

EXORCISING COLLECTIVE GHOSTS:
Recent Argentine Writings on Politics, Economics,
Social Movements, and Popular Culture*

Paul G. Buchanan
University of Arizona

- EL POSPERONISMO.* By ALVARO ABOS. (Buenos Aires: Editorial Legasa, 1986. Pp. 261.)
- CENSURA, AUTORITARISMO Y CULTURA: ARGENTINA, 1960-1983.* 2 volumes. By ANDRES AVELLANEDA. (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América, 1986. Pp. 421.)
- EL GASTO EN SALUD Y MEDICAMENTOS: ARGENTINA, 1985.* By GINES GONZALEZ GARCIA, PABLO ABADIE, JUAN JOSE LLOVET, and SILVINA RAMOS. (Buenos Aires: Estudios CEDES, 1987. Pp. 146.)
- EL PARLAMENTO HOY.* By LILIANA DE RIZ, ANA M. MUSTAPIC, MATEO GORETTI, and MONICA PANOSYAN. (Buenos Aires: Estudios CEDES, 1986. Pp. 72.)
- EL PUEBLO LEGISLADOR: LAS ELECCIONES DE 1983.* By DARIO CANTON. (Buenos Aires: Centro de Investigaciones en Ciencias Sociales, 1986. Pp. 269.)
- PARTICIPACION POLITICA Y PLURALISMO EN LA ARGENTINA CONTEMPORANEA.* By ARIEL H. COLOMBO and VICENTE PALERMO. (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América, 1985. Pp. 137.)
- CONCERTACION, ESTADO, Y SINDICATOS EN LA ARGENTINA CONTEMPORANEA.* By LILIANA DE RIZ, MARCELO CAVAROZZI, and JORGE FELDMAN. (Buenos Aires: CEDES, 1987. Pp. 55.)
- LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS.* By ALDO FERRER. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press for the Third World Foundation, 1985. Pp. 98. \$15.00.)
- FUNCION ADMINISTRATIVA Y LEGITIMACION DEMOCRATICA.* By ENRIQUE I. GROISMAN. (Buenos Aires: CISEA, 1981. Pp. 44.)
- PODER Y DERECHO EN EL "PROCESO DE REORGANIZACION NACIONAL."* By ENRIQUE I. GROISMAN. (Buenos Aires: CISEA, 1983. Pp. 53.)
- FUERZAS ARMADAS, PARTIDOS POLITICOS Y TRANSICION A LA DEMOCRACIA EN ARGENTINA.* By ANDRES FONTANA. (Buenos Aires: CEDES, 1984. Pp. 40.)

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- LOS NUEVOS MOVIMIENTOS SOCIALES. 2 volumes. Edited by ELIZABETH JELIN. (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de America, 1985. Pp. 287.)
- "PROCESO," CRISIS Y TRANSICION DEMOCRATICA. 2 volumes. Edited by OSCAR OSZLAK. (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América, 1984. Pp. 350.)
- FROM MILITARY RULE TO LIBERAL DEMOCRACY IN ARGENTINA. Edited by MONICA PERALTA-RAMOS and CARLOS H. WAISMAN. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1987. Pp. 175. \$23.00.)
- ELECCIONES Y CONSOLIDACION DEMOCRATICA EN ARGENTINA, 1983-1987. By MANUEL ALCANTARA SAEZ. (San José, Costa Rica: Centro Interamericano de Asesoría y Promoción Electoral, CAPEL, 1988. Pp. 65.)
- ARGENTINA, 1976-1981: EL ENDEUDAMIENTO EXTERNO COMO PIVOTE DE LA ESPECULACION FINANCIERA. By JORGE SCHVARZER. (Buenos Aires: Cuadernos del Bimestre, CISEA, 1983. Pp. 61.)
- MARTINEZ DE HOZ: LA LOGICA POLITICA DE LA POLITICA ECONOMICA. By JORGE SCHVARZER. Buenos Aires: CISEA, 1983. Pp. 157.)
- SERVICIOS DE SALUD Y SECTORES POPULARES: LOS AÑOS DEL PROCESO. By JUAN JOSE LLOVET. (Buenos Aires: CEDES, 1984. Pp. 164.)

The 1983 transition from military dictatorship to democracy in Argentina has generated a wave of reflection within the country's intellectual community, in which scholars from a broad range of disciplines have brought their expertise to bear on the causes of national decline since the days of the Great Depression. This essay will examine only a fraction of these works to determine how the traumas of the past decades have altered Argentines' political, economic, and social self-perceptions, particularly among authors not widely disseminated in English.

A generational change has taken place in Argentina, one with fundamental consequences far beyond demographics. The seven-year reign of the "Proceso de Reorganización Nacional" and the years of chaos that preceded it were more than an interregnum. Through the silence of fear, repression, exile, and death, this period witnessed the stilling of an entire generation of Argentines, those who came of age between 1972 and 1982. For these young Argentines, creative expression was limited to reading and writing between the lines, flights of the imagination, wishful thinking, or if necessary, flight into exile. Once the Proceso fell, the survivors and their successors emerged at the forefront of Argentina's cultural rebirth and critical self-evaluation. This need for collective reappraisal was brought into focus by the experience of the young Malvinas campaign veterans and by the televised disinterring of victims of the "dirty war" during the investigations of 1984. The point was also driven home by subsequent publication of the horrific findings of the Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas (CONADEP, also known as the Sabato Commission) under the title *Nunca más*.¹ The new generation of Argentine intellectuals has been tempered by the defeat of the guer-

rillas' armed struggle, the subsequent excesses of the dirty war, neoliberal economic policies, and foreign military defeat. Its members have an acute sense of their position as citizens of the Third World as well as increased respect for the intrinsic worth of democratic freedoms that were so often denied. They also have the opportunity to reflect on the multiple levels at which the Argentine malaise is felt. This generation stands at the threshold between two eras, divided by the profound traumas of the last two decades, while contemplating the authoritarian past and searching the prospects for a democratic future.

The Argentine political opening of 1983 found some sectors of the intelligentsia slower to bloom than others. Among the last to be influenced by the political *apertura* and the cultural *destape* were social scientists. This outcome is no paradox. During the Proceso, what was "social" was considered subversive, and many of the social sciences were labeled "Marxist sciences," removed from university curricula, and subjected to blanket repression. The social sciences were thus left to traditionalists, dilettantes, authoritarian apologists, legal historians, economic Darwinists, and conspiracy theorists, opposed only by a handful of isolated foreign-trained academics who found refuge in transnationally funded research centers like CEDES, CISEA, CLACSO, the Fundación Bariloche, and the Instituto Di Tella. This debate was joined, increasingly after 1982, by the voices of exiles returned from abroad and a younger generation of scholars uninvolved in the debacles of the past.

It is through the work of the emergent generation of Argentine intellectuals that one can perceive that the modern history of Argentina is the history of organic crisis in the full sense of the term: a history of structural contradictions superimposed on alienated individuals and collectivities that locked social agents into pathological, zero-sum economic and political positions. The result was an "impossible game" of cyclical hegemonic stalemates and the imposition of unilateral authoritarian solutions that ultimately proved equally incapable of solving the nation's ills. A microcosmic version of this game was played out in the field of interpersonal relations as classism, racism, sexism, paternalism, Peronism, anti-Peronism, and other inegalitarian "isms" seeped into the fabric of society as methods of coping with the dislocating effects and disorder in all arenas of social life. The history of modern Argentina has thus been one of rule by *dominio*, the coercive "moment of force" by which (temporarily) dominant individuals and groups forcibly subject "others" to their will.² The Proceso was precipitated by the superstructural aberrations that overlapped the long-term economic decline in the years leading up to the 1976 *golpe de estado*, as manifested in guerrilla violence on the left and the right, the paralyzed corruption of the government of Isabel Perón, increased crime, and generalized anomie.

The connection between base and superstructure, between eco-

conomic apparatus and social behavior, has become a leitmotif in the works of Argentine social scientists. Structural conditions, national as well as international, constitute the general parameters that define a limited yet variable range of group choices and strategic interactions (even if pathological in nature). Conjunctural and other superstructural factors, whether tied to *virtu* or *fortuna*, broaden the range of indeterminacy within these general structural boundaries, thereby expanding the range of possible outcomes.³ It is this type of “Linzián” perspective, in which social behavior is grounded but not absolutely defined by structure, that undergirds the most innovative social science analyses of the Argentine condition. While some studies have tended to drift toward a purely behaviorist position, most of the leading work is situated in a perspective that conceptualizes social and political life as being governed by the reciprocal interaction between base and superstructure, which lead to a varying range of strategic choices and distinct types of collective action among political and social agents.⁴

This perspective is particularly evident in the field of economics, where the relationship between base and superstructure during the Proceso was inverted and followed a reverse form of determinism: political logics fueled a structural transformation project that, despite its disastrous effects on the society at large, served to increase the long-term political and economic power of those who implemented it. More generally, the unique authoritarian superstructural traits imbedded in Argentine society have encouraged the propagation of zero-sum attitudes in the economic sphere, in a reversal of the traditional orthodoxy.

In the language of conventional wisdom, politics is the process by which authoritative decisions are made about allocating scarce societal resources. In modern-day Argentina, politics has more frequently been the process by which authoritarian appropriation of scarce societal resources is accomplished, with allocation benefiting a few at the expense of all others. In two essays published by CISEA in 1983, Jorge Schvarzer demonstrates the self-serving way in which, under the guise of a foreign-financed structural transformation project, macroeconomic policy was wielded as an instrument of sectoral power and enrichment during the Proceso by the “neoliberal” team led by Economics Minister José Martínez de Hoz. In *Martínez de Hoz: la lógica política de la política económica*, Schvarzer argues that during his unprecedented five-year tenure as national economic “czar,” Martínez de Hoz was interested in more than “reinserting” Argentina in its “proper” place as an agro-industrial exporter in the international market. This backward-looking structural reform project required eliminating uncompetitive domestic industries by lifting trade barriers, reducing state expenditures on inefficient social services and “demagogic” welfare policies, and reasserting the financial sector’s position as the guide to productive investment. Martínez de Hoz and his team

employed these “objective” justifications to adopt what Schvarzer terms a “Machiavellian” approach that “perversely” used economic policy as an instrument of sectoral power. The team’s policy was designed to centralize and concentrate economic and political resources in their hands while they were in office and also to create a lasting structural legacy—external debt, both public and private—that would place team members in positions of dominance once they left the public sphere.

A subjective rationality underrode the “objectively” rational monetarist discourse of the Proceso’s economic team. Its aim was to cement, at whatever cost, the long-term foundations of their economic and political domination. This “subjective rationality,” which was eminently relational in its social genesis, divided Argentina along class lines and class fractions, awarding the short- and long-term benefits of economic policy to “us” to the detriment of “them.”⁵ As Julie Taylor points out in her analysis of the treatment the technocrats received in the Argentine press after 1983 (in the Peralta Ramos and Waisman volume), the relational affinities binding Martínez de Hoz and his confederates were economic, intellectual, and social: *aristocratizante*, *extranjerizante*, and *tecnocrático*. Beyond their grounding in the Chicago-style school of monetarist thought and their economic links to international capital, the team shared interests in sports, dress, culture, and cuisine. They also shared an exclusionary attitude of *soberbia* (arrogance) toward others, an attitude that facilitated their “satanization” after their fall (see Taylor in Peralta Ramos and Waisman, pp. 137–39).

Schvarzer summarizes this “predatory” approach to economic policy-making: “[U]no de los objetivos básicos de Martínez de Hoz consistió en encontrar los mecanismos para que su política durara y su equipo permaneciera en los puestos de mando del aparato estatal. A largo plazo, su estrategia buscaba lograr un reestructuración de la organización económica, en el mercado y en la sociedad, que favoreciera a los sectores que lo apoyaban. En el corto plazo, en cambio, debía preparar las condiciones que garantizaran el largo” (Schvarzer, *Martínez de Hoz*, p. 113).

To accomplish these dual objectives, restrictions were lifted on capital transfers in and out of Argentina, the peso was overvalued relative to the dollar, and the banking system was deregulated. Meanwhile, collective bargaining was eliminated while wage rates were fixed by the regime, resulting in an abrupt and massive transfer of resources away from wage earners. Continuous instability and uncertainty in a volatile short-term, high-volume capital market increasingly sustained by foreign loans contributed to diverting resources toward that market (via speculation) while buttressing the positions of those with vested interests, including the individuals responsible for formulating macroeconomic policy.

The political logic behind the economic strategy consolidated a specific class fraction’s political and economic position over the short and

long term, but for the country at large, this costly proposition entailed short-term repression, gross transfers of wealth to already wealthy sectors of society, and long-term structural dependence on those sectors and their foreign allies. As Schvarzer concludes, "Esta fue caracterizada en reiteradas ocasiones como el período de la 'guerra sucia'; ¿qué tiene de extraño, entonces, que la política económica fuera, también, 'sucia?'" (Schvarzer, *Martínez de Hoz*, p. 126).

The negative economic effects of the "dirty war" were felt throughout the entire productive apparatus. The lifting of tariff barriers destroyed many local industries and concentrated the little productive capital available in a few agro-export sectors. This trend, coupled with the financial sector's rise, left a disastrous legacy. Aldo Ferrer describes the aftermath in *Living within Our Means*: "Argentina is emerging from a war waged over a period of eight years by monetarism against the country's most important structures, in which its productive system was badly hit, and a fiscal and monetary imbalance created which has rendered ineffective all attempts by the State to re-orient the economy. The constitutional government should not be under any illusion as to the seriousness of the crisis it has to resolve" (p. 26).

Economic policy was "dirty" during the Proceso not only because it was part of a violent class war but because this policy mortgaged the nation's economic future for the benefit of a privileged few. The title of Schvarzer's second essay is revealing: *Argentina, 1976–1981: el endeudamiento externo como pivote de la especulación financiera*. In this short work, he chronicles how the "liberal" economic approach led to a massive wave of speculation that siphoned productive assets into exchange and short-term interest markets. During this era of *plata dulce* and *palos verdes*, when some found it easier to vacation in Miami than in Mar del Plata, money was made through borrowing rather than through productive investment, and the capital infrastructure of the country, with few exceptions, was left to languish.

In the volume edited by Mónica Peralta-Ramos and Carlos Waisman, *From Military Rule to Liberal Democracy in Argentina*, Peralta-Ramos and Michael Monteón argue that the financial system of the Proceso worked quite simply. Foreign capital entered the country through the financial rate (the interest charged among banks and money marketers), was transferred to the commercial rate (the interest charged borrowers) for high-interest short-term loans (the "spread" between financial and commercial lending rates was large), then withdrawn after the investment multiplied, reconverted at the financial rate, and transferred abroad. It was a no-lose situation for the speculators and a no-win situation for their customers, who suffered high inflation and growing debt in a climate of increased unemployment and productive disinvestment. Although a corollary objective may have been to discipline or punish those sectors

deemed responsible for the pre-1976 debacles,⁶ the ultimate goal of this approach was to establish the long-term foundations for a particular class fraction's control of the political and economic systems, using the financial market as the coercive instrument. These groups make up the so-called *patria financiera*.

The coercive aspects of the Proceso's project of domination were felt acutely throughout the state apparatus, where a parallel military bureaucracy was erected in nonmilitary branches and public agencies responsible for providing for the public good were dismantled. Juan José Llovet argues in *Servicios de salud y sectores populares: los años del Proceso* that this tendency was especially pronounced in the areas of public health and social welfare, where the *dictadura's* "privatization" scheme meant eliminating essential services to those fractions of the population held responsible for the failures of the previous decade. In fact, the Proceso set historical highs for funding militarization and lows for funding public health, housing, and welfare.⁷

For Llovet and coauthors Ginés González García, Pablo Abadie, and Silvina Ramos in *El gasto en salud y medicamentos: Argentina, 1985*, the crisis of the public health and welfare systems, particularly financing difficulties amid a climate of fiscal volatility and austerity, overshadowed the positive influence granted by the legitimizing patina of the electoral transfer of power. The general scenario that met the new democratic regime was anything but promising. As Ferrer observes, "The 1976–83 military bequeathed an insolvent economy and a disastrous economic and social situation to the constitutional government. It has left a public sector that is overwhelmed by fiscal and monetary difficulties and the burden of foreign payments, and finds itself in a position where it is almost powerless to reverse the trends of economic life" (*Living within Our Means*, p. 5).

Behavior obstacles abound as well. In the collection edited by Peralta-Ramos and Waisman, the latter points out in his contribution that three unfavorable conditions confront the process of democratic consolidation: a crisis economy, the corporatist legacy, and weak liberal democratic traditions. In parallel, the study by González García, Abadie, Llovet, and Ramos demonstrates that the logistics and issues involved in reconstructing the public health and welfare network during the process of redemocratization surpass mere economic or technical concerns, entailing sensitive policy questions that intertwine the exigencies of provision with the vicissitudes of political competition.

These problems are compounded by the social changes wrought by the Proceso, which are delineated in Juan Villarreal's essay in the collection edited by Peralta-Ramos and Waisman and in journalist-essayist Alvaro Abós's remarkable exegesis of Peronism, *El posperonismo*. The dislocations caused by the Martínez de Hoz project, especially the rise of the financial and commercial sectors and the demise of many traditional

industries, contributed to the “tertiarization” of the labor force at the same time that union membership and real wages declined. The dictatorship’s repressive campaign also destroyed an entire cadre of factory- and shop-level activists, thereby eliminating the key organizational link between union leadership and rank and file. Factory occupations and military intervention of unions also had a decidedly negative impact on the organized working classes. Abós points out that beyond the general decline in union membership (from some 55 to 60 percent of the work force in 1975 to less than 30 percent during the dictadura), the composition of the organized work force also changed: industrial union membership dropped 22.5 percent while commercial union membership increased 17.3 percent (p. 185). In 1973 industrial unions equaled 58 percent of the union membership, compared with 42 percent for the service sector; in 1984 industrial union membership represented 49 percent of the organized work force while the service and commerce sectors represented 51 percent (p. 190).

The shift in union composition moved away from the predominance of large industrial unions defined by productive sector toward smaller commercial unions defined by occupation, further accentuating the disarticulation and decomposition of collective identities among the working classes. In addition, increasing numbers of women and children were incorporated into the work force in order to supplement family incomes, exacerbating the wage differentials within occupational categories produced by the Proceso’s elimination of collective bargaining and repression of union activities. Many wage earners were forced to resort to multiple employment strategies to keep abreast of the cost of living.⁸ The erosion of incomes continues to be felt throughout the socioeconomic spectrum, compressing a domestic bourgeoisie already decimated by the decline in industrial activity while impoverishing the working sectors and increasing income disparities nationwide. As a result, the character of the Argentine work force has been altered along with its decentralization, division, and overall debilitation within an economy whose center of gravity in nonagricultural sectors has shifted from industry to finance and commerce. In sum, the Argentine lower socioeconomic classes have been pauperized and atomized.

Villarreal claims that the parallel homogenizing of dominant-group interests and heterogenizing of subordinate-group interests formed part of a hegemonic project by the architects of the Proceso to establish the structural and social bases of their rule far beyond the authoritarian episode (*From Military Rule to Liberal Democracy*, pp. 74–76). Although one could argue that this outcome was not a hegemonic project (because no exchange of dominant-group concessions and subordinate-group consent had occurred),⁹ it is clear that, at a minimum, the authoritarian project of domination altered the structure and composition of Argentine

economy and society to a degree that had profound implications for the possibilities of democratic consolidation.

While economic policy has been an instrument of authoritarian appropriation and sectoral warfare in Argentina, politics has represented the macrocosmic aggregation of all the ingrained authoritarian features of Argentine social life. Given a political system of weak parties dominated by *caudillos*, *movimientos*, *corrientes*, *corporaciones*, and *tendencias*, all of whom (in a reversal of Clausewitz's famous dictum) view political competition as the pursuit of war by other means, it is natural that Argentine politics should be periodically subject to overt military intervention. As Enrique Groisman points out directly in *Poder y derecho en el "Proceso de Reorganización Nacional"* and more obliquely in *Función administrativa y legitimación democrática*, the constitutional and administrative rules of the Argentine political game have historically been the subject of constant manipulation and misuse: subject to unilateral logics of appropriation, adhered to or ignored according to the whim of those who governed, and thereby cheapened and discredited in the process. From this perspective, the Proceso represented the culmination of a long-term trend in which the rule of law was often abandoned as a basis for authority, opening the door to the unlimited and arbitrary exercise of terror.

The two-volume set edited by Oscar Oszlak, *"Proceso," crisis y transición democrática*, provides an excellent introduction to the historical antecedents leading up to the Proceso, its regressive impact on various kinds of social interaction, and the difficulties inherent in overcoming the compounded authoritarian legacies of the previous fifty years. In Volume 1, Guillermo O'Donnell argues in "Democracia en la Argentina, micro y macro,"¹⁰ that the Proceso was ultimately founded on the authoritarianism inherent in Argentine social life: in the *microdespotismos* of the family, school, church, workplace, and from *la tribuna hasta la calle* (from the soccer stadium onto the street). The general willingness to accept the Proceso and engage in the subservient policing of one's own sphere of reference (in a style that reminds O'Donnell of the *kapos* in the Nazi concentration camps) was a manifestation of the ingrained authoritarian ethos prevailing in Argentine society. Here the restoration of "order" (*poniendo las cosas en su lugar*) was the primary preoccupation of most leaders, from the military-bureaucratic leadership down to employers and male heads of households. For those who did not share this view or were indifferent to it, the norm became strategies of survival via free-riding, self-maximizing behaviors and attitudes of resignation and noninvolvement. As Juan Corradi points out in the collection edited by Peralta-Ramos and Waisman, the "culture of fear" produced by the exercise of omnipotent state terror left lasting psychological and social scars.

Political authoritarianism has traditionally been reinforced at multi-

ple levels of interaction in Argentine society, from the *machista* domination of the family codified in such legal instruments as the *patria potestad* (in which women and children are legally considered to be chattels of their fathers or husbands) and the illegality of divorce, to the cult of the *caudillo*. The extent to which an authoritarian ethos pervades Argentine life is a constant theme in all of the contributions to the Oszlak collection. Oszlak and Emilio Corbiere argue in their respective contributions that Argentina has no history of democratic practice to draw on at any level of social interaction, having instead a political history of authoritarian corporatism and personalist domination superimposed on the social aspects of authoritarianism that have prevailed in civil society. Oszlak explores the “privatization of public space” by the Proceso, in which public discourse was appropriated and monopolized by a privileged few.

In a synthesis of the arguments elaborated in his CISEA volumes, Groisman’s chapter in the Oszlak collection demonstrates how the armed forces established parallel civilian and military organizational hierarchies within the state apparatus. They created a formidable apparatus of domination by combining these hierarchies with ill-defined functional boundaries, unlimited exercise of power and indiscriminate use of legal norms by the military elite, arbitrary creation of legislation without apparent rhyme or reason, discretionary use of administrative authority, the absence of juridical limits or bases for the omnipotent exercise of power, and the belief that political control bears no responsibilities other than to oneself (in this case the military and its civilian allies). This apparatus represented the culmination of a long-term trend of abuse of legal norms and administrative instruments and also took advantage of the historical precedent set by all previous Argentine governments of accepting such measures. Roberto Bergalli’s companion piece on the judicial system details the executive branch’s historical usurping of and infringing on judicial autonomy and authority well before the Proceso. He also analyzes the personalistic and economic motivations that permeate the judicial corps, which preclude establishing a judicial system dedicated to upholding social justice and equality for all citizens. Thus at the most basic institutional level of the administration of justice, the seeds for the arbitrary exercise of authoritarianism were sown long ago—the Proceso was merely the bitter but natural fruit.

The institutionalization of the authoritarian ethos in Argentine political society is indirectly reaffirmed in David Rock’s chapter in the Peralta-Ramos and Waisman collection. Rock shows that the concept of *movimiento*, despite organizational ill-definition and an ideological vagueness that allows it to become all things to all people, has been the primary political vehicle in modern Argentina. The power of the Peronist movement is well known, but as Rock demonstrates, the Radicals too have their notions of *movimiento*, as do a host of other lesser political groups. These

movements have structural origins: the Peronists in the growing urban proletariat and marginalized sectors of the interior connected with the import-substituting industrialization project of the 1940s, Radicalism in the dependant middle classes of the early 1900s, and the guerrilla movements of the 1960s and 1970s among the disenchanted children of the domestic bourgeoisie. Today's groups perceive themselves more as movements than as political parties proper, a self-concept that places them "above" the "others" involved in the partisan fray while blurring the line between competition and conflict. Contemporary examples include the Movimiento hacia el Socialismo (MAS, which draws on urban popular sectors), the Partido Intransigente (PI, from the urban middle class), the Unión del Centro Democrático (UCEDE, grouping the emergent young entrepreneurial sector), the Radical party faction Franja Morada (students and young professionals), and the perfectly named Peronismo Revolucionario Ortodoxo (of working-class origin), which captures all of the inherent contradictions of Peronism under one heading.

As Vicente Palermo points out in his monograph coauthored with Ariel Colombo, *Participación política y pluralismo en la Argentina contemporánea*, these groups view themselves as "hegemonic" movements and employ "una constitución imprecisa y conspirativa del enemigo. El movimiento conceptual es, en ambos casos, el mismo: la deslegitimación o exclusión del otro sumada a la invocación fuerte, dramática, a la unidad nacional, presupone un modo de identidad o subordinación en lugar de reconocimiento recíproco de legitimidad" (pp. 120–21). When one considers oneself to be member of a historical bloc or hegemonic movement rather than a political party, and when distributional conflicts are perceived in zero-sum class terms, one can presume to speak and act for a mass that, even when silent, ostensibly supports the ends and means to which the movement is dedicated. This mind-set leads to an extremely instrumental view of government as well as to political procedures and mechanisms, all of which have contributed to the recurring cycle of *golpes* and authoritarianism. The armed forces—as the ultimate defenders of the "nation" and the most powerful "movement" of all—also purport to remain above the sectoral egotism prevalent in civil society, a position that supposedly allows them to govern in the common interest. The transparency of these claims was demonstrated fully by the Proceso.

However debatable the term *movimiento* may be when applied to other political groups, the fact remains that Peronism is a movement by any definition. Having survived repeated attempts to outlaw and dismantle its various organizational components, Peronism today connects a political party (the Partido Justicialista), organized labor (which although split internally into three factions, remains what Abós calls the "columna vertebral" of the Peronist movement), and a women's branch. Peronism also aspires to represent the hopes of the rural poor, urban marginals, the

dispossessed, the domestic bourgeoisie, and the working classes. As a form of social identity that transcends partisan affiliation, Peronism embodies the myths of nationalism and social justice that have eluded Argentina throughout the modern era. For the Argentine subordinate classes, there is but one political truth: *Perón dió y la oligarquía quitó*.

It is precisely because Peronism was a movement that it disintegrated when Perón died in 1974. Without his stabilizing presence, the various factions and tendencies collided in a centrifugal clash of wills and force. One manifestation was the internecine war between the left and right wings of the movement that paralyzed the Peronist government in the months before the military intervened on 24 March 1976. Because Peronism remained a divided movement rather than a party, the Peronists lost the elections of 1983. The movement was unable to reconcile its continuing internal differences, establish a fixed hierarchy of leadership, or decide whether to renovate and internally democratize or return to the traditional vertical lines of authority in order to confront the Radicals.

The changing nature of Peronism is consequently the crux of Argentine political transformation. Having become a theme in the recent literature on Argentine politics, it is the focus of the studies by Abós and José Nun (in Oszlak, vol. 2). The internal features of Peronism are changing, along with its ideological content and organizational structure, although whether in the direction of *renovación democrática* or *restauración ortodoxa* remains unclear. Torn between its authoritarian tradition and the need to adapt to changed realities since the death of El Líder, the Peronist movement is caught between the two tendencies. The struggle between party and union leadership for control of the movement remains in flux. Despite the resurgence of Peronism as a political force after 1985, divisions continue to rend both the party and the labor movement, with the result being that neither is united, much less hegemonic. In the last quarter-century, Peronism has undergone the type of crisis alluded to by Oscar Moreno in his contribution to the Oszlak collection (vol. 2): a perverse dialectic of opposition without synthesis leading to a zero-sum tug-of-war between ideological extremes and polar tendencies, resulting in a state of hegemonic stalemate and crisis.

The advent of political democracy did not entail replacing the ingrained authoritarian ethos in other facets of Argentine social life. Following a thought expressed by Norberto Bobbio, Abós asserts, "Esta es exactamente la situación Argentina: una vida que en su dimensión política ha accedido a la democracia y que en sus múltiples dimensiones sociales permanece anclada en el autoritarismo" (p. 139). Thus consolidation of the democratic regime remains problematic because of an enduring authoritarian political and social culture that did not disappear with the demise of the Proceso.

In her contribution to Volume 2 of "*Proceso, crisis y transición*,

Liliana de Riz delineates the negative features of the modern Argentine political scene along the lines posited by Waisman: a weak and factionalized party system dominated by the executive branch, a strong state corporatist tradition, and a lack of broad political consensus, all permeated by the cult of personality. Following these lines of thought and those of Colombo and Palermo, José Gómez and Eduardo Viola argue that Argentina's *golpista* political culture is also based on nonrecognition and denial of citizenry to political opponents. With the "others" so negatively defined, it is relatively easy to adopt zero-sum approaches to politics. Gómez and Viola describe the transition to democracy in Argentina as an "implosion" of the authoritarian regime rather than a regime collapse or a transition managed "from above." In discussing the terms of the transition, they point to the shallowness of the initial political debates by traditional political actors, who bracketed any discussion of the authoritarian ethos in Argentine society in favor of securing an electoral transition. That debate was originally left to the new social and political movements that emerged in opposition to the Proceso but were overshadowed once the electoral competition was under way. It later fell to new factions within the traditional parties to promote internal discussion of the legacies of the past, although they tended to close ranks and present a united façade when confronting opponents and the public.

Gómez and Viola believe that this failure to discuss the legacies of the past—coupled with the failure to dismantle much of the repressive apparatus (the death squads merely went underground) and restoration of the traditional corporate-political organizations—portends poorly for the medium- to long-term prospects for creating a viable form of democratic political culture. The scenario is all the more discouraging because the Proceso "depoliticized society" and "desocialized politics," leaving decision making on policy to military or civilian technocrats unencumbered by the "noise" of social demands and politics. With this noise resurrected as part of the restored democratic game and increased by distributional conflicts in a context of economic crisis, many Argentines secretly wax nostalgic for the relative silence imposed by unilateral authoritarian controls.

The conservative authoritarian quest for order in Argentine society finds its darkest expression in right-wing extremist groups, many of them paramilitary units with murky links to the armed forces that extend back to the Proceso and earlier. Several of these groups hold racist, anti-Semitic, and neofascist views that are expressed in outlets like the monthly magazine *Cabildo*. These groups make up a network that finds its most formal institutional expression within the military, which despite the traumas of the last fifteen years, remains a permanent threat to the democratic regime. Driven by a hierarchical vision of society and a Prussian style of military organization and training, the armed forces devel-

oped a strategic outlook based on “organic” notions of Argentina (as a society and as part of the international system) that came to be known as the national security doctrine. This aggregation of concepts provided the political-military justification for the dirty war.

In *Fuerzas Armadas, partidos políticos y transición a la democracia en Argentina*, Andrés Fontana argues that the combined traumas of defeat in the Malvinas campaign and implication in crimes committed during the dirty war exacerbated intraservice divisions going back to 1980 and openly fractured military unity more than a year before Raúl Alfonsín was inaugurated (when the Air Force and Navy withdrew from the military government in the wake of the 1982 defeat). This schism left the military institution as a whole on the defensive during the first years of the democratic regime. The biggest cleavage opened between Army field and flag-rank officers over the issues of command errors during the Malvinas campaign and prosecution of officers implicated in human rights violations. Another division was produced by intraservice accusations of ineptitude and responsibility in prosecuting the foreign adventure. These horizontal and vertical cleavages were accompanied by a general decline in esprit de corps and growing resentment over what were considered to be scurrilous attacks on the military institution by a “leftist” press and other residually subversive elements in society.

Service grievances produced three armed uprisings and numerous *planteos* (statements of interest backed by threats), which eventually forced the Alfonsín administration to capitulate and grant amnesty to military personnel charged with human rights violations. This outcome points to the fact that despite reductions in budget and personnel, the armed forces continue to wield considerable veto power in the Argentine political system and have yet to be resocialized and reorganized as subordinate agents of elected civilian authorities. As Fontana and other students of civil-military relations have shown, resocializing and subordinating the military is a fundamental step on the road toward democratic consolidation. Unless the civil-military partial regime “game” is restructured along more equitable and autonomous lines, the armed forces will continue to represent a deep-seated authoritarian legacy that is inimical to the consolidation of Argentine democracy.¹¹

The military perspective is reinforced by the ingrained authoritarian ethos dominant in Argentine culture, both popular and intellectual. Be it *bacán* or *berreta* (high- or low-brow), culture in Argentina has long displayed xenophobic, chauvinistic, classist, and racist overtones that are inimical to forming a coherent and democratic national identity, much less appreciating the possibilities of fruitful exchange with the rest of the world. In his contribution to the Oszlak collection, Enrique Oteiza illustrates how this cultural tradition has adversely affected the Argentine university system, which has periodically been appropriated by au-

thoritarians of various persuasions (leftist, rightist, Peronist, and anti-Peronist) for purposes of promoting their particular visions of national grandeur.

The ambiguity toward things foreign among Argentine intellectuals and policymakers is clarified by Hector Sussmann's essay in the Peralta-Ramos and Waisman collection. Sussmann points out that Argentine appreciation of foreign art and culture has not carried over to valuing scientific advances and the need for scientific exchange with other countries to promote national development. Here nationalist sentiment, codified in public policies that place trade barriers on foreign technology, has left Argentina lagging not only behind First World countries in terms of technological development but also behind developing countries that have seized foreign technologies to promote national self-sufficiency in a wide range of scientific areas. This approach has instead produced a kind of "back to the future" scenario for Argentina, in which it appears to be moving technologically from the status of a semi-developed country to that of an underdeveloped country. At the same time, a significant brain drain has occurred in the physical sciences as many Argentine scholars have emigrated abroad during the last thirty years for professional rather than political reasons.

Oscar Moneta's treatise on Argentina's foreign relations in Volume 2 of the Oszlak collection shows how this attitude has also produced a series of misguided foreign-policy positions that were tied closely to shifting international economic linkages and self-aggrandized geopolitical perceptions based on oligarchical control of the foreign-policy apparatus. This misdirected worldview needs to be fundamentally altered to allow Argentina to adapt better to changing global realities following its external losses and internal political opening (particularly the emergence of nontraditional transnational actors like human rights and environmental groups and international political parties such as the Christian and Social Democrats). Realization of Argentina's diminished international presence has been forced by a combination of defeat in war, ideological disenchantment with the United States and other Western allies, and increased economic dependence on the developed world. Argentine restoration will require a more flexible and less ideological "independent" stance that downplays traditional foreign-policy alignments in favor of a broadening web of connections, economic as well as political, with the international system.

The pervasive influence of authoritarianism so evident in Argentine political discourse has been no less present in the field of popular culture. In a remarkable two-volume chronology of censorship, *Censura, autoritarismo y cultura: Argentina, 1960–1982*, Andrés Avellaneda details hundreds of acts of public and private censorship in the cultural arena. The realm of censorship extends to virtually all fields: education, religion,

theater, dance, cinema, television, radio, music, sculpture, painting, literature (fiction and nonfiction), poetry, journalism, comedy, cartoons, and even modes of dress and personal appearance. Avellaneda explains the multiple agents and many levels at which censorship have been practiced in Argentina and how they interact to perpetuate a repressed social environment in which anything that “injures” the primary national institutions—family, church, and military (all rooted in “Western Christian values”)—is forcibly excluded from the social milieu. Although Avellaneda’s introduction provides a worthy analytic guide to his chronology of censorship, the rationale of censorship chronicled speaks for itself. For example, he cites the explanation of Francisco Carcavallo, Assistant Secretary of Culture of the Province of Buenos Aires during the Proceso: “En nuestro país los canales de infiltración artísticos culturales han sido utilizados a través de un proceso deformante basados en canciones de protesta, exaltación de artistas y textos extremistas, teatros de vanguardia u obras que por transferencia se utilizan sutilmente, musicalización de poemas—[y] obras plásticas de marcado tinte guerrillero . . .” (Avellaneda, 1:138).

Even civilian regimes have engaged in cultural repression in Argentina. Avellaneda recounts numerous such acts by the Radical governments of Arturo Frondizi and Antonio Illia in the early 1960s, the Peronist regime of 1973–1976, and even the Alfonsín administration. Nor was the state the only actor engaged in cultural repression. Numerous private organizations have also worked to censor free expression in the cultural field, including the Liga de Madres de Familia, the Federación Argentina de Entidades Democráticas Anticomunistas (FAEDA), the Grupo Cruzada, the Alianza Anticomunista Argentina (AAA), the Familiares de los Muertos por la Subversión (FAMUS), the Confederación de Padres de Familia de la República Argentina, the Corporación de Abogados Católicos, and other confessional groups (to say nothing of the Catholic Church hierarchy itself). These groups particularly targeted those forms of expression considered aberrant, which included religious activities deemed inimical to the national interest. This point was affirmed in Decree 1867 of 31 August 1976, which prohibited the activities of the Jehovah’s Witnesses on Argentine soil (Avellaneda, 1:141).

This deeply ingrained repressive legacy framed the resurgence of cultural activity during the last years of the Proceso and the first years of the democratic regime, which made the renaissance all the more remarkable for its vigor.¹² Although Avellaneda’s study serves as a comparative indication of how far Argentina has progressed culturally since 1983, it also demonstrates that political change alone will not still the voices of reaction. The institutions on whose behalf censorship and cultural repression have most often been practiced—family, church, and military (*la esencia de la nación*)—are the most authoritarian and hierarchical social

units in the country. An antidemocratic societal dynamic is thus reproduced: the social foundations of the country remain patriarchal and inegalitarian, undermining democratization of the political and economic spheres.

The pervasive authoritarianism found in Argentine culture is analyzed more generally by Noé Jitrik and Oscar Landi in their respective contributions to the collections edited by Oszlak and Peralta-Ramos and Waisman. Jitrik's short essay sketches a broad outline of the historical appropriation of cultural space by authoritarian leaders, most recently those of the Proceso, which has led to the reduction of what was deemed culturally "permissible" and to an overall debilitation of Argentine artistry. Landi reflects on the difficulties inherent in overcoming this cultural legacy. He argues that despite the economic crisis that is relegating the promotion of democratic culture to the back burner, the entire field of cultural promotion must be considered as an essential common good. Democratic cultural promotion implies freedom of expression, taste, tolerance, and exchange in a broad array of media, all of which began to take root as part of the authoritarian transition and initial phase of democratic consolidation.¹³ In Landi's view, a national effort, coordinated by the central government, is needed to encourage democratic cultural development at all levels (including the military) in order to promote the societal bases for substantive democratic consolidation.

There is room for guarded optimism. According to the electoral surveys reported by Dario Cantón in *El pueblo legislador* and Manuel Alcántara Sáez in *Elecciones y consolidación democrática en Argentina, 1983–1987*, the Argentine electorate has begun to develop a more nuanced approach to choosing its political leaders. Before 1983 Argentina was split rigidly into Peronist and anti-Peronist camps along easily identifiable class lines, in which neither the left nor the right showed much interest in the formalities of electoral competition or other "bourgeois" procedures. The period leading to Alfonsín's assumption of office, however, marked a watershed. Class allegiances began to dissolve at the same time that conservatives and Marxists were reevaluating—and revaluing—electoral vehicles and party competition as preferred means of political struggle. This trend has broadened partisan participation in the political arena, making it a loosely bipartisan system in which minority parties operate as swing votes.

The impact of these changes on the Argentine parliament is extremely important, for as De Riz and her coauthors argue in *El parlamento hoy*, the traditional weakness of the legislature resulted not only from a strong executive branch but from the very structure of the party system, the ideological conflict it reproduces, and the surrounding political culture. An essential step on the road to democratic consolidation is reforming and renovating the parliament in its internal constitution, composi-

tion, and procedures as well as its relation with the other two branches (particularly a balancing of the legislature's relationship with the executive). This goal requires fusing the roles of "legislator" (one actively involved in drafting legislation) and "deputy" (one concerned with presenting social demands), which have marked the traditional division of labor in parliament. The division of these roles has led repeatedly to a clash of symbolic and substantive politics that has produced stalemates. Factors auguring well for the gradual transformation of the Argentine parliament into an efficient instrument of political reproduction are the emergence of nontraditional parties on both ends of the political spectrum, the moderation and internal dynamics of the traditional parties, and the emergence of a younger generation of activists. At the very least, the Argentine parliament now provides the principal institutional forum in which counterhegemonic projects and demands on behalf of historically unrepresented sectors are voiced, thereby adding heterogeneity to Argentine political discourse.

The political impact of the Proceso is also documented in Cantón's and Sáez's surveys of the Argentine electorate. Youth, women, and a good portion of the urban proletariat voted for the Unión Cívica Radical presidential ticket in 1983, reversing their traditional voting pattern of support for Peronist candidates. In addition, considerable ballot splitting occurred across age groups, occupational strata, gender, and regions as voters differentiated in their votes for the executive branch and for members of parliament. This election was followed by a tidal or "pendular" (to use the phrase popularized by O'Donnell)¹⁴ process of electoral behavior, in which the profound alternations in Argentine voting patterns exhibited in 1983 were accentuated in 1985, then moderated and realigned along more traditional axes in 1987. In 1989 the traditional pattern was reaffirmed with the Peronists partially restored to their position of strength in the political arena.

The most heartening changes in Argentina, however, are not so much political as social. The emergence of new social movements has brought a grass-roots approach to political action that departs from the traditional patronage politics of parties and interest groups. The surge of new forms of political and social participation in Argentina has resulted from the combined effects of the long-term sclerosis of the party system and the corporatist interest-group network established as of 1946, the forcible closure of most of these channels of sectoral expression under the Proceso, the profound economic crisis inherited and then accentuated by the *dictadura*, and the subsequent reopening of political and social arenas as of 1982. As Elizabeth Jelin and her collaborators demonstrate in the two-volume *Los nuevos movimientos sociales*, the Proceso's elimination of traditional modes of interest representation and imposition of an enforced silence actually promoted alternative modes of expression among

subordinate groups. These vehicles not only rejected the Proceso and its reorganizational project but challenged the way in which politics had been organized previously.

Foremost among the new associational forms are the human rights groups, spearheaded by the Madres and Abuelas de la Plaza de Mayo, which emerged in response to the gross violations of human rights during the dirty war. These groups successfully introduced a normative component into public discourse during the Proceso, and they now occupy a permanent place in the public arena as ideologically legitimating referents. This outcome is a marked departure from the past, when only the Catholic Church and other traditional interests could claim the moral high ground. To these human rights organizations have been added others that defend more narrowly defined subordinate group interests—neighborhood associations, shantytown organizations, feminists, gays, environmental groups, and musical and artistic societies—all of whom create new arguments and rationales that counter the historically predominant views.

The new types of political expression, as well as the reconstitution of traditional forms of interest representation, are also explored by Oscar Moreno and Daniel García Delgado in the Oszlak collection and by Colombo and Palermo in their monograph. The multiplication of “decisional sites” (to use a phrase coined by Ames)¹⁵ and collective agents has led to decentralization of power, increased sectoral autonomy vis-à-vis the state, greater citizen participation in decision-making processes at the local level, and the “pluralization of public discourse”—all of which represent important steps forward on the road to democratic institutionalization. Moreover, the emergence of democratic ratification processes within interest associations is empowering individual constituents, giving them a larger stake in and more appreciation for the intrinsic worth of democratic procedure as a form of conflict resolution in all facets of social interaction. In *El prosperonismo*, Abós quotes Bobbio as saying, “Si queremos tomar hoy un índice del desarrollo democrático, este no puede ser ya el número de personas que tienen derecho al voto, sino el número de sedes, distintas de la política, en las que se ejerce el derecho de votar.”¹⁶

The importance of the emergence of these new forms of associational activity *qua* decisional sites is enhanced by another dimension: their impact on the identity formation of individual citizens and their perspective on political life. Involvement in decision-making processes at the grass-roots level through these new forms of association, particularly by members of traditionally subordinate groups, creates within citizens a sense of self based on the belief that equality and participation are essential rights and attributes of all citizens. Individual identities themselves become the subjects of these new forms of collective socialization (Colombo and Palermo, p. 98). The overall thrust of the new social movements

consequently challenges the easy continuation of traditional authoritarian modes of social interaction.

As Palermo points out, the emergence of *nuevas formas de hacer política* has also affected the traditional party structure and corporate representation of interests (p. 110). With their leaders imprisoned, exiled, or otherwise forced into silence by the Proceso, a new generation of party and union activists emerged to fill the leadership gap. This trend became increasingly evident as of 1979, when labor conflicts reappeared despite military repression, in the resurgence of Peronist opposition groups unconnected with the deposed Peronist leadership of 1973–1976 and in the renovation of leadership cadres in a wide array of political parties. Since 1983 the process has carried over into a wave of municipal mayoral recalls because of corruption charges, establishing new standards of public accountability regardless of partisan affiliation.

The traditional parties have not led the process of democratic consolidation in Argentina. Instead, the new social movements emerged at the forefront of the “bottom-up” process of regime construction that O’Donnell calls the “resurrection of civil society.”¹⁷ Gómez and Viola believe that the traditional political parties must ultimately assume a dominant position in aggregating these heterogeneous interests in collective socialization, a project that will instill democratic values in the electorate. In their view, traditional parties can promote the adoption of a broad public-policy agenda that could serve as a kind of “foundational moment” for the new democratic era. This belief leads Gómez and Viola to the tautological observation that for democratic consolidation to succeed, decisive actors must play the democratic game (Oszlak, 2:40). In contrast, García Delgado correctly assumes that it is the very emergence and diversity of the social movements that are the crux of the democratic consolidation efforts. Through the actions of these new movements and the proliferation of alternative and counter-hegemonic political perspectives and demands, the Argentine political and corporate systems will undergo a democratic transformation.

Transformation of the Argentine political system depends on an incorporative logic exactly the reverse of that prescribed by Gómez and Viola: rather than an appropriation of the new political and social movements by political parties, the core of Argentina’s move toward democratic consolidation is the internal transformation and democratization of the political parties and traditional corporatist agents at the behest of the new social movements. The emergence of these movements, followed by the reopening of the political arena and a generalized reevaluation of democratic procedures in civil society, eroded the traditional political status quo, thereby incrementally replacing the maximalist, zero-sum strategic postures of yore with minimalist, even-sum, or positive-sum perspectives based on mutual recognition by contending actors and acceptance of

the need for second-best compromises as the outcome of substantive and procedural negotiations. This point is important, for these are the material and institutional bases of the contingent consent upon which the legitimacy of capitalist democracies is founded.¹⁸

The Proceso set the stage for the incremental reform of the political system by imposing a severe authoritarian interlude that forced the citizenry to consider the intrinsic worth of democratic forms. The emergence of new social movements expanded the number of bargaining agents and potential decisional sites involved in the democratic regime and placed additional normative, distributive, and electoral demands on the traditional political parties. The parties were thus forced to moderate their ideological stances in order to broaden their appeal. The Radicals did so most quickly and won the foundational election of 1983. The Peronist party, although rife with internal conflicts, regrouped enough to regain its historical position in 1989.

The underlying question remains as to whether the revalorization of democratic procedure as a form of conflict resolution in the political arena will be followed by legitimation of democratic modes of discourse at other levels of social interaction. The transfer of government to the Peronists in 1989 represents a significant procedural milestone on the road to democratic consolidation. Even so, the ultimate foundation of stable democratic regimes is the reproduction of democratic norms and behavior at other levels of social interaction. The expression of these normative preferences through collective agents, new and traditional, in their internal affairs as well as in their relations with each other and the state in political and economic spheres, makes up the institutional sources of democratic regime legitimation and consolidation. In this light, the most positive aspects of Argentine political development during the last decade have been (in addition to generational change) the emergence of new social movements, the modes of discourse they are promoting, and their influence on the traditional structure of political and economic representation.

The search for a political panacea in Argentina has focused most recently on establishing state-mediated vehicles for sectoral negotiation that would organizationally incorporate major actors in the partisan and corporatist systems. Democratic restoration has occasioned a plethora of academic and practical appeals for promoting concertative frameworks oriented toward tri- or multipartite agreements that are procedural and substantive in nature.¹⁹ The use of concertative pacts as instruments of democratic consolidation in Southern Europe in the 1970s, following the successful experience of long-term concertative systems of interest mediation in the advanced democracies of Northern Europe and the success of "pacted" democracies in Colombia and Venezuela, has prompted a number of Argentine authors (as well as other Latin Americans) to speculate on the potential of these instruments as devices for regime stabilization.²⁰

The appeal of democratic concertation is well demonstrated in the literature under review here. Several monographs and articles explicitly or tangentially call for establishing such vehicles as major blocks in building a democratic regime: the two essays explicitly dedicated to the theme in the Oszlak collection, that by María Grossi and Mario Dos Santos in Volume 1²¹ and that by Juan Carlos Portantiero in Volume 2; the monograph prepared by Liliana De Riz, Marcelo Cavarozzi, and Jorge Feldman, *Concertación, estado y sindicatos en la Argentina contemporánea*; the works of Abós, Ferrer, Schwarzer; and Rock's contribution to the collection edited by Peralta-Ramos and Waisman.

Grossi and Dos Santos maintain that concertation is a mediation and regulation mechanism connecting society and the political system through the state apparatus and collective agents, one that complements the political party system by addressing issues it cannot easily resolve. The authors draw on Claus Offe's analysis of the mercantilization of politics and the politicization of markets under conditions of advanced capitalism and on Gerhard Lehbruch's notion of the structural differentiation and functional specialization of modern capitalist societies. Grossi and Dos Santos point out the especially acute "reciprocal contamination" between politics and markets in dependent capitalist regimes, which gives rise to the utility of state-centered, neocorporatist, or societal corporatist tripartite vehicles of sectoral interaction during processes of redemocratization (p. 139).

In the most extensive Spanish-language review of European writings on the subject, Grossi and Dos Santos explore the variety of forms that democratic concertation can assume as an instrument of regime transition as well as democratic consolidation. The symbolic and ideologically legitimating role of some types of democratic concertation is contrasted with the pragmatic reproduction functions of others. Important factors in creating concertative vehicles and formulating their procedural and substantive agendas are the levels of organization of society, the internal organization of collective agents, previous experience with corporatist forms of interest mediation, the historical role of the state as a social actor, and the general parameters of national political culture. Here the trade-offs between efficiency and representation come into play, often undercutting efforts to expand the number of decisional sites and arenas of ratification involved in the policy process.

Democratic concertation appears to require two conditions. First, it most often occurs when labor-backed parties are in office, whether in Europe or Latin America. The politics of maintaining power require these parties (in contrast with non-labor-based parties) to explore more rigorously the potential of concertative interaction as a means of securing subordinate-group consent. Second, democratic concertation requires that collective agents be internally democratic in their constitution and

procedurally equal in the eyes of the state, and also that given the disparity in resources among collective agents, the state have the organizational capability of compensating for these disparities and equitably enforcing the rules of engagement governing strategic interaction and the substantive terms of any sectoral compromise. The powers of “reciprocal control” (to use another Offe phrase) available to social agents and the state must be such that nonmaximalist strategic approaches become the most viable sectoral choices. This condition requires that the state (or those branches of the state apparatus responsible for interest-group administration) as well as collective agents be organized along complementary (if not parallel) lines, with emphasis on binding decision-making authority based on democratic forms of representation and interaction within and among the participants.

Grossi and Dos Santos nevertheless fail to explore adequately the problems involved in promoting concertative vehicles in postauthoritarian contexts like Argentina, where societal and political authoritarianism has been the norm. This problem is alluded to by Portantiero in his contribution to the Oszlak collection. He points out that the very structure of the national economy has given rise to a “sociedad ceasarista” in which a weak state and a fragmented party system are dominated by sectoral agents representing opposed material interests who are locked in zero-sum distributional conflicts. When these agents gain power, they employ bifrontal and segmental state corporatist approaches to interest-group administration.²² While Portantiero’s analysis sheds light on the obstacles to successful concertation in Argentina, he offers no specific prescriptions for overcoming them. This flaw is even more visible in the works of Ferrer and Waisman. Ferrer speaks generally of the need for a “socioeconomic” pact on a host of fundamental economic and social issues (“development with justice”) in order to consolidate Argentine democracy, while Waisman calls for a European-style social democracy based on long-term political agreements. Their insights are nevertheless limited by a lack of depth when examining the problems involved in establishing such frameworks within the Argentine legacy. This shortcoming is especially surprising in view of the fact that concertative social pacts have already been attempted in Argentina, most prominently in 1973–74 under the second Peronist regime.²³ In that instance, unlike pact experiences elsewhere, a labor-based political movement in government dominated by a charismatic leader and enjoying overwhelming parliamentary control failed to institutionalize a concertative pact. That failure posed a fundamental problem for the Radicals, a non-labor-based party with a moderate parliamentary majority and an interest in concertation following the 1983 elections. This Radical dilemma was particularly acute because experience has shown that concertative efforts most often fail when a labor-backed mass political party comprises the core of the political opposition to the government,

which was the situation in Argentina from 1983 to 1989. It thus remains to be seen whether the possibilities for successful concertation increase with the Peronists in power.

The importance of lessons of the past and the formidable structural and behavioral obstacles to successful concertation bequeathed to the Alfonsín administration are revealed in the monograph by De Riz, Cavarozzi, and Feldman. They compare the 1973–74 experience with efforts at concertation initiated by the Radical administration prior to the Austral Plan (1985) (pp. 31–36). Beyond demonstrating the symbolic rather than practical utility of concertative vehicles during the early stages of democratic consolidation (as instruments of mutual recognition and legitimation), De Riz, Cavarozzi, and Feldman convey the tremendous weight of the structural and institutional obstacles to successful pragmatic concertation in Argentina by reviewing the interplay between labor-movement characteristics, capitalist collective action, state organizational features, and macroeconomic conditions. In particular, the structural and social effects of the reforms undertaken by the Proceso made it unnecessary for the dominant economic sectors to engage in a concertative approach to democratic consolidation. As collectors of interest and conduits of international financial assistance, “la patria financiera” benefits most during periods of acute economic crisis, regardless of regime type or strategic approach, because any resolution of the crisis will require their mollification.

The economic and political weakening of the labor movement and fear of authoritarianism also make securing working-class consent less important than cultivating investor confidence. The latter is a function of the extent to which the national government is willing to accept the dictates of developmental and stabilization logics promoted by transnational finance sectors. Such a dynamic enveloped and eventually overcame the Radical administration. With the advent of a Peronist administration in 1989, the situation is sure to change, although the question of successful concertation remains open. The May 1989 civil disturbances in response to yet another series of austerity measures (to combat a 70 percent monthly inflation and 30 percent drop in real wages) served notice that the subordinate classes are no longer willing to bear the burden of sacrifice in the face of an ever-shrinking economic pie, particularly when politics of austerity are employed at the behest of foreign creditors who invested heavily in the dictadura. When change occurs, it could well be violent—perhaps the Cordobazo of the democratic regime. For the moment, the quest for a panacea remains unfulfilled.

Desperate for hope, yet saddled with the weight of a political and social history of authoritarianism and the worst economic crisis in its history, Argentine democracy in 1990 again hangs in the balance. The positive influence of the emergence of new social movements and political actors combined with the cultural democratization of civil society has

been counterbalanced by the negative influence of economic conditions and the continuing presence of nondemocratic economic and political actors as the mainstays of the political system. Moreover, the longer-term democratizing influence of the behavioral changes at work in Argentine society are continually overwhelmed by short-term desperation caused by the structural crisis. In such an environment, common efforts at democratic regime consolidation yield to the selfish pursuit of individual and group survival strategies, of which financial speculation and food riots are the most salient examples.

Unless new and traditional political actors can find some crisis-induced common rationale for reform and survival, the democratic Argentine regime born in 1983 will die young. The behavioral pieces now exist, but the structural environment thus far has precluded their coming together in constructive fashion. Like a melancholy *milonga* played out endlessly on a well-worn victrola, the Argentine cycle of dashed ideals and betrayal may well continue, merely incorporating new actors into the dance of decline. If such is the future of Argentina, its prognosis is that of the aging macho so often celebrated in song and letters: "triste, solitario y final."

NOTES

1. CONADEP, *Nunca más* (Buenos Aires: EUDEBA, 1984).
2. On the terms *organic crisis*, *dominance*, and *hegemony*, see Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, edited and translated by G. Norwell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 210–60. The term *empate hegemónico* (hegemonic stalemate) is attributed to Juan Carlos Portantiero. For an application of these concepts to the Proceso, see Paul G. Buchanan, "The Varied Faces of Domination: State Terror, Economic Policy, and Social Rupture during the Argentine 'Proceso,'" *American Journal of Political Science* 31, no. 2 (1987):336–82. The term *impossible game* comes from Guillermo O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism: Studies in South American Politics* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1973).
3. This perspective has been especially well applied to the instances of peaceful regime transition from authoritarian to democratic capitalism in Southern Europe and Latin America. See, for example, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy*, edited by Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, 4 vols. (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).
4. The best analyses of postauthoritarian Argentina using this type of approach are found in José Nun and Juan Carlos Portantiero, *Ensayos sobre la transición en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Puntosur Editores, 1987). Because of the length and substance of this work, it merits a separate review from that undertaken here.
5. I am indebted to Roberto Da Matta for explaining to me the relational aspects of rationality and the notion of ethical dualism, although this particular interpretation is my own.
6. Adolfo Canitrot, *La disciplina como objetivo de la política económica: un ensayo sobre el programa del gobierno argentino desde 1976*, Estudios CEDES, no. 12 (1980).
7. On this point, see Paul G. Buchanan and Robert Looney, *Relative Militarization and Its Impact on Public Policy: Budgetary Shifts in Argentina, 1963–1982*, Western Hemisphere Area Studies Technical Report no. 7 (NPS 56–88–002), Department of National Security Affairs, Naval Postgraduate School, July 1988.
8. On the evolution of organized labor over the last half-century, see Alvaro Abós, *La*

- columna vertebral: sindicatos y peronismo* (Buenos Aires: Hispanoamérica, 1986); Abós, *Las organizaciones sindicales y el poder militar* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América, 1984); Marcelo Cavarozzi, *Sindicatos y política en Argentina* (Buenos Aires: CEDES, 1984); Torquato Di Tella, *Política y clase obrera* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América, 1983); Rubén Rotundaro, *Realidad y cambio en el sindicalismo* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Pleamar, 1971); Juan Carlos Torre, *Los sindicatos en el gobierno, 1973-1976* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América, 1983); and Rubén Horacio Zorrilla, *Estructura y dinámica del sindicalismo argentino* (Buenos Aires: La Pléyade, 1974). For an interesting account in English, see David James, *Resistance and Integration: Peronism and the Argentine Working Class, 1946-1976* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
9. For the argument that the Proceso, whatever its hegemonic pretensions, was no more than an exercise in domination (albeit a sophisticated one), see Buchanan, "The Varied Faces of Domination."
 10. Also available as Kellogg Institute *Working Paper* no. 2, 1983.
 11. See, for example, Alain Rouquié, "Demilitarization and the Institutionalization of Military-Dominated Polities in Latin America," in O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy*, Vol 3: *Comparative Perspectives*; and Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988). The term *partial regime* is taken from Philippe C. Schmitter, "The Consolidation of Political Democracy in Southern Europe," manuscript.
 12. The best work in English on the cultural dimension of Argentine democratization is *The Redemocratization of Argentine Culture, 1983 and Beyond: An International Research Symposium*, edited by David William Foster (Tempe: Center for Latin American Studies, Arizona State University, 1989). I am indebted to Edward Williams for calling my attention to this work.
 13. For an excellent survey of the multiple facets of democratic cultural promotion, see *Debates* 2, no. 3 (Apr.-May 1985), which is devoted to this theme. This journal is published by CEDES in Buenos Aires. The issue contains articles by a broad array of authors, including several cited here.
 14. Guillermo O'Donnell, "Estado y alianzas en la Argentina, 1955-1970," *Estudios CEDES/G.E. CLACSO*, no. 5 (Oct. 1976).
 15. Barry Ames, *Political Survival: Politicians and Public Policy in Latin America* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 35-40.
 16. Norberto Bobbio, *El futuro de la democracia* (Barcelona: Plaza y Janés, 1986), quoted in Abós, *El posperonismo*, 139.
 17. O'Donnell's views are well expounded in *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*. On bottom-up processes of regime transition and democratic consolidation, see Paul G. Buchanan, "Democratization Top-Down and Bottom-Up," in *Authoritarian Regimes in Transition*, edited by Hans Binnendijk (Washington, D.C.: Foreign Service Institute, 1987).
 18. Adam Przeworski and Michael Wallerstein, "The Structure of Class Conflict in Democratic Capitalist Societies," *American Political Science Review* 76, no. 2 (June 1982): 215-38; Przeworski, "Material Bases of Consent: Economics and Politics in a Hegemonic System," *Political Power and Social Theory* 7 (1980):21-66; Przeworski, "Compromiso de clases y estado: Europa Occidental y América Latina," in *Estado y política en América Latina*, edited by Norberto Lechner (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno, 1985); and Przeworski, "Democracy as a Contingent Outcome of Conflicts," in *Constitutionalism and Democracy*, edited by Jon Elster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
 19. For an extended discussion of concertation as an instrument of democratic consolidation, see Paul G. Buchanan, "State, Labor, Capital: Institutionalizing Democratic Class Compromise in the Southern Cone," manuscript, chap. 3.
 20. For discussion of concertation in the Southern Cone, see among many others *Novos Estudos CEBRAP*, no. 13 (Oct. 1985):2-44, a special section on social pacts, with emphasis on Brazil; Norberto Lechner, *Pacto social en los procesos de democratización: la experiencia latinoamericana* (Santiago: FLACSO, 1985); Carlos Pareja, "Las instancias de concertación: sus presupuestos, sus modalidades y su articulación con las formas clásicas de democracia representativa," *Cuadernos del CLAEH* no. 32 (1984/4):39-41; Guillermo O'Donnell, "Pactos políticos y pactos económicos sociales: por que sí y por

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21. This work was also published in *Crítica y Utopía* 9 (1982):127-47.
22. For two contrasting examples of state-corporatist approaches, see Paul G. Buchanan, "State Corporatism in Argentina: Labor Administration under Perón and Onganía," *LARR* 20, no. 1 (1985):61-95.
23. For a good analysis of the 1973-74 attempt, see Robert Ayres, "The 'Social Pact' as Anti-Inflationary Policy: The Argentine Experience since 1973," *World Politics* 28, no. 4 (July 1976):473-501.