

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

FORUM

SUMMER 2007 | VOLUME XXXVIII | ISSUE 3

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The *LASA Forum* is published four times a year. It is the official vehicle for conveying news about the Latin American Studies Association to its members. Articles appearing in the *On the Profession* and *Debates* sections of the *Forum* are commissioned by the Editorial Committee and deal with selected themes. The Committee welcomes responses to any material published in the *Forum*.

Opinions expressed herein are those of individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Latin American Studies Association or its officers. Direct subscriptions to the *LASA Forum* only, without LASA membership, are \$50.00 per year.

ISSN 0890-7218

Helen Safa

Recipient of Silvert Award for 2007

Helen Safa is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and Latin American Studies at the University of Florida. She has been active in LASA since the early 1970s, when she was first elected to the Executive Council. She has not missed a single Congress since 1974 and has served on numerous Task Forces (later to become Sections) and advisory committees. In 1982 she was elected LASA Vice President, and served her Presidential cycle through 1986. Her primary initiative was to secure funding through the Ford Foundation for the first exchange agreement with Cuba, which subsequently grew into and remains a major component of LASA Congresses. Dr. Safa also was instrumental in the founding and growth of the Gender and Feminist Studies Section, which helped transform LASA from a largely North American male organization in the 1960s and early 70s into the more sexually, racially, and regionally diverse organization it is today. She is on the editorial board of the *Latin American Research Review* and other scholarly journals.

Dr. Safa has sought to enlarge the scope of Latin American Studies in her own academic institutions, first at Rutgers University and as Director of the University of Florida's Center for Latin American Studies from 1980 to 1985. A major focus at Florida has been on research in the Caribbean, taking advantage of the University's rich library resources there and the state's proximity to the region. Through the Caribbean Migration Program, funded by the Ford and Tinker Foundations, she encouraged students from the Caribbean to do graduate work in Florida; she also invited scholars from the region to serve as visiting professors. Safa also served as chair of the advisory committee for the American Republics of the CIES and on the review panel of the Inter-American Foundation doctoral fellowship program.

Dr. Safa's intense interest in Latin American and Caribbean studies was reflected in her first major monograph, *The Urban Poor of Puerto Rico*, published in 1974, and in *The Myth of the Male Breadwinner: Women and Industrialization in the Caribbean*, which appeared in 1995. The latter monograph compares women industrial workers in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic, demonstrating how women have become major contributors to the household economy in each of these countries; the impact of that contribution, however, is shown to be weakened by a public patriarchy that continues to view women as supplemental wage earners. *Sex and Class in Latin America* and *Women and Change in Latin America*, both co-edited with June Nash, reveal Safa's continuing interest in the social impact of women's paid labor force participation. With support from the Social Science Research Council, she co-organized with June Nash one of the first inter-American conferences on women and development, and her participation in the international women's movement contributed to another co-edited volume with Eleanor Leacock entitled *Women's Work*, supported by the Wenner-Gren Foundation.

Throughout her work, Dr. Safa has pursued an interest in the causes and consequences of inequality, focusing on class issues in her earlier work on poverty and urbanization, moving to gender in the 1970s and 1980s in the previously cited volumes, and now incorporating race. The intersection of class, gender, and race inequalities is strongly evident in the Caribbean, even in the family, where Dr. Safa argues that the prevalence of *matrifocal* or female-headed households can be explained by the difficulties black men confront in becoming providers. These difficulties have been enhanced since 1980 by structural adjustment and globalization, so that now many lower and middle-income



men in the region, regardless of race, no longer function as adequate providers. Dr. Safa initiated a three-year fellowship program at Florida, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, on Afro-American Identity and Cultural Diversity, culminating in a conference and a special issue of *Latin American Perspectives* entitled Race and National Identity in the Americas. Dr. Safa edited that issue while a resident scholar at the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio study center in Italy.

In addition to her books, Dr. Safa has published over 60 articles and book chapters on issues of poverty and urbanization, gender and development, social movements, *mestizaje*, and family structure. She has been a visiting professor at Dartmouth, Columbia, the Kellogg Institute of the University of Notre Dame, the Dominican Studies Institute at City College, Northwestern University, the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands, and, with the support of the Fulbright Program, the Universidad Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona and the Universidade Federal da Bahia. She received an award as a founder of Puerto Rican anthropology and a pioneer in Puerto Rican women's studies from the Puerto Rican Association of Anthropology and the American Ethnological Society. For her scholarly achievements, she also received the 2003 Conrad Arensburg award from the Society for the Anthropology of Work of the American Anthropological Association. ■

President's Report

by CHARLES R. HALE | University of Texas, Austin | crhale@mail.utexas.edu

As the 18 months of my presidency come to a close, I am pleased to report on some key initiatives that have come to fruition in this period. It is fitting that I post this column from Central America, where some 20 years ago I developed a basic orientation toward Latin American scholarship that later I would bring to the LASA presidency. This orientation embodies a preference for research problems that the subjects of our investigations view as important, for methods that emphasize collaboration and horizontal relations, and for scholarly rigor combined with an explicit commitment to social justice. Work in the LASA leadership as well as in conversations with colleagues in many Latin American countries—most recently Brazil and Cuba—has affirmed not only how widely shared these elements are, but also how differently they are interpreted and practiced. One of the biggest challenges of the LASA president, in my view, is to know how to take firm action consistent with one's principles and stated commitments, while at the same time respecting the broad pluralism of positions within our Association on a given substantive issue. Neither the firm action nor the pluralism can be sold short, and judgments eventually will be made about our success in combining the two.

Another equally great challenge is to guarantee the highest possible level of membership satisfaction regarding the organization and quality of the Congress. By the time this *Forum* reaches your hands, LASA2007 will be just weeks away, and I want to share with you my excitement for what we have in store. First, however, a note on Congress organization: our Association is blessed with a Secretariat that provides, each 18 months, an incredibly efficient, procedurally transparent, and yet remarkably adaptable system for making the Congress a logistical success. I have discussed many aspects of this system with

Milagros Pereyra-Rojas, our Executive Director, who along with her staff deserve the lion's share of the credit for producing LASA2007.

I am quite sure that the intellectual content of the Congress will meet and surpass expectations, thanks to the energy and commitment of the LASA members who have organized more than 1,000 panels, workshops, and special events. Here I will mention just a few components of LASA2007 that particularly stand out. I am extremely pleased to introduce an innovation in this year's program: a four-part series called "*Diálogos Políticos*" which features intellectuals who currently are political actors and will discuss their work in connection with the Congress theme, "After the Washington Consensus." The roster includes three prominent Latin Americans: Álvaro García Linera, Vice-President of Bolivia; Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada, President of the Cuban National Assembly; and Matilde Ribeiro, Minister of Racial Equality in Brazil. The fourth participant in the series is Canadian global justice activist and writer Naomi Klein, whose new book, *Disaster Capitalism*, will be released the week of the LASA Congress.

The Congress also features an exciting series of plenary sessions, listed in full at the front of the program. Here I will mention four. Aída Hernández Castillo (CIESAS, Mexico) has organized a featured plenary session titled, "De la Investigación-Acción Colaborativa a las Metodologías Dialógicas," on feminist collaborative research methods in Latin America; and Arturo Escobar and Marisol de la Cadena's session on "Co-laborando conocimientos y políticas alternativos" promises a spirited dialogue among intellectuals working at the crossroads of scholarship and social movement activism. Two invited plenary sessions that are sure to attract major



attention are: "Empire in Question: The Case of Venezuela" organized by Greg Grandin, who made a special effort to capture a wide range of views on the Chávez government and U.S.-Venezuela relations; and "The Struggle for Immigrant Rights: Activist Voices Form the Front Line" on immigration politics in the United States, organized by William Robinson and featuring three major actors in the immigration rights mobilizations of 2005 and 2006, with comments by two leading immigration scholars.

I am also thrilled to highlight plans associated with regular features of the Congress. It is a special honor for me to congratulate Helen Safa, recipient of the LASA2007 Kalman Silvert Award. Professor Safa has been a central figure in numerous LASA initiatives over her long and industrious career, a leader in feminist and gender studies, in critical race theory, and in the articulation of Caribbean scholarship within LASA—all crucial to the health and growth of our Association. I encourage you to attend the special session honoring Helen, which will feature a multi-generational panel of scholars speaking on her scholarship, pedagogy, and her contributions as a citizen-scholar. We also have the great privilege of hosting the eminent Colombian scholar, Orlando Fals-Borda, who will deliver the LASA/Oxfam America Martin Diskin Memorial Lecture for 2007. Professor Fals-Borda has inspired generations of younger academics across the Americas, myself included, with his pioneering writing on and practice of "*investigación-acción*." In recognition of the ten-year anniversary of the Lectureship, Diskin committee chair Brinton Lykes and I have made the event into a

double session to provide space for further reflection on the prospects for *investigación comprometida* in our times.

Please note, also, an important innovation in the Congress format, which we have devised in hopes of rejuvenating membership participation in the Business Meeting. It will be held at the normal time (Friday 8:00 pm, Grand Salon – Fairmont Hotel), with the usual items, though in a more compressed format, to allow time for a substantive statement by incoming LASA president Eric Herschberg focused on the future of our Association, followed by a question and answer period. Please attend this session to hear our new president's plans and priorities and to participate in important matters regarding our Association's governance!

Finally, there are three additional initiatives—involving much groundwork, extensive discussion, abundant time and energy, and generously donated resources—which I believe will make this Congress an especially important and high-quality scholarly event. First and foremost, I take this opportunity to extend a warm and hearty welcome to our Cuban colleagues, who will be attending the LASA Congress in an unfettered manner for the first time since the year 2000! As of this writing it is not clear how many of the over 200 accepted in the program will be able to attend, but it is sure to be a significant number of important academics, who will greatly enrich the Congress with scholarship on Cuba, Latin America, and U.S.-Latin America relations. Without pretense of addressing all the complexities involved in the complete integration of Cuban scholarship within LASA, I am deeply gratified that we have overcome the first and foremost barrier: categorical U.S. government prohibitions on freedom of travel and scholarly exchange. Second, as I write this column, a delegation of five LASA scholars, chaired by Matthew

Gutmann, are hard at work on a delegation to Oaxaca, Mexico to investigate alleged violations of academic freedom of scholars and intellectuals, in the context of social conflict and government repression there. The mandate of this delegation was extensively debated and finely crafted by our Executive Council, and it stands as a first case in a newly established set of guidelines for a “Committee on Academic Freedom,” which I hope the LASA EC will pass in its pre-Congress meeting this September. The decision to send this delegation to Oaxaca was not unanimous: EC member José Antonio Aguilar (CIDE, Mexico) cast a reasoned dissenting vote.¹ I hope that José Antonio and other skeptics, as well as those who support the principle of LASA taking this sort of action, will attend the session (Thursday 2:00 pm, Fundy – Hilton Hotel) where Gutmann and his colleagues report on their findings, and engage the audience in a discussion of academic freedom in Oaxaca.

I conclude this Congress preview with a brief note on *Otros Saberes*, an initiative to which I and many others, most notably EC member Lynn Stephen, have devoted major energy over the past two years. The first phase of the Initiative will culminate with a double session at the Congress (Saturday 10:00 am, Grand Salon – Fairmont Hotel) at which teams of civil society- and academy-based scholars will present preliminary results of their collaborative research, carried out over the past year. After the Congress they will participate in an intensive two-day workshop on their experiences with collaborative research methods. In these pages you have a preview of their presentations, with deep thanks to Vivian Newdick for her work as special editor of this section. We have high hopes that these culminating activities will confirm the founding premises of this Initiative, and make a resounding argument for *Otros Saberes* Phase II, focused on “Gender, Rights

and Citizenship among Indigenous and Afro-descendant Peoples.”

Welcome to Montréal! Enjoy this incredibly rich and diverse intellectual fare, and please take full advantage of the opportunities, both formal and informal, to participate in LASA governance. We want to hear your voices: what has been good and worthwhile in the efforts of LASA over the past 18 months, what has been lacking, and how we might do better. My final column, written just after the Congress, will reflect on precisely these questions.

¹ In the previous *Forum* (38:2), I represented the vote in favor of the delegation as “unanimous (one abstention)”. This was a mistaken reference to the vote on the draft guidelines of the Committee for Academic Freedom. The Oaxaca vote was 9 for, 1 against. My apologies for this error. José Antonio asked that he be identified as the dissenting vote, and I am glad to honor this request. ■

Associate Editor's Report

by ARTURO ARIAS | University of Redlands | Arturo_Arias@redlands.edu

Just prior to the convening of LASA's XXVII International Congress in Montréal, Canada, we decided to feature in this edition of the *Forum* two issues of major import for LASA's ongoing internal debate. Some of the articles in the *Debates* section are part of the ongoing research concern "*Otros Saberes*," led by President Charles R. Hale. *Otros Saberes* seeks to strengthen existing networks of civil society-based knowledge producers by allowing them to formulate research topics crucial to their work, recruit university-based researchers to work with them on these topics, and enhance their capacity to use research to advance their organizational goals. This initiative refocuses LASA's traditional political approach, which in the past had centered more on the dynamics of the political governing structure of Latin American nation-states and the social forces opposing it, to one highlighting civil society-based knowledge production, an initiative that attempts to bring alternative knowledge producers more centrally to university-based research agendas, and deepens LASA's capacity to participate in and influence contemporary policy and political debates. This effort also provides research grants to teams comprised of both indigenous- and/or Afro-Latin- and university based- knowledge producers.

Linked to *Otros Saberes*, and to the mandate of LASA's Strategic Plan, the *On the Profession* section explores the possibility of measuring racial and ethnic categories in Latin America. We were interested in exploring in this edition the fact that the Plan commits LASA to be more representative of the racial-ethnic diversity of the Latin American region. While these categories are fairly well established in the United States (although far from uncontested), in Latin America the practice of categorizing peoples according to racial-ethnic identity is much more fluid. As a

result, LASA keeps data on nationality and discipline, but none on identity. In this respect, our basic question would be, what categories should be used to define Latin American racial-ethnic identity if any should/could be used at all, and, if none, why not?

As with past issue-areas, questions are raised here about the boundaries of traditional fields of study, their premises and methods, their knowledge systems, and their values. Disciplines are challenged to rethink their roles in the context of the fluid transformations of the times, and continually reposition themselves vis-à-vis the many complex issues they face instead of retrenching to safer, more traditional boundaries that only address the past.

The first essay in the *Debates* section, "Develamos el mito de la democracia racial puertorriqueña" is by Jocelyn A. Géliga Vargas, Associate Professor of English at the University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez. The second article, "Investigadores comunales de Tuara guían la elaboración de diagnóstico para la demarcación y titulación de su territorio" is by Edwin Taylor and Mark Everingham. Edwin Taylor is the director of the Instituto de Estudio y Promoción de la Autonomía of the Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe de Nicaragua (URACCAN). Mark Everingham is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and Social Change at the University of Wisconsin, Green Bay. The third article in this section is written by Edizon León Castro, Director of the Fondo Documental Afro-Andino of the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar. It is titled "Produciendo saberes desde la religiosidad y la memoria." The fourth article, "Um inventário da tradição Wajãpi, articulando 'dois caminhos,'" is written by Dominique Tilkin Gallois, professor of Anthropology at the University of São Paulo and Director of

the Núcleo de História Indígena e do Indigenismo. Odilia Romero Hernández, member of the Central Committee of the Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales (FIOB) Los Angeles, California and Coordinator of Women's Issues wrote the fifth article, "Maintaining a Healthy Organization in the Face of Political Repression." The sixth and last article is "Territorios de vida, alegría, y libertad...Un diálogo de saberes por la defensa del territorio". This article is co-authored by Libia Grueso Castelblanco, a member of the national coordinating committee of Proceso de Comunidades Negras of Colombia and Arturo Escobar, Professor of Anthropology and Director of the Institute for Latin American Studies at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Vivian Newdick, a doctoral candidate in Anthropology at the University of Texas at Austin, compiled and edited these articles for the *Debates* section and wrote the introduction, "Desde Otros Saberes". The authors of the articles have received grants from the *Otros Saberes* initiative and will participate in an intensive workshop prior to the Montréal Congress. All have committed to work toward publication of their findings in both the United States and in Latin American venues. The first phase of *Otros Saberes* was focused on indigenous and Afro-Latin issues and future rounds will involve other civil society-based knowledge producers in such areas as gender, environment, worker and peasant rights, and youth cultures.

The *On the Profession* section begins with Judith Maxwell's "What's your eth?" Professor Maxwell begins by stating that people classify criteria on many scales, mobilizing them to structure countless interactions. In many instances these are deployed to differentiate otherness from a community or group to which a subject belongs. Though race as a classification has been debunked, Professor Maxwell points

out how it still is an active cultural construct in many places. This leads her to ask, “What hinges on ethnic or racial identity?” She points out a variety of issues, from deep-rooted social benefits that allow groups to maintain their cohesion, to assimilation to the colonizers’ cultures. All this leads her to conclude that ethnic identity matters, but that deciding what classifications to employ is challenging. After all, she claims, identities are strategically deployed and ethnic and racial terms do not connote the same things throughout Latin America—an idea that will reappear in all articles on this section. The author concludes that the only alternative is for LASA members to self-classify. Professor Judith Maxwell is chair of the Department of Anthropology, Tulane University.

Professor Javier Sanjinés makes a similar argument in “¿Usar o no categorías étnico-raciales? Ambigüedades y auto-reconocimiento.” He sees all classifications as “dudosamente objetivas y, por ende, criticables.” To his understanding, whatever classifications are indeed employed should have at least three traits: “a) el de las normas jurídicas vigentes; b) el de las categorías sociales, y, c) el de los indicadores operativos.” Professor Sanjinés then proceeds to explore each of these, before drawing conclusions similar to those of Professor Maxwell, namely that “la mejor forma (to classify) es a través de dos o más preguntas que respondan a más de una dimensión del concepto, incorporando la pregunta en base al auto-reconocimiento.” Professor Sanjinés is Associate Professor of Spanish in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan.

George Reid Andrews’s “Race Counts” questions whether LASA should gather data on its membership in the first place. He states that “the main argument against

gathering such data is that all racial identities, and many (perhaps most) ethnic identities, are the creation of post-1500 Western imperialism.” Social realities, however, force us to live with classifications and, in any case, “societies that gather census or survey data on race are in a far better position to identify, and try to remedy, patterns of inequality than societies that do not.” For all these reasons, international organizations have added racial data to censuses and surveys, and the resulting data have proven to be an indispensable resource. As Professor Andrews’s states, LASA’s increasing international standing complicates the process of gathering racial and ethnic data, given that “they prove to be highly variable by time and place, so that the same word can have quite different meanings and applications in different moments and settings.” Professor Andrews notes that in an organization such as LASA, there is a high potential for “miscommunication and misunderstanding” but that there is reasonable agreement on the use of certain categories listed in his article. He concludes by stating that “I am a firm believer in the value and importance of racial data; but like racial labels themselves, that value varies in different settings.” Professor George Reid Andrews is UCIS Research Professor of History at the University of Pittsburgh.

In the fourth article in this section, “The Problems of Measuring Race and Ethnicity,” Pauline Alberto and Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof open with a cautionary note. They are concerned about the bureaucratization of racial and ethnic categories that mean so many different things in the various countries of Latin America. They write that “the question of whether and how to count race in an organization like LASA, based in the United States but composed largely of Latin Americans, is made even more complicated by the history of U.S.-Latin American relations.” Inside the United States

itself, where “counting race for purely repressive purposes” shifted to “counting for purposes of addressing historical inequalities,” is seen as valid precedent. The authors recognize the legacy of colonialism as leaving an imprint on race, even as they caution LASA about “any system that would assign fixed identities that members would carry with them beyond the initial survey.” Pauline Alberto is Assistant Professor of History and Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan and Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof is Assistant Professor of History and American Culture at Michigan. ■

ON THE PROFESSION

What's Your eth?

by JUDITH M. MAXWELL | Tulane University | maxwell@tulane.edu

Humans are classifying animals. Many origin stories show the power of creation in naming, in identifying something or someone as a token of a type. Eototo, of the Hopi, creates animals by naming them; Ptah, of the ancient Egypt, orders the world by naming the things and beings in it. In Genesis, Adam is given dominion over the animals by learning their names. Platonic Greek philosophy invented the science of etymology in the hope that by knowing the "true name" *etymon* of something/someone one would gain control over it/them.

People classify themselves and others by many criteria and on many scales: kinship, natal community, occupation, social class, ethnicity, "race", religion, political party, sexual orientation. These scales are mobilized to structure various interactions. Kinship is often used to determine whom one should seek for a marriage partner, whom one can ask for financial aid, whom one can joke with, whom one can ask about sex, and whom one can go to, to have an "ow-ie" kissed and made "all better." Membership in a shared natal community can be mobilized for work levies (sandbagging against floods, cleaning irrigation ditches, neighborhood watches), for festivals (town patron saint day celebrations, block parties, founders' day), and for support of schools (bake sales, book drives).

Classifications aren't just about sharing traits, genes, or activities, affirming an in-group. They also differentiate "us" from "them". If you aren't "kin," then you are NOT part of the family. In some places, this limits entry to the home, or to places more intimate than the formal parlor. If you are not "from here," then you can't be trusted to understand how local society works. When "othering" limits the possibilities of the "others," the classifications are said to be discriminatory. Some discriminations are

less severe than others. In Toby Keith's song "High Maintenance Woman," he laments that "a high maintenance woman" (an attractive apartment owner) "don't want no maintenance man," even if he has "all the right tools." But there is the popular myth of the blue collar worker or *criada* who wins the heart and hand of a white collar or old-money elite.

Though "race" as an anthropological classification has been debunked through studies which document as much physical and cultural variation within "races" as across them, "race" is still an active cultural construct. In Louisiana one must state (and prove) one's race in order to get a marriage license. Race shows up as a category on the United States Census. The category "race" is activated in political campaigns. *Despite anti-discriminatory regulations, perceived racial categories affect housing patterns, employment opportunities, police strategies and court rulings.*

"Ethnicity" usually refers to a group identity based on a shared sense of origin, rooted in kin, and place. In parts of Latin America, the term *etnia* is used to refer to groups of indigenous people, sharing a heritage language and/or a heritage. Ethnic identity is mobilized to compete for development and human rights resources.

What hinges on ethnic or racial identity? In the United States recognized indigenous groups have rights as internal "nations;" they have rights to lands, self-governance and casinos. They have the right to issue and travel under their own passports. They have the right to maintain their languages, customs, and religious practices. Indigenous groups without federal recognition are typically engaged in legally pursuing such status.

In Guatemala, for example, ethnic identity comes into play everyday. When a woman wakes up in the morning, she must rapidly decide her identity for the day. Will she put on a skirt and blouse or an *uq* and *po't*? If she is indigenous by heritage and still living in an autochthonous community, deciding to wear Western clothing may draw criticism, stares, reduce merchants willingness to barter, and limit conversation on buses. If she is non-Indian, living in an urban area, deciding to wear indigenous clothing will draw questions from kin and co-workers, though a woven blouse (*po't*) alone or re-tailored indigenous cloth may bring expressions of approval.

Of course more is at stake than wardrobe and peer fashion pressure. Access to education, health care, jobs, political office, police protection and legal process is unevenly distributed between indigenous and non-indigenous Guatemalan citizens. Last August a family from Tecpán Guatemala journeyed into Guatemala city before dawn, so that they could baptize their three sons (ages 23, 18 and 13), having been unable for years to have this rite performed in their home community because the children had Mayan names and the Tecpán priest refused to baptize them with "names of animals" (in fact none of the names in question had animal referents).

Why would you maintain an ethnic affiliation or identity in the face of discrimination? Clearly there are deep-rooted social benefits that have allowed groups to maintain their cohesion despite more than 500 years of pressure to assimilate. The "classic" scenario of assimilation is that promoted by colonial powers: assimilation to the colonizers' cultures. In the United States indigenous children were taken from indigenous homes and fostered with white families or sent to Indian boarding schools where their native

languages, dress, and religious practices were prohibited. Despite varying policies of the Spanish crown towards education and proselytization in the native languages of Latin America, the over-arching policy has been to teach Spanish and to insist on it for political office, legal documentation (though there may be copies in native languages), and education (though bilingual education is now spreading).

Of course, not all pressure to assimilate comes from the hegemonic powers. With the “final” court settlement of the Hopi-Navajo land dispute, many Navajo families faced having to move from their hogans. Responding to Navajo protest and mobilization of the press, the Hopi president replied that they did NOT have to move, they could simply become Hopi. Tellingly no Navajo chose this option.

Ethnic identity matters. It matters to individuals and it seems to matter to institutions, both governmental and non-, as goods and services may be distributed along ethnic lines, or, inversely, a government may wish to ensure that no favoritism among ethnicities is displayed.

The United States Census in 2000 listed the following “racial” options: (a) American Indian or Alaska Native; (b) Asian; (c) Black or African American; (d) Native Hawai’ian or other Pacific Islander; (e) White; and (f) “some other race”. This last category will be eliminated in 2010 “to increase comparability.” Also in 2000 the survey allowed people to self-designate as having roots in “two or more races.” This was treated as a separate category rather than co-counting with categories (a-f). Interestingly, in 2000 many people who checked “other” specified their “race” as a religious group, e.g. Sunni, Zoroastrian.

This “blending” of categories shows that “racial” categories are about sense of self and sameness, cultural principles and practices, and not necessarily tied to physiognomy.

Many of the colonial racial classifications seemed on the surface to be “about” “blood.” Moreau de Saint Méry (1797) lists the categories of race found in Haiti, based on an assumption of 128 “parts”: *blanc* 128 parts white; *negre* 128 parts black; *mulâtre* 64 black, 64 white; *sacatre* 8-32 white; *griffe* 24-39 white; *marabou* 40-48 white; *quateron* 71-100 white; *métif* 101-112 white; *mamelouc* 113-120 white; *quateronné* 121 to 124 white; *sang-mêlé* 125-127 white.

In Guatemala racial mixing included indigenous populations as well as black and European. Mörner (1971) documents the following: *español*, *indio*, *mestizo*, *castizo*, *negro*, *mulato*, *morisco*, *albino* (offspring of a *morisca* and a Spaniard, not one lacking melanin), *torna atrás*, *lobo*, *zambaigo*, *cambujo*, *albarazado*, *barcino*, *coyote*, *chamizo*, *coyote mestizo*, *ahí te estás* (offspring of a *coyote mestizo* male and a *mulata*).

Wagley (Harris and Wagley 1958) notes that in Brazil different terms included *branco*, *sarará*, *cabo verde*, *cabra*, *mulato* and *preto*.

In Peru, the 1940 Census listed the categories: white, mestizo, Indian, Negro and Yellow (Chinese and Japanese) (Parró, p. 15). However, in processing the forms the census takers found they could not tell a difference between whites and mestizos (only 13 percent of the sample self-designated), so they simply combined these categories. Only one percent of the population was either Negro or Yellow. Final figures showed 53 percent of the population to be white/mestizo and 46 percent to be Indian.

In those areas of Latin America with heavy pre-contact indigenous populations, the careful blood quotient categories of colonial times have simplified to a two-valued opposition. In Mexico, despite la raza ideology, chief divide is between *mestizos* and *indios*. In Guatemala, the duality is characterized as *ladinos* and *indígenas* (though *indio* is still a pejorative term). In Bolivia and Peru, it is *cholos* and *indios*. These categories are largely cultural.

The 1995 Peace Accord on Indigenous Rights in Guatemala (Minugua 1996) lists traits that would make someone an indigene, thus eligible for its protections. These traits are (1) indigenous language; (2) indigenous descent; (3) indigenous cultural practices/dress; (4) indigenous cosmology; (5) self-attribution. Though essentialist descriptions are out of favor among anthropologists and the Guatemalan census has not listed determinants for indigeneity since 1953 (dirt floor houses, indigenous dress, sandals rather than closed shoes, indigenous language), Guatemalans often make initial “racial” attributions on the basis of appearance and language. The salience of such exterior markers is eroding. An urban joke features two male office workers, who meet at a bus stop on Sunday, each accompanied by his wife, who is wearing indigenous clothing. The first man says to his co-worker, “I didn’t know you were Indian.” The second replies, “Oh? Just look at my wife.”

If we grant that ethnic/racial classifications are useful and that efforts to “increase diversity” require some knowledge of the current group composition, what classifications should we use? Taking the Americas as the target population, which labels and whose should be used? The colonial labels reflect both Eurocentric prejudice and the desire of the elites to keep power in their hands and to control the

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labor pool supplied largely by other ethnicities. Terms tend to be value laden, with whites and their labels at the top of the scale, though in is a commonplace adage in Brazil that “money lightens the skin”.

Still we know that in-groups are positively valued and out-groups distrusted. Kindergartners in the New Orleans Recovery District schools (Walton *personal communication*) use the following classification, based loosely on color: blue black, boot black, dark, chocolate or brown, high yellow, bright (divided into red, high yella, and bright bright), mix, café au lait, pass the paper bag test, passé blanc. White is defined by the children not as “color” but as “mean people.” An overarching classification, based on class and descent, rather than color is *Creole* vs. *Black*. Former Mayor “Dutch” Morial was famous among New Orleans African-Americans for having been “creole” in high school and college, but switching to “black” when he entered politics.

Identities are strategically deployed. Which identities are strategic for members of LASA? Ethnic and racial terms are not uniformly deployed throughout Latin America. *Indio* is an activist’s term of choice in Chiapas, but an insult on out-group lips in Guatemala. *Ixto*, another term for Indians in Guatemala, is derogatory no matter the speaker. In some Francophone areas, *indigene* is seen as colonial and paternalistic, with *autoctone* as the preferred term. The terms *Native American* and *First Nations* are not widely used outside the United States. Hegemons are variously known as *white*, *Caucasian*, *blanco*, *branco*, *mestizo*, *criollo*, *creole*, *Krio*, *cholo*, *ylo* *ladino*. Other ethnic terms include *chino*, *sambo*, *negro*, *bozal*. Self-identification varies as the scope of contrast expands or contracts. Dr. Enrique Sam Colop (*personal communication*) notes that at any given time

he might be indigenous, Guatemalan or K’iché. A registration form asking for ethnicity might get any number of responses from Bribri to Canardly (“can hardly tell”). One could go for broad categories linked to social theories: *hegemon* vs. *subaltern*. Still some members may reject the positioning of an autochthonous identity as “sub.” One could also allow for the possibility of noting both “descent” and alignment, e.g. “of European descent but aligned with original peoples of the Americas,” though this perhaps smacks of the trite “some of my best friends.”

A first approximation for mapping the current ethnic diversity of the LASA membership, with an eye toward increasing variety, could be simply to ask people to fill in the blank: ethnicity _____. The variation could then be analyzed to see if any “natural” groups emerge. A second survey might offer a series of labels and track responses: indio _____, indígena _____, native _____, autochthon _____, of European descent/heritage _____, of African descent/heritage _____, mestizo _____, criollo _____, creole _____, ladino _____, mixed _____, American _____, other (please specify) _____. The results of the two surveys might indicate to categories which, if not completely complementary and exhaustive, LASA members might willing self-ascribe. ■

Ambigüedades y auto-reconocimiento

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¿Usar o no categorías étnico-raciales?

Aunque las categorías étnicas y raciales están claramente delimitadas en los Estados Unidos, no por ello dejan de ser dudosamente objetivas y, por ende, criticables. Los formularios oficiales, tanto de las reparticiones gubernamentales, como los que las instituciones públicas y privadas emplean para la identificación étnica, muestran una taxonomía relativamente simple y genérica que podría calificársela de “rotulación negativa” porque no contempla los derechos de aquellos sectores minoritarios que no se encuentran debidamente autoidentificados en dichos formularios.

La propia categoría “Hispanic”, con la que terminamos clasificados la gran mayoría de los latinoamericanos, es reduccionista porque se desentiende del importante factor de la “autopercepción”, tema que consideramos fundamental cuando de delimitar categorías étnico-raciales se trata.

Si el asunto de las categorías étnicas y raciales es un tema conflictivo que no está apropiadamente resuelto por la nomenclatura empleada en los Estados Unidos, en América Latina el tema se torna todavía más complejo, precisamente porque las identidades étnico-raciales son mucho más fluidas, y debido a la enorme importancia que tiene hoy garantizar la plena vigencia de los derechos ciudadanos. Surge, entonces, la pregunta: ¿qué categorías deberían ser empleadas para definir dichas identidades? Y, en consecuencia, ¿cuáles deberían ser las que LASA debería tomar en cuenta si decide llevar a cabo un registro étnico-racial de sus afiliados?

La respuesta a un tema complejo no puede ser de efecto reducido. Nos parece que la definición de estas categorías debería contemplar por lo menos tres tipos de

factores: a) el de las normas jurídicas vigentes; b) el de las categorías sociales, y c) el de los indicadores operativos. Revisémoslos, sin detenernos en detalles.

Es imposible pensar en categorías étnico-raciales sin revisar lo que las normas jurídicas establecen en torno a quienes son considerados como sujetos de derecho. Desde el prisma legal, definir criterios para identificar a los diferentes sectores sociales, particularmente a las poblaciones indígenas largamente postergadas, es un hecho ineludible. Es necesario revisar las reformas legales producidas en América Latina durante las últimas décadas para determinar las nuevas formas de identidad nacional que los países están adoptando. No es lo mismo afirmar el “plurinacionalismo” que el “multiculturalismo”, tal cual éste es practicado en los Estados Unidos. Si el primero está asentado en un sistema jurídico que promueve la interacción transversal de los ciudadanos, aceptando la presencia de “naciones” dentro de una nación, el segundo, es decir, la teoría moderna del multiculturalismo, se traduce en un multiétnicismo en el que el intercambio de las diferentes etnias simplemente no se da. De esta manera, el armazón jurídico norteamericano responde al de una sociedad multiétnica que padece, sin embargo, de un aislamiento interétnico. Por el contrario, en varios países de América Latina la norma jurídica se va adaptando a situaciones creadas por una fuerte presión social de naturaleza étnico-racial, que invoca un pluralismo que hoy en día va más allá de la impenetrable exigencia de la unicidad excluyente.

En América Latina, las nuevas reformas legales tienen como marco de referencia la definición amplia que sobre los grupos étnico-raciales, incluidos los pueblos indígenas y tribales, da el Convenio 169 de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo

(OIT). En este Convenio, aprobado en Ginebra en 1989, y ratificado como principal instrumento jurídico internacional por la mayoría de los Estados latinoamericanos, se estipula, en su artículo 1º, que la identificación étnico-racial es un tema de “conciencia” y de “autopercepción” de los sujetos identitarios. Ello lleva a tratar el segundo factor arriba expuesto, es decir, el relacionado con las categorías sociales, tanto objetivas como subjetivas.

Hablar de categorías sociales implica dos factores identitarios: a) aquéllos que indican una forma propia de vida, y b) la propia conciencia, es decir, la autopercepción de los sujetos identitarios. Los primeros, como la lengua, el territorio, y otros datos objetivos, responden a una situación “en sí” de gran importancia para ponderar el peso demográfico de las distintas poblaciones, mientras que la segunda es una situación “para sí” que conlleva un inevitable factor subjetivo.

Las categorías sociales “blanco”, “mestizo”, “mulato”, “indio” y “negro”, están todas atravesadas por la mirada colonial que establece las diferencias y las jerarquizaciones a partir de las cuales se ha constituido tradicionalmente el poder. No es, pues, gratuito el hecho de que el sector “blanco-mestizo” hubiese ejercitado su dominación política y social sobre las otras categorías sociales, fundándose en estas divisiones raciales. En términos de las identidades étnico-raciales nos parece indispensable superar estas divisiones categoriales. A fin de promover la conciencia y la identidad de los encuestados, las prácticas estadísticas están optando por la lengua y por el territorio como marcas claves del modo propio de ser que distingue a unos grupos sociales de otros. Por eso, cuando los pueblos, “invisibilizados” por quienes otorgan identidad desde el poder, mantienen su lengua y su territorio, no hay

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duda de que también retienen distintivos apropiados para ponderar su peso demográfico y su evolución en el tiempo. Por lo mismo, en sociedades sometidas a la dominación colonial, mantener—y, a veces, incluso recuperar—la lengua y el territorio propios ha constituido una situación “en sí” que las luchas de las organizaciones sociales tienen hoy muy en cuenta. En realidad, estos objetivos de la lucha identitaria son parte central de la estrategia de mantener, desarrollar y transmitir su cultura y asegurar la pervivencia del grupo social con una identidad específica. Naturalmente, el idioma no es el único factor de identificación de los sectores sociales insuficientemente representados. Pero dejar de hablar la lengua no significa dejar de pertenecer a un determinado pueblo o grupo étnico. Entonces, otro factor objetivo como el territorio pasa a ser la marca clave de la pertenencia, del propio modo de ser.

A los factores “en sí” aquí someramente descritos, habrá que añadir los factores “para sí” que subrayamos porque nos parece que son de suma importancia en la construcción de las categorías identitarias. Como veremos a continuación, es a partir de ellos que los registros raciales, deleznable y parciales, son superados por registros de pertenencia más específicos y no simplemente genéricos como son las denominaciones “indígena” o “mestizo”.

La importancia de este conjunto de factores, relacionada con la conciencia y con la autopercepción de los grupos sociales, ha sido enfatizada por el Convenio 169 de la OIT que hemos mencionado. Lo recuperamos para remarcar que si la lengua y el territorio son rasgos objetivos que marcan el “en sí” de los grupos sociales que luchan por la reivindicación de sus identidades étnicas y raciales, la propia conciencia de pertenencia añade el

sentimiento que tiene la gente sobre esta reivindicación.

Dato preponderantemente subjetivo, la autopertenencia puede estar fundada en elementos objetivos, como el lugar de nacimiento y la ascendencia familiar, pero su carácter subjetivo y “para sí” está asentado en el sentir del momento. De este modo, la propia conciencia de pertenencia no se ocupa tanto de la identidad—del registro racial supuestamente objetivo—como de la propia identificación de los sujetos respecto a su grupo social de pertenencia. Esto quiere decir, además, que la identidad social y la autoidentificación no son datos “pétreos”, inamovibles, sino una construcción social que se va haciendo y rehaciendo como resultado del juego de relaciones e incluso de diversas estrategias de sobrevivencia y de convivencia. Hay que tener muy en cuenta el carácter peyorativo que a veces conllevan términos como “indio” o como “indígena”. Las cargas afectivas están ahí y condicionan las respuestas de los encuestados. Al efectuar categorizaciones étnicas y raciales, el tema de la autopercepción ayuda a disolver reacciones negativas. No suscita la misma reacción preguntarle a alguien si es “indio”, que preguntarle si es “guaraní” o “maya”. La diferencia es clara: si “indio” es una nomenclatura racial reductiva y marginante, “dada” por otros que nos recuerdan el hecho colonial, “maya” o “guaraní” son entidades concretas que reflejan mejor la percepción propia, es decir, cómo los encuestados se identifican a sí mismos. Inclusive términos mucho más positivos como “mestizo” pueden funcionar más como escapatoria que como una identidad positiva. Por ello, nos parece que la autopertenencia es un elemento decisivo a la hora de definir a un grupo identitario no solamente por elementos objetivos (el idioma), sino por la aceptación expresa de los individuos que aceptan ser parte de una determinada comunidad. Esto se

perfecciona, naturalmente, por medio del último de los factores enumerados: los indicadores operativos, es decir, los instrumentos mecánicos que permiten la identificación.

Si LASA decide adoptar un registro étnico-racial, tendrá que tener en cuenta la manera cómo los factores objetivos y subjetivos han sido tratados en los censos y en las encuestas nacionales. Entendiendo que no existe la solución perfecta, nos parece, sin embargo, que se debe tener particular cautela en identificar y clasificar de acuerdo a lo que censos y encuestas han tradicionalmente llamado “raza”. Nos parece que este registro refuerza implícitamente la imagen de situaciones discriminantes en que son los otros quienes tildan a alguien de “algo”. Por ello, optamos por aconsejar la construcción de registros que clasifican teniendo en cuenta la autopertenencia concreta que recupera las demandas evitando los rótulos genéricos. De otro modo, quizás sea más prudente dejar de elaborar registros de identidad étnico-raciales.

Debemos incidir nuevamente en el tema de la naturaleza multiétnica y plurilingüe de gran parte de las naciones latinoamericanas, hecho que las distingue del multiculturalismo ejercitado en los Estados Unidos.

Lo multiétnico va ligado a la toma de conciencia de los pueblos indígenas otrora postergados. Su lucha no está únicamente ligada a principios abstractos como el respeto a los derechos humanos, sino relacionada con la necesidad concreta de ser reconocidos como seres humanos. Ha sido toda una evolución censal la que se ha producido a fin de incorporar preguntas que vienen de dos vertientes distintas: la lingüística tradicional y la autopertenencia. Así, la pregunta abierta: ¿qué idiomas y dialectos sabe hablar? ha sido seguida por la

pregunta: ¿a qué pueblo o comunidad pertenece? En este sentido, los censos y las encuestas más exitosos han sido aquéllos que han dedicado sus esfuerzos a la selección, ampliación y precisión de preguntas que toman en cuenta los factores objetivos y subjetivos que hemos indicado. De este modo, preguntas sobre el origen étnico, con respuestas precodificadas de acuerdo con los registros raciales archiconocidos, deben ser seguidas por otras que tienen en cuenta la autopertenencia a determinado tipo de comunidad. Hay que ser plenamente conscientes de que los resultados van a ser notablemente distintos si se emplean sólo categorías genéricas desprovistas de datos más concretos de autopertenencia. Es de notar que el empleo del término “indígena” ha cambiado por el de “originario”, hoy aceptado por las legislaciones latinoamericanas.

El empleo generalizado del término “mestizo” conlleva también su propia paradoja. En encuestas pasadas, llevadas a cabo en varios lugares de América Latina, se observa la dificultad de saber si, al optar por “indígena” o por “mestizo”, los encuestados se decidieron correctamente por una o por la otra. No marcar la primera pudo ser el resultado de ese rechazo que hemos indicado, producto de las discriminaciones seculares. Pudo también ser que los encuestados se decidieron por la categoría “mestizo” debido a que en ellos primó el estilo de vida más “modernizado”, o incluso la ocupación o el nivel de ingresos. No era entonces de extrañar que fuese la duda la que diese lugar a encarnizadas polémicas de si la población era mayoritariamente indígena o mestiza.

Por todo lo indicado, lo prudente sería levantar registros que definen la identidad étnico-racial evitando las ambigüedades señaladas. Se sugiere que la mejor forma es a través de dos o más preguntas que

respondan a más de una dimensión del concepto, incorporando la pregunta en base al auto-reconocimiento. Lo contrario, redundará en la construcción de registros que, como los que rigen en los Estados Unidos, terminan dando ese “rótulo negativo” que debería ser eliminado desde todo punto de vista.

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ON THE PROFESSION

Race Counts

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Should LASA gather data on the ethnic and racial composition of its membership? And if it does gather such data, what racial and ethnic categories should it use?

The main argument against gathering such data is that all racial identities, and many (perhaps most) ethnic identities, are the creation of post-1500 Western imperialism. Nowhere in the world is that unhappy past more visible than in Latin America, where present-day black, brown, indigenous, mestizo/mestiço, ladino, white, and other racial and color labels have deep historical roots in the experience of Spanish and Portuguese rule. (Wade 1997) By asking its members to apply those labels to themselves, will LASA be working to further reinforce and cement in place a colonial inheritance that most of us would prefer to leave behind?

Our preferences are one thing, however, and the social realities with which we live are quite another. Racial identities, practices, structures, and prejudices are as deeply embedded in societies today as they were one, two, or three centuries ago. While having little or no basis in biology, they have very strong foundations in historical and cultural memory and present-day social practice. Racial identities and hierarchies will not disappear during our lifetimes. We therefore need to pay close attention to them, to study them, and to ask questions about them.

Statistical data on race and ethnicity are a principal tool for such study and analysis. Societies that gather census or survey data on race are in a far better position to identify, and try to remedy, patterns of inequality than societies that do not. Racial data are also powerful weapons in the hands of groups and social movements seeking to combat racial inequality. Census data demonstrating the extent and consequences

of racial inequalities in education played a central role in the 1954 Supreme Court decision overturning segregation in the United States. Data on racial inequality in education, earnings, employment, life expectancy, and other social indicators have proven equally valuable to activists pushing for racial remedies in Brazil.

For all these reasons, the UN, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and other international organizations have called on Latin American governments to add racial data to their censuses and household surveys, and in recent years some governments have responded. The resulting data are an indispensable resource to scholars, activists, and policy makers seeking to understand and remedy patterns of inequality in their countries. (Ferreira 2002; Putnam 2004; DANE 2005)

Does it make sense for an academic association to gather racial data on its members? My own disciplinary association, the American Historical Association, believes that it does. In addition to gathering data on its members, the AHA also tracks the racial composition of students earning Ph.D.'s in history at U.S. universities each year. Those data show some interesting changes over time. Minority representation (African Americans, Hispanics, Asian-Americans, and Native Americans) among new history Ph.D.'s (those earning Ph.D.'s in a given year) was at its highest in the late 1970s, peaking in 1979 at 16 percent. Minority representation among new Ph.D.'s then declined in the first half of the 1980s to 10 percent, rebounded in the second half of that decade (to 14 percent in 1987), fell again in the early 1990s and has been on the increase since 1993. In 2004, the most recent year for which published data are available, 15 percent of new Ph.D.'s in history were earned by members of racial and ethnic minorities—a level slightly lower

than 25 years earlier, but considerably higher than the early 1980s. (Townsend 2002; Hoffer 2005: 49)

AHA gathers such data as part of its general mission of tracking trends in the historical profession. That mission, however, is somewhat different from LASA's. Though it seeks actively to promote international exchange and collaboration among historians around the world, AHA's primary role is to represent the interests of the national historical community in the United States. LASA was founded in the 1960s with a similar goal: to represent the field of Latin American Studies in the United States. But it has evolved greatly over time and now aspires to serve a genuinely global community of scholars who study Latin America.

LASA's increasingly international character greatly complicates the issue of gathering racial and ethnic data. As much distinguished scholarship by LASA members has shown, ethnic and racial labels are a vast conundrum. A baffling mixture of vague indeterminacy and rock-hard specificity, their use is dependent on innumerable social and cultural cues and contexts; as a result, they prove to be highly variable by time and place, so that the same word can have quite different meanings and applications in different moments and settings.

This is even more the case when one crosses national boundaries. Latin American members' primary ethnic identification when they are in the United States—Hispanic—does not exist in their home countries. Conversely, my own ethnic identification in Latin America, as explained to me jokingly by an Uruguayan friend—"más gringo no puede ser"—disappears when I return to the United States and am surrounded by people who are, in fact, even more gringo (less

familiar with Latin America and less tuned into local usage there) than I am.

What racial and ethnic identifiers would LASA ask its members about: the ones applied to us when we go abroad, or the ones we use in our home countries? Probably the latter. But in either case, how helpful will it be to know the racial and ethnic composition of this highly diverse, multinational community of scholars? What use will we make of the findings? How will we even evaluate the findings? What if, for example, we find that members of LASA who identify themselves as white outnumber members who identify themselves as non-white by a factor of X? Against what standard do we measure X? Against the racial and ethnic composition of the countries from which LASA members come (most of which lack census data on race)? Against the ethnic and racial composition of other academic associations (most of which, again, probably lack such data)? If against countries, do we add those countries together to produce a hemispheric total? Do we trace national groups of members back to their countries of origin? Or do we look somewhere else entirely?

Meanwhile, to what government or institution do we take our findings? Toward what purpose, and with what policy recommendations? After the last 20-30 years of agitation by indigenous and black movements, what Latin American governments are unaware that nonwhites are under-represented in higher education in their countries? How much substance would data on LASA members really add to those debates?

But still, one is curious: what ethnic and racial terms *would* LASA members use to describe themselves? How many such terms would they use, and what kinds of terms? And how would those terms correlate, if at

all, to other social markers (national origin, gender, income, etc.) recorded on the membership form? One wonders what such data would show, just as one wonders what racial census data would look like in countries that do not currently gather them.

If LASA were to gather such data, what racial and ethnic terms would we ask members to use? Even within national communities, which have at least some basic shared understandings of racial labels and their meanings, the politics of racial labeling and categorizing can be highly contentious. (Nobles 2000) In a cross-national, cross-cultural organization like LASA, this will be even more the case, with high potential for miscommunication and misunderstanding. Nevertheless, there is sufficient convergence among racial categories used in American (in the hemispheric sense) censuses to suggest the following categories as a starting point for discussion:

*Afrodescendiente/afrodescendente/
African-American*

Asiático/asiático/Asian

Blanco/branco/white

Indígena/indígena/Native American

Mestizo/mestiço (or moreno)/racially mixed

*Otro (especificar)/outro (especificar)/
other (specify)*

Another option would be to use a completely open-ended format, with no pre-established categories. Rather, members would be asked to enter whatever racial/ethnic term or terms that, in their minds, most accurately describe them. The advantage of this procedure is that it provides maximum freedom to respondents and more accurate information on how they see themselves; the potential drawback is that the resulting diversity of responses might be so great as to make analysis of the

data very difficult. When an open-ended approach of this kind has been used in Brazilian surveys and censuses, respondents have replied with over 100 racial and color labels. However, three-quarters of respondents assign themselves to one of two categories (white or *moreno*), and another 22 percent to five other categories. (Telles 2004: 82-83) One wonders whether LASA members would display a similar tendency to cluster in a few common categories.

LASA members would also be free, of course, not to respond to this question, and some would doubtless take that option. Members from Brazil, Canada, the United States, and other countries that routinely gather data on race or color are accustomed to selecting racial labels for themselves; but members from countries that do not gather racial data may bridle at such a request. Which brings me to a final suggestion: before deciding whether to gather racial and ethnic data, LASA needs to consult its members. This proposal cannot be imposed from above; rather, it needs to be put to a vote and decided democratically. I am a firm believer in the value and importance of racial data; but like racial labels themselves, that value varies in different settings. Governments and official agencies badly need racial data, since they can't keep making informed decisions on social and economic policy without them. International professional associations' need for such data is less pressing. With the *Otros Saberes* initiative, and its various Sections and Congress tracks devoted to research on racial and ethnic issues, LASA is already hard at work in this area. If its members want to supplement those initiatives by gathering racial data on themselves, then fine, let's do it. And if they don't want to gather such data, then fine, let's not.

Having attended many Congresses over the years, and not a few *Grandes Bailes*, I

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cannot resist closing with some hypotheses to be tested against the data that LASA may someday gather.

(1) For reasons given above, I suspect that non-responses will be significant, perhaps as high as 20-25 percent.

(2) Among those who do respond, how many will opt for "white"? I would guess 70-80 percent. Two factors might hold that number down: first, some respondents might decide to enter their nationality (e.g., Argentine, or Brazilian) rather than a color or racial term. This would correspond to a tradition in much of Latin America of conceptualizing nationality in terms of a national "race." Second, some respondents may want to signal their support for Latin American ideals of race mixture (see below, point 4).

(3) Afro-descendent (or variants thereof) and indigenous (or variants thereof, including specific indigenous ethnic groups) combined will be 5-10 percent, probably closer to 5.

(4) In addition to "no response," the other wild card in this exercise will be terms denoting race mixture: *mestizo*, *moreno* (in Brazil), and others. Some members may opt for these terms for reasons suggested in point 2 above. Others, however, will find it difficult to turn their backs on whiteness.

The more I think about it, the more I would like to see these data. I hope we get the chance to.

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The Problems of Measuring Race and Ethnicity

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There are many reasons why we, as historians, might worry that LASA would take it upon itself to measure race and ethnicity among its members. One is the impossibility of designing a set of bureaucratic categories that could reflect the complexity of individual identities. This is particularly daunting in an organization with a membership from many societies, each engaged in distinct conversations about race, color, and ethnicity, and each with different expectations about how such identities or markers will be counted. In the United States and Puerto Rico, for instance, the census and a wide range of social institutions count “race,” a set of categories based on descent. Some countries in Latin America, like Brazil, count by “color” as well as recognizing the ethnic category “indígena.” Other countries, like Argentina and Venezuela, do not count either color or race regarding people of European and African descent, but do recognize membership in indigenous communities. Meanwhile, popular ideas about racial or ethnic identity vary widely from place to place, and often stand at odds with official methods of counting. Not only do most attempts to measure race and ethnicity do an imprecise job of reflecting the various ways that people in the Americas imagine themselves, but as most scholars now believe, these institutional attempts at counting do not measure any underlying “reality” of racial or ethnic identifications. They generally reflect much more closely the ways that politicians and bureaucrats imagine race and project it onto diverse populations.

The question of whether and how to count race in an organization like LASA, based in the United States but composed largely of Latin Americans, is made even more complicated by the history of U.S.-Latin American relations. As we write this article we are in Brazil, where pitched debate over the implementation of race-based affirmative

action policies for higher education and government posts turns precisely on the question of whether a focus on race (particularly on “blackness”), and on race-based quotas, stems from a U.S. experience rather than a Brazilian one. In the eyes of opponents, the fact that affirmative action seems to come from the United States is evidence that the project is ill-suited to Brazil’s distinct dynamics of racial identification and politics. This argument is in keeping with long-standing claims that Brazil is fundamentally different from the United States in its racial formation and relations. The idea that Brazil has a flexible system of color identification, extensive racial and cultural mixture, and absence of legal discrimination, *unlike the United States*, has been a source of pride for many elite and non-elite, white and non-white Brazilians. These arguments are common in many other parts of Latin America. Differences between racial formations and systems of counting race in the United States and Latin America, both real and imagined, have long been at the center of official and popular Latin American ideologies of national identity and integrity.

Those who support race-based affirmative action here in Brazil respond that these claims to national difference hide practices of systematic (if not legalized) discrimination that have historically functioned in much the same way as anti-black discrimination in the United States. This kind of argument too is familiar in many Latin American contexts, where projects to expose racial inequalities seek explicitly to challenge historical claims about racelessness or racial harmony. In some contexts, activists look favorably on racial enumeration as a means to demonstrate racial inequality. Brazil’s *Movimento Negro*, for instance, has attempted since the late 1970s to replace the color categories “preto” and “pardo” with “negro” (a race- or descent-based category

similar to the U.S. category “black”). Creating statistics that count all African descended people as “negro,” they argue, will make the realities of Brazilian racism more evident. In other contexts, such as Argentina, activists recognize that the failure (since the late 19th century) to count indigenous and African-descended people has helped make those populations invisible, buttressing a discourse of a homogeneous white nation. Yet if there are obvious ways in which counting race and/or color differently might help to combat varied kinds of racism in Latin America, such projects run the risk of opening an even wider gap between official ways of counting and popular forms of identity. Most Brazilians whom activists in the *Movimento Negro* would like to count as “negro,” for instance, do not see themselves as such. For many activists, this general reluctance to accept the category of “negro” reflects a false consciousness produced by national myths of mixture and racial harmony. In this situation, counting by race provides an opportunity for activists to educate African-descended people about their true identities.

As historians of race in Latin America, we are both strong proponents of the idea that race is a social construct that operates differently in different local contexts and at different historical moments. We particularly do not believe that popular identities in Latin America are simply false consciousness, or the result of mystifying discourses that hide underlying racial “realities.” But by the same token, we are skeptical of Latin American discourses that try to fix and naturalize “national” or “Latin” racial systems in opposition to the United States. While race indeed operates differently in different places, local racial systems grew out of parallel institutions and common international discourses, and they were always substantially constituted through contact with one another. In

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defining and debating racial questions, Latin Americans have borrowed, translated, and combined a range of ideas about racial identities and politics. Anti-racist causes—even ones that make use of discourses of “blackness”—are no more foreign to Latin America than racial hierarchies. We should not avoid taking stock of race or talking about race among ourselves for fear of imposing a U.S. concern where it does not belong.

Still, even if we can set aside our concerns about counting race, color, and ethnicity, we might ask the question, “Why ought we to count them?” We should count them, we believe, because the shift in the United States from counting race for purely repressive purposes, to counting for purposes of addressing historical inequalities, is a useful one. As members of an American institution (in the continental sense), we ought to recognize that all of our many societies emerged from processes of colonization and nationalism that placed European cultures and varied formulations of whiteness above both African and indigenous cultures and phenotypes. Although the precise meanings of whiteness, blackness, indigeneity, and mixture may vary widely according to local contexts, all of our societies have historical and ongoing structural barriers that disproportionately bar people who are not white and not culturally European from higher education and academia. Our institutions of higher learning have been especially resistant to indigenous forms of knowledge production. At the same time, the asymmetrical relationship between the United States and Latin America has helped to create a population of more than 40 million people of Latin American descent living inside the United States. While this group is heterogeneous in terms of class, color, and nationality, as a whole its members experience extremely restricted access to higher education. LASA is perhaps

not in a position to radically transform these structural barriers. But we fully support its stated goals of increasing outreach to, and membership from, three major historically excluded groups: indigenous people, Afro-Latin people, and U.S. Latinos. To that end, strategically adopting the project of counting seems necessary, for how are we to know what is needed or what is working if we do not take stock of who we are?

We support such an attempt, and have some ideas about how to begin the conversation. First, we strongly oppose any system that would assign fixed identities that members would carry with them beyond the initial survey. If we count race, color, and ethnicity, it should only be toward the goal of creating a portrait of the whole organization, not to create official categories of membership marked or conditioned by these descriptors. This may seem self-evident, but given the varied ways that these categories are deployed in our many societies, it is worth being absolutely clear on this matter. The Dominican government, for instance, assigns color categories on national identification cards, and that identification potentially influences every interaction with the state. LASA should make it plain that it is not collecting racial profiles of individuals, and that it will only store the collected information in aggregate, not as part of individual membership files. Moreover, we believe that giving this sort of information should be entirely optional for members.

Second, we suggest that two questions about race, ethnicity, and color be posed to the membership. The first should be wholly open-ended. It should explain LASA’s stated goal of mapping the diversity of its membership in the interest of inclusiveness. It should then allow each member to write in a description of her racial or ethnic identity (or to leave the space blank). We feel that open-ended self-identification is a crucial

condition for collecting this sort of information, since simply asking members to choose from a set of fixed categories is likely to create feelings of alienation for many who might look at the list and not recognize themselves among its options. We know from personal and anecdotal experience that many Latin Americans experience this feeling when first presented with the racial categories on forms and applications in the United States. Indeed, when the United States added the category “some other race” to the census in 1990, two-fifths of Latinos immediately began to select it—about the same percentage as chose the category “white.” What is more, an open-ended question seems more likely to help provide an overall picture of how our members see themselves in ways that checklists cannot. Perhaps too, this method can uncover dimensions of diversity that the organization has not yet considered, but ought to—we particularly would be interested in thinking about the issues of class origins and of nationally displaced and marginalized groups aside from Latinos in the United States (Bolivians in Argentina and Haitians in the Dominican Republic come to mind).

On the other hand, an open-ended question would produce complicated results. The famous 1976 household survey in Brazil, which allowed respondents to write in their own color identifications in addition to official ones, produced 136 different categories. LASA wants to measure its own success at including three main groups that are likely to be underrepresented—people who report African ancestry, membership in indigenous communities (to which we recommend adding “or indigenous ancestry”), or Latino identities in the United States. But an open-ended survey on its own would likely provide data that addressed such categories only indirectly. It seems to us a greater act of imposition to use the process of tabulation to try to sort members’

Desde *Otros Saberes*

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many self-definitions into these categories, than to provide the categories up front, explain the reason for including them, and allow members to self-select as many or as few as they recognize. We therefore suggest a second question, inviting members to be active participants in the tabulation process. We hope that since this choice would not establish an official racial condition of membership, and since it would follow an open-ended opportunity to express complex identities, the stakes for this last question would not seem very high. Nevertheless, we think both questions should be optional, and we suggest that the second include a box allowing members to express opposition to the project of counting by race.

In short, we believe that the benefits of painting a self-portrait of our institution for these goals and under these conditions, while including spaces for disagreement and debate, outweighs our significant concerns about the processes and histories of counting. If any group can thoughtfully consider the pitfalls of counting color and race among a multinational membership (without falling into the trap of imagining racelessness in Latin America), it should be the members of LASA.

Los artículos presentados aquí fueron redactados por los y las coordinadores de los proyectos becados por la iniciativa “Other Americas/*Otros Saberes*.” Representan un inventario de los logros y retos encontrados después de aproximadamente diez meses de trabajo intensivo, trabajos muchas veces interrumpidos y por acontecimientos nacionales, tales como atentados contra miembros de la organización protagonista—el caso del Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales (FIOB) de Oaxaca y California—o por ofensivas paramilitares en territorios de poblaciones participantes en el trabajo, como es el caso de Proceso de Comunidades Negras (PCN) de Colombia.

Sin embargo estos artículos muestran las posibilidades que tiene la membresía de LASA de incidir en los procesos y debates políticos principales en las Américas desde la colaboración horizontal con organizaciones críticas de la transformación social. El conjunto de ensayos representa, en diferentes escalas, momentos cruciales en la política de cultura y territorio en las Américas, desde los espacios de cercanía y familiaridad de la revitalización cultural, hasta la formulación de programas de acción política para reformular leyes nacionales y confrontar embates globales. Estos proyectos fueron seleccionados tanto por la firmeza de la metodología de la colaboración, como por la representatividad de procesos dirigidos por pueblos afrolatinos e indígenas.

En tres proyectos la colaboración se apoyó en el “nutrido archivo de la memoria personal y colectiva de afrodescendientes [e indígenas] contemporáneos para componer otras historias” tanto (trans)nacionales, como es el caso de Puerto Rico (Gélida Vargas), como del conocimiento discursivamente silenciado, como son los casos de las poblaciones afroecuatoriana (León Castro) y Wajãpi (Gallois). Cada

proyecto de revitalización cultural se apoyó en la uso y análisis de la tecnología, como la fotografía y el video (Gélida Vargas y León Castro) y en el caso los Wajãpi una consideración, “[d]as especificidades das formas de transmissão de conhecimentos, sobretudo aquelas que diferenciam a oralidade da escrita” (Gallois). Algunas de las fotos producidos por los equipos de investigación se publican aquí.

Los íntimos escenarios de “a transformação dos conhecimentos” sin embargo forman parte de los grandes cambios nacionales marcados por las leyes de reconocimiento étnico. Varios proyectos de *Otros Saberes* confrontan los legatos problemáticos de estas leyes y establecen líneas de acción e investigación para retar la delimitación de las poblaciones indígenas y negras. Para el movimiento negro de Colombia “el Censo convierte en campo de lucha” a partir de la lectura de los resultados del 2005, y “el equipo *visibilización* y *censo* contribuye a articular el énfasis del PCN en la diferencia con una agenda centrada en los derechos y la igualdad” (Grueso Castelblanco y Escobar). En las regiones autónomas de Nicaragua, el diagnóstico comunal formulado por investigadores Miskitus busca establecer las bases del territorio comunal del pueblo de Tuara pero se encuentra con el límite del funcionamiento de la autonomía, ya que las comisiones gubernamentales no son imparciales (Taylor y Everingham). Por lo tanto los resultados de la investigación formarán parte de una crítica del régimen autónomo actual sostenida empíricamente desde abajo.

Cada proyecto interpretó el mandato de *Otros Saberes* de la investigación colaborativa y horizontal de forma diferente. En el caso del FIOB, las líderes buscan poner la investigación al servicio de la organización, que tiene que integrar más jóvenes y mujeres a los cuadros de liderazgo

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“for the survival of the organization” (Romero). La Asamblea Comunal de la comunidad de Tuara aprobó la metodología de la investigación y la mayoría de las actividades fueron realizadas en Miskitu, ya que el equipo contaba con coordinadores principales Miskitu-hablantes. En el caso de la comunidad de Aguadilla en Puerto Rico, el proyecto convocó un equipo de investigación de la historia oral afropuertorriqueña que ha tomado vida propia y, como la mayoría de los proyectos, continuará después del cierre de las actividades becadas.

En Colombia, donde la colaboración horizontal entre académicos y miembros del PCN se convirtió en un tema principal de la investigación, se vislumbra el reto epistemológico de *Otros Saberes*. El equipo de *experiencia metodológica del diálogo de saberes* exploró el terreno difícil de la colaboración que atraviesa oficios y mantuvo las categorías analíticas del PCN como puntos de partida. Exponen una premisa central de *Otros Saberes*: “preguntas como: ¿qué se piensa?, ¿desde dónde?, y ¿con quién? surgen como elementos esenciales para estrategias efectivas de colaboración” (Grueso Castelblanco y Escobar)—una colaboración clave en la era del levantamiento de conocimientos descentralizados, transformadores, generados desde el compromiso. ■

DESDE OTROS SABERES
continued...

Develamos el mito de la democracia racial en Puerto Rico

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La *historia oficial* puertorriqueña ha construido un sujeto nacional singular y unitario que combina armónicamente los denominados “elementos” taínos, españoles y africanos. La “puertorriqueñidad” se figura oficialmente como la suma de estas partes, cada una definida de forma esencialista y ordenada en una jerarquía que reduce la afrodescendencia al estadio de lo primitivo, lo exótico, lo subordinado. A través de la historia oral, “Testimonios afropuertorriqueños: un proyecto de historia oral en el oeste de Puerto Rico”, apela al nutrido archivo de la memoria personal y colectiva de afrodescendientes contemporáneos para componer otras historias—parciales, plurales y populares—que han sido tradicionalmente enmudecidas.

A la sombra de los modelos que condicionan los diseños de investigación académica, en la propuesta que presentamos a la iniciativa *Otros Saberes* establecimos que empezáramos nuestra investigación con dos grupos focales dedicados a relevar los ejes temáticos que orientarían dos proyectos paralelos de historia oral en los municipios de Aguadilla y Hormigueros (ambos en el oeste de Puerto Rico). Los líderes comunitarios que co-gestaron nuestro proyecto convocaron a estos grupos.¹

Quebrantando no sólo nuestras expectativas sino también las convenciones de la metodología del grupo focal, al encuentro inicial de Aguadilla en septiembre 2006 acudieron cerca de 30 personas: trabajadores, estudiantes, profesionales, jubilados, deportistas, escritores, ex-militares y hasta un músico que amenizó la tertulia

preliminar con una típica bohemia. Los testimonios que en primera y tercera persona se comenzaron a narrar esa noche develaron—si bien de forma tentativa, vacilante y fragmentaria—el mito de la democracia racial, articulando con elocuencia vital las experiencias de racismo y blanqueamiento, auto-negación y auto-afirmación, represión y resistencia que socavan los pilares de la construcción imperante y monolítica de la puertorriqueñidad. “Aquí decimos que ‘el que no tiene *dinga* tiene *mandinga*,’² diz que aceptamos nuestra ‘diversidad’ pero lo negro se define siempre desde la mentalidad blanca: el negro es bruto, el negro es sucio, el negro es fuerte”, apuntó uno de los asistentes iniciando un debate en torno a las ideologías raciales dominantes. Corrientes arraigadas en parte porque “desde chiquito a uno le enseñan a bajar la cabeza” y “por querernos y por protegernos” nuestros padres nos dicen “no, tú no eres negro”.

Al calor de este debate se incubó una colaboración que ha madurado progresivamente desde entonces. Una tercera parte de los asistentes a ese primer grupo focal se ha embarcado en la tarea de generar, junto a los investigadores académicos, un archivo testimonial de historias de vida de afroaguadillanos. Por diversas razones, atinentes tanto a la trayectoria histórica de los afrodescendientes en Hormigueros como a las posibilidades de dedicación de los investigadores académicos y los representantes de la sociedad civil, la colaboración entablada en esta localidad tomó otro giro que ha dependido de la cabal participación de estudiantes de la Universidad de Puerto Rico-Mayagüez—un significativo componente de nuestra investigación que no podemos desarrollar en este breve artículo. Nos enfocamos entonces en la colaboración en curso en Aguadilla, donde hemos trabajado colectivamente con representantes de la sociedad civil en el



diseño total de la investigación: guías de entrevista, criterios de selección de los narradores, materiales informativos sobre el proyecto, etc. Luego de capacitar a estos líderes comunitarios en la metodología de la historia oral, el registro de notas de campo, y el uso del equipo de grabación, nos dimos a la tarea de generar los testimonios de diecisiete narradores, 11 hombres y 6 mujeres. Al presente, hemos completado un total de trece entrevistas y hemos iniciado dos archivos foto- y videográficos: uno para documentar el proceso mismo del desarrollo de la investigación colaborativa y el otro para complementar las historias de vida de lo/as entrevistado/as.

En su conjunto, las voces e imágenes que hemos registrado hasta el momento en ambas localidades demuestran que la historia afropuertorriqueña se escribe cotidiana y arduamente “desde abajo”. Los resultados preliminares de la investigación trascienden las fronteras geográficas establecidas tradicionalmente en nuestro país para acuartelar la negritud en determinados pueblos de la zona este (Loíza, Carolina) y sur (Ponce, Guayama), y revelan la presencia viva de la denominada “raíz africana” en todos los rincones de nuestro archipiélago (incluida la zona oeste donde radicamos nuestro proyecto) así como en las diásporas puertorriqueñas.

En los próximos meses nos proponemos trabajar colectivamente en la producción de materiales educativos basados en los proyectos testimoniales desarrollados en Aguadilla y Hormigueros, así como una guía metodológica que sirva para orientar a otros individuos y/o grupos a reproducir nuestro proyecto en otras localidades. Después de LASA2007 anticipamos organizar eventos comunitarios en ambas localidades para presentar los resultados de nuestra investigación colaborativa. Según lo auguró una de las asistentes al primer grupo focal de Aguadilla: nos proponemos “dar a la audiencia—incluso a los blancos—que se exponga, lea, y escuche estos testimonios un espejo para que se miren, se vean y se reconozcan en esa experiencia que ha sido negada y silenciada”.

Notas

¹ Nuestro equipo básico contó con dos investigadores académicos, Dr. José Irizarry Rodríguez y Dra. Jocelyn Gélida Vargas, y un colaborador principal de cada lugar: Carlos Delgado Lassalle de Aguadilla y Edwin Albino Plugues de Hormigueros.

² Dicho popular que refiere de forma estereotípica, superficial y generalizada a la presencia de raíces y/o influencias africanas en la totalidad de la población puertorriqueña. ■

DESDE OTROS SABERES
continued...

Investigadores comunales de Tuara guían la elaboración de diagnóstico para la demarcación y titulación de su territorio

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Los objetivos principales del proyecto “Comunidad Indígena Tuara en el Proceso Autonomo en la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense” eran principalmente dos: la elaboración de un diagnóstico para la titulación del territorio de esta comunidad, y un análisis de las formas de autogobierno existentes para su mejor articulación con Ley de Autonomía. Se puede decir que estos dos objetivos se cumplieron, contruidos sobre una base sólida de colaboración entre académicos y comunitarios; sin embargo, el impacto de la producción de este conocimiento puede ser coartado por problemas que residen en la política territorial regional, fuera del marco del proyecto original. Por lo tanto este proyecto forma parte de un proceso histórico que trasciende el año de investigación.

El territorio de la comunidad de Tuara es de aproximadamente 18,000 hectáreas, habitada por 78 familias de la etnia Miskitu. En este territorio se está llevando a cabo el proyecto becado por *Otros Saberes*, guiado por las autoridades de la comunidad de Tuara (la Asamblea Comunal), con el apoyo de la Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe de Nicaragua (URACCAN) y además de la colaboración de Mark Everingham de la Universidad de Wisconsin, Green Bay.

En el marco de la Ley 445, en el mes de Septiembre del año 2006 se inició con la

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Comunidad indígena Tuara en el proceso autonómico de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense

elaboración del diagnóstico de la comunidad, cual contendría información histórica, demográfica, y socioeconómica. Como parte de la metodología de trabajo se conformó un equipo de trabajo integrado por académicos e investigadores comunales (autoridades y líderes comunales comprometidos con su comunidad y conocedores de la historia y del territorio).¹

El equipo técnico organizó un taller de capacitación para la planificación de las actividades del proyecto, así mismo del diseño y aprobación de la metodología de trabajo. Al concluir el taller se tenía un plan de trabajo y el equipo se dividió en dos grupos de trabajo: uno tenía la tarea de recopilar datos demográficos y socioeconómicos y el otro grupo datos cartográficos del territorio de Tuara.

Los académicos que conformaba el equipo técnico se ganó la confianza de los líderes de la comunidad de Tuara con mucha facilidad, pues, URACCAN es una universidad que hace extensión comunitaria con amplia experiencia y contactos anteriores. También los académicos son Miskitus del mismo pueblo. Tanto los talleres de capacitación, reuniones y asambleas comunales se llevan a cabo en lengua Miskitu y en caso especial se

hace en español y se traduce. Las familias de Tuara participaron de forma masiva para dar la información, así mismo durante las reuniones para las entrevistas grupales.

Para que el pueblo de Tuara logre la titulación, dos organizaciones gubernamentales tendrían que coordinarse: la Comisión Intersectorial de Titulación y Demarcación (CIDT) y la Comisión Nacional de Demarcación y Titulación (CONADTI). Un problema principal es la debilidad que ha mostrado CIDT y CONADETI: siempre están en disputa interna y no se están llevando a cabo las actividades de demarcación. Por otro lado los miembros de CIDT y CONADETI son oriundos de otros territorios (Diez Comunidades y Tawira) que están en disputa con Tuara y tienen sus intereses personales cual podría interferir en la toma de decisión, durante la verificación, entrega de título y amojonamiento del Territorio de Tuara. Por lo tanto, se espera aprovechar los espacios de análisis de *Otros Saberes*, y la relación de colaboración cercana y continua con Tuara, para articular los resultados de este proyecto con los retos que presenta la coyuntura política en las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Atlántica Nicaragüense.

Nota

¹ Los investigadores comunales son: Salvador Nicho (Síndico), Julia Albicio, Francisco Mora, Roger Gonzales, Armando Casaya, Junior Cristofer, y Clemente Martínez; los académicos, Marcos Williamson, Mark Everingham, y Edwin Taylor; los técnicos, Mike Patterson, Walter Castro, y Sergio Perera. ■

DESDE OTROS SABERES
continued...

Produciendo saberes desde la religiosidad y la memoria

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La religiosidad siempre ha sido un elemento cohesionador, constructor de colectividades y de ordenamiento cultural, un dispositivo que busca a través de sus prácticas perpetuar valores, mandatos, y códigos que permitan la cohesión social. Desde esta perspectiva el proyecto "Saberes propios, religiosidad, y luchas de existencia" busca responder dos preguntas fundamentales: ¿Cómo entender la religiosidad en las comunidades afroecuatorianas como base de su filosofía, cosmovisión, y lugar de construcción, transmisión, y aprendizaje de saberes entre generaciones? Y ¿qué implica la religiosidad como estrategia de existencia identitaria, sociocultural, epistémica y organizativa?

La mayor apuesta en este proyecto es construir respuestas a estas preguntas de manera colectiva, a partir de la generación de procesos participativos y pedagógicos de investigación, mediante la recreación de saberes religiosos que parten de prácticas culturales cotidianas, que forman parte de la Existencia misma de las comunidades afroecuatorianas como: el nacimiento, prácticas curativas, fiestas religiosas y la muerte. El proyecto viene siendo desarrollado en dos zonas de Ecuador: Esmeraldas¹, que se encuentra en la costa norte del pacífico del país y el Valle del Chota², ubicado en la zona interandina. Los equipos que se conformaron en estas zonas, tienen el antecedente de venir trabajando con el Fondo Documental AfroAndino en actividades anteriores.

Los resultados logrados en estos procesos de investigación participativa apuntan perspectivas de transformación y



visibilización, por ejemplo la participación e involucramiento en este proceso de investigación por parte de las comunidades, que transforma la relación hegemónica de objetos-sujetos de estudio a sujetos productores de conocimientos y saberes. De esta manera no solo se visibilizan (las comunidades afroecuatorianas) como sujetos productores saberes, sino que visibilizan lugares y prácticas otras de producción de saberes. Se trata de mirar como a través de la religiosidad y sus prácticas se han venido (re)construyendo y transmitiendo históricamente distintos saberes vitales para las comunidades y paralelamente las dinámicas, usos, sentidos y significados de esos saberes en la cotidianidad en los actuales momentos. Un ejemplo de ello es el uso de medicina tradicional y sus secretos para las curaciones de mal aire o mal de ojo, que es uno de los temas desarrollados en la producción de saberes de este proyecto. El proceso investigativo ha permitido a las comunidades reflexionar que sus prácticas religiosas encierran una serie de saberes, que han sido celosamente trabajados y transmitidos por los y las guardianes de la tradición³. A partir de este entendimiento se ha trabajado la religiosidad como elemento

central en la revitalización de la identidad. Un segundo momento de este proyecto es la reinserción de estos conocimientos y saberes en las comunidades, para ello se ha contemplado la producción de materiales didácticos y pedagógicos para la etnoeducación⁴, construyendo una “metodología propia” como resultado de un diálogo entre academia y comunidades, como han sido los conversatorios abiertos a partir de la utilización de testimonios orales y visuales, la construcción de cartografías culturales, realización de recorridos, intercambios de saberes, etc.

Consideramos que el mayor logro del proyecto ha sido la generación de un proceso de agenciamiento epistémico comunitario para la revitalización y construcción de saberes, a través de una relación colaborativa entre la universidad y las comunidades, un buen ejemplo de ello son las ideas que han surgido desde la comunidad para generar centros de capacitación para jóvenes que quieran aprender o especializarse en el arte de ayudar a concebir a mujeres embarazadas. El desarrollo de este proyecto ha presentado un reto a la academia (construido como espacio

“único” de producción de conocimientos), ¿Hasta qué punto está dispuesta la academia a dejarse impregnar de las experiencias y lógicas otras de producción de conocimiento propuestas desde las comunidades? Dependiendo de la respuesta a esta pregunta se puede pensar en el siguiente paso que es la construcción de un diálogo de saberes.

Notas

¹ La historia de la provincia de Esmeraldas data desde 1552 con la presencia de los primeros cimarrones que lograron consolidar un proyecto de libertad y autonomía en este territorio. Este proyecto involucra a cuatro comunidades del norte de esta zona: Selva Alegre, Timbiré, Coloy Eloy y Maldonado.

² Los primeros esclavizados en esta región fueron traídos por los jesuitas para consolidar el proyecto de la caña de azúcar a mediados del siglo XVII.

³ El término guardianes de la tradición es utilizado por las comunidades para nombrar a los/as mayores de las comunidades cuya función principal es el cuidado y la transmisión de los conocimientos y saberes.

⁴ La etnoeducación se ha venido construyendo desde las comunidades afroecuatorianas como un proyecto político que busca desarrollar una educación propia como respuesta a la educación oficial que no ha incorporado. ■

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continued...

Um inventário da tradição Wajãpi, articulando “dois caminhos”

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Nos últimos 3 anos, um grupo de 30 jovens e adultos Wajãpi vem sendo formado para assumir progressivamente todas as tarefas envolvidas na realização e gestão de um inventário de seu patrimônio cultural imaterial. É nesse contexto que o projeto “Saberes Wajãpi: Formação de pesquisadores e valorização de registros etnográficos indígenas” foi idealizado, a partir da colaboração já existente entre o Conselho das Aldeias Wajãpi—Apina e a equipe de educadores da ONG Iepé e de antropólogos e lingüistas do NHII/USP, responsável pela capacitação dos pesquisadores da comunidade Wajãpi¹. A pesquisa colaborativa produzirá uma sistematização dos resultados alcançados, gerando instrumentos indispensáveis à continuidade do processo, necessariamente longo.

Como parte do processo de realização do inventário de seu patrimônio imaterial, os jovens pesquisadores debatem os aspectos que consideram importantes e representativos do modo de pensar, fazer e viver dos Wajãpi. Em discussões com líderes das aldeias, estabeleceu-se inicialmente uma pauta de temas prioritários para as pesquisas, que incluía: *“resguardos, rezas de cura, de agressão e de prevenção, casamentos e poligamia, jeitos de responder ao sogro, jeito de conversar bonito, conhecimentos históricos, religiões, jeito de classificar plantas e animais, jeitos de fazer manejo de recursos naturais, festas, teorias dos Wajãpi sobre o mundo”*.

Os pesquisadores Wajãpi realizam registros etnográficos (saberes e práticas de manejo ambiental, cosmologia, curas, música e

ritual, tecnologias, histórias, etc.) e estão aprendendo a controlar sua difusão, reconhecendo-se como efetivos detentores de um diversificado patrimônio de saberes. Nesse movimento, adquiriram uma consciência mais aguçada da riqueza desses saberes, que desejam agora transmitir em forma escrita (na língua Wajãpi) para as crianças nas escolas. Sabem, entretanto, que ainda não são especialistas nem dominam esses assuntos e por este motivo, devem realizar um trabalho aprofundado e minucioso de pesquisa junto às pessoas mais idosas de cada uma de suas aldeias.

Nesta abordagem, algumas questões teórico-metodológicas assumem especial importância:

- a relação entre conhecimentos e práticas culturais;
- as especificidades das formas de transmissão de conhecimentos, sobretudo aquelas que diferenciam a oralidade da escrita;
- a relevância das versões e variantes do conhecimento no seio do mesmo grupo;
- a transformação dos conhecimentos no contexto de sua transmissão;
- as teorias que articulam e dão significado aos dados isolados.

O inventário que os Wajãpi iniciaram e cujos resultados estão sendo sistematizados com apoio deste projeto, não será simplesmente uma compilação de saberes “dos antigos”, nem sua mera transcrição, mas envolve uma reflexão nova e atual. A equipe discute intensamente as alternativas de articulação entre modos de conhecer e modos de transmitir, para equacionar o que os Wajãpi chamam dos “dois caminhos”, o de sua tradição e o das novas práticas, técnicas e conhecimentos adquiridos na escola.



Saberes Wajãpi: Formação de pesquisadores e valorização de registros etnográficos indígenas

Um dos pressupostos do projeto é que qualquer inventário de patrimônio cultural imaterial sempre abarca tanto aspectos “novos” quanto “tradicionais”, e considera que patrimônio não se define como um receptáculo de experiências do passado, mas como um espaço para a interação e o diálogo entre culturas. Essa articulação entre “caminhos”—como dizem os Wajãpi—passa necessariamente pela escrita e por isso engaja novos agentes de transmissão, que, no caso, são os 30 pesquisadores que o projeto contribui a formar.

A próxima etapa, subsidiada pelos resultados deste projeto, será a inclusão dos resultados das pesquisas realizadas e sistematizadas pelos Wajãpi no âmbito das escolas. Essa inserção em novo contexto de transmissão representa um conjunto de dificuldades que tem estimulado os professores Wajãpi a refletirem sobre diferentes processos de produção e transmissão de conhecimentos, além de aprofundarem seus próprios conhecimentos sobre aspectos do patrimônio cultural de seu povo. Estão agora desenvolvendo algumas estratégias específicas para a valorização de seus saberes e práticas tradicionais em contexto escolar. O principal desafio para o futuro sendo o de tratar o conhecimento

DESDE OTROS SABERES
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tradicional na escola sem empobrecê-lo e sabendo estabelecer relações pertinentes com os saberes escolares dos não-índios. O trabalho dos pesquisadores Wajãpi iniciou com o aprendizado de técnicas de documentação e de sistematização do conhecimento, antes transmitido apenas através da oralidade. É necessário apostar em longo prazo e na mobilização desse grupo de pesquisadores e de todas as aldeias Wajãpi em torno de ações que valorizem tanto as formas de transmissão oral, como os conhecimentos relacionados ao manejo de recursos naturais, à saúde, à história das aldeias, à cosmologia, aos rituais, à música, à pintura corporal, etc. Mas o registro das tradições em forma escrita não é uma ação isolada, nem suficiente. Nem a transposição dos saberes tradicionais para a escola é garantia de sua salvaguarda. Um processo de valorização cultural é sempre muito demorado, além de complexo, exigindo investimento de longo prazo e a mobilização de todas as comunidades e aldeias.

Nota

¹ Os participantes indígenas da pesquisa incluem os 20 jovens e adultos da turma de "pesquisadores Wajãpi" que iniciaram sua formação em 2005, além dos 10 professores bilíngues. Por falta de espaço nesta edição, não podemos incluir a lista nominal. Presidente do Apina: Jawapuku Waiãpi, equipe do Iepé, Lúcia Szmrecsányi, equipe do NHII-USP, Dominique T. Gallois, Luis Donisete Benzi Grupioni, Joana Cabral, Silvia Cunha. ■

Maintaining a Healthy Organization in the Face of Political Repression

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This project entitled "Desarrollando del Liderazgo Binacional Indígena: Género, Generación y Etnicidad dentro del FIOB" is a collaboration between el Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales (FIOB), the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) and the Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF) to conduct participatory research that will enable the FIOB to develop a leadership program with indigenous migrants in California (United States), and Baja California and Oaxaca (Mexico). Principal goals include increasing the participation of young people and women in FIOB leadership. We consider these changes necessary for the survival of the organization.

This "Other Americas/Otros Saberes" project is being carried out by a team consisting of three members of FIOB binational leadership: Rufino Domínguez (Mixtec-Fresno), Odilia Romero (Zapotec-

Los Angeles), and Centolia Maldonado (Mixtec-Oaxaca); as well as two academics: Maylei Blackwell (UCLA-Chicano Studies) and Laura Velasco (COLEF-Social Sciences).

The FIOB team faced challenges in accomplishing the project's calendar of activities due to the political climate that it faced as an organization with an important part of its membership in Oaxaca. The conflict that initiated with the teachers' strike in Oaxaca City on May 1, 2006 and was followed by Mexican federal and Oaxaca state police repression affected many FIOB members directly and indirectly. The political killings and mass arrests required the mobilization of the FIOB to denounce human rights violations (which continue). Members of the FIOB still have pending warrants for their arrest.

This repression of course most affected FIOB membership that lives in Oaxaca. Yet many indigenous activists from California, Baja California, and Oaxaca found a way to participate in our programmed workshops and interviews, held in each of these locations, after an adjustment of the work schedule. During the month of June 2007 about 20 leaders from all three regions met in Mexico City to share the results of the



Desarrollando del liderazgo binacional indígena: Género, generación y etnicidad dentro del FIOB

ROMERO HERNÁNDEZ continued...

three previously held regional workshops. We also used this occasion to develop an action plan for a leadership training program. The plan, designed within the *Otros Saberes* project research team, consists of a curriculum and a series of training sessions to take place between July 2007 and March 2008. The curriculum will include *relaciones humanas* (e.g. conflict resolution), public speaking techniques, binational political analysis, recruiting strategies for new members, and gender, youth, and identity analysis. These regional workshops will culminate in a leadership conference on women, youth, and diversity at the end of March 2008 right before the celebration of FIOB's Fourth Binational Congress.

To complete this leadership development action plan we reflected on a series of themes related to internal and external organizational strategies—topics that developed in the course of the previous nine months' work. We collectively discussed the responsibilities of FIOB binational leaders, the challenges in the development of female and male leadership, the replacement of leaders and the recruitment of new members, and the solving of conflicts within the organization. We further reflected on challenges in making our organization grow: the capacity and politics of tolerance among different ethnic groups, the challenges that articulation with the American Indian movement presents, and the importance of the creation of a dialog with the migrant movement in the United States.

We expect that this process will strengthen the FIOB. FIOB leadership feels that this project has been one of the few that has made the organization reflect on its strengths and weakness. And this is key for anyone who wants to maintain a healthy organization. ■

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Territorios de vida, alegría, y libertad... Un diálogo de saberes por la defensa del territorio

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En medio de la selva, los sonidos del tambor y de los cantos se confunden con los sonidos de los grillos y las ranas que exploran el río y las piedras que conducen al mar, es el sonido lejano de la fiesta tradicional en una vereda del Pacífico Sur Colombiano que se resiste a olvidar su cultura, que se resiste a callar en medio del conflicto armado por la disputa de sus territorios. —Libia Grueso

El derecho al territorio y el reconocimiento como grupo étnico, es la conquista más importante de las luchas de las organizaciones de comunidades negras de Colombia en las últimas dos décadas. En el caso del Pacífico colombiano, el derecho al territorio incluye, de acuerdo con la Ley 70 de 1993, el derecho a los bosques y reconoce el papel fundamental de la cultura de la comunidad negra en la conservación de ecosistemas.

A pesar de este reconocimiento, se ha generado una creciente disputa territorial desde los intereses del capital nacional y transnacional representado por agroindustriales y narcotraficantes que hacen de la guerra su estrategia para negar los derechos colectivos de las comunidades, generando desplazamiento masivo y expropiación territorial mediante estrategias tales como las plantaciones de palma aceitera para biocombustible en el caso de inversiones legales y las plantaciones de coca en los cultivos para usos ilícitos. A lo anterior se suma la reciente normatividad

sobre aguas y bosques que involucra retrocesos significativos sobre los derechos de las comunidades negras.

En este contexto, las organizaciones de comunidades negras han construido conocimientos para la afirmación y defensa de sus derechos étnico-culturales y territoriales; esta valiosa experiencia de pensamiento y acción, está dispersa en múltiples documentos y memorias escritas y orales.

Es a partir de esta experiencia que el Proceso de Comunidades Negras (PCN), una dinámica organizativa que agrupa más de 120 organizaciones étnico-culturales y territoriales de comunidades negras en Colombia, acoge la convocatoria de LASA *Otros Saberes*.¹ El espacio construido en torno al proyecto LASA ha permitido profundizar una serie de debates sobre cuatro temas principales que forman las bases de cuatro grupos de investigación. Resumimos algunos logros y alcances aquí.

En el equipo temático denominado *territorio y resistencia*, se analiza la construcción del territorio en cada subregión de principales asentamientos afrocolombianos, el derecho al territorio valorando la capacidad de resistencia de las organizaciones, e historias de vida destacando el papel de líderes hombres y mujeres en la defensa del territorio. En estos análisis, logramos mayor claridad sobre las diversas facetas de la contra-estrategia del estado por la vía jurídica (ej., nueva ley forestal), el impacto diferencial del conflicto, y la importancia de la seguridad alimenticia de las poblaciones y los planes de manejo en los ríos.

En el grupo *organización y participación*, el sistematizar experiencias a partir de la valoración de lo propio surge como un criterio importante del proyecto. También alcanzamos la motivación de espacios

El derecho al territorio y el reconocimiento de la comunidad negra en el contexto del conflicto social y armado desde la perspectiva del pensamiento y acción política, ecológica, y cultural del Proceso de Comunidades Negras de Colombia



internos de trabajo en torno a la situación organizativa, donde se reflexiona respecto a sus debilidades y fortalezas y se prepara espacios de relación con el Estado. Se enfatiza de que se trata no solo de producir un discurso contra-hegemónico sino una movilización contra-hegemónica y que la clave de la resistencia es el fortalecimiento organizativo. Identificamos la formación de más jóvenes y mujeres como una necesidad importante.

A partir de una valoración de los resultados del censo y sus implicaciones en dos ciudades con mayor población afrocolombiana, Cali y Buenaventura, el censo se convierte en campo de lucha para el movimiento. El trabajo del equipo visibilización y censo contribuye a articular el énfasis del PCN en la diferencia con una agenda centrada en los derechos y la igualdad. Identificamos como la investigación alrededor del censo puede afectar problemas de racismo, los niveles de conciencia, y el debate sobre las reparaciones y marcamos tareas específicas, tales como la creación de indicadores. Con base en estos resultados se complementan los argumentos con los cuales el PCN hace público la

afirmación que las cifras y conclusiones del Censo general de población del 2005 no se corresponden con la realidad de la población afrocolombiana.

Las discusiones dentro del equipo *Otros Saberes* aporta a la construcción del protocolo de relacionamiento del PCN y el proyecto LASA. El grupo *experiencia metodológica del diálogo de saberes* encuentra que los saberes representan intereses; se escribe para actuar. Preguntas como: ¿qué se piensa?, ¿desde dónde?, y ¿con quién? surgen como elementos esenciales para estrategias efectivas de colaboración. El diálogo de saberes debe partir de un consenso de intereses sobre el propósito de lucha del movimiento; más que reafirmar teorías, se aspira a que contribuya a potenciar un propósito social y político particular (en este caso, la campaña internacional de visibilización—un objetivo principal del proyecto). Se acuerda orientar la propuesta desde los siguientes criterios: 1) asumir los principios político-organizativos del PCN como punto de partida; 2) sistematizar el pensamiento y práctica del PCN desde sus experiencias y desde sus lecturas sobre sí mismo; 3) orientar el

proyecto hacia una valoración desde las categorías de pensamiento propio construidas colectivamente.

Como resultado de estos diversos análisis (proceso que no cabe resumir aquí) se identifica como una de las más importantes experiencias del PCN sus propuestas y acciones en torno a “la construcción del territorio-región para la conservación de la diversidad natural y cultural del Pacífico Colombiano, ecosistema estratégico en la preservación de especies y la regulación climática a nivel mundial.” Esta opción solo es posible si se reconocen de manera plena y efectiva los derechos culturales y territoriales de los pueblos negros e indígenas que lo habitan, y si se potencializa su capacidad social de organización de acuerdo con su propia opción de desarrollo.

Las dinámicas de la región y del país constituyen una red compleja de relaciones en las cuales se desarrolla una propuesta político-organizativa que busca contribuir a la conservación de la vida, la consolidación de la democracia a partir del derecho a la diferencia, y la construcción de alternativas de sociedad. Sistematizar esta experiencia y contribuir al propósito de la misma a través del proyecto *Otros Saberes* es también una apuesta a otros mundos posibles.

Nota

¹ El equipo básico está integrado por activistas del PCN: Carlos Rosero, Julia Eva Cogollo, Naka Mandinga, Libia Grueso y Jeannette Rojas, acompañante permanente del PCN; e investigadores académicos, Arturo Escobar, Luis Carlos Castillo, Juliana Flórez y Ulrich Oslender. En el equipo ampliado participan otro/as líderes del movimiento social: Konty Bikila, José Absalón Suárez, Edelmira Mina, Félix Banguero, y Mario Ángulo entre otros. ■

Report from the Program Chairs *Informe de los Directores del Programa*

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As we write this report in June, it is exciting to see the LASA2007 program almost finalized. During the past three months we have been busy responding to members' questions and trying to accommodate as best as possible several proposals in more appropriate panels. Several colleagues were naturally disappointed that their proposals were not accepted. We have explained that decisions are based on five criteria: significance of the proposal, clarity, concept, audience, and value. Each of the track chairs used these same criteria in making their evaluations. As program chairs we have supported these decisions and thank the track chairs for their invaluable contribution to LASA. We have also responded to requests from several members to be placed in different panels in order to make a better fit. We also had to divide some panels that were too large and find appropriate alternatives for all concerned. We appreciate the flexibility of session organizers and chairs in helping to accommodate these changes. In most cases, these were new sessions that were created from individual paper proposals rather than original sessions. The final task was to choose the cover of the program booklet. After considering several options, we chose the wonderful painting "Liberación Femenina" by Paula Nicho Cumez, a Maya-Kaqchikel artist from Comalapa, Guatemala. We hope you agree that this picture reflects the spirit of LASA2007 and the future hopes and aspirations of all the peoples of the Americas. ■

A medida que escribimos este informe de junio, nos vamos emocionando al ver que el programa de LASA2007 está casi terminado. Los tres meses anteriores los hemos dedicado a responder diversas preguntas de los y las miembros y hemos estado tratando de acomodar, lo mejor posible, algunas propuestas en paneles más apropiados que en los que se encontraban. Ciertamente, algunos/as colegas se decepcionaron pues sus propuestas no fueron aceptadas. Como lo aclaramos en su momento, la decisión se tomó con base en los siguientes criterios: relevancia, claridad, concepto, público y valor de las propuestas. Cada uno de los directores de circuito (*track chairs*) utilizó los mismos criterios en sus evaluaciones. Como co-director y co-directora del programa, hemos apoyado sus decisiones y les agradecemos su invaluable contribución a LASA. Asimismo, hemos respondido algunas solicitudes de las y los participantes para ser reacomodadas/os a fin de quedar en un lugar más adecuado. También hemos dividido algunas mesas que eran demasiado grandes y les hemos encontrado otros sitios apropiados. Agradecemos la flexibilidad de quienes organizaron y dirigieron las sesiones dentro de las cuales se dieron estos cambios. En la mayoría de los casos se trataba de sesiones nuevas que se crearon a partir de las propuestas individuales y no así de las sesiones originales. La última tarea que tuvimos, fue la de escoger la fotografía para la portada del programa. Después de considerar varias opciones, nos decidimos por la hermosa pintura intitulada "liberación femenina", de Paula Nicho Cumez, una artista maya-kaqchikel de Campala, Guatemala. Esperamos que estén de acuerdo en que esta fotografía refleja el espíritu de LASA2007 y las esperanzas y aspiraciones futuras de toda la gente de las Américas. ■

On Montréal

by MARIANNE NIOSI | mniosi@france24.com

Officially the second largest French-speaking city in the world after Paris, the French-speaking metropolis of the New World, Montréal is perhaps best described as a bilingual, multicultural city. Even in the Frenchier quarters of the city, a Thai restaurant or a kippa-wearing local will ruin the cliché.

At first glance, Montréal's linguistic geography is simple. Loosely, one may say West is English, *Est* is French. But the fuzzy borders between the two worlds create fascinating spaces where conversations switch fluidly from one language to the other, or more surprisingly, where people speak different languages to one another without seeming to notice the absurdity of the scene: "Bonjour! -Hello. -Vous n'avez plus Le Devoir ? -No. Only The Gazette left. -Ok, merci. -No problem." Purely French or English neighborhoods hardly exist anymore and that mixed quality is found all over the island, even in the slightly French accent of old-stock Montréal "anglos," or in the perfect pronunciation "francos" take on to say English words.

Montréal's cultural melting pot is further complicated by its mixed immigrant community. Wander from North to South on Boulevard Saint-Laurent. You'll first pass through the Italian quarter, one of the oldest ethnic communities in the city, with renowned institutions such as the Caffè Italia and Milano's supermarket. Then swerve right to the Greek neighborhood on Avenue du Parc, and back left to the Portuguese quarter around St-Urbain and Marie-Anne, where on a sunny Sunday little girls in white satin dresses walk to communion with their families. Bars and nightclubs line the street as it approaches Rue Sherbrooke. Further south, the small Chinatown follows La Gauchetière Ouest. Contrary to other Canadian cities where immigration has created largely closed ghettos, Montréal's

immigrants have established themselves in the heart of the city. And while Irish and Italian immigrations go back far enough that many a French Canadian will go by the surname MacComber or Vezina, the various waves all seem to have found some place in the city's vibrant cultural and culinary scene. Montréalers take pride in this diversity and will happily detail their latest exotic discovery, be it the best Ethiopian restaurant in town or the latest "salsa" club.

There is also a certain "trashy," port-city, quality to Montréal. When Saint-Laurent plunges into downtown towards the intersection of Sainte-Catherine, strip clubs, sex shops, and tattoo parlors line the "red light" district. Strangely enough, these institutions share the street with hip concert halls, theaters and even a university, highlighting the city's surprising capacity to harbor very diverse lifestyles at a stone's throw from one another. Montréal's "alternative" culture has given rise to a thriving musical scene, but also to internationally-recognized contemporary artists. From jazz to independent theater, abundant summer festivals reflect culture's central role in the city's identity.

Just as Montréal's ethnic and cultural identities are diverse, the city's look is also quite hard to pin down. The Revolution tranquille, the decade from 1960 to 1970 that saw Quebec's Francophones shed their Catholic past and the whole province modernize, left its trace on architecture with an unfortunately pronounced taste for concrete. Inaugurated in 1966, the city's subway, decorated in oranges and maroons, aquas, and purples, is a testimonial to the esthetics of those booming times. These kitsch memorials are interspersed with Montréal's classier, properly 19th century brick buildings, but also with the modern, sophisticated interiors of restaurants, cafés

and clubs, and with a touch of colonial Nouvelle-France on greystone buildings.

Visitors tired from this kaleidoscope of styles and colors might want to retire into the streets of Outremont or Westmount, the twin municipalities to the North and South of Mont-Royal, the mountain that sits in the middle of the island. There at last large Victorian houses in matching colors with matching gardens and front porches sit side by side and the sound of the wind rustling through the leaves soothes the mind. As they walk across to the parc du Mont-Royal, sagacious tourists will wonder about this classic 19th century park's resemblance to a more well-known city park, only to discover that a certain landscape designer, having won fame for his New York masterpiece, was hired by the city of Montréal in 1873 to remodel this green space. Exiting the park, another one of Montréal's dichotomies strikes the eye: to the south a very North American city center complete with shopping malls and tall buildings, to the East, another downtown, the Plateau neighborhood, beckons with its cafés and boutiques.

With varied ingredients, Montréal cooks up a tasty and uncommon meal. Attempts to explain this unique blend have been made, but the small metropolis is best savored with a synthetic mindset and a curious eye. ■

Some Tips on Language Etiquette in Montréal

by VICTOR ARMONY | Université du Québec à Montréal | armony.victor@uqam.edu

Language is an extremely sensitive issue in Québec. The strong “sovereignist” movement, which advocates the separation of Québec from Canada through democratic means, places the protection of the French language at the very top of its priorities. Many French-speaking people in Québec feel self-conscious and defensive about their language, particularly in relation to English-speaking North Americans. That’s why a few tips on language etiquette may come in handy when visiting Montréal.

Canada has two official languages at the federal level: English and French. However, except New Brunswick, each Canadian province has only one official language. French is Québec’s official language. About 80 percent of its population is “francophone” (French is their native tongue or the main language spoken at home). In Montréal, French-speakers represent almost 70 percent of the population (it’s the second largest French-speaking city in the world, after Paris). In the downtown area, most people in the service sector speak English (as a first or second or even third language). Nevertheless, outside places specifically catering to tourists and international visitors (e.g. hotels, conference halls, etc.), it is considered common courtesy to ask “Do you speak English?” when addressing someone in that language. Any effort made by a visitor to use some French during an interaction with French speakers—even if only a “Bonjour” or a “Merci”—is generally perceived as a friendly gesture and elicits an equally friendly response.

Québec is pronounced “keh-BECK” in French and “kuh-BECK” in English. The adjective in French is “Québécois,” pronounced “keh-beh-KWA” (the “s” is silent). In English, two forms are usual: “Quebecer” (more common) and “Quebecker.” However, many English-speaking citizens of Québec have adopted

the French word “Québécois” in written and verbal communication and it is considered culturally sensitive to do so. In Spanish, the adjective is “Quebequense,” but many Spanish-speaking Quebecers also use “Québécois.” Some of them prefer the more familiar term “Quebeco” (but please note that, while this word is not intentionally derogatory, it might be interpreted as such by a French-speaking person).

The proper name of the city is *Montréal*, with an (acute) accent on the “e.” The word comes from “Mont Royal,” or “Royal Mount,” the big hill located in the middle of Montréal Island. When uttered in French, it sounds like “Monray-AL,” pronounced with a guttural “r” (although some older French-speaking Montrealers use the rolling “r”). Contrary to what some assume, the “t” is never silent when saying the city’s name in English or Spanish. In English, there are two ways of pronouncing it. English-speaking Montrealers tend to say “MUN-treal,” while most Americans say (incorrectly in the opinion of some Anglophone Montrealers) “MAWN-treal” or “MAHN-treal.”

The Québécois are known for their hospitality and warmth. They feel strongly about their own language and cultural heritage, but that should not be construed as an intolerant attitude towards outsiders. Actually, many of them love to discuss politics, and they will enthusiastically engage a conversation with a foreigner about Québec’s history and current affairs. ■

Exhibitors and Booth Numbers

Hilton Montréal Bonaventure Fontaine Ballroom

Exhibit Hours

Thursday and Friday: 10:00am-5:00pm

Saturday: 10:00am-4:00pm

Araceli Tinajero (91)
 Blackwell Publishing (63)
 Cambridge University Press (61)
 Center for Latin American Studies /
 University of California, Berkeley (84)
 Center for Latino Research - Dialogo (53)
 Centro de Investigacion y Docencia
 Economicas / CIDE (59)
 Chiapas Media Project (54)
 Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias
 Sociales-CLACSO (52)
 Council for International Exchange of
 Scholars (55)
 David Rockefeller Center for Latin American
 Studies, Harvard University Press (5)
 Duke University Press (7-8)
 El Colegio de la Frontera Norte A.C. (43)
 El Colegio de Mexico A.C. (44)
 Flacso (2)
 Hackett Publishing Co. (64)
 Iberoamericana de Libros y
 Ediciones S.L. (46-47)
 Institute for Study Abroad,
 Butler University (57)
 Institute for the Study of the Americas-
 University of London (50)
 Instituto Internacional de Literatura
 Iberoamericana (6)
 Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo
 de México (ITAM) (38)
 Inter-American Development Bank (45)
 Inter-American Foundation (42)
 Latin American Perspectives (90)
 Latin American Research
 Resources Project (15)

Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc. (34-35)
 Macmillan (67)
 Markus Wiener Publishers (29)
 Maya Educational Foundation (88)
 McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers (68)
 Military Review (69)
 Ocean Press (39)
 Oxford University Press (51)
 Palgrave Macmillan (66)
 Pathfinder Press (85)
 Penn State University Press (65)
 Perseus Books Group / Westview Press (28)
 Plumsock Mesoamerican Studies (87)
 Prochile (11-12)
 Proquest CSA (1)
 Random House, Inc. (40)
 Routledge / Taylor & Francis Group (27)
 Rowman & Littlefield Publishers (62)
 Rutgers University Press (13)
 Scholarly Book Services, Inc. (56)
 Stanford University Press (60)
 Temple University Press (86)
 The Gale Group (58)
 University of Arizona Press (70)
 University of California Press (14)
 University of Minnesota Press (16)
 University of New Mexico Press (36-37)
 University of North Carolina Press (30-31)
 University of Notre Dame Press (26)
 University of Pittsburgh Press (9-10)
 University of Texas Press (32-33)
 University of the West Indies Press (56)
 University of Windsor,
 History Department (41)
 University of Wisconsin Press (83)
 University Press of Florida (3-4)
 Vanderbilt University Press (25)

ON LASA 2007

Session Highlights

Wednesday

Elinor Melville Memorial Panel: Economy, Society, and Environment in Latin American and Caribbean History

Organizer: Julia Murphy
2:00 - 3:45 pm

Decolonizing

Organizer: Arturo Escobar
4:00 - 5:45 pm

Diálogos Políticos 1 / Naomi Klein

Organizer: Charles R. Hale
4:00 - 5:45 pm

Thursday

The Struggle for Immigrant Rights: Activist Voices Form the Front Line

Organizer: William Robinson
10:00 - 11:45 am

After Washington, Beyond Civil Society: Emergent Social Movement Theories and Practices in the Américas - Part 1

Organizer: Sonia E. Alvarez
12:00 - 1:45 pm

Diálogos políticos 2 / Álvaro García Linera

Organizer: Charles R. Hale
12:00 - 1:45 pm

After Washington, Beyond Civil Society: Emergent Social Movement Theories and Practices in the Américas - Part 2

Organizer: Sonia E. Alvarez
2:00 - 3:45 pm

Identity, Autonomy and the State: From Québec to Bolivia

Organizer: Pierre Beaucage
2:00 - 3:45 pm

Conversations on Utopia and Reification in Latin American Health

Organizer: Steven Palmer
2:00 - 3:45 pm

Delegación LASA-Oaxaca

Organizer: Matthew Gutmann
2:00 - 3:45 pm

Publishing your Research I: Journals

Organizer: Philip Oxhorn
4:00 - 5:45 pm

Desarrollo de las Ciencias Sociales en América Latina: Una mirada de futuro desde la FLACSO

Organizer: Francisco Rojas-Aravena
6:00 - 7:45 pm

Publishing your Research II: Books

Organizer: Philip Oxhorn
6:00 - 7:45 pm

Friday

Can Corporate Accountability Contribute to Equitable Economic Development in Latin America?

Organizer: Michael Conroy
8:00 - 9:45 am

Las mujeres políticas en América Latina: Reflexión desde la práctica

Organizer: Ana Lau Jaiven
10:00 - 11:45 am

25 Años de investigar la frontera norte de México

Organizer: Maria Socorro Tabuenca Córdoba
10:00 - 11:45 am

De la investigación-acción colaborativa a las metodologías dialógicas: Reflexiones desde la academia feminista y los estudios de género en América Latina

Organizer: Rosalva Aida Hernandez-Castillo
12:00 - 1:45 pm

Empire in Question: The Case of Venezuela

Organizer: Gregory Grandin
2:00 - 3:45 pm

The Québec Paradox: Dealing with Diversity in a "Distinct Society"

Organizer: Victor Armony
2:00 - 3:45 pm

Diálogos Políticos 3 / Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada

Organizer: Charles R. Hale
6:00 - 7:45 pm

Saturday

Archivo y acceso: El cine Latinoamericano en el siglo XXI

Organizer: Claudia Ferman
10:00 - 11:45 am

Refounding the Republic: The Grassroots Change Processes of Social Reform and the Constituent Assembly in Bolivia (2006-2007)

Organizer: Kevin Healy
10:00 - 11:45 am

Otros Saberes I: Conocimientos colaborativos de intelectuales Indígenas y Afrodescendientes

Organizer: Charles R. Hale
10:00 - 11:45 am

To Understand Reparation from the Perspective of Activists and Women Survivors of Sexual Violence during Times of Conflict

Organizer: Gisela Eva Côté
12:00 - 1:45 pm

Canada in the Hemisphere: An Insider's View

Organizer: Philip Oxhorn
12:00 - 1:45 pm

Otros Saberes II: Conocimientos colaborativos de intelectuales Indígenas y Afrodescendientes

Organizer: Lynn Stephen
12:00 - 1:45 pm

(RE)Imagining Latin America and What It Means to Be "Latin American" Today

Organizer: Philip Oxhorn
2:00 - 3:45 pm

What Is Research Good For?

Organizer: Charles R. Hale
4:00 - 5:45 pm

Diálogos políticos 4 / Matilde Ribeiro

Organizer: Charles R. Hale
6:00 - 7:45 pm

Special Events

Kalman Silvert Award Session

Friday, September 7, 10:00 am
Grand Salon (Fairmont)

Helen Safa is the recipient of Silvert Award for 2007

LASA/Oxfam America Martin Diskin Memorial Lectureship

Saturday, September 8, 2:00 pm
Grand Salon (Fairmont)

The 2007 Lecture will be given by Orlando Fals-Borda.

Bryce Wood and Premio Iberoamericano Book Awards and the Media Award Presentations

Friday, September 7, 8:00 pm
Grand Salon (Fairmont)

The Award Ceremony will precede the LASA Business Meeting.

Welcoming Ceremony and Reception

Wednesday, September 5, 8:30 pm
Ballroom (Hilton)

Film Festival

This year's Festival highlights two of the most relevant filmmaking movements taking place in Latin America today.

First, there is a notable increase in the production of indigenous film over the entire region. This movement has already turned out masterpieces such as *Meu Primeiro Contato* / *My First Contact*, which will be screened at LASA2007 in Montréal.

Secondly, there is significant activity in the independent media sector, which originated in the aspiration to document and editorialize social and political movements outside mainstream media. An interesting example is the film "I," which also will be screened at LASA2007. This film puts forward many important debates associated with the newly created Indymedia.

Additionally, the Festival organized a screening of a series of films on the conflict in Oaxaca, and Atenco, Mexico, also produced by independent media. The Festival features prominently the following themes: *The Border* / *La Frontera*; the new Social and Political Movements / *Movimientos Políticos y Sociales*; *The Cities* / *Las Ciudades*; and *Claim for Justice* / *Reclamo de Justicia*.

Accommodations

Thanks to Tourisme Montréal we have been able to create a list of more affordable hotels in Montréal. The following hotels are not working with LASA through a contract, but they are available for relatively cheaper rates. (Please note that LASA cannot offer shuttle transportation between these hotels and the Congress sites).

Auberge YWCA Montréal
(514) 866-9942 (Telephone)
www.ydesfemmesmtl.org
info@ydesfemmesmtl.org

Hôtel Travelodge Montréal Centre
(514) 874-9090 (Telephone)
1 800 363-6535 (Canada and U.S.A.) (Toll Free)
1 800 578-7878 (Reservations)
www.travelodgemontreal.ca
reserve@travelodgemontreal.ca

La Tour Belvédère Apartment Hotel
Apartment-Hotel
(514) 935-9052 (Telephone)
1 888 922-9052 (Toll Free)
www.tourbelvedere.com
email@tourbelvedere.com

McGill University Traditional Residences
Residence: Campus
(514) 398-5200 (Telephone)
www.residences.mcgill.ca/summer.html
reserve.residences@mcgill.ca

Les Résidences Universitaires de l'UQAM
Residence: Campus
(514) 987-6669, ext. 6000 (Telephone)
www.residences-uqam.qc.ca
uqamres@netrevolution.com

Montréal International Youth Hostel
Youth Hostel
(514) 843-3317 (Telephone)
1 866 843-3317 (Toll Free)
www.hostellingmontreal.com
info@hostellingmontreal.com

New Residence Hall - McGill University
Residence: Campus
(514) 398-3471 (Telephone)
www.mcgill.ca/nrh
reservation.nrh@mcgill.ca

Transportation

The main sites for the Congress are the Fairmont - The Queen Elizabeth Hotel and the Hilton Montréal Bonaventure.

Sixty percent of the sessions will be held at the Fairmont Hotel; the rest will be held at the Hilton. The Book Exhibit and the Film Festival will be at the Hilton. The two hotels are one block away from each other.

LASA will be providing transportation from the Hyatt to and from the main Congress sites throughout the Congress. The Delta hotel is located within a short distance of the sites and can be reached by walking.

Child Care

LASA will subsidize the cost of child care for accepted participants who are taking their children to LASA2007. Reimbursement will be provided at the rate of US \$8 per hour for one child, and US \$10 for two or more children, for a maximum of 10 hours.

LASA's maximum responsibility per family will be \$80.00 for one child and \$100 for two or more children. A parent who bills LASA for childcare must be a 2007 member of the Association and a registered attendee of LASA2007. To receive reimbursement, the parent must submit the original bill from the caregiver, with the name(s) of the child(ren), and the dates of the service, to the LASA Secretariat on or before October 10, 2007.

For advance reservations, please call:

Fairmont: (514)365-1704
or (514)954-2288
Hilton: (514)365-1704
Hyatt: (514)982-1234
Delta: (514)879-1370

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Comentario al Dr. Hosokawa

by MIDORI IJIMA | Universidad Rikkyo, Tokio, Japón

El penúltimo *LASA Forum* (Winter 2007, issue #1) se molestó en expandir su visión hacia el tema poco tratado: los latinoamericanistas no latinos (ni anglos). Siendo yo miembro de JALAS (Japan Association of Latin American Studies) y de LASA, me llamó una gran atención la breve pero interesante síntesis del Dr. Shuhei Hosokawa titulada “The Antipodal Passion”, la cual refleja lo difícil de profundizar este tema.

A mi modo de ver, su observación que enfoca al exotismo (ser antípoda) y la cuestión lingüística no logran escapar, a su vez, del argumento simplista. Lo más fundamental que le falta es una perspectiva histórica. No niego que esos dos puntos mencionados sean elementos importantes. Tampoco ignoro la condición *física* que limita su contribución (menos de una página). Sin embargo, temo que su descripción inocente e ingenua ofreciera a los lectores una imagen bastante torcida—aun no errónea—al respecto.

De verdad, ¿América Latina es un mundo exótico para los japoneses? En el sentido común, sí. Buena parte de la sociedad japonesa solo levanta su mirada hacia esta zona cuando habla de las ruinas, en otras palabras, las pirámides, la arqueología, la gloria de los indios (muertos desde luego). Estos días, a lo mejor, también de la música o del fútbol...y de vez en cuando, de Fujimori (no como criminal de lesa humanidad sino como un *nikkei* más conocido del mundo). Ahí está el exotismo. Quizás el mismo exotismo que condujo a los Conquistadores a las Indias y a la gente como John Stanley a África. Es decir, el exotismo no garantiza la buena voluntad. Sabemos que funciona muchas veces a todo contrario.

Basta mencionar dos nombres: Seiichi Izumi (arqueólogo, 1915-70) y Eiichiro Ishida (antropólogo, 1903-68), dos patriarcas de estudios latinoamericanos en Japón. Ahora, ¿qué antecedentes tuvieron esos dos profesionales? Ambos trabajaron como investigador-académico en la COLONIA. Izumi en Corea, ocupada y dominada por el Dai Nipón Teikoku (Gran Imperio Nipón) mientras Ishida en Manchuria, bajo la sombra inequívoca de la Mantetsu, la versión japonesa de la East Indian Company. Agrego aquí el hecho de que la clase política de entonces tenía una teoría magnífica para justificar su invasión como bien sabemos todos, la consecuencia les obligó a estos dos cambiar de su campo de operación (ahora campo de estudio). Si los estudios latinoamericanos en Japón conllevan innatos el exotismo, ¿acaso no tendría nada que ver con su ADN? El exotismo no es nada nuevo. Puede ser otra cara de la misma moneda llamada el colonialismo.

Pasemos a lo lingüístico. Lo que apuesta el Dr. Hosokawa es más que cierto. Los japoneses pocas veces presentan sus trabajos en el idioma extranjero aunque eso *no* quiere decir que sí se discutan en *su* idioma. Aquí también se requiere un asterisco. No es el privilegio de los latinoamericanistas sino del medio mundo a menos que te muevas en las ciencias naturales. Entonces, nada extraño. Durante los últimos 50 años la academia japonesa, importando productos académicos especialmente “Made in USA”, ha venido balaceando el superávit que cometen sus empresas.

En todo caso, a la sociedad japonesa de posguerra, le importa más seguir y obedecer a los Estados Unidos que elaborar su propia opinión o diplomacia independiente. Para colmo, América Latina es el “patio trasero” de su Big Brother. No hay mucho que hacer por su cuenta. Inclusiva es mejor no destacar en esa área pensando en reservar su mano libre en Asia, zona realmente vital para sus intereses.

En este contexto, Area Studies en Japón en general se tiende a concentrar su energía en el mercado doméstico. No se sentía la necesidad, por lo menos hasta ahora, de salir de ese círculo, mucho menos de participar en la digna misión de fomentar lo humano, los valores universales.

Nos falta todavía mucho para abordar todos los aspectos que merecen considerar. Espero que estas líneas sirvan a contextualizar y centrar la periferia debidamente. ■

Centering the Periphery, Non-Latin Latin Americanisms: The Case of Austria

by GERHARD DREKONJA-KORNAT | Chair for Latin America | University of Vienna | gerhard.drekonja@univie.ac.at

I followed with interest the debate on “Centering the Periphery: Non-Latin Latin Americanisms” (*LASA Forum*, winter 2007). Unlike my colleagues from the Netherlands or Germany, I was neither surprised nor amused by the idea of working and writing in the periphery because Austria was beyond periphery. There simply was no tradition of research on Latin America (although we had the Habsburg “Casa de Austria”-connection and the naturalista-experience of Bohemian-born Tadeo Haenke, our “Austrian Humboldt”).

The founding of the Institute of Ethnology at the University of Vienna in the 1920s (a bulwark of catholic science) opened briefly a window of opportunity for research on American civilizations, however without followers after WW II. (An interesting case is Friedrich Katz, today emeritus at the University of Chicago, who studied there in the 1950s but without chance to find a job).

When Latin America, as part of the Third World, aroused interest among a young generation in the 1960s, there was no other way than to do it amateurishly, learning by doing. This was the typical experience of half a dozen pathfinders who went to Latin America, without a safety net, to find *el buen revolucionario* (I myself, Leo Gabriel, Wolfgang Dietrich, Elke Mader, Georg Grünberg). Initiated, in my case, to Latin America by Cornell University (teaching literacy to adults in the “Cornell-in-Honduras-program”), I undertook a kind of intellectual vagabondage through Latin America beginning in 1966, doing all kind of jobs, travelling a lot, working with a development cooperation, establishing myself as a correspondent and risk analyst, but always keeping contact with academia, first via the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Pittsburgh (my thanks to Carmelo Mesa-Lago), then via the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá (mis agradecimientos to Fernando

Cepeda). Thus, I became very early an Austrian (the first?) member of LASA.

The decade of the 1980s was for all of us adventurers the moment for homecoming. In the meantime, in Vienna a privately organized Lateinamerika-Institut had opened its doors. We returnees did our best to introduce and expand the field of serious research but encountered all varieties of problems, not the least the distrust of the university establishment with its pretension on research monopoly. However, as the first “Director Académico” of the Lateinamerika-Institut, modest progress was made in the late 1980s, including an experiment with an interdisciplinary course on Latin America, and integrating ourselves to CEISAL (Consejo Europeo de Investigaciones Sociales de América Latina) that anchored its legal residence at our Lateinamerika-Institut (something that, before 1989, was very important to the Eastern European colleagues because travel to Vienna was allowed).

The turning point came in 1990 when the Republic of Austria created for the University of Vienna a Chair for Latin American History (in German horribly “Lehrstuhl fuer aussereuropaeische Geschichte”—for Non-European History). I won via *concurso público*. All of a sudden, distrust ended, and most of the scheming stopped as well. Synergies between the Chair and the Lateinamerika-Institut set creativity free. For the first time, cohesive research debate on Latin America within the university realm became possible.

Progress was made. In one of our recent evaluations, we were able to show the number of Austrians doing serious work on Latin America (265). This is proof that Latin American Studies is no longer an exotic subject in Austria. The “critical mass” has been achieved. A quality explosion occurred lately. I tried to document it by editing a volume (“Lateinamerikanistik: der oesterreichische

Weg”. Muenster-Vienna: Editorial LIT 2005), having 30 mostly younger authors describe how they got into regional studies and contributed in their discipline to the international debate. I think, *modestia aparte*, that we have come a long way within a very short time and can show professional standards.

We certainly should publish more in English, because a mouse click in HAPI reveals absences. But even publishing in German, the question is: How “useful” are we Austrian Latin Americanists? In a conventional sense, not at all—fortunately. We do not have to defend an empire, play international power politics, generate financial profits, worry about trade balances. But we can provide our students, through alternative lectures, teaching and writings, with perspectives that debunk misleading rhetoric, take apart false arguments, point out the arrogance of metropolitan positions. Our students, thus, are given the opportunity to show solidarity with the “other Latin America.”

And we are proud for advancing on a journey towards a partnership of scientific discourse in which our Latin American *colegas* are no longer merely “shepas” but work together with us, hand in hand, to produce and exchange knowledge for our mutual emancipation process.

By the end of 2007, I myself will enter the state of emeritus, saying adiós to the University of Vienna with a cultural studies-volume on La Habana (“Havanna”. Editorial LIT 2007). In 2008, I shall continue anew as guest professor in Colombia. Our position in Vienna, renamed “Chair for the History of the Americas,” is in good, strong, and young hands, showing consolidation and advancement and coordinating our strongest asset, the Course for Advanced Latin American Studies, which, a European first, will convey the title “Master of Arts in Latin American Studies.” ■

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL NOTES

In Memoriam

Álvaro Félix Bolaños, Associate Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of Florida, passed away unexpectedly on May 14, 2007. Born in Cartago, Colombia in 1955, Félix earned his Licenciatura en Letras at the Universidad del Valle in Cali, Colombia. He taught Spanish literature in a Cali high school for eight years before coming to the United States for graduate studies. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. in Latin American Literature at the University of Kentucky. Félix taught at Tulane University and Universidad de los

Andes before moving to Gainesville in 1998; he had just been promoted to full professor at Florida. His area of specialization was colonial Latin American literature and culture. His research focused on historical and literary representations of the first contacts between Spaniards and Indians, colonial culture, and the legacy of colonial culture in contemporary Latin America, including within indigenous communities. An avid runner, he was jogging at the time of his death. Félix was a much respected colleague and friend, and will be missed by many.

A Commemorative Retrospective in Memory of Alvaro Félix Bolaños will be held at the LASA Congress in Montréal on Wednesday, September 5th, 6:00–7:30 pm, in the Marquette Room, Fairmont Hotel.

Carmen Diana Deere, Director, Center for Latin American Studies, University of Florida. ■

Review: Literature and Arts of the Americas

Caribbean and Caribbean Diaspora Writing and Arts

Issue 74 (Volume 40, Number 1)



Founded in 1968 by the Americas Society (formerly the Center for Inter-American Relations), **Review** is the major forum in the United States for contemporary writing in English and English translation from throughout the Americas.

Review 74 opens with a section of scholarly articles developed by Guest Academic Editor **Silvio Torres-Saillant** (Syracuse University) that contextualizes a compilation of fiction, poetry, and creative essays from the region and the diaspora. These include new and newly-translated work by **Marie-Celie Agnant**, **Denis Henriquez**, **José Kozar**, **Frank Martinus Arion**, **Achy Obejas**, **Luis Rafael Sánchez**, **Anna Lidia Vega Serova**, and others.

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Volume 40, 2007, 2 issues per year

(Institutional rate: US\$173/£104; Personal rate: US\$41/£23)

Print ISSN 0890-5762, Online ISSN 1743-0666

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

CJLACS - Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies

RCÉLAC - Revue canadienne des études latino-américaines et caraïbes



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CJLACS / RCÉLAC issues appear twice a year. It is the flagship publication of the *Canadian Association of Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CALACS)* / *Association canadienne d'études latino-américaines et caraïbes (ACÉLAC)*.

Since 1976, the journal is dedicated to interdisciplinary studies on Latin America and the Caribbean. It publishes peer-reviewed articles based on original research, in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.

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LASA Section on Ethnicity, Race, and Indigenous Peoples: A Space for Initiatives

Created at the 2004 Congress, Ethnicity, Race and Indigenous People (ERIP) has become one of the four largest Sections of LASA. This reflects the enormous interest that the issues it addresses raise among the membership at large, but also the active engagement of its members, which makes the Section a space bursting with initiatives. For instance, the travel fund for Indigenous and Afro-descendants was established by the LASA Executive Council upon an initiative of the ERIP Section. The Section also received permission from the Council to explore venues for fundraising aimed at establishing a permanent fund for collaborative research with Indigenous and Afro-descendant organizations in Latin America, a task which is underway. In recent months the ERIP Section has teamed up with the journal *Latin American and Caribbean Studies* (LACES) to organize a joint conference which will be repeated regularly every 18 months and will feature a **Best Graduate Student Paper Award** of \$500 (see the call for papers below). In addition the Section is in the planning stages to develop an initiative regarding Indigenous and Afro-Descendants Universities. As this brief characterization shows, the Section is an exceedingly open space for members to advance ideas and find partners to bring them into fruition, but in order to keep and further this profile the Section needs the continuing support and participation of its membership. For this reason, we would like to invite actual and potential members to renew or join the Section and to share your ideas and initiatives with us at ERIP@ethnicityrace.org and visit our webpage <http://www.ethnicityrace.org/>

The ERIP council

First Conference on Ethnicity, Race, and Indigenous Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean May 22-23, 2008 University of California, San Diego

Individual papers and organized panel proposals are invited for the First Conference on Ethnicity, Race, and Indigenous Peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean, May 22-23, 2008, at the University of California, San Diego. The event will be organized and sponsored by ERIP (LASA Section on Ethnicity, Race, and Indigenous Peoples), CILAS-UCSD (Center for Iberian and Latin American Studies, University of California, San Diego) and LACES (Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies, journal published by Taylor & Francis). Panel and individual paper topics relating to all aspects of ethnicity, race relations, Indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants and other ethnic or racial groups in Latin America and the Caribbean are welcome. Scholars and practitioners in all humanities and social science disciplines with an interest in these areas of research are encouraged to participate.

The deadline for submitting proposals for individual papers and pre-organized panels is Wednesday, October 31, 2007. The relevant forms and detailed information about the mechanics of the submission of proposals can be obtained at the conference's webpage <http://cilas.ucsd.edu/events/conferences.php>

The Latin American Studies Association (LASA) is the largest professional association in the world for individuals and institutions engaged in the study of Latin America. With over 5,000 members, twenty-five percent of whom reside outside the United States, LASA is the one association that brings together experts on Latin America from all disciplines and diverse occupational endeavors, across the globe.

LASA's mission is to foster intellectual discussion, research, and teaching on Latin America, the Caribbean, and its people throughout the Americas, promote the interests of its diverse membership, and encourage civic engagement through network building and public debate.



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