Latin America’s Radical Left

This book examines the emergence, development, and demise of a network of organizations of young leftist militants and intellectuals in South America. This new generation, formed primarily by people who in the late 1960s were still under the age of thirty, challenged traditional politics and embraced organized violence and transnational strategies as the only ways of achieving social change in their countries during the Cold War. This lasted for more than a decade, beginning in Uruguay as a result of the rise of authoritarianism in Brazil and Argentina, and expanding with Che Guevara’s Bolivia campaign in 1966. These coordination efforts reached their highest point in Buenos Aires from 1973 to 1976, until the military coup d’état in Argentina eliminated the last refuge for these groups. Aldo Marchesi offers the first in-depth, regional and transnational study of the militant left in Latin America during the turbulent 1960s and 1970s.

Aldo Marchesi teaches history at the Universidad de la República (Montevideo, Uruguay). He is the Director of the Uruguayan Interdisciplinary Studies Center (CEIU), a specialized center on Uruguayan Recent History.
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(continued after the index)
Latin America’s Radical Left

Rebellion and Cold War in the Global 1960s

ALDO MARCHESI

Universidad de la República (Uruguay)

Translated by LAURA PEREZ CARRARA
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Acknowledgments

The acknowledgments for this book are inevitably tied to my decision to pursue my PhD studies in Latin American History in the United States, more specifically at New York University. That decision emerged gradually over a series of conversations with Eric Herschberg, Steve Stern, and Elizabeth Jelin (Shevi) at the start of the century, in the framework of the SSRC program on Collective Memory of Repression. The three of them helped me considerably in that process and opened up possibilities that were unimaginable from where I stood, in my small and remote country of Uruguay.

Shevi provided enormous support throughout that whole process, both intellectually and as a friend. Generously sharing her experience as a researcher, she showed me that there was a way to conduct research in which the ethical and political commitments of the researcher need not be at odds with doing quality research and that, quite the contrary, they would help me examine more incisively the recent, turbulent past of the Southern Cone, especially in those aspects toward which I felt a certain sympathy. Shevi also created a collective space that played a key role in my studies on these issues. There I met and worked with many colleagues, including Claudio Barrientos, Azun Candina, Emilio Crenzel, Álvaro de Giorgi, Ponciano del Pino, Claudia Feld, Silvina Jensen, Victoria Langland, Cecilia Lesgart, Federico Lorenz, Ludmila Catela da Silva, Samantha Quadrat, Diego Sempol, and many more, several of whom I am still in contact with and are now great friends. It was in those Southern Cone exchanges that I began forming the idea of carrying out a project that considered the region as a whole.

In the process of deciding on my PhD studies, the Uruguayan historians Gerardo Caetano, José Rilla, and Álvaro Rico were also of great assistance. Over a series of conversations with them I traced a line of work, which was what enabled me to apply for a PhD with a clear idea of what I wanted to do. Vania Markarian was also very supportive in this whole process. In addition to being a close friend, she was something of a “pioneer” who showed me that it was possible to study abroad and return to build an academic career in
Acknowledgments

Uruguay. Since then we have had a highly productive academic relationship, which I think has much to do with several of the concerns expressed in my dissertation. Jaime Yaffé, with whom I have worked at a number of events on the recent past, has also been a valuable friend throughout this process and someone with whom I could discuss ideas.

In 2004, I began my PhD studies at NYU thanks to a Fulbright/Laspau Scholarship and the Mc Cracken funds assigned by the university. The experience was very enriching. Jeniffer Adair, Lina Britto, Joaquín Chavez, Michelle Chase, Joshua Frens String, Forrest Hylton, Yuko Miki, Ernesto Seman, Aaron Slater, and Matthew Vitz were great friends with whom I shared courses and exam preparations. In all those spaces we discussed the work we were doing and I am sure that some of the few merits of this book have much to do with those conversations.

The team of Latin Americanist scholars in the History Department provided essential support in the development of my dissertation project, as well as in the drafting of the final version. Sinclair Thomson showed ongoing interest and commitment with the project and its realization. The brilliant, intelligent, and insightful feedback he provided throughout the process helped enhance many aspects of my work. In his role as dissertation advisor, Greg Grandin helped me put my object of study into the broader context of the Latin American Cold War. His perspective pushed me to question certain common notions that I had interiorized and to identify what was relevant by taking a global approach to the conflict. Ada Ferrer was immensely helpful in the workshops and her insistence that I incorporate Cuba into the project was very useful. Although she joined the Department just as I was returning to the Southern Cone, Barbara Weinstein gave me valuable feedback during my defense and provided interesting input for examining the relationship of the middle classes with these organizations.

Peter Winn was also part of the examination committee when I defended my dissertation and I thank him in particular for his comments on the Chilean process, as well as his keen contribution regarding the more general conceptualization of the period.

From my experience as a student I would also like to highlight three courses from which my project’s development profited greatly: Jeff Goodwin’s course on social movements, Mary Nolan and Marilyn Young’s course on the Cold War, and Pablo Piccato’s course on Honor and Masculinity in Mediterranean societies.

In 2007, I began my journey back to the Southern Cone. Thanks to funding from New York University and an IDRF-SSRC grant, I was able to move back and forth from Chile to Argentina and back to Uruguay several times to gather the necessary information. Many colleagues helped me with my project in many different ways during these trips.
Acknowledgments

In Chile, historians Igor Goicovich, María Olga Ruiz, Claudio Pérez, and Alondra Peirano, Veronica Valdivia, Rolando Álvarez, Claudio Barrientos, Julio Pintos, and Hillary Heißner all lent enormous support to my efforts. Last, but not least, I would like to thank my two great friends, the historians Alberto Harambour and Consuelo Figueroa, whom I met in New York and who were excellent hosts during my stays in Santiago.

In Argentina, Vera Carnovale and Maria Cristina Tortti were instrumental as guides for my work. But also, several conversations with Ludmila Da Silva Catela, Emilio Crenzel, and Marina Franco helped me in my research.

In Uruguay, my work was somewhat easier because I knew the people and the places I needed to focus on. Nonetheless, I have to thank Clara Aldrighi and David Cámpora, who were instrumental in my gaining access to militants as well as insight into perspectives that had not been included in my research.

During the writing stage I also had the chance to travel and present sections of the work in progress. Such opportunities are always good for gauging the impact of the work one is doing. In this sense, I would like to thank Eric Zolov, Tanya Harmer, Julio Pinto, Eugenia Pallieraki, Maud Chirio, and Andrew Kirkendall for the feedback they provided in different events held in the United States, Spain, Chile, and France. Also, Herbert Klein read the final draft thoroughly, providing valuable comments and suggesting additions that I believe have strengthened the manuscript. Klein also helped me in exploring the Hoover Archive collections, which contain material very relevant to my research.

While I was writing in Montevideo, I discussed my project with several friends with whom I met on various occasions to share the concerns that moved me to delve into these subjects. Although many of them are not engaged strictly in academic work, our talks contributed enormously to my research. In recognition of this I want to mention two groups I discussed my project with several times. First, de la raíz (Rodrigo Arim, Gabriel Burdín, Andres Dean, Aníbal Corti, Damian Osta, Andres Prieto, Gustavo Rak, Adolfo Wasseem, Isabel Wschebor), a political discussion group that began gathering at the start of the century to talk about left-wing politics. The other is a group of close friends with whom I got together regularly at a bar in the city. They insisted that their “key contribution” had to be included in the credits of my work. So here are my thanks to the great Eduardo Clouzet, Daniel Martirena, and Fernando Devicenzi, who sadly will not be here to see this work published.

And last, as is typical in acknowledgments, comes family. If, as I believe, creating something is a process of intersubjective construction, then it follows that those who have been closest to me have without a doubt played a major role in this process.
My stepsiblings Rafael and Analía have been an important presence in my life during this past decade and we have shared this experience in different ways. They have been there for me in difficult times and we have also enjoyed good moments together.

My parents, Carlos Marchesi and María Amelia Gordillo occupy a very important place in this history. This work studies their time. That time inevitably marked their youth and, through them, it marked me too, leaving a critical imprint that in many ways has always been with me and is still with me today.

Finally, Antonieta and Luca both played a leading role in this project. With her I traveled to the United States and with him we returned. They both saw me glued to my computer and sacrificed their time with me as a family so I could finish this book. Antonieta was a major pillar in all this. Besides having my back in the day-to-day during the times in which the dissertation absorbed me completely, talking to her always helped me gain a different perspective and understand how much of what I was writing made sense beyond the academic world. For all that, I am deeply grateful to her. Luca grew along with the dissertation. At times it was hard and painful having to travel and to concentrate on my writing, as I felt that was robbing me of the time to be with him and to accompany his growth. This was a learning experience for us both. The dissertation may have been a way of teaching me that, in these individualistic times in which we are living, in addition to family there are other things we need to care about and commit to. But that family, at least family as I see it, must also be part of those commitments.
### Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>Ação católica (Catholic Action) Brazil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Ação Popular (Popular Action) Brazil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNT</td>
<td>Convención nacional de trabajadores (Workers National Convention) Uruguay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIA</td>
<td>Central Intelligence Agency, United States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGT</td>
<td>Confederación general del trabajo (Labor General Confederation) Argentina.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUT</td>
<td>Central unitaria de trabajadores (Workers United Center) Chile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DINA</td>
<td>Dirección de inteligencia nacional (National Intelligence Directorate) Chile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EGP</td>
<td>Ejército guerrillero del pueblo (People’s Guerrilla Army) Argentina.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELN</td>
<td>Ejército de Liberación Nacional (National Liberation Army) Bolivia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA</td>
<td>Frente Amplio (Broad Front) Uruguay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAL</td>
<td>Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación (Liberation Armed Forces) Argentina.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARN</td>
<td>Fuerzas Armadas de la revolución nacional (National Revolution of Armed Forces) Argentina.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAP</td>
<td>Fuerzas Armadas Peronistas (Peronist Armed Forces) Argentina.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAR</td>
<td>Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias (Revolutionary Armed Forces) Argentina.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIDEL</td>
<td>Frente Izquierda de Liberación (Leftist Liberation Front) Uruguay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>Frente Revolucionario Antimperialista (Antimperialist Revolutionary Front) Bolivia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRIP</td>
<td>Frente Revolucionario Indoamericano Popular (Popular Indoamerican Revolutionary Front) Argentina.</td>
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Abbreviations

GAP  Grupos de amigos personales (Group of Personal friends of Salvador Allende) Chile.
JCR  Junta de coordinación revolucionaria (Revolutionary Coordination Board) Chile.
MAPU Movimiento de acción popular unitaria (Popular Unitary Action Movement) Chile.
MIR Movimiento de izquierda revolucionaria (Left Revolutionary Movement) Chile.
MLNT Movimiento de liberación nacional Tupamaros (Tupamaros’s National Liberation Movement) Uruguay.
OAS Organization of American States.
OLAS Organización Latinoamericana de Solidaridad (Latin American Solidarity Organization) Cuba.
OSPAAL Organización de solidaridad de los pueblos de Asia, África y América Latina (Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa and Latin America) Cuba.
PCC Partido Comunista Cubano (Cuban Communist Party) Cuba.
PO Palabra obrera (Worker Word) Argentina.
POLOP Política operaia (Worker Policy) Brazil.
PRT-ERP Partido Revolucionario de los trabajadores-Ejército revolucionario del pueblo (Workers Revolutionary Party-People Revolutionary Army) Argentina.
PRT Partido Revolucionario de los trabajadores-Bolivia (Workers Revolutionart Party) Bolivia.
PSV Partido Socialista de Vanguardia (Socialist Party of Vangard) Argentina.
VPR Vanguarda Popular Revolucionaria (Popular Revolutionary Vangard) Chile.
SIDE Secretaría de Inteligencia del Estado (State Secretariat of Intelligence) Argentina.
UP Unidad popular (Popular Unity) Chile.
UTAA Unión de Trabajadores del Azúcar de Artigas (Artigas’s Sugar Workers Union) Uruguay.