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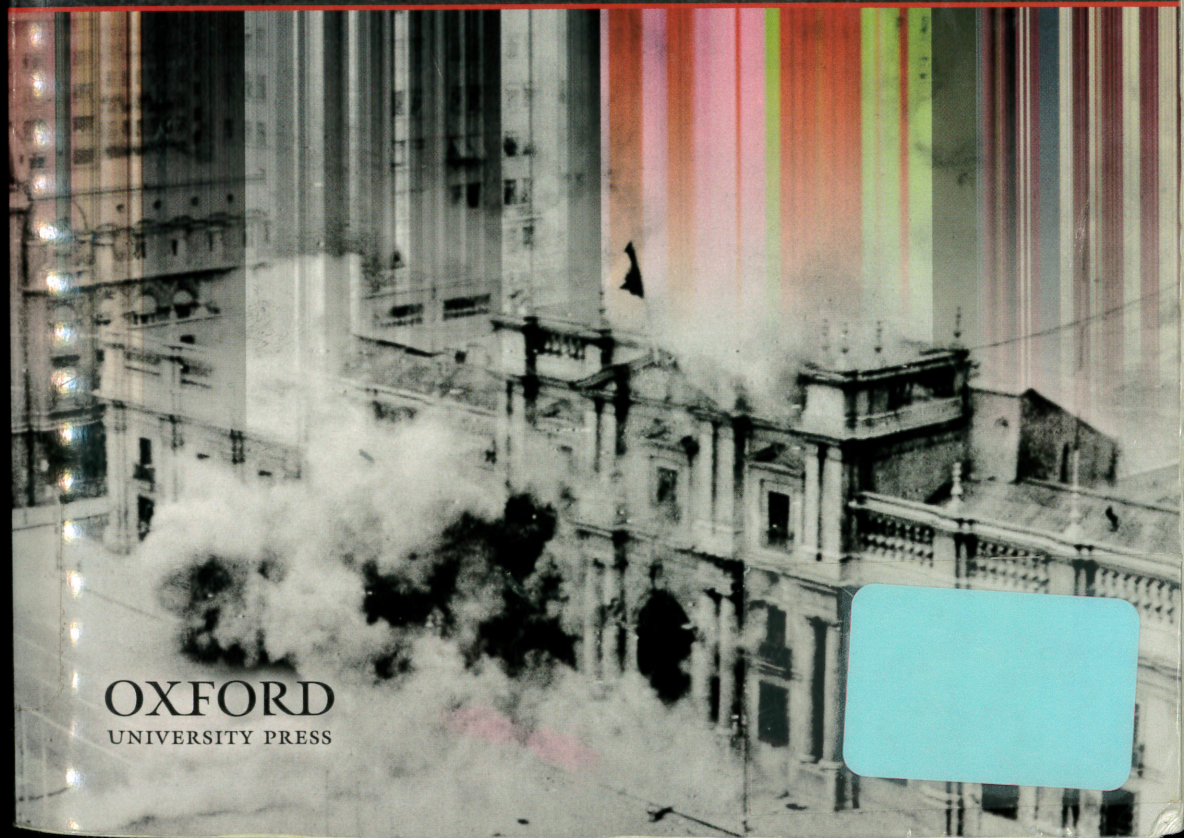
MODERN LATIN AMERICA

SEVENTH EDITION

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comparative analysis in such a way as to illuminate differences and similarities among countries covered in this book. Our *substantive* intent has been to support the claim that, over time, changes in social structures—and in social coalitions—can shed significant light on patterns of political change in Latin America.

We wish to emphasize that this perspective illustrates only one approach to comparative historical analysis. There are many other ways of carrying out this kind of exercise. Political scientists have focused on the importance of formal (and informal) institutions, especially electoral institutions. Gender specialists have demonstrated the utility of comparing societies according to their treatment of women and families. Sociologists and anthropologists have analyzed comparative dimensions of social movements and grassroots organizations. Practitioners of cultural studies have revealed the contours of ideology and the subtle interplay among literature, the arts, and social formations. All such perspectives can be extremely useful.

Our basic point is modest: comparative historical analysis is feasible, constructive, and enlightening. It is more art than science. At the same time, it can illuminate whatever may be “unique” about specific societies, and it can shed light on patterns of cause and effect. That conviction has established a foundation for this book.



Culture and Society

Richness, texture, and complexity are the hallmarks of Latin American cultural expressions. These features are deeply rooted in the region's past. The conquering Spaniards and Portuguese brought with them Iberian notions of culture and considered them to be superior to indigenous ways. Similarly, they held African religions and cultures to be inferior to their own. Throughout the colonial period, elite society looked to European literature, poetry, art, music, and theater as the standard for propriety, suitability, and creativity. This European-oriented world disdained the lower classes. At the same time, Indian societies survived and retained relative autonomy as they concurrently interacted with the Spaniards and Portuguese. Likewise, slaves maintained African traditions of religion, belief, customs, and language even as they learned to cope with their masters and their new environment.

Parallel cultures continued, yet over time mixture and hybridity intensified. The interactions among different peoples engendered new cultural forms that evolved and became distinct from their origins. Slaves and freed people of African descent created new rhythmic and musical forms and alternative ways of expressing their religious beliefs. They borrowed from indigenous and European traditions as well. Indians acculturated to Spanish ways, transforming them as they adapted. Those of European background also modified their customs and culture. Born in the Americas, they eventually saw themselves as fundamentally distinct from those arriving from Iberia.

On the eve of independence, only a small percentage of the population of Latin America was literate. Very few women had access to the written word. In the Spanish colonies, the sons of the elites and a scattering of other talented males attended universities founded in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (e.g., in Mexico City, Lima, Bogotá, and Guatemala), but most received education from private tutors. Brazilians had to cross the Atlantic in order to attend university in Coimbra, Portugal, or in other European cities. Only in 1808 when the Portuguese

royal court moved to Rio de Janeiro did the country acquire a printing press. It took another decade for universities to be established within Brazil.

Literary works, essays, and even newspapers circulated among a small segment of society, largely within urban settings. Many aspiring authors supported themselves as journalists, a tradition that would continue throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These literary venues and cultural exchanges merely reinforced a closed masculine world of intellectuals and *letrados* (men of letters) from the middle sectors or upper echelons of society, although by the mid-nineteenth century, some women participated in these circles. Thus, exemplary novels, poetry, and essays that have come to represent the classical canon of Latin American culture reflect only one segment of society and one kind of cultural production. Other forms, produced by the lower classes, remained vital to everyday life, but have been less registered and preserved.

What then has been unique about how Latin Americans have described themselves and their world through the written word, art, song, and performance? How has that changed in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries with film, radio, television, and the Internet? Moreover, how has Latin American culture been shaped by the history of a given country, region, or the continent as a whole?

FROM COLONIES TO NATIONS

In the late eighteenth century, liberal ideas derived from the European and American Enlightenment circulated in the Spanish and Portuguese empires. At times, they arrived in books and pamphlets by authors such as Voltaire, Rousseau, Jefferson, and Diderot that were smuggled into the colonies. Often they entered with the sons of the privileged few when returning from study or travel abroad. These ideas not only inspired the independence movement, but also affected architecture and literature. Architects abandoned the majestic baroque and more ornamental rococo styles when designing churches and public buildings, and constructed edifices in sharper and cleaner neoclassical styles. Inspired by the American and French revolutions, humanist thinkers penned essays and articles criticizing colonial institutions and promoting freedom and nationalism. For many, the grandeur and the potential greatness of the continent became a theme that justified a break with the old and an embrace of the new.

As the Spanish empire crumbled, patriotic poetry helped consolidate new national identities. Among the poets of the period was José Joaquín de Olmedo (1780–1847), the son of a Spanish captain and an Ecuadorian mother, who joined others in declaring the city of Guayaquil independent from Spain in 1820. His most well-known poem, *La victoria de Junín: Canto a Bolívar* (Victory at Junín: Song to Bolívar), praises the Liberator for his heroism on the battleground and legitimizes the independence movement by declaring its warriors to be the rightful heirs to the Incas.

Already a new theme had emerged. For some writers, claims to authority, legitimacy, and tradition came from the indigenous past rather than a European

heritage. Patriotic poetry constructed many of its metaphors around the near-divine power of its independence leaders whose bellicose ways were deeply rooted in the colonial and pre-Conquest past. Yet they promised an enlightened future for the new nations rising out of the bloody battles for independence.

The novel offered a new form for social criticism of the old and new orders. *El periquillo sarniento* (The Mangy Parrot), written in 1816 by Mexican journalist and author José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi (1776–1827), exemplifies this genre. Considered by many as Latin America's first novel, it is a picaresque tale of the son of a creole family from Mexico City who lives a wild and carefree life. This genre provided an opportunity for Fernández de Lizardi to paint a playful picture of his milieu and satirize all social classes during this transitional moment from colony to independence.

A number of remarkable polymaths contributed to the founding of the new nations of Latin America. Especially outstanding among them was Andrés Bello (1781–1865), a native of Caracas and a lawyer by training, who accompanied the German naturalist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt on part of his scientific expedition of South America in 1800. He also served for a short time as Simón Bolívar's tutor. After serving as a diplomat for the Venezuelan republic, he moved to Chile where he became the first rector of the University of Chile. Bello authored the 1852 Civil Code of Chile that borrowed from Napoleonic law. It was later adopted by Colombia and Ecuador. His lengthy epic poem *Silva a la agricultura de la zona tórrida* (Agriculture of the Torrid Zone, 1826), an ode to tropical products of a lush and bountiful continent, is considered a foundational work for Latin American literature. Bello represented the enthusiasm of the founding generation of the new republics that strongly desired to create a unique literature with its own cultural and intellectual traditions.

Romanticism, Indians, and Slaves

Turmoil and warring factions shaped political events from the 1820s to the 1850s in most countries as Liberals and Conservatives fought for hegemony and battling warriors laid their claims to the reins of power. Defining the nature of the nations carved out of the Spanish empire became a preoccupation of humanists and writers throughout the period. In rejecting the formalism of neoclassicism, a rising generation of intellectuals attempted to distinguish themselves from Europe. Yet in a pattern that would repeat itself throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, they appropriated European trends and adapted and transformed them on American soil.

In the wake of independence, romanticism became the vehicle for defining these new countries. Enthusiastic idealism about the new nations' potential for wealth and prosperity drove this literary current. The natural riches of the land and the force of its people promised greatness. Among the first promoters of romanticism in South America was Esteban Echeverría (1805–51), an Argentine poet and writer. Having lived in Paris during the zenith of the French romantic movement, he returned to Buenos Aires intent

on forging a national literature reflective of its natural surroundings and its local social reality. This did not mean turning his back on Europe, as Echeverría and many other nineteenth-century intellectuals considered the Old World to be a positive influence on the backward, primitive, and violent nature of America. His most famous work, *El matadero* (The Slaughterhouse, 1839), looks at the clashes between what he considered the reactionary and treacherous *caudillos*, such as Juan Manuel de Rosas. For Echeverría, enlightened Europeanized intellectuals were the chosen ones who could transmit the culture that was necessary to civilize the emergent nation.

In this regard, Echeverría's work stood as a precursor to that of Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811–88), the renowned writer, journalist, and president of Argentina, whose battles against Rosas forced him into Chilean exile. There he wrote *Facundo: Civilización e Barbarie* (Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism), that attacks Rosas for his authoritarian rule. For Sarmiento, the rural *gaucho* represented a barrier to the country's potential. Instead he favored the city where institutions of education, learning, and refinement could transform the nation's backwardness. An underlying premise of Sarmiento's work was that European immigration would solve Argentina's cultural and demographic deficiencies. Ironically, while deriding the *gaucho* for his supposed negative influences on the country, Sarmiento ended up placing this figure at the center of all discussions about the nature of the country and its people. While in Chile, Sarmiento was responsible for establishing the first school for teachers in Latin America. As president of Argentina (1868–74), he promoted the expansion of public education as the path to the country's modernization.

Not all mid-nineteenth century Argentine writers rejected the *gaucho* as a backward pull on society. In 1872, José Hernández (1834–86) penned an epic poem *Martín Fierro* that was an immediate popular success. It presents the story of a poor Argentine cowboy and his hard life on the *pampas* (grassy plains). In offering a romanticized tale of a gaucho, Hernández, who opposed Sarmiento's immigration proposals, presented this pastoral character as the "authentic" representative of Argentine people. For Hernández, the gaucho had guaranteed the country's independence and ensured its vitality. His poetic homage to the gaucho is in part a lament over the impending disappearance of this noble figure of the pampas. This tension between the rural and urban continued throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Argentine nationalists would return to the image of the gaucho as a national symbol on numerous occasions to counter what were considered the corrupting influences of the Europeanized urban world.

While residents of the Río de la Plata region debated the role of the gaucho in Argentine's future, Brazilian romanticists faced different dilemmas. The empire's political stability largely relied on the iron fist of the generals who had crushed multiple regional rebellions, including a ten-year revolt of gauchos in the country's south. For this reason, and contrary to Argentina, Brazilian gauchos were utterly disqualified from becoming a symbol of the nation as a whole.

Instead, romantic writers nostalgically turned to the figure of the Brazilian Indian. By the mid-nineteenth century, the indigenous people of Brazil had been exterminated, assimilated, or pushed into the backlands. Barely visible as a sector of society, they became an essential part of a pure and simple foundational myth of the Brazilian nation.

Two romantic writers are emblematic of what became known as the Indianist movement. One was Antônio Gonçalves Dias (1823–64), who tragically died in a shipwreck before completing the epic poem *Os Timbiras* (The Timbiras, 1857). Dias believed that the Portuguese had unjustly conquered the country and wrongly decimated the indigenous population. His work laments this loss. To preserve the language of the people who had once greeted Portuguese sailors with open arms, Dias compiled a dictionary of the Tupi language in 1858. While traveling in Europe under the patronage of the imperial government with the mission of studying educational institutions, he also composed poetry that evokes his deep sense of longing for his native land. Two small passages of the poem *Canção do Exílio* (Song of Exile, 1843) are incorporated into the national anthem and express intense pride in the nature and beauty of Brazil.

José de Alencar (1829–77) was perhaps the mostly widely read author of the Indianist movement. He wrote a trilogy of novels that portray highly romanticized relations between Portuguese men and indigenous women. *Iracema* (1865), for example, is set in the northeastern state of Ceará and tells the story of the love between Martim, a white-skinned Portuguese man, and Iracema, a "honey-lipped virgin." Employing familiar romanticist tropes, Alencar creates a frustrated love affair that represents the tensions between nature and civilization. Iracema (an anagram for America) is much like the noble (and innocent) savage, who carries her lover's child but tragically dies after giving birth. Symbolically, her son is the new Brazilian nation, a mixture of Portuguese and Indian. Brazilian-born classical composer Carlos Gomes (1836–96) used this same theme in his music. His 1870s opera *Il Guarany* (The Guarani) that premiered at La Scala Theater in Milan, Italy, borrows from another volume of Alencar's indigenous trilogy. It is the only Brazilian opera that has ever won international acclaim.

Using Indians to personify the nation and portray a romantic past was possible because they were essentially invisible in nineteenth-century Brazil. Slaves from Africa were not. Their labor in the coffee plantations of São Paulo, in the sugarcane mills of Pernambuco, and in the cotton fields of Maranhão provided planters, merchants, and other members of the elite with means for accumulating significant wealth. Afro-Brazilians worked in every sector of the economy. They were considered essential for national prosperity. Because so many middle- and upper-class Brazilians owned slaves, the idea of emancipation was slow to gain support throughout society.

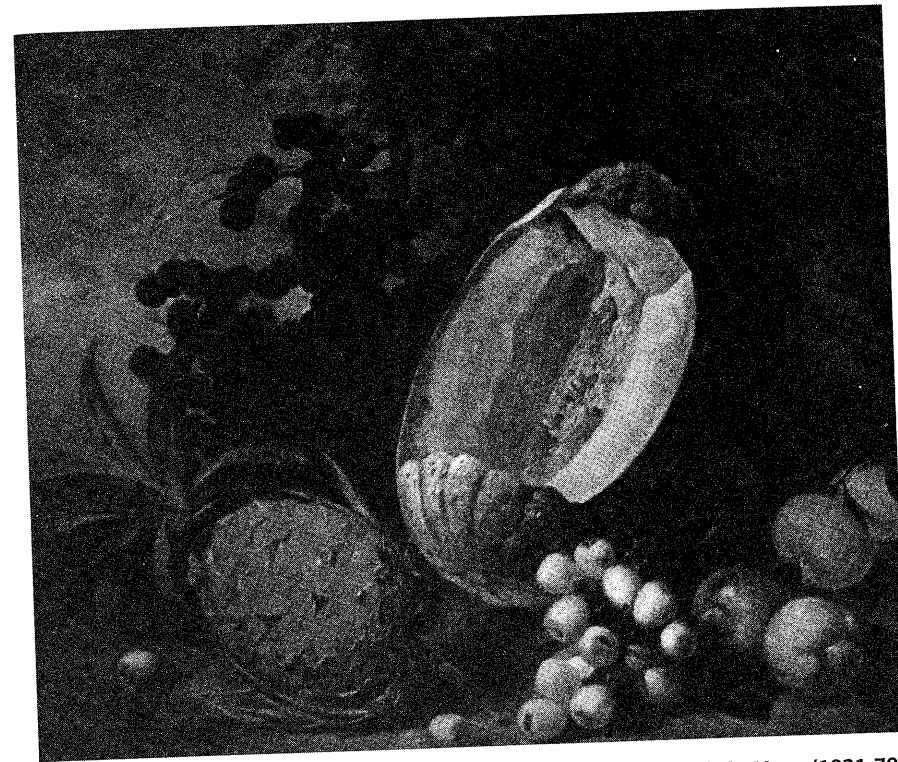
Nevertheless, the abolitionist movement produced a poet of great import. Antônio de Castro Alves (1847–71) wrote his first poems while a law student.

As the antislavery crusade gained momentum, he read his work aloud in public events that celebrated the emancipation of individual slaves and pushed for the end of the institution. Among his most famous poems is *O navio negreiro* (The Slave Ship, 1869) that depicts the horrific conditions facing Africans as they crossed the Atlantic, destined for hard life in Brazil.

Cuba, like Brazil, ended slavery only in the 1880s. Among the Cuban writers who used their pen to criticize the institution was Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda (1814–73), an upper-class woman, whose first novel *Sab* (1841), sparked a controversy in Cuba and Spain for its condemnation of slavery. Her positive portrayal of the morally superior slave Sab in comparison to his white owners, as well as her criticism of the institution of marriage, scandalized Cuban elite society. The Spanish government promptly banned the book. The next year, her novel *Dos mujeres* (Two Women) again criticized marriage and portrayed adultery in a positive light. Both themes mirrored Avellaneda's own personal, free-spirited lifestyle. She lived in Spain for most of her adult years and audaciously put herself forward as a candidate for membership in the Spanish Royal Academy, but she was barred from admittance because of her gender. Avellaneda has come to be seen as a precursor for women who would become important writers in the twentieth century.

Art took on new importance in the nineteenth century as the Spanish republics and imperial Brazil established state-financed academies. These institutions usually invited art instructors from Europe to train their students. They encouraged art with national themes and honored talented artists with prizes and trips to Europe in order to continue their studies. Artists produced epic paintings that portrayed great historic moments in the young nations' histories. Wall-sized canvases depicted independence figures mounted on horses with their swords drawn declaring independence or calling their troops to defeat the Spaniards. (See the depiction of the "Grito de Ipiranga" in Chapter 11 on Brazil.) Framing the heroes of independence were tangled bodies of soldiers of all colors, thrusting themselves into battle.

Allegorical paintings were also popular. Many drew on the Indianist literature and represented the sad tales of Indians' tragic encounters with Europeans. Landscape artists captured the majestic beauty of the Andes and the deep, dark undergrowth of the thick tropical rainforests. Still-life paintings depicted the abundance of nature's products spilling out of cornucopias. Most of these representations hung in official buildings or in the homes of the upper echelons of society. Although the market for such art was small, the state and elites provided enough demand to allow talented artists to survive. At the same time, the ongoing confrontations between Liberals and Conservatives over the separation of church and state weakened large-scale religious support of the arts. Patronage became decentralized and depended on local wealthy families to finance work usually executed by artists and architects not trained in the new national academies. Folk artists also produced colorful statues of saints as part of ongoing popular religiosity. These images were important in religious processions and in local celebrations.



A still-life painting entitled *Melon and Pineapple* by Agostino José da Mota (1821–78) portrays the bountiful natural riches of Brazil.

LITERATURE, ART, AND NEW IDEAS IN A WORLD ECONOMY

By the 1870s, political stability, increased urbanization, and the beginning of a wave of European immigration to parts of Latin America transformed the cultural landscape. Steamships and transatlantic cable brought news, people, and the latest cultural trends to Latin America and the Caribbean at an accelerated pace. The bourgeoisies that were growing wealthy from the boom cycles of export economies insisted that their major cities imitate those of Europe. With revenue increasing, they financed the renovation of their capitals, constructing beautiful Belle Époque buildings and wide avenues following contemporary European styles. By the turn of the twentieth century, Buenos Aires boasted the luxurious Teatro Colón opera house. The rubber barons and their wives of Manaus attended Italian operas at the Teatro Amazonas in the sweltering tropical heat while dressed in European frock coats and heavy velvets and silks. An internationally acclaimed pianist inaugurated the Teatro Nacional Sucre in Quito, Ecuador. The famous French stage actress Sarah Bernhardt played to packed audiences in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, and Santiago on her off-season South American tours. She declaimed in French, and her audience understood every word. French was the elite's second language and signaled worldliness, sophistication, and linkages to the Old World.

Journalists, writers, and intellectuals also looked to Europe to seek ideas about how their countries could modernize and adapt to a changing international economic order. The philosophy of positivism seemed to offer an answer. It gave those anxious to find ways to cast off colonial legacies an ideological justification for wedding their countries' economies to Europe and the United States. Developed by the French thinker Auguste Comte (1798–1857), positivism outlined the history of human development in three stages. Following superstition and metaphysics, the third and culminating stage embraced science and technology. Reason, order, and progress would open the path to evolution and prosperity. Modern roads and bridges, railroads and steamships, telegraphs and other technology improved countries' infrastructures and increased production for the export market. These advances created a sense that Latin America had the potential of "catching up" with Europe. Positivism offered a scientifically based formula for practical success.

The philosophy had its greatest impact in Brazil, Chile, and Mexico, although proponents in each country applied the ideas surrounding positivism in quite different ways. In imperial Brazil, positivism merged with republican sentiments, as figures such as Benjamin Constant of the Military Academy promoted the idea that the empire had become an impediment to progress and needed to be dissolved. The Brazilian positivists won support among sectors of the army, journalists, and young intellectuals. Adherents of the philosophy were influential figures leading up to and immediately after the overthrow of Emperor Pedro II in 1889. And as a result, the positivist motto, Order and Progress, even today appears on the Brazilian flag.

In Chile, positivist ideas permeated sectors of the Radical Party through Valentín Letelier (1852–1919), who was also the rector of the National University. Mexican positivism had a more lasting influence. In 1867 President Benito Juárez appointed Gabino Barreda (1818–81) to reorganize the National Preparatory School. He did so following Comte's philosophical principles. Positivist influences reached into the 1890s when a group of advisers to President Porfirio Díaz, known as the *científicos*, shaped the finances and planning of the government. They emphasized order within society as an important means of ensuring the political stability that in turn could guarantee economic progress. In doing so, the Mexican positivists aligned themselves with an authoritarian regime. They also adapted ideas that regarded Indians as inferior to Europeans. In short order, the Mexican Revolution would overturn these racist assumptions.

Realism and Naturalism

At the same time that positivism was gaining widespread influence, romanticism yielded to realism and naturalism in literary circles. Again European (especially French) trends inspired Latin American authors, as realist writers attempted to describe the "authentic" world that they inhabited. Peruvian writer Clorinda Matto de Turner (1852–1909) is considered a pioneer of realism for her portrayals of Andean society. Born in Cuzco, Peru, the former Incan capital, she became interested in colonial and Incan history and depicted the indigenous characters in her work in a positive light. Matto learned Quechua as part of her desire to understand and promote

indigenous culture. In 1889 she published *Aves sin nido* (Birds without a Nest) that shows how Europeans stripped indigenous people of their rights, and how self-indulgent priests mistreated and exploited them. The novel also tells the story of a love affair between a white man and an indigenous woman.

Although this type of liaison might have been acceptable in mid-nineteenth-century Brazil, where middle and upper classes in urban centers had essentially no contact with indigenous people, social conventions were quite different in Peru. Indians and *mestizos* made up the vast majority of the population, and racist and hierarchical norms prevailed. In the context of a society where those of Indian and European descent lived side by side, proper society considered such romantic encounters as absolutely scandalous. In addition to her forward-thinking views about indigenous peoples, Matto, like Avellaneda, was a champion of greater education for women.

Naturalism emerged as an outgrowth of realism. Instead of simply describing reality in poetry or prose, naturalists tried to explain it "scientifically." Naturalism gained popularity especially among intellectuals influenced by social Darwinism. This adaption of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution considered that heredity and social environment influenced an individual's character. In many cases, an overwhelming pessimism is embedded in naturalism as social conditions and one's station in life inevitably produce grim outcomes.

A prominent representative of this literary trend, Balomero Lillo (1867–1903) grew up in the northern mining region of Chile. He was appalled by the harsh labor conditions of the mineworkers. His writing was an attempt to expose their plight to a larger public, engender sympathy, and improve their situation. In his short stories, collected in the book *Sub terra* (Underground, 1904), Lillo depicted miners trapped by their destiny and forced to live dreary lives using European machinery to provide Chilean minerals for an international market.

Adolfo Caminha (1867–97), a Brazilian naturalist, shocked the reading public in 1894 with his novel *O Bom Crioulo* (translated as *The Black Man and the Cabin Boy*). Caminha chose a black sailor to be the protagonist of his story, a literary choice that was uncommon at the time. He developed the tragic tale of the sailor's love for a pure and innocent blond cabin boy. Although Caminha saw the central character's homosexuality as a perverse trait, the novel remains a pioneering work for its bold subject matter.

A more immediately influential naturalist Brazilian author was Euclides da Cunha (1866–1909), a young journalist and army engineer. In 1897, he accompanied the federal army to repress the inhabitants of Canudos, a rural village in northeastern Brazil, that was led by Antonio Conselheiro, a charismatic itinerant preacher. Da Cunha documented the army's campaign in the 1902 book *Os Sertões* (published in English as *Rebellion in the Backlands*). He vividly describes the arid, harsh region and makes the naturalist argument that the backwardness of the people is environmentally determined, while the coast of Brazil is a "chain of civilizations." Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa (b. 1936) retells the story of Canudos in his beautifully written novel *La guerra del fin del mundo* (The War at the End of the World, 1984).

One literary figure towered over all other Brazilian romanticists, realists, and naturalists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis (1839–1908) is universally considered Brazil's greatest writer and one of the most important in Latin America of all times. Born to the son of slaves and a Portuguese washerwoman, in the 1880s he began to write in a narrative manner unlike that of any of his contemporaries. His first novel in this new style is *Memórias póstumas de Brás Cubas* (The Posthumous Memories of Brás Cubas, 1881). Machado de Assis' short stories and novels combine elements of realism and surrealism along with a sharp, critical eye to the political, social, and economic dysfunctions of late nineteenth-century Brazilian society. His concise and exact style and carefully crafted studies of the psychological dimension of human interactions have rendered his work unique in Brazilian literature.

Modernism

At the end of the nineteenth century, Rubén Darío (1867–1916), a Nicaraguan poet, inaugurated a literary movement known as modernism. Enriching poetry and prose through musically constructed verse with inventive imagery and inspired symbolism, Darío catapulted to Latin American fame at age twenty-one with his collection *Azul* (Blue, 1888). A plethora of newspapers published throughout the continent at the turn of the twentieth century expanded readership for innovative cultural developments, and Darío had an immediate impact everywhere. His work was cosmopolitan in its approach to literary dialogues. It also inverted normal channels of influences between Europe and Latin America. Unlike previous literary and artistic styles, Latin American modernism originated on the American continent and then moved eastward across the Atlantic to Spain and other parts of Europe. Modernism also reflected a confidence among new generations of authors about the intrinsic value of their work in relationship to European authors. One literary critic has said, "Faced with any poem written in Spanish, one can state precisely whether it was written before or after Darío."

Another self-confident titan of the modernism movement was Cuban poet and independence leader José Martí (1853–95). His political activism led him to spend most of his life in exile, where he supported himself as a journalist. Like Darío, Martí consciously tried to innovate the Spanish language in his poetry, essays, and journalistic articles. His passionate promotion of the ideal of Cuban independence, especially his efforts to unify the Cuban émigré community, played a decisive role in gathering support for the independence cause. Unfortunately, he died in an attempted invasion of the island in 1895 before his dream could be achieved.

After U.S. and Cuban forces defeated Spain in 1898, and Theodore Roosevelt began meddling in Panama and elsewhere in Central America, Rubén Darío came to distrust Washington's intentions in the region. His collection of poems, *Cantos de vida e esperanza* (Songs of Life and Hope, 1905), expressed his deep concern that the Colossus of the North might end up dominating Latin America.

The growing influence of the United States in the Western Hemisphere alarmed other intellectuals as well. In 1900, Uruguayan essayist José Enrique Rodó

(1872–1917) wrote an essay entitled *Ariel*, inspired by Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*. In Rodó's essay, Ariel represents Latin America and Caliban represents North America. Rodó criticized what he considered to be the crass utilitarianism of a U.S. culture that emphasized specialization and materialism as the means to develop society. Rodó feared that the United States wanted to impose its culture on other parts of the world. He warned against a tendency for Latin Americans to be uncritically attracted to North America culture, wealth, and rising power. To counter this threat, he called on Latin American youth to seek inspiration in a broad classical education. Rodó's essay had a lasting effect on intellectuals throughout Latin America. It encouraged the nationalist and regionalist sentiment of those who were uneasy with the emergent power of the United States in the early twentieth century.

Although representative of a later generation of modernist writers, Chilean poet, educator, and feminist Gabriela Mistral (1889–1957) gained international appreciation for her work by being the first Latin American to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1945. Recognized nationally in Chile for the collection *Sonetos de la muerte* (Sonnets of Death, 1914), she continued her poetry while working first as a primary school teacher and then as the director of Santiago's newest and most prestigious public school for girls. A second collection called *Desolación* (Desolation, 1922) won her international acclaim. That same year she left Chile to assist in the development of educational reforms taking place in Mexico under the guidance of Minister of Education José Vasconcelos. She later taught in the United States, and worked as a diplomat and cultural ambassador for Chile.

Mistral's early career as a primary school teacher started her on parallel paths as an internationally celebrated poet and educational reformer. Her experiences teaching the rudiments of literacy to young children in a small town in Chile were not unlike the careers of thousands of other lower- and middle-class women who found that the teaching profession offered possibilities of economic independence. Many became important founders and leaders in the early Latin American feminist and suffragist movements. They were joined by other women from both middle sectors and elite backgrounds in initiating a discussion about the role of women in Latin American society.

By the 1850s, these women began producing newspapers in Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, and Mexico, among other countries. These publications were dedicated to issues related to women in politics, education, and the public sphere. The movement quickly spread as debates about the emancipation of women, suffrage, their legal status, marriage, and the family attracted support from skilled workers, immigrants, government employees, and schoolteachers. Numerous congresses held around the turn of the century discussed possible paths toward greater rights. They usually became sharply divided along political lines or over divergent strategies for achieving their goals. Although women writers such as Avellaneda, Matto, and Mistral were not leaders of these movements, their published works disseminated feminist ideas and raised the social profiles of women throughout Latin America.

NATIONALISM, RADICAL POLITICS, AND TURBULENT TIMES

The first two decades of the twentieth century were times of great social upheaval around the world. International events reverberated throughout the continent: the War of 1898 in Cuba, the Mexican Revolution, World War I, the Russian Revolution, and the student reform movement of Córdoba, Argentina. In some ways, Rodó's call for an emphasis on classical education as a means of counterbalancing the rise of the United States in the region was an attempt to return to a nostalgic past. Instead, strong nationalist sentiments emerged to counter the giant to the north. They were particularly strong in Mexico where a social and political revolution upset traditional hierarchies. No longer were isolated individuals questioning the mistreatment of the indigenous population and the nation's underclasses. A new generation of Mexican intellectuals began to rethink their relationship to their country and its people. They produced new forms of art, literature, poetry, music, and theater that reflected the complexity and diversity of their nation.

Throughout Latin America, a flood of new political ideas took hold. Anarchism, socialism, and communism, in some places brought by European immigrants seeking better opportunities in the new world, seemed to offer solutions to pressing social problems. Proponents of these radical ideas encouraged mutual-aid associations, unions, strikes, and hopes of revolutionary change. The fast-paced shifts in European experimentalism also had an impact in Latin America as artists and writers adopted and adapted new trends from Europe. They included cubism, futurism, and surrealism. For these writers, modernist poetry seemed too old-fashioned, too preoccupied with aesthetics, truth, and beauty. Free verse, the subconscious, and disorderly forms of expression shaped the new poetic styles. A world war that had decimated Europe and left economic chaos and the rise of fascism in its wake polarized debate among intellectuals, as many moved radically to the left. For some, revolution seemed to offer the solution to social and economic problems.

The term *vanguardism* captured the concept of experimentation that was at the core of the cultural movements in the early twentieth century. Writers and artists saw themselves in the forefront. They wanted to take Latin American cultural production into uncharted terrains. Poets considered Rubén Darío's work overly embellished and lacking in substance. They chose to employ metaphors instead of allusion and eliminate what they considered useless words and unnecessary rhymes. They experimented with original layouts of the text of written poetry as a way of fusing it with visual arts.

Poets tested the limits of public acceptance for the themes in their work. Pablo Neruda (1904–73), a young Chilean poet, produced a collection of erotically charged love poems, *Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada* (Twenty Poems of Love and a Song of Despair, 1924) that scandalized some but became his most popular book. Like many intellectuals of his generation, Neruda joined the Communist Party in the 1930s, and his poetry assumed a political and overtly Marxist content. Similarly, Nicolás Guillén (1902–89), an Afro-Cuban journalist and writer, joined the communist movement in the 1930s. Guillén's early poetry experimented with Afro-Caribbean forms and rhythms, and he became best known for *poesía negra* (black poetry).

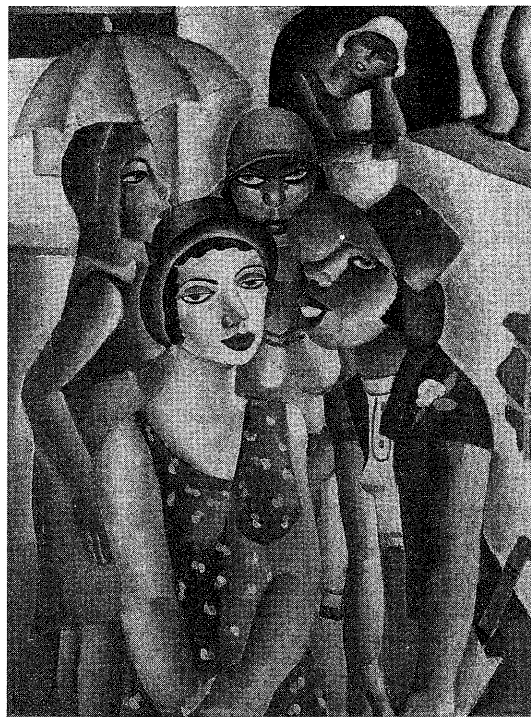
Since the nineteenth century, Buenos Aires had been a major center of literary production, but in the 1930s it took on a new importance under the guidance of Victoria Ocampo (1890–1979), a pioneer among women writers in Argentina. Born into a wealthy nineteenth-century aristocratic family, Ocampo became a major patroness of literature and culture. In 1931 she founded the cultural review *Sur*, with the help of Eduardo Mallea (1903–82), an Argentine, and Waldo Frank (1889–1967), an American literary figure. *Sur* quickly became the best-known literary journal in Latin America. A parallel publishing house, also named *Sur*, was created, thanks to Ocampo's personal funding. In both enterprises she exercised a firm managerial hand, making literary quality, not ideology, her prime requirement. *Sur* became an important outlet for the translated editions of such foreign writers as André Gide, T. S. Eliot, and Albert Camus. It also offered a forum for intense literary and cultural debates in which intellectuals from all over Latin America participated.

Brazilian Modernism

Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo became other significant centers for experimentation, as a dynamic new cultural movement emerged in Brazil in the 1920s and 1930s. Known as modernism (not to be confused with the early modernist poetry movement of Spanish America), its proponents sought to rejuvenate Brazilian culture. The movement's adherents rejected what they considered to be stale, formal European cultural traditions embraced by the coffee barons that ruled high society in São Paulo, the country's most important metropolis. In 1922, during the centennial celebration of Brazilian independence, a group of young, mostly wealthy, bohemian artists and writers produced an event known as the Modern Art Week at the elegant Municipal Theater. It included art exhibits, lectures, and poetry readings. It was designed to challenge the cultural establishment that still defended nineteenth-century traditional styles. Heitor Villa Lobos (1887–1959) conducted his music at the Modern Art Week as well. Combining classical styles with popular folk music and legends, his work was an effort to compose music that conveyed unique national traditions and influences. Although the Modern Art Week was widely disdained by cultural critics of the time, many of those who participated in the event became the leading artists and writers of subsequent decades.

One important current within Brazilian modernism was known as the anthropophagic (literally, man-eating) movement. It was led by Oswald de Andrade (1890–1954). Referencing the tradition of ritual cannibalism among some Brazilian Indians during the colonial period, the movement's proponents argued that artists and writers should borrow from European and American artistic traditions. Then, after digesting these influences, they should produce their own innovative creations.

An emblematic novel of this movement is *Macunaíma* (1928), written by Mário de Andrade (1893–1945, not related to Oswald), who was an organizer of the Modern Art Week, a literary critic, and folklorist. Macunaíma, a "hero without character," is born in the Amazonian jungle but travels to São Paulo where he experiences modern urban society and then returns to the jungle. He possesses extraordinary supernatural powers, and Andrade employs literary techniques in



In 1930 this modernist painting by Emiliano de Cavalcanti (1897-1986), entitled *Five Girls of Guaratinguetá*, represented new notions of race in Brazil. (Museu de Arte de São Paulo.)

his novel that will later become known as magical realism. Borrowing freely from folk stories and traditions and using colloquial Brazilian language, the novel aspires to promote a pan-Brazilian national cultural identity.

As with literature and poetry, Brazilian art adopted very nationalist themes, focusing on ordinary people, especially those of non-European background. A new aesthetic featured people of color as positive representatives of the Brazilian nation. Tarsila do Amaral (1886-1973) was a leading painter of this trend, and her works, such as *Black Woman* (1923) and *Anthropophagy* (1929), shocked conservative bourgeois Paulista tastes.

Revolutionary Art and Literature

At the same time, Mexican artists and writers responded to the dramatic changes that had taken place in their country. By 1920, the most violent phase of the Mexican Revolution had come to an end. Álvaro Obregón had established himself in power. The task now was to carry out the reforms promised by those leaders who had survived the wars of the previous decade. As minister of education, José Vasconcelos (1882-1959) redirected the government's cultural agenda. He organized a rural education program that included 2000 new libraries throughout the

country. A Department of Fine Arts had the task of preserving popular art while promoting the work of contemporary poets, writers, artists, and composers.

Vasconcelos made a major contribution to the debate about Mexican national identity through a book entitled *La raza cósmica* (The Cosmic Race, 1925). Vasconcelos argued that Latin America was producing a new "fifth race" that was an amalgamation of Europeans, Africans, Asians, and Amerindians. By today's standards, some of the characteristics that he attributes to different peoples of the world seem stereotypical and somewhat racist. Even so, he articulated the thesis that widespread *mestizaje* was a positive development for Mexico.

While Vasconcelos lauded racial mixture, other Mexican intellectuals were committed to Indianism, or indigenism. It was the central theme in the 1935 novel *El Indio* by Gregorio López y Fuentes (1895-1966). It permeated the musical works of Carlos Chávez (1899-1978), a brilliant conductor, pianist, and composer who went so far as to score his *Sinfonía India* (1935) and *Xochipili-Macuilxochitl* (1940) for pre-Columbian instruments. Emphasizing the country's indigenous history, this cultural movement became an integral part of the official political creed. As such it offered inspiration for the magnificent National Museum of Anthropology and Archeology in Mexico City.

Mexican artists entered this discussion as the Revolution unleashed a torrent of creative energy in the arts. Like Vasconcelos, many praised the indigenous and *mestizo* profile of the people. One especially prominent outlet for their work came through public murals, as a trio of gifted painters—Diego Rivera (1886-1957), David Siqueiros (1896-1974), and José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949)—sought to inform and educate the country's largely illiterate masses. "Art must no longer be the expression of individual satisfaction," they declared in a manifesto, "but should aim to become a fighting, educative tool for all." Through massive murals in such public buildings as the Agricultural School in Chapingo and the National Palace in Mexico City, they idealized the pre-Hispanic past, empathized with Mexico's masses, heaped derisive scorn on Spanish conquerors and Yankee capitalists, and elevated popular leaders like Zapata to a pantheon of heroes. Marxist in degrees but nationalist to the core, the muralists played a major role in reshaping the popular history of revolutionary Mexico.

The Mexican Revolution produced polemics and a torrent of popular novels. As early as 1915, Mariano Azuela (1873-1952) published *Los de abajo* (translated as *The Underdogs*), a story of characters entangled in a meaningless war: "The revolution," says one, "is like a hurricane; if you're in it, you're not a man . . . you're a leaf, a dead leaf, blown by the wind." In the 1920s, Martín Luis Guzmán (1887-1976) wrote *El águila y la serpiente* (The Eagle and the Serpent), a tale of idealistic revolutionaries and venal politicians that also contained a firsthand portrayal of Pancho Villa. "When he fires, it isn't the pistol that shoots, it's the man himself. Out of his very heart comes the ball as it leaves the sinister barrel. The man and the pistol are the same thing." A generation later, Carlos Fuentes (b. 1928) presented skeptical views in two acclaimed novels, *La muerte de Artemio Cruz* (The Death of Artemio Cruz, 1962) and *La región mas transparente* (translated as *Where the Air Is Clear*, 1958). For these writers, the defining characteristic of the Revolution was its violence; their goal, and that of their characters, was to ascertain the purpose of it all.

Frida Kahlo: Privacy on Public View

Long in the shadow of her contemporaries, Frida Kahlo (1907–54) has emerged in recent years as one of the twentieth century's most celebrated artists. As shown in the film biography *Frida* (2002), her personal life was one of tragedy, struggle, and resistance. Stricken by polio as a child and then gravely injured in a trolley-car accident, she endured frequent illness and constant pain. In 1929 Kahlo married the already famous Diego Rivera and joined the Mexican Communist Party.

Despite her political commitment and her appreciation for the muralist tradition, Kahlo's painting was highly personal, private, and intense. Known especially for her haunting self-portraits, she combined Mexican traditions of religious folk art with European traditions of portraiture. Iconoclastic and original, she sometimes drew upon Christian images for inspiration but always in her own way, frequently challenging classic conventions of ecclesiastical representation: in Kahlo's paintings, women's bodies are as naked and bloody as those of Christ and as clothed and emotionally stoic as those of Mary. Rejecting the traditional ideal of the self-abnegating woman, Kahlo also affirmed female sexuality and sensuality. As Rivera himself acknowledged, "This is the first time in the history of art that a woman expressed herself with such utter frankness."

Beyond Mexico, young intellectuals throughout Latin America found socialist and communist movements particularly attractive after the world economy collapsed in 1929. As the demands for export commodities plummeted, countries began to feel the effect of the Great Depression. European society seemed polarized and headed toward another great war. Among the new recruits to Marxism was a Peruvian journalist named José Carlos Mariátegui (1895–1930). In 1928 he published *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Seven Interpretative Essays on Peruvian Reality), an original analysis about how a socialist revolution might take place in Latin America based on local conditions and practices. Mariátegui argued that Peru was simultaneously communal, feudal, and capitalist. He blamed the subordinate position of Indians in Andean society on the land tenure system. His solution was to reorganize landholdings so that production would be based on traditional indigenous community lands.

Rethinking Race

Not all Latin American intellectuals looked to the people of mixed racial or indigenous background as a positive representation of the nation. The *mestizo* also came in for harsh criticism. Soon after José Vasconcelos propounded his pro-*mestizo* ideas about "the cosmic race" in Mexico, Alejandro O. Deústua (1849–1945) offered in 1931 a biting critique of Peru. "Among us," he said, "the problem of the *mestizo* is much more grave than in other countries. The product of the Indian in his period of moral dissolution and the Spaniard in his era of decadence, the *mestizo* has inherited all the defects of each without being able to conserve the remains of the gentlemanly life of the conqueror. . . . The mixture has been disastrous for the national culture."



Frida Kahlo at work in her studio.

Miscegenation was for Deústua not a sign of social progress but a symptom of backwardness. Peru was condemned by the racial composition it had inherited.

Other Andean thinkers, however, found inspiration in the country's Indian heritage. Jorge Icaza (1906–78) brought attention to the exploitation of Ecuador's native population in the 1938 novel *Huasiungo* (published in English as *The Villagers*). Another notable case was José María Arguedas, a novelist who managed to penetrate both the indigenous and creole worlds of Peru. He was a *mestizo* who had lived in Indian communities as a child and was fully bilingual in Spanish and Quechua. In *Canto Kechwa* (1938), he argued that "the indigenous is not inferior. And the day on which the people of the highlands who still feel ashamed of the Indian discover of their own accord the great creative possibilities of their Indian spirit, on that day, confident of their own values, the *mestizo* and Indian peoples will definitely prove the equality of their own creative ability with that of the European art which now displaces and puts it to shame."

This debate about racial mixture and national culture took place in Brazil as well. Whereas much of the Peruvian population was indigenous, Brazil had the largest Afro-descendant population outside of Africa, with a significant minority of mixed racial heritage. Gilberto Freyre (1900–87) framed this discussion with the publication in 1933 of a sociological treatise entitled *Casa-Grande e Senzala* (published in English as *Masters and Slaves*). He argued that the Portuguese

colonizers had created a multiracial tropical colony based on the plantation. Freyre's writings lauded the African and indigenous contributions to Brazilian culture and society. His ideas stood in sharp contrast to racist ideology still circulating in Latin America, Europe, and the United States.

Even so, critics maintained that Freyre unduly romanticized Brazil's colonial past by deemphasizing the hierarchical and the sexually coercive nature of racial mingling. They also observed that his characterization of Brazilian society, later synthesized as "racial democracy," obscured the existence of widespread hopes that European immigration would improve the nation's racial stock. In fact, this prevalent ideology of "whitening" (*branqueamento*) maintained subtle forms of discrimination against Afro-Brazilians. Moreover, Freyre's emphasis on the neatly devised triad of Africans-Indians-Europeans ignored the role of other ethnic and racial groups, such as Japanese and Syrian Lebanese immigrants. In spite (or because) of its weaknesses, Freyre's thesis nonetheless became integrated by the government of Getúlio Vargas (1930–45) into a larger nationalist discourse about the special nature of Brazil as a country that had eliminated the racial divisions and tensions plaguing the United States and permeating European fascist ideology.

At the same time that Freyre's ideas about race in Brazil received official endorsement from the Brazilian government, Aimé Césaire (1913–2008), a young Afro-descendant from the French Caribbean island of Martinique, began working on a book-length poem entitled *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (Notebook on a Return to My Native Land, 1939). It represented a defining moment in Caribbean culture. Césaire and other young intellectuals questioned the Eurocentric focus of traditional literature. They developed a movement called *négritude* (blackness) that turned to African roots in the construction of culture and society in the Caribbean and looked at Africa with a sense of pride. The ideas surrounding this movement had significant impact among intellectuals in Haiti and other Caribbean islands. Haitian president François Duvalier (1957–71) appropriated the ideas of the movement (called *noirisme* in Haiti) to justify marginalizing mulattoes from participation in his government. For others, it linked them more closely to Africa. *Négritude* became a prominent ideology among African students living in Europe who formed part of the generation that led the decolonization movement in Africa after World War II.

The Making of Mass Media

While essays, books, murals, poetry, paintings, and newspapers reached a limited audience, the silent film offered a new, popular cultural medium almost immediately after it was introduced in the last years of the nineteenth century. Although European and U.S. films dominated the screen at the turn of the twentieth century, Brazilian and Mexican entrepreneurs produced their own pictures that created the first national silent film stars. In the early years of film, documentaries dominated national production.

By the 1920s radio became another important new mass medium, reaching an ever-wider public with news, music, talk shows, sports, and variety shows.

Colgate-Palmolive successfully launched a Spanish version of its commercially successful soap operas in the Cuba of the 1930s. Serialized *radionovelas* became popular throughout Latin America overnight. The phonographic industry, which was largely controlled by foreign companies, worked in tandem with radio stations. They packaged and produced local musicians and singers. Through successful record promotion, distribution, and careful programming, performers could sometimes enjoy a meteoric success and become nationally known celebrities. State-owned radio stations became an important vehicle for forging a sense of patriotism and nationalism. Radio standardized the national language even as it transmitted programs that featured regional differences. (Radios remained an important means of cultural transmission well into the late twentieth century, even after television had already reached all segments of society.)

When U.S. studios began producing sound films in 1929, they quickly responded to the Latin American market with simultaneous remakes in Spanish and dubbed films featuring a galaxy of Hollywood stars. U.S. films flooded into Latin America transmitting the "American way of life" on the silver screen to audiences everywhere. Although competition from these films made it hard to develop national industries, state support in Mexico and Argentina allowed those countries to enter a golden age of film production with scripts featuring national stars, plots, and settings. Copying the Hollywood studio system, production companies established themselves in Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo. Tango singers such as Carlos Gardel (1887–1935) and Mexican divas such as Dolores del Río (1905–83) became international celebrities through their film appearances. Cuba and Peru also began to produce films as well, but Mexican and Argentine cinema tended to have a greater impact on other countries in the region.

When the United States entered World War II, the government recruited Hollywood studios into the war effort. Walt Disney traveled to Latin America to develop ideas for new cartoons with Latin American-style characters as a means of promoting good relations with the country's "friendly neighbors to the south." A Hollywood studio hired Portugal-born Brazilian samba singer Carmen Miranda (1909–55) to perform in pictures as the generic "Latin bombshell." A series of movies filmed in Los Angeles but set in Latin America reproduced long-held stereotypes about the region.

Popular Culture, Theater, and Sports

Although music produced by the lower classes, generally referred to as *música popular*, had been an essential part of everyday life from the Andes to the islands of the Caribbean since the colonial period, radio and film brought these sounds to much wider, national audiences. The Afro-Cuban *rumba*, the Argentine *tango*, the sentimental and romantic *bolero*, and the Brazilian *samba* were performed in movies and transmitted over the airwaves, legitimizing what the elites had often considered "low culture."

As nationalism and anti-imperialist sentiments strengthened in Latin America, especially in the 1930s and 1940s, the "authentic" culture of the people

took on additional significance. Governments promoted projects to collect and preserve indigenous and African musical traditions, and regional music received a new national prominence. At the same time, Cuban dance bands brought the cha-cha and the rumba to the United States, and the tango circulated throughout Latin America and beyond.

Modern theater came to the fore in the 1930s and 1940s. Mexican directors staged vanguard theater productions using innovative lighting and scenery and plots with political content. Argentine playwrights wrote dramas that addressed socio-cultural problems. In Brazil, Polish-emigré director Zbigniew Ziembinski (1908–78) innovated theater with his production of *Vestido de noiva* (Wedding Dress, 1943) by Nelson Rodrigues (1912–80). The drama tells the story of a young woman's attempt to understand her failed marriage and her imminent death while in a state of coma. The ground-breaking staging that presented action on various levels—reality, memory, and hallucination—and offered a surrealistic and non-linear plot revolutionized Brazilian theater. These early works established the groundwork for an explosion in the quality and content of theater. As one expert has explained, playwrights and directors took up the challenge of bringing to Latin American theater “a new sense of its own identity, capturing the national and human spirit through believable characters who manifested the social, political, religious, and personal conflicts of individuals in modern society.”

Innovative theater provided a new space for Afro-Brazilian artists to affirm their cultural heritage. In the mid-forties, Abdias do Nascimento (b. 1914), a young black intellectual, founded the Teatro Experimental do Negro (Black Experimental Theater), whose purpose was to develop new texts that focused on people of African descent. Beginning with a 1945 production of Eugene O'Neill's *Emperor Jones*, with Nascimento playing the lead character, this project broadened cultural norms by expanding the subject matter of Brazilian plays. Nascimento also promoted beauty contests to redefine hegemonic aesthetic gender standards and an art competition with the theme of the Black Christ.

By the early twentieth century, soccer had become the most popular sport in Latin America. Brought to the region by the British, the foreign economic power that dominated much of South America until the 1920s, soccer was originally played by the upper classes. The middle and lower classes quickly adopted the sport. Soccer clubs, professional players, and devoted fans strengthened the region's competitiveness worldwide. Uruguay won the World Cup in the first international competition in 1930. Latin American countries have taken first place in half of the World Championship games: Uruguay twice (1930 and 1950), Argentina twice (1978 and 1986), and Brazil five times (1958, 1962, 1970, 1994, and 2002).

Baseball is the second most popular sport, gaining Cuban adherents as early as the 1870s. Its widespread practice beyond the United States can be traced to U.S. imperial influences in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Panama, and Puerto Rico, occupying American troops popularized the game. In Venezuela it was played in enclave

areas dominated by U.S. oil companies. As early as the 1930s, these countries began supplying talented players to the U.S. major leagues.

LATIN AMERICAN CULTURE ENTERS A WORLD MARKET

A marked increase in urbanization and the growth of the middle classes of Latin America during and after the 1940s significantly affected cultural production. Educational systems expanded, and more women attended universities. Literacy rates increased, and active reading publics grew in size. (Although television was introduced in the 1950s, it was restricted to urban and middle-class audiences until the mid-1960s when it became a mass medium.) Throughout the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, books and other forms of cultural production reached an ever-wider audience. The number of authors, poets, playwrights, and filmmakers increased as well. Architects built new modernist structures that borrowed from foreign trends but then created distinctive new styles. New forms of musical expression blossomed too.

Growing interest in Latin America after the Cuban Revolution produced international curiosity about the continent's authors, poets, and essayists. Latin American writers first reached a larger foreign readership through Spanish publishing houses, and soon thereafter their works appeared in English and French translations. There was a “boom” in Latin American literature. Because there is so much diversity and variety in the novels, essays, poetry, theater, and films of the period between the 1940s and the 1970s, even a brief overview cannot do justice to the plethora of innovative work produced throughout the region. Nonetheless, several merit attention here.

Already a prolific writer in the 1930s, Miguel Ángel Asturias (1899–1974), a Guatemalan poet, novelist, and diplomat, became a precursor to the “Latin American boom” in literature of the 1960s and 1970s. He combined interests in anthropology and Mayan mythology, which he integrated into his novels, with sharp political positions. Asturias was expelled from Guatemala in 1954 for his support of the reform-minded Jacobo Arbenz government that was overthrown with CIA backing. His first major work, *El Senor Presidente* (Mr. President, 1946), was actually completed in 1933 but could not be published for more than another decade because of its scathing critique of life under a military dictatorship. A later work, *Hombres de maíz* (Men of Maize, 1949), is a defense of Mayan culture and customs. In 1967, Asturias was the second Latin American after Gabriela Mistral to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Asturias' interest in indigenous America was taken up by other writers of a younger generation as well. The Peruvian author José María Arguedas (1911–69) was of mixed Spanish and Quechua descent and grew up in poverty in a village in the southern Peruvian Andes. His novel, *Los ríos profundos* (Deep Rivers, 1961), uses a mixture of Spanish and Quechua and addresses the clash between Europeanized and indigenous cultures. Similarly, Rosario Castellanos (1925–74), a Mexican poet and author, set her novels in the largely indigenous area of

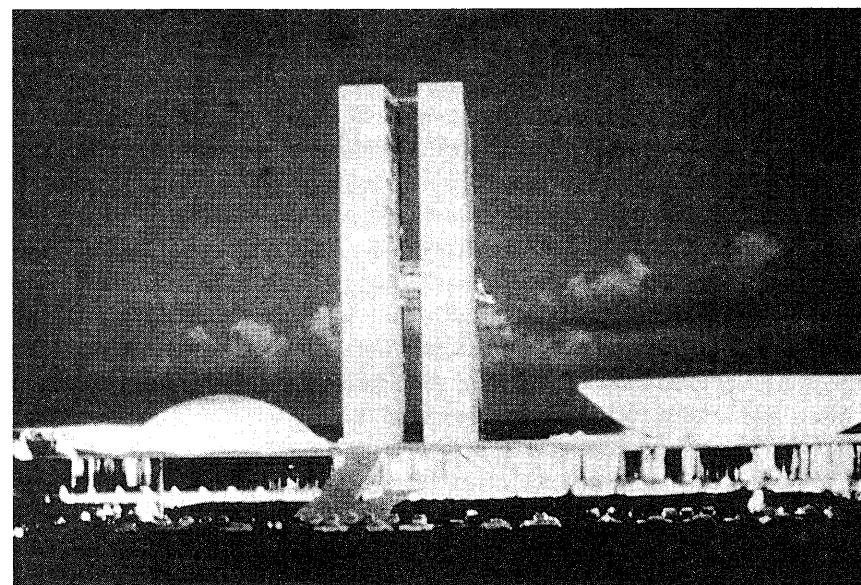
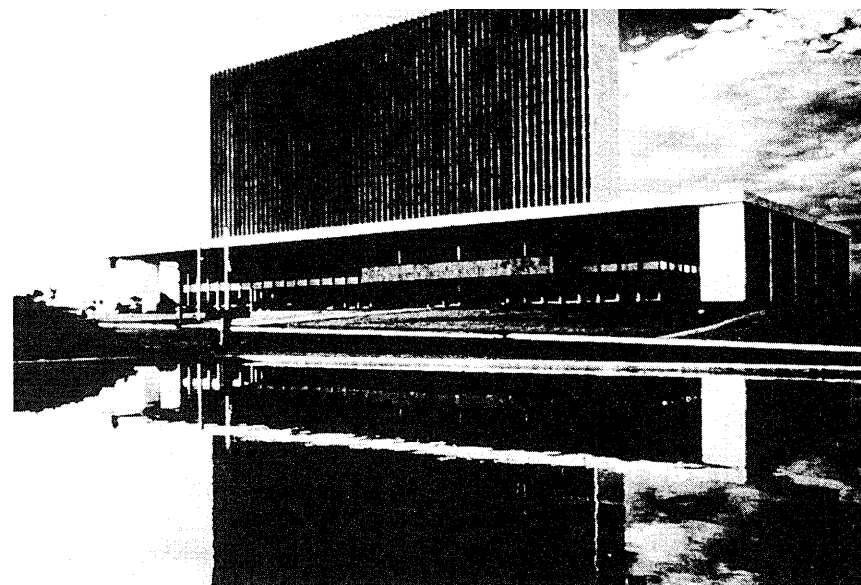
Chiapas. *Oficio de tinieblas* (translated as *The Book of Lamentations*, 1962) reached back into the nineteenth century to tell the tale of a Tzotzil indigenous uprising. Castellanos' work reveals an identification with and deep sympathy for the indigenous people of Mexico.

Ever since the Mexican Revolution, succeeding generations of intellectuals have reflected on the roots and nature of Mexican identity and culture. In 1950 Octavio Paz (1914–98) produced a book-long collection of nine essays entitled *El laberinto de la soledad* (*The Labyrinth of Solitude*) to address those questions. Building on the notion that individuals are inherently lonely, Paz considered that *fiestas* (public festivities) provide an opportunity to express community and allow Mexicans to cast off their usually masked self-denial. Paz also offered a sweeping analysis of Mexican history from the pre-Columbian period to the Mexican Revolution. After the massacre of hundreds of Mexican students in 1968, he republished this work with an additional essay that discussed the tragic affair. Although sympathetic to the revolutionary left in his youth, Paz moved toward more moderate positions as he grew older, criticizing the authoritarian nature of socialist regimes. For Paz, art was an important component of human existence: "There can be no society without poetry, but society can never be realized as poetry, it is never poetic. Sometimes the two terms seek to break apart. They cannot." Paz received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1990.

Innovative Architecture

As Mexican intellectuals reflected on the impact of the past on their society, many Brazilians gazed optimistically into the future. The modern architectural style demonstrated that the country was not merely imitating Europe and the United States but creating something new. Since the early twentieth century, builders had borrowed European architectural design trends such as art nouveau and later art deco for new public buildings, private dwellings, and public monuments. Modern architecture came to Latin America through students educated abroad who returned to Brazil to design new hospitals, schools, universities, and housing projects. As one scholar has noted, "At the programmatic base of the modern movement lie the ideals of democracy, creative liberty, social equality, constructive rationality, progress, and confidence in science and the scientific method to produce a physical reality that safeguards humankind and society and reinvents the city." The energy of this movement took hold in Brazil and produced some of the most innovative modern architecture in the world.

Leaders in the Brazilian modern architectural movement included Lúcio Costa (1902–98) and Oscar Niemeyer (b. 1907), who were influenced by the 1929 and 1936 visits to Brazil of the French architect Le Corbusier (1887–1965), the father of the modern glass tower building. In the 1940s, Niemeyer designed a series of modern building projects in Belo Horizonte, including an innovative Catholic church. He did so with the enthusiastic support of Juscelino Kubitschek, the city's mayor and later the state's governor. And as president of Brazil, Kubitschek (1956–61) dedicated his administration's efforts to completing the



The glittering capital of Brasília boasts extraordinary modernistic architecture. *Top*, headquarters of the governor of the federal district; *bottom*, the legislative palace, whose twin towers and buildings contain the separate houses of the national congress. (Courtesy of the Consulate General of Brazil, New York.)

new capital of Brasília in the country's interior. He called on architects and planners to submit their proposals to an international juried competition. Lúcio Costa's project won. The new capital took the shape of a large airplane with government buildings on a main axis leading to the presidential palace, Congress, and Supreme Court. Huge blocks of residential apartments fanned out from the center like wings on the plane. Niemeyer designed the most important buildings. The construction was innovative and bold. He used slender arches, long ramps, and large geometric shapes. Although critics claimed that the city was sterile, unfriendly to pedestrian traffic, and overly planned, it symbolized a promise that Brazil was as modern as, if not more modern than, any European or American society.

As Brasília was being built, a Franco-Brazilian film and a new musical style placed Brazil on the international map. *Black Orpheus* (1959) was set in the hillside *favelas* (slums) of Rio de Janeiro in the midst of Carnival and featured an all-black cast of characters. The winner of an Oscar for Best Foreign Film, the movie offered its audience an idyllic view of the country and race relations. It introduced the world to *bossa nova* (new style) with its cool jazz sound and its syncopated beat. Bossa nova became an immediate international success.

During the 1960s, other musical styles from Latin America moved onto the world stage as well, especially sounds from the Caribbean. Cuban salsa, Dominican *merengue*, and the Colombian *cumbia* became popular all over Latin America and moved to the United States with migrants from the Caribbean basin. Similarly, Mexican immigrants brought regional music with them, including the *canción ranchera*, which had become popular all over Latin America through Mexican films of the 1940s and 1950s.

Latin American Revolutionary Culture

At the same time that Kubitschek was inaugurating Brasília and bossa nova musicians were playing to packed auditoriums at Carnegie Hall in New York, Fidel Castro and his band of bearded revolutionaries were changing the political and cultural landscape of Latin America. A surge of artistic and literary enthusiasm followed the victory of the Cuban rebels in 1959. Early reforms won widespread popular support on the island and abroad. The new government increased the literacy rate from 76 to 96 percent in a successful 1961 campaign in which students fanned out into the countryside to teach peasants how to read. Educational opportunities expanded. Sons and daughters of the poor had access to university and technical training. Colorful wall murals and posters promoted revolutionary ideals. Schoolchildren learned new nationalistic and revolutionary songs. In the first two years of Castro's rule, cultural heterogeneity was expressed in the literary supplement *Lunes de la Revolución* (Monday of the Revolution). It provided a forum for rich debate on the relationship of culture to revolutionary change.

As the regime turned to socialism and considered outspoken critics to be enemies of the revolution, *Lunes de la Revolución* was shut down. Many of its contributors left the country. Yet revolutionary fervor that promised radical

change across the continent inspired loyal internal and foreign support for the Cuban experience. The Nueva Trova (New Song) movement in the mid-1960s used politicized lyrics to praise the accomplishments of the Revolution. Cuba organized international conferences that brought authors, poets, artists, filmmakers, playwrights, and musicians from throughout Latin America to the island to celebrate a revolutionary vision for the region. Cuban singers and songwriters, such as Silvio Rodríguez (b. 1945) and Pablo Milanés (b. 1943), composed revolutionary verses that circulated throughout the region as a whole.

Cuba's politically engaged music represented a larger continental trend. American (and to a lesser extent European) pop music, especially rock 'n' roll, reached ever-wider Latin American markets in the 1950s and 1960s. Many Latin American musicians adapted to these new sounds. They wrote songs and music in the same styles and found favorable reception. Others turned to local traditions to counter foreign influences. In Argentina and Chile, folklorists and musicians sought out folk sounds and instruments. Preserving songs and rhythms that seemed to be disappearing, they used their investigations to create a new musical genre, eventually known as *la nueva canción* (the new song).

Chile was at the center of this movement, and Violeta Parra (1917–67), a woman of humble origins, was one of its leaders. A supporter of the Chilean left, Parra began collecting folk music and composing her own songs that addressed the problems of poor slum dwellers, miners, and factory workers. She turned her house into a center for musicians and folk artists. She revived a tradition, known as *la peña*, a cultural center where performers could present their music. *La canción nueva chilena* became especially popular during the socialist government of Salvador Allende (1970–73) because of the songs' progressive political content. Using Andean rhythms and instruments and poetic lyrics, the music announced a national and indigenous culture in opposition to foreign, especially U.S., influences. After the military coup d'état that overthrew Allende and installed the seventeen-year dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, musical groups such as *Quilapayún* and *Inti-Illimani* went into exile. They performed their music around the world as a means of building international opposition to the military regime. Argentine singer Mercedes Sosa (b. 1935) and U.S. folk balladeer Joan Baez (b. 1941) popularized Violeta Parra's most famous song, "Gracias a la vida" (Thanks for Life, 1966), which offered a haunting ode to human existence in the face of daunting hardships.

Brazilians made their own unique contributions to the new song movement. In reaction to rock 'n' roll and other foreign musical influences, Brazilian Popular Music, as it was known, used acoustic guitars and regional instruments to produce songs addressing national themes. Sometimes they were overtly political. Other times they drew on folk music or conveyed simple stories of everyday life.

This musical current was challenged by *tropicalía* (tropicalism), an art movement that incorporated poetry, theater, and music into an alternative cultural outlook. Borrowing from the modernist, cannibalistic idea of *antropofagia* developed in the 1920s and 1930s, its proponents insisted that artists should feel free to

appropriate elements from international cultural trends and creatively transform them into national forms of expression. Tropicalismo was also a reflection of the wild and rebellious youth culture that was sweeping the world in the late 1960s. Caetano Veloso (b. 1942) and Gilberto Gil (b. 1942), the leading performers of the musical wing of this movement, were forced into exile in 1969 for a period of time, but returned soon thereafter to continue long and productive musical careers. Veloso is Brazil's most well-known artist internationally, and Gil served as minister of culture from 2002 until 2008 during the Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva government, while continuing as a songwriter and performer.

The Literary Boom

As suggested previously, the Cuban Revolution attracted worldwide attention toward all of Latin America and the Caribbean. One historian has noted, "Latin American novelists became world famous through their writing and their advocacy of political and social action, and because many of them had the good fortune to reach markets and audiences beyond Latin America through translation and travel—and sometimes through exile."

Among the first members of the "boom generation" of the 1960s was Julio Cortázar (1914–84), an Argentine who spent much of his life in France. Among his most original works was *Rayuela* (Hopscotch, 1963), which offered the reader the opportunity to read the novel's chapters in any order. Cortázar also used stream of consciousness and inner monologues in his texts. Similarly, Cuban novelist Guillermo Cabrera Infante (1929–2005), who initially supported the Cuban Revolution but went into exile in 1965, employed stream of consciousness in his experimental novels, among them *Tres tristes tigres* (translated into English as *Three Trapped Tigers*, 1967). Although considered among the internationally acclaimed writers of the "boom" generation, he rejected that label for himself.

Cabrera Infante became alienated from the Cuban Revolution. On the other hand, Pablo Neruda retained loyalty to the Latin American left over his long literary career that spanned five decades. His work celebrated the indigenous roots of Latin American culture and denounced U.S. multinational penetration into the region. Among his masterpieces was the book-length poem *Canto General* (General Song, 1950) that glorified the wondrous beauty of the Incan ruin of Machu Picchu. It also condemned Standard Oil's exploitation of the continent's natural resources. Neruda was a controversial choice for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971 because of his left-wing political views. He died twelve days after Augusto Pinochet came to power in Chile in September 1973. The new regime banned mourners from attending his funeral to avoid possible public protests against the military that had just taken over the country.

Neruda's political poetry was echoed by many journalists and novelists who saw their literary mission to awaken Latin Americans to a continental sensibility that went beyond borders and narrow nationalism. Among these essayists is Eduardo Galeano (b. 1940). In the early 1960s, he was an editor of the influential Uruguayan weekly *Marcha*, which, like the Argentine cultural magazine *Sur*,

published a wide array of writers from Latin America. When the military took power in Uruguay in 1973, he fled the country for Argentina where he founded the publication *Crisis*. When the generals took power in Argentina in 1976, he fled again, this time to Spain. His most influential work was *Las venas abiertas de América Latina* (The Open Veins of Latin America, 1971), which was widely read in Latin America, Europe, and the United States.* Galeano offered a sweeping historical analysis of Latin America from Conquest to the present. His polemical style defended the view that first the Spaniards and Portuguese and later the British and U.S. governments exploited the people and the resources of Latin America. Like some other contemporary thinkers in Latin America, he was concerned about the continent's history. He once wrote, "I am a writer obsessed with remembering, with remembering the past of America above all and above all that of Latin America, intimate land condemned to amnesia."

Like Pablo Neruda, Brazilian writer Jorge Amado (1912–2001) joined the Communist Party in the 1930s. He spent time in prison, saw his books banned under the regime of Getúlio Vargas, and went into exile. In 1946 he was elected to the National Constituent Assembly; during the 1950s he withdrew from active political work in order to concentrate on his writing. It is largely regional in character, celebrating northeastern Brazil. His novels combined attention toward poverty and social disparities with a celebration of the African and mixed-race people of Brazil. Amado's 1943 novel *Terras do Sem Fim* (translated as *The Violent Land*) painted a gruesome story of the exploitation of cacao growers in Bahia who remained under the thumb of powerful landholding families. Other works were filled with picaresque and humorous depictions of memorable characters from all walks of Brazilian life. *Dona Flor e Seus Dois Maridos* (Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands, 1966), for example, recounted the comical tale of the ghostly return of a widow's carefree and womanizing husband who disrupts her new marriage to a second, more conventional spouse.

Perhaps the most internationally renowned Latin American author in the late twentieth century was Colombian journalist and author Gabriel García Márquez (b. 1927). Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982, his most famous novel, *Cien años de soledad* (One Hundred Years of Solitude, 1967), is a modern world classic. Set in the banana-growing region of Colombia in the fictional town of Macondo, it was narrated in the style of "magical realism" in which mysterious elements invade realistic settings. Márquez once described the challenge of writing in this genre. "My most important problem was destroying the line of demarcation that separates what seems real from what seems fantastic."

Cien años de soledad is a gripping tale of fiction; a compelling allegory about the history of Colombia; and a searching exploration of life, love, passion, and personality in contemporary Latin America. Márquez drew on historical events in his work. One story in the book was based on an incident in the town of Ciénaga in

*This was the same book that Venezuela's Hugo Chávez rather intrusively presented to U.S. president Barack Obama at a meeting of hemispheric heads of state in April 2009.

1928, when a union guided by the Revolutionary Socialist Party (a precursor of the Communist Party) declared a strike and 25,000 workers, particularly those at the U.S.-owned United Fruit plantations, stopped cutting bananas. The American manager dispatched an urgent message to the Colombian president, Miguel Abadía Méndez, describing "an extremely grave and dangerous situation." Abadía Méndez responded by deploying army units in order to maintain "public order." The ensuing confrontation led to what came to be known as "the massacre of the banana plantations," a central event in the collective memory of Colombians—and recounted, albeit with purposeful exaggeration, by Gabriel García Márquez. (The tragedy did not, however, convince United Fruit to leave Colombia. That occurred only in the 1940s, after an outbreak of sigatoka disease devastated the banana plantations it controlled.) During the 1970s and 1980s, Márquez was an outspoken opponent of the Pinochet regime in Chile. He also attempted to help negotiate several unsuccessful peace accords between rebel groups and the Colombia government in the 1990s.

Literature and poetry were not the only boom industries of the 1960s and 1970s. Film and television took on new dimensions as well. In the post-World War II period, Latin American films had to compete with international cinema and the growing influence of television. As the quality of national cinema production declined overall, young intellectuals, influenced by French new wave and Italian neorealist cinematic styles, began making films designed to reflect their countries' social realities. In Brazil this movement became known as *cinema novo* (new cinema) and produced documentary-like reflections on sociopolitical themes by filmmakers such as Nelson Pereira dos Santos (b. 1928), who directed *Vidas secas* (Barren Lives, 1963), and Glauber Rocha (1939–81), whose masterpiece *Deus e o diabo na terra do sol* (released in English as *Black Gods/White Devils*, 1964) received international acclaim.

Filmmakers in other countries produced works along similar lines. Tomás Gutiérrez (1928–96) directed films about postrevolutionary Cuba. *Memorias de subdesarrollo* (Memories of Underdevelopment, 1968) examines an intellectual's ambivalence about the Revolution. The epic trilogy *Lucía* (1968), directed by Humberto Solás (1941–2008), portrays three different women in Cuban history and their relationship to revolutionary change. Argentine filmmakers Fernando Solano (1913–92) and Octavio Getino (b. 1935) directed *La hora de los hornos* (The Hour of the Furnaces, 1970) that lauds the liberation movements of Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Generally shot in black and white with innovative film techniques, these films represent the work of a generation determined to make powerful statements about Latin America's ongoing social and economic problems.

Theater underwent intense transformation in the 1960s. Playwrights and directors turned away from European and U.S. sources for inspiration and focused more on themes related to Latin America. Among the leaders of this trend was Brazilian theater director Augusto Boal (1931–2009), who developed new performance and staging styles. The musical drama *Arena conta Zumbi* (Arena Tells

about Zumbi, 1965) skirted government censors by retelling the story of the seventeenth-century runaway slave community of Palmares. The play is also a metaphor about opposition to the military regime that had come to power the year before. Similarly, Colombian directors Enrique Buenaventura (1925–2003), who headed the Experimental Theater of Cali, and Santiago García (b. 1929), who led La Candelaria Theater in Bogotá, turned to innovative forms of political theater. Many theater groups moved away from the hierarchical hand of the theater director and adopted more collective processes for developing and staging productions. By 1968 theater festivals throughout Latin America created a sense of community among actors, directors, playwrights, and performers. They observed each other's work and shared ideas about how best to make theater relevant to a broader public. This is not to say that other theater genres disappeared. Middle-class audiences sought a wide variety of entertainment options, but experimental theater reflected what was new and exciting.

While theater productions were becoming more experimental, television was becoming more commercial. In its early phases, television stations had relied on local live programming similar to radio shows. By the 1960s, foreign (mostly U.S.) programming flooded the airwaves, bringing dubbed TV series and movies to an ever-widening audience. At the same time, the tradition of *radionovelas* was transferred to the new medium. *Telenovelas* became national fixations, as families gathered around television sets for favorite nighttime series. The content ranged from historical to modern dramas. Some focused on traditional romantic and family themes while others addressed social and political issues. In the 1970s and 1980s, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela began exporting their products to other parts of Latin America, to Spain and Portugal, to Spanish-language channels in the United States, and even to countries as far away as China and Russia.

Radio and television could reach an illiterate population. Comic books became a popular print medium entertainment vehicle for the semiliterate, the working class, and their children. Comic books with national themes and unique local characters achieved popularity in the 1930s and 1940s. At the same time, U.S. comic books penetrated the Latin American market. Disney cartoons and other foreign series were translated and widely disseminated. As *telenovelas* became popular, publishers produced *fotonovelas* that narrated everyday stories and reached broad audiences. Comic books also became a pedagogic vehicle in the 1970s in politicized literacy campaigns. Government agencies turned to the format as well to address social and educational issues.

DICTATORSHIP, DEMOCRACY, AND NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The authoritarian regimes that swept across South America in the 1970s and the civil strife that divided countries in Central America during the 1980s forced many of the politically engaged writers, musicians, and filmmakers, along with tens of thousands of revolutionaries and political activists, into exile. From other

countries in Latin America, Europe, and to a lesser extent the United States, they wrote about their new experiences or documented the political repression taking place in their homelands. A new genre emerged, known as testimonial literature. In these works people told the story of their lives, their activism, and the repression that they had experienced.

Among the most famous (and later controversial) volumes is the first-person account of Rigoberta Menchú (b. 1959), an indigenous Guatemalan woman involved in her country's revolutionary movement in the 1970s. Her testimony *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia* (published as I, Rigoberta Menchú, 1982) begins: "I'd like to stress that it's not only my life, it's also the testimony of my people. . . . My story is the story of all poor Guatemalans. My personal experience is the reality of a whole people." In her book, she related the ways in which the Guatemalan security forces killed members of her family for their support of revolutionary guerrillas. Her testimonial became an international success, and Menchú's activities in favor of human rights won her the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992. Subsequently, anthropologist David Stoll challenged the accuracy of the details of her story, although he acknowledged that her accounts helped to draw international focus to the brutality of the Guatemalan military.

Menchú's articulations in favor of the indigenous people of Guatemala represent a much broader and continental social phenomenon of the last several decades. Indigenous groups have forged organizations to make new claims on the state. They have demanded that natural wealth be distributed in ways more favorable to local communities. Some have insisted on cultural autonomy; others have called for indigenous languages to be an integral part of educational programs. Many organizations have focused on ensuring that lands are reserved or preserved for indigenous people. In some respects, these social articulations are a rejection of *indigenismo* in which authors spoke in the name of the Indians of their country. Pan-Indian conferences and gatherings have provided another platform for activists to reconceptualize the relationship of the indigenous population to national cultures.

Indigenous people were not the only social group articulating a critique of the social and political order. While in exile in the 1970s and 1980s, many left-wing Latin American women began to rethink normative social and cultural assumptions about gender. Some questioned the pervasive traditional gender roles on the left and the hierarchical nature of centralized political movements. Influenced by feminist ideas in Europe and the United States, many returned from exile with skills that helped build women's movements and organizations. Inspired by the United Nations First World Conference on Women held in Mexico in 1975, they joined together with activists involved in anti-dictatorial struggles and grassroots movements fighting social and economic inequality. The women's movements in different countries addressed an array of issues ranging from reproductive rights to creating new state institutions to curtail domestic violence.

Women writers became more prominent as well. Among those who gained recognition as post-boom authors are Isabel Allende (b. 1942) and Luisa

Valenzuela (b. 1938). Isabel Allende was born in Chile but moved into exile after the 1973 coup d'état. Since the 1980s, her work has reached a wide international audience. *La casa de los espíritus* (The House of Spirits, 1982), written while in exile in Venezuela, was inspired by a letter that she wrote to her dying grandfather. Her short stories and novels, influenced by magical realism, focus especially on the experience of women. Argentine novelist and short-story writer Luisa Valenzuela has employed an experimental avant-garde style to consider the impact of the Argentine dictatorship on human interactions in *Como en la Guerra* (As in War, 1977) and *Cambio de Armas* (Change of Arms, 1982). Both women represent a new consciously feminist critique of gender relations that is shared by many other authors.

Parallel to the emergence of feminist movements throughout Latin America, gay men and lesbians began to carve out a new political and social space for themselves. In 1971 several politicized groups merged to create the Frente de Liberación Homosexual de la Argentina (Argentine Homosexual Liberation Front). The wave of repression, which enveloped the country in 1975 and culminated in a military coup d'état the following year, obliterated the movement. Activists formed similar groups in Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Brazil in the mid-to late 1970s. They served both as support and as consciousness-raising groups and spaces to elaborate a new political discourse that challenged hegemonic norms about gender and sexuality. Many lesbian activists moved into the women's movement. After receiving initial resistance, they participated openly in creating an inclusionary feminist program.

The AIDS epidemic in the early 1980s both dissipated and strengthened gay political organizations, as activists developed new strategies to pressure the state to address health issues. In 1995, the International Lesbian and Gay Association held its seventeenth international conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. That event encouraged new local, regional, and national organizations from Mexico to Chile. The movement's political agenda includes enacting antidiscriminatory legislation, addressing ongoing violence and gay bashing, and educating the public. Pride parades and marches have become an important means of visibility. In recent years, the annual Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered parade in São Paulo, Brazil, has amassed 3 million people, making it the largest of such mobilizations in the world.

Concurrent with a politicized movement, authors writing about homosexuality have become prominent. Among them is Reinaldo Arenas (1943–1990), who clashed with the Cuban government in 1967 for his writings and openly gay lifestyle. Arenas was imprisoned for a time for having published abroad without official authorization. He finally left Cuba in 1980. His work *Antes que anochezca* (Before Night Falls, 1992) was a frank autobiography that sharply criticized the Castro regime, the Catholic Church, and U.S. culture and politics. Another well-known gay author who also fled his country was Manuel Puig (1932–90). He went into exile in 1973 as the political situation polarized in Argentina. His novel *El beso de la mujer araña* (The Kiss of the Spider Woman) told the tale of the relationship between two

prisoners—a gay man and a revolutionary. It was later made into a successful Broadway musical and a prize-winning Hollywood film. Such works mark the emergence of a new generation of writers willing to publish their creative considerations about previously taboo topics.

Just as women, gays, and lesbians began to articulate new concerns about inequality and discrimination, the democratization process in many countries in the 1980s expanded opportunities for Afro-Latin Americans. New social movements such as the Movimento Negro Unificação (Black United Movement) in Brazil presented biting critiques of ongoing social and economic gaps between Afro-Brazilians and people of European descent. Although the movement did not create a mass following, many of its ideas provoked national discussions about racial inequality, pressured the state to address historical patterns of discrimination, and created new government programs. Similar movements have developed in Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, and Mexico, where intellectuals and activists have focused attention on lingering forms of discrimination and positive African influences in these countries.

Afro-Latin American culture has enjoyed a renaissance since the 1980s. Migratory flows between the Caribbean and both Europe and the United States have increased the circulation of ideas about black identity and culture. Musical styles from salsa to the Afro-Cuban sounds of the Buena Vista Social Club have gained popularity among world music aficionados. Nongovernmental organizations, anthropologists, and ethnomusicologists have sought to record and preserve Afro-Latin American traditions.

New musical forms and cultural traditions are being created. To offer one example, Afro-Brazilian identities are being expressed in a new way through participation in *blocos Afros*, percussion groups organized to participate in Carnival festivities. These *blocos* arose in poorer Afro-Brazilian neighborhoods in the 1970s in the northeastern city of Bahia to allow residents to participate in the festival and to provide an Afro-Brazilian alternative to the *trios elétricos*, white rock bands that had come to dominate Carnival performances.

The most famous of the dozen *blocos Afros* of Salvador is Olodum, which began as a small neighborhood group and now has thousands of members in Salvador, as well as fans the world over. The group's name comes from the Yoruba word *Olodumare* ("God of Gods"). Olodum is widely credited with the invention of "samba-reggae," an innovative musical style in which vocal melodies characteristic of Caribbean reggae are wedded to the aggressively rhythmic drumming of Carnival street music. More recently, the group has added traditional Western instrumentation to its ensemble, but drums and voices remain at center stage. Olodum's musical repertoire has also incorporated elements of salsa, West African music, pop, candomblé chants, and African-American hip hop. As the genre "samba-reggae" suggests, the Olodum members see themselves as part of the African diaspora and as sharing musical styles with Afro-Caribbean peoples.

This connection extends to a celebration of *négritude* or "blackness," and of Africa and peoples of the diaspora. Olodum's director of international relations, Billy

Arquimimo, explained this by stating: "Olodum is part of the international black movement, and we want to promote self-esteem and pride." Along with this celebration of African roots, notable in a society in which Africanness is often denigrated, even by Afro-Brazilians, comes a commitment to the struggle for racial equality and a celebration of black leaders the world over. "We fight discrimination with protest songs," noted Arquimimo. "Our message is the same as Malcolm X, Marcus Garvey, Bob Marley or Martin Luther King Jr.; we're fighting for equality." While the effects of their appeals to black consciousness and racial equality are nearly impossible to gauge, they serve as powerful examples of Afro-Brazilian identity.

Films, Pop Music, and the Internet

The severe economic crises of the 1980s placed significant restraints on national film industries. Nevertheless, many of the veteran directors of the 1960s, as well as new generations of filmmakers, including many women, began producing high-quality feature films and documentaries, many with political and social content. Two films dealing directly with dramas during or immediately after the military dictatorships represented this genre. *La historia oficial* (The Official Story, 1985), directed by Luis Peunzo (b. 1946), told the story of the children of those disappeared in Argentina during the "Dirty Wars" of the 1970s and early 1980s. *O que é isso companheiro* (Four Days in September, 1997), directed by Bruno Barreto (b. 1955), recounted the 1969 kidnapping of the U.S. ambassador by urban guerrillas. Both films received international recognition.

The economic value of many of the films released over the last two decades, especially those from Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil, as well as their sophisticated scripts and outstanding acting, have made them competitive on the world market. Walter Salles (b. 1956) directed the touching film *Central do Brasil* (Central Station, 1998) about a child's search for his father in an arid, poverty-stricken region of northeastern Brazil. Veteran actor Fernanda Montenegro (b. 1929) received international praise for her leading role in the film. *Y tu mamá también* (And Your Mother Too, 2001) was a coming-of-age film of two young boys and a woman in her twenties who took a road trip with the political and social problems of contemporary Mexico as a backdrop. The film garnered many awards. *Diarios de motocicleta* (Motorcycle Diaries, 2004) continued the tradition of political themes with a romantic re-creation of Ernesto "Che" Guevara's youthful trip through Latin America before he joined the revolutionary forces that overthrew the Cuban dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1959.

The underside of life in Latin America, especially pressing problems of poverty and the impact of drug trafficking, has become another prominent subject for filmmakers. The *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro provided the setting for the 2002 Brazilian crime drama *Cidade de Deus* (City of God) that tracked the lives of generations of petty crooks and drug dealers and the violence imposed upon the city's residents. The joint Colombian-American production *Maria llena eres de gracia* (Maria Full of Grace, 2004) also addressed the impact of drugs on poor people's lives. The film followed the ordeals of a woman who agreed to transport

drugs to the United States when her family faced serious economic problems. Latin American cinematographers have also excelled at documentary filmmaking, focusing on topics ranging from immigration to environmental destruction.

Above all else, Latin American television and commercial music production have experienced significant growth over the last several decades. Although much television programming today is light entertainment for wide audiences, state-owned television and some national networks dedicate airtime to various types of culture. These include presentations of theatrical classics, historical documentaries, roundtable debates with intellectuals and authors, and programs about art. In some countries national networks have become billion-dollar conglomerates.

It is estimated that 80 to 95 percent of the populations of most countries have regular direct access to television. Viewer rates are slightly lower in rural areas and in poorer countries, but during telecasts of crucial soccer matches (especially the World Cup finals), entire countries appear to shut down as people gather with family and friends to view these all-important contests. Just as world-class soccer stars and baseball players have become export commodities to U.S. and European teams, *telenovelas* are now transmitted throughout the world, bringing multiple new images of Latin America to viewers in Miami, Mozambique, and Moscow.

Latin American pop music has penetrated international youth markets with increasing intensity since the 1970s when Bob Marley (1945–81) introduced Jamaican reggae to audiences in Europe and the United States. The performance of Jimmy Cliff (b. 1948) in the Jamaican film *The Harder They Come* (1972) created a romantic vision of gangsters and marijuana dealers in tropical Kingston. The demand for world music among discerning consumers from the north has produced a growing market for Latin sounds rooted in a diversity of national musical genres. Latino stars such as Ricky Martin (b. 1971) from Puerto Rico and Selena (1971–95, who blended Mexican *ranchera* traditions with American country, German polka, and Caribbean sounds) have offered crossover music that has reached wide audiences in Latin America and the United States.

More significantly, the Internet has revolutionized communication and culture in Latin America. Today large sectors of the middle class own computers, and cybercafés or similar businesses offer services for people to pay for Internet use by the minute. Many nongovernmental organizations have developed projects to help people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds gain access to the Internet. Locally based community programs have begun training youth to work with video cameras to produce films documenting their quotidian experiences. The cyber revolution has democratized access to culture, news, and information, and it has internationalized easy exchanges between scholars, writers, authors, and the public in general.

For all these reasons, Latin America is exerting increasing influence on the United States, the country that for so long looked down upon its southern neighbors. Cities such as New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, not to speak of Miami, have burgeoning Spanish-speaking communities. Large concentrations of Brazilians live in and around Boston, New York, and Miami. In recent years,

immigrants have moved to small towns and rural areas of the Midwest and the South. Music, dance, and cuisine are undergoing transformations. In 1992 salsa outsold ketchup for the first time in America. By 2006 the Latino population reached 43.2 million, and by 2050, it is estimated, Latinos will make up one-quarter of the U.S. population. Such change within America cannot fail to alter its beliefs about and attitudes toward Latin America.

And in the future, as in past centuries, the fate of Latin America will continue to depend on its relationship to the centers of international power. The region will remain a site of struggle, triumph, tragedy, and contradiction. Meanwhile, outsiders will continue to be startled and fascinated by what Gabriel García Márquez called “the unearthly tidings of Latin America, that boundless realm of haunted men and historic women, whose unending obstinacy blurs into legend.”