Dictatorship in Fact and in Fiction

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Edited by

Keith Ellis

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INTRODUCTION

At the mention of the word "dictatorship," in the context of Latin America, it is customary to expect a world of repression, cruelty, and bizarre behaviour. But when we analyse carefully the literature that has been produced by that world, we may find a need to provide room for thought that allows us to probe more deeply into the personalities and characters that have built this world or contributed to it. We may even need to provide room for thought that leads us to re-evaluate or reinterpret some of the previously absorbed information. We may also find to be insufficient the information on which we based our initial findings. In other words, it may be necessary to spend more time doing more fundamental research.

I was aware of some of the attractions and perils of the dictatorship genre when Cambridge Scholars Publishing Inc. (a British publishing house not tied to Cambridge University) asked me to provide them with a manuscript for a book that would be of interest to readers of the English-speaking world. I hastened to assume that those readers would find entertaining and perhaps instructive a subject about which I had long been curious, considering it to be insufficiently explored by and undeservedly new to many of the usually well-informed and honest readers of my acquaintance. Along with some of my highly conscientious and reputable colleagues, we could provide readers with analyses of history and literature that would provoke our readers' stimulative reactions.

My first task then was to assemble a group of scholars who have read widely and sensitively, a group of "dear writers," as the great Brazilian novelist Machado de Assis might have categorized them before he conferred on them the responsibility of performing a demanding and painstaking task. I was requiring them to accommodate their extraordinary talents to an archetypal yet multivalent theme, whose aspects might be both familiar and strange to our readers.

A second consideration, as was revealed in the title I proposed for the book, *Dictatorship in Fact and in Fiction*, was generic openness. "Fact" here, implies history, as Cervantes wrote, "la historia cuya madre es la

verdad" [history whose mother is truth], while "fiction" allows for the liberty that authors enjoy in being inventive. Our writers would need ample room in which to explore the discrete or terrorizing activities of many of the people about whom they would be writing. The combination of the two makes for the powerful juxtaposition that our contributors employ so skilfully. The initial openness encourages liveliness in other characteristics of the pens of our contributors.

I thank them for making at once concrete and flexible sadly representative Latin American figures such as the barbaric Domingo Faustino Sarmiento and the beautifully creative José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia, known by other names given to him with love and respect by his people: Dr. Francia, El Supremo, El Dictador Supremo del Paraguay, El Dictador Perpetuo del Paraguay, and Kari Guasu (Great Lord in the language of the Guaraní people).

The invited contributors are all courageous enough not to fear their findings but to express them here with edifying clarity. Thus, even as we offer these and other Latin American portraits in their essential settings, we will remember too Nicolás Guillén's rescuing, original words on the dark-skinned moral giant, Dr. Francia. Let us weigh too the brief eulogy, perhaps unsurpassed in its beauty in the genre, where the sublime Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío counterpoised the ideal (and the real) life of the Cuban transnational hero, José Martí. By means of the wonder of language that is at once specific and allusive, that reaches out and multiplies, the Latin American content of this book is marvellously magnified.

I

DICTATORSHIP IN FACT AND IN FICTION: JOSÉ GASPAR RODRÍGUEZ DE FRANCIA AND DOMINGO FAUSTINO SARMIENTO

KEITH ELLIS

Within the context of *Dictatorship in Fact and in Fiction*, it may be enlightening to take a close look at two Latin American leaders who achieved great notoriety: José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia (1766-1840) and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-1888). Someone wishing to analyze the work of these two leaders must start by evaluating the character of the information that has been and continues to be available about them. Is the information fakery or is it true? Does it represent the opinion of their knowledgeable compatriots or the opinion of a small elite? Is it merely the accepted opinion or is it true, i.e., based on facts and on real lived experience? I will examine first the earlier and more controversial of these two leaders.

Dr. Francia: Turning Away from the Colonial Way

Print information about Dr. José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia (Dr. Francia)–El Dictador Supremo (1814) (El Supremo) or El Dictador Perpetuo de Paraguay (1817)–did not correspond to the language used for him by his countrymen and women during his time as their esteemed Dictator.[1] We must therefore take into account the sources of most of the

[1] Several historians have commented on the remarkably representative nature of Paraguay's Congresses, see for example (Gott, "Latin America as a White Settler Society", 282) where he points out the careful efforts made by Dr. Francia to ensure that the election of 1 000 representatives to the Congress was devoid of barriers of class, ethnicity, status, literacy or condition to democratic participation in the

historical information about him (religious, imperialist, European, bourgeois) especially when he is presented from the point of view of the colonialists in colonial Latin America.

We need to consider alternative ways of thinking while we scrutinize some of the ways that have been imposed on us. While Bartolomé de las Casas was able to portray some of the indigenous resistance to Spanish colonialism, we should be careful to remember that he was an important messenger of the European church with its peculiar sets of laws, transgressions and punishments. In time, some of these become so distanced from everyday reality or usefulness that they come to be regarded as superstitions. Others are more lasting and are kept so with the aid of powerful institutions such as the church, whose patronage and a degree of snobbishness help to compensate for their lost genuine popularity. Sometimes historical events have the effect of keeping populations in touch with their practical realities, as did the French Revolution of 1789 for the generation of that time; and, in that case, the effect went beyond the boundaries of France and affected the thinking of people in other countries and systems. Latin America is to be included in this extended sphere of influence, especially the Paraguayan.

Dr. Francia, Doctor of Theology, identified himself politically as a Jacobin,[2] always with his firm anti-colonial thinking, which was developed

government of the country. The use of the indigenous Guaraní language also facilitated the full participation in the election of the Congresses by the Paraguayan population.

[2] Dr. Francia identified with the Jacobin movement (led by Maximilian Robespierre) of the French Revolution, a movement which came to use increasingly strong measures (raising a Revolutionary army among the *sans-culottes* to enforce central government policy, to apply price controls and protect against hoarders, speculators, monarchists, and political rivals considered traitors) in the face of increasingly strong internal and external enemies of the Revolution, leading to what has been called a Reign of Terror. The failure of the Jacobin economic policies (depreciation of the French currency, serious food shortages and rationing in Paris, and then an unworkable price-fixing policy) to protect the *sans-culottes* ultimately produced enemies faster than they could be eliminated and resulted in the elimination of the Jacobin leaders themselves.

Because Dr. Francia instituted measures in Paraguay to avoid the class divisions faced by the French economy (symbolized in the 1826 flag's emblem by the *sans-culottes'* Phrygian cap held high on a baton by a lion) and secure the unity (or fraternity) of the Paraguayan people, he was able to realize the ideals (liberty and equality) of the independence movement that he led in Paraguay. Thanks to his vision, the term "Jacobin" can now be associated with moderate authoritarianism, more equal formal rights and centralization. It is also associated with government intervention to transform society and a strong nation-state capable of resisting

in its distancing from the authority of the church. He focused on the national conditions that needed improvement, in keeping with his requirements for precise information on which he could base important changes, such as introducing new crops in new areas and expanding state farms.[3] We may trace, in the development of Francia's thinking, a path that leads us from the Incan-developed ideas of communication to the sensitive, humane priest, Bartolomé de las Casas, to Hatuey, who–as the courier of a message that was as urgent as any message relayed by the Andean Inca *chasqui* system for prompt and firm humanist consideration–decried and exposed, to his Cuban brothers, the need to resist the invading Spaniards. This is the conceptual guidance that came to underlie Dr. Francia's humanist Paraguay.[4] Whereas the Paraguayan leader was following indigenous practice as well as contemporary Western revolutionary goals, his efforts were not appreciated by many of his peers outside of Paraguay.

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undesirable foreign interference. Some still use it negatively to condemn the use of powers of the state for "private" matters.

[3] John Hoyt Williams, "Paraguay's Nineteenth-Century 'Estancias de la República'." *Agricultural History*, Vol. 47, No. 3 (July 1973): 207.

[4] The Paraguayan poet, Rubén Bareiro Saguier (as quoted in Georges Fournial's lecture in a 1984 seminar in Paris on Augusto Roa Bastos's novel, *Yo el Supremo*: "José Gaspar de Francia, el Robespierre de la Independencia Americana"), emphasizes the goal of Dr. Francia's leadership of Paraguay:

> Admirador de Rousseau y sobre todo de Robespierre, cimentó la autoridad de su régimen sobre la doctrina del interés público, lo que significaba sacrificar las libertades individuales por el bien y la defensa de la independencia nacional, amenazada por las ambiciones anexionistas de la Confederación argentina, la política equívoca del Brasil, el peligro español siempre latente y la penetración del imperialismo inglés, que se había establecido en los países vecinos. [Being an admirer of Rousseau and Robespierre, he founded the authority of his regime on the doctrine of public interest, which meant sacrificing individual liberties for the good and the defense of the nation's independence, which was threatened by the annexationist ambitions of the Argentinian Confederation, the equivocal politics of Brazil, the still latent Spanish danger and the penetration of British imperialism, that had established itself in the neighbouring countries (underlining mine).] (Georges Fournial. "José Gaspar de Francia, el Robespierre de la Independencia Americana," accessed January 2, 2023. https://depoliticaehistoria.blogspot.com/2020/01/jose-gaspar-de-francia-el-robespierre.html).

Allow me to give here a more recent example of how certain aspects of a culture can lag while others seem to take up new and challenging postures. In 1976, I went to the University of the West Indies (Mona, Jamaica) to witness the awarding by that University of an honorary doctorate to Cuba's great National Poet, Nicolás Guillén. I was able, since Guillén and I were both there a day before the scheduled ceremony, to enjoy some conversations with the master poet. He was always curious about cultural developments in Jamaica, particularly with regard to the work of Miss Lou (Jamaican poet and actress Louise Bennett) who might have been considered to occupy, among the Jamaican people, a position sustained by love similar to his own position among the Cuban people, with his poetry about the people using the finest nuances of their language. Because of that, wherever Guillén and I met, his first question was always "How is Miss Lou?," perhaps thinking of her wonderful, ironic poems mocking the idea of persistence of colonial habits in Jamaican culture. But, on this occasion, he noticed that the Jamaicans to whom he was being introduced were somewhat stiff and not at ease in his presence.

The pleasantries were rudely interrupted when a senior informal member of the welcoming committee suddenly struck the distinguished Cuban poet on his chest, a blow the victim of which could have accepted as an original (Jamaican) form of greeting. But I, knowing all Caribbean ways of asking "whappen suh?," recognised the novel impertinence of this one; and, fearing that one of those incidents that called for the diplomatic skills, such as I had known the Cubans to display, was at hand, I quickly adjusted my angle of vision in an attempt to assess the extent of the multidimensional harm as well as the possible Cuban response to the outrage. I also positioned myself to be able to impede any further rash acts. The noble Guillén himself was the one who kept thick ice from forming over the episode: with a tranquil smile… that same defiant calm noticed years earlier by his friend, the American writer Langston Hughes, when the two were under bombardment in a Barcelona hotel by Francisco Franco's Fascist forces who had launched the evil Spanish Civil War.

I was happy to see approaching me a colleague and good friend of mine, Professor Lloyd King, who had come from Trinidad and Tobago to Jamaica, with the same mission that had brought me from Toronto, to witness the historic occasion that would symbolically bring the academic

lives of Cuba and the English-speaking West Indies closer together. I was confident too that King, who had previously made sure that I got to know any then recent Trinidadian calypso creation with its typical risqué plays on words,[5] would be relaxed on meeting the poet of this courageous Antillean country, with its largely and loosely Catholic population and its firm underlay of African beliefs, that was creatively daring to break not just with the language but also with the rules of U.S. hegemony.[6]

[5] One that I remember him mentioning specifically was about a youngster impatiently learning the alphabet, searching for a name starting with the letter Q, so that the refrain of the calypso was: "Teacher, who for Q?". It was a revelation for me with my Baptist background to see young Catholic couples dancing to such songs until it was time for early mass when they would walk across the street straight into church, living out in their culture what elsewhere might seem to be contradictory behaviour.

[6] The calypso also served to convey legendary moments of sport. This was perhaps also the occasion on which I told Guillén about a sensational cricket match, the first test series in which the West Indies team beat England at their home ground, Lords Cricket Ground in London. King George VI was there, acknowledging the important event and the captains, Yardley for England and Goddard for the West Indies. As soon as the match was over, the great Trinidadian calypsonian, Lord Kitchener, strode into the field with his band, ready to perform the complete epic narration of the victory in five gleeful stanzas with end rhyme and flowing rhythm that are approximate with the relaxed soft warmth of the late English afternoon, like one of those so gracefully depicted by Jamaican poet Mervyn Morris. Here is the first of them:

> *Cricket lovely Cricket,*
> *At Lord's where I saw it;*
> *Cricket lovely Cricket,*
> *At Lord's where I saw it;*
> *Yardley tried his best*
> *But Goddard won the test.*
>
> *They gave the crowd plenty fun;*
> *Second Test and West Indies*
> *With those two little pals of mine* (Chorus)
> *Ramadhin and Valentine.*

The flair for rhyme among Trinidadian artists, especially Lord Kitchener, has made me think of the corresponding wonderful gift that the richly rhyming poet of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", among other poems, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, received as a blessing thanks to "Mary Queen." Is Chango to be thanked for an even greater gift when Guillén produced both end and internal rhymes in verses such as:

With my eyes having been on Guillén, as I shared with him a few introductory words about Lloyd, I then looked back to assess Lloyd's degree of satisfaction at having met revolutionary Cuba's National Poet. There was nothing but a trace of Lloyd for me to see, represented by the alternating soles of his fleeing shoes, as, like a bolting colt, he sprinted away from us, apparently more afraid than curious with respect to understanding the Cuban Revolution and the liberation of Cuba and Cubans. It was as if he had put together every superstitious censure he had ever heard about the ungodly Cuba and used all of them to power that moment of panic. I could, of course, only imagine his facial expression of terror since I had no hope of overtaking Lloyd in his sprint. He had become Hasely Crawford, powered by Trinidad's Roman Catholicism, and I would have had to become the unattainable, proudly striding Usain Bolt. I simply waited for the bright clarity of 10 a.m. the following day, the time of the award ceremony, to have the assurance that my friend had passed unharmed through the dark, demonic hours and into the time of the rousing national anthems of two independent countries, growing in their friendship.

Nicolás Guillén was the world's first well-oriented interpreter of Dr. Francia. Many readers will assume that the great historian of Latin American reality, Eduardo Galeano (*Las venas abiertas de América Latina*, 1971; *Open Veins of Latin America*, 1973), had this achievement. But I do need to correct that assumption and say that Nicolás Guillén understood Dr. Francia's Caribbean importance earlier.[7] It might be surprising, in a project

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Yoruba soy, lloro en yoruba [I am Yoruba, I weep in Yoruba]
lucumí. [Lucumí]
Como soy un yoruba de Cuba, [Since I am a Yoruba from Cuba,]
quiero que hasta Cuba suba mi llanto yoruba, [I want to move up to Cuba my lament in Yoruba,]
que suba el alegre llanto yoruba [Move up my happy lament in Yoruba]
Que sale de mí. [That goes out from me.] (Nicolás Guillén, *Nicolás Guillén: A Bilingual Anthology* (Havana: Editorial José Martí, 2003), 138-139.)

[7] See Guillén, "Cuba-Paraguay*," originally published in the Havana journal *Hoy*, May 20, 1964. Nicolás Guillén. "Palabras en el acto de homenaje a Paraguay en el 153 aniversario de su independencia" [Words from an Hommage to Paraguay on the 153rd Anniversary of its Independence]. In *Páginas Escogidas*. Selection and

that gives open access to fact and fiction, to say that the poet-journalist, Nicolás Guillén, is the first writer to do this. And so it must be explained here that the poet Nicolás Guillén, the National Poet of Cuba, is a man of exceptional intellectual resources, who possesses, in addition, the ability, the insight and the courage to see and include the relevance of the unspeakable experience suffered by post-Francia Paraguay[8] to the Cuban situation at the time of his writing an homage to Paraguay on that country's Independence Day (May 14, 1964). Guillén's immediate task, as a patriotic and highly skilled poet, was to show Dr. Francia in a new light to those countries that were not predisposed to be hostile to his Cuba and to publicize his discernment of paths of friendship. Hence "Cuba-Paraguay*" encapsulates perfectly the abuses and hardships that are to be faced by a country that is determined to follow a course of independence and justice that is designed by its people.

I select the following kernel from Guillén's speech on Paraguay's Independence Day in 1964, a speech in which history and culture are featured, and which in retrospect seems to provide a model for speeches which we are hearing these days from progressive leaders wishing to alert people to the dangers of slipping back to colonial days.

> […F]rom the distant days of my school-leaving exam, I knew, because that's what they who taught me were interested in having me learn, that Dr. Francia was "a brutal tyrant." The most terrible anecdotes gave him a diabolical reputation, while they hid carefully his great role in rescuing Paraguay's independence, its absolute independence, leading to the Revolution of 1811. Time has told me the truth. It was then too that I could measure the role played by that man of iron, a learned and dynamic man, a man who was hated, that is true, by the Spanish reactionary merchants because he expropriated their foully acquired riches, hated as well by the conceited military people who did not hesitate to beg for foreign help, and by the religious congregations whose privileges he took away; but he was

Introduction by Keith Ellis (Havana: Fondo Cultural Casa de las Américas, 2015), 294-296.

[8] See William Costa's 2020 article entitled "Paraguay Still Haunted by Cataclysmic War That Nearly Wiped if off the Map," accessed February 27, 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/27/paraguay-war-of-the-triple-alliance-anniversary.

> loved by the dispossessed peasant masses upon whose help he counted in order to give the final blow to the counter-revolution.
>
> It happened like that in Cuba too. From Aponte, who in 1812 dreamt of freedom for blacks and of the end of slavery, to Martí, who designed our second independence, our penultimate war of independence, there was no leader on whom did not fall the lowest forms of calumny. The Spanish government called them madmen, horse thieves, arsonists, assassins, rapists, bandits: but no Latin Americans believe a single line of those insults, just as now none believe the blunders of imperialism that try to quench in the great Latin American scenario the resplendence of the Cuban Revolution and of its leader Fidel Castro.[9]

Guillén's 1964 speech/article was written with his usual scrupulous attention to history.[10] He no doubt foresaw that a competent reading of his brief article–published on the eve of the hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of the war that would be called "the Paraguayan War" (1864) and then "the War of the Triple Alliance" (1865), a genocidal war, in which the bloodthirsty, racist President of Argentina (Sarmiento) hurried to participate upon his acceptance of the presidency of his country (1868) and as the way of ensuring the "extermination"[11] of blacks, indigenous and dark-skinned people to make "*lebensraum*" for European (white-skinned) immigrants in

[9] Guillén, "Palabras en el acto de homenaje a Paraguay en el 153 aniversario de su independencia", 295-296.

[10] Fidel Castro, the Cuban leader, coinciding in time with Guillén's exercise of his poetic mission, spoke of culture as being "the sword and the shield of the nation." Cuba's latest President, Miguel Díaz-Canel, maintains this understanding of the importance of culture, reiterating Fidel's quote. It is joyous to observe that the new president of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, in his first statement about the plans of his new government, gives primary importance to culture. These statements of Lula da Silva and Díaz-Canel, that keep alive the sentiments of Fidel and José Martí are greatly comforting, because in these days it is vitally important that the attention to culture be maintained at the top of our preoccupations.

[11] Sarmiento's repeated use of the word "exterminación" [extermination] indicates the finality and definiteness which he requires as a final solution for what he sees as the problem of the presence of these people who are not white in Argentina.

his own country Argentina–[12] would enable people to understand the urgency of Cuba's defense of its sovereignty.

When Guillén wrote this defense of Dr. Francia, the image of this Latin American leader was very negative. Guillén dared to recognize and to give fulsome credit to Dr. Francia's humane and appropriate vision because of the circumstances in which Paraguay then found itself. In the one reference that José Martí makes to Dr. Francia: "el Paraguay lúgubre de Francia,"[13] like some other readers, his attitude is equivocally negative; that is to say, he doesn't condemn or praise him.[14] But the adjective with which he qualifies the Paraguay for which Francia is responsible is decidedly not positive, especially since, Martí, the Cuban hero, is wont to demonstrate with brightness his preferred environments.[15] Pablo Neruda is decisively

[12] Ignorance of history, of these particularly savage acts of genocide, is probably why Argentina itself has suffered greatly from other crises. It has never fully ever been able to explain why it is that with, so many good human and natural resources, it remains so unbalanced and suffers such instability whenever such things as financial crises come to afflict the world.

[13] From José Martí's November 26, 1891 speech at the Liceo Cubano de Tampa, in which he gives an example of a republic which Cuba should not resemble when it has won its independence (see Pedro Pablo Rodríguez, "Paraguay y paraguayos en José Martí," accessed June 13, 2017, http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/periodico-cubarte/paraguay-y-paraguayos-en-jose-marti/).

[14] One wonders why the Cuban National Hero and great writer, José Martí, was so brief and ambiguously negative about Dr. Francia in his only reference that I can find to the Paraguayan leader in Martí's copious writings: "el Paraguay lúgubre de Francia" [Francia's sad Paraguay], from a speech given at the Cuban Liceo in Tampa, Florida, on November 26, 1891 (Rodríguez, "Paraguay y paraguayos en José Martí"). Among Dr. Francia's greatest accomplishments was his achievement without war of winning the independence of his country, no ordinary feat this if we consider, for example, the brutish and ruthlessly acquisitive and retentive character of the Spaniards whom Martí himself, Juan Varela and other great Cubans knew and described so well, revealing their colonial inhumanity. These two illustrious giants of Cuban history, Martí and Varela, barely escaped with their lives from Spanish terror; and Martí, as well as other stalwarts of Cuban history such as Antonio Maceo and his six brothers, all mothered by Mariana Grajales, were killed in battle against the intensely repressive and bloodthirsty colonialism that was so despised by Dr. Francia. Perhaps, in this case, Martí suffered a disarming surplus of empathy with Dr. Francia, a disquieting appreciation of his likeness with Dr. Francia, "aquel hombre de hierro, ilustrado y dinámico" [that man of iron, learned and dynamic], as Guillén so perceptively states in his elegant summary (Guillén, "Palabras en el acto de homenaje a Paraguay en el 153 aniversario de su independencia", 296).

[15] This is generally borne out in the poems of Martí's *Versos libres* [*Free Verses*].

negative to Dr. Francia, more so perhaps because the Paraguayan leader is known as Francia, referring to a country that was dear to Neruda's heart.[16] Dr. Francia's political leadership in the movement to end colonialism in Paraguay had made him the enemy not only of Spain, but also of the leaders of Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay, countries which refused to recognize Paraguay's sovereignty for the duration of Dr. Francia's life. He truly represented the interests of the indigenous Guaraní people, the overwhelming majority of the people of Paraguay; and he used both his learning and the democratic power accorded to him by the people of Paraguay to defend their agricultural economy and their cultural and racial dignity. For this loyalty to his constituents, which was considered disloyalty by the European elites and by those of Latin America, he was criticized for being isolationist and authoritarian or "autocratic," criticism that Guillén could avoid one hundred and fifty years later when he visited countries friendly to Cuba, such as the Soviet Union, China and other "non-aligned" countries.

But Dr. Francia, in spite of having no friendly nation to support him, continued in the line of Hatuey and his indigenous fighters to defend assiduously a worldview that is based on the real lives of people. One of these areas was in the vitally important one of food supplies. One of his first moves was to demonstrate to the people of Paraguay the virtue of producing annually and humanely more crops than had ever been produced by the Spanish colonialists, two rather than one.[17] Francia involved himself in the details of what the children would be reading; he examined toys, books and entertainment for children, made sure, when he ordered them on behalf of the state, that they were instructional, contributing to the defense of the country. He worked and thought in the real world, preferring representation of real life and shunning literature as fiction. We might say that Dr. Francia anticipated what would become a strong trend in European literature, as was recorded in Erich Auerbach`s *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in*

[16] See José Manuel Rodríguez Pardo, "Pablo Neruda difama al Dr. Francia," accessed March 10, 2023, https://josemanuelrodriguezpardo.blogspot.com/2011/04/pablo-neruda-difama-al-doctor-francia.html and the relevant lines from Pablo Neruda's *Canto General* [General Song] (1950), V "La arena traicionada" [Sand Betrayed].

[17] John Hoyt Williams, "Paraguayan Isolation under Dr Francia: A Re-Evaluation." *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (February 1972): 113.

Western Literature.[18] The consciousness of the people was channeled in ways that were practical (not in the distracting ways in which Britain was persistent, in telling people lies and feeding them illusions), so that Paraguayans were wary of the foreign or Western fictions and illusions. The people understood the need for a strong defense and for spending on defense. Paraguay's defense became strong, and countries could not attack Paraguay with impunity while Francia was its chosen, benevolent "dictator", that is, its chosen leader.

One of the ways by which Dr. Francia demonstrated the stringency with which he observed the laws of his country, especially those regarding its sovereignty and independence, is illustrated in his treatment of the case of Aimé Bonpland. An eminent botanist, he had travelled to the Americas with Alexander von Humbolt, a renowned authority on a range of scientific matters with geography as their mainspring. Shortly after their return to Europe, Bonpland professed his scientific attachment to Paraguay and decided to return on a solo mission to Francia's country where he entered into the commercial production of the drink, mate, that was highly popular, to the point of addiction, in the Southern Cone of Latin America. Bonpland had done this, in such feverish anticipation of an envisaged fortune, that he had to be summoned to Asunción to be told by Dr. Francia words to the effect that he knew that Bonpland was in Paraguay, indulging his love for growing *yerba mate*, and selling it to Argentina in competition with the Paraguayan state. Dr. Francia offered the great botanist on the spot the opportunity to have that pleasure for the next ten years on condition that he dedicate his earnings to the Paraguayan state.

And so the celebrated botanist began to serve his irrevocable sentence for appropriating sovereign land with the aim of entering into commercial competition with the Paraguayan state. To many people beyond

[18] Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, written in Istanbul to which he had had to flee from the University of Marburg, as a German Jew in 1935, describes how Western literature, from antiquity to the twentieth century, deployed increasingly more realistic and democratic forms of representation, revealing an optimistic view of European history that also served as a response to the inhumanity he saw in the Third Reich. This is similar to the defensive and practical work of Dr. Francia in leading Paraguay to independence in 1811 and then strengthening and defending it until his death in 1840, from the Spanish, from Brazil, from the provinces of Argentina and the British.

Paraguay, from the still Imperial head of the world at the time, Great Britain, from legislators, preachers, politicians and poets worldwide, even from the great fellow liberator Simón Bolívar himself,[19] came the judgement that Dr. Francia's treatment of the person identified in the messages about him as being a scientist had been excessively harsh, and thus unacceptable. Bolívar took such umbrage at being included among those whose petitions were denied by Dr. Francia, that he threatened to invade Paraguay to liberate Bonpland (Barca). In a reply to one patronizing note to him from Bolívar, proposing that he accept diplomatic representatives, the superior reasoning of refusal by Dr. Francia is to be noted.[20]

Francia saw marriage, for example, as a way of strengthening the unity and defense of the indigenous nation. In Paraguay marriage between two Europeans was illegal. A European could marry an indigenous person, a "known" mixed-race person or a black person.[21] Laws enforced by a "nationalized" civil service making European foreigners register and declare their wealth and pay "forced loans and extraordinary 'defense taxes'" were some of the other restrictions that started to be imposed on the foreigners living in Paraguay at the time of its independence in order to reduce their economic power. In 1820-22 and at various times during the 26 years of Francia's responsibility for defending Paraguay from invasions by its neighbours, some of the members of a larger community of non-Paraguayans (mostly Argentinians living inside the Paraguayan border near Corrientes, Santa Fe and Entre Ríos whose loyalty to the Paraguayan state was not reliable) were either imprisoned and later deported or moved from the border area to the interior of the country with a customary gift of land, livestock, seeds and tools.[22] The stability and peace needed for agriculture, both government-administered *estancias* and smaller individual farms, were thus protected by a cautious and strong emphasis on defense. At the same

[19] Simón Bolívar's intercession on behalf of Bonpland was motivated by his friendship with von Humboldt who had advised and sponsored intellectually the Venezuelan's necessary wars of liberation of the Americas and perhaps by his jealousy of Dr. Francia's administrative success.
[20] José Luis Ayala Olazával, "Ricardo Palma y Simón Bolívar a propósito del Dictador Francia, del Paraguay," *Aula Palma*, No. XV, (2016): 192.
[21] (Williams, "Paraguayan Isolation under Dr Francia: A Re-Evaluation," 115).
[22] (Williams, "Paraguayan Isolation under Dr Francia: A Re-Evaluation," 116).

time, the prosperity bought by this investment in defense was sustained by the produce of their agriculture: hides, tobacco, yerba mate, cotton and rice.

Paraguayan lands were thus cultivated for the independence and needs of the Paraguayan, indigenous people; and as with the Andean predecessors, the Incas, the food supply was guaranteed, amply produced and fairly distributed among the people, with a surplus destined for the export market. The surplus was also strictly in the hands of the protective government.

The Scottish brothers, John and William Parish Robertson, who wrote fabricating the terror that Dr. Francia supposedly represented, focused on the possible links between the Reign of Terror of the Jacobins and the work of Dr. Francia. This was useful propaganda in building up to the War of the Triple Alliance, in which Britain could find it easy to link the neighbours of Paraguay to the British imperialist effort of bringing Paraguay into the fold; but this could be accomplished only after a ferocious genocidal war, because the Paraguayans were passionate in defense of their nation which was very strong for being linked to their good life (compared to the lives of their neighbours). This can be seen from what happened afterwards– the horror of two real dictatorships in Paraguay, those of Higinio Morínigo (from 1940 to 1948) and Alfredo Stroessner (from 1954 to 1989).

The Peruvian (or Spanish) novelist, Mario Vargas Llosa, attempted a collective short story project about dictators and tried to be specific in matching authors to dictators.[23] The peripatetic lives of some of the authors

[23] See Augusto Monterosso, 176-177, as quoted by Keith Ellis in his article: "Ayala's New World Creations in Their Generic Context," *Hispania*, Vol. 89, No. 4 (December 2006): 823-828.

> In 1968 Mario Vargas Llosa wrote to several leading Latin American novelists soliciting their collaboration in a project concerning dictators. We learn from one of these writers, the Guatemalan Augusto Monterroso, that Vargas Llosa assigned the following writers to contribute a short story on a specific historical figure considered by him to be a principal Latin American dictator. Alejo Carpentier would write about his fellow Cuban Gerardo Machado, Carlos Fuentes about fellow Mexican Antonio López de Santa Anna, José Donoso about the Bolivian Mariano Melgarejo, Julio Cortázar about fellow Argentinian Juan Domingo Perón, Carlos Martínez Moreno about Juan Manuel de Rosas, Augusto Roa Bastos about fellow Paraguayan José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia, Vargas Llosa

may have been a reflection of a change in their place of abode because of pressures originating from changes of regimes or governments. Ernesto Cardenal's poem "La llegada"[24] contains its own antithesis in the form of a dream of the hopeful relief from the repression of Somosa's dictatorship. The hope is shattered by the stubborn reality that comes to impose itself inflexibly, although the hope remains for a Nicaragua without class divisions, to be represented in another poem in a different post-Somosa time when as in the time of "el Supremo" there is no use for a prefix such as "the Nazi". These different perspectives on a dictator may be taken a step further and, with the help of changing historical circumstances, lead to a changed picture presented by an author of the same dictator, such as happened in the case of *Yo el Supremo* (1974) by Augusto Roa Bastos. With Stroessner, the longest ruling of Latin American dictators (1954-1989), having finally been removed from the world by assassination (2006), the author Roa Bastos, who correctly had seldom mentioned Stroessner without using the prefix "the Nazi", found himself having survived to see better times in Latin America, when readers could understand the more complex structure of his novel, and when they could better distinguish and not be fooled by a fake such as Argentina's Domingo Faustino Sarmiento.

When Fidel Castro could travel to Paraguay in 2003 to witness the installation of the democratically elected successor to the Nazi Stroessner, Nicanor Duarte, as president of Paraguay, Roa Bastos, in an interview given to foreign journalists,[25] made very clear his admiration of the Cuban people and Cuba's revolutionary leaders, in a remarkable series of statements. He affirmed that "Castro is an example of revolutionary coherence," that the Cuban leaders and their administrators "are what Latin America lacks most," that Cuba and Cubans should be respected and defended ("The duty

about fellow Peruvian Luis Miguel Sánchez Cerro, and Monterroso himself about the Nicaraguan Anastasio Somoza.

[24] Ernesto Cardenal, "La Llegada". In *Nueva antología poética* (México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores), 265-266.

[25] "Roa Bastos viaja a Cuba con Castro, a quien sitúa como 'ejemplo de coherencia revolucionaria'", ABC Cultura, accessed August 19, 2003, https://www.abc.es/cultura/abci-bastos-viaja-cuba-castro-quien-situa-como-ejemplo-coherencia-revolucionaria-200308190300-202053_noticia.html?ref=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F.

of every honourable citizen of the world is to be on the side of the Cuban Revolution" and "For Cuba the least that one can offer is one's life"). Fidel's reaction was to visit Roa Bastos in his home to invite him to visit Cuba and have medical attention. Roa Bastos would be awarded Cuba's highest honour, the José Martí Medal, and would be able to appear at the launching of the Cuban edition of two of his novels: *Hijo de hombre* [Son of Man] and *Yo, el Supremo*.[26] It was evident that Fidel was moving the latter novel and its constituents to a more exemplary place.

When Vargas Llosa suggested to the Honduran (or Guatemalan or Mexican) Augusto Monterroso that he contribute to Vargas Llosa's dictatorship project by writing on Anastasio Somosa, Monterroso refused and said, in a telegraphic answer, that he would rather shoot Somosa than write about him.[27] The outstanding Cuban poet, Nancy Morejón, in response to my request that she join in this present project (to write an essay on dictatorship), refused gently and firmly, indicating that she would find unbearable a subject that, in the terms of this book, would bring to her mind the distasteful likes of Fulgencio Batista.

My readings of Nicolás Guillén on this subject show him making us examine the class interest of the point of view being presented and defended. And since the Latin American figure to whom Guillén referred with positive powerful impact, José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia, had for long remained, at best, an obscure figure, for being regularly dismissed in "good company," Guillén gives Dr. Francia due elevation by linking him to his own biography from the start. He also gives room to those opposed to his own position, so that a dramatic, confrontational scenario is established, one that will endure with the issue of Dr. Francia, an issue that needs to be confronted. And, if the witness to what Guillén is doing is sophisticated enough to place what he is doing in a literary generic context, he or she will appreciate the depth of Guillén's contribution, that he is not just preceding Galeano but that he is doing so in a way that is infusing his observation with high literary value,

[26] Pedro de la Hoz announces that Casa de las Américas is the publisher of these novels ("Una historia cubana de Roa Bastos", accessed June 23, 2017, http://www.lajiribilla.cu/una-historia-cubana-de-roa-bastos/).
[27] (Ellis, "Ayala's New World Creations in Their Generic Context," 824).

since as in his practice of all the literary genres, the Cuban master gives pride of place to brevity, as he does here.[28]

Dr. Francia died in 1840, leaving his country well-led, well-protected (with much of the defensive weaponry produced locally), prosperous and without class conflict. Dr. Francia's personal selection and distribution of children's toys is much more attuned to his real image as leader of his people than are the contents of books about or against him, such as those commissioned by the British government, and written by two Scottish traders, the brothers Robertson, specifically for the purpose of calumniating Dr. Francia.

Striving to be as self-sufficient as possible, el Supremo made agents from countries that were net exporters to his country very unwelcome, particularly Great Britain. In fact, reports written by some of them, after personal interviews by Dr. Francia concerning their trade missions, made them seem terrified of him. His economic and financial measures, and his success in having his fellow citizens emulate his passion for saving–his modest salary often went uncollected–created surpluses that redounded to the prosperity of the Paraguayan people. Alas, this also made them targets of the envy of other peoples, both Latin American and international, mainly British. The terrible ultimate result was the vehement hostility that was shown to Paraguay when war broke out in 1864, fifty years after Dr. Francia had been elected Dictator by the Congress of Paraguay. All that hatred, all that resentment, all that jealousy, had welled up into what came to be known as the War of the Triple Alliance (Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil) or the Paraguay War. When these countries declared that their enemy was Paraguay they were mistaken. It was in fact a war between British imperialism and the ideology of a people deeply imbued with the idea that equality was the better way. The people of Paraguay–the beautiful Guaraní–and other indigenous peoples, and those people of European origin who had integrated fully into being Paraguayans, in keeping with the wishes of Dr. Francia, married to each other, for example, and acknowledging no higher

[28] For further generic analysis of Roa Bastos's novel *Yo el Supremo*, see Keith Ellis, "Power without Responsibility: The Function of Words in Augusto Roa Bastos's *Yo el Supremo*". In *The Power of Words: Literature and Society in Late Modernity*, eds. Mauro Buccheri, Elio Costa and Donald Holoch (Ravenna, Italy: Longo Editore, 2005), 195-216.

ethnicity, enjoying their sweet musical culture, under the protection of a dictator who was theirs, were suddenly thrust into a war twenty-four years after their protector and supreme benefactor had died and whose *obra magna* they tried to preserve, a war which was unleashed against this protector, whom they tried to the death to protect, even after his death. They recognized him and bore his image through the flag and the anthem that they had been carrying aloft for ten years since his passing. This is the first example in Latin America, after that of the Incas, of what a colossal task it is to fight against racism.

After Dr. Francia's Passing

The absence of El Supremo's stern, efficient, and productive leadership from the Paraguayan scene could not have the Paraguayan Republic maintain for long its special place of stability and productivity in the Latin American world.[29] This was so especially since Paraguay's neighbours saw the opportunity to tighten links with Great Britain without feeling the embarrassment and scorn that would have been directed at them by the anti-imperialist and Jacobin-influenced Paraguayan who could display strength and prosperity as the fruits of his ideological positions. There is no doubt that the ideology remained and was evident in the popular national displays, as in those of high symbolism such as the flag (which has retained to this day Dr. Francia's original choice of the French tricolour)[30] and a national

[29] On Dr. Francia's death in 1840, he was succeeded by Carlos Antonio López (1840-1862) and his son Francisco Solano López (1862-1870).

[30] From the several contributors to "The History of the Paraguayan National Flag" (accessed July 31, 2009, https://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/py_hist.html), one discovers that the two official flags approved by Dr. Francia's government had unofficial, or popular, beginnings. Even before August 15, 1812, when the French tricolore was made official, it was used in 1806 by Paraguayans to represent their resistance to British forces approaching their region. And before the tricolore was replaced officially in 1826, by a light blue flag with a small white six-pointed star in the upper left corner, it had been present in the weeks before the first Congress of Paraguay (June 17, 1811) in a dark blue version. It was known as the Star of May flag, representing the month of Paraguay's independence, May. 14, 1811. and It has been characterized as Dr. Francia's flag. Although the tricolore had been a frequent alternative between 1826 and Dr. Francia's death in 1840, Paraguayan garrisons displayed only Dr. Francia's flag from 1840 until 1842. Since that time the tricolore, with variations in the two different emblems on the opposite sides of the flag, has

anthem in Guaraní adopted in 1831.[31] However, it would not be easy to resist the forces ranged against a people who, neglecting the bellicose habits

been the flag used in Paraguay. Thus the underlying inspiration of the French revolutionary tricolore, originally with vertical stripes and shortly afterward with horizontal stripes (occasionally of varying length and width), has been the basis of the Paraguayan flag, of the first of the two flags made official by Dr. Francia's government.

[31] Tadeo Zarratea, "El primer canto patriótico del Paraguay" [The First Patriotic Song of Paraguay] (accessed July 31, 2009, https://mbatovi.blogspot.com/2009/07/el-primer-canto-patriotico-del-paraguay.html) tells us that the accepted author of this first anthem of independent Paraguay is the Paraguayan poet and guitarist Anastasio Rolón. The government of July 20, 1831 described the work as "Himno de la patria" [National Anthem]. Zarratea believes that the eight stanzas and a chorus in the Paraguayan Guaraní of the period, published by Dr. Roberto A. Romero, could have been composed orally and passed on among the popular poets of the country. Zarratea includes in his article a copy of the anthem in Guaraní, contained in Dr. Romero's article entitled "Protagonismo Histórico de la Lengua Guaraní," where he points out that Dr. Francia rejected another anthem entitled "A la Libertad del Paraguay" because it was written in Spanish "idioma de chapetones" [tongue of European greenhorns] (quoted from Romero in Zarratea). Zarratea admires Dr. Francia's protection of the Guaraní language and the dignity of its speakers, noting that, when Rolón's anthem was translated and printed by Francia's successor, Carlos Antonio López in 1845, as a part of what Zarratea calls López's "neocolonialistic barbarism," which included diminishing the importance of the Guaraní culture, the soldiers and students forced to sing the translation felt little of the emotion of the original. Carlos Antonio López's translation into Spanish from Zarratea's article follows, together with my translation to English.

Primer Himno Nacional Paraguayo [First Paraguayan National Anthem]

Nuestros brazos, nuestras vidas, [Our arms, our lives,]
a la patria son debidos: [We owe to the motherland:]
No serán impunemente [Their rights if offended]
sus derechos ofendidos. [Will not go unpunished.]

El león del Paraguay [The Paraguayan lion]
rugirá fiero y sangriento [Will roar wildly smelling blood]
contra cualquier enemigo [Against all enemies]
sea pérfido o cruento. [Be they treacherous or cruel.]

A nuestros hijos daremos [We will leave to our children]
alta Patria preciosa; [A proud shining motherland;]

esclavos nunca seremos [Never to be the slaves]

de prepotencia orgullosa. [And proud of our power.]

Primero se ha de acabar [We will first perfect]
la Paraguaya Nación [The Paraguayan nation]
antes de sufrir aviltada [Rather than defiled]
la extranjera opresión. [Suffer foreign oppression.]

Paraguayos valerosos, [Brave Paraguayans,]
¿queréis insultos sufrir? [Do you want to suffer insults?]
¿perder el nombre y la gloria [Lose your fame and your glory]
o antes mil veces morir? [Or rather die a thousand times?]

¡Morir, morir, morir! [Die, die, die!]
Y que retumbe grandioso [Let the echo of the great people]
El eco del pueblo fuerte [Resound powerfully]
¡Magnánimo y brioso! [Magnanimous and courageous!]

Los estandartes tremolan [The banners shake]
en los pulsos belicosos: [In combattive hearts]
Los cañones ya vomitan [The cannons disgorge]
marciales golpes rabiosos. [Fierce martial blows.]

Y la Patria independiente [And the independent motherland]
ya no es más contestada; [Is no longer threatened;]
la Victoria declaróla [Victory declared her]
justa, ovante, respetada. [Just, triumphant, respected.]

CORO [REFRAIN]

Viva nuestra independencia, [Long live our independence,]
nuestra patria gloriosa [And our glorious motherland]
siempre sea soberana. [May she always be sovereign.]
Siempre sea majestuosa. [May she always be majestic.]

The Spanish lyrics of a different post-Francia anthem of Paraguay were written by Acuña de Figueroa, a Uruguayan poet and composer who had composed the Uruguayan National Anthem in 1811, but did not support independence. Carlos Antonio López, who had requested of him these new Spanish lyrics when he became president of Paraguay, received them in 1846. The origin of the music is uncertain (French and Hungarian composers are suggested), but a Paraguayan composer, Remberto Giménez is known to have finished the music in 1933.

of the Argentinian caudillo culture, had been preferring the peaceful, developmental ways instilled in them by Dr. Francia.[32] The passion for a special nationhood blended into the ideology that inspired the anthem left insufficient room for such technical fundamentals of the practice of war as taking time to breathe; and the ensuing exhaustion left the Paraguayan forces open to wanton slaughter. At this point, prominent gentlemen of the press cultivated by Great Britain which had steered them into an ideological position centred on free trade, declared their pro-imperialist hand. By doing so, writers like Sarmiento, Bartolomé Mitre and Juan Bautista Alberdi had many points in their agenda covered at once: issues such as the removal of the non-white Argentinian population and the rewards for assistance given to the foreign power, the accompanying promotion and status that would not be solely national but international, perhaps shining even where the sun never sets.

The British crown[33] had come recently to know of Paraguay's increasing threat to its industrial supremacy and unexpectedly to know what it might have hoped would be only a minor obstacle to its worldwide plans. But it will have come to find Paraguay to be a quickly growing lion cub which was already forging for itself, thanks to its daring ways of thinking, items such as imposing weaponry, iron works, that could not only provoke the envy of other recently established nations, but that could also show to them paths through education, culture, industry and the command of reason that could be painfully disruptive to the sector of the social classes that had begun to fear for its very survival. Thus, Mitre in 1861, pointing the way to a decisive military solution to the class problem that they saw as a threat, used words that are strongly reminiscent of usage by Anton Fugger to show disdain for the position represented by Dr. Francia. At the same time, we may see how deprived Francia is of support from the elites, in their lies about the ¨peacefulness¨ of their war: "We should be aware of this peaceful triumph [in the region]; let us seek the nerve centre of this progress and find

[32] Anonymous, "A Report on Paraguay in the London Press of 1824," in *The Paraguay Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, eds. Peter Lambert and Andrew Nickson (Duke University Press, 2013), 55-59. See a document which describes the goals and methods of Dr. Francia's administration and appears to have been written by Dr. Francia himself.

[33] Crown is a personification of British coinage (about $ 20) as well as headpiece worn by the British monarch, all of it meaning the British Empire.

the initial force which put it into motion. What is the force which drives this movement? Gentlemen, it is British capital."[34] Mitre, appropriately but unintentionally revealing the nexus between free trade and war, goes on to anticipate: "When our warriors return from their long and glorious campaign, to receive the well-deserved applause of their people, commerce shall see inscribed on their banners, the great principles which the apostles of free trade proclaimed for the greater glory and happiness of mankind."[35]

Anyone familiar with the motto (*Pecunia nervus bellorum* [Money is the sinews of war] of the Fuggers, the family of bankers who plied from the original thieves and murderers, the soldiers of the illiterate Francisco Pizarro, the treasures taken from the Incas, may see more clearly in the nexus between free trade and war what El Supremo insisted on avoiding when he fought to maintain the peace in Paraguay. They may also see and hear, especially if they are knowledgeable of the motto of these Augsburg bankers, and at the same time of the fine points of generic literary criticism that is alert to the contribution of the sense of hearing, how keen Mitre is, as a representative of the elites about echoing them not only in the sense but also in the sound of their oratory.

Soon the mature trained defenders were eliminated and much depended on the spirit of the secondary lines. Before long, they too were eliminated, and reinforcements had to be summoned from other parts of the large country. The covering of distances alone began to account for the weariness of soldiers who were getting younger and younger, satisfying the genocidal Sarmiento appetite. The women came in after the older boys and fought with a ferocity that suggested that prescience had told them of the calamity that would befall Paraguay if they lost. And they lost after all.

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[34] Quoted in Laverdiere, Andrew F. "Paraguay: Genocide in the Name of Free Trade," *Rising Tide Foundation*, accessed December 1, 2022, https://risingtidefoundation.net/2022/12/01/paraguay-genocide-in-the-name-of-free-trade/.

[35] Quoted in Laverdiere, "Paraguay: Genocide in the Name of Free Trade."

Sarmiento: Twisted Identity and Influential Sickness

Sarmiento purposes to condemn the peoples he considers barbarians; and the reader finds him willy-nilly prominently active among the real barbarians.

Sarmiento was born in a 19th century South America that could be described as comprehensively unstable. Even independence did not bring stability, as the competition between the interests of the colonialists who claimed the land and the new governments, on the one hand, and the interests of the previously powerless indigenous, mestizos and slaves or former slaves, on the other, who were not necessarily empowered in the new governments, prevented stability from being established. The unity between the two opposing groups created by the struggle for independence disappeared with its achievement; and, in the case of Argentina and Chile, the fighting skills of the non-urban peoples (of the caudillos and the gauchos) gave them some control over the Europeanized urban population, which had shown itself unable to unite the interests of the two groups. Sarmiento was born in a semi-urban setting in Argentina which exposed him to the political rivalries of the Federalists and the Unitarians, or the caudillo (or warlord) culture and the urban culture with its European educational and cultural institutions. He wished to solve these often violent conflicts by simply eliminating the non-whites, and replacing them with white immigrants from Europe. Having had access only to basic education, Sarmiento became a teacher early in life. He used journalism to express his hostility to the Federalist government of Argentina and so found it necessary to leave Argentina for Chile where he continued his journalism and wrote a semi-fictional work criticizing the caudillo culture of Juan Manuel Rosas and his enforcer, Facundo (*Facundo: Civilización y barbarie*, 1845, published in instalments). He later collaborated with Manuel Montt on his vision of whitening the two countries by increasing European immigration. Chile financed three years of his travels in which he studied educational systems and promoted the emigration of Europeans to Chile. He was able to return to Argentina where he became governor of his home province, San Juan, before being named Ambassador to the U.S. by the first Unitarian president of Argentina, Bartolomé Mitre.