On "Functional Groups," "Fragmentation," and "Pluralism" in Spanish American Political Society

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THE TERM "functional group"—sometimes rendered "interest group" or, to be on the safe side, "functional interest group"—has attained of late a certain modishness among Latin Americanists. At present, unfortunately, it serves as little more than a convenient catchall reference for the great *intereses,* the list of which, except for pride of place, has also become virtually standardized: the several officer corps, the university, land owner cliques or associations, *cámaras* of merchants and industrialists, the Church, the *entes autónomos,* organized labor, and so on. The fact that professional concern is increasingly being directed toward such structures is in itself significant, for it reflects a deep disenchantment with the more traditional methods of conceptualizing and analyzing Spanish American political society.

For some time, in fact, it has been apparent that a broad range of phenomena—most obtrusive in the repeated cycles of civic violence and civic paralysis, protracted incidences of dysfunction in which the great *intereses* have played prominent roles—simply do not respond to analysis and explanation in terms of constitutional dispositions and electoral and parliamentary behavior. Over the past decade or so this scholarly *inquietud* has generated numerous studies of national military establishments, student political movements, labor federations, and so on. Similarly, writers have amply described and analyzed the one Spanish American national system—Mexico—in which organized *functional* (as distinct from *territorial*) political groupings have been frankly accepted as agents of the political process.

"Functional interest groups" are thus by no means unfamiliar; the point is, however, that the conceptual armamentarium at present available to the investigator seeking to comprehend them *as a culture-*

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wide phenomenon remains meager and imprecise. An adequate working definition of the Spanish American "functional interest group," considered both as a structure of social interaction and solidarity and as a vehicle for the pursuit of political ends, is still lacking—indeed, even the terminology itself must be regarded as only provisional. Furthermore, we need a conceptual framework—a "model," if one wishes—by means of which a total Spanish American national system may be examined in terms of the interrelationships among its constituent functional groupings, and of their involvement in the political process. Hence this essay, whose purpose is to isolate and define the issues and to develop a vocabulary and a frame of reference for their further study.

Because the discussion that follows breaks with many of the categories and premises that have shaped North American thinking, it is instructive to turn first to the short interpretive passage from which the essay's title and its organizing principle are derived. Some years ago Arthur P. Whitaker observed, a propos the repeated failures of consensus in Argentine political life in the years following the overthrow of Juan D. Perón:[1]

> Socially and politically, Argentina is a highly fragmented country. Its *fragmentation* is different from the *pluralism* which many of us think is one of the best attributes of society in the United States. In Argentina, the divisions are sharper, deeper, and more numerous, and the several fragments either do not communicate with each other at all or else do so mainly to quarrel and fight. Hence the widespread feeling of frustration and loss of direction that embitters domestic differences and tends to perpetuate them. [Italics added.]

[1] Arthur P. Whitaker, "The Argentine Paradox," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 334 (March 1961), 107. *Cf.* Kalman Silvert, "The Costs of Anti-Nationalism," in K. Silvert (ed.), *Expectant Peoples: Nationalism and Development* (New York, 1963), 347-372. On pp. 358-359, Silvert acutely and suggestively characterizes the Argentine system as a variant on "Mediterranean syndicalism," although, as the present essay attempts to show, the term "syndicalism," with its implication of autonomy for intermediary groups, is perhaps not totally appropriate. More generally, in a "thinkpiece" such as this, it is impossible to acknowledge all one's intellectual debts. To be sure, only a corporal's guard of North Americans—Blanksten, Kling, McAlister, Morse, Phelan, Sarfatti, Scott, Silvert—have addressed themselves to any of the major questions raised here. The Latin American and especially the European historiography is, however, fertile; I have followed especially: Beneyto, Castro, J. H. Elliott, Góngora, Hernández y Sánchez Barba, Konetzke, Leonhard, Lohmann Villena, Lynch, Maravall, Miranda, Verlinden, Vicens Vives, Zavala, Zorraquín Becú. The concepts in political sociology are derived from standard authors: Almond, Bendix, Pye, Verba, and, in a more traditional vein, W. Y. Elliott, Kornhauser, Nisbet, E. Lewis. It has also been rewarding to turn directly to the classic authors, particularly Parsons, Durkheim, Weber, and, with reservations, Weber's teacher, Gierke.

For the purposes of this paper, Argentina is merely the extreme or stylized case in the examination of the dysfunctional phenomena that Whitaker refers to as "fragmentation." Both the duration and the intensity of the crisis of unconsummated change that has beset Argentina since 1930 have worked with uncommon virulence to rend political society into mutually isolated and bitterly antagonistic *intereses creados,* concerned above all to maintain past gains in what is now conceived to be, relative to earlier expectations, an economy of scarcity. In a complementary process, Argentina's once-vigorous parliamentary institutions and political party system had fallen into discredit and disarray long before they were swept away by military fiat in mid-1966. In the accelerating disintegration of these mechanisms for the achievement of consensus, the nation's demise as a political democracy was further hastened by the inability of successive executives to withstand the divisive importunities of organized interests. (In this respect Argentina stands at the opposite pole from Mexico, a viable "corporative centralism,"[2] whose institutions have proven adequate until now to maintain the PRI's functional "sectors" subordinate to the will of the party and national executives.) Nevertheless, while unique historical processes have thus thrown Argentina's essential configuration into a merciless high relief, analogous structures and processes have often enough been discernible in other Spanish American national systems, *most particularly those at a roughly comparable level of socio-political development.*

Three elementary propositions arise from the foregoing. In the first place, although large secondary groups are central to both, North American pluralism is indeed, as Whitaker indicates impressionistically, very different from the Spanish American phenomena in question. Both are culturally determined, which is to say historically determined: they rest upon theoretical and juridical bases, and manifest themselves in reiterated patterns of socio-political behavior, markedly at variance with one another. In the second place, however, the two are not direct opposites, for fragmentation is not, in any sense, a *system.* The term can only refer, rather, to the *dysfunction* of a system—one which, until relatively recently, has performed with tolerable efficiency. It is this traditional[3] set of arrangements—which

[2] Robert E. Scott, *Mexican Government in Transition* (Urbana, 1959), 162-176.

[3] "Traditional" and "transitional" are to be understood here in the meanings and contexts developed in recent years by the writers of the Parsonian persuasion. Similarly, "primary" and "secondary," as applied to groups, structures, and relationships, follow standard sociological usage.

lacks any universally-accepted descriptive label—that is the Spanish American counterpart of pluralism.

Thirdly, therefore, the fragmentation syndrome is to be correlated to the emergence of transitional modes of socio-political organization. This means, in its simplest terms, that as a given Spanish American national system acquires more fully the attributes of transitional society, and, in particular, as its political framework distends to accommodate newly-articulate and newly-exigent urban groups, the conjuncture of constitutional and informal structures through which, in traditional society, political demands were received, processed, and acted upon, grows increasingly unworkable, and may, as in Argentina, become directly obstructive. As will be suggested in the course of this essay, the remarkable tenacity with which traditional patterns resist alteration and/or supplantation draws strength not only from the Bourbon attitudes of the present holders of power, but also, to a degree not yet properly remarked, from the peculiar modalities of Spanish America's *pre-industrial* urban structure.[4] This implies, among other things, little reason to believe that Spanish America's transitional periods will be anything but protracted and agonized, or that the more complex configurations ultimately to emerge will bear much more resemblance to the North American variety of pluralism than they do at the present.

The first task of this essay is thus obviously to establish a conceptual baseline in North American pluralism.[5] The latter possesses two characteristics of great relevance to the matter at hand. The first is the *multiplicity of groups,* in which is implied also the unfettered

[4] *Cf.* Gideon Sjoberg, who holds that the organization of the economically active population in discrete and mutually exclusive secondary occupational groups is a near universal characteristic of the world's preindustrial cities. *The Pre-Industrial City, Past and Present* (New York, 1960), 183-204. Richard Morse, in numerous works, and recently Claudio Véliz, in his Introduction to *Obstacles to Change in Latin America* (London, 1965), 2-5, have emphasized the premodern character of the Latin American city and the requirement this places upon the investigator to re-examine his own premises. See also the Introducción to Torcuato S. Di Tella *et al., Sindicato y comunidad: dos tipos de estructura sindical latinoamericana* (Buenos Aires, 1967), 21-45. In this important work, a methodology for the empirical study of the phenomena of "solidarity" and "inclusiveness"—central to the present essay—has at last begun to take shape.

[5] To add to the already considerable semantic confusion, "*pluralismo*" has begun to appear in the works of Spanish American publicists, especially Christian Democrats. The premises from which they depart are different from those under consideration here. *Cf.* Goetz Briefs: "For Catholic social thought the crucial point is not, as it is for [late-liberal pluralistic theorists] the *diversity* of social structures, but rather the *unity* harmoniously embracing this diversity, and the structure, hierarchically ordered according to merit, of this unity." "Katholische Soziallehre," *Staats-Lexikon,* VI (1956), 300.

freedom to form such groups. That is, in the North American experience, pluralism has since the beginning been bound up with the concept of the "voluntary association," the ad hoc banding together of individuals for the accomplishment of (usually) limited ends: political, educational, charitable, fraternal, religious, and so on. Alexis de Tocqueville is certainly the shrewdest observer of the Americans as joiners:[6]

> Americans of all ages, all stations in life, and types of disposition are forever forming associations. There are not only commercial and industrial associations in which all take part, but others of a thousand different types —religious, moral, serious, futile, very general and very limited, immensely large and very minute. . . . In every case, at the head of any new undertaking, where in France you would find the government or in England some territorial magnate, in the United States you are sure to find an association. . . . I have often admired the extreme skill they show in proposing a common object for the exertions of very many and inducing them voluntarily to pursue it.

De Tocqueville described the America of the 1830s. He was undoubtedly correct in emphasizing the long prior evolution of the habit of voluntary association in the Anglo-American tradition, particularly within the context of the struggle for religious liberties. Nevertheless, from the vantage point of more than a century it seems clear today that the burgeoning group life he described was also in large part due to a concatenation of circumstances unique to time and place. These included: the optimistic faith that *any* social end could be accomplished by the organized human will; the extreme fluidity—which on the frontier approached atomization—of society in Jacksonian America, a fluidity which permitted individuals to slough off the ascriptive ties of birth and thus more easily to come together in temporary groupings for limited aims; the political liberty possible under governments whose own area of competence was rigidly circumscribed; the moderating effect of universal suffrage on the "violence of faction." The North American reality has, of course, since changed in many ways. The purview of government has grown, that of voluntary associations has contracted—but the legal permissiveness, the habit, and the myth linger on.

North American pluralism possesses a second characteristic, however, of perhaps even greater significance: *multiplicity of affiliations,* or, as Samuel, Kornhauser and others would have it, "*cross-cutting solidarities.*"[7] A North American—a middle-class North American,

[6] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York, 1966), 485.
[7] William Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society* (New York, 1959), 78-83.

let us say—receives imperatives from, and senses allegiances to, a great diversity of collectivities. These may include his local community, his regional community, and his national community; his church; his old school; his occupational group (perhaps in both local and national aspects); his political party (*idem*); possibly his fraternal order (although the decline of these once-flourishing associations seems irreversible); possibly his ethnic association (*idem*); the military (through a reserve unit); social clubs and public-service organizations; and so on. Such multiple affiliations undoubtedly place heavy demands on the intellect and sympathies, but the compensation is correspondingly great, for "*so long as no association claims or receives hegemony over many aspects of its members' lives, its power over the individual will be limited*" (italics added).[8]

Although the events of the 1960s leave little room for complacency about the efficacy of the "unseen hand," the presumed ability of the system to stabilize itself *automatically,* it is nevertheless true that the unique style of American politics continues to owe much to the two characteristics just discussed. In industrial, or post-industrial, society, the moil of competing groups, the exquisite web of personal allegiances, have long since replaced the conformism and occasional tyranny of the village community; except on its margins—in the central-city ghettos or the more traditional areas of the old Confederacy—society is not and cannot be cleaved into great monoliths to be captured by all-or-nothing political movements. Rather, even as James Madison foresaw, "extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens. . . ."[9] There is little hindrance to the use of existing groups or the formation of new ones for the voicing of grievances, claims, demands for redress. So long as the system per se is regarded as legitimate and capable, however, the task of transmuting this input into output—legislation, policy, dispensation—is left to agencies specialized for the purpose: parties, legislatures, executives, bureaucracies. And because the defeat of a group's objectives at the hands of the system is seen neither as permanent nor as a rebuff to a total or inclusive way of life, it can be accepted, for the time being, with something like a good grace.

The Spanish American system whose symptoms of dissolution have here been labeled "fragmentation" is less well understood, and

[8] *Ibid.*, 81.
[9] "Tenth Federalist," *The Federalist* (New York, 1941), 56.

definitions must be approached more circuitously. To begin with, there are *at the moment* certain natural limits to fragmentation within Spanish America. It occurs only in simultaneous fulfillment of two general sets of conditions within a given national system (or at the point where two developmental scales intersect): first, a sufficient elaborateness of *urban* socio-economic structure to permit the emergence of a variety of modernizing, politically aggressive functional groups; and second, a commitment to representative political institutions—a conventional party system and legislature—which are, however, incapable either of processing and satisfying the groups' manifold political demands, or of barring the groups' direct access to the formal agencies of government. Provisionally, therefore, two distinct clusters of national systems fall outside the scope of the discussion, although it is perfectly conceivable that very soon the fragmentation syndrome may well make its appearance in either. In the first, comprising Paraguay and the Caribbean and Central American nations, the modernizing zone of society remains minute in size and influence. In the second, in which Chile, Uruguay, and Costa Rica hold somewhat precarious membership, the organized functional groups, although relatively well developed and politically exigent, must nevertheless interact with durable and viable structures of "interest aggregation," the party system and legislative bodies. The Cuban and Mexican systems are special cases. Both have incorporated functional structures; in both, however, the hegemony of a revolutionary elite remains without effective challenge; and few evidences of the type of dysfunction under discussion here are visible. It is thus in the sizeable remainder—Argentina, the Bolivarian republics, perhaps Guatemala—that the preconditions of fragmentation are most abundant.

It is a commonplace that the extent of change varies enormously within Spanish America. Whether one conceives of a given national system as a continuum, tending *in toto,* though unevenly in its parts, toward modern industrial society, or rather as discontinuous subsystems ("Urbia" and "Agraria"), it is clear that the greatest transformations have taken place in the great urban agglomerations, particularly those where industry has encroached upon older commercial, extractive, and bureaucratic interests. Here older modes of behavior have been diluted, older forms of face-to-face relationships modified, older allegiances to clan, commune, and *patrón* loosened. These primary relationships and traditional imperatives are supplanted by, or more commonly encysted within, the larger, more im-

personal occupational structures and business concerns of the city. The *patria chica* syndrome, the *cofradía,* the artisan *taller,* the café circle, the informal monopoly of wholesalers and retailers, the intricate obligations of *amistad, relaciones,* and *compadrazgo,* still remain, though increasingly in simulacrum. Now, however, they subsist within or alongside the labor syndicate, the managerial cadre, the college of professionals, the association of merchants, the officer corps, the government bureau, the integrated factory.

In these modernizing zones the style of politics has altered. In the nineteenth century—which, taken as a cultural epoch, did not end in 1900—the political process was often enough little more than the equation derivable from the forces that could be commanded at a given moment by particularistic solidarities. It turned upon dynastic feuding among the great political clans and their retinues; *indiadas* or the threat of *indiadas*; city-state versus city-state; military factions pledged, for the moment, to General X as against those of General Y; clerical versus anticlerical sects; and the like. It must be emphasized that most of these solidarities lacked organizational forms for the sustained pursuit of political ends. The political capacity of which they disposed was, at best, latent, negative, inchoate, and intermittent. To operationalize that capacity, and to lend it some color or legitimacy, the more or less fortuitous appearance of a caudillo or *movimiento* was useful, if not indispensable. In the last one to three generations, however, demographic shifts and the centralization of administration, communications, and economic enterprise have caused the Spanish American city to regain its central role as the arbiter of political destinies. It is the natural home of larger, more complex secondary groups, able to exert their will on the political process through the modern devices of strategic work stoppages, bloc voting, public-relations campaigns, direct access through institutionalized channels to the councils of power, or, in the case of the military, monopolization of the use of force.

"Modern" as applied to the emergent functional interest groups is of course a relative term, for they are conjunctures of very disparate elements. Many of the *occupations* pursued within them have been "called into existence" by the requirements of a complex industrial age, and are highly modern in their narrow specialization and the formidable technical expertise they demand. This is as true of the clergyman trained as sociologist or social worker or the *militar de laboratorio,* as of the management consultant or automation expert. Still, on the principle of cumulativeness, as suggested above, the

groups comprise intricate webs of personalistic, non-instrumental relationships. Moreover, the institutional matrix—the juridical principles involved, the ascription of individual and corporate status and roles, the devices of corporate self-government, the legitimation of political intervention in the larger system and frequently the mechanisms through which such intervention is exercised—is one which pertains to Spanish America's preindustrial urban past. For all of the anomalies involved, however, and for all the great disparities among functional interest groups with respect to the solidarity and political leverage they in actuality possess, it must be pointed out that *as a type* they dispose of certain inherent characteristics—permanence in time, internal systems of discipline and authority, legal status and a claim to political legitimacy, direct access to the decision-making levels of government—which make them, vis-à-vis the haphazard political sects of the past as well as the faltering party systems of the present, extremely effective vehicles for the achievement of their own ends.

For while it is perfectly comprehensible that newly-emergent functional groups should seek a variety of ends on a more or less regular basis, the infrequency of their recourse to the traditional political institutions in doing so is worth remarking. In the extreme case, for which Argentina before 1966 provides the *locus classicus,* significant negotiations develop in personal confrontations between the leadership cadres of the groups, and the chief executive and/or his subordinates within the appropriate bureaucratic structures depending from his cabinet; the institutionalized apparatus of legislative chamber and party caucus is partially or wholly circumvented. One may safely follow Gabriel Almond, *et al.*,[10] in suggesting that this pattern of political interaction is highly deleterious to nations committed verbally to rapid development within the framework of conventional democratic institutions. If an organized group's demands on government are not subjected to the pulling and hauling, the deals and compromises of the legislative process, they then remain stark, unmodified, uncompromising. Should they be met, orderliness and continuity in overall developmental planning may have to be sacrificed—if not immediately, then as soon as competing groups have had the opportunity to make known *their* wants. On the other hand, the group that is rebuffed—because its demands are too outrageous or too inchoate to be processed or simply because of a weak tactical

[10] "A Functional Approach to Comparative Politics," in G. A. Almond and J. Coleman (eds.), *The Politics of the Developing Areas* (Princeton, 1960), 38-45.

position—can easily persuade itself that it has been denied elemental social justice. Its *total* way of life, affective and rational elements both, has been offended; and the repercussions in public life may be severe. At the very least, neither the administration which has been pressured into concessions behind closed doors nor the regular party politicians, shown once again to be marginal to the serious business of politics, are likely to gain in public stature. At the worst, should a general stalemate ensue between administration and the key functional groups, the temptation to cut the Gordian Knot may well prove irresistible to a self-proclaimed "restorer of the people's liberties" or whatnot who commonly appears nowadays as the chairman of a military junta.

At this stage of the inquiry, an elaborate nomenclature is of little value; too much remains to be tested and verified. For purposes of rough classification, the most useful criteria are the simple, incisive ones of *solidarity* and *power*.[11] With them, it is possible to focus one's attention on the relatively small cluster of familiar *intereses* central to each national system. This is, after all, a common-sense approach for a cultural area in which, despite bloomin' buzzin' appearances, secondary-group formation is by no means as extensive as in a matured industrial system. It is apparent, for example, that monopolies and oligopolies limit the number of economic interests seeking representation; that economic "underdevelopment" itself poses rather strict limits to the variety and elaborateness of occupational structure (where no electronic industry exists, one does not find an Association of Electronic Manufacturers or a Syndicate of Electronic Engineers); that the Roman Catholic Church, although not homogeneous within itself, has yet to see its religious monopoly seriously challenged by other organized sects; that many potential groups of lower status and/or rural origin have until now been effectively prevented from acquiring the sinews of organization.

Although it has been used for convenience in this discussion, the term "interest group" is inappropriate for serious analysis. Even within the North American context, the concept has lost much of its validity. For Spanish America its connotation of "rationality" and "instrumentality" does not in the least accord with the totality of

[11] Robert Nisbet, *Community and Power* (New York, 1962). These concepts must be cast in Weberian, probabilistic, terms. Thus *power* is "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests," and *solidarity* is "the probability that the imperatives mobilizable through the constitution of the corporate group will prevail upon members, as against imperatives received from outside."

the affective as well as the cognitive involvement of the *latino*—or at least of the *latino* well placed enough to be considered, and to consider himself, part of the system. A more subtle problem is posed by the term "corporate group," which has also been applied of late. Because it calls up echoes of the antidemocratic experiments of the 1920s and 1930s, it is capable of provoking ideological resistance among those fearful of surrendering any part of their faith in the liberal-democratic ethos of Spanish America. Objections on analytical grounds, however, would seem to be better founded. For while one may indeed discern the existence in embryo of corporative regimes in several of the systems of the region (*e.g.*, Argentina, Ecuador), the fact remains that no such corporative regime (if one excepts Mexico) has as yet been formally founded. In the absence of a comprehensive corporative statute, one which would, presumably, provide the means of compulsion to membership and a rough equality of functional representation in social and economic councils or in a corporative chamber, the present configuration possesses none of the neat symmetry that would permit the indiscriminate application of the term "corporate" to its components; far from it. If "corporate" is to be used, after all, the touchstone must be the probability that corporate discipline[12] can be exerted in ordinary and extraordinary situations, and this probability varies greatly from one functional structure to the next. As will be suggested later, the probability also appears to vary according to broad occupational categories ("heterocephalous" and "autocephalous"), and according to class/status determinants. With all this, "corporate group" as a generalized label is of doubtful utility.

"Institutionalized functional group" is perhaps for the moment as unexceptionable a term as any. Despite its infelicity, the adjective "institutionalized" is desirable on several counts. Whereas a "functional group," in the bald meaning of the term, is a group organized functionally for the attainment of ends particular to itself—like the birth-control leagues or Communist Parties of Spanish America—the great *intereses* are as a matter of course accepted as socially legitimate. They are, in fact, institutions in that, to follow Germani, their ostensible ends "constitute the basis of the explicit recognition on the part of society at large" (just as their "latent functions may be related to forms of recognition that are also latent").[13] But aside from

[12] Max Weber, "The Concept of Corporate Group and its Types," *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York, 1947), 145-152.

[13] Gino Germani, *Política y sociedad en una época de transición de la sociedad tradicional a la sociedad de masas* (Buenos Aires, 1965), 31-32.

recognition by society at large, the *sine qua non* of social legitimacy in contemporary Spanish America is juridical recognition by, and nominal or decisive administrative subordination to, the State. This direct one-to-one political relationship—prior to and distinct from the sense in which *any* secondary body capable of making claims on the State is inherently political—serves *ab initio* to blur and confuse the difference between *social* and *political* function, between "society" and "polity."

The *intereses* are institutionalized in another important sense. They endure over time and come to comprise (again to follow Germani) conjunctures of "norms, values, cognitive elements, which tend to form a relatively unified *system,* by virtue of which the 'members' of the institution have defined for them their relationships and reciprocal expections."[14] In the absence of multiple horizontal relationships, as in the pluralistic configuration described above, such a system, depending on its antiquity and elaborateness, and also its efficacy as a source of patronage and/or material and psychological satisfactions, tends toward *inclusiveness,* toward discreteness and impermeability by other systems. In this event individuals are largely unbeset by competing allegiancies or cross-cutting solidarities; they are, rather, afforded a dominant or unique constellation of imperatives for belief and behavior, a dominant or unique reference group of significant personal contacts. A political society characterized by a congeries of such inclusive groups reproduces Ortega y Gasset's classic image of invertebrate Spain: "a series of water-tight compartments (*gremios herméticamente cerrados*)," none of which feels "the least curiosity toward events in the domain of the others."[15]

The sources of group solidarity and political efficacy, and of the sharp differentiations among these structures as well, can be examined under three mutually reinforcing aspects. The institutionalized functional groups may, first, be conceived as pyramidal structures of patronage and clientage, the apices of which extend within the formal precincts of government, particularly the ministries and dependencies of the executive branch. This area in which bureaucratic functionaries and the leaders of functional groups interact (or to put it another way, in which society and polity overlap and fuse) is of crucial importance—although, unfortunately, journalists and researchers are rarely welcome guests there. The *intereses* are, almost without exception, nonautonomous. Not only do they stand adminis-

[14] *Ibid.*
[15] *Invertebrate Spain* (New York, 1937), 44.

tratively and juridically at the pleasure of the State; in practical matters, too, they require constant executive dispensation relating to appropriations, achievement and retention of monopolies, tariffs, social and tax policy, and so on. Save in Mexico and Cuba, however, where revolutionary *political* elites and *functional* elites have interpenetrated, and a decisive subordination of the policies of the *intereses* to those of the State has taken place, the relationship is far from authoritarian. On the contrary, in the transitional societies in which no such revolutionary *Gleichschaltung* (to use the Hitlerian term in a strict technical sense) has occurred, a capable functional group leadership remains free to deploy its considerable influence in an environment of subtle interaction and maneuver, pressure and counter-pressure. Thus the mixed agencies through which the formal superordination of the State is expressed—the chambers of commerce and industry supervised by the Ministry of Economy; the mineral, coffee, sugar, cotton, meat, grain "boards" under the same; professional licensing bodies linked to the universities which in turn retain a precarious "autonomy"—except for finances—under the Ministry of Education; the administrative boards of *entes autónomos;* arbitration commissions under the Ministry of Labor; military cadres serving in the Ministry of War—serve as channels through which demands and claims ("input") flow in one direction, and commands, dispensations, patronage ("output") in the other. The struggle for control of these vital stopcocks of patronage, and for the relative advantage of one over another, is never-ending.

Although the pattern described so far is by no means unique to Spanish America, several of its elements pertain specifically to the transitional societies of the area. First, it is not yet common for institutionalized functional groups to seek political ends through specialized agencies or lobbies. While individuals of exceptional gifts as "contact men" are detailed to perform much of this work, in general the incidence of *personalismo,* face-to-face confrontations between public officials and functional elite members, appears to continue high. More important still, although such negotiations outside the framework of open electoral politics are facilitated by the decrepitude of the conventional agencies and processes, it has nevertheless grown increasingly difficult to reach lasting accommodations, even within the context of covert arrangements. As the sheer number of interests to be satisfied has increased, the horizontal solidarities and tactical alliances within a small, relatively homogeneous oligarchy which once made possible an effective sub rosa manipulation of affairs

have become correspondingly more tenuous. Although their hegemony has been by no means dissipated, the great families no longer enjoy an *automatically accorded* political prestige. Simultaneously, as new functional structures have proliferated, new men, some of them of rather more obscure background, have emerged as candidates to the new functional elites. Although they may aspire to—or, indeed, have been born to—the trappings, insignia, and way of life of the traditional oligarchs, they are not free to base their public eminence on simple class/status (*i.e.*, largely ascriptive) determinants. Their stature, rather, derives in great measure directly from their day-to-day performance as *patrones* of their respective functional groupings. Therefore, the new functional elites, taken as a whole, comprise little more than an ill-defined social stratum, one possessed of fewer internal linkages and much less internal cohesion than the traditional elite whose status derived from the simpler and more nearly complementary triad of landholding, military, and ecclesiastical interests.

A second approach lies through the expectations and other attributes of the inclusive group environment. Except in extreme cases, such as that of the military, this environment is not necessarily continuous with that of the latino's rich primary solidarities, his family and intimates; it does, however, occupy much of the remainder of his social universe. In it he finds a broad range of psychological gratifications. For some—the young priest, or officer, or trade-union organizer—the deepest satisfaction lies in the sharing of an ascetic ideal. For most, it affords security: shared values, reasonably certain expectations concerning career chances, possibilities for marital alliances, criteria for identifying one's self in the social order (including the *carnets* and other documents and impedimenta demanded by officialdom), the sense—when justified—that the group looks after its own.

The material benefits available through the group qua group are, of course, a major factor for cohesion. These commonly include beneficial tax or wage legislation; the multiple *cajas,* pension and social security schemes; monopolies or quasi-monopolies (as, *e.g.*, when the number of tobacconists, pharmacies, notaries, etc., within a given district is stipulated by public authorities); low-cost housing; social and athletic clubs, dispensaries, resorts and sanatoria available to members only; the discounts on public transportation and cultural events enjoyed by students; and so on.

Group solidarity is manifested through other devices as well. Some groups—students, performing artists, and railwaymen and other skilled workers—utilize an elaborate argot. There are differen-

tial modes of dress: the several military, police, and civil service uniforms, the apprentice's smock, the workingman's blue coveralls, etc. Informal immunities, such as the *universitario*'s latitude in "manifesting" and his recourse to the university as sanctuary, or the apparent immunity of the *militar* from customs regulations (or, indeed, the criminal law), have far-reaching implications for political life. Even more significant, however, are the partly or wholly autonomous systems of internal jurisdiction: in the Church, in the military, in some permanent bureaucracies, in stock exchanges and *cámaras,* in commercial and labor tribunals, in the university.

In the older and more traditional functional groups, the imperatives and expectations particular to the group are so pervasive, so hallowed by time, so easily and unreflectively internalized that the result is a markedly stereotyped personal style. The ample endowment of attitudes, values, patterns of behavior, which the individual receives on entering or being co-opted into the *ramo* or *gremio,* is naturally reinforced by the expectation of others that he will act in predictable ways deducible from his group affiliation. The army officer who has internalized the values of authority, formal hierarchy, and patriotism and his corporate role as guardian of the (written or unwritten) constitution or the professor who has internalized the very different values of skepticism, intellectual hierarchy, and the universality of knowledge and *his* corporate role as monitor of the public morality and national socio-economic evolution—these are "stock" figures, partially because they have fully absorbed the imperatives to belief and action of their own functional groups, and partially because colleagues and others *expect* them to be stock figures and so interact with them in ways conducive to eliciting stock responses. The North American observer, culturally conditioned to "open-mindedness" toward the infinity of human possibilities, is disturbed to find himself surrounded, in a Spanish American milieu, by highly disparate, sharply modeled, and reasonably predictable *types.* It is, however, an equally crude folk-wisdom that permits the latino to conduct his social affairs—and regularly to deduce on a one-to-one basis the political allegiance of individuals from their group affiliation—by departing from ascriptive assumptions.

A third route of approach lies through the controlling concepts of the traditional legal culture. Although much research and elucidation remain to be done in this area, it is nonetheless clear that juridical precepts are intimately bound up in functional group solidarity and are instrumental in furthering differentiation among such groups; they

do so by exaggerating the one-to-one relationship between group and State, and by diluting the Liberal requirement for juridical equality of groups before the law. On the part of the State, the legal regime is one intensely hostile to the *autonomous* existence of intermediary bodies. Its origins lie deep in the Roman Law, in the Roman "concession" theory, of which it has been said, "groups existed only in the legal contemplation of the sovereign."[16] In this tradition, the State does not take cognizance of a group; it *creates* the group by endowing it with juridical personality. Therefore, in systems like those of Spanish America, in which the State's recognition and patronage are all-important for privilege, places, and institutional legitimacy, the unrecognized group drifts in an uncomfortable, harassed limbo. This hostility is manifested in similar fashion through the procedures of administrative centralism, an administrative centralism whose functionaries at all levels can only view the enthusiasms and irregularities of voluntary ad hoc groups as inimical to orderly government and threatening to the status and competences of bureaucrats.[17]

But if the State's dominance over inferior groups is incontestable, there exists nevertheless in the general legal culture a countervailing rationale, one which poses formidable obstacles to the arbitrariness and despoliations of government, and thus inhibits the smooth, efficient, and potentially authoritarian, articulation of functional groups to the policies of the State—the rationale of the *interés creado.* This diffuse concept has behind it in the Hispano-Roman legal tradition antecedents of weight and venerability equal to those of the concession theory, and stands in perpetual tension with the latter.[18]

[16] Nisbet, *Community and Power,* 113. On this question I have followed: Rudolph Sohm, *The Institutes: A Textbook of the History and System of Roman Private Law* (Oxford, 1907), 135-150, 186-203; Otto von Gierke, "The Idea of Corporation," in T. Parsons *et al.* (eds.), *Theories of Society* (2 vols., New York, 1961), I, 611-626; Luis Recaséns Siches, *Vida humana, sociedad y derecho: fundamentación de la filosofía del derecho* (3rd ed., México, 1952), 258-277.

[17] The evolution of the Hispanic law of association may be traced in: *Novísima Recopilación,* Libro XII, Título XII, Leyes 1, 2, 3, 10, 12, 13; VIII, XXIII, 1. Printed in Marcelo Martínez Alcubilla (comp.), *Códigos antiguos de España: colección completa de todos los códigos de España desde el Fuero Juzgo hasta la Novísima Recopilación* (2 vols., Madrid, 1885-1886). In America, the restrictions placed upon association were, predictably, even harsher than those obtaining in Spain. Cf. Libro I, Título IV, Ley 25, of the Leyes de Indias. Also: John Phelan, "Authority and Flexibility in the Spanish Imperial Bureaucracy," *Administrative Science Quarterly,* V (1960), 47-65.

[18] On *uso, costumbre,* and *fuero,* see Primera Partida, Título IV, Leyes 1-8, as reprinted in Martínez Alcubilla, *Códigos antiguos,* or elsewhere. Corresponding to the restricted right of association in America, the authority accorded there to *uso, costumbre,* and *fuero,* was less than in Spain. Cf. Libro II, Título II, Ley 21, of the Leyes de Indias.

Shielded by it, functional groups from which sizeable numbers of persons—or, for that matter, small numbers of eminent persons—derive their livelihood, which have over time accreted prerogatives and immunities, hold themselves justified in levying particularistic claims of equity upon superior government. As suggested earlier, the assertion of these particularistic claims against the programs and policies of regimes committed to rapid modernization renders public argumentation of the issues tortuous, and conflict, inchoate. The possibility of reducing disputes to operational terms is lessened; the possibility of a total confrontation is increased.

The polarity of these opposing concepts is most often made manifest in the acrimonious negotiations over the concession or revision of the *estatuto básico* or *ley orgánica.* It is a struggle that generates much affect, and it is notable that this affect is thence often transferred to the objective symbol of corporate legitimacy, the *ley* or *estatuto* itself. This phenomenon is undoubtedly relative to class and status, for it may be assumed that the infrequent high-status group endowed with a comprehensive *ley orgánica*—a stockmen's association or a *cámara* of manufacturers—does not need to view its dispositions with the same jealousy as a newly-formed secondary-teachers' association, industrial union, or peasant league. For such as the latter, however, the document's detailed statement of rights, duties, immunities, internal governance and jurisdiction, financial liabilities, and formal relationship to administrative organs are specific points to be cherished most vigilantly; the regime may unilaterally alter or revoke them only with the greatest difficulty and in the face of the most determined resistance. For the historian, the sense of familiarity is strong, for the *ley* or *estatuto,* taken together with the heterogeny of custom-derived informal immunities and prerogatives, constitutes a special and differential juridical status very strongly reminiscent of the corporate *fuero* of the *ancien régime.*

The institutionalized functional groups under discussion are largely co-extensive with the so-called middle sectors and, of course, the new functional elites. The point is well illustrated by a sardonic passage on Chile from the pen of Oswaldo Sunkel:[19]

> The new middle class and organized workers who lacked the ability of ruling groups to circumvent the law, to avoid taxes, to isolate themselves in exclusive circles, to behave in short, as if they enjoyed extraterritorial rights in their own country, have also been creating an elaborate structure of legal privileges, the extent of which has depended on the power of their respective political pressure groups. The forty or fifty different social security systems,

[19] "Change and Frustration in Chile," in Véliz, *Obstacles,* 131-132.

special pay clauses and benefits, tax exemptions, duty-free territories and ports, etc., are clear proof of this activity.

The extremities of the social hierarchy are little involved in these phenomena, for obvious reasons. In the submerged portion of the population, both organization and legal and political recognition—the minimum requisites of a multi-faceted group existence—face formidable obstacles. Some are inherent in social determinants: isolation and illiteracy; attachment to the traditional primary solidarities of ethnic group, clan, commune, patria chica, *patrón*-client relationships; initial disorientation in the new urban environment; the high economic vulnerability and occupational mobility of the unskilled. Others are patently political—the resolute resistance of interested parties to the formation of cooperatives, peasant leagues, industrial unions. In this, there is little that is uniquely Spanish American.[20]

At the other end of the social spectrum, among the favored of fortune, the traditional elites, *formal* organization for the promotion and defense of status and interest has been unnecessary, if not unthinkable. In the less complex world of the nineteenth century, and in the minds of those who find it altogether too attractive an age to abandon, traditional elites straddled landowning, military, and ecclesiastical interests, and interacted more or less amicably with foreign promoters of extractive and commercial development. Communications flowed freely through informal channels: dynastic marriages and alliances, social clubs, ad hoc caucuses, *relaciones*. Status was highly ascriptive; authority and the deference due it were highly internalized. While intestine conflict over the fruits of power was endemic, resistance against the infrequent external threat to the serenity of status could easily enough be mobilized without recourse to the devices of corporate discipline. Indeed, except in the Church, little such corporate discipline existed, in either the late-medieval or the modern sense.

For reasons that were suggested earlier, particularly the growing emphasis on performance ("achievement") rather than ascription, today's functional elites find it much more difficult to insulate themselves as social entities from their respective constituencies. One is, in fact, struck by the ragged interpenetration, the constant seepage in both directions, between functional elites and the levels of the

[20] Charles Anderson has hypothesized a typical process whereby new political groups, including those of low status, are co-opted into the system and admitted to the contention for power. "Toward a Theory of Latin American Politics," Graduate Center for Latin American Studies, Vanderbilt University, Occasional Paper No. 2, 1964.

upper middle sectors immediately below them. To explore this phenomenon, a discrimination made earlier must be restated in a slightly different way. That is, the institutionalized functional group conceived as a structure of corporate solidarity tending toward inclusiveness pertains preeminently, under this aspect, to the lower and middle levels of the middle sectors—to unionized skilled labor, organized white-collar workers, school teachers, and so on. Higher in the social hierarchy, however, the characteristic of the group as an elaborate web or discrete system of patronage and clientage, personal relations and obligations, comes to predominate. At these levels—very simply, as an individual's contacts grow more influential—the dependence upon personal social agility and manipulative skills becomes greater. The aspirant comes, in fine, to adopt much of the operational style of the members of the functional elites. It is worth remarking, for example, that the "free" professions, particularly law and medicine, that have traditionally served as springboards to political careers and/or bureaucratic sinecures, possess relatively fewer corporate accouterments than lower-status groups whose members have little pretension to direct access to the mighty. Even at that, however, the North American observer—bemused, perhaps, by what seems to him the total anarchy of the medical profession—should not exaggerate the freedom of the "free" professions. They too have become intimately dependent on government, both for employment and for the retention of the partial or complete corporate monopolies operated through the degree-granting and licensing agencies of the national universities.

The social continuum that spans functional elites and upper middle sectors is related to the often-noted community of values that also unites them. Both undoubtedly derive in some large measure from the phenomenon of downward social mobility. It is suggestive to ponder the fate of generations of cadet branches of the great families, cadets evicted by the glacial pace of economic growth, by mismanagement, profligacy, and the destructive gyrations of the world economy from a truly upper-status way of life. While their numbers have not been large in absolute terms, they have, of course, long adorned—and over populated—the government service, diplomacy, the free professions, and of late communications and the more respectable of the technical specialties. To these professions and occupations they have brought their ancestral pretensions and values and the *câchet* conferred by name, manners, education, and personal contacts. They have thus created a style, an environment of attitudes and cues for

behavior, to be emulated by their newly arrived upwardly mobile colleagues.

In the lower and middle reaches of the middle sectors, on the other hand, the enterprise of individuals is, by and large, less central to the functioning of the newly emergent secondary groups than the mechanisms for the achievement and maintenance of corporate solidarity. As it is apparent, however, that the extent and effectiveness of such organization vary greatly from one group to the next, it is useful here to apply still another rough discrimination. This is the Weberian continuum which stretches between the poles of "autocephalous" (self-organized and managing) and "heterocephalous" (organized and managed by others) occupations.[21] The more heterocephalous occupations—the military, the clergy, blue- and white-collar and technical specialties within large business concerns, primary and secondary teaching, bureaucratic trades—operate within relatively rigid frameworks of authority, and are thus easily susceptible to formal organization and further development in the direction of inclusiveness. In the more autocephalous occupations—the professions; the arts; independent accountants, draftsmen, and the like; independent small and medium businessmen in merchandising, manufacturing, artisanry, and the service trades—effective organization is less feasible. The extent of the sense of community among individuals pursuing, on an individual basis, the same craft, is problematical; the possibility that this can be translated into solidarity and power—through, for example, monopolistic agreements or through syndical trade associations articulated to government—is even more so. Nevertheless, the extreme limiting case—the mere statistical agglomeration of persons all earning a livelihood in the same way—is rare, and likely to grow rarer in middle-sector Spanish America.

Certain long-cherished illusions about the political future of the Spanish American middle sectors are at last, it seems, being allowed to expire quietly. Commentators—North Americans in particular—departing from a priori and/or culturally-derived premises concerning the "natural" behavior of matured middle classes, have been given to foreseeing the emergence from the bosom of the middle sectors of broad-based, "aggregative,"—and presumably reformist or progressive—political movements. In the past quarter of a century or so, moreover, the measurable numerical expansion of the middle sectors, together with the precisely observed elaboration of levels and gradations of socio-economic status within them, appeared to lend weight

[21] Weber, "Concept," 250-254.

to these prognostications. To date, however, these data have been of greater service to the market analysts of U.S. firms purveying consumer commodities than to the political analysts, for these *levels* and *gradations* have not been, with any notable rapidity, transmuted into horizontal *solidarities* possessing the potential for mass political action in the conventional manner.

The efficacy of institutionalized functional groups as social solidarities and as vehicles for the satisfaction of political claims is a major factor in explaining this rather puzzling phenomenon. For middle-sector latinos integrated into the system, the group solidarity into which they have been born or migrated serves multiple ends: material and psychological satisfactions, a reference group of personal relations, a single fount of patronage, a single source of authority, a single focus of allegiance. Barring a situation of general societal dissolution and accelerated change—and the resources of the system for barring such a situation are massive—caudillos, *movimientos,* and the discredited actors and agents of the formal game of politics have little claim on their attention; the means to the attainment of political ends are closer at hand. In marked contrast to the pervasiveness of *vertical* patterns, structures of *horizontal* consensus and solidarity below the level of government itself remain at best exiguous. The traditional agencies—the alliance of extended high-status families, on occasion ad hoc councils of ecclesiastical authorities or the parish church organization—which once, in an unstructured and intermittent manner, exercised this function, have declined in authority and efficacy; the shortcomings of the traditional political parties are too well known to require comment. Only to a slight degree, and very unevenly throughout Spanish America, have they been supplemented or supplanted by modernized parties or, informally, by social clubs, voluntary associations, and other vehicles of cross-cutting solidarity.[22]

The historian is by temperament unable to let the matter rest in the immediate present—or in the hands of the present-minded. The conclusion seems inescapable that, taken as a whole, the congeries of institutionalized functional groups, the mutual isolation and/or hostility that characterizes their extra-mural relations, and the peculiar modalities of their articulation to the political apparatus of the State bear more than a superficial resemblance to the corporate

[22] The most extensive empirical demonstration of this point may be found in the comparisons established between Mexico and Britain, the U.S., Germany, and Italy, in Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba (eds.), *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton, 1963). See especially pp. 194, 263, 273-278, 301-302, 319.

system of the *ancien régime.* It seems too that, as there are very few direct institutional continuities discernible, the configuration described here represents in some sense a *recrudescence,* with many alterations of varying magnitude, of a socio-political system which, it has usually been assumed, passed into oblivion with the disintegration of Spain's American empire. To make such a proposal is, unhappily, to raise conceptual problems of daunting complexity to which, in the present state of research, there can be nothing like definitive answers, only tentative organizing hypotheses. The discussion can logically be divided into two parts. The first involves a consideration of the corporate structure of the Hispanic and Hispanic American *ancien régime*; the second, an attempt to conceptualize the virtual disappearance in the nineteenth century and the reappearance, *mutatis mutandis,* in the twentieth of pre-Independence socio-political and juridical concepts and organizational forms. This temporal division, it should be noted, corresponds to the two different senses in which, in strict logic, the term and concept "traditional" as applied to Spanish America must be understood.

It is convenient, if not quite conventional among North Americans, to consider the corporate structure of Spain and her American empire as a national variant on the themes pursued in the older European historiography of the *corps intermédiaries,* a historiography which sought to establish the evolving relationships in the states of early modern Europe between sovereignty and the intermediary bodies which separated the sovereign and the individual.[23] Within this conceptual context, it is possible to make out a particular period in time in which the Hispanic state was overtaken by a peculiar sort of political paralysis, and from this to hypothesize that the *ancien régime* of both Spain and Hispanic America rested upon an equilibrium of contradictory and opposing forces, the precipitate of the fateful arrest of socio-political evolution that occurred in the Spanish lands in the latter sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. For in these lands the relationship between sovereignty and *corps intermédiaires* was in effect frozen in mid-passage from the forms of late-

[23] E. Lousse, "État de la question," *La société d'ancien régime: organisations et réprésentations corporatives* (Louvain, 1943), 16-17. After reviewing the somewhat sparse historiography on Spain, Professor Lousse concludes that it is "un problème qui . . . reste aussi controversé que celui du parlement anglais." However, since 1943 numerous writers—especially Vicens Vives, Maravall, Hernández y Sánchez Barba, Beneyto, and Elliott—have added substantially to the record. Among some writers, it should be noted, the term *corps intermédiaires* is reserved exclusively for *parliamentary* bodies, e.g., the Cortes of Castile and Aragón. It is used here in a less legalistic, more sociological sense.

medieval Christendom to those of the burgeoning royal absolutism that elsewhere in Europe was to erect the institutional scaffolding of the modern Nation-State.

The achievement of Ferdinand and Isabel, and of their immediate successors of the House of Austria, rested in great part upon their ability to arrest and for a time to reverse the centrifugal tendencies in Spanish political society. Prior to their advent, although there was in theory no question about the locus of temporal authority, the Crown, in practice the feudal organization of Castile, was characterized by extreme decentralization: it consisted of little more than an unarticulated congeries of autonomous *señoríos, municipios,* privileged jurisdictions, guilds and functional corporations, and the like. In the reign of the Catholic Monarchs, however, and through most of the sixteenth century, the accretion of royal power, greatly facilitated by the work of an ever-ramifying bureaucracy, was inexorable. The Crown succeeded in turn in curbing the waywardness of the great noble houses, the military orders, the towns, and the headstrong prelates of the Church. This process of centralization required the enlistment, by coercion if necessary, of functional elites into the Crown's administrative structure, and the yoking, for better or worse, of the fortunes of the *corps intermédiaires* to those of the Crown (a relationship symbolized by Isabel's personal emblem, the Yoke and the Arrows). Individuals sought and found places as royal administrators; institutions like the Church, the military orders, and the Mesta became coordinate arms of Crown administration and served as indispensable sources of royal revenue. But significantly, loss of autonomy did not bring great alterations in the economic and social prerogatives of the elites, nor did it demand gross internal restructuring of the *corps intermédiaires* themselves.

But for the mounting bankruptcy of funds and spirit at home, and the unrelieved disasters abroad in the latter sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it is conceivable that the process toward a more or less harmoniously integrated national polity might well have been extended and consummated—Spain might, for example, have continued to follow a trajectory analogous to that of France. This, however, did not occur. In the seventeenth century the Crown's insatiable demands for revenue, coupled to rising doubts that Spain's far-flung commitments could save the Imperial mission from disaster, worked to effect an approximate stabilization between Crown and *corps intermédiaires.* As the Crown's capacity for leadership became more problematical, its expedients more threadbare, its con-

cessions of places and privileges, titles and monopolies, placed more nakedly on a financial basis, it and the *corps intermédiaires* approached a parity based on interdependence and exchange. The latter entities, *although they were never to regain their former de facto political autonomy,* evolved into tough structures of solidarity and privilege, concerned primarily, in the *desengaño* of the close of the Siglo de Oro, to preserve past gains.

Francisco Suárez, the most lucid and accessible of the constellation of brilliant jurisconsults who adorned Spanish philosophy during the Siglo de Oro, is the central theorist of Spain's arrested socio-political development.[24] In asserting this, unfortunately, one must be prepared to sail close to the winds of polemic, for in recent years Suárez has often been invoked in the sputtering debate over the doctrines of "popular sovereignty" in the Independence movements, as well as—more plausibly—by writers who, unpersuaded of his direct influence on eighteenth-century ideologues, nevertheless see in his writings a major source for the understanding of the value-structure of Colonial thought. These broad and disputed issues are not central here: what are relevant are the closely-reasoned and authoritative rationales he provided for *both* of the countervailing elements in the emerging stasis of Spanish statecraft.

Suárez was not a seminal thinker but preeminently a codifier and expositor. As such, he responded sensitively to the conflicting drives of the overlapping historical epochs of his lifetime. In his political corpus are gathered together the older themes of Thomism and Hispanic consuetudinary law and the newer philosophical justifications for the dynamic state-building autocracy of the sixteenth century. Not surprisingly, his attempted reconciliation of these very contradictory traditions is only partly successful. The tension, for example, between the older rationalism and the newer voluntarism remains unresolved. His theoretical State is a fictive person, in accord with Scholastic precedent; yet in important ways it is an entity distinct from and superior to its constituent members. Similarly, the magistrate is a functional member of the State, yet above it.[25]

[24] On Suárez, I have followed principally Labrousse, Mesnard, Rommen, Gierke, Sánchez Agesta, and Recaséns Siches. The thesis that follows, although its thrust is in a different direction, owes much to Richard Morse, "Toward a Theory of Spanish American Government," *Journal of the History of Ideas,* XV (1954), 71-93; and his "The Heritage of Latin America," in L. Hartz (ed.), *The Founding of New Societies* (New York, 1964), especially 151-159.

[25] On rationalism versus voluntarism in Suárez, see: Roger Labrousse, *Essai sur la philosophie politique de l'ancienne Espagne: politique de la Raison et politique de la Foi* (Paris, 1938), 27. On the State as fictive person, see F.

Nevertheless—and this is the crux of the argument—Suárez endowed his State with a remarkable stability, a stability achieved through the delicate balancing of opposing and ultimately antagonistic forces. On the part of the people, their privileges and institutions are shielded by the authority of custom, consuetudinary law. For the magistrate, on the other hand, power is irrevocably his unless and until he lapses into tyranny. But the definition of tyranny is narrow, and the means by which it may legitimately be resisted are closely circumscribed. In the important question of inferior groups (*societates imperfectae*), the power of the magistrate (*potestas jurisdictionis*) is indivisible; this power may be delegated to inferior groups, but it may not be shared with them—flatly, *minores civitates non habere potestatem ferendi proprias leges.*[26] Nevertheless, inferior groups may, with the magistrate's assent, govern themselves, and this assent need be nothing more than the tacit toleration of what has become custom. Custom is, indeed, the justification for the *interés creado,* for customary privileges have the force of law for groups (but not individuals) which have shown their utility in the furtherance of the common good. In order to abrogate such privilege, it is the magistrate's obligation to demonstrate, in written law, that the common good has not been served—a difficult proposition in logic.[27] Suárez' State is, it must be acknowledged, a system admirably designed, out of very disparate components and different traditions, for the preservation of the status quo.

An equilibrium similar to that in Spain was achieved in Spanish America. Upon a protean social organization, particularistic, potentially and dangerously centrifugal, more analogous to fifteenth- than to sixteenth-century Spain, was superimposed a heavily bureaucratized administrative regime, the viceregal system, that was, in sixteenth-century terms, the utmost in modernity. Given the newness of the American *intereses creados* and the lesser social eminence of their leaders, this was, perhaps, an easier task than in the Peninsula itself. Nevertheless, distributive justice and, more importantly, the economic exigencies demanded that the *beneméritos de Indias* be conceded, within the notoriously flexible framework of viceregal

Suárez, *De Legibus ac Deo Legislatore,* I, VII, 7; III, II, 4. On the Prince as functional member of the State, see *De Legibus . . .* , III, XXXV, 6, 8; and III, IV, 6; also the commentary in H. Rommen, *Die Staatslehre des Franz Suarez, SJ* (München-Gladbach, 1926), 104-105.

[26] *De Legibus . . .* , III, IX, 17. Cited by P. Mesnard, *El desarrollo de la filosofía política en el siglo XVI* (Río Piedras, P. R., 1956), 607.

[27] *De Legibus . . .* , VII, IV, 10; VII, II, 2-7; I, VII, 9-10. Cf. Gierke, *Natural Law and the Theory of Society, 1500-1800* (Boston, 1957), 272-274.

supervision, their economic and social prerogatives, which included, with time and the coming of the *hacienda,* a more extensive authority over more servile labor than had ever been available to any but the very mighty in Spain. From this uneasy compromise emerged *criollo* elites whose social and economic hegemony went largely unchallenged, but who lacked the autonomous political (and through most of the period, military) functions appropriate to a true feudal nobility.

In America, the development of a rigidly hierarchical structure of socio-legal castes diluted the sense, derived from the common late-medieval analogy of the human body, of organic functional organization.[28] Nevertheless, there in time emerged in the urban centers limited systems of cabildos, consulados, guilds, monopolies, and privileged jurisdictions, differentiated from one another by status, function, and law. Although many made use of direct channels of political communication with superior levels of administration, their capacity for autonomous action remained, under the wary vigilance of Crown officials, latent save in the event of acephaly or a general breakdown of administration. This conglomerate society was far from static: it suffered the vicissitudes of demographic change and alterations in economic patterns; the personal fortunes of *benemérito* families and newcomers underwent violent gyrations. Toward the end of the eighteenth century gross changes were impending, changes implied on the one side by the threats to privilege posed by the Bourbon reforms, and on the other by symptoms of increasing "bourgeoisification"—the substitution of economic for legal class/caste criteria in social mobility and the assignment of status—in urban environments.[29] Nevertheless, the social and political patterns and juridical legitimization of the corporate regime remained substantially intact to the eve of Independence.

The subsequent processes are a conundrum, though perhaps not a totally intractable one. There is, after all, nothing particularly novel in the suggestion that for Spanish America a special awareness of historical sequences is required. The perceptive observer whose senses have been assailed in the streets of Mexico, perhaps, or Guatemala, or Quito, or Lima, or many another urban center, by the physical juxtaposition, the *montage,* of the pre-Columbian millenia, the Colony, the turn-of-the-century *belle époque,* and today's glass- and chrome-

[28] Pointed out by L. N. McAlister, "Social Structure and Social Change in New Spain," *HAHR,* XLIII (1963), 353-357.

[29] *Ibid.,* 368-370. See also the important essay by Enrique Wedovoy which serves as the "Estudio preliminar" to Manuel de Lavardén, *Nuevo aspecto del comercio en el Río de la Plata* (Buenos Aires, 1955).

bedizened mass cult, is not likely to conceive of Spanish America's movement toward modern and industrial society as inexorable—much less rectilinear or unilinear. One comes, rather, to think in terms of multiple currents of cultural evolution moving at different rates to uneven rhythms, regressing as well as advancing, submerging as well as predominating, intersecting and interacting fortuitously within the framework of a given metropolis, a given institution, or indeed, a given personality structure.

The disintegration of the corporate system of the *ancien régime* can therefore be considered to represent a regression to simpler forms of socio-political organization, for it was not for decades replaced by structures of comparable complexity. When "the settlers . . . , foiled by the Crown in the sixteenth century, were at last triumphant in the nineteenth,"[30] Spanish American political society reverted to its primary components: the clan, the tribe, the hacienda, the village or town, the armed band. Much more than Liberal ideological imperatives, social and political determinants, acting at varying speeds and in varying combinations according to area, were overriding in the disappearance of the corporate system: the loss of royal political and juridical legitimacy; the concurrent dismantling of the structures of royal patronage and the expulsion of Spanish-controlled monopolies; the dislocations and atomization of the years of armed conflict; the ruination of the artisanate by cheap European goods; the deflection of economic activity away from the cities of the interior and their subsequent stagnation and rustication; rationalization, largely by foreigners, of the exploitation of natural resources; the proletarianization of the countryside. It seems no exaggeration to suggest that, toward the middle or end of the nineteenth century, many areas of Spanish America more closely approached the "two-class" model—still belabored by too many journalists and academics—than they had done since the first century of conquest, or have done ever since.

The political reconstitution of Spanish America which took place in these circumstances was bound to be somewhat illusory. The oligarchic republics which emerged in the better-favored areas owed much, in outward form, to imported constitutionalisms, parliamentary procedures, and up-to-date European legal codes; and so long as social organization remained rudimentary, suffrage remained effectively restricted, the hegemony of the newly-consolidated creole elites—the

[30] J. H. Elliott, "The Spanish Heritage," *Encounter*, XXV (September 1965), 40.

survivors and victors of the post-Independence anarchy—and their foreign associates remained uncontested, few anomalies were apparent. It was only with the turn of the present century that urban development—still in a mode much antecedent to that of the industrial city —permitted newly-vocal social groups and economic interests to begin to exert pressures for the expansion of the framework of politics. This phenomenon was most marked in the Plata region, where, significantly, not only sizeable "middle-class" parties but also *entes autónomos* and the quasi-corporative devices of the University Reform made their appearance during the first three decades of the century. Simultaneously, but in a less distinguishably urban context, the institutions of the Mexican Revolution began slowly to acquire their distinctive characteristics in the years following the promulgation of the Constitution of 1917. Since then—notably during the 1930s—the *vigencia* of nineteenth-century liberalism and of the constitutional procedures associated with it has continued to recede. At the same time, the socio-political elaboration described in the earlier pages of this essay has accelerated, and has created an intricate though informal system of political interaction parallel to the formal. The two have interacted, and have, after a fashion, produced results. As suggested earlier, however, their continued coexistence in the more "advanced" transitional societies has come to be the structural/functional dimension of paralysis.

To summarize: with the quickening pace of urbanization and the roughly parallel increase in the complexity of social and economic organization, there has predictably appeared a new congeries of urban secondary groups based on occupation or social function. Many of these have rapidly attained a sophisticated level of formal organization; insofar as they are effective in creating a framework for creature satisfactions, material and psychological, they take on the character of partially-closed social environments in which sizeable numbers of persons find a single fount of authority and a single focus of allegiance. They thus manifest a high degree of "inclusiveness," and correspondingly, of mutual isolation, characteristics of a more traditional, preindustrial order of secondary-group organization. Their mode of political behavior is profoundly conditioned by these social determinants; it is further characterized by a pattern of direct, one-to-one interaction with the permanent structures of government. This pattern intersects at points with, but is largely alternative to, the constitutionally-envisioned electoral and legislative process. The vertical nature of these relationships is in large part de-

termined by the controlling concepts of a traditional politico-legal culture, one which is throughout antagonistic to the autonomous existence of secondary groups, but which conduces to the institutionalization of dependent, *non*-autonomous secondary groups. Because the articulation and subordination of nonautonomous groups to government is far from complete, however—this too has deep roots in the evolution or non-evolution of the Hispanic State—the constant febrile effort and atmosphere of struggle necessary to keep the system in some sort of equilibrium conduces to in-group solidarity, exacerbates the differentiations among groups, and strengthens the configuration of multiple lines of vertical interaction converging within the apparatus of government. In sharp contrast, horizontal solidarities at levels other than that of government are few and feeble.

For all its patent injustices and ceaseless commotion, the system is not unworkable *so long as* 1) the number of interests to be satisfied is relatively small; and 2) the elites who command and manipulate them remain a) relatively unified and homogeneous, and b) relatively well-insulated from the importunities of their constituents. But it is precisely these conditions that are now disappearing, and thus the system is growing ever less viable. The number of groups, the extravagance of their expectations, and the stridency of their political demands have all augmented; at the same time, the slow eclipse of the old elites, the fragmentation of the new, and the continuing (and in some areas, growing) debility of the conventional party systems and legislatures make it increasingly difficult, in a nonauthoritarian context, to adjust those demands to the requirements of overall national development. Because of the prevalence of the vertical patterns of political flow, because parties and legislatures serve poorly or not at all as buffers and instruments of aggregation, the competition for preferment can be resolved only within the framework of government itself. The result very often has the appearance of a muted civil war. To be sure, the obvious authoritarian solution has not escaped the organizers of recent military coups, and such internal conflict has been suppressed by fiat. However, whether these military regimes possess the internal resources of leadership, programs, and cohesion to permit them to transcend the limitations of the system that has borne them to their present eminence is one of the more interesting of the questions raised here, the answers to which should begin to become clear in the next decade or so.