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Widening Exclusion and the Four-Tiered Structure of Exile

In polities of restricted political participation, exile was mostly a privilege reserved for a segment of the political elite ostracized by those in power. By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, however, a process of ‘massification’ of exile was manifest, as growing numbers of exiles with a middle- or lower-class background were affected by their purposeful or unwilling involvement in politics and the public arena. Widening exclusion led to a dynamic of dispersion of exiles, allowing them to increasingly focus the attention of an evolving international public sphere, in which former themes of internal politics found an echo on the basis of growing awareness and care about human-rights violations, political persecution, and exile. The transformation of the early three-tiered structure of exile into a four-tiered structure constitutes the core of this chapter.

Massive Exile: The Counterface of Political Inclusion

This process of massification of exile occurred in tandem with the changing nature of the political and social conflicts in the region. Latin American countries underwent processes of population growth, modernization, migration, and urbanization at different paces. Within each of them, the uneven pace of transformations was replicated, shaping strong internal asymmetries. Still, beyond differences, the entire region was a scenario of changes in the 20th century: from traditional into modern lifestyles, from rural into urban settings, and from Catholicism into religiously diversified and at times secular frameworks. From both socioeconomic and political perspectives, these societies were transformed under the aegis of population growth, immigration, and internal migration. With improved transportation and the introduction of new communication and other technologies, a sudden incorporation of peripheries into mainstream social and political trends was operated. As they became a part of nation-states, the broader strata were subject to the prospects and often unforeseeable perils of political participation.

In the context of politics tainted with authoritarianism or outrightly authoritarian, inclusion and political access have implied the likelihood of forceful exclusion. As inclusion was, in most cases, a product of sociopolitical pressures resulting in crises and instability, the possibility existed of excluding individuals and groups who were detrimental to the political control of those in power. In many cases, the prospects of routinized public order were perceived as contingent on the manageable exclusion of parties and sectors seen as the opposition. Rhetorically transformed into a threat to the national existence, these groups and individuals were often persecuted and expelled with the tacit support of manipulated public opinion. Arrests, torture, extrajudicial killings, and exile were widely used in order to deal with those portrayed as dangerous opponents. The move could be portrayed as instrumental to crisis resolution and as a contribution to public stability and orderly development. Brian Loveman's research has indicated that, institutionally, emergency legislation was widely applied to suppress social and political turmoil, providing a halo of legitimacy to policies conceived out of political expediency.¹

Whenever political participation and mobilization widened and threatened the control of those in power and their supporting coalitions, excluding 'troublemakers,' 'dangerous enemies,' or 'triggers of instability' became highly beneficial. Although comparatively Latin America as a whole experienced a limited number of international wars, internal conflicts have long characterized the region.² In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, inclusive pressures increased in the form of political and revolutionary groups that often adopted violent and anarchical forms of action. Facing these pressures, governments and social elites adopted repressive mechanisms of control and regulation. As countries modernized, pressures for political democratization grew and in some countries were projected through populist leaders. In the post-World War II period the entire subcontinent was increasingly touched by the processes of mobilization subsumed in the terms of the Cold War.³

Therefore it was only natural to witness how exile – already encoded into the political culture of these countries during the first century of independent life – was activated as a major mechanism of institutionalized exclusion, not only by and against members of the old political classes, but increasingly by and against the leaders, activists, and rank-and-file sympathizers of those sectors that were newly incorporated into politics.

The middle classes entered politics mostly through some interweaving of an enlarged franchise and corporatist unionization. Along with social and

¹ Brian Loveman, *The Constitution of Tyranny. Regimes of Exception in Spanish America*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993.

² Miguel Angel Centeno, "War in Latin America: The Peaceful Continent?" in Julio López-Arias and Gladys M. Varona-Lacey, Eds., *Latin America. An Interdisciplinary Approach*. New York: Peter Lang, 1999, pp. 121–136. See also, Arie Kacowicz, *The Impact of Norms in International Society: The Latin American Experience, 1881–2001*, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005.

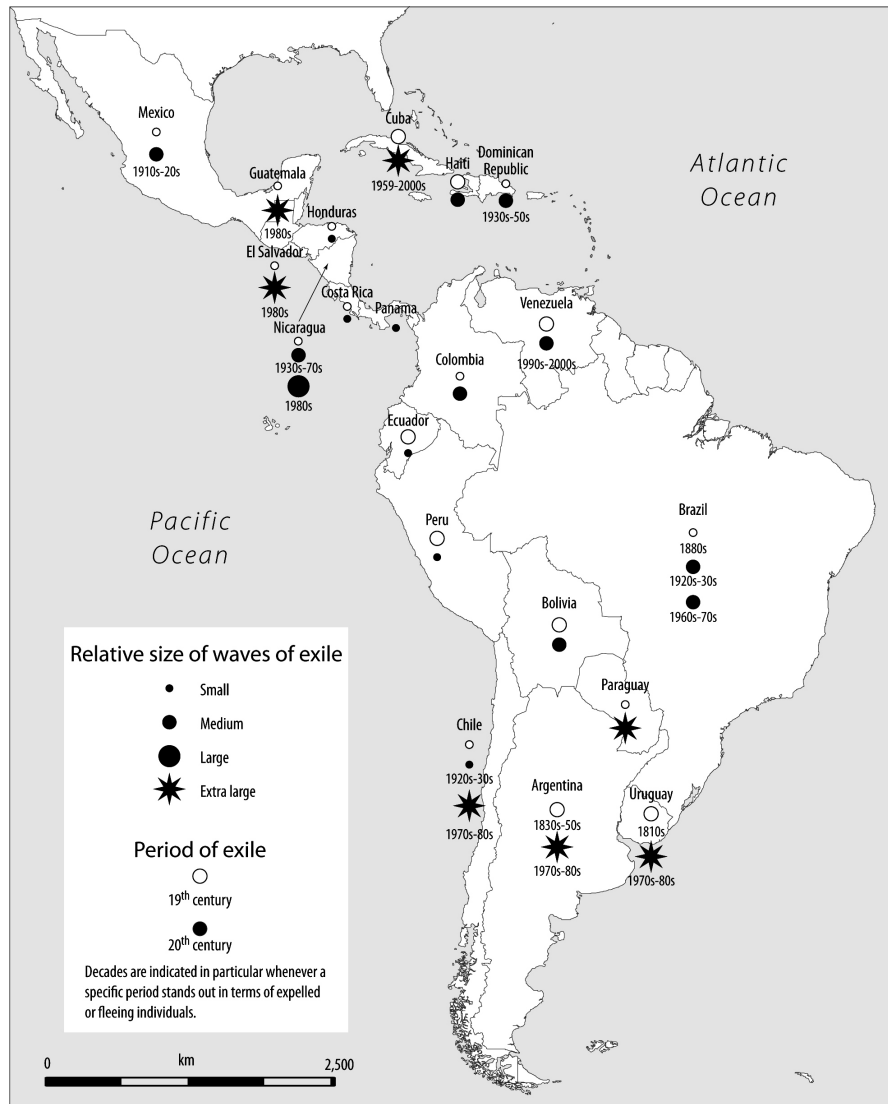
³ Leslie Bethell, Ed., *Latin America since 1930*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

economic modernization there was increased political activism and membership in movements, parties, or politically linked organizations such as trade unions, newspapers, and professional organizations, as well as intellectual and academic groups. The larger countries of the region also went through processes of industrialization and diversification of their social structures, including a growing urban working class directly involved in production and related services. Concurrently, state bureaucracies expanded at the national, provincial, and municipal levels. These sectors increasingly entered the public domain, initially backing interelite struggles as part of differentiated sets of alliances, which mobilized them by promoting and supporting their sectorial demands.

The extent of the socioeconomic pressures, political confrontation, and repressive violence can be traced through the long series of bloody confrontations, falling short of revolutionary changes such as those attempted in Mexico, Bolivia, Cuba, or Nicaragua. Repressive violence was endemic, but had its peaks, such as the massacre of Canudos in 1897 and the Contestado War in 1912–1916 in Brazil, the massacre of Santa María de Iquique in Chile in 1907, the Tragic Week anarchic revolts and pogroms in Argentina in 1919, the various U.S. interventions in Central America, the civil war in Costa Rica in the late 1940s, the assassination of Jorge Eliécer Gaitán in 1948 that emboldened the decade-long period of *La Violencia* in Colombia, the cycles of guerrilla war and repression in Guatemala from the 1950s to the 1990s, the Peruvian Shining Path [*Sendero Luminoso*] in the 1980s, the Colombian complex of narcotrafficking, criminality, guerrillas, and counter guerrillas since the 1960s, and the tense situations in Chiapas and the Andes during the 1990s and 2000s, in which the spillover of violence was mostly avoided. The magnitude of violence permeating these varied instances of protest, mobilization, and repression was modulated by the exacerbated use of political rhetoric coupled with the development of the mass media.

Whereas the first half of the 20th century was a transitional period in terms of mass exile, the subsequent decades turned into the most tragic period relative to mass exile, as the countries of the region faced failing and changing development models, mass mobilization, political polarization, and the dilemma of carrying out reforms or exposing themselves to revolutionary threats. These trends were entrapped in the antinomies of the Cold War, the resilience of powerful conservative sectors to relinquish power, and the development of doctrines of national security, which transformed the whole area into a scene of violent political exclusion.

With the intensification of the Cold War confrontations in the 1960s and 1970s, the use of political exile both as a means of escaping repression and death and as a mechanism of forced exclusion became more and more common. Latin American political exiles spilled all over Latin America and reached the United States, Canada, Western Europe, the Communist bloc and, to a lesser extent, countries as far away as Israel, Algeria, Sierra Leone, and Australia.



MAP 4. Expelling countries.

Paradoxically, a main factor lying beyond the widening use of political exile as a major mechanism of exclusion was the development of many features of modern civil society in various parts of Latin America. Functioning civil societies meant not only the emergence of bases for democracy, but also increased political involvement and growing demands of social and political rights, redistribution, and transparency. In more stable environments, all of these could perhaps be channeled into strengthening democracy. Yet, in the Latin American

context, they were interpreted in an environment of revolutionary developments, high-pitch rhetoric, and popular mobilization as a destabilizing threat for established order and strong interest groups. The lack of democratic institutionalization of both states and political parties contributed to political polarization, creating a vicious circle in which the fear of revolution brought about repression, which in turn became a convincing factor that pushed small and highly radicalized groups into armed action. The very drive of modernization of these socioeconomic systems generated new forces in society, which the system was unable to include through democratic institutionalization. From a political perspective, populism and clientelism were used in order to include these new strata, but in ways that did not encourage democratic autonomy and representation. When populism failed, a 'self-fulfilling prophecy' took effect, generating increasing political and social polarization, repression, violence and retaliations, decreasing levels of stability, until the armed forces, in various ways, took over power with the self-attributed mission of establishing a new order on the basis of their doctrines of national security. It is at this stage that repression exceeded the limits of persecuting those involved in direct political violence, and those in power began to target segments of civil society perceived as enemies or bedrocks of subversion.

The processes behind the use of political exile had changed since the 19th century. Confrontational politics and political factionalism continued, but took on more institutionalized and modern forms in many of the states of the continent. To illustrate the persistent impact and recurrence of elite exile in the 20th century, it is instructive to quote at length the characterization of Guatemala between the 1920s and the 1960s by intellectual Isidoro Zarco, followed by a description of Chile in the 1920s and early 1930s by social scientists Brian Loveman and Elizabeth Lira. According to Zarco,

At least in the last 40 years, all former rulers – with the exception of Colonel Flores Avendaño – were either led with honors to the General Cemetery or had (or have) to live far away from the fatherland due to the misfortunes of politics. After suffering a military coup, Don Carlos Herrera had to travel “freely by force” [*forcivoluntariamente*] abroad, where he died. His successor, General José María Orellana, passed to a better life long before he completed his presidential term. Don Lázaro Chacón practically gave his soul to the Almighty, pressured by the terrible load of governing this country. Don Baudilio Palma managed only to assume rule for three days before he was ousted and he later died in exile. General Manuel Orellana left with a consular position to Barcelona and was not allowed to die in his beloved fatherland. After 14 years of iron rule, General Ubico died in exile and only under Colonel Peralta's rule were his remains repatriated to Guatemalan lands. The only one who was permitted to return when dying was General Ponce Vaides. Of those still alive, Arévalo, Arbenz and Ydígoras are forced to stay far from their homeland. Some live with the threat of prison. Others must fear death.⁴

⁴ Isidoro Zarco, “El exilio: ingrato destino de nuestros ex-gobernantes,” in Cesar Brañas, Ed., *El pensamiento vivo de Isidoro Zarco*. Guatemala: Editorial Jose de Pineda Ibarra, 1973, pp. 125–126.

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The options to exile were even harsher, as clearly stated by former Bolivian President Germán Busch (1904–1939) in an interview with political scientist Robert Caldwell. Referring to the opposition, he candidly said, “If had not thrown them out, I would have had to shoot them.”⁵

The situation in Chile in the early 20th century was not so dissimilar to that of other countries in terms of the uses of exile:

Beyond overseeing and spying on trade union leaders, politicians and others, by governments since WWI, the administration of Ibáñez [1927–1931] imprisoned, relegated and sent to exile hundreds of opposition individuals of all political colors and also media representatives. Among them President [Arturo] Alessandri, General Enrique Bravo, Colonel Marmaduke Grove, Senators Luis Salas Romo and Luis Alberto Carriola, Deputies Pedro León Ugalde, Ramón and Luis Gutiérrez Allende, Ernesto Barros Jarpa and future minister of Interior of the Popular Front and later founder of the anti-Communist group *Acción Chilena Anticomunista* (ACHA) [Chilean Anti-Communist Action] Arturo Olavarría.⁶

By the 20th century, exiles were both members of the political elite as well as rank-and-file political activists, union activists, intellectuals, students, and even persons detached from any public or political involvement. The new logic of demobilization affected members of all social segments. Factionalism was no less harsh than in the 19th century, although it was embedded in the process of institutionalization of party politics and the establishment of more participatory public spheres. All these were being forcefully limited by authoritarian governments that had a very negative view of politics and its impact on their countries. The military, while professing to be neutral in political terms, saw themselves as the saviors of the ‘nation’ and the moral reservoir of its perennial values. In this context, exile came to be conceptualized as a mechanism for the complete exclusion of those portrayed as the ‘enemy.’ This enemy was not one who, when circumstances allowed, would return to the homeland and resume its former social and political roles. It was an enemy to be totally excluded, either by physical elimination or through permanent exile. At this stage, exile served as a regulatory mechanism for nation-states centered on their own political and public spheres.

Military and authoritarian rule reformulated the criteria of inclusion and exclusion according to their own ideological tenets. From the start, they created whole categories of individuals and organizations to be excluded institutionally, as alien to the nation, its spirit, tradition, well-being, and future. Marxism, Leninism, Trotskyism, Socialism, Communism, Left-Wing Liberalism, the Christian Left, some forms of Populism, and whoever promoted these ideologies or merely sympathized with them had to be marginalized and/or eliminated because the threat posed to the nation and its ‘values.’ Doctrines

⁵ Testimony of Busch to Robert G. Caldwell as reported in “Exile as an Institution.” *Political Science Quarterly*, 58, 2 (1943): 246.

⁶ Brian Loveman and Elizabeth Lira, *Las ardientes cenizas del olvido: vía chilena de reconciliación política, 1932–1994*. Santiago de Chile: LOM, 2000, p. 9.

of national security determined clear-cut criteria of inclusion and exclusion. These criteria were applied with varying degrees of autonomy of interpretation by the different mechanisms of repression.

The enemies were marked from the start. They included such varied targets as a professor who taught Marxism and other 'alien doctrines,' trade union leaders and members who fought for greater benefits, high school students who contested the established authorities in their demand for reduced fares for public transportation, a priest who defended the poor in his parish, a lawyer committed to the cause of human rights, a security officer who refused to shoot students in a demonstration, members of some academic disciplines, especially in the social sciences and humanities, such as psychology, sociology, and political science, and – briefly in Argentina – even modern mathematics, which were perceived as critical to the established order, artists and forms of art that expressed protest against social injustice and oppression, and all types of organizations – from political parties to professional and neighborhood associations – that were committed to 'antinational,' anti-Western, anti-Christian ideas. Various degrees of exclusion were applied in each of the countries, finding expression in the intervention into academic life, the destruction of several professional career tracks, the proscription and sometimes burning of 'dangerous' books and artistic creations, and prohibition against broadcasting 'subversive' music.⁷

Displacement ceased to be perceived by both persecutors and escapees as a tactical move. Truly enough, in some cases such as Chile, especially in the 1980s, those in power used internal exile [*relegación*] as a tool of punishment and political exclusion.⁸ In this case, the move was less radical in terms of displacement and loss of contact with the home habitat, but no less dramatic from a personal perspective, as reflected in Carlos Guzmán's film *La frontera* (Chile, 1991) and in personal testimonies gathered by FASIC (Fundación de Ayuda Social de las Iglesias Cristianas, or Social Aid Foundation of the Christian Churches).⁹ Moreover, the very fact that a person was 'relegated' became a form of social stigma and occupational punishment. On their release, many of the internal exiles found themselves expelled from work or banished from continuing their university studies.

The rupture was usually even sharper in the case of those forced to move abroad. In a line of continuity with the more elitist forms of exile that prevailed in earlier times, the exiles knew that those in power would not tolerate their return, and if they could enter their country of origin, their mission would be

⁷ Luis Roniger and Mario Sznajder, *The Legacy of Human-Rights Violations in the Southern Cone*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 249–250.

⁸ In Chile, this mechanism was used following Decree Law 3,168 of 1980, which sanctioned internal exile for those found to be disturbing public peace. Between 1980 and 1985, 1,277 individuals were displaced to internal exile, with a peak of 733 in 1984. See *Programa de reunificación familiar. Reencuentro en el exilio*. Santiago: FASIC, 1991, Anexo No. 1.

⁹ FASIC, *Exilio Interno, Relegación I, 1980*. Santiago: FASIC, 1981, Documento de trabajo No. 2.

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to remove from power those responsible for the repression and their own exile. Concomitantly, a transformation was effected under the impact of views leading to zero-sum strategies, such as the doctrines of national security that called for the cleansing of society of subversive elements, coupled with the equally totalistic revolutionary views of some of the exiles, which were projected onto the entire political opposition as a means of disarticulating the 'old' forms of politics. Under this set of characterizations, political exile became a comprehensive means of exclusion, intended by those in power to have a long-lasting effect in the public arena. From the point of view of the authoritarian rulers holding power in various Latin American countries during the Cold War, those who went abroad or were expelled for political reasons would be forever relegated to permanent exclusion. In other words, instead of denoting a politics of exit that might have implied regaining the status quo ante, as in the past, exile was orchestrated into a mechanism of total exclusion from politics. It is in this framework that Shain's definition of a political exile does not cover the entire gamut of political exiles. For Shain,

a political exile is that who engages in political activity, directed against the policies of a home regime, the home regime itself or the political system as a whole, and aimed at creating circumstances favorable to his return.¹⁰

When policies of long term and unconditional exclusion are applied systematically and on a massive scale, cutting the links between the exile and his home-country politics, the will of the exile to act politically abroad and to return to the home country ceases to be the *sine qua non* requirement for defining exiles. Truly enough, a small group of displaced individuals continued to be politically active while abroad and were not only denied citizenship rights, but were attacked verbally and sometimes targeted physically by agents of their countries' rulers. But these politically active exiles were only part of a much larger set of people suffering territorial exclusion following their identification as targeted enemies, whether or not they had played a political role in the past and whether or not they were engaged in politics in the present.

The triangular structure of exile had changed as well. Such a triangular structure was predicated on the interplay between the interests of the exiles, those of the host countries, and the pressures exerted by the home countries. Among these factors, the latter two assumed greater centrality as the states consolidated their borders and promoted national symbols and consciousness through education, civil and military services. This triangular structure of exile, present since early independence, persisted as the nation-states continued to be the main players in the international arena. The concept of the 'Patria Grande,' rooted in Bolivarianism, while persisting in the margins of the Left and the Right, had somehow given place to clear-cut distinctions sustaining the collective identities of Argentines, Mexicans, Brazilians, Colombians, Peruvians, and

¹⁰ Yossi Shain, *The Frontier of Loyalty*. Middletown, CN: Wesleyan University Press, 1989, p. 20.

the other nationalities of the region. It would be in exile that the transnational identities would be regained, albeit only partially, in the framework of campaigns of solidarity, cross-national movements favoring regional integration, and the rediscovery of the common fate shared with the nationals of other Latin American countries.

This structure underwent a core transformation in the second half of the 20th century, once the global arena entered the exile equation as a fourth factor (see Diagram 5.1). The global arena turned increasingly important in the exile equation as it became preoccupied with humanitarian international law and the protection of human rights. It is at this stage that, in the words of Saskia Sassen,

citizenship becomes a heuristic category through which to understand the question of rights and subject formation and to do so in ways that recover the conditionalities entailed in its territorial articulation and thereby the limits or vulnerabilities of this framing.¹¹

In part, at least from the perspective of Latin America, this trend was the result of the increasingly transnational character of opposition and repression. In some outstanding cases, this confrontation reached the point of assassination in settings far removed from the home country; *vide* the murder of former Chilean Minister of Foreign Affairs Orlando Letelier and his secretary, a U.S. national, Ronnie Moffitt, on 21 September 1976 in Washington D.C., orchestrated by the Chilean DINA (Dirección Nacional de Inteligencia, or National Intelligence Directorate). The Condor Operation, reaching far beyond each Latin American country, was the logical development of the impossibility of containing political opposition by their exclusion from domestic public spheres. The counterface of this wave of institutionalized exclusion and political persecution was the internalization of principles of human rights by organizations at the international and global arena. Instrumental in such shifts were organizations such as the United Nations, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and particularly Americas Watch, the World Council of Churches, the Catholic Church, the UNCHR, the International Organization for Migration, the Red Cross, the European Parliament and human rights parliamentary commissions across the globe, international associations of political parties such as the Socialist International and the International of Popular (Demo-Christian) parties, confederations of trade unions at the national and international levels, and a myriad of NGOs concentrated on the defence of human rights. This multilayer infrastructure enabled the rapid creation of a dense network of committees of solidarity with the victims of institutionalized repression fleeing persecution.

The crystallization of an international public sphere attentive to what once were considered 'internal matters' wrapped in the nation-state mantle

¹¹ Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006, p. 278.

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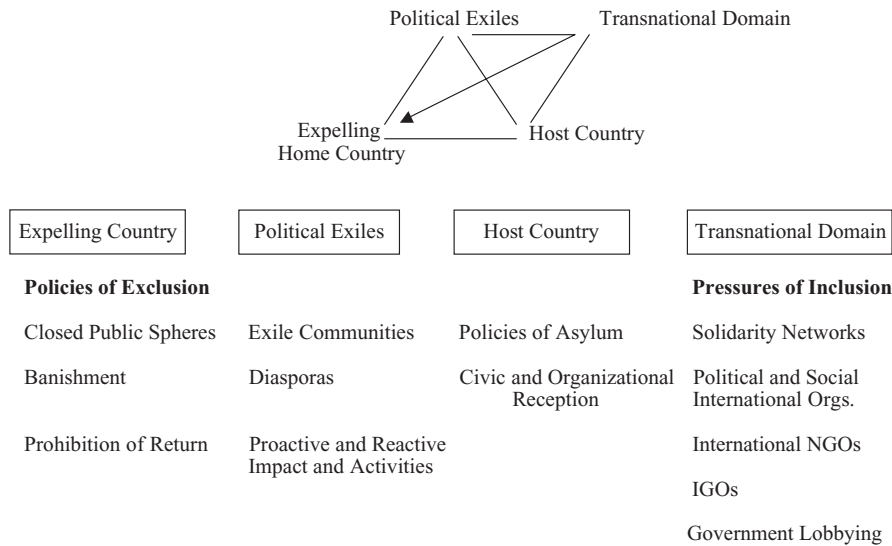


DIAGRAM 5.1. Shifting Format of Exile.

of sovereignty publicly unraveled the character of authoritarian repression, projecting the plight of the exiles in terms of human rights and debordering its treatment. In the last stages of the Cold War, the work of transnational solidarity networks and international agencies echoed cases of autocratic abuse, making them politically costly, strengthening the cause of democracy and opposition to authoritarianism.¹² This generated pressures in multiple directions, unforeseen by the rulers of the Ibero-American states until then.

The fourth tier of exile – the transnational dimension – emerged as a crucial aspect of the tug-of-war among political exiles, their supporting networks, and the repressive rulers of their home countries. Theoretically, the fourth tier has operated against the supposed monopoly of the nation-state over domestic public spheres and politics by empowering exiles in terms of transnational influence and resonance for their voice in the global arena. As such, they contributed from the bottom up toward the construction of what will be theorized starting in the late 20th century as the formation of a global civil society. In John Keane terms, such a concept implies

[A]n unfinished project that consists of sometimes thick, sometimes thinly stretched networks, pyramids and hub-and-spoke clusters of socio-economic institutions and actors who organise themselves across borders, with the deliberate aim of drawing the world together in new ways. These non-governmental institutions and actors tend to pluralise power and to problematise violence.¹³

¹² Laurence Whitehead, “Three International Dimensions of Democratization,” in Whitehead, Ed., *The International Dimensions of Democratization: Europe and the Americas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

¹³ John Keane, *Global Civil Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 8.

The roots of this transformation can be traced back to the second half of the 19th century, as states began developing a normative framework of treaties and conventions, increasingly binding for individual signatory countries as they faced issues such as diplomatic and territorial asylum, a normative figure evolving since ancient times. In parallel, as terror and fear of persecution expanded well beyond national borders, exiles were able to capitalize on international solidarity networks, projecting the issue of repression and exile into the general public awareness and helping develop an arena for transnational activism.

Asylum and the Protection of Persecuted Individuals

Since ancient times, societies recognized the existence of inviolable space, in which persecuted individuals could find asylum. In ancient Israel, special towns and altars were designated as locales of asylum. In Greece, some of the major temples served as similar places of asylum. In Rome too there were locales for those seeking the rights of asylum, who were commonly “slaves who had been maltreated by their masters, soldiers defeated and pursued by the enemy, and criminals who feared a trial or who escaped before sentence was passed.”¹⁴ Churches soon provided sanctuaries for threatened individuals, because it was customarily recognized that these individuals were not to be dragged from the altar. Asylum thus turned into a “sanctuary or inviolable place of refuge and protection for criminals and debtors, from which they cannot be forcibly removed without sacrilege.”¹⁵ And yet, the right of asylum was considered to be a prerogative that states had to recognize, rather than the simple “right of a fugitive to demand protection.”¹⁶

With the passing of time, the right of asylum was transferred from religious centers to diplomatic sites, a trend reflected in the modern concept of asylum granted on the grounds of persecution. The Spanish *Enclopedia Universal Ilustrada* compares the right of immunity of the churches or temples and the right of extraterritoriality of ambassadors and diplomatic agents of foreign nations. The latter originated in the use of *jus quarteriorium* by virtue of which the places surrounding diplomatic dwellings or embassies served as refuge, at the beginning, for common criminals escaping police or court actions.¹⁷ In absolutist Europe, common criminals enjoyed the protection of asylum, whereas political offenders were likely to be extradited on the basis of a conception of the complete authority of the rulers over the life and possessions of their subjects.¹⁸

From the point of view of political asylum, the French Revolution constituted the watershed. As it proclaimed “The Rights of Man and of the Citizen,”

¹⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1953, p. 593.

¹⁵ *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 1933, p. 528.

¹⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1953, p. 594.

¹⁷ *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada Europeo Americana*. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, n.d., p. 675.

¹⁸ David Alejandro Luna, *El asilo político*. San Salvador: Editorial Universitaria, 1962, p. 20.

it recognized resistance to oppression as a “natural and imprescriptible right,” and by doing so it tacitly laid the groundwork for the development of political persecution as a distinct category, which serves as a basis for the modern concept of political asylum. Since 1815, the UK rejected the extradition of people persecuted on political grounds. The figure of political asylum soon became a focus of juridical interpretation and legislation. In 1829 Hendrik Provo Kluit in his *De deditione profugorum* defended the rights of political asylum and the exclusion of politically persecuted persons from treaties of extradition. European nations such as Belgium, France, and the Scandinavian countries enshrined political asylum in official treaties.¹⁹ The right of political asylum spread in parallel to processes of democratization in Europe and beyond. Still, violent anarchist activities constituted a singular problem for those states that recognized the right of asylum at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. These states were still unwilling to receive individuals involved in proactive violence into their territories. The U.S. Immigration Act of 1924 declared anarchist and other political extremists as “unwanted,” barring their entry into the country. In the same period, Soviet Russia declared its willingness to provide asylum to any foreigner persecuted on political or religious grounds.²⁰

Fascism and its allies further constrained the use of political asylum. Most notorious are the cases of the Republican Spaniards who sought asylum in France after the 1939 defeat of the Second Republic and, once France was overtaken by Nazi Germany, were sent back to Spain, where they faced long-term imprisonment or capital punishment by death squads.

Latin America began very early to deal with the problem of political asylum. This early development is rooted in the contradictory context of political instability: on the one hand, instability generated exclusion and exile throughout the sister-nations of the Americas. On the other hand, the politics of exit could be hampered by the difficulties of transport and communications, even in neighboring countries. Moreover, those in power could use exiles as a means of harassment of political enemies in neighboring countries. And even when reluctant to concede asylum to ‘troublemakers’ from neighboring countries, they could not ignore that eventually they themselves may need that mechanism if ousted from power by a coup. Accordingly, this issue turned into a much discussed subject in negotiations and meetings on diplomatic asylum, making Latin America a pioneer region on that matter.²¹

In 1867, diplomatic representatives of the different states discussed in Lima the issue of diplomatic asylum, without reaching agreement. The first document on this legal figure was produced by the First South American Conference on International Private Law in Montevideo in 1889. A Treaty of Peace and

¹⁹ Luna, *El asilo político*, pp. 20–21.

²⁰ “Asile.” *Larousse au XX^e siècle*. Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1928, vol. I p. 384.

²¹ Jaime Esponda Fernández, “La tradición latinoamericana de asilo y la protección de los refugiados,” available at <http://www.acnur.org/biblioteca/pdf/3392.pdf>, accessed 10 July 2007.

Friendship was signed on December 1907 by the representatives of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador in Washington D.C., aimed to achieve stability in the Isthmus. The contracting parties undertook the commitment not to allow the leaders and activists of political émigrés “to reside in the border regions of the countries, the peace of which they could disrupt.” In 1911, the Andean countries reached agreement on extradition in a congress in Caracas. The Central American countries reached a parallel agreement in Guatemala in 1934. Inter-American treaties on asylum and political refuge were signed in La Havana (1928), Montevideo (1933), and Caracas (1954). The 1928 treaty denied the right of asylum to common delinquents, and the 1933 agreement clearly defined the legal framework of political asylum. Most American nations adhered to the treaty and ratified it, with the exception of Venezuela, Bolivia, and the United States. In 1939, these understandings found their way into the most comprehensive regional treaty, reached in Montevideo by the countries in the region. The 10th Inter-American Conference produced an agreement on political asylum in 1954. It declared in its Article 2 that “every state has a right to concede asylum; but cannot be forced to concede it, neither to explain the reasons why it denies it.”²² This reflected the consensus shaped during the interwar period in Europe as elsewhere concerning the perception of asylum as a state prerogative, to be granted by individual states as they take into consideration the gravity and nature of the political crime committed.²³

Whereas the 1928 and 1933 treaties dealt with asylum mainly in diplomatic terms, the 1954 treaty devoted concurrent attention to the territorial aspect of asylum. The Caracas Congress dealt with this aspect explicitly following the renowned case of Víctor Raúl Haya de La Torre, founder of the APRA (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana, or American Popular Revolutionary Alliance) movement in Peru. With his party outlawed in 1948, he spent 5 years caught in diplomatic asylum at the Colombian Embassy in Lima.

Both Colombia and Peru brought the case before the International Court of Justice, which recognized in a November 1950 ruling that the protection had been improperly granted. Yet, as Peru further requested the Court to order Colombia to surrender Haya de la Torre to Peruvian authorities, the Court ruled in June 1951 that, although Peru was legally entitled to claim that the asylum should cease, there was no obligation on the part of Colombia to surrender

²² Unión Panamericana, *Convención sobre asilo diplomático suscrita en la X Conferencia Interamericana. Caracas: 1–28 marzo 1954*. Washington: OEA, 1961. On the legal aspects of political asylum in the region see also Leonardo Franco et al., “Investigación: El asilo y la protección de los refugiados en América Latina. Acerca de la confusión terminológica ‘asilo-refugio.’ Informe de progreso,” in *Derechos humanos y refugiados en las Américas: lecturas seleccionadas*, San José de Costa Rica: ACNUR-IIDH, 2001 (www.acnur.org); and Luis Miguel Díaz and Guadalupe Rodríguez de Ita, “Bases histórico-jurídicas de la política mexicana de asilo diplomático,” in Silvia Dutrenit-Bielous and Guadalupe Rodríguez de Ita, Eds., *Asilo diplomático mexicano en el Cono Sur*. Mexico: SRE, 1999, pp. 63–82.

²³ See for instance the entry on ‘Asile.’ *Larousse au XX^e siècle*. Paris: Librairie Larousse, 1928, vol. I, p. 384.

Haya de la Torre, as this would be opposed to “the Latin American tradition in regard to asylum, a tradition in accordance with which a political refugee ought not to be surrendered.” The Court recognized in its ruling the deadlock.

According to the Havana Convention, diplomatic asylum, which is a provisional measure for the temporary protection of political offenders, must be terminated as soon as possible. However, the convention does not give a complete answer to the question of the manner in which an asylum must be terminated. As to persons guilty of common crimes, it expressly requires that they be surrendered to the local authorities. For political offenders it prescribes the grant of a safe conduct for the departure from the country. But a safe conduct can be claimed only if the asylum has been regularly granted and maintained and if the territorial state has required that the refugee be sent out of the country.²⁴

The Court opted not to give a practical solution, but only suggested the parties to seek guidance “from those considerations of courtesy and good neighborliness which in matters of asylum, have always held a prominent place in the relations between the Latin American Republics.” Only in 1954 did the Peruvian government finally grant Haya de la Torre safe conduct after years of bitter denunciations from liberals throughout the Western hemisphere and after the case had been brought before the International Court of Justice in 1950 and 1951.²⁵

Latin American countries had debated also territorial asylum even before the issue reached global attention following World War II. Within the international arena, the creation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, or in its Spanish acronym, ACNUR) in 1949 signaled the diffusion of such concern for identifying the problem and dealing with it in the framework of refugee support. According to the UNHCR charter, even if contemplating concrete historical circumstances, a political refugee is any person who

owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear or for reasons other than personal convenience, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear or such reasons other than personal convenience, is unwilling to return to it.²⁶

²⁴ International Court of Justice, Haya de la Torre Case, available at <http://www.icj-cij.org/iccjwww/idecisions/isummaries/ihayasummary510613.htm>.

²⁵ Luna, *El asilo político*, pp. 39–40. Although APRA was legalized in 1956, Haya de la Torre remained mostly abroad until 1962 when he returned to campaign for the presidency in Peru. This was not the first time that de la Torre and his movement were persecuted. Haya de la Torre had founded APRA, a pan-Latin American movement, in 1924, while in Mexican exile. As he returned in 1931 to run for the presidency, he was imprisoned for 15 months. APRA was then outlawed until 1934 and again from 1935 to 1945.

²⁶ Statute of the Office of the United Nations’ High Commissioner for Refugees. See <http://www.unhcr.org>, accessed 12 July 2007; and “Convention related to the status of refugees (1951),” art. 1, in Office of the UNCHR, available at http://www.unhcr.ch/html.menu3/b/o_c_ref.htm, accessed 28 April 2006.

In the 1960s, following the beginning of massive entry of Cuban political refugees to the United States and the parallel exit of Haitians, Paraguayans, Bolivians, Dominicans, Nicaraguans, and Hondurans, the Interamerican Commission of Human Rights issued a report in which it recognized that their escape from the home countries was putting high pressure on possible countries of asylum and threatened to change traditional views on political refugees and exiles.²⁷

In parallel, the regulatory norms evolving out of these international fora became increasingly binding in the 1960s. Specifically with the Declaration on Territorial Asylum adopted by the General Assembly of the UN in December 1967, Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was enforced, as the Declaration recognized that the grant of asylum by a state “is a peaceful and humanitarian act and that, as such, it cannot be regarded as unfriendly by any other state.”²⁸

The process of formalization of these provisions went even further in the 1980s and 1990s. It was then that, following the displacement of hundreds of thousands of refugees in Central America, a series of Latin American meetings organized by UNHCR brought together government officials, UN agents, professional experts, and NGOs to discuss the humanitarian and legal problems of asylum and refugees. Starting with a program of cooperation between the OAS (Organization of American States) and the UNHCR signed in 1982 and the 1984 Declaration of Cartagena on Refugees, resulting from an colloquium on the international protection of refugees in Central America, Mexico, and Panama, numerous inter-American meetings and summits have further endorsed the normative framework for the protection of refugees in the Americas. This framework, sanctioned once again in the San José Declaration of 1994, stresses the humanitarian and apolitical character of their treatment, the rejection of forced repatriation, and the need to reinforce legality.²⁹

The UNHCR, which was charged with the task of helping refugees in the late 20th century, distinguished two subgroups of refugees: the statutory and the displaced. Statutory refugees include individuals who fled their country because of well-founded fear of persecution, whereas displaced refugees are

²⁷ María Claudia Pulido and Marisol Blanchard, “La Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos y sus mecanismos de protección aplicados a la situación de los refugiados, apátridas y solicitantes de asilo,” available at <http://www.acnur.org/biblioteca/pdf/2578.pdf>, accessed 10 July 2007.

²⁸ “Declaration on Territorial Asylum,” available at http://www.UNHCR.ch/html/menu3/b/o_asylum.htm, accessed 10 July 2007.

²⁹ Franco et al., “Investigación: El asilo y la protección de los refugiados en América Latina,” pp. 176–177. The major meetings were those of Tlatelolco in 1981; the declaration of Cartagena in 1984; the meetings of Guatemala in 1989 (CIREFCA); San José de Costa Rica in 1994; Tlatelolco in 1999; Rio de Janeiro in 2000; Asuncion in 2005; and Montevideo in 2006. Alberto D’Alotto, “El sistema interamericano de protección de los derechos humanos y su contribución a la protección de los refugiados en América Latina,” available at <http://www.acnur.org/biblioteca/pdf/3186.pdf>, accessed 10 July 2007.

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those who can be determined or are presumed to be without or unable to avail themselves of the protection of the government of their state of origin. As students of these phenomena have emphasized, the determination of eligibility for the refugee status remained in the hands of the country in which asylum was being sought.³⁰

International organizations have based their work on several international agreements that protected exiles. Authorities grant asylum in virtue of the principle of nonrefoulement provided by Article 33 of the 1951 UN Convention on the status of refugees and Article 22 (8) of the American Convention of Human Rights. According to the former, “no contracting state shall expel or return [*refouler*] a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.”³¹ It has been observed that, in many cases, states have also applied this principle to asylum seekers, which exceeds the expectation of this norm, but has been instrumental in preventing deportation. This normative framework is not lacking in contradictions and tensions, as Niklaus Steiner has pointed out while discussing Western European cases:

The strength of this international norm has led states into the uncomfortable (and perhaps untenable) position of declaring that most asylum-seekers are not in enough danger at home to be granted asylum, yet they are in too much danger to be returned home. Deportations of rejected asylum-seekers are relatively rare and rejected asylum-seekers instead are often allowed to remain, but with only limited status and rights.³²

Because of the massive and complex character of the problem, especially in Central America, the legal and normative frameworks elaborated in the 1980s and 1990s in Latin America have increasingly incorporated the international normative of political refugees, broadening the scope of political asylum as a characteristic of the regional normative shaped originally in the framework of elite politics. Thus the legal frameworks endorsed in the region have increasingly conflated the categories of refugees, persons devoid of citizenship (‘apatrides’) and asylees.³³

³⁰ Dennis Gallagher, “The Evolution of the International Refugee System.” *International Migration Review*, 23, 3 (1989): 579–598.

³¹ Office of the UNHCR, *Convention relating to the state of refugees*, adopted by the UN on 28 July 1951, entry into force 22 April 1954.

³² Niklaus Steiner, *Arguing About Asylum. The Complexity of Refugee Debates in Europe*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000, pp. 15–16. On the same problems in Latin America see Jorge Santistevan de Noriega, “ACNUR e IIDH, Una relación para el refugio,” (2001), available at <http://acnur.org/biblioteca/pdf/0267.pdf>, accessed 8 July 2007.

³³ Pulido and Blanchard, “La Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos”; Cesar Walter San Juan with the participation of Mark Manly, “El asilo y la protección de los refugiados en América Latina: análisis crítico del dualismo ‘asilo-refugio’ a la luz del Derecho Internacional de los Derechos Humanos,” available at <http://acnur.org/biblioteca/pdf/3418.pdf>, accessed 10 July 2007.

The Emergence of a Four-Tiered Structure of Exile

The triangular structure of exile was built upon the connections and tensions between the agenda of the exiles, the political considerations of the host countries, and the pressures exerted by the home governments, rooted in a framework of political and administrative fragmentation. This formal structure remained a major characteristic as long as states were the central players in the international arena. The promise of the French Revolution in terms of rights accorded to “man and citizen” underwent transformations and suppressions under Napoleonic rule and the Restoration of the *ancien regime* norms carried out by the Holy Alliance. Liberal resurgence in 1848 in Europe, heavily tainted with nationalism, was concentrated in the internal public arenas of the old and new nation-states. Although this enhanced sovereignty, it basically put aside a serious concern with the consequences of state politics in terms of expulsion of political opponents into exile.

Countries used exiles as pawns in their international strategies. Illustrative is the situation as late as World War I, when the role of political exiles comes together with *revoluzionirungpolitik*, i.e., with internal politics being played by one country against another by using political exiles, émigrés, and other agents, and by exiles using spaces in the host countries to bring about a certain result in the home country. The most famous European cases of this triadic structure are perhaps those of Roman Dmowski of the Polish National Movement and Thomas Masaryk of the Czech National Movement, as they led movements in Paris and legions against the Central Empires, or Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, the leader of the Bolsheviks, being sent by the Germans in a sealed wagon to Russia, through Sweden and Finland, in order to propel the fall of the Romanovs and take Russia out of the war.

In the Americas, one of the most notable cases is that of the Cuban exiles who started relocating to the United States as early as the 1820s. Even though exiles were part of a larger diaspora of Cubans, many of them workers in the tobacco industry, the former played an increasingly influential role in policy-setting, along with U.S. economic and political interests. Illustrative is the progressive move of the United States to press for the resignation of President Gerardo Machado in the early 1930s. By then, the economic crisis and the hardships it produced had led to widespread protest, met with increasing repression by the Machado administration. Institutionalized violence sent hundreds of exiles to the United States, mainly to Florida and New York, where they forcefully campaigned against the *caudillo*, with a minority advocating direct U.S. intervention. The presence of a Cuban oppositionary voice in the U.S. press played an important role in the decisions taken by the Roosevelt administration to refrain from further supporting Machado, thus hastening his escape from Cuba and the series of events that would soon lead to Fulgencio Batista's ascent to power.³⁴ Beyond the details of this and other cases of exile

³⁴ Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, *Cuba. The Making of a Revolution*. Northampton: University of Massachusetts Press, 1968, pp. 76–95; “The Machado Dictatorship,” available at http://www.cubafacts.com/History/history_of_cuba7.htm, accessed 14 June 2006.

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politics in the Americas and elsewhere, the principal point is that, as influential as exiles were in this triangular structure, there were almost no institutional arenas on the international level that could serve as effective frameworks for the discussion and regulation of issues concerning political exile and constitute, as a fourth tier, a source of pressure on individual states.

With the evolution of a global arena with transnational networking, communications, and forums within which problems of international law and international human rights could be aired, this structure of exile underwent a core transformation. Once this fourth element entered the exile equation, the political exiles abroad were increasingly able to condition local politics from afar by playing in a transnational arena.

This structure of exile emerged progressively in Latin America, acquiring at first a regional physiognomy and shifting increasingly to transnationalism. Perhaps one of the earliest indications occurred in the 1950s in the Caribbean and Central American subregion, when a series of dictatorships generated waves of exiles that spread all over the region. Consequently, an intense activity of exile groups from the states in this region, particularly Guatemala, Nicaragua, Cuba, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic, took place. By 1952, virtually the entire Spanish Caribbean was dominated by dictators persecuting and suppressing internal opponents, so that political opposition in the area came almost exclusively from exiles and the networks they managed to create and sustain abroad. The principal centers for Caribbean exile activity were at that time Mexico City, San José de Costa Rica, San Juan (Puerto Rico), Miami and New York.

Venezuelan Acción Democrática (AD, or Democratic Action, the Social Democratic Party of Venezuela) was heavily concentrated in Mexico, probably a thousand strong and closely knit around the figure of former President Rómulo Gallegos. Gallegos, deposed by a military coup in November 1948, was a prominent writer and popular speaker, whose reputation and salience in Mexico and throughout the Americas gave prestige to the exile cause. Dominicans were found throughout the Central American and Caribbean areas, with their largest numbers concentrated in San Juan and New York. Miami was the traditional stronghold for Cubans, but they were also active in Mexico, San Juan, and New York. The Nicaraguans and Hondurans still preferred Mexico and, depending on circumstances, San José de Costa Rica. The more militant exiles of all nationalities were in Arbenz's Guatemala, until the *coup d'état* deposed him and forced him into exile in 1954.³⁵

Besides their political activities, the exiles engaged in writing, teaching, lecturing, and public speaking, partly because this was their way to make a living. Yet these activities projected their cause into the Caribbean and Central and North America. The activities of the exile politicians were important

³⁵ The analysis of the political exiles in Central America and the Caribbean in this period is based mainly on Charles D. Ameringer, *The Democratic Left in Exile. The Anti-Dictatorial Struggle in the Caribbean, 1945–1959*. Miami: University of Miami Press, 1974, especially “The Diaspora,” pp. 161–221. On the Venezuelans in Mexico see also Rafael José Neri, *La embajada que llegó del exilio*. Caracas: Academia Nacional de la Historia, 1988.

enough to provoke the reaction of local dictators and generate sympathy in democratic countries, generating international pressure. Democratic dialogue and alliances cemented transnational cooperation among democratic leaders and exiles throughout the Americas. Physical exclusion from domestic public spheres was increasingly not equivalent to political exclusion. Through their international impact, exiled individuals could affect the equation of power in their home countries while far away from them. The attempts of assassination of exiles abroad are a clear indication of the increasing importance of this fourth tier as part of the structure of exile in the region. The activities of the agents of Trujillo, Batista, Somoza, and other dictators, although largely uncoordinated, signaled a move to radicalizing tactics of dealing with important leaders of the exile oppositions, as will be typical of Operation Condor nearly two decades later. The fourth tier was becoming more central for both expellers and exiles.

The better organized exile parties (the Venezuelan AD, the Dominican Revolutionary Party [Partido Revolucionario Dominicans, or PRD] and the Cuban Auténticos) supported their militants. Parties managed to raise funds through voluntary contributions and occasionally through activities and raffles. A number of Cuban exiles lived 'in princely fashion' in Miami and Miami Beach, in what some defined as a Golden Exile. Two of the wealthier co-nationals, Carlos Prío Socorrás and José Alemán, used their personal assets to support other exiles and promote their cause. Toward the 1950s, the U.S. government also helped finance the exile movement, although indirectly and covertly.

No exile was fully beyond the reach of the dictators of the Caribbean. The Dominicans, particularly, were carefully watched through Rafael Trujillo's efficient espionage system, which used the diplomatic and consular services to harass and even liquidate his enemies. After 1956, Fulgencio Batista and Trujillo plotted together the assassination of Costa Rican President José Figueres, who supported the democratic left in exile. By 1957, Trujillo's agents were directing numerous intrigues in Mexico and Central America. Trujillo had friends in the U.S. Congress, attracted by his anticommunist policy and the extensive lobby he maintained, and was able to foment close scrutiny of the exiles' activities. On the other hand, Trujillo occasionally bribed his antagonists with money or promises of amnesty. In 1955, the Dominican Congress passed an amnesty bill, and Trujillo announced that the government would help financially those exiles seeking repatriation. Marcos Pérez Jiménez also reached out to deal with enemies, especially attempting to eliminate Rómulo Betancourt and putting pressure on host countries to expel him and constrain his movements.

Although countries respected the right of asylum, they watched the activities of exiles carefully in order to avoid radicalizing influences in the domestic arena and, at the same time, avoid international friction and embarrassment with peer governments. Students in particular were a category not always welcome, as they tended to be politically active. In 1956, the Honduran government was reported to be trying to persuade Guatemalan student exiles to depart for

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Costa Rica, because it did not want them to stir up the local student body. Similarly, in Mexico in 1953, when it was discovered that Mexican arms had been used in Castro's assaults in Cuba, Mexican authorities undertook efforts to prevent arms smuggling to Cuba and expelled two Cuban exiles. In 1956, Castro, Che Guevara, and others were arrested on charges of plotting a revolutionary action against Batista. Nevertheless, before the year ended, Castro had invaded Cuba; the area of Yucatán had served as his jumping board. Probably as a result of this experience, Mexico ousted 550 'undesirable aliens' in 1957, some of whom were engaged in political actions considered dangerous or embarrassing to the Mexican government. For this reason, and because Marcos Pérez Jiménez had been ousted in Venezuela, Cuban exiles began 'flocking' to Caracas in 1958. The United States followed a similar policy toward Cuban exiles; it provided a haven but would not tolerate violations of its laws.

AD (Venezuela) was the largest of the exile parties and the best organized, with Rómulo Gallegos as its spokesman in Mexico, and Luis Augusto Dubue presiding over affairs in Costa Rica. Liaison was maintained by the Coordinating Committee, which Dubue also administered in Costa Rica. By far, the largest number of activists was in Mexico, where they maintained the party structure and activity. Here, the Confederation of Workers of Venezuela in exile, under the direction of AD militants, collaborated closely with the international free-trade union movement. Special focus was given to youth and student affairs by the Juventud of AD. The most important exile newspaper, *Venezuela Democrática*, was edited in Mexico between 1955 and 1957. Periodic public meetings were held, principally in Mexico and Costa Rica, energized by the commemoration of the martyrs who had died in exile and in the underground of Venezuela. During the first four and a half years of exile, AD leaders were preoccupied with securing a reliable communication network with those in the underground, directing their activities from abroad and promoting their cause before the UN. The closing of penal colonies in 1949 and 1952, as well as the release of Valmore Rodríguez and others from prison in 1949, stemmed from denunciations of human-rights violations made by exiles before the UN. The exiles were also successful in organizing a boycott of the Conference of the Petroleum Committee of the International Labor Organization held in Caracas in 1955, as important unions refused to send representatives. AD also led a strategy of cooperation with other opposition parties, inspired by the belief that the tide was turning against the dictators and the pending expiration of Pérez Jiménez's term of office at the end of 1957. Agitation for free elections became the basis for unifying the Venezuelan opposition groups. Following an orchestrated plebiscite that would enable Pérez Jiménez to stay in power, the political arena entered into turmoil. A military revolt against Pérez Jiménez in January 1958 seemed to fail, and although it would trigger riots that resulted in over 300 dead and the eventual ousting of Pérez Jiménez, the Venezuelan military officers implicated in the revolt fled to Colombia aboard a stolen plane. After being captured by Colombian intelligence in

Baranquilla, the government decided in favor of their release. The press reported that

Carlos de Santamaría, Colombia's Foreign Minister, said yesterday that the eighteen Venezuelans would be released shortly and would be "free to live anywhere they liked in Colombia, except in towns on the Venezuelan border". The Foreign Minister also noted that it was only proper that Colombia provide asylum for the Venezuelans since "at least 10,000 Colombians" who fled from the dictatorship of General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla between 1953 and early 1957 were still living in Venezuela.³⁶

During the years in exile, AD effectively opposed the dictatorship and maintained a party structure, so that it quickly became a major political factor in Venezuela after the deposition of Pérez Jiménez. The party eventually reached power and continued cooperating in the struggle against the other dictators of the Caribbean. Few parties of the Democratic Left enjoyed the same success in exile, probably because none was as well organized.

The Cuban exiles were deeply divided. A number of rival parties existed, including the People's Party or *Ortodoxo*, and the Communist Popular Socialist Party. The *Auténticos* were torn by personalist factionalism and found it difficult to arouse sympathy, with many Cubans disillusioned by their previous leadership. Therefore, they, as well as other Cuban exile groups, tended to rely on conspirational activity. Most of their energy and resources were spent in active and violent forms of opposition. The Dominican exiles had been scattered the longest, some since 1930. By the time Germán Ornes went into exile in 1955, he complained that he found an "aristocracy of exiledom," in which those who had been in exile the longest looked down on the recent arrivals and regarded them with suspicion as collaborationists.

These political organizations were creatures of exile. In the Dominican Republic, there were no true political parties before Trujillo; afterward, none were tolerated. The closest that the Dominicans came to a political party in the modern sense was the PRD, founded in Havana in 1939 by Juan Bosch and Angel Míolan, with branches in Puerto Rico and New York. Other groups, all founded in exile, were at best splinter parties and at worst a handful of followers of a single leader. Aside from the communists, only one of these organizations lasted beyond the exile years, the *Vanguardia Revolucionaria Dominicana* founded in Puerto Rico in 1956, with branches in Mexico and New York. Despite the Batista dictatorship, it maintained headquarters in Cuba until 1958, when it moved to Caracas. Owing to the contacts of Bosch with democratic leaders and organizations, it managed to elicit strong denunciations of the Trujillo regime internationally.

Loose coalitions characterized the activities of the Dominican exiles in New York. With their protests and demonstrations, they seemed puny in comparison with the dictatorship of Rafael Leónidas Trujillo, but their activities had important effects. They rejected Trujillo's demands of total submissiveness.

³⁶ Ted Szulc, "Venezuela Quite After Rebellion." *New York Times*, 4 January 1958, p. 6.

They contributed to an atmosphere that facilitated a shift in U.S. policy. Trujillo himself overreacted to the exile activities, which produced additional scorn against his government. Despite factional differences, the PRD developed a party structure and acquired sufficient prestige, so that when the time came it could try to provide a democratic alternative. By going into exile, the PRD was free from any collaborationist taint.

When a country lived through a democratic period and projected an image of being committed to popular causes, it could become a haven for political exiles, such as Guatemala between 1944 and 1954, Costa Rica after 1948, and redemocratized Venezuela after 1958. In the 1940s exiled communist leaders were conspicuous in Guatemala. They were active in Guatemalan political affairs. Cuban communist leaders were frequent visitors to Guatemala, aiding the local Marxists in their rise to control organized labor. Venezuelan communists were also frequent visitors, but the most active were the Salvadorans. The Dominican Popular Socialist Party was the Communist Party of the Dominican Republic in exile, but they also belonged to the Guatemalan Labor Party. In 1952, they undertook to organize all Dominican exiles under a Committee of Dominican Exiles, and in June their "Solidarity" broadcast claimed a favorable response from Dominicans everywhere. Other national groups in exile established similar united fronts in Guatemala. These included the Asociación Democrática Salvadoreña, the Movimiento de Nicaragüenses Partidarios de la Democracia, and the Partido Democrático Revolucionario Hondureño. The Spanish republican exiles were also active, and they joined these groups to form the Frente Democrático de Exilados Americanos y Españoles. In the 1953 May Day parade, the exiled groups marched with 70,000 partisans demonstrating loyalty to President Arbenz. At the same time, Guatemala campaigned actively against the Caribbean dictators. With the fall of Arbenz in June 1954, the exiles fled Guatemala. After they were gone, Castillo Armas placed their names on a list of communist agents forbidden to return to Guatemala. The list included noncommunists, such as Venezuelan AD leaders, and the PRD leader, Juan Bosch.

Anastasio Somoza García's dictatorship in Nicaragua was another factor in the creation of resistance groups in exile, foremost in Costa Rica. In 1953, Nicaraguan leader Pablo Leal used Costa Rica as a base for collecting support for a revolutionary movement against Somoza. He traveled to Miami, where Cuban President Prío Socarrás pledged to support him and instructed him to get in touch with his representatives in Mexico City. With their help, arms were shipped to Costa Rica, which eventually were smuggled into Nicaragua. Leal went to Guatemala next, where he recruited Nicaraguan revolutionaries. By the end of 1953, these elements departed Guatemala for Costa Rica. Leal made the final preparations in Costa Rica, including the formation of the Partido Nacional Revolucionario. He next met with figures such as Dominican leader Bosch and Venezuelan politician Betancourt, and, together with Cuban Sergio Pérez, they helped in the acquisition of weapons. Of the 21 comrades who finally accompanied Leal, 16 were Nicaraguans and 5 of various nationalities.

This failed expedition resulted in the death of many, among them Amadeo Soler, a Dominican friend of Juan Bosch. Romulo Betancourt was depicted as the mastermind behind the plot and forced into serial exile.

Somoza was finally killed in 1956 by Rigoberto López Pérez, a young Marxist Nicaraguan poet who had previously been exiled in El Salvador. This, added to the sympathy demonstrated by Salvadorans to Somoza's killer, made Nicaraguan–Salvadoran relations tense. Especially sharp demands were put on El Salvador regarding the control of exiles, including the extradition of certain Nicaraguan exiles. El Salvador refused to extradite exiles for political reasons, thus reiterating its policy of asylum, provided the displaced individuals refrained from political activities in the host country. In similar fashion relative to their compatriots in Costa Rica, Nicaraguan exiles in Honduras were gathering near the border and enjoying a freedom never before experienced, under the umbrella of Honduras' Democratic Left government of Ramón Villeda Morales. Because Villeda Morales' situation was too precarious for foreign adventures, the activities of anti-Somoza exiles were not in the best interests of their host. Finally, the Honduran government interned the would-be invaders and took steps to deport them to Guatemala, to preclude their engagement in a planned insurgency.

Central America and the Caribbean countries entered the Cold War with many of its polities in a state of agitation. Political dynamics were characterized by recurrent shifts between democracy and dictatorship, redefining lines of alignment and generating streams of political exiles. For different reasons, Mexico and Costa Rica had become traditional sites of exile. Guatemala, up to the 1954 coup, and Venezuela, after the return to Democracy in 1958, also attracted large numbers of exiles, and Colombian Embassies were instrumental in granting asylum to many would-be exiles, despite the violence that erupted in that country in the late 1940s. Cuba played an ambiguous role, serving as a host country for Latin American exiles while generating waves of exiles from among its own citizens. Similarly, while persecuting his own political opposition and spearheading antcommunism, the dictatorship of Trujillo in the Dominican Republic hosted exiles as varied as the refugees from the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), Jewish refugees escaping Nazi Europe who were unable to find shelter almost anywhere,³⁷ and the well-known case of Peron in the 1950s. Rafael Trujillo even proudly played the card of being the architect of a doctrine of diplomatic humanitarian asylum, thus reflecting – within the limits of his

³⁷ At the 1938 Conference on Refugees in Evian, the Dominican Republic offered to accept up to 100,000 refugees. Trujillo's generous offer contrasted with the indifference of the other participant countries and was connected to his vision of racial improvement of the population, through the arrival of white immigrants which would preclude the country from becoming a mulatto or black nation. The first 400 Jewish refugees arrived in 1940. However, an unfavorable report by the Brookings Institution seems to have hampered the full use of this quota. See *Capacity of the Dominican Republic to Absorb Refugees. Findings of the Commission Appointed by the Executive Power of the Dominican Republic*. Ciudad Trujillo: Editora Montalvo, 1945.

ideological view and combined with his repressive policies – the increasing importance of humanitarian themes as part of foreign policy.³⁸

This ambiguity was not only found in the polities where democratic contestation was banned. Truly enough, most of the countries forcing exiles abroad were under dictatorial rule, with exile resulting from closed public spheres and proscribed political participation. However, even formal democratic administrations such as those of Costa Rica and Chile that provided a haven for political exiles from other Ibero-American countries, used expulsion as a means of settling accounts with their political oppositions. In Costa Rica, José Figueres, a prominent politician and economic entrepreneur, who criticized democratically elected President Rafael Angel Calderón, found himself expelled to Mexico between 1942 and 1944. In Mexico, Figueres joined a group of Latin American politicians who formed the Caribbean Legion that plotted against the ruling governments of the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. The policies of Calderón, expropriating German assets in the framework of World War II, alienated coffee growers and bankers of German descent and many conservatives, who backed Figueres. In 1948, a situation of political polarization and a short but bloody civil war resulted from contested electoral results. When Figueres took power at the head of a junta, Calderón was forced to flee into exile to Nicaragua and later to Mexico, where he stayed for nearly a decade.³⁹

The fourth tier further developed following the *coup d'état* in Brazil in 1964, as analyzed by James N. Green with a focus on the solidarity movement in the United States. The ups-and-downs of this movement were closely linked to the main issues central to U.S. politics. The interest in supporting the plight of exiles in the late 1960s was high, especially among intellectuals, students, and the clergy, and was intimately connected to the opposition to the American involvement in the Vietnam War. In the early 1970s, with the electoral defeat of George McGovern and the beginning of U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam in 1973, the consequent loss of steam of the antiwar movement was also reflected in the loss of interest in the Brazilian case. The movement of solidarity with Chile after the Pinochet coup would rekindle the interest in Latin America. According to Green, the Watergate hearings and Senator Frank Church's investigations on Washington's efforts to destabilize the Allende government revealed the depths of corruption and depravity of the Nixon administration and provided a broader political space for a policy discussion about human rights in Latin America. The work around Brazil had laid the groundwork for the Chilean solidarity movement.⁴⁰

³⁸ Henry Helfant, *La doctrina Trujillo del asilo diplomático humanitario*. Mexico: Editorial Offest Continente, 1947.

³⁹ Charles D. Ameringer, *The Caribbean Legion Patriots, Politicians, Soldiers of Fortune, 1946–1950*. University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 1996.

⁴⁰ James N. Green, "Clergy, Exiles and Academics: Opposition to the Brazilian Military Dictatorship in the United States, 1969–1974." *Latin American Politics and Society*, 45, 1 (2003): 87–117.

Chile was a country that had stabilized politically by the end of 1932 and followed formal democratic procedure until the coup of September 1973. Nonetheless, inner exile [*relegación*] and exile abroad [*destierro*] had persisted and were used massively by democratic administrations. Even under formal Democracy, Chilean political culture contained strong authoritarian and exclusionary elements enshrined constitutionally and reflected in the recurrent use of emergency laws promulgated whenever there was a political crisis. The use of emergency legislation created a situation of constitutional dictatorship that did not preclude the electoral game, but constrained participation and excluded those considered dangerous to the political system.⁴¹

As a matter of fact, Chile was the only country in Latin America to lack extraconstitutional changes of government between 1932 and 1973. In this Chile was exceptional. But institutional continuity, lack of *coups d'état*, and democracy are not synonymous:

In the 27 years after 1930 there were 16 laws or decree-laws of exceptional powers that imposed restrictions to freedom and allowed for a kind of “institutional dictatorship” during almost a total of four years, i.e. close to 20 percent of the time. When the country was not under a “regime of exception”, the possibility existed for the government of issuing such measures, integrating into the political culture the implicit menace of demanding extraordinary faculties, declaring a state of siege or a state of emergency.⁴²

Costa Rica was another case in which formal Democracy did not preclude the use of institutional exclusion as a central political tool. After the 1948 Civil War, the Junta government imprisoned thousands of political activities, expropriated personal assets, dismissed civil servants linked to the previous administration, and sent nearly 1 percent of the population into exile.⁴³ There is a transnational dynamic evident in the spread of individual leaders throughout the region, the emergence of political parties in exile, the establishment of cross-national political alliances, and counteralliances and transnational repressive operations targeting the oppositions in exile. On a regional level, one witnesses in Central America and the Caribbean Basin the incipient formation of a four-tiered structure of exile, which, beyond the individual countries’

⁴¹ Many laws of exception were enacted between 1933 and 1973, the most notorious being the Law of Internal Security of the State (Law 6026 of 1937) that proscribed both communists and nazis, and the Law of Defense of Democracy (8987 of 1948), used to exclude communists from work and political participation, forcing thousands to be relegated or forced into exile, among them, later to be Chile’s Nobel Laureate Pablo Neruda.

⁴² Brian Loveman and Elizabeth Lira, *Las ardientes cenizas del olvido: vía chilena de reconciliación política, 1932–1994*. Santiago de Chile: LOM, 2000, pp. 27–28.

⁴³ James Dunkerley, *Power in the Isthmus. A Political History of Modern Central America*. New York: Verso, 1988, p. 131; in Deborah J. Yashar, *Demanding Democracy. Reform and Reaction in Costa Rica and Guatemala, 1870s–1950s*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997, pp. 179–190. Bowman defines the Costa Rican system between 1948 and 1958 as a “semi-democracy” (Kirk S. Bowman, *Militarization, Democracy and Development: The Perils of Praetorianism in Latin America*. University Park: Penn State University Press, 2002).

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preoccupation with their own exiles and the exiles they hosted, started developing international networks trying to appeal to international organizations and states beyond the region to affect policies and regain power.

A generation later, the fate of persecuted citizens of individual countries turned increasingly to be of concern for the international community, debordering the nation-state contained treatment of political exile. The coup by Pinochet against the constitutional government of Salvador Allende was a major focus of concern, especially driven by the massive plight of Chileans looking for asylum in Santiago's embassies and, once relocated throughout the world, rekindling the banner of solidarity with the exiles in their fight for the restoration of democracy and against the human-rights violations of the dictatorship. No less fundamental in reconstructing the international arena was the effect of the Argentine military administration's policies of denial and persecution of its citizens. While Argentine authorities embarked on a policy of systematic disinformation and denial of human-rights violations, claiming it was the result of conspiratorial webs linked to international Communism, the increasing evidence shaped a dense web of critics on the transnational and international arena, which would radically change the discursive and political balance in favor of the exiles.⁴⁴

Among the concerned organizations and networks instrumental for this transformation into a dense organizational scenario defending human rights were civil associations and committees of solidarity in Europe and the United States; officers in these countries' administrations concerned with flagrant violations; political networks such as the Socialist International supporting persecuted political activists; domestic human-rights organizations, and transnational organizations like Amnesty International and Americas Watch that gained heightened profile and respectability as they contested the dubious explanations of targeted states about their record of humanitarian violations; powerful representatives of the international media such as the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*; concerned international bodies such as the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights centered in San José de Costa Rica or the UNHCR and its domestic representative agencies supporting the flow of refugees in European and other countries.

The *de facto* rulers were increasingly forced to argue and counterargue in terms of human rights, thus paradoxically reinforcing the hold of such discourse as the normative discourse that was about to supersede the previous hegemonic discourses of national sovereignty, at least on the declarative level. This transformation, also under effect in the intellectual arena, recreated the terms under

⁴⁴ David Sheinin, "How the Argentine Military Invented Human Rights in Argentina," in Carlos H. Waisman and Raanan Rein, Eds., *Spanish and Latin American Transitions to Democracy*. Brighton, UK: Sussex Academic Press, 2005, pp. 190–214; Roniger and Sznajder, *The Legacy of Human-Rights Violations in the Southern Cone*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 38–49.

which the plight of the exiles would be examined.⁴⁵ Exiles would henceforth find greater political space for their long-term activism in favor of the end of authoritarian rule, the restoration of democracy, and a full inquiry about the record of human-rights violations of the dictatorships. In the short term, however, many of them were forced to escape for their lives, sometimes even serially as the region plunged into a domino process of breakdown of civilian rule and instauration of authoritarian military or civilian–military dictatorships. In this sense, the last wave of repression will exacerbate trends already evident in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Patterns of Exile

Those who moved abroad did not follow a single pattern of expatriation, exile, and escape. There were many who managed to enter a foreign embassy, where they received diplomatic asylum, to leave later to a host country according to interregional and international norms of asylum. Others escaped the home country and sought territorial refuge in a foreign country. There were also those who, fearing for their lives, left with the support of human-rights or international refugee organizations. There were those who were pushed into exile after they were excluded from any possibility of finding employment, after being fired and included in a black list of ‘troublemakers.’⁴⁶ Finally, there were individuals who left the home country after spending time in prison, freed by the repressive government under the condition of being received by another country.⁴⁷

Often, exile began as the voluntary displacement of people who, without having been part of the ousted government, sympathized with it or were activists. In an authoritarian traditionalist pattern of rule, such individuals are usually forfeited persecution. By simply ceasing any political involvement, they are often spared repression and may be able to continue their routine life, now depleted from any political involvement. In this situation, the political realm is closed, but domains are still left open in the public spheres, as long as what occurs here does not interfere with the rulers’ understanding of politics, and as long as the masses are effectively depoliticized and demobilized. Such

⁴⁵ On the transformation of such discourses and the role of the intellectuals in the Southern Cone, see Luis Roniger and Leandro Kierszenbaum, “Los intelectuales y los discursos de derechos humanos: La experiencia del Cono Sur.” *Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe*, 16, 2 (2005): 5–36.

⁴⁶ In the case of Argentina there was a law (*Ley de prescindibilidad*, no. 21260/76) that allowed firing public employees under suspicion of connections with ‘subversive’ activities. This law was as ambiguous as the Law of State Security, which targeted people considered enemies of the state or of the nation. Similar legislation had existed in other countries as well since independence, as analyzed by Brian Loveman, *The Constitution of Tyranny*.

⁴⁷ María Luisa Tarrés, “Miradas de una Chilena,” p. 23; Pablo Yankelevich and Silvina Jensen, Eds., *Exilios. Destinos y experiencias bajo la dictadura militar*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones del Zorzal, 2007.

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was the case of Brazil from the 1964 coup until the institutional change that took place in December 1968. In this period, while the political system was controlled from above by the armed forces and the deposed civilian rulers fled the country into exile, it was still possible to conduct intellectual and academic life in a more-or-less open way, with Marxist texts and thriving public debates, even though the most radical elements of the Left still pursued the path of armed rebellion and guerrilla.⁴⁸

In political situations in which the rulers took a more totalistic approach in their fight against the Left, such as Argentina between 1976 and 1983 and Chile between 1973 and 1990, the penetration and ‘cleansing’ of civil society from Marxist influence and mobilization came together with a high measure of closure of the public spheres. In these situations, the repressive government aimed to redefine the basic tenets of society in a manner that demonized a wide spectrum of social and political forces, defined as ‘enemies of the nation.’ Even certain disciplines and professions were considered subversive ‘by nature’ and supporters of guerrilla insurrection, as in the case of psychology and psychoanalysis in Argentina. The changes undergone by these professions in the 1960s and 1970s were the grounds for their persecution:

Psychoanalysis was widely adopted by the Argentinean middle classes in the 1960s. By then, mental health in Argentina was confronting important changes. There was a “revolution” in psychiatry and psychology and hospitals incorporated services of psychopathology. In parallel, processes of insurgency and revolution in Latin America and the impact of the French May [of 1968] gave new meaning to the relationships of professional practice and politics in the framework of the authoritarian dictatorship of Onganía. Psychologists and psychoanalysts began to perceive themselves more as workers than as liberal professionals and, at the same time, favored treatments for free to the working classes. They were persecuted, their offices were invaded and they had to flee to exile because they had treated patients with social, political and armed militancy. For the military, these professionals were not only a possible source of information about the activities of the “subversive”, but they were also considered to be supporters of the guerrilla due to the professional help they provided to those in the underground.⁴⁹

All those falling into one of the ‘dangerous’ categories were liable to become victims of persecution and repression. This pattern generated a very strong incentive for displacement. In such a manner, many individuals coming from all parts of the political spectrum and civil society opted to leave – as if it were voluntary – making it difficult to trace a dividing line between expulsion and escape. Thus, even indirectly, the closure of the public spheres in these

⁴⁸ Parameswara Krishnan and Dave Odynak, “A Generalization of Petersen’s Typology of Migration.” *International Migration*, 25, 4 (1987): 385–397; Roberto Schwarz, “Culture and Politics in Brazil, 1964–1969” in Schwarz, *Misplaced Ideas: Essays on Brazilian Culture*. London: Verso, 1992, pp. 126–159.

⁴⁹ Silvina Jensen, “Política y cultura del exilio argentino en Cataluña,” in Pablo Yankelevich, Ed., *Represión y destierro*. La Plata: Editorial Al Margen, 2004, p. 125.

latter situations revived the old 19th-century options of *encierro*, *destierro*, or *entierro*, that is, to be in jail, in exile, or facing death.

In despair, many persecuted individuals did not have the possibility of choosing their destination but had to leave thorough the first available embassy or to the first country that would let them in. Here, sometimes ethnic and national origins played a role. Resorting to ethnic and national origins in order to obtain documents and the possibility to enter the ancestral country of origin was a possibility. Persecuted and threatened individuals turned in the plight to the representatives of Spain, Italy, Germany, the UK, Switzerland, and other European countries. Striking was the case of Israel, whose representatives were addressed by Latin American persecuted persons of Jewish origins, who, in most of the cases, were ideologically opposed to Zionism and the policies of the government of Israel.⁵⁰

But, in principle, while constrained to the same extent as past exiles in their decisions, 20th-century exiles had more open avenues. In particular, the framework of a global arena divided by ideological convictions determined that the question of asylum become intimately connected to foreign policy considerations and to the struggle for vilification of the opposite ideological camp:

Granting asylum to a refugee is an implicit critique of another state's treatment of its citizens, so that states are often quick to accept refugees from foes, but hesitant to accept them from friends. Such an asylum policy was common during the Cold War. . . . The US in the 1980s generally admitted Nicaraguans and Cubans, but rejected El Salvadorans and Haitians.⁵¹

This framework, which facilitated the exiles' move to countries with a value system close to their own, was replicated in the opposite end of the political spectrum by leftist exiles and refugees who went to Cuba and communist countries in Eastern Europe, as in the case of members of the Chilean Communist Party moving to East Germany.⁵²

With the increased development of means of transportation, many more individuals than in the past could move to locations a great distance from their homeland, thus highlighting pull factors such as the political and socioeconomic opportunities in settling in European or North American countries. Many Latin Americans went into exile in Sweden, the UK, France, Italy, West Germany, Holland, Belgium, Canada, and the United States.

Sweden, which became a pole of reception of political exiles for various reasons, deserves special attention. Since 1968, the Social-Democratic government of Olof Palme developed a policy of active neutrality oriented to the

⁵⁰ The links between escape and exile deserve special analysis and will be analyzed in a later section of this chapter, especially in connection with the cases of Israel and Italy, on which there is more documentation.

⁵¹ Niklaus Steiner, *Arguing about Asylum*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000, pp. 3–4.

⁵² Testimony of José Rodríguez Elizondo in Jerusalem, March 2000; and idem, *La pasión de Iñaki*. Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello, 1996.

Third World and sympathetic to the movements of liberation. Sweden had been a country of immigration since the eve of World War II, but had increasingly restricted its reception policies. In 1972, Sweden made the decision to allow entry and residence to political refugees only for humanitarian reasons or for reasons of family unification. Accordingly, the infrastructure developed to facilitate the absorption of immigrants, which involved social workers, teachers of Swedish, occupational assessors, and a framework of well-provided-for refugee camps, could be redirected to attend the needs of the political refugees arriving from South America in the wake of the military takeovers. The country was particularly receptive to the victims of Pinochet's persecution, who arrived after 1973. Sympathy toward Allende's experiment in Democratic Socialism touched a sensible chord in the context of Swedish Social Democracy and had brought about the establishment of a committee of solidarity with Chile in 1971, later replicated in similar committees of solidarity with other Latin American countries. This committee greatly enlarged its activities after the September 1973 coup. It published a bimonthly bulletin, which published 20,000 copies in its prime. The committee was dissolved 20 years after its foundation, in 1991, once Chile returned to Democracy. Chilean exiles and migrants became the largest community of Latin Americans in Sweden, reaching a total of 27,841 out of 47,980 individuals registered by the Central Bureau of Statistics of Sweden (SCB) in 1990.⁵³ Besides labor and study opportunities, freedom and stability, the core countries of the developed West also provided access to the international public sphere and the main domains in which not only politics but also human-rights violations were discussed and action could be taken against their authoritarian home governments.

Geographical or cultural proximity, especially if linked to democratic rule, were highly important factors as well. For example, many Chileans – among them the later Nobel Laureate Pablo Neruda – left for Argentina in the late 1940s, when the Communist Party was outlawed. Once again, after the 1973 military coup in Chile, another wave of exiles, including General Carlos Prats, the constitutionalist commander of the Chilean Army under Allende, crossed the Andes. In 1974 there were already 15,000 Chilean exiles in Argentina and 1,500 in Peru. In 1976, the military takeover in Argentina endangered the Chilean exiles and refugees there. The UNHCR intervened and relocated as many as 30,000 Chilean refugees and exiles to other Latin American countries, Europe, and Australia.⁵⁴ Accordingly, the figures indicated a progressive dispersion as many of the countries in Latin America slipped into military control. Partial data for 1984 reflect this trend in relation to Chilean expatriates: nearly

⁵³ In 1989, there were 26,292 Chileans in Sweden, but only, 2,396 Uruguayans, 2,341 Argentinians, and 1,907 Bolivians. Daniel Moore, "Latinoamericanos en Suecia," in Weine Karlsson, Ake Magnusson, and Carlos Vidales, Eds., *Suecia-Latinoamerica. Relaciones y cooperación*. Stockholm: LAIS, 1993, pp. 161–183.

⁵⁴ Alan Angell, "La cooperación internacional en apoyo de la democracia política: El Caso de Chile." *Foro Internacional*, 30, 2 (1989): 215–245.

47 percent of them were still in Latin America, now mainly in Venezuela (hosting 44 percent of them); 37 percent in Western Europe (Spain 10%, France 8.3%, Italy 6.6%, and Sweden 5.5%); and 8 percent in North America (of them 6.7% in Canada). Even Australia received 5 percent and Eastern Europe and Africa 3 percent. By then Chilean exiles were established in nearly 120 countries.⁵⁵

Similarly, throughout the century, most exiled Paraguayans left for Argentina as they sought to escape political persecution in their home country. Nonetheless, after 1954, General Alfredo Stroessner built an intricate network of spies and collaborators to infiltrate this community of exiles and émigrés in an attempt to control the oppositionary activities of the most politically active elements among them.

The case of Uruguay under military rule is also illustrative of the combined effects of exiles choosing neighboring countries as locales for their escape, subsequently superseded by expanding paths of dispersion. Around 1973, many Uruguayan political refugees and exiles went to Argentina, where they found shelter until local anti-Left groups and the military who took power persecuted them. Uruguayan exile was accompanied by a wave of migration of mixed socioeconomic and political motivations, composed of hundreds of thousands of people. By the late 1970s and 1980s, around half of the number had migrated to Argentina, but the United States and Australia had attracted a significant number of Uruguayan expatriates.

Another case of relocation in terms of geographical and cultural proximity involved the relocation of activists from the Caribbean Basin and Central America to Mexico in the 1950s, a period of political turbulence throughout those areas. As previously analyzed, Mexico granted hospitality and political asylum to the antidictatorial and progressive forces persecuted there.

After the Cuban revolution, in addition to fleeing to the United States, large groups of Cubans, many of them exiles, resettled in Costa Rica, Colombia, Mexico, and Panama, engrossing some of the earlier networks of co-nationals established in these countries. The case of Cuban exiles has been thoroughly analyzed in such a vast number of excellent works, especially for those relocating to the United States and Spain, that we have consciously refrained from addressing it in full in this book.

The across-the-border pattern of refuge becomes even more pronounced in situations of civil war, as illustrated by those who fled from El Salvador or Guatemala in the 1980s. The number of Salvadorans living abroad in 1980 totaled 750,000, a number that represented 16.2% of the country's population. The early 1980s migration further added to that number. According to UNHCR, Salvadoran refugees were living in all the countries of the region: 175,000 in Nicaragua, 120,000 in Mexico, 70,000 in Guatemala, 20,000 in

⁵⁵ Jaime Llambias-Wolff, "The Voluntary Repatriation Process of Chilean Exiles." *International Migration*, 31, 4 (1993): 579-597.

Honduras, 10,000 in Costa Rica, 7,000 in Belize, and 1,000 in Panamá.⁵⁶ Many of them moved on in further search of economic opportunities for livelihood, 1 million settling in the United States.⁵⁷

The proximity factor also weighed heavily in the case of exiles from Haiti, which was reinforced by the modest resources of most refugees. Even though they had been viewed with distrust and animosity since their early 19th-century invasion and spoke a different language than the Dominicans, many Haitians moved to the Spanish-speaking Dominican Republic, when they had to leave the homeland because of political persecution or oppression. Over the course of the 20th century, between 250,000 and 500,000 Haitians settled in the Dominican Republic. A more reduced number moved to the affluent United States, but moving to France was beyond the pale for most, even if there was a linguistic affinity and France was economically stable. Only about 4,500 Haitians lived in France in the 1980s, according to OFPRA (Office Français de protection des réfugiés et des apatrides, or French Office of Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons), an agency responsible for determining refugee status. It is hard to discriminate how many of the translocated Haitians were driven by political instability rather than by concerns with economic subsistence, but certainly the choice of the Dominican Republic reflects the weight of proximity. Other locations would be more attractive in terms of economic prospects alone, as the parallel move of many Dominicans leaving illegally to Puerto Rico, looking for jobs and possibly a ticket to the United States, seems to indicate.

Perhaps the most important intervening variables in selecting paths of exile have been the political environment and cultural setup in the prospective host countries. Most exiles escaping persecution by dictatorial rulers preferred to settle in democratic countries. A country close to their homeland, qualifying more or less as 'free' and 'democratic' would rank high. Manuel Jirón, a Nicaraguan who had to flee his home country both under the Somoza dictatorship and later under the Sandinistas, recalls how a community of co-nationals in exile formed in Somoza's times in San José de Costa Rica, with its members – among them Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, his spouse Violeta Chamorro, the "tormented poet" Manolo Cuadra, Teño López, and the intellectual Gonzalo Rivas Novoa – plotting and discussing Nicaragua's problems aloud in San José's coffee houses.⁵⁸

Yet, even if the country of reception was not democratic, as was the case of Nicaragua in the late 1940s and 1950s, it could provide a hospitable environment for exiles fleeing Costa Rica after the 1948 civil war. Somoza welcomed

⁵⁶ Celio Mármora, "Hacia la migración planificada inter-Latinoamericana: Salvadoreños en Argentina." *Estudios Migratorios Latinoamericanos* 1, 3 (1986): 275–293.

⁵⁷ Segundo Montes, "Migration to the United States as an Index of the Intensifying Social and Political Crises in El Salvador." *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 1, 2 (1988): 107–126.

⁵⁸ Manuel Jirón, *Exilio S.A. Vivencias de un nicaragüense en el exilio*. San José: Ediciones Radio Amor, 1983.

into Nicaragua those persecuted by the government of José Figueres, primarily individuals associated with former President Rafael Angel Calderón Guardia and his followers, the labor movement associated with the Communists and parts of the oligarchy. Anastasio Somoza, who had backed Calderón in the civil war, hosted the exiles. When, in 1954, Figueres let the Nicaraguan exiles to launch an invasion of their home country to overthrow Somoza, the Nicaraguan president retaliated by launching an invasion of Costa Rica in January 1955, integrating Costa Rican exiles in the attack that almost costed Figueres his presidency, but for the intervention of the Organization of American States and the United States.⁵⁹ As in the past, proximity to the home country was a plus, as it built up the hope of a prompt return.

If relocated far away, say in Europe, cultural affinity would weigh heavily in favor of Spain over other destinations. Although it was relatively underdeveloped compared with other European destinations at the time of the onset of repression in the 1970s, the sharing of the Spanish language was a major factor of attraction, even before democratization and even more so after Franco's death and the democratic opening. Testimonies of Latin American exiles in Sweden and Israel bear witness to the pull that Spain and Mexico exercised on them in spite of the better conditions provided them by the Swedish or Israeli authorities.⁶⁰

Spain increasingly attracted the largest numbers of Latin American exiles and refugees within Europe, in parallel to the arrival of many migrants motivated by economic reasons. Among Latin Americans, the most numerous groups in Spain by the mid-1980s were Argentines (42,358), Chileans (28,717), Uruguayans (10,966), and Dominicans (8,818). Other estimations put those numbers even higher. The Argentinean consulate in Madrid estimated 25,000 co-nationals resided in the city. Nearly 9,000 Argentines had permanent residency, and more than 3,000 had temporary residence. Another estimated 25,000 were undocumented. The consulate in Barcelona estimated that more than 25,000 Argentines had settled in Catalunya, and 5,000–6,000 were thought to reside in Southern Spain and some thousands more in the Balearic Islands. In the same period, 2,809 Chileans had obtained Spanish citizenship, 4,031 held residence permits, and 1,877 were permanent residents. Around 20,000 Chileans were estimated to be in Spain as undocumented persons, most of them in the areas of Madrid (over 15,000) and Barcelona (around 5,000). In the same period, most Uruguayans in Spain were in the area of Barcelona (more than 5,000). These figures, which include those naturalized and those undocumented, are an indication of the attraction of Spain for exiles, represented

⁵⁹ G. Pope Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1997, p. 106.

⁶⁰ Interview with Elda Gonzalez, Madrid, 26 June 1998; Diana Guelar, Vera Jarach, and Beatriz Ruiz, *Los chicos del exilio*. Buenos Aires: País del nomeolvides, 2002; Orit Gazit, 'No Place to Call Home.' *Political Exile, Estrangement and Identity. Processes of Identity Construction Among Political Exiles from Latin America to Israel, 1970–2004*. Jerusalem: Shaine Working Papers No. 11, 2005.

mostly by Argentines, Chileans, and Uruguayans, as well as for migrants, represented mostly by Dominicans. It is hard to distinguish between the cultural affinity and the economic and political attraction, which became increasingly important in the case of Spain. And yet, personal recollections and memories bear testimony to the weight of the first factor, even before Spain turned into an economically or politically open country. The pull factors overwrote distances for prospective exiles from South America, thus reversing the late 19th-century and early 20th-century pattern of relocation to the Americas.⁶¹

Other European destinations such as Sweden or France received a much smaller number of exiles and refugees. When the preceding factors played a secondary role in shaping the routes of escape, political connections affected the differential number of relocated individuals from various Latin American countries. Thus, as we have seen, many more Chileans than other South Americans arrived in Sweden because of the connections of the Chilean Social Democracy (SD) and the SD in power in the host country. Other Scandinavian countries also received Latin American exiles, though a less significant number. For instance, until August 1987, Denmark had received only 800 Chileans.⁶²

Escape and Exile

When there is institutionalized repression, state terror, and generalized violence, as in the 1970s in South America, and in the 1980s in Central America, there is a flow of individuals fleeing for their lives and looking, often desperately, for asylum. In such situations, there is no certainty that possible host countries will come forward and save those willing to escape political persecution. Escape is often enabled by the personal decisions and vision of individuals representing potential host countries, sometimes taking action on behalf of politically persecuted people, helping far beyond their formal instructions. Being guided by their concern for fellow human beings and humanitarian values, these representatives of foreign governments and international organizations may take risks inspired by human-rights values that had become enshrined in the international and transnational arena in recent generations. The existence of a fourth tier clearly influences attitudes that facilitate escape and exile.

Such situations, clouded by political violence, imprisonment, torture, disappearance, and assassinations, are dramatic:

Whoever decides to come to the [Italian] consulate, knows that, in the best of the cases, s/he will have to leave Argentina, the family, the house, the work, all the things that s/he has built or fought for until then. They will have to start again from zero in Italy,

⁶¹ The source for these figures is the Spanish government, UNHCR, and NGOs, as cited in CISPLA, *Latinoamericanos: refugiados políticos en España*, Valencia, 1982. See also Chapter 6.

⁶² Daniel Moore, Olsen Frykman, and Leonardo Rossiello, "La literatura del exilio Latinoamericano en Suecia (1976-1990)." *Revista Iberoamericana*, 59 (1993): 164-165.

a country they know only through the fables told by their parents. This is a country in which they will find themselves without a house and without money, isolated and where it will be hard to find work. Such a step involves a kind of laceration accepted only by those who know they are being looked for – generally after the kidnapping of someone close, who probably had given away a name, since nobody resists torture – and having spent all the money and with no shelters, has no alternative but to wander around the city, expecting to be abducted at any moment and taken away amidst the indifference of onlookers.⁶³

The decision to escape and go into exile became a major decision for many who might or might not become victims of repression and had to decide on a step that would affect their lives and the lives of thousands of co-nationals for years to come.

In this section we analyze cases of escape and exile in the 1970s, specifically those cases in which individuals feeling the angst of persecution resorted to the aid of foreign diplomats to exit the home country. One generation after World War II and the Holocaust, a minority of diplomats and foreign representatives in Latin America had a special sensibility to persecution, probably sharing the values of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.⁶⁴ The cases selected here are those of the individuals who contacted the Italian and the Israeli representatives in two South American countries: Chile and Argentina.

The abrupt onslaught of the military *coup d'état* in Chile created a sudden and massive wave of escapees entering the grounds of the various embassies and diplomatic residencies in Santiago, in search of diplomatic asylum. Following the coup in September 1973, several gestures of solidarity by diplomats took place. A key figure in mobilizing the diplomats stationed in Chile was Swedish Ambassador Harald Edelstam, who became known as “the Raoul Wallenberg of the 1970s” for his commitment to help refugees. “Ambassador Edelstam was credited with single-handedly preventing troops from storming the Cuban embassy and with providing protection for about 20 Chileans, Brazilians and other political refugees who had sought asylum there. When Mr. Edelstam protested the breach of the normal diplomatic safe-conduct affairs, he was beaten by Chilean soldiers and armed police.”⁶⁵ Socialist International resolved to ask governments led by member parties to provide asylum quotas to those who were currently escaping from Pinochet.⁶⁶

⁶³ Enrico Calamai, *Niente asilo politico. Diario di un console italiano nell'Argentina dei desaparecidos*. Rome: Editori Riuniti, 2003, p. 160.

⁶⁴ See Micheline Ishay, *The History of Human Rights*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.

⁶⁵ Edelstam was expelled from Chile in December 1973. “1974 Legislative Session: 4th Session, 30th Parliament, Wednesday, 27 March 1974, Afternoon Seating,” available at http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/HANSARD/30th4th/3op_04s_740327p.htm, accessed 5 June 2006.

⁶⁶ “Reserved” message from the [Israeli] Embassy in Santiago to the South American desk at the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem, on the subject of the situation of the radical elements after

Israeli diplomats in Santiago, surprised by the violent character of the military coup, confronted a situation in which persecuted leftists approached them in search of asylum. They lacked coherent directives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jerusalem, as Israeli law did not contemplate the possibility of granting asylum to political refugees. Nevertheless, Israeli Ambassador Moshe Tov and his second-in-command Benjamin Oron began to assist victims of military persecution on their own initiative. In the first stage, they redirected those individuals to the Swedish Embassy, providing financial support to help feed the increasing number of asylees. Later on, when the Swedish could not shelter any more persecuted people on their premises, they received political refugees in the Israeli Embassy located in an apartment building in central Santiago. The Israelis, different from the Italians and the Mexicans for instance, were not perceived by the military authorities as providing asylum, and accordingly their embassy was less targeted by police, trying to preclude the access of potential refugees. Moreover, most of the 'guests' at the Israeli Embassy were not interested in reaching Israel as their place of exile and were assisted by the Israeli diplomats in obtaining safe conducts and asylum in other embassies. Often the Israeli diplomats moved these individuals in their own cars, taking advantage of their diplomat licence plates and immunity. Soon, the Israeli diplomats moved to a third stage of looking for the release of political prisoners and trying to find information about people whose whereabouts were unknown. After long negotiations with the Chilean Air Force, the Israeli Embassy managed to liberate some prominent political prisoners, among them Benjamin Teplizky, secretary-general of the UP coalition, and Luis Vega, a high official of the Ministry of Interior under Allende.⁶⁷ The Labor Party, which governed Israel until 1977 and was a member of the Socialist International, complied with the resolution by the latter and took about 50 Chilean political refugees, Jews and non-Jews, who were granted residence in Israel and were received through acts and expressions of solidarity.⁶⁸

Similarly, and to a much larger extent, the Italian authorities had to deal with a substantial number of Chileans and foreigners seeking asylum in the residence of the ambassador in Santiago. Between 1973 and 1975 several hundreds of refugees managed to smuggle themselves into the grounds. According to the testimony of Brazilian exile in Chile José Serra, who found shelter there, there was a time between October 1973 and May 1974 that the embassy hosted more than 600 asylees, men, women, and children, both Chilean nationals

the coup the intervention of the Social Democrats and the Socialist International," in Israel's National Archive, doc.5376/22 no. 717, dated 8 October 1973.

⁶⁷ Interview with Benjamin Oron, Jerusalem, 9 August 2000.

⁶⁸ Interview with lawyer Nahum Solán, Jerusalem, 12 August 2003. Solán, who at the time was a functionary of the Absorption Ministry, mentioned various cases, among them that of the Chilean writer Manuel Rivano, who years later relocated from Israel to Sweden.

and foreigners who were exiled in democratic Chile.⁶⁹ The diary of Enrico Calamai, who served in a diplomatic position on the grounds for two months in late 1974, attests to the organizational capacity of the refugees who had taken shelter in the Italian diplomatic residence. They had organized themselves democratically in committees with representatives of the Chilean parties, dealt with all aspects of daily life in the dire conditions in which they lived, negotiated with the Italian representatives, and even defied the Pinochet government by commemorating the first anniversary of the military coup with black flags and a mass mourning.⁷⁰

This mass of asylees would need the intercession of the diplomatic representatives of Italy before the Chilean military administration to obtain safe conducts to leave Chile, while the Christian Democratic government of Italy had not recognized the government of Pinochet. In parallel, the Chilean government could not force its way into the diplomatic grounds, but did create a security belt to preclude the exit of the asylees and the access of others seeking asylum, while it refused to grant the safe conducts. In particular, the Chilean military were after Humberto Sotomayor, second-in-command in the hierarchy of the MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria, or Revolutionary Leftist Movement), who had entered the diplomatic residence with his family.⁷¹ Eventually, after many months of negotiations, the Chilean government granted safe conducts allowing the asylees sheltered in the foreign embassies to exit the country for Italy and other countries. Until May 1974, the Chilean government let thousands of those who had taken refuge in the diplomatic missions – both 1,265 nationals and 4,949 aliens radicated in Chile – exit the country. By early April 1975, all those who had taken refuge in the Italian diplomatic residence had left Chile. The Italian diplomats had made efforts to find them asylum in other countries, primarily non-Communists to Australia and Communists to Rumania.⁷² Italy preferred to be selective in granting asylum to leftists coming from Chile, especially because of the influence of right-wing circles close to those in power (P-2) and in the context of the Cold War. Asylum was accordingly restricted. An October 1974 report by the OAS indicates that only 228 such individuals (aliens and Chileans) had been received by Italy until mid-1974, far behind the number of individuals finding asylum elsewhere⁷³ (see the following list).

⁶⁹ José Serra, “The Other September 11.” *Dissent*, winter 2004, available at <http://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/?article=411>, accessed 5 June 2006.

⁷⁰ Calamai, *Niente asilo politico*, p. 90.

⁷¹ Calamai, *Niente asilo politico*, pp. 95–97, 100.

⁷² Interamerican Commission of Human-Rights, Organization of American States, “Report on the status of human-rights in Chile: Findings On the Spot. Observations in the Republic of Chile, 22 July–2 August 1974.” OEA/Ser.L/V/II.34, doc. 21 corr.1, 25 October 1974, available at <http://www/cidh.org/countryrep/Chile74eng/chap13.htm>, accessed 4 June 2006; Tomaso de Vergottini, *Cile: diario di un diplomatico, 1973–1975*. Rome: Koinè, 2000, pp. 118 and 238–241.

⁷³ OEA, “Report on the status of human-rights in Chile,” note 10.

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Country	Number of asylum-seeking individuals
Argentina	902
France	854
Mexico	805
Sweden	649
Federal Republic of Germany	594
Panama	436
Cuba	374
Russia	263
Venezuela	249
Italy	228
Netherlands	201
Peru	189
Spain	162
Colombia	156
Austria	152

The pattern of repression in Argentina was different, with a spiral of increasing violence taking place in tandem with the politicization and polarization of the public domain in the democratic interregnum of 1973–1976. The coup of March 1976 did not diminish violence, but rather obliterated the institutions and legal mechanisms that could operate as countervailing weights to the onslaught of institutional – yet partially uncoordinated – violence against those suspected of leftist leanings. Individuals started escaping in the last stages of the democratic downfall, and, with the deepening of generalized violence and disappearances, sought ways of escape, often desperately. Embassies were told by the authorities to take measures to avoid letting escapees seeking asylum enter their premises. Analyzing the cases of the Italian and Israeli diplomatic envoys and representatives, one cannot but stress the key role played by individual foreign officials, often in clear defiance of hierarchical administrative rules or in advance of the regulations decided by their central authorities, be they ministries of Foreign Affairs or agencies of immigration.

The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs opposed any intervention in favor of those seeking asylum, especially having the precedent of their embassy in Chile flooded with asylees. Enrico Calamai, who had been stationed as Italian consul in Buenos Aires since 1972, was sent in late October 1974 to Santiago, where he was exposed to the misery of the Chilean asylees in the embassy there. Once back in Argentina and facing the plight of Argentinean activists on the run – most of them of Italian descent – who sought a way to escape the tightened circle of repression, Calamai took the decision to help many of these individuals to escape, even defying the directives:

Clearly, the Argentineans expect the full cooperation of the Italian diplomats, in order to avoid the repetition of what happened in Santiago and not to made public what was about to occur in the country. The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had the same

expectations of us. It was a coincidence of points of view that since the beginning was unacceptable and impossible to understand. Any behavior outside this line would carry serious consequences for a diplomatic career.⁷⁴

Being approached by relatives and friends of the individuals on the run, Calamai opted to build an 'underground' network with Filippo di Benedetto, a representative of the Italian trade unions in Argentina, and Giangiacomo Foà, a journalist of the *Corriere della Sera* to help the persecuted individuals, using one of the offices of the Italian consulate in Buenos Aires as a shelter. The latter cooperated through their intimate knowledge of hundreds of associations of Italians in Argentina to send individuals in need to Calamai. Foà, well aware of the extent of repression in Argentina, used information he received from Calamai to publicize the plight of the persecuted and condemn the Argentinian military in the most widely read Italian newspaper. These activities eventually led to his expulsion from the country. Calamai used his diplomatic prerogatives and issued passports and visas to hundreds of individuals, and he even accompanied some of these escapees to the border in order to facilitate their exit from the country. The decision to help those in flight involved both a personal and institutional risk. Although the consul was willing to receive whoever arrived, he had to personally examine each case in order to ensure that the person was not a provocateur or an informant sent by the military authorities. Many were sent through Uruguay, even if they knew that the Argentinean security forces operated in that country too. Still, the intense traffic between the two countries on the River Plate and the requirement of only a personal ID instead of passports led them to use this path of escape.⁷⁵ Until 2000, Calamai's dedicated work in favor of the fleeing individuals was kept secret, as it obviously ran against the directives of the Italian Foreign Ministry.⁷⁶

Even more convoluted was the role played by the Israeli diplomats and representatives in Argentina during the peak of repression in the late 1970s, which affected many individuals of Jewish origins, who in their plight contacted the former as they sought ways of escape.⁷⁷

The relationships between Israel and Argentina, which had sunk to a nadir during the period following Adolf Eichmann's kidnapping in 1960 and his transferal to Jerusalem for trial there,⁷⁸ had improved notoriously. At the onset of military rule, they could even qualify as cordial and close. On the international level, Israel had turned into a clear ally of the United States, thus

⁷⁴ Calamai, *Niente asilo politico*, pp. 139–140.

⁷⁵ Calamai, *Niente asilo politico*, pp. 161, 250–251.

⁷⁶ Maria Adriana Bernardotti and Barbara Bongiovanni, "Aproximaciones al estudio del exilio argentino en Italia," in Pablo Yankelevich, Ed., *Represion y destierro*. La Plata: Ediciones al Margen, 2004, pp. 53–55.

⁷⁷ The following analysis is based on Mario Sznajder and Luis Roniger, "From Argentina to Israel: Escape, Evacuation and Exile," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 37, 2 (2005): 351–377.

⁷⁸ Raanan Rein, *Argentina, Israel and the Jews. Perón, the Eichmann Capture and After*. Bethesda, MD: University Press of Maryland, 2003.

confronting the USSR and the Soviet bloc in the Middle East both directly and indirectly. Israel was considered to have a strong influence in Washington, an idea that prevailed both in military circles and among other elites as well, and prompted the view that it was convenient to maintain good relations with Israel in this regard. Additionally, the Argentinean military commands were impressed by the Israeli Defense Forces military prowess and its capacity to ensure the survival of a country in hostile surroundings. Ensuing commercial relationships developed and involved the sale of Argentinean meat to Israel and the sale of Israeli arms to Argentina.⁷⁹

Paradoxically, however, this admiration was mixed with apprehension and mistrust, as parts of the military high ranks feared a presumed Zionist plan to infiltrate Argentina and take over Patagonia. According to this imagined scheme, known as the Andinia plan, and much in concordance with the doctrine of national security, parts of the local Jewish community were seen as collaborators of the Zionists, and their loyalty to Argentina was to be suspected. Needless to say, this mistrust of co-nationals was imbued with open anti-Semitism in sectors of the armed forces.⁸⁰

Ambiguity thus dominated this set of relationships. The military junta strongly emphasized that it did not carry out anti-Jewish policies and stressed their good relationships with Israel as part of the anticommunist front led by the United States, while they simultaneously mistrusted the loyalty of the Argentine Jews. Furthermore, the military could not fully follow the nuances of Jewish identity, on the basis of their conceptual confusion regarding who was “Jewish,” “Israelite,” or “Israeli.” This confusion would be used tactically by the Israeli diplomats and representatives of the Jewish Agency (JA) so as to attempt to help those fearing persecution and repression.

Israel did not possess a special statute for refugees or political exiles, but throughout the years had received thousands of Jews escaping persecution by

⁷⁹ In 1977–1981, Israel provided 14 percent of Argentina’s military purchases. Germany led the list, providing 33 percent, the United States 17 percent – despite the embargo of 1978 – France 14 percent and the UK 12 percent. Behind were other providers of arms such as Switzerland, Belgium, Spain, and Austria. Israeli sales rose after 1982, when the western countries imposed the embargo effectively. Bishara Bahbah, “Israel’s Military Relationships with Ecuador and Argentina.” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 15, 2 (1986), pp. 76–101; and Joel Barromi, “Israel frente a la dictadura argentina. El episodio de Córdoba y el caso Timerman,” in Leonardo Senkman and Mario Sznajder, Eds., with the cooperation of Edy Kaufman, *El Legado del Autoritarismo*. Buenos Aires: GEL, 1995, p. 348.

⁸⁰ Even in 2003, 20 years after the fall of the military government, versions of the Andinia plan still surface. In August 2003, different sources attributed to the chief of the army, General Roberto Bendini, a statement – made at the high military academy, the Escuela Superior de Guerra – in the sense that alien interests were trying to steal Patagonian resources. According to the source, Bendini claimed that “for now there is no definitive enemy,” although he added that the activities of “small Israeli groups” and NGOs are being closely observed. In the case of these “small Israeli groups” Bendini explained that they arrive inadvertently under the “guise of tourism” (<http://www.radio10.com.ar/interior/home.html>). In light of the reactions generated by his comments, General Bendini denied he had singled out any specific groups (Clarín, 13 September 2003).

different governments.⁸¹ Israel took in such individuals within the framework of its basic constitutional laws, primarily the Law of Return that entitled every Jew who immigrated to automatically receive Israeli citizenship on arrival, enjoying full civil and political rights. When facing a threat to the lives of individuals of Jewish origin in any place in the world, Israel could thus use the legal–institutional mechanisms that allow and favor their immigration and integration as citizens. The JA was the institutional mechanism in charge of regulating Jewish immigration from countries with which Israel had diplomatic relations. The representatives of the JA were those charged with processing applications of those who wished to immigrate to Israel legally and were able to do it openly, through the regular immigration procedures.

Under the PRN (Proceso de Reorganización Nacional, or National Reorganization Process) in Argentina, a situation with few precedents came about. Jews whose family members had been detained and disappeared desperately appealed to the representatives of the JA, the consular representatives, and Israeli diplomats. People of Jewish origin who felt threatened by the wave of terror and the persecution taking place there began to rapidly apply for help through these channels.⁸² The high number of cases largely surpassed expectations. The question was how to proceed, and which policies to adopt concerning cases of individuals under severe fears or life-threatening danger, and who had often gone underground and were sought after by the local authorities and security forces of Argentina.

A process of pragmatic decision-making was initiated by the Israeli representatives stationed in Argentina, which involved the representatives of the JA as well as the Israeli diplomats. These representatives stationed on the ground found themselves on the spot and had to deal with the pleas for help coming from the persecuted. The persecution, evacuation, and exile of these individuals from the countries of the Southern Cone were not objects of discussion

⁸¹ Among these were the Holocaust survivors, expatriates of their native lands, who were persecuted and annihilated by Nazism and rejected by many countries during the Second World War; many of the Jews escaping Arab countries in the Middle East and North Africa, who were forced to leave their countries of origin almost with no resources, as a consequence of the Arab–Israeli conflict and the establishment of the state of Israel; and more recently, the Jews from the former Soviet Union.

⁸² According to testimonies by Ran Curiel and Dany Recanati, they immediately began receiving family members of detainees and *desaparecidos* following their arrival in Argentina in 1976 at the Israeli Embassy and as head of the JA delegation, respectively. Yet, according to Curiel, at first many of the Jews who were persecuted did not appeal solely to the Israeli representatives, and only later, when the Israeli delegation received permission to make “consular” visits to Jewish prisoners, an option not available to other diplomatic missions, did the family members appeal mainly to the Israeli Consulate. This seems to have been buttressed by a diplomatic initiative of Allen (“Tex”) Harris of the American Embassy in Buenos Aires to orientate the relatives of Jewish background to the Israeli consulate for assistance. Testimony of Ran Curiel, Jerusalem, 12 September 2003, and interview with Dany Recanati, 20 April 1990, available at the Section of Oral Interviews, Institute of Contemporary Jewry [henceforth: ICJ], Jerusalem, no. 216 (2).

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or factors in the process of decision-making and had no priority in the agenda of high-level politicians, governmental officials, or in the Israeli Parliament. In theory, the lower-level representatives were merely in charge of carrying out the policies of the government and Israeli institutions, but in fact they became the initiators of policies that were formalized through practice.

Nonetheless, some of the Israeli representatives stationed in Argentina felt it was their duty to stand against anti-Semitism, to help persecuted Jews to escape and send them to Israel, where they would be safe. These diplomats shared an ethos that depicted the State of Israel as a shelter for persecuted Jews. In very wide terms, the Zionist ethos saw Jews in the diaspora as “exiles” and the process of their ingathering in Israel as a “dis-exile,” i.e., the return of descendants of a people expelled and dispersed from the home country almost 2,000 years ago. The persecuted Argentineans of Jewish origin could rely on this ethos to find a way of escaping the trap set by the military, but they did not share it. On the contrary, motivated by radical leftist positions, many of them were highly critical of the Israeli position in the international scene and saw Israel only as a temporary shelter, a site of exile, perhaps to be left shortly after escaping Argentina or once the situation in the home country returned to democracy. These contrasted visions could be reconciled only because of the seriousness of their plight.

Both leftist and rightist governments in Israel were willing to receive the individuals of Jewish origins who had to flee for their lives in Argentina, even if the latter’s political visions were antithetical to the Israeli official strategies in the Cold War and the Israeli–Palestinean conflict. Even before the 1976 *coup d’état*, efforts were made to ‘save’ young Jews who had joined revolutionary movements, either of Peronist leanings or other orientations, and who, in some cases, were becoming part of the guerrillas.⁸³ Both the foreign minister as well as leading political figures expressed an uncompromised commitment with rescuing those individuals who feared for their physical integrity in the

⁸³ Nahum Solán, representing the Zionist Youth Organization and belonging to the Zionist-Socialist MAPAM (Mifleguet Poalim Meuhedet, or United Workers–Party), remembers his journey to Argentina in 1975 as an envoy of the JA. Once there, he tried to contact the young men and women who had shifted from the Zionist–Socialist groups toward Argentinean leftist groups, such as the ERP (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo, or People’s Revolutionary Army) and the Montoneros, motivated by the desire to participate in the revolutionary struggle. Nonetheless, many of them had doubts after discovering anti-Semitic prejudices, which prevailed in such groups formed by many Catholics. But as they were already ‘inside’ the underground movements, they saw no other options but remaining there. Desertion would be considered as treason to the cause and could even bring about the death penalty. At one point, Solán remembers traveling to the hills in the province of Córdoba and managing to meet with a score of young people who were living through that experience. These belonged to a left-wing Zionist organization that had lost dozens of members to ‘subversive’ leftist movements such as the ERP. Among these former members, six individuals had returned to Argentina from Israel to join the guerrilla movement. Solán reportedly managed to convince twelve of them to abandon the local leftist movements and leave for Israel. Interview with Solán, Jerusalem, 12 August 2003.

atmosphere of repression and terror. Emblematic is Menahem Begin, leader of the Israeli National Right opposition that within months would win the elections and the government after overthrowing Yitzhak Rabin's Labor coalition, who voiced this view as he visited Argentina in August 1976. In a closed meeting with the Zionist representatives in Argentina, Begin reportedly said that "Israel has to help every persecuted Jew. This should bear no regard to his/her political ideas, whatever these may be." Interpolated by one of the Israeli envoys who held that a great part of the young persecuted individuals belonged to the extreme Left, and that, on arriving in Israel, they would join the extraparliamentarian anti-Zionist groups, Begin responded: "They can associate with Matzpen [anti-Zionist, extreme Left] in Israel for all I care. Israel is obliged to save them."⁸⁴ Begin embodied a point of view widely found in Israel and shaped by the vision of the Holocaust, which predicated a historical role for Israel as a Jewish state with a mandate to help any Jew in distress. This became especially crucial in cases in which elements of political persecution were being mixed with anti-Semitism, as was the case in Argentina. And yet once in power as prime minister in 1977, Begin failed to shape the course of agenda setting because of the weight carried by the positions of the Israeli ambassador, the local Jewish leadership, and other diplomatic and commercial interests.⁸⁵

The view of the need to evacuate the persecuted individuals was shared by the head of JA representatives in Argentina, Dany Recanati, who tried to assist in the escape of the persecuted individuals, other diplomatic and consular representatives in Argentina, along with figures such as Rabbi Roberto Graetz and Rabbi Marshall Meyer.⁸⁶

Recanati began receiving appeals for help and processed them, being aware that the local authorities considered many of these individuals to be subversives and terrorists. This does not mean that these representatives did not consult with their superiors in the JA or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (henceforth,

⁸⁴ Aryeh Dayan, "Thanks to Menahem Begin." *Kol Hair*, 9 September 1987, p. 34 (in Hebrew). Matzpen was a small, Trotskyist and anti-Zionist extraparliamentary group, ostracized by most political forces in Israel. Various Israeli figures visited Argentina during those years, including former prime minister Itzhak Rabin, Yigal Alon, and the president of the JA, Arie Dultzin. The Israeli diplomats who received and accompanied them in Buenos Aires repeatedly brought up the problem of the persecuted and missing individuals. In light of reactions such as Begin's during his visit to Argentina in 1976, it is difficult to understand how the issue was not projected to the center of public concerns in Israel.

⁸⁵ In spite of the identification of these factors, it is hard to evaluate the relative weight of each one on the official agenda setting. This is not possible before a full opening of archives in the future, on 'sensitive' issues like the arms industry, probably not before 2016.

⁸⁶ Rabbi Marshall Meyer and Rabbi Roberto Graetz were key figures in the defense of those who were politically persecuted. Without enjoying diplomatic immunity and often endangering themselves and their families, they undertook a huge effort in the area of human-rights preservation. This was publicly recognized when Argentina returned to democracy, especially in the case of Marshall Meyer, who not only was nominated to the CONADEP (Comisión Nacional Sobre la Desaparición de Personas, or National Commission of Inquiry on the Disappeared) but who also received the highest Argentine decoration, the Order of General San Martín.

MFA) in Jerusalem in order to receive precise instructions, establish the limits of what was permissible, and approve whatever was being practiced *in situ*. Yet the modules of escape, evacuation, and exile were shaped on the spot rather than derived from the framework of high-level politics and administration. In fact, it was the contrasting attitudes and, sometimes, clashes between Ambassador Ram Nirgad and senior JA representatives such as Dany Recanati and Itzhak Pundak that seem to have led to upper-level meetings in Jerusalem and to the formalization of the procedures and their rerouting to the JA and MFA representatives in South America. Beyond the personal level, the confrontation reveals the crucial role played by competing interpretations of issues and problems and the alternative worldviews that underlie the positions of individuals who were expected to act in unison.⁸⁷

The confrontation was shaped by the cautious position of the ambassador, who in 1976 was willing to intercede only on behalf of Israeli citizens in trouble, as against the representatives of the JA and some of the junior staff of the embassy, who followed a broader mandate that included helping Argentine citizens of Jewish background. This case, which led to the liberation and evacuation of eight individuals, was the first case of open recognition by the Argentinean authorities of the *locus standi* of Israel regarding Argentine Jews.⁸⁸ It was also the first case of an ongoing, but tense, cooperation between the Israeli ambassador and the JA representatives.⁸⁹

As there was a growing consciousness of the problem, and as the tensions generated in Argentina required adjudication, a series of meetings took place in Jerusalem around June–July 1976, aimed at coordinating the stands of the MFA, the JA and other agencies (the Ministry of Interior and the Immigration Absorption Ministry). JA officials discussed with the Israeli MFA the issue of the families of the persecuted individuals, specifically those families within which some of the members were not Jewish. They decided to assist any such individual – whether Jewish or not – in escaping the country, because it was assumed that the arrival of any such family member to Israel would accelerate the rescue process of those left behind.⁹⁰ Instructions were similarly drafted

⁸⁷ Documentation on this confrontation abounds in the archives, in the form of reserved reports, e.g., by Itzhak Pundak to Avraham Argov, 14 February 1977; to Almogi and Dulzin, 6 September 1977; and to Almogi, 12 October 1977, Central Zionist Archives, C85/199, and a telegram of protest by Dr. Reznicki of the DAIA to Almogi (with copy to Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan) against the declarations of Pundak aired on Israeli radio on 30 June 1977, regarding the situation in Argentina. We are grateful to Dr. Leonardo Senkman who made available copies of these still undisclosed documents.

⁸⁸ See Barromi, “Israel frente a la dictadura,” pp. 325–335; and the testimony by Israel Even Shoshan, 11 November 1990, ICJ, No. 216 (1).

⁸⁹ Ambassador Nirgad and JA director’s representative Yitzhak Pundak had serious differences of opinion concerning the labeling of the military rulers as anti-Semitic, images that Pundak had circulated in Israel. See Senkman, “Israel y el rescate”; and Marcel Zohar, *Free my People to Hell. Betrayal in Blue and White; Israel and Argentina: How the Jews Persecuted by the Military Were Neglected*. Tel Aviv: Zitrin, 1990 (In Hebrew).

⁹⁰ Secret memorandum sent by Joshua Wolberg, chief of the Latin American section of the Department of Immigration of the JA in Latin America, 11 June 1976; this document was endorsed

regarding the possible treatment and evacuation of individuals whose lives were at risk in South America.⁹¹

The instructions were intended to be rerouted to South America – not only to Argentina – and specified the procedures to be followed with regard to individuals in danger, defined as “those who were persecuted for their Judaism, their participation in Zionist activities or their political activity in general, and who were under physical threat due to their personal background or their relatives’ activities.” The instructions explicitly excluded individuals who were fleeing the authorities for having committed financial offenses, terrorist acts, or petty crimes. Leonardo Senkman sums up the prescriptive norms:

It was the functionary’s task to carefully interrogate the individual with regards to his/her personal history in order to test the authenticity of the motives of persecution. . . . The Israeli Embassy, the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, and a local security official [at the Jewish Agency], were to receive a synopsis of the investigation. Following the ambassador’s consent, the immigration emissary was to organize the evacuation via neighboring countries or directly to Israel. Under precise instructions, the Department of Immigration was to be on the side but unnoticed during the immigration procedure and the escaping individual was not to carry compromising documents mentioning Israel as the final destination; only in outstanding cases, when there was no other alternative, could the Jewish Agency offer Israeli transit documents [*laissez passer*] subordinated by the approval of the local [Israeli] Ambassador. When possible, it was recommended that the individuals should travel on their own to neighboring countries after receiving financial aid from the Jewish Agency [and once abroad they would receive an Israeli *laissez passer*].⁹²

In addition to being a compromise in the tug-of-war between the representatives of the different agencies, the instructions formalized the operating procedure already tried on the ground by the JA delegates.⁹³

The attitude of the Israeli ambassador was cautious and reflected a more generalized attitude of some Israeli circles, which advised discretion concerning the provision of help to people persecuted by their home governments. Such an attitude was shaped by diverse factors, from commercial and material interests to diplomatic caution. A series of arguments was put forward to justify diplomatic caution, primarily (a) the intent not to endanger the work of the JA in the realm of legal immigration; (b) the wish not to affect the relationships with the military junta at a time when Israel was being censored in the UN and its diplomatic connections were being reduced internationally; and finally (c) the claim that discretion was required for helping the politically

with the signature of Jehuda Dominitz, vice-director general of the JA for Immigration (personal archive of Dany Recanati, representative-in-chief of the JA in Buenos Aires; in subsequent references, PADR).

⁹¹ “Procedures for the treatment of people escaping from South America” (in Hebrew: Nohal tipul benimlatim me-artzot Drom America), PADR, Jerusalem, no date, probably June 1976.

⁹² Senkman, “Israel y el rescate,” pp. 302–303.

⁹³ In April 1990 Recanati recalled that “we had built an operational framework we defined as evacuation.” Testimony in ICJ, 216 (2).

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persecuted individuals in escaping Argentina. A fourth argument, often used by the local Jewish community, was that an open confrontation with, or criticism of, the policies of the military junta, to be launched in Israel or in international forums, would produce an increase in anti-Semitism, which in turn would affect Jewish institutions and the community at large. Behind the scenes, especially in Israel, were also interests connected to the armaments industry, the impact of which can be guessed at but will remain undocumented until the Israel National Archives release such documentation in the future.

What is clear is that there was ambiguity in the highest circles. On the one hand, any public expression against the ruling junta and any condemnation of its repressive policies were cast aside in Israel. Members of the Israeli Parliament, the Knesset, presented eight urgent motions regarding the issue between 1976 and 1981, the critical period of human-rights violations in Argentina. The Parliament's secretary did not approve any of these motions and consequently they went down before even reaching the stage of debate. In their later testimonies, Geula Cohen, Dror Zeigerman, and Menahem Hacoheh, members of Parliament, claimed that this lack of approval was because the president of the Knesset, Menahem Savidor, yielded to the pressure of the Israeli MFA that demanded that the issue not be discussed openly.⁹⁴ This case was clearly one of agenda denial, in which problem identification did not lead to the issue's gaining agenda status, and therefore sidelining it in the short term, albeit maximizing the chances of criticism and issue expansion in the long run.⁹⁵

The provision of help comprised several venues, from visits to political prisoners held in prison to the benefits of the so-called Option Law and the covert evacuation of individuals who felt seriously threatened in the wave of repression. Through these various paths, between 350 and 400 individuals were assisted in escaping Argentina and arriving in Israel.

In Israel, the fleeing individuals found themselves in different environments, from universities to Hebrew language learning centers, cities, and kibbutzim. There, the new environments forced them to test previous assumptions and reshape their various identities. Who were the newly arrived from Argentina? Persecuted Jews willing to integrate into Israeli society? Were they exiles? Or, rather, were they leftist individuals from Latin America who used Israel as a bridge to less compromising *lieu d'exil*? Argentinean expatriates? Many of the newly arrived individuals found a source of political affinities to their leftist leanings in the kibbutz structure. The testimonies of dozens of people who arrived indicate that the fleeing individuals did not develop into a community

⁹⁴ Testimonies by Geula Cohen (ICJ-216/42); Dror Zeigerman (ICJ-216/40); and Menahem Hacoheh (ICJ-216/23); Appel and Bachrach, "The Politics of the Israeli Governments Regarding the Jewish Detainees-Disappeared in Argentina." Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Seminar Paper, 2002, p. 28.

⁹⁵ On these aspects of agenda setting and agenda denial, see, among others, Roger W. Cobb and Marc Howard Ross, *Cultural Strategies of Agenda Denial*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997, esp. pp. 3-4; and David Dery, "Agenda Setting and Problem Definition." *Policy Studies*, 21, 1 (2000): 37-47.

with its own identity and political agenda. Moreover, they dispersed throughout the entire country. Left-wing movements such as MAPAM's Youth, tried to 'convert' or 'reconvert' them into Socialist Zionism. Although some became active on the margins of Israeli politics, many refrained from any political activism. Indeed, their experience contrasted with that of Chilean exiles in Israel and elsewhere, who worked tirelessly in the political and international arena to keep Pinochet's record of human-rights violations in the news and to pave the way for the eventual restoration of democracy in their homeland.⁹⁶ The presence of the Argentinean newcomers did not have a notable impact on Israeli public life and did not affect the political debate on state terror and forced disappearance of Argentinean citizens, at least until the early 1980s, close to democratization.⁹⁷

Many continued to experience the syndrome of 'living with the suitcases packed,' in a situation of suspended reality, of living neither in the homeland nor in the host country, which compounded the challenges of exile. With the passing of time, most of the escaped individuals left Israel for Europe, Spain in particular, or else for Latin America, where language and cultural affinity existed. Others returned to Argentina in the period of democratization initiated in 1983. A minority remained in Israel, adding on to the other Argentineans and Latin Americans who had immigrated voluntarily. Like many of those other immigrants, the fleeing individuals became 'invisible' in Israeli society as they integrated into the different spheres of everyday life and spread their residence throughout the entire country, rather than forming a cohesive community.⁹⁸ Their past remained a living memory and constitutive trait of their multifaceted, and at times fractured, personal identity, and their collective experience went unnoticed until recently, as part of the multiple paths of individuals and groups of the Latin American diaspora generated by the military repression.

This analysis reveals that even countries without explicit or with restrictive policies of asylum faced the plight of individuals persecuted and requesting diplomatic assistance. In the cases that we analyzed, reluctance toward asylum was evident on the part of high governmental circles in Italy and Israel. Diplomatic representatives and immigration agents in Chile and Argentina, imbued

⁹⁶ Thomas C. Wright and Rody Oñate, *Flight from Chile: Voices of Exile*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988. There were organizational moves by relatives of the victims of disappearance, foremost Memoria, led by Luis Jaimovich, father of Alejandra, abducted and disappeared, but their impact was limited.

⁹⁷ Appel and Bachrach, "The Politics."

⁹⁸ On Latin Americans in Israel, see Luis Roniger, "The Latin American Community of Israel: Some Notes on Latin American Jews and Latin American Israelis." *Israel Social Science Research*, 6, 1 (1989): 63–72; and Luis Roniger and Deby Babis, "Latin American Israelis: The Collective Identity of an Invisible Community," in Judit Bokser Liwerant, Eliezer Ben-Rafael, Yossi Gorny, and Raanan Rein, Eds., *Identities in an Era of Globalization and Multiculturalism. Latin America in the Jewish World*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008, pp. 297–320. The assessment of processes of reconstruction of identity in Israel deserves separate analysis. It is currently being developed by Orit Gazit, in a thesis in progress at the Hebrew University on the "Shifts of Identity of Political Exiles from Latin America in Israel."

with a humanitarian ethos increasingly recognized internationally, were sensible to the plight of the persecuted and responded with personal initiatives that saved the lives of many. On the ground, they confronted a similar problematique. Caught between the scope of domestic repression and the unwillingness of their governments to generate positive policies toward the persecuted, they took the initiative in granting asylum, assisting escape, getting safe conducts, and finding locales of exile.

These initiatives likely brought institutional responses and eventually turned into systemic directives for treating the political exiles. The collective identities of the persecuted – among whom were many individuals of Italian and Jewish descent but full members of Chilean and Argentinean societies and persecuted as such – were tested by extreme circumstances that forced them into looking for diplomatic help in escaping. The personal decisions of individual diplomats and representatives were under such circumstances as crucial as formal directives in shaping the routes of escape, and ultimately saved many human lives by making their exile possible. This problematique reveals how the human values characteristic of the transnational and international arena by the late 20th century have subsumed considerations based on narrower collective identities or *realpolitik* of interests. Once abroad and safe, the escapees could decide to integrate in to the host society, continue their political activity in the host country and return to the home country when conditions allowed, or continue into serial exile.

Serial Exile

The political will of exiles to continue the struggle against dictatorship at home is a major factor shaping the phenomenon of serial exile. We define serial exile as the subsequent and sometimes recurrent displacement from one site of exile to another, as the countries the displaced individuals settled in restrict their freedom of action.

Such restrictions are often due to policies of asylum, to pressures from the home country, or the case of a host country entering a period of political repression and dictatorship. These factors existed already in the 19th century, as exemplified in cases as renowned as those of Simón Bolívar and José Martí, and were intensified in the 20th century. In the 1970s, Peru, Mexico, and Venezuela were considered stable and safe places of refuge. Thus, for instance, after the 1973 military coup by Pinochet, Chilean leftists crossed the Peruvian border. Many, such as the exile Hugo Alvarez, thought that Peru “was one of the few possible places [of refuge] that were near and safe.”⁹⁹ But Peruvian authorities restricted the exiles’ political activities, and many, including Alvarez, felt pressured to relocate to a second *lieu d’exil*, in his case to Sweden. Redemocratized Venezuela, and especially Caracas, attracted exiles from all

⁹⁹ Ana Baron, Mario Del Carril, and Albino Gomez, *Por qué se fueron*. Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, 1995, p. 410.

over Latin America. Among those settling there were leaders from the Bolivian Partido Revolucionario de Izquierda Nacionalista (PRIN, or the Nationalist Leftist Revolutionary Party) and of the MIR, Brazilian Partido Trabalhista leader Leonel Brizola, Curaçao and Aruba political activists, leaders of the Panamanian Social Democratic Party (PSDP), and the Paraguayan Febreristas. Representatives of different political parties from the Southern Cone, living in exile in Caracas, created a coordinating committee of the Democratic Forces, the Junta Coordinadora de las Fuerzas Democráticas del Cono Sur. Bringing together Aniceto Rodríguez of the Socialist Party of Chile, Adolfo Gass of the Radical Party in Argentina, Oscar Maggido of the Frente Amplio of Uruguay, Elpidio Yegros of the Febrerista Party of Paraguay, Erwin Moller of the PRIN of Bolivia, and Mario Astorga of the Radical Party of Chile, they vowed to coordinate their actions against the dictatorships in the home countries.¹⁰⁰ Venezuelan democracy developed in the late 1990s a situation of political polarization that prompted thousands to leave their home country for exile. Alongside Venezuelan citizens were some of the families of an estimated number of 30,000 Cubans who had relocated to the country after Castro's revolution and who now feared the repeat of Fidel Castro's policies by Chavez. Paradoxically, daughters and sons of former Cuban exiles in Venezuela have recently flocked to the Cuban consulates in Caracas and Valencia looking for ways to prove their Cuban origins in order to benefit from the Cuban Adjustment Act, a law that allows any person who can prove that s/he was born in Cuba or to Cuban parents to become a legal resident of the United States.¹⁰¹

Going into exile often implies being the victim of circumstances, because of the need to relocate even in the absence of choice and a clear mindset of the range of alternatives. Typical is the case of the Brazilian exiles and expatriates who moved out of Brazil, as their home country was taken by a military coup in 1964. Many of those who found shelter in Chile and participated in ideologically similar organizations and supported Allende's political project were forced to flee Chile with the onset of military rule in September 1973. They joined Chilean exiles, finding temporary refuge in Mexico. The Mexican authorities, however, clearly discriminated between Chilean and Brazilian exiles arriving in the aftermath of the Chilean coup. Whereas the Chileans were granted the benefits of political asylum, the Brazilians and other nationals coming from Chile were given some support but were not allowed to work or study. Because their situation was precarious in terms of residential status, these exiles looked for possibilities of asylum and relocation away from Mexico. "We tried all [the embassies] that could be imagined: Pakistan, India, Luxemburg, always receiving negative answers."¹⁰² Some were granted tourist

¹⁰⁰ Informe de la misión de la Internacional Socialista a América Latina, 15–25 March 1978. Socialist International Archives (1951–1988) at the International Institute of Social History (IISG), Amsterdam, files 1125–1129.

¹⁰¹ "Double Exile," *Miami Herald*, 28 October 2007, available at www.archives.econ.utah.edu/archives/cubanews, accessed 12 June 2008.

¹⁰² Testimony of Marijane Lisboa, in Rollemberg, *Exilio*, p. 123.

visas for a year to Yugoslavia, and the Mexican authorities were prepared to cover the costs of the flight tickets. In their layover in Belgium, waiting for the next-day flight to Yugoslavia, many stayed. Again, in Belgium, the local authorities were helpful toward the Chilean exiles, but declined to give such status to the Brazilians and other serial exiles. Accordingly, they tried to have their condition as refugees recognized by the local office of the UNHCR. Many remained there and in other European countries unregistered. Their main preoccupation shifted from collective political action to personal survival. While in Chile, they kept alive their original revolutionary ideals, because, owing to their serial relocation, they were forced to concentrate on finding menial work and making a bare living. The host countries did not contemplate the need of serial exiles to find political asylum. From a psychosocial and political perspective, the Chilean coup of 1973 was the *cause célèbre*, whereas the Brazilian military takeover of 1964 had been long forgotten. Chilean exiles were seen as 'legitimate' seekers of asylum, whereas the Brazilians were relegated to a gray area of undocumented migrants. Their only way out of this condition would be an international recognition of their status as refugees. This case helps explain why many refugees have wandered through several countries before reaching the receiving country, following troublesome trajectories seeking asylum and working opportunities.¹⁰³

In many cases, exiles were forced to relocate from place to place because of pressures from the home rulers on the host country, met with the latter's lack of political will to create an imbalance of power with the country of origin. Well-known cases of pressures leading to relocation and serial exile are those of Raúl Haya de la Torre, Juan Domingo Perón, and Rómulo Betancourt.

Raúl Haya de la Torre was the founder of APRA. The pace of his displacement was rather hectic and was motivated and conditioned by the development of his continental, pan-Latin American ideas. Because of his political activity, Haya de la Torre was banished from Peru and deported to Panama in 1919. In Panama he developed his antiimperialist and Bolivarian ideals and went to Cuba, where he took an active part in organizing the student union and spreading revolutionary ideas. He traveled through Mexico in the aftermath of the revolution, and, after founding the APRA in 1924, he traveled to the United States and the USSR. Because of an illness, he moved to Switzerland, but was soon expelled from there. Following the intercession of the Peruvian government, the Swiss authorities considered him to be a danger to public order. In 1925, he visited Florence, London, and Paris. In the latter city, he was active in the community of Peruvian émigrés, intellectuals, workers, artists, and students and founded a chapter of APRA within the Asociación General de Estudiantes Latinoamericanos (AGELA, or General Association of Latin American Students). He then went back to Oxford, where he divided his time between political activism and anthropological studies. His continental views became further refined, and he elaborated his third position against both Western imperialism and Communism, a position that granted him the animosity of the

¹⁰³ Anne Marie Gaillard, *Exiles et retours: Itinéraires chiliens*. Paris: CIEMI-L'Harmattan, 1997.

Latin American Communist Parties, among others. After completing his studies in London, he returned to New York and from there went to Mexico, where he was involved in some revolutionary activities. He then went to several Central American countries, where he was jailed in Guatemala and El Salvador. After international pressures, he was liberated and moved to Berlin, where he made a living by writing for the international press. In 1930, there was a ‘revolution’ in Arequipa against Augusto Leguía, and General Luis Miguel Sánchez Cerro became president of Peru. Haya de la Torre wanted to go back but could not obtain official approval, so he stayed in Europe, further developing the “Indian doctrine” of his ideology. After two years in Berlin and after many years in exile, he was finally able to return to Peru in 1931 as the candidate of the APRA for the presidency of Peru.¹⁰⁴

In the case of Perón, he left Argentina in October 1955, after being forcefully removed from power by the armed forces. He first arrived in Paraguay, invited by President General Stroessner, and was welcome warmly by the population that recalled Perón’s symbolic decision to hand back the trophies taken by Argentina in the 1864–1870 War of the Triple Alliance. Following pressures from the Argentinean government on Paraguay, Perón was asked to leave the country. Invited by Anastasio Somoza to settle in Nicaragua, he was flown in Stroessner’s personal plane, but decided to reside in Panama for nine months. He was under constant protection and surveillance, receiving threats from anti-Perónist elements. He then traveled to Venezuela, where Marcos Pérez Jiménez sheltered him from August 1956 until January 1958. The Argentine authorities put constant pressure on the Venezuelan administration to curtail Perón’s freedom. He himself refrained from open attacks on Argentine authorities in order to respect the asylum regulations. Nonetheless, he was targeted in several attempts on his life, which failed. Following the fall of Pérez Jiménez’s government, Perón found asylum with Isabelita and six close associates in the Embassy of the Dominican Republic. In late February 1958 he got a safe conduct to leave Venezuela for the Dominican Republic, where he maintained excellent relations with local ruler Rafael Trujillo. He received a Spanish visa, and moved to Spain in January 1960, settling there for close to 13 years. In Spain too, despite his very positive image and good connections with General Franco since 1946, when Perón had provided free agricultural produce to famished Spain, he had to be very careful not to exceed the terms of asylum and was forced to refrain from openly targeting Argentinean rulers, which could lead to strained relationships between the two countries. His residence was nonetheless the center of political pilgrimage for Argentine union leaders, politicians, and activists looking for his directives and advice. In December 1969, Perón had tried to secretly travel back to Argentina, in what has become known as “Operation Return.” This attempted return took place following declarations by President Umberto Illia that there were no exiles from Argentina, but only expatriates unwilling to come back. Perón snuck out of Madrid. The plan was

¹⁰⁴ F. Cossio del Pomar, *Haya de la Torre. El Indoamericano*. México: Editorial América, 1939.

to fly to Montevideo and then move to Asunción, where the general would establish his headquarters until a popular uprising in Argentina would force his return. However, the Iberia flight was forced to land in Brazil. Franco was outraged and ordered the ousting from Spain of those asylees who had traveled with Perón, while Perón himself was put under greater surveillance and pressure to refrain from openly engaging in politics. Only in 1972, following political developments in Argentina, was the aging leader able to visit Argentina and then to permanently return in 1973, elected to run his home country as president until his death in July 1974.¹⁰⁵

Rómulo Betancourt is perhaps the most exemplary case of a serial exile among 20th-century political leaders forced to flee their home countries for long periods. In 1928 Betancourt left Venezuela for the first time, for seven years, after being involved in a failed military–student insurrection against President Juan Vicente Gómez. Resembling Simón Bolívar, he first moved to Curaçao, where he was actively involved with the community of exiles and workers; then to the Dominican Republic, where he conceived a strategy of class alliance to fight against dictatorship; to Colombia, where he created a Revolutionary Alliance of Left Forces (*Alianza Revolucionaria de Izquierda*, or ARDI); and finally to Costa Rica, from where he was able to return only after Gómez died in December 1935. Having returned in late 1936, Betancourt soon found himself implicated in protests against a draconian Law of Public Order and was expelled for one year by the new Venezuelan administration of Eleazar López Contreras, together with 36 other political leaders and activists. Betancourt went underground to evade displacement, but in 1939, the police located him and he was forced to leave for Chile, where he was in contact with socialist activists, among them Salvador Allende. He returned in 1940 to Venezuela and became a key figure in the AD Party, reaching an understanding with Marcos Pérez Jiménez to launch a coup and becoming head of the Revolutionary Junta of Government in 1945. After the coup by Pérez Jiménez and other military officers against elected President Rómulo Gallegos of the AD, in November 1948, Betancourt was forced to seek asylum and leave Venezuela for a third exile.

Already a well-known political leader, Betancourt sought asylum in the Colombian Embassy and was allowed to leave for Cuba in 1949. In Havana, he was the victim of an attempt on his life, perhaps ordered by Pérez Jiménez or by Rafael Leónidas Trujillo, dictator of the Dominican Republic. He then moved to Costa Rica, where his presence was severely monitored because of pressures laid on by Venezuela and also by Nicaragua, where there had been a plot against the government. Betancourt was depicted as the mastermind behind the plot and, under Nicaraguan demands, he was ordered to leave Costa Rican territory in 1954, along with other exiles, foremost the Dominicans Bosch, Pompeyo Alfaro, and Sergio Pérez, the Honduran Marcial Aguiluz, and a long list of

¹⁰⁵ *Perón, el hombre del destino*. Buenos Aires: Abril Educativa y Cultural, 1975, vol. III: 107; Tomas Eloy Martínez, *Las memorias del general*. Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1996, pp. 116–126.

Nicaraguans. Betancourt had become anathema to all the Caribbean dictators. Venezuela, in particular, resented the asylum granted AD exiles in Costa Rica. The United States managed to dispel the crisis by arranging Betancourt's move to the United States and his settling in Puerto Rico. Here too, Venezuelan government representatives pressured U.S. Congressmen for his deportation. Only a year after the fall of Pérez Jiménez in 1958, he returned to Venezuela and was elected president for the period 1959–1964.¹⁰⁶

At work here is the character of the political and institutional environment of host countries, which, while providing asylum in the spirit of Latin American brotherhood, are willing or pressured to monitor the political activities of the exiles in their midst. Personal considerations may play a role in the mechanics of serial exile. Friendships or enmities with those in power; love affairs, marriages, and marriage disruptions; personal assets or lack of them; all those are extremely of weight in facilitating or discouraging the exile to seek accommodations in a certain host country. In general, the host countries are adamant about allowing exiles' interference in their internal politics, while sometimes tolerating their activities, as far as they are restricted against the governments of the home countries. This policy is enforced, unless coincidence of interests between the host country's and the home country's governments creates a context that forces a new displacement. In extreme cases, the haven may become a trap for the exiles, as the host government is unable or unwilling to guarantee their personal security.

Of similar effect is a radical political change in the host countries or the creation of governments that resemble repressive rule in the expelling home country. We have already referred to the case of the Brazilian expatriates who had moved out of Brazil in 1964. Let us focus on one paradigmatic case of serial exile, that of Mauricio Paiva.

Following the 1964 coup, Paiva found his first shelter in Algeria. He later moved to Cuba because many members of the political organization he was part of were there, and he felt close ideological ties to the Cuban Revolution. After becoming disappointed with the Cuban lifestyle, he moved to Chile during Allende's government. With Pinochet's coup he moved to Buenos Aires under the sponsorship of the UNHCR. There, under increasing political polarization, the Federal Police pressured many asylum seekers to leave Argentina. By the end of April 1974, as the Portuguese authoritarian regime of Salazar-Caetano fell, Paiva arranged his documents to move to Portugal. To facilitate his entry he got in touch with old friends of the Portuguese Socialist Party who had been exiled in Brazil and were already back in Lisbon. He thought that, after entering Europe through Portugal, he could easily move to another European

¹⁰⁶ Robert Jackson Alexander, *Romulo Betancourt and the Transformation of Venezuela*. New Jersey: Transaction, 1982. After leaving the presidency, he traveled to the United States and Asia and settled in Europe, remaining an influential figure but refraining from direct involvement in his country's politics until his death in 1981.

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country. In the end, he got a tourist visa for Norway that allowed him to stay there for a short period of time. Finally, he went to Portugal in mid-August. He traveled through the Pacific so as to avoid going through Brazil in case the plane would be forced to land there in case of an emergency. In spite of Portugal's coup at the end of 1975, Paiva stayed in that country until the end of September 1979, when he returned to Brazil. He is an exile who moved serially to countries with governments close to his ideological mindset, and was forced to relocate because of military coups.¹⁰⁷

This dynamic can be further illustrated in detail as one follows the case of João Goulart. Brazilian President João Goulart was deposed from power by a military coup in 1964 and had to leave his country. As with many others in his situation, his preferred locale of exile was then Uruguay, because of its proximity to Brazil and an administration still democratic and sympathetic to the plight of the exiles.¹⁰⁸ The alternative choice of Bolivia was somehow downplayed at that time because of the problems that the government of Paz Estensoro, fearing for its stability, posed for the Brazilian exiles whose moves were surveilled by the political police. For a few months, Bolivia hosted a small group of exiles such as José Serra, president of the national student forum, Colonel Emanuel Nicols, journalist Carlos Olavo da Cunha Pereira, and former parliamentarian Nieva Moreira. They even founded a newspaper that supported the progressive branch of the Bolivian MNRI. Shortly after the Bolivian coup of November 1964, some moved to Chile until 1974, when they were forced to move again, this time mainly to France.¹⁰⁹

Goulart moved to Uruguay, where he lived for nearly a decade as an asylee. His presence in Uruguay, close to the Brazilian border, as well as that of other politicians such as Leonel Brizola, was a further focus of attraction for other escapees. In 1967 Goulart created, together with Carlos Lacerda, a former governor of Guanabara (and foe of both Vargas and Goulart), a block aimed at restoring free elections and democracy in Brazil. The movement was able to mobilize demonstrations supported by labor and political leaders, but was soon banned in April 1968. During his stay in Uruguay, Goulart established a farm for rice production using artificial irrigation and contributing to making that industry the leading nontraditional export of the host country. His economic situation was better than that of many of the other exiles, whom he assisted financially as the main contributor to a collective fund of assistance, and politically, through his high-level contacts in the Uruguayan administration. Many union leaders and politicians stayed temporarily at his farm in Tacuarembó.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Mauricio Paiva, *O sonho exilado*. Rio de Janeiro: Achiamép, 1986.

¹⁰⁸ Cristina P. Machado, *Os exiliados*. Sao Paulo: Editora Alfa-Omega, 1979, pp. 29-31.

¹⁰⁹ Uchoa Cavalcanti, Pedro Celso, and Javelino Ramos, *Memórias do exílio*. Sao Paulo: Livraria Livramento, 1976, vol. 1, pp. 153-156.

¹¹⁰ José de Hebert Souza, in *Memórias do exílio*, pp. 35-37.

However, especially after the shift to authoritarianism with Bordaberry's government in June 1973, his situation was far from secure. Once the Brazilian authorities did not renew his passport, both Stroessner and Perón offered him assistance. Eventually, he left Uruguay for democratic Argentina in 1974, settling in Buenos Aires. In December 1976, nine months after the military takeover in Argentina, Goulart was found dead in his apartment. Whereas the official version was that he died of a heart attack, the mysterious parallel deaths of oppositionary leaders such as Marcos Freire and Carlos Lacerda contributed to the credibility of conspirational theories.¹¹¹

In addition to proximity, as was the case of Uruguay, the other major factor of attraction was the political setup of the host country. The case of Chile clearly reflects that trend for the Brazilian exiles. As previously analyzed, Brazilians and other foreigners were permitted to be active in Chilean politics and Chilean political parties. Internationalist winds were blowing strongly in the domestic political process. Many of the exiles, coming from armed resistance movements in their home country, aligned themselves with the most extreme parts of the Chilean Left. These exiles perceived themselves as a popular revolutionary avant-garde with political experience and freely expressed their views and extended their advice to their Chilean friends. They demanded from Allende's government wages that would allow them to continue their political work in Chile. There was even an attempt to take over the Brazilian Embassy in Santiago and establish a revolutionary government in exile, but this action was rapidly suppressed by the Chilean police and politically rejected by the Chilean government of Salvador Allende.

Once there was a radical break in the host political environment, as in Chile in 1973, exiles considered it wise to move again. There were also Brazilians who sought asylum at various embassies. Whereas Argentina, Peru, and Uruguay considered taking back their co-nationals, the Brazilian Embassy in Santiago refused to consider such a possibility.¹¹² Some of them moved to democratic Argentina, only to find themselves two-and-a-half years later in need of a new relocation as that country fell under military rule. There they were joined by many Chileans who had taken shelter in Argentina after the military coup.

¹¹¹ Jorge Otero, *João Goulart, lembranças do exílio*. Rio de Janeiro: Casa Jorge, 2001. Goulart was only one among many prominent Brazilian politicians and intellectuals forced into exile. Among those moving to Uruguay were Renato Acher, Amaury Silva, Ivo Magalhaes, Claudio Braga, Darcy Ribeiro, and Leonel Brizola. Brizola lived in Uruguay from 1964 until 1977, when he was deported for "violating the norms of political asylum." The increasingly authoritarian character of Uruguay forced exiles to relocate. While Goulart moved to Argentina, Brizola found refuge at the U.S. Embassy, and moved to the United States and later Portugal, before returning to Brazil in 1979.

¹¹² The Brazilian ambassador to Chile, Antonio da Camara Canto, was awarded recognition by the Chilean government, whereas a Brazilian officer of the UN who managed to find diplomatic refuge for his co-nationals was detained once he returned to Brazil. Machado, *Os exiliados*, p. 110.

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The majority were successful in escaping thanks to international groups that organized outlets to Europe when Latin American countries refused to accept them. There were also Brazilians who asked for and obtained asylum at the Embassy of Panama. The coup in Chile thus significantly altered the distribution of the Brazilian diaspora by forcing exiles to relocate to more remote sites, in countries such as France, Sweden, Belgium, and West Germany, as many of the Latin American countries did not accept them anymore. The UNHCR was instrumental in obtaining refugee visas for some of them in Europe, Australia, or other Latin American countries. The number of persons relocated under such conditions according to one estimate stands at 30,000.¹¹³

This situation was paradigmatic also of the paths taken by many Chileans. A couple, Manuel and Ana María, sought refuge first in Argentina, as it was her country of birth and where relations enabled him to find a job equivalent to the one he held back in Chile. But Chileans arriving at that time were considered communists *a priori*. After two years of residence and still under a fragile civilian rule, the police issued an order of expulsion for Manuel, as he was considered to be a threat to national security. His wife, being Argentine born, could not be legally expelled. Manuel had written to various universities in France, Mexico, and the United States in search of a job, and once a French university accepted his candidacy, the couple left, with a promise of professional security, rather rare among exiles and refugees. In most cases, the formal procedures of international transference of escaping individuals from one country to another were complicated enough to deter those without good reasons and a fierce will.¹¹⁴

Prompting relocation and serial exile has been also the fear by the host government of the economic impact of exiles and refugees on the local society and economy. This case was especially true in the case of the Haitian refugees in the Dominican Republic and the politically motivated dislocation of populations and forced mass displacement of Central Americans during the civil wars in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The exiles and refugees were perceived as a heavy burden on the structures of already pressured countries faced with the residence of these groups.¹¹⁵ In most cases, however, political factors have been central, with massive serial exile shaped mainly by the changing political circumstances of a host country interplaying with the persisting will of many of the displaced individuals to continue fighting the governments that forced them into exile.

Massive exile heightened the likelihood that the diaspora of Latin Americans would include communities of co-nationals, in some of which the exiles

¹¹³ Angell, "La cooperación internacional," pp. 215–245.

¹¹⁴ Gaillard, *Exils et Retours*.

¹¹⁵ Relief Web, "Central America: Main Refugee Flows during the 1980s," available at <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RW.NSF/db900SID>, 8 July 2007; NCHR Refugee Program, "Beyond the Bat Eyes," available at <http://www.nchr.org/reports/bateyes.pdf>, accessed 8 July 2007.

played a major role as proactive actors in the mobilization of other sojourners, the activation of networks of transnational solidarity, and the contacts with national and international agencies with an increasing presence in the global arena. This transnational dimension, which transformed the structure of political exile, worked against the claimed monopoly of the nation-state over domestic public spheres and politics. It empowered exiles in terms of influence and resonance for their voice in the global arena, affecting the policies of the expelling countries and redefining the role and impact of communities of exiles.