 Seminar in Lima served as a space for building consensus around the practical meaning of students' apostolic action in the university *milieu*. The consensus was built around their role in leading the revitalization and updating of the university

student mobilization for university reform, which was to unfold upon the premise of the university's social function.

Having explored the singularities and commonalities of the MIEC and JECI processes in the region, this study sheds light on the intellectual and political amalgam that occurred during their encounter, with Vatican II as the backdrop. Evidence shows that already ongoing in the 1963 Seminar in Lima, this mentioned intermingling crystallized in 1967 with the merging of the regional Secretariats. In understanding these intersections, this dissertation explores the ways opened by the increased dialogues of Christians with Marxism. It illuminates the multiple paths opened by the theological and apostolic renewal made possible by Vatican II. It also exposes the intellectual and ideological crossroads facilitated by Catholics' increasing participation in university *gremios*. The evidence examined in this dissertation shows that, in the context of the student network evolution into a social movement, these intellectual intersections led to the students' concurrence around the agglutinating concepts of Commitment and Cultural Autonomy. These concepts had all theological, apostolic, and political edges. The study shows that a personalist philosophy, a prophetic theological line, and the Theology of the Signs of the Times sprung from Vatican II were among the sources informing the first of these concepts—Commitment. The second, Cultural Autonomy, would arise from personalist anthropology perspectives and be informed by developments from dependency theory and Althusserian Marxism. Significantly, a *Latinoamericanista* ideological background would also permeate this latter concept.

Finally, in the context of the students' bringing of Commitment and Cultural Autonomy into the terrain of praxis, this study delves into the ways in which they intellectually navigated the intense crises of identity within the movement. *Vanguards of Liberation* argues that these crises, which revolved around the relations between faith, politics, and ideology, created essential opportunities for theological and pastoral reflection maturation in Latin America. Moreover, it claims that the Latin American Catholic student movement's long intellectual and spiritual journey and praxis contributed to elaborating the sharper ruptures from which Liberation Theology arose, shedding light on its internal tensions and competing formulations.

\*\*\*

After sketching this dissertation's contributions, a closing statement is fitting. Retaking Ricoeur's words which animated the early stages of this research, against the "definitive effacement of traces" of memory guarded in this set of once-silenced sources, *Vanguards of Liberation* chose to attempt to grasp, from the inside-out, the dynamics of production of meaning and exertion of power. In such an attempt, it uncovered MIEC-JECI Catholic student militants' intellectual and political agency. It exposed their critical role in the making of Latin American Liberationist Christianity. While doing so, it reminded us that Liberation Theology did not begin in 1968, nor was it the only progressive Catholic path in Latin America. Instead, it was a slow construction of a new theology that arose as the available theologies and the Church model were incapable of incorporating the expressions of a *Committed* pastoral and apostolate. In looking to be

faithful to the gospel, this modality of apostolate sided with the oppressed in their fight for social justice.

Furthermore, in approaching these sources from such a perspective, *Vanguards of Liberation* exposed how the student laity embraced Christian Commitment and radicalized itself in the faith, amidst the distressful social contexts of economic dependency and underdevelopment during the Latin American *sixties*. In living a Committed life and acting as *yeast in the dough*, the Catholic students' mobilization partook of multiple social, political, and intellectual expressions of the emerging New Left in the region. Significantly, in their myriad social engagements within the New Left, Catholic militants taught the ways and values of living a *Committed* life. In so doing, their mobilization left an indelible legacy in Latin American political culture. An ethic of *Commitment* still inhabits various social and community processes that continue to fight for social justice, the expansion of citizenship, and democracy in the region. Ultimately, this study revealed that because they brought their Christian Commitment to the limits of their temporal engagements, the student laity faced martyrdom under Cold War's military containment strategies. Probably, less visible, the lay student martyrdom has been waiting to be named, understood, and remembered, with a longing for justice.



## LIST OF REFERENCES

### 1. Archives and Collections

#### 1. Movimiento Intenational de Estudiantes Católicos, Juventud Estudiantil Católica Secretariado Latinoamericano-SLA

##### Ecuador, Quito.

Centro de Formación Leonidas Proaño-CLP.

Latin American Secretariat internal archive. Latin American and per country materials. Boxes: 1, 3, 13, 15, 16, 17, 63, 112, 116, 117, 126, 129, 130, 136, 137, 138, 148, 149, 150, 151, 156, 165, 170, 177, 178, 238, 267, 286, 289, 291.

##### Peru, Lima.

Instituto Bartolome de las Casas-IBC.

SLA-Uncatalogued archive.

Materials from SLA Centro de Documentación.

IBC-Centro de Documentación:

Box 131, 132

Box Documentos MIEC-JECI I

Box Documentos MIEC-JECI II.

#### 2. Florida International University Libraries, Special Collections, U.S.

Bidegain Papers Collection.

Series II: Brasil- JEC

Series III: JEC- International Reuniones / JUC- Internacional , 1946 – 1996

Series IV: Movimiento Estudiantil (1953-1970)/ América Latina Documentos Históricos (1917-1988)

Series V: Iglesia Política y Sociedad (1958-1973)/ Democracia Cristiana (1948-1970)

Series VI: Celam (1962-1987)/ Brasil- JEC (1955-1968)/ Colombia PAX Romana (1957-1963)

Series VII: Pax Romana en Latinoamérica, 1921 – 1995

Series VIII: Pax Romana (1949-1970)/ Secretaria Latinoamericana de JECI (1956-1968)

Series IX: Secretariado Latinoamericano MIEC-JECI Publicaciones  
(1966-1998)

3. Florida International University Libraries, Digital Collections, U.S.

Digital Archive of Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean- DARLAC  
<http://dpanther.fiu.edu/dPanther/collections/darlac#>

4. The Catholic University of America, Special Collections, U.S.

Records of the Office of the General Secretary, by the United States Conference  
of Catholic Bishops. Series 4: Latin American Bureau Series.

5. Misereor Archives, Aachen, Germany-Remote aided access granted.

6. Adveniat Archives, Germany- Aided access to selected documentation granted.

## 2. Press and Newspapers

### 2.1 Latin American Secretariat MIEC-JECI, Publications

BIDI- *Boletín Iberoamericano de Información*, 1961, 1965  
*Vispera Magazine*, 1967-1973  
*Servicio de Documentación*, 1966-1973  
SPES 1969-1973

### 2.2. National Newspapers and Magazines

#### Mexico

CENCOS A.C., 1967.  
La Prensa., 1967.  
El Heraldo., 1967.  
La Señal., 1967.

#### Uruguay

El Comercio, 1972.  
Ahora, 1972.  
Accion, 1972

## Peru

El Comercio, 1963

## Other Newspapers

Catholic Herald, London, 1937.

The Monitor, U.S., 1963

### **3. Published Sources**

Acha, Omar. "Encrucijadas y obstinaciones en la distinción de historia y memoria: en torno a las prácticas memoriográficas en la Argentina." *Jornadas Internacionales: Historia, memoria y patrimonio*. 2010.

Acevedo Tarazona, Álvaro. "Educación, reformas y movimientos universitarios en Colombia: apuestas y frustraciones por un proyecto modernizador en el siglo XX." *Revista de estudios sociales* 53. 2015: 102-111.

Agee, Philip. *Inside the company: CIA diary*. Stonehill, 1975.

Ahern, Kevin. *Structures of grace: Catholic organizations serving the global common good*. Orbis Books. 2015.

Alba, Víctor. *Historia del movimiento obrero en América Latina*. No. 04; HD6530. 5, A5. México: Libreros mexicanos unidos. 1964.

Aldrichi, Clara. *La izquierda armada: ideología, ética e identidad en el MLN-Tupamaros*. Ediciones Trilce. 2001.

Alva-Castro, Luis. "Presentación". In: Haya, V. *El antiimperialismo y el APRA*. Lima: Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú. Instituto de Estudios Peruanos (IEP). 2013.

Altbach, Philip G. *Student Politics in America: A Historical Analysis*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1974.

Altbach, Philip G. "The Student Internationals. An Analysis of International and Regional Student Organizations. Final Report". 1970.

Andes, Stephen JC, and Julia G. Young, eds. *Local church, global church: Catholic Activism in Latin America from Rerum Novarum to Vatican II*. CUA Press, 2016.

Andes, Stephen JC. "Catholicism, Revolution, and Counter-Revolution in Twentieth-Century Latin America." In Thomas Orique, David; Fitzpatrick-Behrens, Susan; and Virginia Garrard. Ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American Christianity*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 2015.

Andes, Stephen JC. *The Vatican and catholic activism in Mexico and Chile: The politics of transnational catholicism, 1920-1940*. OUP Oxford. 2014.

Archila, Mauricio. "El movimiento estudiantil en Colombia." *Revista del observatorio social de América Latina* 31. 2012: 71-103.

Archila, Mauricio. "Entre la Academia y la Política". In Marsiske, Renate, and Lourdes, Alvarado. *Movimientos estudiantiles en la historia de América Latina*. Vol. 1. Plaza y Valdes. 1999.

Armus, Seth D. "The Eternal Enemy: Emmanuel Mounier's Esprit and French Anti-Americanism." *French Historical Studies* 24. no. 2. 2001: 271-304.

Ardao, Arturo "Panamericanismo y Latinoamericanismo," pp. 179-196, in Karina Batthyány y Gerardo Caetano (Coord.) *Antología del pensamiento crítico uruguayo contemporáneo*. CLACSO, 2018.

Ardao, Arturo. *Nuestra América Latina*. Ediciones de la Banda Oriental. 1986.

Arrighi, Giovanni, Maurice Wallerstein, Immanuel and Hopkins, Terence K. *Antisystemic Movements*. London; Verso. 1989.

Assmann, Hugo. *Teología desde la praxis de la liberación*. Salamanca: Sigueme. 1973.

Austin Nesvig, Martin, ed. *Local religion in colonial Mexico*. UNM Press. 2006.

Bahmann, Manfred K. *A preference for the poor: Latin American liberation theology from a Protestant perspective*. University Press of America. 2005.

Barrios, Miguel Ángel. *El latinoamericanismo en el pensamiento político de Manuel Ugarte*. Editorial Biblos. 2007.

Beozzo, Jose Oscar "The Church and the Liberal States," in Dussel, Enrique. *The Church in Latin America, 1492-1992*. Oates & Burns. 1992. pp. 117-138.

Beozzo, José Oscar. *Cristãos na universidade e na política: história da JUC e da AP*. Publicações CID/Sociologia religiosa. 1984.

Berman, Paul. *A Tale of Two Utopias: The Political Journey of the Generation of 1968*. 1st ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. 1996.

Berryman, Phillip. *The religious roots of rebellion: Christians in Central American revolutions*. Wipf and Stock Publishers. 2004.

- Berryman, Phillip. *Teología de la liberación: los hechos esenciales en torno al movimiento revolucionario en América Latina y otros lugares*. Siglo XXI. 1989.
- Berryman, Phillip. *Liberation theology: essential facts about the revolutionary movement in Latin America—and beyond*. Temple University Press. 1987.
- Betto, Frei. *Batismo de sangue: guerrilha e morte de Carlos Marighella*. Editora Rocco. 2006.
- Bidegain, Ana María, comp. *Obispos de la Patria Grande. Pastores, profetas y mártires*. Bogotá Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano-CELAM. 2018.
- Bidegain, Ana María. "El cristianismo y el cambio socio político de las mujeres latinoamericanas." *Sociedad y Religión* 24. no. 42. 2014: 25-39.
- Bidegain, Ana María. *Participación y protagonismo de las mujeres en la historia del catolicismo latinoamericano*. San Benito. 2009.
- Bidegain, Ana Maria "A leiga militante na Igreja Católica, antes e depois do Concilio Vaticano II, Dom Helder Camara e o Concilio Ecumenico Vaticano II". *XXX Simposio CEHILA*. Internacional do Insituto Helder Camara Recife. August 2004.
- Bidegain, Ana María. "Influencia de la Guerra Fría en el Movimiento de Universitarios de Acción Católica". In German Ferro Medina (comp). *Religión y Etnicidad en América Latina, Tomo II. Memorias del VI Congreso Latinoamericano de Religión y Etnicidad ALER y II Encuentro de la Diversidad del hecho religioso en Colombia ICER*. Instituto Colombiano de Antropología-ICANH. 1997.
- Bidegain, Ana María. "From Catholic Action to Liberation Theology: The historical process of the laity in Latin America in the twentieth century." No. 48. *Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies*. University of Notre Dame. 1985.
- Bidegain, Ana María. "Bases históricas de la teología de la liberación y atipicidad de la iglesia colombiana." *Texto y contexto* 5. 1985: 35-68.
- Bidegain de Uran, Ana María. "La organización de movimientos de juventud de acción católica en América Latina. Los casos de los obreros y universitarios en Brasil y en Colombia entre 1930-1955". UCL-Université Catholique de Louvain. 1979.
- Blacker, O'Neill. "Cold war in the countryside: conflict in Guerrero, Mexico." *The Americas* 66, no. 2. 2009: 181- 210.
- Boff, Leonardo. *Jesus Christ Liberator: A Critical Christology of Our Time*. Trans. R.R. Barr; Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books. 1978.

Boff, Clodovis., Assmann, Hugo., Mesters, Carlos., Betto, Frei., Gutiérrez, Gustavo., Dussel, Enrique., Sobrino, Jon., and Pixley, Jorge. "Cristianismo de la liberación y marxismo en Brasil de 1960 a nuestros días." *Revista Casa de las Américas*, 301. 2020: 3-20.

Boff, Leonardo: *Introducing liberation theology*. Orbis Books. 1987.

Bonavena, Pablo., and Millan, Mariano (Comp). *Los' 68 latinoamericanos: movimientos estudiantiles, política y cultura en México, Brasil, Uruguay, Chile, Argentina y Colombia*. Clacso. 2018.

Bonino, José. *Faces of Latin American Protestantism: 1993 Carnahan Lectures*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing. 1997.

Bonino, José M. *Christians and Marxists: the mutual challenge to revolution*. Hodder and Stoughton. 1976.

Bosi, Alfredo. "Economía e humanismo." *Estudios avanzados*. 2012. vol. 26. no 75: p. 249-266.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *Practical reason: On the theory of action*. Stanford University Press. 1998.

Boye, Otto. "El pensamiento de Maritain en Chile." Primer Coloquio del Pensamiento Contemporáneo. *Jacques Maritain*, organizado por la Universidad de Viña del Mar y el Instituto Internacional Jacques Maritain, 2007

Brands, Hal. *Latin America's cold war*. Harvard University Press. 2012.

Brands, Hal. *Latin America's cold war*. Harvard University Press. 2012. McMahon, Robert J., ed. *The cold war in the third world*. Oxford University Press. 2013.

Bresser-Pereira, Luiz Carlos. "From the national-bourgeoisie to the dependency interpretation of Latin America." *Latin American Perspectives* 38. no. 3. 2011: 40-58.

Broderick, Walter J. *Camilo Torres Restrepo*. Planeta Colombiana. 1996.

Bruneau, Thomas C., and Margarida Oliva. *O catolicismo brasileiro em época de transição*. Ed. Loyola. 1974.

Büschges, Christian. Müller, Andrea. and Noah Oehri. Ed. *Liberation Theology and the Others: Contextualizing Catholic Activism in 20th Century Latin America*. Maryland: Lexington Books. 2021.

Büschges, Christian. "50 años de la Teología de la Liberación. Introducción/50 Years of Liberation Theology, Introduction." *Iberoamericana* 18, no. 68 (2018): 7-11.

Burdick, John. *Looking for God in Brazil: the progressive Catholic Church in urban Brazil's religious arena*. Univ of California Press. 1996.

Burdick, Michael A. *For God and the Fatherland Religion and Politics in Argentina*. Albany: State University of New York Press. 1995.

Calhoun, Craig. "Secularism, citizenship and the public sphere". In: Calhoun, Craig, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Jonathan Van Antwerpen, eds. *Rethinking secularism*. OUP USA. 2011.

Calles Barger, Lilian. *The world come of age: an intellectual history of liberation theology*. Oxford University Press. 2018.

Camarero, Hernán, and Martín Mangiantini, eds. *El movimiento obrero y las izquierdas en América Latina: Experiencias de lucha, inserción y organización* (Volumen 1 y 2). UNC Press Books. 2018.

Camargo, Alfonso. "La historia humana como riesgo y aventura." *Quaestiones Disputatae: temas en debate* 1. no. 3. 2008.

Campos, Esteban. "La revista "Cristianismo y Revolución" y el problema de la memoria en la historia de la historia reciente argentina." *Revista de la Red Intercatedras de Historia de América Latina Contemporánea: Segunda Época* 1. 2014: 86-100.

Carroll, D. *What is liberation theology?* Gracewing Publishing. 1987.

Casanova, José. "The secular and secularisms". *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 76.4. 2009: 1049-1066.

Casanova. *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago. 1994.

Castaneda, Gilberto "Luchas estudiantiles en la Facultad de Arquitectura de la Universidad San Carlos de Guatemala (1954-1980)." In Marsiske, Renate, and Lourdes, Alvarado. *Movimientos estudiantiles en la historia de América Latina*. Vol. 1. Plaza y Valdes. 1999.

Castells, Manuel. *The power of identity*. John Wiley & Sons, 2011.

Castillo Ramirez, Maria Gracia. "Jovenes catolicos de izquierda revolucionaria (1965-1975)." In *Violencia y sociedad: Un hito en la historia de las izquierdas en America*

*Latina*. ed. Veronica Okion and Miguel Urrego. Morelia: IHH-UMSNH/E1. Colegio de Michoacan, 2010. 111-40.

Chávez, Joaquín M. *Poets and Prophets of the Resistance: Intellectuals and the Origins of El Salvador's Civil War*. Oxford University Press. 2017.

Chávez, Joaquín M. "Catholic Action, the Second Vatican Council, and the Emergence of the New Left in El Salvador (1950–1975)." *The Americas* 70. no. 3. 2014: 459-487.

Chartier, Roger, and Sanchis Martínez, Marina. "El mundo como representación." *Historia Social*. 1991: 163-175.

Chartier, Roger. *El mundo como representación: estudios sobre historia cultural*. Vol. 302369. Editorial Gedisa. 1999.

Chenu, Marie-Dominique. "Prologue." In Gonzalez-Ruiz, Jose Maria. *El Cristianismo no es un Humanismo*. Ediciones Peninsula. 1966.

Chiodini, Lucas. "Cristianos por el Socialismo: los cristianos liberacionistas durante el gobierno de la Unidad Popular." In *XIV Jornadas Interescuelas/Departamentos de Historia*. Departamento de Historia de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras. Universidad Nacional de Cuyo. 2013.

Christian, William A. *Local religion in sixteenth-century Spain*. Princeton University Press. 1981.

Colburn, Forrest. *The Vogue of Revolution in Poor Countries*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press. 1994.

Cole-Arnal, Oscar. "Shaping Young Proletarians into Militant Christians: The Pioneer Phase of the JOC in France and Quebec." *Journal of Contemporary History*. 1997. Vol 32(4), 509-526.

Comblin, Jose. "The Church and the Defence of Human Rights." in Dussel, Enrique. *The Church in Latin America, 1492-1992*. Oates & Burns. 1992.

Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano. *Celam: Elementos para su historia: 1955- 1980*. CELAM- Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano. 1982.

Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano- CELAM. *II Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano*, Medellin, Colombia August 26 - September 7, 1968.

Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano- CELAM. *Las cinco conferencias generales del episcopado latinoamericano*. CELAM-Centro de Publicaciones. 2014.



- Cook, Guillermo. *The expectation of the poor: Latin American basic ecclesial communities in protestant perspective*. Wipf and Stock Publishers. 2021.
- Coutrot, Aline. "Youth Movements in France in the 1930s." *Journal of Contemporary History*. Vol 5 (1). 23-35. 1970.
- Cowan, Benjamin A. *Securing sex: morality and repression in the making of cold war Brazil*. UNC Press Books. 2016.
- Dahlin, Therrin C., Gillum, Gary P., and Grover, Mark L. *The Catholic Left in Latin America: a comprehensive bibliography*. 1981. pp.91-102.
- Davis, Harold Eugene. *Latin American Thought*. Louisiana State University Press. 1972.
- De Kadt, Emanuel. "Church, society and development in Latin America." *The Journal of Development Studies* 8, no. 1. 1971, pp. 23-43.
- De Kadt, Emanuel. *Catholic radicals in Brazil*. London; New York: Oxford UP. 1970.
- De Mattei, Roberto. *The Crusader of the 20th Century: Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira*. Gracewing Publishing. 1998.
- Del Valle, L. "Teología de la Liberación en México," in Blancarte (ed), *El pensamiento social de los católicos mexicanos*. Fondo de Cultura Económica: 230-265.
- Del Villar Tagle, María Soledad. "The European Roots of a Theology of Liberation: Gustavo Gutiérrez and the Nouvelle Théologie." *International Journal of Latin American Religions*. 2022: 1-16.
- Dick, Hilario, *Los Estudiantes siendo iglesia en América Latina, La historia de la JEC*. SLA MIEC-JECI. Quito. 1994.
- Dodson, Michael. "The Christian Left in Latin American Politics." *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 21. no. 1. 1979: 45-68.
- Dominella, Virginia, and Aldo Ameigeiras. "La renovación eclesial y el catolicismo liberacionista en espacios locales y regionales durante las décadas de 1960-1980." *Cuadernos del Sur Historia* 48. 2019: 7-22.
- Dominella, Virginia Lorena. "Catolicismo liberacionista y militancias contestatarias en Bahía Blanca: sociabilidades y trayectorias en las ramas especializadas de Acción Católica durante la efervescencia social y política de los años 60 y 70." PhD diss. Universidad Nacional de La Plata. 2015.
- Dorr, Donal. "Reading the Signs of the Times." *The Furrow* 59. no. 10. 2008: 547–52.

Dussel, Enrique. *Beyond philosophy: Ethics, history, Marxism, and liberation theology*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. 2003.

Dussel, Enrique. "Philosophy in Latin America in the Twentieth Century: Problems and Currents." In Mendieta, Eduardo, ed. *Latin American philosophy: currents, issues, debates*. Indiana University Press. 2003.

Dussel, Enrique. *Teología de la liberación: un panorama de su desarrollo*. Potrerillo. 1995.

Dussel, Enrique. *Resistencia y esperanza: historia del pueblo cristiano en América Latina y el Caribe*. Ed. Dep. Ecueménico de Investigaciones DEI. 1995.

Dussel, Enrique. "Teología de la liberación y marxismo." Ellacuria and Sobrino (ed). *Mysterium liberationis: conceptos fundamentales de la teología de la liberación*. 1990: 115-144.

Dussel, Enrique. *El último Marx (1963-1882) y la Liberación Latinoamericana*. Ediciones Siglo XXI Mexico. 1990.

Dussel, Enrique. "Encuentro de cristianos y marxistas en América Latina." In *Cristianismo y Sociedad* 74. 1982: 19-36.

Dussel, Enrique. *A history of the church in Latin America: colonialism to liberation (1492-1979)*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing. 1981.

Dussel, E. *De Medellín a Puebla: una década de sangre y esperanza, 1968-79*. Mexico City: Edico, 1979.

Dussel, Enrique, and Drury, John. *History and the theology of liberation: a Latin American perspective*. Orbis Books. 1976.

Dussel, Enrique. *Hipótesis para una historia de la Iglesia en América Latina*. Barcelona: Edit. Estela-IEPAL. 1967.

Edwards, Bob, and Patrick F. Gillham. "Resource mobilization theory." *The Wiley-Blackwell encyclopedia of social and political movements*. 2013.

Ellis, Marc H., and Maduro, Otto. (ed). *The Future of Liberation Theology: Essays in Honor of Gustavo Gutierrez*. Edited by Maryknoll, NY: Orbis. 1989.

Ellner, Steve. "Marta Harnecker (1937–2019)." *Science & Society* 84. no. 3. 2020: 416-419.

Fallow, Ben. *Religion and State Formation in Postrevolutionary Mexico*. Durham: Duke University Press. 2013.

Ferm, Deane W. *Third World liberation theologies: An introductory survey*. Wipf and Stock Publishers. 2004.

Fernández Fernández, David. "Por una Iglesia junto al pueblo y sus luchas: El Movimiento Iglesia Joven en Santiago de Chile." *Anales de la Universidad de Cádiz*. ISSN 0213-1595. N° 11. 1996. pp. 45-60.

Fernández Fernández, David. "La Teología de la Liberación en Chile." *Trocadero. Revista del Departamento de Historia Moderna, Contemporánea, de América y del Arte* 6-7. 1995: 249-266.

Filho, Martins. Roberto, João. and Collins, John. "Students and Politics in Brazil, 1962-1992." *Latin American Perspectives* 25.1. 1998: 156-169.

Field, Thomas C., Krepp, Stella., and Pettina, Vanni. *Latin America and the Global Cold War*. Ed. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 2020.

Fiorenza, Elisabeth Schüssler. "Feminist theology as a critical theology of liberation." *Theological studies* 36. no. 4. 1975: 605-626.

Franzin, Maria Tereza. *Por onde andei (1971-1974)*. CIP. Sao Paulo. 2022.

Frei Montalva, Eduardo: "Memorias 1911-1934". *Correspondencia con Gabriela Mistral y Jacques Maritain*. Planeta. Santiago de Chile. 1989.

Fossati, William J. "Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier on America: Two Catholic Views." *In Truth Matters: Essays in Honor of Jacques Maritain*.

Freire, Americo. "Dominicanos, 1968". In Nunes, Paulo Giovanni Antonino, Pere Petit, and Reinaldo Lindolfo Lohn, eds. *Utopia e repressão: 1968 no Brasil*. Saggá Editora. 2018.

Gaete, Marcial Sánchez. *Historia de la Iglesia en Chile: Tomo IV, una sociedad en cambio*. Editorial Universitaria de Chile. 2014.

García Mourelle, Lorena. "Catholic Student Activism in Uruguay, 1966–1973." In: Büschges, Christian, Andrea Müller, and Noah Oehri. Ed. *Liberation Theology and the Others: Contextualizing Catholic Activism in 20th Century Latin America*. Maryland: Lexington Books, 2021.

García Mourelle, Lorena. *Militancia juvenil católica en Uruguay (1966-1973): un acercamiento a sus estrategias de incidencia en la Universidad*. Naveg@mérica. Revista electrónica editada por la Asociación Española de Americanistas, n. 24, 2020.

Gigacz, Stefan Robert. "The Leaven in the Council: Joseph Cardijn and the Jocist Network at Vatican II." University of Divinity AU. Diss. 2018.

Gilbert M., Joseph., Nugent, Daniel., and G. M, Joseph. *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico*. Durham: Duke University Press. 1994.

Gonzalez, Michelle A. "Latina Feminist Theology: The Past, Present, and Future." *Journal of feminist studies in religion* 25. no. 1. 2009: 150-155.

Gonzalez-Ruiz, Jose Maria. *El Cristianismo no es un Humanismo*. Ediciones Peninsula. 1966.

Gosse, Van. *Rethinking the new left: An interpretative history*. Springer. 2016.

Gosse, Van. "A Movement of Movements: The Definition and Periodization of the New Left". In Jean-Christophe Agnew and Roy Rosenzweig, eds. *A Companion to Post-1945 America*. London: Blackwell. 2002.

Gould, Jeffrey L. "Solidarity under siege: the Latin American left, 1968." *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 2. 2009: 348-375.

Grandin, Greg. "What Was Containment? Short and Long Answers from the Americas." *The Cold War in the Third World*. 2013: 27-47.

Grandin, Greg. *The last colonial massacre: Latin America in the Cold War*. University of Chicago Press. 2011.

Grandin, Greg., G. M, Joseph., and G. M, Joseph. *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence During Latin America's Long Cold War*. Durham N.C: Duke University Press. 2010.

Green, James Naylor. *We Cannot Remain Silent Opposition to the Brazilian Military Dictatorship in the United States*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 2010.

Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *A theology of liberation: History, politics and salvation* (Rev. ed.). Maryknoll. NY: Orbis. 1988.

Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *La Fuerza Histórica de Los Pobres*. Lima: CEP. 1980.

- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*. Trans. Caridad Inda and John Eagleson. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 1973.
- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *Teología de la liberación, Perspectivas*. Lima: CEP. 1971.
- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina*. Lima: CEP. 1971
- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina*. Montevideo: Centro de Documentación MIEC-JECI. 1971
- Halperín Donghi, Tulio. *The Contemporary History of Latin America*. Duke University Press, Durham and London, 1993. Edited and translated by John Charles Chasteen.
- Harmer, Tanya. *Allende's Chile and the Inter-American cold war*. Univ of North Carolina Press. 2011.
- Harnecker, Marta, and Louis Althusser. *Los conceptos elementales del materialismo histórico*. Siglo Veintiuno Editores. 1971.
- Haya, V. "El movimiento de los estudiantes en América Latina," Oxford, 1926. Reprinted in *Vispera* No.4. Year 1, January, 1968.
- Haya de la Torre, Victor Raul. "What Is The Apra?." *The Labour Monthly*. London. December 1926.
- Haya de la Torre, Victor Raul. "Que es el A.P.R.A.?" In *El Antimperialismo y el APRA*. Lima: Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos -IEP, 2013.
- Haya de la Torre, Víctor Raúl. *Obras completas. Tomo I*. Lima: Editorial Juan Mejía Baca. 1977
- Hawkins, Kirk A. "Sowing Ideas: explaining the origins of Christian democratic parties in Latin America". In *Christian democracy in Latin America: electoral competition and regime conflicts*. Edited by Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press. 2003.
- Hellman, John. *Emmanuel Mounier and the New Catholic Left*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 1981.
- Hewitt, W. E. "Liberation Theology in Latin America and Beyond." In Swatos Jr., William (ed) *A Future for Religion? New Paradigms for Social Analysis*. Sage Focus Editions 151. 1993.
- Hill, Patrick J. "Emmanuel Mounier: Total Christianity and Practical Marxism." *CrossCurrents* 18. no. 1. 1968: 77-104.

- Himes, Michael J. "Reading the Signs of the Times: Theological Reflections." *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America*. 2002.
- Holbrook, Joseph. "Catholic Student Movements in Latin America: Cuba and Brazil, 1920s to 1960s". Florida International University, Ph.D. Diss. 2013.
- Holland, Joe. *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: The Popes Confront the Industrial Age, 1740-1958*. Paulist Press. 2003.
- Horn, Gerd-Rainer. *The spirit of Vatican II: Western European progressive Catholicism in the long sixties*. Oxford University Press, USA. 2015.
- Horn, Gerd-Rainer. *Western European liberation theology: the first wave (1924-1959)*. OUP Oxford. 2008.
- Huhle, Rainer. "Review of Peasant and Nation. The Making of Postcolonial Mexico and Peru, by F. Mallon," *Notas: Reseñas Iberoamericanas. Literatura, Sociedad, Historia* 6. no. 1 (16). 1999: 177–78.
- Iber, Patrick. *Neither peace nor freedom*. Harvard University Press. 2015.
- Ignasi Saranyana, Josep. "Las cinco Conferencias Generales del Episcopado Latinoamericano en su contexto teológico (1955-2007)." *Scripta Theologica* 54, no. 2 (2022).
- Jacobsen, Nils and Aljovín de Losada, Cristóbal. *Political Cultures in the Andes, 1750-1950*. Durham N.C: Duke University Press. 2005.
- Jaffe, Tracey Lynn. "In the footsteps of Cristo Obrero: Chile's Young Catholic Workers movement in the neighborhood, factory, and family, 1946-1973." Diss. University of Pittsburgh. 2009.
- Karabell, Zachary. *Architects of intervention: The United States, the third world, and the Cold War, 1946- 1962*. LSU Press. 1999.
- Karl, Robert A. *Forgotten Peace: Reform, Violence, and the Making of Contemporary Colombia*. Oakland, California: University of California Press. 2017.
- Keeley, Theresa. "Medellin is 'fantastic': drafts of the 1969 Rockefeller Report on the Catholic church." *The Catholic Historical Review* 101. no. 4. 2015: 809-834.
- Klaiber S.J., Jeffrey. *Historia contemporánea de la Iglesia católica en el Perú*. Perú: Fondo Editorial de la PUCP. 2017.

Klaiber, Jeffrey. *The Catholic Church in Peru, 1821-1985: a Social History*. Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press. 1992.

Klaiber, Jeffrey L. "Prophets and populists: Liberation theology, 1968-1988." *The Americas* 46. no. 1. 1989: 1-15.

Krischke, Paulo J. "The role of the church in a political crisis: Brazil, 1964." *J. Church & St.* 27. 1985: 403.

Laclau, Ernesto, and Chantal Mouffe. *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics*. Vol. 8. Verso Books. 2014.

Langland, Victoria. *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Military Brazil*. Durham: Duke University Press. 2013.

Le Goff, Jacques. *El orden de la memoria. El tiempo como imaginario*. Trans. de Hugo F. Bauza. Paidós, Barcelona. 1991.

Leão, Fábio de Souza. "A formação litúrgica no Brasil a partir da Sacrosanctum Concilium." Diss. 2010.

Lechner, Norbert. *Los patios interiores de la democracia: subjetividad y política*. Fondo de Cultura Económica. 1990.

Lessa, Francesca. *The Condor Trials: Transnational Repression and Human Rights in South America*. Yale University Press, 2022.

Levenson-Estrada, Deborah. *Trade Unionists Against Terror: Guatemala City, 1954-1985*. UNC Press Books. 1994.

Levine, Daniel H. "Authority in Church and society: Latin American models." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 20. no. 4. 1978: 517-544.

Levine, D. and Wilde, A. "The Catholic Church, "Politics," and Violence: The Colombian Case." *The Review of Politics*, 39(2). 1977: 220-249.

Lombardi, Carlos M. *Las ideas sociales en la Argentina*. Editoriales Platina/Stilcograf. 1965.

Londono Ardila, Sandra. "Catholicism and Modernization: Acción Cultural Popular and The Rise of a Centrist-Catholicism in Colombia." *World Christianity, Urbanization and Identity* 3 2021: 257.

Londoño-Ardila, Sandra; "Consciousness-raising and Liberation: The Latin American Progressive-Catholic Student Movements and the Regional Version of the Revision of

- Life Method (1955–1968).” *Journal of World Christianity* 22. October. 2019; 9 (2): 151–170.
- Londoño, Sandra, and Javier Mejía. *El discurso de una ética católica modernizada. El caso del programa Acción Cultural Popular (1947-1958)*. Tesis de Maestría. Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. Bogotá, Colombia. 2010.
- Londoño Vega, Patricia. *Religion, Culture, and Society in Colombia: Medellín and Antioquia, 1850-1930*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 2002.
- Love, Joseph. "Sources for the Latin American Student Movement: Archives of the US National Student Association." *The Journal of Developing Areas* 1. no. 2. 1967: 215-226.
- Lowy, Michael. *The war of gods: religion and politics in Latin America*. Verso. 1996.
- Löwy, Michael. "Marxism and Christianity in Latin America." *Latin American Perspectives* 20. no. 4. 1993: 28-42.
- Löwy, Michael, John Barzman, and Betto (Frei). *Marxism and liberation theology*. Amsterdam: International Institute for Research and Education. 1988.
- Luciani, Rafael. "La sinodalidad, una forma más completa de ser Iglesia." *Revista CLAR* 59, no. 3 (2021): 114-124
- McSherry, J. Patrice. *Predatory states: Operation Condor and covert war in Latin America*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012.
- Mainwaring, Scott. "The diversity of Christian democracy in Latin America". In *Christian democracy in Latin America: electoral competition and regime conflicts*. Edited by Scott Mainwaring and Timothy R. Scully. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press. 2003.
- Mallon, Florencia E. *Peasant, and nation: the making of postcolonial Mexico and Peru*. Univ of California Press. 1995.
- Mallon, Florencia E. "The promise and dilemma of subaltern studies: perspectives from Latin American history." *The American Historical Review* 99. no. 5. 1994: 1491-1515.
- Maluleke, Tinyiko Sam. "Black and African theologies in the new world order." *A time*. 1996.
- Mancebo, Deise. "Universidad del Estado de Rio de Janeiro: Resistencia estudiantil y rección universitaria (1950-1978)." In Marsiske, Renate, and Lourdes, Alvarado. *Movimientos estudiantiles en la historia de América Latina*. Vol. 1. Plaza y Valdes. 1999.



- Manrique, Nelson. *¡Usted fue aprista! Bases para una historia crítica del APRA*. CLACSO and Fondo Editorial de la Universidad Católica del Perú. 2009.
- Marchesi, Aldo. *Latin America's Radical Left: Rebellion and Cold War in the Global 1960s*. Vol. 107. Cambridge University Press. 2017.
- Maritain, Jacques. *True Humanism*. Translated by M. R. Adamson. London: G. Bles, 1954.
- Maritain, Jacques, and Manuel Rio. *Acción católica y acción política*. Editorial Losada. 1939.
- Maritain, Jacques. *The Things that are not Caesar's*. New York: C. Scribner's Sons. 1931. (English translation of *Premature du Spirituel*).
- Markarian, Vania. *Uruguay, 1968: Student Activism from Global Counterculture to Molotov Cocktails*. Trans. Laura Pérez Carrara. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. 2016.
- Markarian, Vania. *Left in Transformation: Uruguayan Exiles and the Latin American Human Rights Networks, 1967-1984*. New York: Routledge. 2005.
- Marwick, Arthur. *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, c. 1958- c. 1974*. Oxford University Press. 1998.
- McCarthy, John D., and Mayer N. Zald. "Resource mobilization and social movements: A partial theory." *American journal of sociology* 82. no. 6. 1977: 1212-1241.
- Medina, Mariana Moraes. "Intelectuales y Lecturas de la izquierda católica Latinoamericana en las páginas de la revista *Víspera*." *Caderno de Letras*. 2021. no 39. p. 83-102.
- Mella, Julio Antonio. "What is the ARPA?". *The Labour Monthly*. London. April 1928.
- Mendoza, Juan. "Teología de la Liberación, un acto Segundo". *Memoria, presencia y futuro. A los 50 años de Teología de la Liberación*. CEP-IBC-Fondo Editorial PUCP. 2021.
- Mendoza-Ályarez, Carlos. "La teología de la liberación en México: recepción creativa del Concilio Vaticano II." *Theologica Xaveriana* 64. no. 177. 2014: 157-179.
- Miller, Nicola. *In the Shadow of the State: Intellectuals and the quest for national identity in twentiethcentury Spanish America*. Verso. 1999.
- Mouffe, Chantal. *The return of the political*. Vol. 8. Verso. 2005.

- Mounier, Emmanuel. *Œuvre de Mounier*, Tome III 1944-1950, Editions du Seuil, 1962.
- Nora, Pierre. "Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire." *Representations* 26 1989: 7-24.
- O'Donnell, Guillermo. *Bureaucratic Authoritarianism, Argentina, 1966-1973 in Comparative Perspective*. University of California Press. 1988.
- Ordorika, Rodriguez-Gomez., and Gil, Anton (Coord). *Cien años de movimientos estudiantiles*. UNAM, Mexico. 2019.
- Ordorika, Imanol. "Student movements and politics in Latin America: a historical reconceptualization." *Higher Education* 83, no. 2 (2022): 297-315.
- Pavilack, Jody. *Mining for the Nation: The Politics of Chile's Coal Communities from the Popular Front to the Cold War*. University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press. 2011.
- Pelegri, Buenaventura. *JECI MIEC: Su opción, su pedagogía*. Centro de Documentación del MIEC-JECI. Lima. 1978.
- Pensado, Jaime M. "El Movimiento Estudiantil Profesional (MEP) una mirada a la radicalización de la juventud católica mexicana durante la Guerra Fría." *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 31. no. 1. 2015: 156-192.
- Pensado, Jaime M. *Rebel Mexico: Student unrest and authoritarian political culture during the long sixties*. Stanford University Press. 2013.
- Peña, Milagros. *Theologies and Liberation in Peru: The Role of Ideas in Social Movements*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 1995.
- Pérez-Echeverry, Antonio José. "Teología de la Liberación en Colombia. Algunas perspectivas." *Reflexión Política* 9. no. 17. 2007: 48-57.
- Pérez-Echeverry, A. J. *Teología de la liberación en Colombia: un problema de continuidades en la tradición evangélica de opción por los pobres*. Universidad del Valle. 2007.
- Pérez-Prieto, Victorino. "Los orígenes de la Teología de la liberación en Colombia: Richard Shaull, Camilo Torres, Rafael Ávila, "Golconda", sacerdotes para américa latina, cristianos por el socialismo y comunidades eclesiales de base." *Cuestiones Teológicas* 43. no. 99. 2016: 73-108.

- Petrella, Ivan. "The intellectual roots of liberation theology." *The Cambridge history of religions in Latin America*. 2016: 359-371.
- Planas, Pedro. *Los orígenes del APRA: El joven Haya. Mito y realidad de Haya de la Torre*. Okura. 1986.
- Pope, Stephen J. "Integral Human Development: From Paternalism to Accompaniment." *Theological Studies* 80.1. 2019: 123-147.
- Ramos, Jorge Abelardo. *Historia de la nación latinoamericana*. Peña Lillo, Ed. 1968.
- Richard, Pablo. "Religion and Democracy: The Church of the Poor in Central America." *Alternatives* 13. no. 3. 1988: 357-378.
- Richard, Pablo (ed). *Raíces de la teología latinoamericana: nuevos materiales para la historia de la teología*. DEI. CEHILA. 1985.
- Richard, Pablo. *Morte das Cristiandades e nascimento da Igreja: análise histórica e interpretação teológica da Igreja na América Latina*. Ed. Paulinas. 1984.
- Richard, Pablo. *Materiales para una historia de la teología en América Latina: VIII Encuentro Latinoamericano de CEHILA, Lima 1980*. DEI-Departamento Ecumenico de Investigaciones and CEHILA- Comision de Estudios de Historia de la Iglesia en América Latina. 1981.
- Ricoeur, Paul. *Memory, history, forgetting*. University of Chicago Press. 2004.
- Rilla, José. "Caminos de la herejía democrática: católicos y falangistas en tránsito". *Pasado y memoria: Revista de historia contemporánea* 20. 2020: 43-65.
- Ríos, Manuel. "Herejes en el Siglo XX: Cristianismo liberacionista en Nicaragua." In *XII Jornadas Interescuelas/Departamentos de Historia*. Departamento de Historia, Facultad de Humanidades y Centro Regional Universitario Bariloche. Universidad Nacional del Comahue. 2009.
- Rodríguez, Enriqueta Lerma., and Pérez Pérez, Adriela. "Dios Papá/Dios Mamá: cristianismo liberacionista en el área de mujeres de Frontera Comalapa." *Sociedade e Cultura* 23. 2020.
- Rodríguez, Enriqueta Lerma. "¡Alto hermano, la tierra es de Dios!" Praxis: transformaciones del cristianismo liberacionista en Chicomuselo, Chiapas/ "Stop, Brother, the Land Belongs to God!" Praxis: Transformations of Liberationist Christianity in Chicomuselo, Chiapas." *Iberoamericana* (2001). 2018: 77-96.

Roldán, Mary. "Popular Cultural Action, Catholic Transnationalism, and Development in Colombia before Vatican II." *Local Church, Global Church: Catholic Activism in Latin America from "Rerum Novarum" to Vatican II*. 2016: 245-274.

Rojas, Rafael. *El árbol de las revoluciones: Ideas y poder en América Latina*. Turner. 2021.

Rojas, Rafael. "Haya, Mella y la división originaria." *Telar: Revista del Instituto Interdisciplinario de Estudios Latinoamericanos* 20. 2018: 45-67.

Rojo, Luis Arturo Torres. "La semántica política de Indoamérica, 1918-1941." In *Construcción de las identidades latinoamericanas: ensayos de historia intelectual (Siglos XIX y XX)*. 2004.

Roux, Rodolfo R. de. "La romanización de la Iglesia católica en América Latina: una estrategia de larga duración." *Pro-Posições* 25. no. 1. 2014: 31-54.

Rowell, Nick. "Activist Christians, the Human Rights Movement, and Democratization in Latin America." In Thomas Orique, David; Fitzpatrick- Behrens, Susan; and Virginia Garrard. Ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American Christianity*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 2015.

Ruiz, Luis J. García. "La teología de la liberación en México (1968-1993): Una revisión histórica." *Clivajes. Revista de Ciencias Sociales* 4. 2015: 68-68.

Salinas, M. "La Iglesia chilena ante la crisis del orden neocolonial". In Dussel, E. (Coordinator). *Historia General de la Iglesia en América Latina*. Tomo IX. CEHILA.

Sánchez Gaete, Marcial. *Historia De La Iglesia En Chile. Santiago de Chile: Sociedad de Historia de la Iglesia en Chile*. Editorial Universitaria: Tierra de Hermanos. 2014.

Sanders, Thomas G. "The Church in Latin America," *Foreign Affairs* 48, no. 2. January 1970: 285-299.

Santa Ana, Julio de. *Towards a Church of the Poor: The Work of an Ecumenical Group on the Church and the Poor. Comm. on the Churches' Participation in Development*. World Council of Churches. 1979.

Segundo, Juan Luis. "Diagnóstico político de América Latina," *Revista Mensaje* 11. 115: December 1962. p. 656-661.

Segundo, Juan Luis. "Los caminos del desarrollo político latinoamericano." *Revista Mensaje* 11. 115: December. 1962. p. 701-707.

- Seigel, Micol. "Beyond compare: comparative method after the transnational turn." *Radical History Review*. no. 91. 2005: 62-90.
- Schall, James V. *Jacques Maritain: The philosopher in society*. Rowman & Littlefield. 1998.
- Schall, James V. "On "Liberating" Theology from Christianity: Religious Values and Political Philosophy." *Counseling and Values* 31. no. 1. 1986: 40-50.
- Schall, James V. *Liberation theology in Latin America: with selected essays and documents*. Ignatius Press. 1982.
- Scott, Ivan. *The Roman Question and the Powers, 1848–1865*. Springer. 2012.
- Sierra Vásquez, Juan Fernando. "Cultura, Movilización Social y Religión". Diss. Catholic University of Louvain. Belgium. 1992.
- Sigmund, Paul. *Liberation theology at the crossroads: Democracy or revolution?* Oxford University Press on Demand. 1992.
- Smith, Brian H. *The Church and Politics in Chile: Challenges to Modern Catholicism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 1982.
- Smith, Donald Eugene. *Religion and political development: An analytic study*. Little, Brown. 1970.
- Sobrino, Jon. "La teología y el "principio liberación," *Revista latinoamericana de teología* 12. no. 35. 1995: 115-140.
- Sobrino, Jon. *The true church and the poor*, Trans. Mathew J O'Connell, Orbis Books. 1984.
- Sobrino, Jon. *Christology at the Crossroads*. Trans. John Drury. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 1978.
- Soneira, Teresa Fernández. *Con la estrella y la cruz: Historia de la Federación de las Juventudes de Acción Católica Cubana*. Vol. 16. Ediciones Universal. 2002.
- Souza, Luiz Alberto Gómez de. *A JUC, os estudantes católicos ea política*. Publicações CID/História. 1984.
- Spenser, Daniela., and G. M. Joseph. *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War*. Durham: Duke University Press. 2008.

Snider, Colin. "Catholic Campuses, Secularizing Struggles: Student Activism and Catholic Universities in Brazil, 1950–1968." *Local Church, Global Church: Catholic Activism in Latin America from Rerum Novarum to Vatican II*.

Steger, Hanns Albert. *El movimiento estudiantil revolucionario latinoamericano entre las dos Guerras Mundiales*. Vol. 17. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Dirección General de Difusión Cultural. Departamento de Humanidades. 1972.

Stern, Steve J. *Reckoning with Pinochet the Memory Question in Democratic Chile, 1989-2006*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 2010.

Stern, Steve J., Mignolo, Walter D., Saldívar-Hull, Sonia., and Silverblatt, Irene. Ed. *Battling for Hearts and Minds Memory Struggles in Pinochet's Chile, 1973-1988*. Duke University Press. 2006.

Stern, Steve J. *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: on the Eve of London, 1998*. Durham: Duke University Press: 2004.

Suri, Jeremi. *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente*, Cambridge, Mass. 2003.

Swope, John Wolfgang. "The production, recontextualization and popular transmission of religious discourse: the case of liberation theology and basic Christian communities in Santiago, Chile." PhD diss. Institute of Education, University of London. 1992.

Tarrow, S. *Power in Movement*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 1994.

Tilly, Charles. *From mobilization to revolution*. Addison-Wesley. Reading Mass. 1978.

Tombs, David. *Latin American liberation theology*. Brill. 2002.

Touraine, Alain. "Los movimientos sociales." *Revista Colombiana de Sociología* n. 27. 2006. pp. 255-278.

Touraine, Alain, and David Macey. *Can we live together?: Equality and difference*. Stanford University Press. 2000.

Touraine, Alain. *Return of the actor: Social theory in postindustrial society*. 1988.

Trindade, Isabella Leite. "La SAGMACS en Brasil y la construcción de un nuevo método de proyectación urbana". *Cuadernos del CLAEH*. 2015. vol. 34. no 101. p. 185-194.

Tünnermann Bernheim, Carlos. *Noventa años de la Reforma Universitaria de Córdoba (1918-2008)*. Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO), 2008.

- Turner, S. *Catholicism and Political Development in Latin America*. Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press. 1971.
- Vila, Alice., Kibort, Christie. "Faith in the balance: Foundations of liberation theology in Latin American and European thought." Diss. University of Miami. 2002.
- Weis, Robert. ed. *For Christ and Country: Militant Catholic Youth in Post-revolutionary Mexico*. Vol. 115. Cambridge University Press. 2019.
- Westad, Odd Arne. *The global Cold War: Third World interventions and the making of our times*. Cambridge University Press. 2005.
- Williams, Edward J. "Latin American Catholicism and political integration." *Comparative Political Studies*. 1969. vol. 2. no 3. p. 327- 348.
- Zermeno. "Los demócratas primitivos" and Pogliaghi, "Estudiantes en la reconstrucción democrática Argentina". In Ordorika, Imanol, Roberto Rodriguez-Gomez, and M. Gil Antón. *Cien años de movimientos estudiantiles*. 2019.
- Zolov, Eric. *The last good neighbor: Mexico in the Global Sixties*. Duke University Press, 2020.
- Zolov, Eric. "Introduction: Latin America in the Global Sixties." *The Americas* 70, no. 3. 2014: 349-362.
- Zolov, Eric. "Expanding our conceptual horizons: the shift from an old to a new left in Latin America." *A Contracorriente: una revista de estudios latinoamericanos* 5, no. 2. 2008: 47-73.
- Zolov, Eric. *Refried Elvis: The rise of the Mexican counterculture*. Univ of California Press, 1999.

#### **4. Oral Sources**

- Alfredo Pezo-Paredes. Interview. 05-27, 28 & 29-2020.
- Cecilia Tovar. Interview. 07-10-2019.
- Francisco del Campo. Interview. 6-15-2020.
- F. Gustavo Gutierrez. Interview. 07-15-2019.
- F. Paul Dabezies. Interview. 05-04-2020 - 06-23-2020.

Ernesto Katzenstein. Interview and written communication with the author. 10-08-2020.

Gilberto Valdez. Interview. 5-04-2020/5-11-2020/7-03-2020.

Juan Mendoza. Interview. 07-18-2019.

Karin Idrogo-Estela. Interview. 1-29-2022.

Luis Ignacio Betancur. Interview. 04-29-2021.

Oliverio Henao. Interview. 01-20-2022.

Pablo del Hierro. Interview. 05-29-2019.

Rodrigo Guerrero. Interview. 06-22-20/ 02-04-2021.

Rolando Ames. Interview. 07-12-2019.

Romeo Perez, Anton. Interview. 04-09-2020.

Rosa Alayza. Interview with the author. 07-06-2019.

#### Latin American conversations in celebration of Pax Romana Centenary

Oliverio Henao. *Conversations by country in preparation for Pax Romana Centenary Celebration with MIIC and FIU-LACIIR*. 02-04-2021.

Rolando Ames. *Conversations by country in preparation for Pax Romana Centenary Celebration with MIIC and FIU-LACIIR*. 03-19-2021

Oliveiro Henao. In "La Capilla and Montevideo 62: Founding Encounters." *Latin American conversations in celebration of Pax Romana Centenary*. 07-31-2021.  
Organized and hosted by FIU-LACIIR, SLA MIEC-JECI and MIIC.

Carlos Alberto Payán, "La Madurez Pastoral y Teológica de Los Movimientos," *Latin American conversations in celebration of Pax Romana Centenary*. 08-28-2021.  
Organized and hosted by FIU-LACIIR, SLA MIEC-JECI and MIIC.

#### **5. Websites**

Anaforas – Facultad de Información y Comunicación, Universidad de la República, Montevideo - Uruguay. *Vispera Magazine* digitized issues, 1967-1975.  
<https://anaforas.fic.edu.uy/jspui/handle/123456789/6120>



Red de Bibliotecas Virtuales de Ciencias Sociales de America Latina y el Caribe.  
Biblioteca CLACSO Argentina  
<http://biblioteca.clacso.edu.ar>

ERIC Institute of Education Sciences.  
<https://eric.ed.gov/>

The Catholic News Archive, Catholic Research Alliance  
thecatholicnewsarchive.org

Jacques Maritain, Filósofo Cristiano  
<https://www.jacquesmaritain.com>

ICMICA-Pax Romana, History/Library  
<https://www.icmica-miic.org/>

Memorial da Resistencia de Sao Paulo, Repositório digital.  
<http://memorialdaresistenciasp.org.br/acervo-digital-memorial/>

Revista Mensaje, Archivo Historico  
<https://www.mensaje.cl/archivo-historico/>

Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano y Caribeño-CELAM  
<https://celam.org/conferencias-generales/>

Latin American Episcopal Conferences  
Argentina <https://episcopado.org/>  
Colombia <https://www.cec.org.co/>  
Chile <http://iglesia.cl/>  
Paraguay <https://episcopal.org.py/>  
Peru <https://www.iglesiaticolica.org.pe/>  
Uruguay <https://iglesiaticolica.org.uy/>

Sitios de Memoria Uruguay  
<https://sitiosdememoria.uy/>

The Holy See  
<https://www.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html>  
Apostolic Constitutions  
Apostolic Exhortations  
Apostolic Letters  
Encyclicals

Homilies  
Messages

## **6. Films and Documentaries Consulted**

Eva Piwowarski (Director), “La nación sudamericana.” LineaSurFilms, Amerigramas y Sadop. TELAM - Secretaría de Cultura de la Nación Republica de Argentina. Date published December 12, 2011. URL. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3qNp3k2oTk>

Chapter 1: La Nación Sudamericana. Sus Orígenes.

Chapter 2: Latinoamericanismo del 900. De la fragmentación a la unidad.

Chapter 3: El Nuevo ABC. Argentina, Brasil y Chile.

Chapter 4: Década del 60. La radicalización de Latinoamericanismo.

**APPENDIX I**  
**MEETINGS ORGANIZED BY PAX ROMANA-MIEC AND JECI WITH LATIN**  
**AMERICAN PARTICIPATION 1960-1973**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Organizer</b>
Pax Romana Inter-federal Assembly.	1960	Lisbon, Portugal	“Towards an International Consciousness”	Pax Romana MIEC
Regional Seminar for Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean zone.	1960	Tres Rios, Costa Rica	Formation Seminar	SLA MIEC
Regional Meeting of the Pacific zone	1960	Santiago, Chile	“Formation for action, spiritual formation and apostolic life”	SLA MIEC
Brazilian JUC National Congress	1960	Belo Horizonte, Brazil	JUC Tenth Anniversary	Brazilian JUC
First South American Camp	1960	N/I	“Methodology of the Movement”	SLA JECI
JECI South American Meeting	1960	Brazil	“The South American student milieu and the international consciousness of the militants”	SLA JECI
MIEC Formation Seminar	1960	San Jose, Costa Rica	“Formation Seminar”	SLA MIEC
MIEC Study Session	1961	Louvain, Belgium	“The Christian Responsibility in a Technological Era”	Pax Romana MIEC
MIEC Formation Seminar	1961	N/I	“The student, pioneer of a better world”	Pax Romana MIEC
Pax Romana MIIC Plenary Assembly	1961	Fribourg, Switzerland	“The Responsibility of the Christian Intellectual in the World Today”	Pax Romana MIIC
JECI Study Session	1961	Mainz, Germany	“The student's work in the thought and action of the Movements”	JECI
III JECI World Council	1961	Eichholz, Germany	"The work of the student in the Movements' thought and action."	JECI
First Latin American Seminar	1961	Boyacá, Colombia	“Political, Social, and Economic Problems of Latin America.”	SLA MIEC
Regional Meeting for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean zone	1961	Tegucigalpa Honduras	“The apostolate’s technique”	SLA MIEC
Regional Meeting for the Rio de la Plata zone	1961	Porto Alegre Brazil	“The university and the reality of our people”	SLA MIEC
Argentina’s National Meeting	1961	Santa Fe, Argentina	“Review of the milieu and JUC”	Argentinean JUC and AUDAC
XXV World Congress	1962	Montevideo, Uruguay	“Social Responsibility of the University and University Students,”	Pax Romana MIEC MIIC
Pax Romana Inter-federal Assembly	1962	Montevideo, Uruguay	Inter-federal Assembly	Pax Romana MIEC
First Seminar of Catholic Latin American Movements' Advisors	1962	Montevideo, Uruguay	“The mission of the laity in the University”	CELAM SLA MIEC

Second JECI Latin American Study Session	1962	Vilches-Talca, Chile	Pedagogical discernments of the JEC approach	SLA JECI
Pax Romana MIIC Plenary Assembly	1963	Galway, Ireland	“Nationalism and Supranationalism”	Pax Romana MIIC
Second Latin American Seminar	1963	Lima, Peru	“Towards a Reform of the University in Latin America”	SLA MIEC
Formation Seminar	1963	Costa Rica	The University Student Apostolate	SLA MIEC
MIEC and JECI Latin American Secretariats Meeting	1963	Petropolis, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	The student apostolate in Latin America	SLAs MIEC-JECI
JECI Latin American Committee	1963	Recife, Pernambuco Brazil	Latin American Committee	SLA JECI
Regional Seminar for Central America and the Caribbean zone	1963	Mexico City, Mexico	"The formation of university leaders"	SLA MIEC
Latin American Advisors Seminar	1964	Caracas, Venezuela	“Latin American Pastoral: time for decision”	CELAM-DPU SLA MIEC
XXV MIEC/ IMCS Inter-federal Assembly:	1964	Washington, U.S.	“Christian commitment in the temporal order”	Pax Romana MIEC
Meeting of Latin American leaders	1964	Washington, U.S.	Review and planning	SLA MIEC
Regional Seminar for South America	1964	Cochabamba, Bolivia	University Apostolate	SLA MIEC
Regional Seminar for Central America	1964	El Salvador	University Apostolate	SLA MIEC
Regional Seminar for the Caribbean	1964	Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	University Apostolate	SLA MIEC
University Pastoral Seminary Rio de la Plata zone	1964	Asuncion, Paraguay	University Pastoral	SLA MIEC
IV JECI World Council	1964	Brummana, Lebanon	A review of the Common Bases	JECI
Regional Seminar for Central America and the Caribbean zone	1964	Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	Formation seminar	SLA JECI
Latin American Advisors Regional Meeting	1964	Caracas, Venezuela	“University Pastoral”	CELAM-DPU SLA MIEC
Regional Meeting Atlantic zone	1964	San Bernardino, Paraguay	“University Pastoral”	SLA MIEC
Regional Seminar for Central America and the Caribbean zone	1964	Managua, Nicaragua	“The University Catholic Action Movements”	SLA MIEC
JECI Latin American Committee	1965	Lavallol, Argentina	The Missionary Plan	SLA JECI

University Pastoral Seminar	1965	Lima, Peru	“University Pastoral”	SLAs MIEC-JECI
Latin American Advisors Regional Meeting	1965	San Jose, Costa Rica	“The priestly function and apostolic movements”	CELAM SLA MIEC
Meeting Central American zone	1965	San Salvador, El Salvador	“University Catholic Action as an Educational Movement”	SLA MIEC
Second Central American Seminar	1965	Tegucigalpa Honduras	“The meaning and nature of the JEC”	SLA JECI
Regional Meeting on University Pastoral	1965	Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	University Pastoral	SLA MIEC
Regional Seminar for the Central American zone	1965	Managua, Nicaragua	The Bases and methods of University Catholic Action	SLA MIEC
Secondary Students Meeting	1965	Montevideo, Uruguay	“Analysis of the Pastoral Options of the Movement”	SLA JECI
JECI Latin American Committee	1965	Porto Alegre Brazil	Secretariat of Coordination and the unity of the student milieu	SLA JECI
XXVI Pax Romana World Congress	1966	Lyon, France	The Responsibility of Christians students and intellectuals in the post-Conciliar church	Pax Romana MIEC MIIC
First Latin American Congress for the Apostolate of the Laity	1966	Buenos Aires, Argentina	In preparation for the Third World Congress of the Lay Apostolate	CELAM SLA MIEC
Regional Seminar for Central America, México and the Caribbean zone	1966	Guatemala	"Pedagogy for 'the New'"	SLA MIEC
JECI Latin American Committee	1966	Buenos Aires, Argentina	Secretariat of Coordination and the unity of the student milieu	JECI
XXVI IMCS Inter-federal Assembly:	1967	Bochum, Germany	“Students in Changing societies”	PAX ROMANA MIEC
V JECI World Congress	1967	Montreal, Canada	The vocation of the student milieu	JECI
JECI Latin American Committee	1967	Montreal, Canada	Review and planning	SLA JECI
Latin American Study Session	1967	Toledo, Uruguay	“The Church’s pastoral in Latin America”	MIEC-JECI
Latin American Seminar of University Pastoral	1967	Mexico City, Mexico	“The Church and University”	MIEC-JECI
Latin American Meeting of JECI Advisors	1967	San Salvador, El Salvador	“The JEC in the Church and in the milieu”	JECI
Central American-Caribbean Seminar of Secondary Movements	1967	San Salvador, El Salvador	Experiences in the milieu and deepening of the movement’s pedagogy.	SLAs JECI - MIEC
Latin American Seminar	1967	Moraiva, Costa Rica	“Student Gremialismo”	SLAs MIEC JECI

I Latin American Meeting of Ecclesiastical Advisors	1968	Ikúa-Satí, Asunción, Paraguay	Evangelization of the youth.	MIEC-JECI-DPU
Latin American Committee	1968	Asunción, Paraguay	Review and planning	SLAs MIEC JECI
Central American Seminar	1968	San José, Costa Rica	“Student Gremialismo”	SLAs MIEC JECI
Pax Romana MIEC Study Session	1969	Fribourg, Switzerland	Federations as movements. Doctrinal and pedagogical content of the students’ militancy.	Pax Romana MIEC
Coordination Meeting of Central America and the Caribbean	1969	Managua, Nicaragua	Coordination meeting	SLAs MIEC JECI
JUC Southern Cone Meeting	1969	Montevideo, Uruguay	“Political radicalization as ‘problematizer’ of a church presence”	SLAs JECI-MIEC
JECI World Study Session	1969	Brussels, Belgium	Preparing for the 1970 JECI World Council	JECI
VI JECI World Council	1970	London, England	The JEC movements and social transformation	JECI
First MIEC JECI Latin American Committee	1970	Cali, Colombia	The Movement, as a community of faith, within the historical process of Latin America	SLA MIEC-JECI
Central American Advisors’ Meeting	1970	Managua, Nicaragua	A Review of Life	CELAM DL SLA MIEC JECI
XXVII MIEC Inter-federal Assembly	1971	Fribourg, Switzerland	Celebration of IMCS/MIEC’s 50th year “Liberation – How?”	Pax Romana MIEC
Caribbean Advisors’ Meeting	1971	N/I	“New working avenues”	CELAM DL SLA MIEC JECI
Andean Region Advisors’ Meeting	1971	Lima, Peru	What does faith mean to students amidst politicization?	CELAM DL SLA MIEC JECI
CAMEXCAR Meeting. Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean	1971	Antigua, Guatemala	New elements in university problems	SLA MIEC JECI
II Latin American Meeting of Ecclesiastical Advisors	1971	Medellin, Colombia	Theological and pastoral reflection	CELAM-DL SLA MIEC JECI
Second MIEC JECI Latin American Committee	1972	Lima, Peru	Being Church in a social process of liberation	MIEC-JECI
Faith and Politics Seminar	1973	Lima, Peru	Expansion of the theoretical framework of the Review of Life	SLA MIEC JECI

Source: Table elaborated by the author from crossing data available in Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos MIEC/JECI*, and other primary sources at SLA-CLP and SLA-IBC Repositories. Information of Pax Romana International events was generously shared by Kevin Ahern.

**APPENDIX II**  
**COMPOSITION OF LATIN AMERICAN SECRETARIATS MIEC JECI**

PAX ROMANA-MIEC			JECI		
Years	Coordination Structure	Team	Years	Coordination Structure	Team
1960-1962	MIEC Latin American Sub-Secretariat	Secretary: Carlos del Castillo Team: Luis Boza Dominguez Ricardo Hoffman, Cristian Caro, and Hector Dada Hirezi	1956-1957	Brazilian JUC International Team	Luis A. Gomez de Souza, Vera Areas, Lucia Ribeiro de Oliveira, Eduardo Portella Netto, Lourdinha Santos, Maria Margarida Bittencourt, and Lucia Mello  Advisor: Frei Romeu Dale.
			1957-1958		
			1958-1961	JECI South American Secretariat	Secretary: Cosme Alves Neto Team: Celso Guimaraes Advisor: Fr. Luis de Sena
1962-1963	MIEC Latin American Secretariat	Secretary: Rodrigo Guerrero Team: Luis Boza, Saul Irueta, Hector Dada, Ricardo Hoffman. Advisors: Fr. Nestor Giraldo and Fr. Ismael Errazuriz.	1961-1963	JECI Latin American Secretariat	Secretary: Celso Guimaraes Team: Maria Do Carmo Ibiapina, Ignacio de Sa Parente, Jorge Hector Segreto Advisor: Fr. Luis de Sena
1963-1965		Secretary: Luis Fernando Duque Team: Luis Sereno Coló, Margarita Lagos Advisor: Fr. Nestor Giraldo and Fr. Ismael Errazuriz.	1963-1965		Secretary: Ignacio de Sa Parente. Team: Iraci Poleti, Humberto Lanzillotta  Secretary: Nelly Saavedra Miguel Angel Sejem, Iraci Poleti, Jorge Mendive, Roberto Borda Advisor: Jorge C. Pascale
1966		Secretary: Luis Alberto Meyer Team: Margarita Lagos, Ricardo Bernardi, Serafina Ferreira. Advisor: Fr. Nestor Giraldo	1966		University Team Secretary: Miguel Angel Sejem Team: Roberto Escordato Iraci Poleti, Roberto Borda, Advisor: Jorge C. Pascale, Fr. Bosco Salvia  Secondary's Team Secretary: Patricio Pino Team: Nelson Salinas, Daniel Fernandez Advisor: Fr. Jose Rouillon.

Joint Secretariat MIEC-JECI		
Years	Coordination Structure	Team
1967-1968	Latin American Secretariat MIEC-JECI	SLA MIEC Secretary: Luis Alberto Meyer SLA JECI Secretary: Luciano Dourado Team: Cesar Aguilar, Carlos Horacio Urán, Ricardo Bernardi, Stella Saitzen, Jorge Lecumberry. Advisor: Bosco Salvia
1968-1969		SLA MIEC Secretary: Eduardo Barragan SLA JECI Secretary: Ernesto Katzenstein Team: Bayardo Garcia, Hugo Gensini, Angel Pacheco, Carlos Horacio Uran, Elieth Matamorros. Advisor: Bosco Salvia
1969-1970		SLA MIEC Secretary: Rosendo Manzano SLA JECI Secretary: Ernesto Katzenstein University Team: Silvio Sant'Anna, Carlos Alberto Payan. Secondary Team: Rafael Mendive, Patricio León, Lesbia Rosales, Jose Luis Pimentel. Advisor: Buenaventura Pelegri
1970-1971		SLA MIEC-JECI Secretary: Carlos Albornó University Team: Ernesto Katzenstein, Silvio Sant'Anna, Carlos Alberto Payan. Secondary Team: Rafael Mendive, Patricio León, Lesbia Rosales, Jose Luis Pimentel. Advisor: Buenaventura Pelegri
1971-1973		SLA MIEC-JECI Secretary: Gilberto Valdez Team: Ivan Jaramillo, Virginia Betancur, Humberto Migliorizzi, Francisco Merino, Washington Uranga, Andres Campos, Maria Tereza Franzin. Advisor: Buenaventura Pelegri

Source: Table elaborated by the author from data available in Jacobs, *Memorias de los Movimientos MIECJECI*, and other primary sources, such as, bulletins *Carta al Comité* and *Curriculum*, Circular Letters, and Reports. Boxes 267, 13, 112, 126, 286 from SLA-CLP and MIEC-JECI Box II at SLA-IBC.



**APPENDIX III**  
**INDEX OF SERVICIO DE DOCUMENTACION**  
**A PUBLICATION BY THE LATIN AMERICAN SECRETARIAT MIEC AND**  
**JECI**

<b>INDEX SERVICIO DE DOCUMENTACIÓN</b>			
<b>SERIES 1 – TEOLOGÍA Y PASTORAL</b>			
<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>AUTHOR/ORIGIN OF THE DOCUMENT</b>
1	N/D	Apostolado Laico	Fr. Gilberto Gimenez, advisor to Paraguay's JEC, in collaboration with Pax Romana's SLA.
2	October 1966	Ser Cristiano en el Mundo de Hoy	Frei Bernardo Catao. On the developments achieved at the Brazilian JUC- <i>Encuentro Regional</i> in Aracatuba, Sao Paulo, January 1966.
3	March 1967	Para una Teología de las Relaciones entre la Iglesia y el Mundo	Fr. Gilberto Gimenez's presentation in <i>Encuentro de asesores del MEP</i> , Queretaro, Mexico, 1976.
4	June 1967	Pastoral Universitaria. Buga	Part I of the Conclusions of the Episcopal Meeting on University Pastoral hosted by Departamento de Pastoral Universitaria-CELAM. Buga, Colombia, 1967.
5	August 1967	Historicidad de la Teología	Karl Rahner. Originally appeared in <i>Selecciones de Teología</i> , Voy 6 No 22, translated by Ramón Valls Plana and Antonio Homs, 1967.
6	October 1967	Misión de la Universidad Católica en América Latina. Declaración de Buga	Conclusions from the Experts' Seminar <i>Misión de la Universidad Católica en América Latina</i> . Buga, Colombia, 1967. Reproduced also in "Los Cristianos en la Universidad," <i>Vispera</i> No 1, year 1, 1967.
7	December 1967	Cristianismo y Política I Pueblo de Dios y Política	Raneiro La Valle. Originally appeared in <i>I-DOC</i> , Dossier 67-20, June 1967.
8	December 1967	Cristianismo y Política II. Hacia una Perspectiva Cristiana de la Política	Ricardo Arias Calderón. Originally appeared in <i>Mensaje</i> , Vol XVI, No 159, June 1967.
9	December, 1967	Cristianismo y Política III. El Cristiano y la Revolución	José María González Ruiz "Campo Internacional Ecumenico de AGAPE", Conference given on July 1966. Reproduced also in <i>Cuadernos de Ruedo Iberico</i> , February-March 1967, No 11.
10	January 1968	Populorum Progressio I. De la "Animación" de lo Temporal al Análisis de Situación	Fr. Ricardo Cetrulo originally appeared in <i>Vispera</i> , No 3, Year 1. Reproduced also in <i>Pespectivas de Dialogo</i> , No 15, Centro Pedro Fabro, Montevideo, Uruguay, N/D.
11	January 1968	Populorum Progressio II. Neocapitalismo o Revolución	Fr. Raimundo Ozanam. Originally appeared in <i>Paz e Terra</i> , No 4, Year 1, August 1967, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

12	January 1968	Populorum Progressio III. Hacia un Nuevo Humanismo	Fr. Pierre Bigo. Originally appeared in <i>Mensaje</i> , Vol. XVI, No 158, May 1967.
13	May 1968	La Secularización y la Revisión de los Fundamentos de la Moral	Pinto de Oliveira. Originally appeared in <i>I-DOC</i> , No 68-10, N/D.
14	May 1968	Introducción a una Pedagogía de la Pastoral Universitaria	Fr. Gilberto Gimenez. SLA guest author.
15	September, 1968	La Pastoral de la Iglesia en América latina	Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez Merino. A series of conferences given during the <i>Primera Sesión de Estudios MIEC</i> , Uruguay, 1967. The material was also published as a book by the Centro de Documentación MIEC-JECI.
16	June, 1969	Hacia una Teología de la Liberación	Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez Merino, conference given during <i>II Encuentro de Sacerdotes y Laicos</i> , Chimbote, Peru, July 1968.
17-18	October 1969	Introducción a la Metodología de los Movimientos Apostólicos Universitarios	Fr. Buenaventura Pelegri, Advisor to the Latin American Secretariat MIEC-JECI.
19	February, 1970	La Iglesia debe comprometerse en lo político	Fr. Lucio Gera. Originally appeared in <i>Enlace</i> , Year 1, No 7, October 1969. Also reproduced by <i>Boletín JUC</i> Bahía Blanca, Argentina.
20-21	August, 1970	Pedagogía de la Explicación de la Fe	Fr. Buenaventura Pelegri, advisor to Paraguay's JEC.
22	September 1970	Notas sobre Teología, Iglesia, Política	The issue presents two works:  Karl Rahner and J. B. Metz's "Los Problemas Fundamentales de la Iglesia Universal," in <i>La respuesta de los teólogos</i> , edited by Carlos Lohlé.  Harvey Cox, "El lugar y objeto de la Teología," in <i>No los dejéis a la serpiente</i> , Editorial Peninsula, 1969.
23-24	September 1970	Teología de la Liberación	Fr. Hugo Assman, SLA guest author.
25	December, 1970	El Revolucionario Cristiano y la Fe	Fr. Pablo Fontaine. Originally appeared in <i>Mensaje</i> 19 (188) Santiago de Chile, 1970.
26	February, 1971	Iglesia y Política I. Iglesia y Proyecto Histórico	Hugo Assmann, originally a conference in a roundtable meeting organized by the Latin American Secretariat MIEC-JECI in Parroquia Universitaria de Montevideo, Uruguay.
27	N/D	Iglesia y Política II	Fr. Benoit Dumas and Hector Borrat. Originally a conference in a roundtable meeting organized by the Latin American Secretariat MIEC-JECI in Parroquia Universitaria de Montevideo, Uruguay.
28	April 1971	La juventud en una sociedad en pleno cambio económico y político	The author was kept anonymous by the SLA, apparently, for security reasons. Document facilitated by CENCOS-

			<i>Centro Nacional de Comunicación Social, Mexico.</i>
29	September, 1971	La Teología Política	Marcel Xhaufflaire, originally a conference entitled "La Teología Política según J. B. Metz," in <i>Comisión Nacional Belga de Justicia y Paz</i> , April 1970.
30	September 1971	La Teología Política II	Fr. Marcel Xhaufflaire, conference in Lieja, Belgium, April 1970.
<b>Sub-series 1</b>			
1	February 1968	Los Cristianos en la Historia	Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez and Fr. Felipe Zegarra, in <i>UNEC Jornada de Estudio del Centro de Lima</i> , Chaclacayo, October 1966.
2	February 1968	Fe y Compromiso	Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, conference in <i>UNEC Jornada de Estudio del Centro de Lima</i> , Chaclacayo, October 1967.
3	April, 1969	MUC Uruguay: Situación y Perspectivas	A reproduction from <i>Boletín MCU</i> Movimiento de Católicos Universitarios, Montevideo, 1969.

<b>SERIES 2 – FILOSOFÍA SOCIAL</b>			
ISSUE	YEAR	TITLE	AUTHOR/ORIGIN OF THE DOCUMENT
1	September 1966	Pastoral Universitaria Latinoamericana	Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez in <i>Seminario de Pastoral Universitaria</i> , Departamento de Pastoral Universitaria-CELAM, Lima, Peru, August 1965.
2	N/D	Marxistas y Cristianos Elementos de reflexión para un diálogo	The issue presents two works: Marcel Reding "Cuatro puntos en favor del dialogo" and Han M. M. Fortmann "Obertura sobre el dialogo" in <i>Journal de Pax Romana 1965-1</i> .
3	November, 1966	Conciencia Histórica y Cristianismo	Fr. Javier Artola, an explanation and synthesis of Fr. Henrique de Lima Vaz's work. In preparation for the student Camp devoted to the problem of ideologies.
4	March, 1967	Fe Cristiana e Ideologías	Julio de Santa Ana (editor). Originally appeared in <i>Cristianismo y Sociedad</i> , No 3, Year 1, 1967.
5	November, 1967	Cultura y Universidad	Henrique de Lima Vaz. Originally appeared in <i>Educación para la Vida</i> , No 10, Vozes, 1966.
6	November 1968	Funciones de la Universidad en el proceso Latinoamericano	Pierre Furter, a talk given in <i>Encuentro Continental de Líderes del Movimiento Estudiantil Cristiano (MEC)</i> , Las Cumbres, Panama, January 1968.
7	November, 1969	Concientización I Una experiencia de concientización: con M.I.J.A.R.C. en el cono sur	Silvio Sant'Anna, from his attendance as SLA representative to <i>Encuentro del Cono Sur del Movimiento Internacional de la Juventud Agraria y Rural Católica (MIJARC)</i> , Uruguay, April 1968.

8	N/D	Concientización II. Bases Antropológicas de una Educación Liberadora	The issue presents two works:  Ernani Fiori “Aprender a decir su palabra,” originally appeared in <i>Cristianismo y Sociedad</i> .” And José Luis Fiori “ <i>Dialéctica y Libertad: Dos dimensiones de la investigación temática</i> ,” originally appeared in <i>Aspectos Culturales del Desarrollo</i> , ILADES, N/D.
9	N/D	Concientización III. Bases Pedagógicas de una Educación Liberadora	The issue presents two works:  Paulo Freire “La concepción “bancaria” de la educación y la deshumanización, and La concepción problematizadora de la educación y la humanización” and “La alfabetización de adultos,” originally appeared in <i>Aspectos Culturales del Desarrollo</i> , ILADES. N/D.
10	N/D	Concientización IV. Bases Metodológicas de una Educación Liberadora	The issue presents three works:  Paulo Freire “Investigación y Metodología de la Investigación del Tema Generador” and “A propósito del tema generador y del universo temático,” originally appeared in <i>Cristianismo y Sociedad</i> . N/D.  Paulo Freire and Raúl Velozo Farias “Sugerencias para la aplicación del método en terreno,” originally appeared in <i>Revista Cristianismo y Sociedad</i> , N/D.
<b>SUB-SERIES 2</b>			
1	August 1967	¿Dios Esta Muriendo?	The document was circulated in a Brazilian JUC regional meeting and authored by an advisor of the movements.

<b>SERIES 3 – REALIDAD LATINOAMERICANA</b>			
ISSUE	YEAR	TITLE	AUTHOR/ORIGIN OF THE DOCUMENT
1	N/D	La Intervención en las Universidades Argentinas	Reproduction of Parroquia Universitaria Cristo Obrero’s letter to the Christian Community in Cordoba, Argentina. N/D.
2	October, 1966	La Universidad Latinoamericana y el Desarrollo Social	Darcy Ribeiro, in <i>Seminario sobre la formación de elites en América Latina</i> , N/D.
3	1966	Diversos aspectos de la Realidad Universitaria Colombiana	A Colombian university student, militant, and Christian. The author was kept anonymous by the SLA.
4	June 1967	Venezuela. Notas sobre el Ateísmo Universitario	Elena González Baldó. Originally appeared in <i>CIDOC Informa</i> , Vol III, No. 4, N/D. Reproduced first in <i>SIC</i> , January 1966.

5	September 1967	Chile. La crisis de la Universidad Católica	A collection of documents appeared in the Chilean press and produced by the conflicting parties.
6	May 1968	Los Estudiantes en la Transformación de la Sociedad Brasileña	Marialice Foracci, conference given in <i>Encuentro Nacional de JUC de Brasil</i> , 1966. Published also in <i>Aportes</i> , No 7, Paris, 1968.
7	November, 1968	Desarrollo y Subdesarrollo	Gerard de Bernis. A talk given in <i>Sesión Mundial de la Juventud Estudiantil Católica Internacional</i> , Montreal, July-August 1967.
8	December, 1968	Los Estudiantes de Francia	<p>The issue reproduces five articles that appeared in a publication by the <i>Comunidad Católica Latinoamericana de París</i>.</p> <p>Edgard Morin, "La Comuna Estudiantil." Originally appeared in <i>Le Monde</i>, May 1968; "Una Revolución Sin Rostro," originally appeared in <i>Le Monde</i>, June 1968.</p> <p>Raymond Barillon "El Partido Comunista y la Revuelta de Los Estudiantes." Originally appeared in <i>Le Monde</i>, May 1968.</p> <p>Conrad Detrez, "Hacia una Estrategia de la 'Contestación.'" Originally appeared in <i>Espirit</i>, No 373, N/D, translated by SLA.</p> <p>Paul Blanquart "Los estudiantes y la revolución." Originally appeared in "<i>Cahiers de l'Action Catholique Universitaire</i>," May 1968.</p>
9	January 1969	Realidad Universitaria Latinoamericana y sus Implicaciones Pastorales	<p>The issue presents two documents (one report and one annex) that served as working papers in the Second Conference of the Latin American Episcopate in Medellin, Colombia, in 1968.</p> <p>Departamento de Pastoral Universitaria-CELAM "Report to his holiness Pope Paul VI." Also appeared in <i>Revista Educación Latinoamericana</i>, CELAM, Vol 11, No 8, October 1968.</p> <p>Secretariado Latinoamericano MIEC-JECI Annex to the DPU Report "La Situación Universitaria."</p>
10	June 1969	Universidad y Sociedad en el Perú: La Nueva Ley Universitaria	Hélan Jaworski C. a publication circulated by Peruvian UNEC <i>Centro de Lima</i> , N/D.

11	July 1969	México: Iglesia y Movimiento Estudiantil	The issue presents two documents: Enrique Maza “El movimiento estudiantil y sus repercusiones para la Iglesia,” originally appeared in <i>CIDOC</i> 69/122.  Rosendo Manzano (Latin American Secretary MIEC) “Una reflexión sobre la situación,” SLA visit to Mexico, June 1969.
12	October 1970	El Movimiento Estudiantil Brasileño: del Reformismo a la Revolución	Julia Moura, originally appeared in “Brasil: Perspectivas de la Revolución,” <i>Cuadernos de Marcha</i> , Montevideo, 1968.
13	December 1970	El Movimiento Estudiantil Latinoamericano entre la Reforma y la Revolución	Carlos Horacio Uran and Ana Maria Bidegain, Montevideo, Uruguay, December 1970.
<b>Sub-series 3</b>			
1	February, 1968	Fe y Realidad Brasileña I. Declaración de los 300 Sacerdotes Brasileños	Originally appeared in <i>Ultima Hora</i> , E. Nacional newspaper, October 24, 1967.
2	February, 1968	Fe y Realidad Brasileña II. La JUC quiere una Iglesia Militante	Originally appeared in <i>Ultima Hora</i> , Sao Paulo, September 11, 1967.
3	May, 1968	Fe y Realidad Brasileña III. Evangelio y Justicia Social	Dom Antonio Batista Fragoso, a talk given in Belho Horizonte, January 1968. Previously published in <i>Noticias da Igreja Universal</i> , Documentos, May 1968. A recorded version was published by the Brazilian JOC.
4	February 1969	1968: Los Cristianos en la Universidad del Valle (Cali, Colombia)	Originally appeared in <i>Boletín Liberación</i> , Equipos Universitarios de Cali, Colombia.

**APPENDIX IV**  
**INDEX VISPERA MAGAZINE**

<b>Vispera Magazine</b>			
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 1, Year 1	<b>Date of publication</b>	May, 1967
Editorial Board:	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, Luis Carriquiri, Darío Ubilla, César Aguiar, Antonio Pérez García, Bryan Palmer.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: Presencia y Memoria de Camilo Torres		Hernán Zambrano François Houtart Juan Luis Segundo Augusto Vanistendael	
Other titles: Carta del Editor Surgió en Buenos Aires una OEA de compromiso Presidentes en Punta del Este Una expresión ecuménica La misión de la Universidad Católica en América Latina Toledo: Un paso hacia América Latina Que la Universidad vaya hacia aquellos que no pueden venir a ella Una presión y una intervención constantes Dentro del nacionalismo revolucionario Un principio de injusticia social mundial Los fundamentos teológicos de la presencia de la iglesia en el desarrollo socioeconómico de América Latina Las bases bíblicas de la conferencia de Iglesia y sociedad El postconcilio o el riesgo del ghetto narcisista Parroquia Universitaria Cristo Obrero		Héctor Borrat Bryan Palmer Carlos Parteli Juan Tron CELAM César Aguiar Julio César Castaños Espaillat Javier Caonabo Peña Gómez Luis Alfonso Cabal Mons. Marcos McGrath Harvey Cox Jr. Luis Alberto Gómez de Souza José Gaido	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 2, Year 1	<b>Date of publication</b>	August, 1967
Editorial Board:	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, Luis Carriquiri, Guzmán Carriquiry, Darío Ubilla, César Aguiar, Antonio Pérez García, Bryan Palmer, José Croatto, Enrique Dussel, Luis Osvaldo Roggi.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: Populorum Progressio		José Míguez Bonino Juan Cobrda Dom Helder Cámara Mons. Aníbal Muñoz Fernando Belaúnde Terry Juan Carlos Onganía Antonio Scipione	

	Felipe Herrera Ricardo Peralta Mons. Jerónimo Podestá Manuel Dibar. Equipo Nacional de la Antigua JUC del Brasil.  Newspapers and Journals: Criterio, Mensaje, Diálogo, El Popular, Journal do Brasil, Última Hora		
Other titles: Carta del Editor Perfiles ideológicos del Belaundismo La Universidad argentina entre la modernización y la historia Vanguardia, retaguardia, postconcilio Vulgaridad y Urgencia de la Historia Universal Los canadienses no aceptarían un condominio Casi una tierra privilegiada Ecumenismo y Nueva Izquierda Un nuevo comienzo Los resultados previstos Una nueva estrategia Constituyente para Stroessner Carros tanques en la Nacional El sitio de la Universidad (o la Novísima Troya) Ofrenda y reconciliación Dom Helder, Costa e Silva y la Pax Americana A propósito de Camilo América Hoy El valle y la loma Martínez Moreno o el día empieza allá	Héctor Borrat Luis Pásara Antonio Pérez García Alberto Methol Ferré Clément Trudel Ángel Carrillo de Albornoz Mike Lenaghan Juan Luis Segundo Bryan Palmer Carlos Horacio Urán Luis Carriquiry Jaime Niño Diez Juan Díaz Bordenave Darío Ubilla		
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 3, Year 1	<b>Date of publication</b>	October, 1967
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, Luis Carriquiry, José Croatto, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Luis Osvaldo Roggi, Darío Ubilla.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: Con gozo y esperanza		Arturo Paoli Héctor Borrat Juan Luis Segundo	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Populorum Progressio: de la “animación” de la sociedad al análisis de situación Chile en ebullición La Revolución verde oliva, Debray y la OLAS		Héctor Borrat Ricardo Cetrulo Romeo Pérez Alberto Methol Ferré Pablo Otero	



<p>El verde crece  En el centro de la ciudad  Más que para un diálogo ideológico, para acciones comunes  La no violencia es acción, aunque no lo parezca  Vitrina de la democracia: plebiscito puertorriqueño  Sobre el poder en el Perú  La crisis de la Universidad Católica de Chile  “Superando la perspectiva desarrollista (...) en una perspectiva pluralista”  Los MECs del Cono Sur  La iglesia peruana levanta una basílica de esperanza social  “Forma de piel”</p>		<p>Luciano Parisse  Diego Palma  Juan Muñoz  Metz Rollins  Darío Ubilla</p>	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 4, Year 1	<b>Date of publication</b>	January, 1968
Editorial Board	<p>Editor: Héctor Borrat  Alberto Methol Ferré. César Aguiar, Guzmán Carriquiry, Luis Carriquiry, José Croatto, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Luis Osvaldo Roggi, Darío Ubilla, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley</p>		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
<p>Informe: 1918-1968 La Universidad: entre la reforma y la revolución</p>		<p>Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre  Camilo Torres  Alberto Methol Ferré  Darcy Ribeiro</p>	
<p>Other Titles:  Carta del Editor  La muerte del Che  Reflexiones pacíficas sobre la revolución  O primeiro sínodo  Notas sobre lenguaje y evangelización  Padres... en víspera  ¿Puede filosofar el creyente?  Vanguardia, retaguardia, crisis  Que la escuela laica supere el laicismo  Mito, símbolo, guerrilla  Una persona que es palabra  Para alegría de los generales  Historia de chiribonos  Devaluación monetaria y elecciones en Lima  La ley anticomunista o los enemigos del orden  Hoguera en Buenos Aires  Un seminario para el poder social  El cincuentenario de la Católica  Un gusto anticipado de las cosas que vendrán  Obituario para noveleros  La Iglesia según “Le Monde”  Hipótesis para una historia de la Iglesia en América Latina  Macondo: un territorio mágico y americano</p>		<p>Héctor Borrat  Leopoldo Marechal  Julio Barreiro  Norberto Habegger  Eduardo Paysse González  Alberto Methol Ferré  Antonio Pérez García  Carlos Horacio Urán  Alceu de Amoroso Lima  Almeri Bezerra de Melo  Segundo Galilea  Luciano Parisse  Antonio González Deliz  Michel Duclercq  Richard Shaull  Luis Beltrando Gorgulho  José Miguel Oviedo</p>	

<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 5, Year 2	<b>Date of Publication</b>	April, 1968
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré. César Aguiar, Guzmán Carriquiry, Luis Carriquiry, José Croatto, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Luis Osvaldo Roggi, Darío Ubilla, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributor</b>	
Informe: Buga		Luis Carriquiry Miguel Ángel Solar Luis Hevia Eduardo Vío Grossi Luciano Rodrigo Cisterna Mario Kriegerger	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Prudencia y revolución La revolución cubana, Debray y las OLAS Precisiones sobre la crítica al foquismo El hombre bíblico no es un Prometeo Meditaciones en torno a "Cien años de soledad" Aparecida sem Norte Los principios y los problemas Desarrollo anárquico y unilateral Siempre estamos naciendo Una universidad moderna Ninguna influencia visible Gracias a la Revolución Mexicana La incertidumbre y la angustia Con muchas iniciativas La acción del espíritu El caso de los Maryknollers La parábola y la historia Camilo, no a tantos kilómetros Estos rebeldes poderes Una desilusión sociológica		Héctor Borrat Jordan Bishop José Manuel Quijano Alberto Methol Ferré José Croatto Jean-Baptiste Lassegue Jesús Manuel Martínez Antonio Elizondo Pedro Velázquez José Álvarez Icasa Francisco Migoya Gaspar Elizondo Alberto de Ezcurdia Jorge Ortiz Amaya Francisco Aguilera Mons. Sergio Méndez Arceo Darío Ubilla César Aguiar Antonio Pérez García	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 6, Year 2	<b>Date of publication</b>	July, 1968
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré. César Aguiar, Guzmán Carriquiry, Luis Carriquiry, José Croatto, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Luis Osvaldo Roggi, Darío Ubilla, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: Obispos de La Patria Grande		César Aguiar Alberto Methol Ferré Héctor Borrat Dom Helder Cámara	

Other Titles: Carta del Editor Soy inocente de la muerte de David Tejada Uruguay ha elegido (inconscientemente) la violencia La Rebelión de Mayo Cortázar: El acceso a la casa del hombre Juicio bíblico sobre el ateísmo Creer es comprometerse El Gran Drama The Last Happening La Tercera Asamblea Cristiana por la Paz Conflictos y replanteamiento en la Universidad Católica del Perú Los irreductibles sajones de Torre Nilsson El manifiesto de Dios Un Teólogo en búsqueda Los cinco dólares del Presidente Johnson		Héctor Borrat Ernesto Cardenal Agustín Benzano Seré Bonit Dumas Néstor García Canclini José González Ruiz Josef Hromádka Charles West Hiber Conteris Francisco Barbosa Miguel Barriola	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 7, Year 2	<b>Date of publication</b>	October, 1968
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Luis Osvaldo Roggi, Darío Ubilla, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: "Humanae Vitae, Pareja y Poder"		César Aguiar Darcy Ribeiro Iván Illich Alberto Methol Ferré Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo Ricardo Bernardi Jean-Baptiste Lassegue	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor El gran impulso Aspectos militares de la guerra de Vietnam Entre Marx y Monroe "Cristo nunca fue propietario" La IV Asamblea del Consejo Mundial de Iglesias Elecciones y Expectativas Chile: Iglesia Joven "Entre la libertad y el despotismo" Un paraíso que se convierte en purgatorio Entre la ontología y la historia Psicoanálisis, ética de la libertad Una secuela de la séptima vispera (octubre 1968) Imperialismo y pentagonismo		Héctor Borrat Gustavo Mathias Lucas Albornoz Raimundo Ongaro Placide Bazoche Jorge Miguez Bonino Miguel Cardozo Guzmán Carriquiry Jorge Medina Vidal Alberto Methol Ferré Jorge Poggi Romeo Pérez	

<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 8, Year 2	<b>Date of publication</b>	January 1969
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Luis Osvaldo Roggi, Darío Ubilla, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: África Joven		Guzmán Carriquiry Joseph Ki Zerbo Pierre Fougeyrollas	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Marcuse: todo es utopía Políticas de vivienda popular y barrios marginales “8 Ahau” Presión liberadora, ¿política de Dios? “Una colegialidad evidente” “Liberando al hombre de hoy” La patria Centroamericana Nixon: law and order How to win no friends and influence people Los riesgos de la ilegalidad La carrera armamentista Advertencia a “Comunidad” Se estremecen los bastiones ¿La comisión faltó a su deber? Despoblar el tiempo Un amigo polémico Una contradictoria aproximación Obispo de La Patria Grande		Héctor Borrat Jean-Baptiste Lasségue Helan Jawroski Ernesto Cardenal Benoit Dumas Pablo Otero Visca Kurtis Friend Naylor A. M. Henry Bayardo García Rosendo Manzano Luis Pásara Pablo Zaffaroni Bryan Palmer Andrés Flores Colombino Luis Alfonso Cabral Alberto Methol Ferré Darío Ubilla Dorys Zeballos Julio de Santa Ana	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 9, Year 3	<b>Date of publication</b>	February, 1969
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bryan Amber, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Darío Ubilla, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: El Cristo de la fe y los Cristos de América Latina		Rodolfo Obermüller Frei Gilberto Gorgulho Francisco López Frei Timoteo Anastacio Sinval de Itacarambi Leáo	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Introducción a Karl Barth El malthusianismo no tiene base en América Latina Marcuse: ¿utopía valiente o pensamiento perverso?		Héctor Borrat Julio de Santa Ana Abraham Guillen Jean-Baptiste Lassegue	

<p>“La industrialización recolonizadora”  “En el Cristo vivo”  Segunda DC al Poder  Cuatro meses, tres documentos  La hora del lobo  Balthasar contra la corriente  A mitad de camino</p>		<p>Darcy Ribeiro  Mons. Eduardo Pironio  Romeo Pérez  Alberto Methol Ferré  Beatriz de León</p>	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 10, Year 3	<b>Date of publication</b>	May, 1969
Editorial Board	<p>Editor: Héctor Borrat.  Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobían, Carlos Baraibar, Ernesto Cardenal, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Malgarejo, Darío Ubilla, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.</p>		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: Modernización / Humanización		<p>Antonio Pérez García  Luis Alberto Gómez de Souza  Héctor Borrat</p>	
<p>Other Titles:  Carta del Editor  Petróleo para el Perú: ¿acto aislado o política de conjunto?  Protesta en la Zona del Canal  “Macario” de Juan Rulfo  Interpretación motivacional del catolicismo popular  “Una voz que otros no pueden hacer oír”  “Acción cultural liberadora”  Iglesia: Confrontaciones y perspectivas  Paraguay: La iglesia, los presos políticos y Stroessner  EE. UU.: Las amenazas internas  Claude Julien: L’Empire American  Néstor García Canclini: Cortázar: una antropología poética  Henry Fesquet: Une engliseen état de péche mortel</p>		<p>Héctor Borrat  Rolando Ames Cobian  Grupo Cuaquero de Acción  Jorge Medina Vidal  Aldo Büntig  Dom Helder Cámara  Paulo Freire  César Aguiar  Miguel Cardozo  Julio de Santa Ana</p>	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 11, Year 3	<b>Date of publication</b>	July, 1969
Editorial Board	<p>Editor: Héctor Borrat  Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobían, Carlos Baraibar, Ernesto Cardenal, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Darío Ubilla, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.</p>		

<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: La DC ante su crisis		Alberto Methol Ferré Bryan Palmer Romeo Pérez Rodrigo Ambrosio	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Militares y militarismo en el Brasil: mitos y realidades Revelación y sentido de la historia Salmo 4 “Roma está angustiada” Brasil: Ante el asesinato del P. Henrique Paraguay: La segunda expulsión de los Jesuitas EE.UU. - América Latina: La protesta bifronte ¿Vaticano-BID? ¿Vaticano-OEA? Canadá: Sodepax, ecuménica y nordatlántica África: La visita del Papa Gregorio Lemercier: “Diálogos con Cristo” Conrado Eggers Lan: “Cristianismo y nueva ideología” I. M. Bochenski: “Historia de la Lógica Formal”		Héctor Borrat Paulo Schilling Julio de Santa Ana Ernesto Cardenal Edward Schillebeeckx Carlos Gradín Leoncio Clavel Guzmán Carriquiry Buenaventura Pelegrí César Aguiar Alberto Methol Ferré	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 12, Year 3	<b>Date of publication</b>	September, 1969
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Carlos Baraibar, Ernesto Cardenal, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Luis Osvaldo Roggi, Darío Ubilla, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Meditación ante el cadáver del Padre Henrique Concientización y religiosidad popular Doctrina social de la Iglesia, capitalismo, socialismo El Ecuador y la crisis actual de su cultura De Macondo a Santa Marta El futuro de las ideologías y las ideologías del futuro “Al Sínodo” “El Plan Vértice” “Doscientos franceses” EE.UU. - América Latina: El gran negocio Ecuador: 85 días críticos Chile: Un conflicto educacional importante Paraguay: Gobierno enceguecido, Iglesia valiente Vaticano... y retener lo bueno África: La necesaria negritud		Héctor Borrat Buenaventura Pelegrí Felipe Berryman Jordan Bishop Agustín Cueva Edmundo Gómez Mango Luis Alberto Gómez de Souza Mons. Eduardo Pironio Fabio Konder Comparato François de l’Espinay Bryan Palmer Gustavo Darquea César Aguiar Leoncio Clavel Miguel Barriola	

Brasil: NIU, fin de una experiencia ejemplar Francia: La “contestación” sacerdotal J. F. Donceel: “Antropología filosófica” Noah Chomsky: “American Power and the new mandarins” Krimm, Congar, Rahner y otros: “El diácono en la Iglesia y el mundo de hoy” Francois Houtart - Emile Pin: “A Igreja na revolucao de America Latina”		Gerard Bessiere Alberto Methol Ferré Luis Fernando García Viana	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 13-14, Year 3	<b>Date of publication</b>	November-December, 1969
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Carlos Baraibar, Ernesto Cardenal, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Luis Osvaldo Roggi, Alberto Silva, Darío Ubilla, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: El proceso peruano		Rolando Ames Cobián Carlos Amat y León Luis Soberón Hélan Jaworski Luis Pásara Ricardo Antoncich	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor En asamblea permanente El conflicto Iglesia-Estado en Paraguay Colombia: una Iglesia en tensión Fiscales o testigos – notas sobre un foro latinoamericano ¿Hacia una segunda Revolución Boliviana? Una toma de conciencia crítica En la ruta de Golconda Desde el exilio Colombia: En el apogeo de otra frustración política Buenos Aires: Un Medellín protestante Londres-Estocolmo: Dos raros y valientes ejemplos José Luis de Aranguren: Ética y política Jorge Abelardo Ramos: Historia de la Nación Latinoamericana Héctor Béjar: Perú 1965, apuntes sobre una experiencia guerrillera		Héctor Borrat Leoncio Clavel Javier Darío Restrepo Darío Ubilla Hernán Siles Suazo Joao da Veiga Coutinho Noel Olaya Germán Zabala Francisco de Paula Oliva Carlos Horacio Urán Luis Alfonso Cabal Alberto Methol Ferré Ana María Bidegain Luis Pásara	

<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 15, Year 4	<b>Date of publication</b>	February, 1970
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Luis E. Pereira, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Luis Osvaldo Roggi, Alberto Silva, Darío Ubilla, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley, Carlos Horacio Urán Rojas.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: Argentina – pueblo, iglesia, poder		Ignacio Palacios Videla Norberto Habegger Lucio Gera Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Ciencia y filosofía en América Latina -una aproximación histórica- La Universidad según Darcy Ribeiro El golpe más duro La hora de los hornos América Latina: Abriendo la década Ernesto Cardenal: “Salmos” Indalecio Liévano Aguirre: “Bolivarismo y monroísmo” Robert Nisbet: “La formación de pensamiento sociológico”		Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré Pierre Furter Alberto Bayley Gutiérrez Jorge Abelardo Ramos Luis Vignolo Darío Ubilla Carlos Horacio Urán	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 16, Year 4	<b>Date of publication</b>	April, 1970
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Darío Ubilla, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley, Carlos Horacio Urán Rojas.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor De la iglesia colonial a Medellín El conflicto Honduras – El Salvador Escalada represiva y pastoral de los excomulgados Para leer a Althusser Sobre el celibato de los sacerdotes Prueba de fuego		Héctor Borrat Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino Luis Fuentes Rivera Carlos Gradín Javier Sasso Mons. Haroldo Ponce de León	



<p>¿Es posible ser cristiano en África?  Reconocerse recíprocamente  Washington: Nosotros, desde el norte (I)  Bruselas: Nosotros, desde el norte (II)  Colombia: La vergüenza de la democracia  Perú: Con Bolívar y Mariátegui  París: América Latina no oficial  Amsterdam: Nuevo estilo de autoridad en la iglesia  Porto Alegre: Castillo fuerte es nuestro Dios  Gonzalo Cárdenas: “Las luchas nacionales contra la dependencia”  P. Schoonenberg: “Alianza y creación”  Luis Felipe Ramón y Rivera: La música folklórica en Venezuela</p>		<p>Eduardo Galeano  Basile Kossou  Marc Oraison  Carlos Horacio Urán  Bryan Palmer  Alberto Silva  Miguel Ángel Cabrera  Darío Ubilla  Horacio Bojorge  Daniel Mendoza de Arce</p>	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 17, Year 4	<b>Date of publication</b>	June, 1970
Editorial Board	<p>Editor: Héctor Borrat  Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Darío Ubilla, José A. Viera Gallo, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.</p>		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
<p>Other Titles:  Carta del Editor  Los dos rostros visibles y alineados de la Iglesia Una  La Comunidad Eucarística en el mundo capitalista  El diablo entre los marginados  El pecado original como re-sacralización de la sexualidad y de la sabiduría  Para una Cristología de la Vanguardia  El tiempo personal y el tiempo histórico en “El Siglo de las Luces”  El proceso es irreversible  Rikchay Perú  Con cierta certeza  La tarea de amarse a sí mismo  Entre los indios Canoeiros  Buenos Aires: El fin del nacionalismo oligárquico  Del Secuestro de Aramburu al ocaso de los 1441 días de Onganía y algunas burlas al pueblo  La Paz: un movimiento obrero crítico y clasista  Sao Paulo: Realmente um Fato Novo  París/San Pablo: Torturas y torturadores; crítica y contracrítica  Viña del Mar: Estudiantes y Política</p>		<p>Héctor Borrat  Bonoit Dumas  Arturo Paoli  Eduardo Galeano  J. Severino Croatto  Beatriz de León  Augusto Zimmermann  Fernando Lecaros  Luis Pásara  Jean-Baptiste Lasségue  Balduino Loebens  Alberto Methol Ferré  Eduardo González  Miguel Cardozo  Zé da Silva  Darío Ubilla  Carlos Horacio Urán  Edilberto Rivas  Alberto Silva  CISPHA</p>	

Port au Prince: Bajo Du valier Cayaltí: De la hacienda capitalista a la cooperativa de los trabajadores K. S. Karol: Les guerrilleros au pouvoir Josep Piñol: ¿Nuevos caminos en la Iglesia? Carlos P. Denyer: Concordancia de las Sagradas Escrituras Iglesia Latinoamericana: Protesta o Profecía			
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 18, Year 4	<b>Date of publication</b>	August, 1970
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Darío Ubilla, José A. Viera Gallo, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: La década de los sesenta		Raúl Abadie Aicardi Alberto Bensión Samuel Lichtensztein Carlos Horacio Urán Rojas	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor A cien años del Vaticano I Viejos y nuevos católicos Cristo, último Adán Construir nuestra ciencia El internacionalismo ha muerto, ¡viva el internacionalismo! El único aquí en Roma El tercer mundo ausente Buenos Aires: En la guerrilla cabe un sacristán Montevideo: Los dilemas de “Antonio das Mortes” París/Montevideo: Los dos rostros visibles y alienados de la Iglesia Una Roma: Y, Pedro, ¿qué dice? Montevideo: Pacheco, Dan Mitrione y los 160 México: Bajo el “partido aplanadora” Lima: La propiedad privada en cuestión Augusto Salazar Bondy: ¿Existe una filosofía de nuestra América? Víctor Villanueva: Nueva mentalidad militar en el Perú Joachim Jeremias: Las parábolas de Jesús J. Severino Croatto: Historia de la Salvación Karl W. Deutsch: Los nervios del gobierno		Héctor Borrat Horacio Bojorge Álvaro Barreiro Manuel Sadosky Robert de Montvalon Jesús García Giancarlo Zizola Eduardo González César Aguiar Alberto Methol Ferré Pancho Zapata Luis Pásara Alberto Methol Ferré Luis Pásara	

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Vispera No 19-20, Year 4</b>	<b>Date of publication</b>	<b>October-December, 1970</b>
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Darío Ubilla, José A. Viera Gallo, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: La via chilena		Romeo Pérez Vivian Trias	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Redescubrir la Iglesia en el Tercer Mundo Bolivia: ¿Revolución en la contrarrevolución? Concientización y educación Éxodo y liberación El Mesionsimo y el Cristo Mesías en la religiosidad popular brasilera Inquieto Quebec Los laberintos de la Ciudad Secular América del Sur: Temor en el Atlántico Bruselas: ¿Demasiado a la izquierda? Lima: El Topo Gigio: la lógica del sistema Copenhague/Washington: Dos veces zaran deada Buenos Aires: Dos modelos de Acción Católica América Latina: Contra la demofobia La respuesta de los teólogos Clo vis Lugon: La Republique de Guaranis Lewis Munford: El mito de la maquina G. E. Rusconi: Teoría crítica de la sociedad Roger Bastide: Las Américas negras M. I. Pereira de Queiroz: Historia y Etnología de los movimientos mesiánicos Robert S. McNamara: The Essence of Security reflections in The Office		Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré Raúl Abadie Aicardi Hernani Maria Fiori Horacio Bojorge Matías Martinho Lenz Ives Vaillancourt Harvey Cox Bryan Palmer Consejos Superiores de la Juventud de Acción Católica Argentina Luis Pásara Guzmán Carriquiry Daniel Gil César Aguiar	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Vispera No 21, Year 4</b>	<b>Date of publication</b>	<b>February, 1971</b>
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano		

	<p>Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Darío Ubilla, José A. Viera Gallo, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.</p>		
	<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>
	<p>Other Titles:  Carta del Editor  Estructuras integradas de dependencia y dominación en las Américas  Cristo en la sociedad sin padre  El indígena ecuatoriano siempre indio  Degradado por nuestras conquistas sociales  A dos meses de gobierno popular  Lucha electoral y lucha de masas  Perú: acelerando el proceso  Curacao: La isla Shell  México: Discurso programático del nuevo presidente  EE.UU.: Cipayos en lugar de Marines  Vaticano/Kyoto: Religión: ¿opio o alerta?  Asunción: “Nuestro pobre y sufrido pueblo paraguayó  Quito: La eucaristía como protesta  C. R. Lafón, E. Dussel y Aldo Büting: El catolicismo popular en la Argentina. Cuaderno 1 y 4  Mario Wschebor: imperialismo y universidades en América Latina  Héctor Silva Michelena/Heinz Rudolf Sonntag: Universidad, dependencia y revolución  Sergio Bagú: Tiempo, realidad social y conocimiento  Nacla Newsletter: Current Nacla Literature  Gustavo F. J. Cirigliano y Ana Zabala Ameguino: El poder joven</p>		<p>Héctor Borrat  Helan Jaworski  Arturo Paoli  Orlando López  Peter Wiemers  Luis Maira  Rodrigo Ambrossio  Miguel Cabrera  José Porfirio Miranda  Alberto Methel Ferró  Segundo Galilea  Jorge Faget  César Aguiar  Carlos Gil</p>
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 22, Year 5	<b>Date of publication</b>	April, 1971
Editorial Board	<p>Editor: Héctor Borrat  Alberto Methol Ferré, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Darío Ubilla, José A. Viera Gallo, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.</p>		

<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Propuestas para una polémica Algunos modelos de crisis de fe La crisis de Ilades A cuatro meses de gobierno popular DC/UP: ¿entendimiento progresivo? Guatemala: La revancha del MLN Washington/Santiago: Estado del mundo y desafío chileno Santiago: El complot del cobre Asunción: La dura cuaresma del padre Monzón Medellín: los últimos estertores de la derecha tradicional Buenos Aires/Rio: Justicia y paz Montevideo: A pasos de gigante Washington: El teniente Calley, Richard Nixon y la mayoría silenciosa La paz: Sangre y política Morner, Magnus: Actividades económicas y políticas de los jesuitas en el Rio de la Plata Nacla Newsletter Vol. N° 8 Jaime Arenas: La guerrilla por dentro J. Severino Croatto, Fernando Boasso: El catolicismo popular en la Argentina		Héctor Borrat Alfonso Alvarez Bolado Ives Vaillancourt Guarani Pereda Pedro Felipe Ramírez Bryan Palmer Carlos Horacio Urán Jorge Scuro Juan de Dios Rojas	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 23, Year 5	<b>Date of publication</b>	May-June, 1971
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, Raúl Abadie Aicardi, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Helan Jaworqui, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Darío Ubilla, José A. Viera Gallo, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: Los Cristianos en la vía socialista chilena		Gonzalo Arroyo Alfonso Baeza Martín Gárate Esteban Gumucio Juan Martín Santiago Thipssen Sergio Torres Ignacio Pujadas Pierre Dubois Beltrán Villegas Pablo Fontaine	

<p>Other Titles:  Carta del Editor  Fronteras del mar, Imperios sin fronteras  Honduras: Dependencia y cambio social  Canción, protesta y consumo  Historia y Aggiornamiento  En la Zona Andina  La lucha del pueblo en Colombia  Ese grande y fecundo nacionalismo revolucionario latinoamericano  Los invasores de Pamplona alta  Primer encuentro por una iglesia solidaria  Contra recortes  Chile solidario  SST: La anécdota y el símbolo  La XIII reunión del CELAM  Antes que a los hombres  La Iglesia según Allende  Reino y reinado de Dios  El papado, y el mundo moderno  Jesus und die Revolutionaren zainer Zeit (Jesús y los revolucionarios de su tiempo)  Concilium: el futuro de la Iglesia  Libera a mi pueblo  Voto y cambio social</p>		<p>Héctor Borrat  Oscar Abadie Aicardi  Guillermo Molina Chocano  Juan Damián  Mario Góngora  Mons. Luis Fernández  Hernán Vergara  Luis Carriquiry  Alberto Methol Ferré  Carlos Horacio Urán</p>	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 24-25, Year 5	<b>Date of publication</b>	December, 1971
Editorial Board	<p>Editor: Héctor Borrat  Alberto Methol Ferré, Raúl Abadie Aicardi, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Helan Jaworqui, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Darío Ubilla, José A. Viera Gallo, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.</p>		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
<p>Informe I: La vía chilena</p> <p>Informe II: Sacerdocio y Justicia</p>		<p>Secretariado Ejecutivo  Provisorio Organización de  Izquierda Cristiana</p> <p>Martín de la Rosa  Pablo Fontaine Aldunate  Ignacio Palacios Videla  Quico Hernández  Alex Morelli  Daniel Gilbert</p>	

	Horacio Bojorge Daniel Gil Buenaventura Pelegri Héctor Borrat Sacerdotes de Cuzco Haroldo Ponce de León Natalio Luis Jovanovich Carlos Paz Juan Domingo Perón		
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Pobreza evangélica, solidaridad y protesta En este tránsito hacia la Patria grande con la mayor amplitud Historia de la Iglesia Un tiempo y su intérprete Segundo encuentro de revistas europeas y latinoamericanas Nueva actitud estudiantil Armas europeas para América Latina La caída del Gral. Torres Bolivia y el Cono Sur Tristes tópicos Antropología estructural	Héctor Borrat Gral. Liber Seregni Mons. José Dammert Mons. Roque Adames Mons. Ademar Esquivel Marcelo Cerviño		
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 26; Year 6	<b>Date of publication</b>	March, 1972
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, Raúl Abadie Aicardi, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Guzmán Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Helan Jaworqui, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Darío Ubilla, José A. Viera Gallo, Luiz Eduardo Wanderley.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: Siete zonas de un proceso		Horace Brill Luis Vignolo Jorge Lozano René Recabado Alcocer Galo Peñalva Enrique Monteverde Abraham Lama Bernabé Vargas	
Other Titles: Diez tesis sobre nosotros La partida del Secretariado Sacerdocio y Justicia En la esperanza impaciente		Hanns Albert Steger Alf Ammon Shepherd Bliss Mishy Lesser	

<p>A que nos condujo el Sínodo  Misioneros franceses para América Latina  Dos grandes de la teología alemana  Hanns Albert Steger: Varias lógicas disponibles  Alf Ammon: Alemania y América Latina  Shepherd Bli-Mishy Lesser: Libertad y disciplina  Las dos Argentinas - Mario Carlos Casalla  Ideología y fe - Rubén R. Dri  Rostow y la no historia - Héctor H. Alimonda  Perú, Velasco y la tierra - Luis Pásara  Teología moral de San Juan  El ejército y la política argentina: 1928-1945  De Yrigoyen a Perón  Dependencia y cambio social  Al Troesma con cariño  La religión de Israel  Uncle Samuel &amp; his Population Bomb</p>		<p>Mario Carlos Casalla  Ruben Dri  Héctor Alimonda  Luis Pásara  Horacio Bojorge  Héctor Borrat</p>	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 27, Year 6	<b>Date of publication</b>	June, 1972
Editorial Board	<p>Editor: Héctor Borrat  Alberto Methol Ferré, Raúl Abadie Aicardi, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, José Croatto, Pablo Dabezies, Luciano Dourado Mattos, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Helan Jaworqui, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Antonio Pérez García, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Carlos Horacio Urán.</p>		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: La Universidad en América Latina		Hanns-Albert Steger	
<p>Other Titles:  Tres historias de Pascua  Vos sabés que no estuve en Zárate  Qué alarma a la Policía Federal  “En ocasión del allanamiento”  Competencia por el liderazgo  Mutún  El FBI a Río  Acuerdos de Generales  Al Atlántico  Liberando al petróleo  Por qué la denuncia  III UNCTAD  Moratoria  Dos mensajes  Raúl Ferrer: Educación de adultos en Cuba  Segundo Galilea: Hacia una pastoral vernácula  Eduardo Galeano: El grito del Obispo</p>		<p>Alberto Fernando Carbone  Joseph Comblin  Raúl Ferrer  Segundo Galilea  Eduardo Galeano  Antonio García  Alberto Methol Ferré</p>	



Antonio García: ¿A dónde va Colombia? Alberto Methol Ferré: La Iglesia y el Estado Los salmos traducidos y explicados Teología de la esperanza Sólo el amor es digno de fe Los mitos de nuestro tiempo El dosel sagrado El humanismo semita			
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 28, Year 6	<b>Date of publication</b>	August, 1972
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, Raúl Abadie Aicardi, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, José Croatto, Enrique Dussel, José Gaido, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Gilberto Giménez, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Helan Jaworqui, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Carlos Horacio Urán.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: La ofensiva contra el Papado		Miguel A. Barriola	
Other Titles: La abstención del 70% Las áreas y el gabinete III UNCTAD, tercer fracaso De chinos y chilenos Sinamos; sin amos Falangistas y/o movimientistas Las reservas de EE.UU. Echeverría en Washington La montaña parió un ratón Preparando el complejo La paz de Stroessner La misión Godber Mario Kaplún: los medios de in-comunicación popular Henrique C. de Lima Vaz: Ateísmo y mito Héctor Borrat: El encuentro de Santiago César Aguiar: Ideología y burguesía Las venas abiertas de América Latina Teología protestante Operación bumerang Comunidad de base y civilización técnica La nueva teología protestante Penetration culturelle et presse religieuse		Mario Kaplún Henrique de Lima Vaz Héctor Borrat César Aguiar Alberto Methol Ferré Frei Plácido de Santa María	

<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 29, Year 6	<b>Date of publication</b>	November, 1972
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, Raúl Abadie Aicardi, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Enrique Dussel, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Carlos Talavera, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Helan Jaworqui, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Carlos Horacio Urán.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: La PRAXIS ¿Qué quiere decir?		Alberto Methol Ferré Georges Marie Martín Cottier	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Las fronteras del petróleo Los pronósticos del "World III" Las desdichas del BID Esa prudente diversificación Misionero del Tercer Mundo Neurofisiología e imperialismo Godspell sin buena nueva Benigna Berger: Aprender del Tercer Mundo Joseph Comblin: Teología de la Liberación y modelo brasileño Bryan Palmer: De Valdés a Almeida Alberto Silva: El seminario de México General Marcó del Pont: Perú y el Plan Bienal César Aguiar: Para leer a Max Webber De Kant a Marechal Jésus de Nazareth vu par les témoins de sa vie Teología del Progreso Cuestiones fundamentales de hermenéutica Dictionnaire Grec-Francais du Nouveau Testament Théologie de la revolution		Héctor Borrat Héctor Alimonda Bryan Palmer César Aguiar Benigna Berger Joseph Comblin Bryan Palmer Alberto Silva Gral. Marco del Pont Alberto Methol Ferré	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 30, Year 7	<b>Date of publication</b>	February, 1973
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, Raúl Abadie Aicardi, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Enrique Dussel, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Carlos Talavera, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Helan Jaworqui, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Carlos Horacio Urán.		

<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: Teología y Liberación		Alain Birou Segundo Galilea Juan Carlos Scannone Héctor Borrat	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Reformando el esquema Managua-San Fernando Nuestros vecinos del Este Perimetral Norte La Biblia para Latinoamérica Perón en casa Trompeteros-Capirona-Pavayacu Emilio Castro: Al sur de Oikoumene Carlos López Matteó: un año violento Agustín Benzano Seré: Sin novedad en el Fondo Héctor Alimonda, Ricardo Menassé, Eduardo Romero: Tango de Buenos Aires Héctor Borrat: Brasil a los 150 Industria y concentración económica El fundamento irreligioso de la iglesia El apocalipsis, una respuesta al tiempo Destino y esperanzas del mundo moderno Estudios sobre los orígenes del peronismo Fe y nueva sensibilidad histórica		Héctor Borrat Hernán Rodas Alberto Methol Ferré Emilio Castro Carlos López Mateo Agustín Benzano Seré Héctor Alimonda Ricardo Menassé Eduardo Romero Horacio Bojorge	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 31, Year 7	<b>Date of publication</b>	June, 1973
Editorial Board	Editor: Héctor Borrat Alberto Methol Ferré, Raúl Abadie Aicardi, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, César F. Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Enrique Dussel, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Carlos Talavera, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Helan Jaworqui, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Carlos Horacio Urán.		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
Informe: El Proceso Peruano		Francisco Moncloa Rafael Roncagliolo Luis Pásara Gral. Leónidas Rodríguez	
Other Titles: Carta del Editor Renovada CEPAL El consenso de Lima Al límite de la paciencia La derrota de Panamericana Cierta humor vital		Héctor Borrat Carlos Baraibar Alcira Argumedo Fernando Moreno Héctor Alimonda Alberto Methol Ferré	

<p>El viaje de Rogers  El enviado de Nixon-Kissinger  Don Gustavo, Dussel, Cussiánovich  Carlos Baraibar: Para una política latinoamericana  Alcira Argumedo: Perón-Pueblo  Fernando Moreno: El Pacto Andino  Encuesta de Héctor Alimonda: Una política científica  Alberto Methol Ferré: A jaques Maritain  Los caminos de la liberación latinoamericana  Discusión sobre Teología de la Esperanza  El intercambio desigual  De la cólera a la esperanza  Palmares, la guerrilla negra</p>		<p>Horacio Bojorge  Jaime Niño  César Aguiar</p>	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 32, Year 7	<b>Date of publication</b>	October, 1973
Editorial Board	<p>Editor: Héctor Borrat  Alberto Methol Ferré, Raúl Abadie Aicardi, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, César F. Baraibar, Horacio Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Enrique Dussel, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Carlos Talavera, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Helan Jaworqui, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Carlos Horacio Urán.</p>		
<b>Content</b>		<b>Contributors</b>	
<p>Other Titles:  Los clamores y el grito  “Milagro extranjero”  La política económica  El pueblo que se reúne  Una polémica inter pares  Superman bifronte  Carlos Castillo: Fe y acción solidaria  Jaime Martínez Cárdenas: Colombiano por el Cono Sur  Benoit Dumas: La mesa, la misa  Michel Shooyans: El genocidio intrauterino  Raúl Federico Abadie Aicardi: La Cuenca Platense  Los cinco comunismos  Gnosis  La violencia en el mundo actual  Antropocentrismo cristiano  Heidegger y la metafísica tomista  Nos ha liberado</p>		<p>Carlos Castillo  Jaime Martínez Cárdenas  Benoit Dumas  Michel Shooyans  Raúl Federico Abadie Aicardi</p>	
<b>Issue</b>	Vispera No 33, Year 7	<b>Date of publication</b>	December, 1973
Editorial Board	<p>Editor: Héctor Borrat  Alberto Methol Ferré, Raúl Abadie Aicardi, César Aguiar, Rolando Ames Cobián, Gonzalo Arroyo, Carlos Baraibar, César F. Baraibar, Horacio</p>		

	Bojorge, Ernesto Cardenal, Luis A. Carriquiry, Enrique Dussel, Bayardo José García Núñez, Lucio Gera, Carlos Talavera, Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, Helan Jaworqui, Enrique Mareque, José Alfonso de Moura Nunes, Bryan Palmer, Romeo Pérez, Guillermo Rodríguez Melgarejo, Alberto Silva, Paulina Spinoso, Carlos Horacio Urán.
<b>Content</b>	<b>Contributors</b>
Informe: La polémica platense	Raúl Federico Abadie Aicardi Paulo Schilling Jorge Nelson Gualco
Other Titles: La Iglesia y la Junta De tres obispos franceses, sobre Chile De Pablo VI sobre Chile Allende nos escuchaba Apurando la mateada ¿Apenas una victoria moral? Del petróleo al poder La apoteosis del Golbery La derrota del COPEI Justino O'Farrel: Perón y el ser histórico André Dumas: Cuatro preguntas a América Latina Romeo Pérez: La ruptura chilena Héctor Borrat: Eros y el Espíritu José Comblin: De la acción cristiana El proceso revolucionario peruano: testimonio de lucha Medios de comunicación: ¿Esclavizan o liberan? Vida y Muerte de las órdenes religiosas Thomas Hobbes y los orígenes del Estado burgués Fe cristiana y cambio social en América Latina	Justino O'Farrel André Dumas Romeo Pérez Héctor Borrat José Comblin

**APPENDIX V**  
**TESTIMONIO DE ANDRES A. CAMPOS ACERCA DEL TRATO RECIBIDO EN**  
**BRASIL, 1971.**

**(TESTIMONY OF ANDRES A. CAMPOS ABOUT THE TREATMENT**  
**RECEIVED IN BRAZIL, 1971. The source is presented in its original Spanish**  
**language. Box 150 Folder Sucesos Montevideo, 1971. SLA-CLP Repository, Quito.)**

Mi nombre es Andrés A. Campos, soy miembro del Secretariado latinoamericano de la JECI y colaborador del Departamento de laicos del CELAM en la rama pastoral estudiantil.

Lo que voy a relatar son los hechos que viví en las cárceles donde son confinados los prisioneros políticos de Brasil. Esas prisiones están a cargo de la policía militar, que desempeña las funciones de policía política.

Durante los meses de octubre y noviembre fui enviado a Chile a realizar un trabajo pastoral con estudiantes de la JEC chilena. Permanecí en dicho país durante ese tiempo y el día 25 de noviembre me dispuse a regresar a Montevideo (Uruguay) en donde queda la sede del Secretariado Latinoamericano. Ese día salí de Santiago de Chile a bordo de una aeronave de SAS, debiendo desembarcar en Montevideo. Al llegar al aeropuerto de Montevideo fui detenido por la policía de emigración del Uruguay, la cual no me permitió la entrada en el país y me condujo a una sala especial en donde me fue quitado el pasaporte, para ser revisado por el encargado de ingreso de extranjeros a aquel país. A pesar de que pedí insistentemente que se me permitiese hablar con el responsable de esta sección para saber qué tipo de problema tenía para que no se me permitiera entrar al país. Tal petición me fue negada. Fui obligado por la policía del aeropuerto a subir al avión SAS, que partía en esos momentos rumbo a San Pablo (Brasil).

Yo sabía que, si era deportado al Brasil, era casi seguro que tendría problemas, máxime que en mi maleta llevaba algunos documentos sobre la situación política de Chile, de América Latina y sobre la forma en que la iglesia chilena está asumiendo el momento histórico de su país. Por esa razón insistí que al menos se me deportase a Chile, ya que cuarenta minutos después un avión de ALITALIA salía de Montevideo rumbo a Chile. Si había problemas con la Compañía ofrecía pagar el precio del pasaje hasta aquel país con dinero en efectivo y al contado. La policía uruguaya se negó a pesar de la insistencia que los mismos empleados de SAS hacían en este mismo sentido.

Sin recibir explicación alguna y contra mi voluntad de continuar a Brasil fui subido al avión que despegó rumbo a San Pablo. En el avión destruí todas las direcciones que portaba conmigo y abandoné mi cuaderno de apuntes y algún material que transportaba a Montevideo, en donde es permitida la venta de publicaciones de este tipo. Las publicaciones se referían al problema de la dependencia económica de América Latina y a los fenómenos sociales que nuestro continente está viviendo con intensidad.

Al desembarcar en San Pablo, fui detenido inmediatamente por policías vestidos de civil, quienes rápidamente me subieron a un auto y me llevaron a una sala especial en donde mi pasaporte fue revisado detenidamente y sellado por ellos. Inmediatamente después, fui subido a un taxi y se me ordenó que partiese inmediatamente del aeropuerto con destino a San Pablo. Yo obedecí, pero a los diez minutos de marcha mi automóvil fue detenido por

varios autos de la policía que hacían sonar sus sirenas y que nos sacaron, al taxista y a mí, violentamente del auto. El taxista fue bárbaramente golpeado por un policía que usaba para eso la culata de su ametralladora, haciéndole sangrar la cabeza. Yo era encañonado y revisado por uno de ellos. Inmediatamente después fui esposado y llevado a un puesto policial, en el camino, en donde me hicieron desnudarme y revisaron mis ropas detenidamente. La maniobra fue hecha para así informar a la prensa que yo había intentado huir en un taxi cuando descubrieron que yo era un guerrillero uruguayo que intentaba ingresar al país.

Posteriormente fui nuevamente conducido al aeropuerto, esta vez esposado y rodeado por varios autos de la policía brasileña. En el aeropuerto me esperaban con un gran aparato policial y rápidamente me condujeron a una sala en donde empezaron a interrogarme y en donde revisaron mis maletas. Ahí fui drogado con un paño que al serme puesto en la nariz y en la boca me atontó. Nuevamente fui conducido a un auto en donde me vendaron los ojos y me tiraron al piso del mismo. Del aeropuerto salí en esas condiciones: atontado, vendado, esposado y en el piso del automóvil.

Durante el trayecto comenzaron los golpes al cuerpo: me golpeaban con los pies y con las culatas de sus armas; los golpes recibidos hicieron que empezara a sangrar por la boca y la nariz durante todo el trayecto, que habrá durado cerca de una hora y media, aunque por mi estado no pude darme cuenta del tiempo exacto. Cuando bajamos me fue quitada la venda y pude ver que estaba en un recinto militar con varios hombres armados y policías militares que montaban guardia en la entrada y en los muros del lugar. Después supe que había sido llevado al cuartel general de la policía militar: Operación Bandeirantes.

Subimos a un piso y allí me quitaron todas las cosas que llevaba en el bolsillo, tales como mis gafas, billetera, cinto, pañuelo, etc. Inmediatamente me vendaron nuevamente y me llevaron a un lugar en donde me sentaron a una silla. Pocos momentos después entró una persona que me preguntó si hablaba el inglés; le contesté que no; una de ellas hablaba inglés y otra traducía al portugués. Yo contestaba todo en castellano a pesar de entender y hablar un poco el inglés. Las preguntas que se me hacían eran acerca de cuáles eran mis vinculaciones con diversas organizaciones armadas del Brasil y del Uruguay; si conocía brasileños exiliados en Chile y las guerrillas que operan en Brasil; que diera los nombres de todos los tupamaros que yo conocía en el Uruguay.

Respondía que todas esas cosas no las sabía, que mi trabajo era al servicio de la iglesia y no conocía más que a miembros de la Conferencia de Obispos del Brasil; entonces empezó a pedir nombres de asesores y militantes de las coordinaciones nacionales de cada uno de los países de América Latina; nombres de obispos que apoyasen nuestro trabajo y de quienes nos entregaban dinero para nuestros viajes. Me negué a responder eso diciendo que no sabía la respuesta de todo lo que me preguntaban. Fue entonces cuando empezaron a golpearme y a decirme que confesara que era tupamaro, que venía a Brasil para entrevistarme con guerrilleros brasileños y que Mons. Helder Cámara financiaba y encubría la guerrilla del Brasil. Como continuase negando todo, los golpes continuaron durante 20 o 25 minutos. Después cesaron y la venda me fue quitada. Cuando pude ver, estaba en una oficina muy pequeña en donde había un escritorio y varias sillas; las paredes sucias mostraban manchas de sangre y un cartel decía: “Sala de Partos”.

Fui llevado a un cuartito en otras de las alas del edificio. El cuarto de unos seis o siete metros cuadrados no tenía baños ni ventanas, pues las que había estaban tapadas y selladas con maderas; un colchón sucio cubierto con frazadas sucias, un recipiente de plástico en donde hacer mis necesidades fisiológicas y dos vasos de agua. Esa provisión de agua debía durarme todo el día con temperatura de verano y de mucho calor. Mi celda estaba totalmente aislada de otras celdas y afuera había cartelito que decía. “Prisionero Especial”.

Dormía ahí esa noche y alrededor de las 8 de la mañana del viernes fui llevado a la sala en donde estuve la noche anterior. Allí me esperaban cuatro personas que portaban armas en sus cintos y que empezaron a interrogarme. Querían nombres de mis contactos en Brasil, nombres y direcciones de brasileños en Chile y Uruguay, que confesase mi vinculación con la guerrilla brasileña, guerrilla que supuestamente estaría actuando bajo la cobertura y apoyo económico de Don Helder Cámara. Debía confesar que pertenecía al Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (Tupamaros) de Uruguay, que Dom Helder Cámara mantenía el contacto con la organización guerrillera del Uruguay por intermedio de mi persona.

Más tarde, una nueva acusación que yo debía formular me fue presentada: tenía que dar los nombres de todos los obispos brasileños y latinoamericanos que actualmente se encontraban financiando la guerrilla brasileña.

Como me negase a responder afirmativamente a todos los puntos anteriores, uno de los oficiales del equipo de interrogación dio la orden que yo fuese llevado a una sesión que él llamó de ablandamiento. Antes de ser llevado, me pidió que le explicase por qué estaba en Brasil. Le conté que había sido deportado a Brasil cuando viajaba de Chile a Uruguay, que mis intenciones en Brasil era ponerme en contacto con la curia de San Pablo, hablar con Dom Pablo Evaristo, Arzobispo de San Pablo y explicarle mi situación, para inmediatamente tratar de regresar a Uruguay a reintegrarme al equipo del Secretariado.

Mi versión no lo convenció y volvió a ordenar que me llevasen a otro tipo de interrogatorio. Fui llevado entonces a otra salita, allí esperaba un equipo de “interrogación” compuesto por otras personas que se turnaban en su trabajo. Fui sentado en una silla de madera y mis manos amarradas; en esa posición, comenzó sobre mí una verdadera lluvia de golpes en las más diversas partes del cuerpo. Para no dejar huellas demasiado visibles, vendaban sus puños con paños mojados con agua; de esa forma los golpes no dejan huellas en el cuerpo. Mientras uno me golpeaba, otro de ellos decía que sería entregado al “Escuadrón de la Muerte”, organización parapolicial que se encarga de asesinar a personas de izquierda y a delincuentes reincidentes. El mismo que hablaba de entregarme al Escuadrón a cargar su revólver en mi presencia, amenazándome matarme en ese momento si no confesaba inmediatamente toda la verdad al responder las preguntas que se me estaban haciendo.

Como continuara afirmando que todo lo que anteriormente había dicho era verdad, que no había nada más que añadir, el interrogador se puso furioso y comenzó a insultarme, a mi y a los sacerdotes, a Dom Helder Cámara, a quien acusaba de obispo comunista y a toda la iglesia brasileña de quien decía ser oportunista y vende patria.

Ya para entonces yo estaba bastante asustado y esperaba que de un momento a otro su revólver sería disparado sobre mí. Por suerte no fue así y tras amenazar matarme si no



hablaba, dio orden de que no fuese llevada comida a mi celda en ese día y que me llevaran a ella inmediatamente.

Salimos a mi celda, pero a las dos de la tarde de ese mismo día volvieron por mí y me llevaron a un segundo interrogatorio a cargo de otras ocho personas que no eran las mismas de las veces anteriores. Allí repetí los datos dichos en el primer interrogatorio y escuché los mismos cargos de pertenecer a los Tupamaros de Uruguay, a la Alianza de Liberación Nacional de Brasil y de que Dom Helder Cámara era el protector y fundador de esas organizaciones de acción directa.

Uno de los cuadernos con anotaciones personales de una reunión del Equipo del Secretariado Latinoamericano que habíamos tenido en el mes de agosto había sido capturado conmigo. En tal cuaderno había apuntes de las realidades económicas y políticas de los distintos países y regiones de América Latina, de la situación de las iglesias nacionales y de sus problemas principales; de la situación del Movimiento estudiantil universitario y secundario y dentro de ese sector la realidad de los Movimientos de JEC en cada uno de los países. Además, estaban anotados los planes pastorales de nuestro Secretariado para el próximo semestre. En la parte correspondiente a Brasil había hecho un breve análisis económico y un cuadro político estudiando algunos aspectos de las organizaciones políticas de Brasil, tanto de derecha como de izquierda, para tener así una idea de la realidad del país. Luego había una serie de datos acerca de la persecución que la iglesia está teniendo actualmente en Brasil y los nombres (sin apellidos) de los obispos interesados en apoyar una experiencia pastoral con estudiantes, en sus respectivas diócesis. Afirmaban que ese cuaderno era una prueba de mi afiliación guerrillera y que mi misión era la de una especie de enlace entre guerrilleros exiliados en Chile y guerrilleros uruguayos; que estaba en Brasil para ponerme a trabajar con los grupos armados que actualmente operan en Brasil. Además, querían nombres de gente que trabajara en Brasil, direcciones de gente de la JEC y de la JUC, nombres y direcciones de sacerdotes que trabajasen con nosotros. Contestaba que no sabía nombres ni direcciones y que por esa razón no se las podía dar.

Con el cuaderno me fue encontrada una agenda personal con anotaciones de reuniones y citas que había tenido en diversas partes de América Latina. Alrededor de esos datos ellos comenzaron todo un interrogatorio sobre cuáles son los fines y los medios de mi trabajo en la Iglesia. Como mis respuestas tampoco convencían, ordenaron que se me diese otra sesión de ablandamiento para que confesara la verdad.

Inmediatamente comenzaron los golpes en la cara, estomago y pulmones. Sobre mis oídos fueron puestos algodones y en las orejas cintas elásticas que me apretaban las venas; lo mismo en las muñecas y en los tobillos, en los dedos de las manos y de los pies. El dolor que se siente cuando la circulación de la sangre se ve detenida por la presión del elástico es insoportable, sobre todo en las orejas. Al momento que se quitan el dolor es el doble de cuando son puestas. Esto fue hecho varias veces, al mismo tiempo que me golpeaban y gritaban que contestase las preguntas que anteriormente me habían hecho; cuando veían que producía mucho dolor en mí, amenazaban con hacer lo mismo en los genitales. Todo lo anterior me había atontado bastante y mis respuestas eran muy incoherentes, pero continuaba afirmando que yo era miembro de la Iglesia latinoamericana al servicio de todos los obispos de las naciones de América Latina, sin relación alguna con

organizaciones guerrilleras como las que ellos mencionaban. En esas condiciones fui llevado nuevamente a la celda.

El sábado 27 fui despertado sorpresivamente a las cuatro de la madrugada por tres policías uniformados que me trasladaron a una sala en donde me esperaban cuatro policías vestidos de civil, uno de ellos con apariencias de sargento a juzgar por el tratamiento que recibía de los otros.

Al momento de llegar, comenzaron a insultarme a gritos y a darme golpes en el cuerpo. Esa noche habían capturado a tres estudiantes a quienes, según parece, les habían hecho confesar que pertenecían a una de las organizaciones políticas del Brasil que funcionan actualmente en la clandestinidad. Querían que yo confesase ahí mismo que había sido mandado a Brasil para entrevistarme con ellos. Fui llevado ante dos de ellos a quienes les preguntaron si me conocían. Ellos respondieron que nunca me habían visto y que no me conocían; ellos decían que sus respuestas eran verdaderas, pero los golpes sobre sus cuerpos continuaban. Uno de ellos perdió el conocimiento y en ese momento me sacaron violentamente de la celda en donde yo estaba con todo el grupo. Fui llevado a otro cuarto en donde me esperaba un policía de civil que comenzó otro interrogatorio. Volví a contar mi historia y las condiciones de mi trabajo, pero no creían nada de lo dicho por mí; insistían que confesase lo que ellos querían. Continuaba afirmando las condiciones anormales en que llegué a Brasil y el respaldo de la Conferencia Episcopal Latinoamericana a mi trabajo. Ellos insistían y preguntaban por la financiación de mis viajes y de mis gastos de estadía.

Cuando ya salía el sol fui llevado nuevamente a mi celda en la que estuve confinado hasta las tres de la tarde de ese mismo día cuando me es puesta una venda y soy llevado a otro interrogatorio. Este giró alrededor de mis agendas y de las anotaciones que en ellas tenía. Luego sobre unos libros que me habían encontrado en la maleta y que querían saber quién los había entregado y para quien eran transportados.

Como contestase que eran llevados para el Secretariado Latinoamericano, empezaron a preguntarme sobre el Equipo y su forma de trabajo; querían también saber la forma de trabajar de la jerarquía uruguaya. Al concluir esa serie de preguntas, empezaron a pedirme nombres de tupamaros en Uruguay, pero esta vez me fueron propinados muy pocos golpes en el cuerpo.

Al día siguiente, domingo 28 de Noviembre, fui llevado a una sala donde me tomaron las huellas digitales de los diez dedos de las manos y varias fotografías de frente, perfil y de pie. En mi ficha militar pusieron: “sospechoso de actividades terroristas y al servicio de obispos subversivos.”

Ese día por la tarde me llevaron a la sala de interrogatorios. Allí me esperaban seis personas que fueron las que más duro me trataron en los días que estuve preso. Inmediatamente que llegué fui amarrado a una silla de madera; me quitaron los zapatos y me amarraron alambres alrededor del cuello, muñecas, muslos, genitales y tobillos. Esos alambres eran de cobre y estaban unidos a un alambre central que terminaba en un generador de electricidad. Las descargas eléctricas duran aproximadamente medio minuto cada una y la intensidad de la corriente es variable según la intensidad con que se haga girar la manivela. Cada descarga hace saltar el cuerpo de una manera terrible, pues la corriente hace bailar el cuerpo como si fuera de papel. En la desesperación por liberarme del dolor que la corriente eléctrica producía yo intentaba agitar el cuerpo logrando solamente que los alambres se enterrasen en la piel produciéndome así más dolor. La

corriente eléctrica hace que los mus[cu]los queden doloridos por las descargas a que son sometidos. En los genitales el dolor es terrible y hace que uno grite intensamente pues es insoportable. En el cuello las descargas hacen que la cabeza baile a un ritmo alocado y que el dolor haga involuntariamente morderse los labios hasta hacerlos sangrar.

Aproximadamente quince minutos duró la primera sesión después de la cual fui desatado para que cantase el himno nacional de Brasil. Al responder que no podía cantar por no conocerlo y por no hablar portugués, mis interrogadores me volvieron a amarrar a la silla y continuaron con sus descargas, mientras me gritaban que hablase portugués. Por momentos paraban la corriente y comenzaban las preguntas de siempre. Insistían con especial interés que complicase a Dom Helder Cámara; como las descargas continuaban con más fuerza, perdí el conocimiento; me despertaron con un balde de agua fría sobre mi cabeza y me dieron un largo descanso. No puedo calcular cuanto tiempo duró esto, pero después volvieron con más descargas eléctricas, esta vez acompañadas de golpes en el cuerpo que me eran dados con los puños envueltos con paños mojados; a la vez se oían gritos de otros interrogadores en otras salas del pasillo, supongo que trabajando con otros detenidos.

Al ver que yo no daba para más y que estaba a punto de volver a desmayarme, me desataron y fui obligado a beber mis orinas en un vaso que ellos me presentaron. Al poco rato comencé con intensos vómitos y traté de pararme, pero mis piernas no me respondían y caí al suelo en donde empezaron a golpearme; hasta que no pude soportar más y volví a perder el conocimiento. Cuando desperté todavía estaba en la sala de interrogatorios. Me volvieron a sentar en la silla y cuando me ponían los alambres nuevamente volví a perder el conocimiento.

Cuando desperté ya estaba en la celda. Al amanecer entró un enfermero a revisarme y poco después fui llevado a una sala donde me toman los datos personales, mis huellas digitales y soy fotografiado al lado de cantidad de libros, que ellos decían habían sido encontrados en mis maletas de viaje; después mostraron algunas armas de fuego que también decían que yo las transportaba.

Mientras era llevado a otro interrogatorio, otro prisionero era llevado a lo mismo que yo. Estuvimos un momento frente a frente; tendr[í]a aproximadamente 19 o 20 años y estaba completamente sano. Cuando me sacaban a mí del interrogatorio vi el estado en el que había salido él: sus dientes habían sido rotos a golpes y su nariz había sido rota también; sangraba mucho de la cara y su brazo estaba en una posición muy extraña, por lo que también supongo que le había sido roto. Iba totalmente desmayado.

Al ver el estado en que salía el muchacho, mis nervios me traicionaron y entré en un estado de desesperación muy grande. Por la noche de ese mismo día, una ambulancia que llegó al patio de la prisión salió transportando un bulto, que supongo era el cadáver de un prisionero, pues la camilla en la que era transportado estaba cubierta con una manta. Fue subido rápidamente a la ambulancia y esta salió del patio de la prisión.

El día martes por la tarde fui llevado a interrogación. Me fue puesta una bolsa de plástico en la cabeza de tal manera que me cubría toda la cabeza y la cara; en esa forma el respirar oxígeno puro era casi imposible, sintiendo la desesperación de la asfixia. Cuando el cuerpo se retuerce en la agonía de querer un poco de aire fresco, la capucha de plástico es quitada, permitiendo entonces que se respire un poco. Inmediatamente es vuelta a poner y se repite la misma operación. Eso se hizo unas tres veces, a la cuarta yo estaba

desmayado. Me dieron oxígeno en un tanque y me amarraron de los pies. Completamente desnudo fui izado sobre una viga y atado a esta por los tobillos; quedé entonces colgado de la cabeza para abajo y sostenido de los tobillos para no caer al suelo. En esa posición fui hecho girar violentamente sobre mí mismo durante un buen rato. Esa posición y la velocidad giratoria hace que la sangre se concentre en la cabeza produciendo la sensación de que esta va a estallar. A mis gritos de desesperación fui bajado y sentado en una silla, en donde volvieron a hacerme un montón de preguntas que yo respondía atontado. No puedo recordar qué me preguntaron y cuales fueron mis respuestas.

Por huellas que después descubrí en mi brazo, creo que esta tarde me fue inyectada alguna droga, pues también la lengua daba muestras de una intoxicación y en la piel de mi brazo había varias cicatrices de pinchazos, que supongo eran de inyecciones que me habían sido puestas. Los recuerdos de esta tarde son muy vagos, pero tengo la impresión de que alguien me hacía preguntas mientras yo luchaba por no perder el conocimiento. Más de eso no puedo recordar.

Al día siguiente, miércoles, me llevan a un interrogatorio, el más amable que he tenido en todo el tiempo que estuve preso en Brasil. Me interrogó una sola persona, quien me ofreció cigarrillos y me llamaba por mi primer nombre de una forma muy amable. Yo miraba con mucha desconfianza tantas atenciones, pues eran un contraste con las otras sesiones que hasta entonces había tenido.

Este policía me presenta una declaración escrita, sobre la base de lo que con él había declarado. Me permite que la corrija en algunos aspectos y luego de una plática amena sobre diversos aspectos inocentes se retira de la sala, dejándome allí hasta que soy retirado y trasladado a mi celda nuevamente; esta vez me preguntaron si quiero bañarme y respondo que sí. Me permiten un baño y luego soy encerrado.

El día jueves, cuando soy llevado a otro interrogatorio, se me dice que han descubierto una red de brasileños entrenados en Cuba, que sabían que varios cubanos estaban clandestinamente en Brasil; que por la forma de mi rostro y por el acento de voz ellos tenían la seguridad de que yo era cubano. Me muestran una serie de nombres de sacerdotes y de laicos a quienes tengo que complicar en esa red clandestina. Poco tiempo después me piden que les de los nombres y las direcciones de la gente de JEC, JUC, JOC, MIJARC, que yo conozco en Brasil. Les contesté que no sabía de nadie porque nunca había trabajado en Brasil y que esos movimientos católicos hacía bastante tiempo que habían dejado de existir en Brasil.

No soy golpeado en este interrogatorio y me llevan a la celda. Casi media hora después, llegan nuevamente por mí. Esta vez me muestran el cuaderno de notas que me habían capturado, las fotografías de mi madre, mis hermanos, y mi novia que yo portaba en mi billetera y empiezan a gritar insultos contra mi país, contra Cuba y contra mí, a quien acusaban de homosexual.

Soy amenazado que si no colaboro con ellos será entregado al “Escuadrón de la Muerte.” Al rato soy vendado; me trasladan a un automóvil, sentado con dos personas armadas que se sitúan cada uno a un lado. Creí que su amenaza sería cumplida y que en ese momento sería trasladado a un lugar solitario en el que sería asesinado. Estuvimos así casi una media hora; yo en una tensión nerviosa muy grande y bastante asustado; después uno de ellos me quita la venda y veo que han dejado de estar custodiándome y que una de las puertas del auto está semiabierta, como invitándome a huir. Miro alrededor y veo que

no hay guardias cerca; sospecho que lo que se busca es simular un intento de fuga para en cuanto salga del auto disparar, así que decido permanecer en él. Minutos más tarde soy bajado del auto y llevado a mi celda.

En mi celda la tensión nerviosa a que he estado sometido todos estos días empieza a mostrar sus efectos: empiezo a delirar y a hablar cosas yo sólo; pasaba de la risa histérica a la depresión más profunda; me sentía adolorido y con fiebre, sentía mucha sed y me parecía que necesitaba más agua.

El día viernes me llevan al baño y ordenan que me bañen muy bien. Me permiten afeitarme y que cepille los dientes, me dan un peine y un buen desayuno. Un médico me examina para si no tengo huellas visibles de los golpes recibidos. Empiezo a sospechar que pronto seré puesto en libertad y recobro la confianza y el ánimo. Cerca de las doce del mediodía, me llevan a un interrogatorio; me muestran varios negativos de fotografías y me preguntan si son más. Al examinarlas veo que son los negativos de los rollos que yo portaba y que habían sido tomadas en Chile; al mirar más detalladamente veo que entre las fotografías hay cinco o siete fotos que ellos presentan como prueba de que yo he estado en Brasil no pertenecen a mi cámara fotográfica. Ellos insisten las que estaban en mi cámara fotográfica y que las fotos de recintos militares son prueba de que soy cubano y que hago espionaje en Brasil; que ese delito se paga con la pena de fusilamiento y esa será la suerte que yo voy a correr; que los documentos de iglesia sólo son una cobertura que el comunismo internacional usa y que la Iglesia brasileña se presta a ese juego, por lo que también son traidores al Brasil. Después me dan una plática demagógica del oportunismo de la Iglesia, de los sacerdotes y obispos, además de explicarme el fenómeno económico de desarrollo en Brasil; las pretensiones imperialistas de este país y las prerrogativas de gendarmerie internacional que se autoproclama. Me aluden indirectamente a Chile y a Uruguay, países que, en nombre de la seguridad continental, ellos pueden intervenir militarmente.

Después de oír todo eso soy llevado nuevamente a mi celda; me vuelven a bañar y me quitan la ropa que tenía puesta, pues estaba bastante sucia y con muestras de los golpes recibidos y había bastantes manchas de sangre. Me dan ropa limpia; poco rato después llega un oficial, quien me pide firme una declaración en la cual digo que he sido bien tratado. Al sentarme en una silla un policía se pone a mis espaldas y coloca el cañón de su revólver en mi cabeza. En estas condiciones acepto firmar una declaración que ellos fotocopian y de la que me dan una copia. Esa copia está en poder de la CNBB (Conferencia Nacional de Obispos Brasileños).

Al rato, el mismo oficial me pregunta qué pienso hacer cuando salga libre. Le contesto que dirigirme inmediatamente a mi embajada para salir cuanto antes del Brasil. Él me dice que como soy miembro del CELAM lo mejor es que vaya donde las autoridades de la Iglesia brasileña; me entrega el teléfono y la dirección del Vicario General de San Pablo. Acepto la dirección y sospecho que algo se busca con esto. Creo que al llegar a dicha casa volvería a ser capturado y entonces involucrarían directamente al Sr. Vicario General como Tupamaro, armándole así un escándalo publicitario a la Iglesia brasileña.

Soy llevado en un auto oficial a la delegación de extranjería en donde legalizo mi situación y después de salir de allí, en vez de dirigirme a la casa del Vicario General, decido ir a la Curia metropolitana. En ese lugar no había nadie pues era ya de noche.

Para esos momentos yo estaba sumamente agotado y nervioso, además no hablo portugués y no conozco la ciudad de San Pablo. Detuve entonces a dos señoras a quienes me presenté como sacerdote que acababa de llegar a Brasil y que estaba perdido, que necesitaba ir a la catedral y que si ellas podían acompañarme; las dos señoras aceptaron y me acompañaron hasta allí. En la catedral me encontré con varios miembros de la CNBB y el Sr. Nuncio en una Misa.

Me presente ante ellos y expliqué a grandes rasgos lo peligroso de mi situación ya que para esta hora la policía estaría buscándome por toda la ciudad. Los efectos de los días pasados en prisión y del trato recibido empezaban a surtir sus efectos y me encontraba en un estado muy deplorable. Fui llevado rápidamente a una casa de un sacerdote, ya que ellos creían que lo que se buscaba era complicar a la Iglesia con las guerrillas para así buscar un enfrentamiento.

Como el Sr. arzobispo de San Pablo estaba fuera del país en este momento, yo conté todo al Vicario General de San Pablo, Monseñor Benedicto Ulhoa, con quien me entrevisté a las 11 de la noche en la casa de dicho sacerdote.

Él me informó que había recibido muchas llamadas telefónicas del Secretariado Latinoamericano en Montevideo y del Departamento de Laicos del CELAM preguntando por mi suerte.

Ante esas llamadas, él visitó personalmente los hospitales y las cárceles en donde negaron toda información sobre mi persona. El comando militar negó que yo estuviese detenido. En esos días llegó un muchacho brasileño que trabaja a tiempo completo para nuestro equipo, liberado en Brasil para el trabajo en pastoral del medio secundarista. Él venía de Montevideo y traía toda la información sobre mi situación. La policía militar negaba que yo estuviera detenido, pero gracias a que el rector del Seminario se había movido intensamente en mi búsqueda, se logró saber que yo estaba detenido en la policía política de San Pablo.

En la madrugada soy llevado por el Vicario y el rector del Seminario a un lugar seguro, en donde soy hecho pasar como seminarista. Allí logro descansar y soy visitado por un médico.

El día sábado viajó el Secretario de la Conferencia Episcopal del Brasil para enterarse personalmente de todo lo sucedido. En la reunión que tuvimos con él le conté todo lo sucedido, y las implicancias políticas que esto podía tener para la Iglesia de Brasil. Pido ayuda para salir inmediatamente del Brasil y trasladarme a Argentina. El Vicario General contó a D. Ivo que policías militares habían llegado el sábado por la mañana a la curia y que habían pedido se les diese los nombres de todos los sacerdotes de la diócesis, especialmente de los que trabajaban con jóvenes estudiantes, obreros y campesinos. La información les fue negada y ellos prefirieron retirarse. Además, hay noticias no confirmadas en la Curia de que hay varios jocositas detenidos, entre ellos dos asesores. La jerarquía cree que puede ser una escalada contra la Iglesia y ve conveniente que yo salga cuanto antes de Brasil, pues mi vida corre peligro si vuelvo a ser capturado. Yo cuento a los obispos que temo por la suerte de dos muchachos brasileños ya que creo que en las torturas a que fui sometido di los nombres. El día martes, 7 de diciembre, salgo de Brasil rumbo a Argentina.

## VITA

### SANDRA LONDONO-ARDILA

Born, Bogotá, Colombia

- 1996-2002      B.A., Anthropology  
Universidad Nacional de Colombia  
Bogotá, Colombia
- 2003-2005      Academic Assistant  
Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá.
- 2006-2007      Lecturer  
Universidad Pedagógica Nacional  
Boyacá, Colombia.
- 2007-2010      M.A., Education  
Universidad Pedagógica Nacional  
Bogotá, Colombia
- 2007-2014      Assistant Professor  
Universidad Pedagógica Nacional  
Bogotá, Colombia
- 2014-2016      M.A., History  
Florida International University, Florida
- Teaching Assistant  
Florida International University, Florida
- 2016-2022      Ph.D., History  
Florida International University, Florida
- 2016-2019      Teaching Assistant  
Florida International University, Florida
- 2019              University Graduate School Fellow  
Florida International University, Florida
- 2019-2020      Teaching Assistant  
Florida International University, Florida
- 2021-2022      University Graduate School Fellow  
Florida International University, Florida

## PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

2022. "Student Remembrances: Catholic Activism and the Student Movement in 20th century Latin America," *Graduate Student Conference*, Department of History, Florida International University, 2022.

2021. "Catholicism and Modernization in Colombia. 'Acción Cultural Popular' and the rise of a Centrist-Catholicism, 1947-1962." In Biney, Moses O., Kenneth N. Ngwa, and Raimundo C. Barreto Jr. *World Christianity, Urbanization, and Identity*. World Christianity and Public Religion Series, Vol. 3. Fortress Press.

2021. "Catholicism and Modernization in Colombia." Brazilian book launch of *World Christianity, Urbanization and Identity*. Faculdade Unida de Vitoria (UNIDA), Brazil.

2020. "Liberating 'La Patria Grande': Progressive Catholic students in 1960s and 1970s Latin America" *Tinker Andes Series-LACC*. Florida International University.

2019. "Consciousness-raising and Liberation: The Latin American Progressive-Catholic Student Movements and the Regional Version of the Review of Life Method (1955–1968)." *Journal of World Christianity* 9, no. 2 (2019): 151-70.

2019. Sandra Londono-Ardila and Ana Maria Bidegain "Revisiting the Liberation Utopia in Latin America—Socio-ecclesial Mobilization, Ecumenism, and Theological Renewal," Introduction. *The Journal of World Christianity*, Special Issue: Volume 9, Number 2, 2019, Pennsylvania State University Press.

2018. "The Socio-Religious Mobilization of the Latin American Laity and the Theological Renewal of Medellin," *American Academy of Religion Annual Conference*, Denver, CO.

2017. "The Specialized Catholic Action and the Latin American consciousness-raising process," *Latin American Socio-Ecclesial Liberation Movements: History and Continuity, International Symposium*, Florida International University.

2015. "The search for a Christian Society: 'Acción Cultural Popular' and Colombian Cultural Modernization 1947-1958." Graduate Student Conference, Department of History, Florida International University.

2014. Londono-Ardila, Sandra and Mejia-Cruz Javier *El Discurso de una Etica Católica Modernizada: El Caso del Programa Acción Cultural Popular, 1947-1958*. Red Iberoamericana de Educación—Redipe, Bogota.

2011. Londono-Ardila, Sandra and Mejia-Cruz Javier "Ocupación simbólica y subjetivación en el caso del programa Acción Cultural Popular 1947-1958." *Magistro* 5, no. 10 (2011): 59-72.