



1967

An Investigation Into the Effects of Immediate Knowledge of Performance and Subsequent Test Results

Thomas John Ginley
Loyola University Chicago

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GONZÁLEZ PRADA: HIS IDEAS AND INFLUENCE

by

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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts,
Loyola University, Chicago.**

June

1967

PREFACE

Manuel González Prada is usually regarded as the father of what might be called Peruvian populism. For this reason, his social thought assumes an importance for the student of Latin American history or political science. Frequent reference is made to his ideas in Latin American studies. Sometimes these ideas are treated individually; sometimes they are treated in a related study. Generally, however, there is little effort made to relate these ideas to the national, family and personal circumstances affecting their author. Such an approach neglects a very important dimension of his social thought.

Efforts made to remedy this lacuna in the study of González Prada have not been too successful. Luís Alberto Sánchez' Don Manuel, the most popular biography written to date, is marred by a pronounced panegyric quality. Also, there is no attempt made to assess González Prada's influence. Eugenio Chang-Rodríguez offers a creditable study of González Prada in La literatura política de González Prada, Mariátegui y Haya de la Torre. However, in covering such a wide range of ideas in the one study, this work tends to be extensive rather than intensive. He, too, is inclined to sit in awe at the feet of the master. Rufino Blanco-Fombona's "Manuel González Prada" in Grandes escritores de America is a long critical study (pp. 267-339) of the social and

literary aspects of González Prada's work. This study is very poor in biographical content. His work is even more eulogistic than the above-mentioned studies.

The purpose of this study then is to correlate González Prada's social thought with national, family and personal circumstances. To express it in another way, it is a study of the evolution of González Prada's social thought. To give González Prada's influence a more comprehensive analysis, brief studies are made on Clorinda Matto de Turner, José Carlos Mariátegui and Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre.

Sincere thanks are extended to the officials and attendants of Cudahy Library at Loyola University, Deering Library at Northwestern University, Chicago Public Library, Boston Public Library and New York Public Library, to Monsignor Joseph Mohan, Mrs. Edward Gibbs, and Mrs. Lloyd Gillis for their assistance in obtaining books, to Mrs. George Connelly for her patience in deciphering and typing the manuscript, and, finally, to Doctor Joseph Gagliano, the thesis adviser, whose kindness, criticisms and suggestions were of immeasurable assistance.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction: Formation and Life

Of all South American nations, Peru seemed to be the least inclined to seek her independence. With the advent of independence, the Peruvian nation continued to display the same indifferent character in most aspects of her national life. The most notable exception to this general apathy was the mad scramble on the part of the caudillos to gain control of the country. In this phase of the national experience, leaders emerged, gained sufficient followers for a quick golpe de estado, had their moment of glory, and passed from the scene with kaleidoscopic rapidity. The same lag was evident in Peruvian social and political thought. Apart from a group of liberal priests headed by Luna Pizzaro, Peruvians were wedded to the Spanish past. In contrast to men like Alberdi, Sarmiento, Constant, and Juárez who gave their countries new perspectives, Peruvian leaders, for the most part, rigidly followed medieval precedents in dealing with problems and issues that confronted the new nation.

Some Peruvian writers point to Francisco de Paula Vigil (1792-1875) as the first authentic Peruvian liberal. After renouncing his priesthood, Vigil served as a deputy and a senator before becoming director of the Biblioteca Nacional. In the age

of the Syllabus of Errors, he vehemently defended the authority of the state against what he termed the pretensions of the Roman Curia. He waged a long fight for tolerance and had very modern ideas on penal reform.¹ However, Manuel González Prada, Vigil's constant champion, says that "he always had a Roman conception of the omnipotent state."²

Manuel González Prada is universally recognized as the prototype of Peruvian radical social thinkers. This man attacked almost every tradition and canon that age and usage had sanctified. Blessed with rare literary mastery and sparkling wit, he could give that extra thrust to any issue which caught his attention. He caught the imagination of the young generation and the age of social thought was definitely launched in Peru.

Quickly scanning the antecedents, circumstances and conditions of González Prada's formative years, one might experience surprise if not shock at seeing the classical Latin liberal emerge from the pages of his biographies. However, a close reading and a correlation of the facts associated with his life bring the reader to the conclusion that this was the only logical outcome.

On the paternal side, González Prada's Galician ancestors were men of accomplishment. One was a capitan in the army

¹Raimundo Lazo, Vigil, Palma, González Prada: Evocaciones Históricas de la Biblioteca Nacional de Lima (La Habana: Universidad de la Habana, n.d.), pp. 1-18.

²Manuel González Prada, Páginas Libres (Lima: P.T.C.M., 1946), p. 97.

of Charles V; one was secretary of state to Philip II; and another was secretary to Don Juan of Austria. Down through the years, however, family fortunes had fallen on bad times, necessitating González Prada's grandfather to seek new horizons in America.

Josef González de Prada arrived in America in 1784, shortly after the quelling of the Túpac Amaru rebellion. Because of his mother's connections, he was made minister of the royal exchequer in Cochabamba. While serving in that capacity, he improved his state by marrying Nicolasa, daughter of Brigadier Marrón de Lombrera. Becoming a favorite of Viceroy Abascal, he was made governor of Cochabamba and Tarma successively.

While serving as governor of Tarma, Josef González de Prada distinguished himself militarily during the independence struggle, and was singled out by Abascal as deserving of a noble title. The viceroy recommended that he be given the title of Count of Ambo in recognition of "the memorable and well-directed action at Puente de Ambo."³ Although his noble lineage was authenticated and his coat-of-arms recognized, the title itself was not forthcoming. The enmity between Viceroy Pezuela and Brigadier Marrón de Lombrera did not facilitate the matter. The denial of the title was bitterly felt by the family for years.

On the maternal side, González Prada's grandmother was

³Luis Alberto Sánchez, Don Manuel (Santiago: Ediciones Ercilla, 1937), p. 19.

the daughter of an Irish refugee, O'Phelan, who fled to Spain because of religious persecution in Ireland. Alfredo, González Prada's only son to attain adulthood, says that there were marked Irish physical and psychological characteristics in his father; that he bore a striking resemblance to the Irish patriot Parnell.⁴ The same grandmother had a relative, the Marquis of Salamanca, who had lost a finger in the Battle of Trafalgar. The finger, preserved in alcohol, was the grandmother's most cherished heirloom and she displayed it from time to time with commentary befitting such conspicuous sacrifice.⁵ That the Marquis of Salamanca could devote his attention to the saving of his finger for posterity, during the heat of battle, causes one to wonder about Nelson's reputation as a naval genius.

Francisco González de Prada, Manuel's father, studied law at the University of Arequipa. Upon completion of his studies, his mother wanted him to go to Spain to acquire the title his father had sought so vainly.⁶ Francisco, however, was determined to pursue his practice immediately. Establishing himself in Arequipa where he married Josefa Álvarez de Ulloa in 1839, he was appointed as judge of first instance of that city in the same year.⁷ Their first child, Francisco, was born in 1840. He

⁴Manuel González Prada, Tonel de Diogenes. Notas de Alfredo González Prada (Mexico: Edición Tezontle, 1945), p. 12.

⁵Sánchez, op. cit., p. 26.

⁶Ibid., p. 23.

⁷Ibid., p. 25.

was followed by Cristina, Manuel, and Isabel in that order, with a four-year space between the birth of each child.⁸

Francisco was everything which in later years his son would oppose: conservative, bourgeois, Hispanicist, royalist, and devoutly Catholic. His career aspirations received a severe blow when Ramón Castilla ascended to the presidency.⁹ Although a conservative, Castilla made many concessions to the liberals. Losing his judgeship as a result of the new administration, Francisco González de Prada moved to Lima where he carried on a private law practice. Manuel was born on January 6, 1849, during the period of his father's political eclipse.¹⁰ Episcopal purple rustled in abundance on the occasion of his baptism, as Archbishop Luna Pizzaro was the minister and Bishop Pascual the sponsor.

With General Echenique's ascension to the presidency, there was a sharp reversal in the elder González de Prada's fortunes. Relying more on scholars than soldiers, Echenique made him one of his top advisors and gave him the task of revising the legal codes.¹¹ Subsequently, he was sent to Bolivia as a plenipotentiary to resolve difficulties with the intractable Belzu.¹² This mission dragged on endlessly with little to show

⁸Ibid., p. 26.

⁹Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 31.

¹¹Ibid., p. 27.

¹²Ibid.

for all the effort expended. On his return he was made vice-president of the council of state.¹³

Castilla again took control of the country, thus forcing Francisco González de Prada and his family to flee to Valparaíso, Chile. Manuel was enrolled at the Escuela Inglesa. While attending this school, he studied under Blum, an Englishman, and Goldfinch, a German.¹⁵ Because of this early exposure to both languages, he developed a high degree of fluency, enabling him later to translate into Spanish some of the works of Byron, Heine, and Schiller.¹⁶

At the beginning of 1857, the González de Prada family returned to Peru, even though Castilla was still in power. Because of the ineffectiveness of liberal theories and the lack of skillful administrators in liberal ranks, a disillusioned Castilla began to have second thoughts about the exclusion of competent conservatives from government posts.¹⁷ Upon his return to Lima, Francisco González de Prada was appointed as dean of the Colegio de Abogados and was elected alcalde of the municipality of Lima.¹⁸ In the meantime, Echenique, exiled in Chile and main-

¹³Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁶Carlos Fernández Sessarego, Peruanidad y Cultura (San José de Costa Rica: Ediciones "Jose Martí," 1945), p. 18.

¹⁷Sánchez, op. cit., p. 34.

¹⁸Ibid.

taining that he was the rightful president, confirmed González de Prada's vice-presidency and gave him permission to make any decision which would further the exiled government's effort to regain power.¹⁹

At an early age, Manuel was beginning to display characteristics which would mark his conduct during the whole of his life. He was a timid, introspective child with an intense love for animals. When provoked, however, he would retaliate furiously. On being punished unjustly by a teacher when only six, he threw a bottle of ink at her.²⁰ One day he met his confirmation sponsor, General Machuca, who was leading a regiment of soldiers. Manuel directed a question to Machuca who answered him rather insultingly. The enraged lad retorted: "So zambo de mierda."²¹ This incident ended a very close relationship.

Receiving a comfortable inheritance, the González Prada's were lavish hosts, always providing the best in food and wine. Dispensing such hospitality, they entertained a constant parade of guests, particularly clerics and military officers.²² Manuel's extreme aversion to the former developed very quickly but it would extend to the latter in the years to come. Little Manuel was not exactly the model of childhood sanctity found in the second nocturn of the breviary. He had very little taste for

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 40-41.

²⁰Sánchez, op. cit., p. 36.

²¹Ibid., p. 43.

²²Ibid., pp. 31-32.

his mother's long prayers and litanies. Always confiding in his sister Cristina, he expressed to her the longing to be a man so that he could absent himself from the long prayer sessions.²³ After their marriage, his wife chided him for his anti-clericalism and pointed out that although her father was an unbeliever, he maintained good relations with priests. This did not impress Manuel:

The reason is that your father never suffered as I who lived in an atmosphere of rank Spanish fanaticism, unknown in France, at least since the Revolution; this mystical lunacy which dominated women made them rags in their priests' hands...I have experienced this in my mother and sisters. In my home I breakfasted upon priests, I had them for dinner, I breathed priests and their will alone dominated all. ²⁴

Following the ancient custom that the second son should study for the Church, the González de Pradas sent an unwilling Manuel to Santo Toribio Seminary. He despised every feature of seminary life, particularly the wearing of a cassock. While at the seminary, he made two important acquaintances, one a life-long friend, Augustín Obín, who was eventually ordained a priest, the other, Nicolás de Piérولا, a life-long enemy who left the seminary and later became president of the country. In regard to Piérولا, Sánchez says: "His shortness did not attract the sympathy of Manuel who cherished the belief that every noble and liberal person should possess--as Montaigne would later teach him--

²³Ibid., p. 37.

²⁴Adriana de González Prada, Mi Manuel (Lima: Editorial Cultura Antartica S.A., 1947), p. 135.

tall stature."²⁵ Sánchez does not seem to mind that his hero have such an awkward category within his ideological compass.

To amuse themselves, several of the seminarians played a game of "warring kites" on the roofs of buildings adjoining the seminary. A boy, with whom Manuel was playing, fell from the roof, sustaining a fatal head injury. This episode hastened Manuel's departure from the institution.²⁶

After running away from Santo Toribio, Manuel was enrolled at the Colegio San Carlos. He did not particularly distinguish himself in scholastic endeavor at the institution. He never allowed his marks to exceed the minimum necessary for matriculation. This attitude extended even to his favorite subjects, chemistry and mathematics. He was a trying case for the chemistry teacher, the Italian Eboli, who saw tremendous possibilities in the boy. He showed a flair for writing, but would not subscribe to the classical Spanish style demanded by his teachers.²⁷

Completing his studies at San Carlos, he obtained permission from his father to study engineering in Belgium. His mother, however, countermanded this decision, and Manuel had to resign himself to the study of law, since there was no engineering

²⁵Sánchez, op. cit., p. 44.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 45-46.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 48-49.

course offered in Lima.²⁸ He ploddingly followed law studies for five years. Finally, in 1868, in sheer exasperation at having to study canon law, he terminated his studies.

González Prada was now free to devote himself to the pursuit of literature. During his law studies, he had completed in eleven days a comedy, La tia y la sobrina, which was approved for presentation, but because of his excessive timidity, he withdrew it at the last moment.²⁹ During this period he wrote a number of articles which he was afraid to publish, maintaining all the while that his interests lay not in literature but in chemistry and engineering.³⁰ After much agony, he finally submitted a number of radical articles, which clearly reveal the influence of Hugo and Vigil, to the daily, El Nacional. They were signed under a pseudonym so as not to offend his mother. These articles evoked a cry of alarm from conservatives.³¹ Naturally, his mother hurled various deprecations at the author.

In 1869 a violent earthquake occurred in the Arequipa district, and González Prada made haste to the scene of the disaster in his mother's native province. Whatever his motives were in going there, González Prada emerged from this experience with a new sense of human suffering and a first-hand knowledge

²⁸Ibid., p. 52.

²⁹Ibid., p. 59.

³⁰Ibid., p. 58.

³¹Ibid., pp. 60-61.

of the misery of the majority of Peruvians.³² After this sojourn, he set out on a long horseback trip through the Andean region, the natural beauty of which threw him into raptures of ecstasy, but the terrible conditions of the Indians caused him deep spiritual turmoil.

The other members of the family chose their stations in life. Francisco, the eldest son, dedicated himself to business and the intricate manoeuvres of social climbing. Cristina married a socially prominent resident of Lima. Isabel, the youngest member of the family, established a convent-like home in which she led a life of prayer, penance, and good works.³³

Deeply impressed with rural Peru, González Prada decided to reside in one of the family properties in the valley of Malle in the province of Canete, about sixty miles south of Lima.³⁴ Living an almost monastic life in this rustic retreat, his interests and activities were varied and intense. He tried to improve techniques in sowing, harvesting, and the care of cattle; he experimented with yuca from which he hoped to derive a commercially feasible quantity of starch; he devoted considerable time to reading, and his favorite authors were Hugo, Quevedo, Menard, Khayham, Gracian, and Hurtado de Mendoza; he did not

³²Eugenio Chang-Rodríguez, La literatura política de González Prada, Mariátegui, y Haya de la Torre (Mexico: Ediciones de Andrea, 1957), p. 56.

³³Sánchez, op. cit., pp. 64-65.

³⁴Chang-Rodríguez, op. cit., p. 57.

neglect the exercise of his literary talents, composing and experimenting in different kinds of verse.

His reputation as a poet becoming established after the War of the Pacific, González Prada was asked to contribute some of his works to Farnaso Peruano. He was also asked to give biographical data. He complied with the request, giving this terse summation: "I was born in Lima. My parents are Don Francisco González Prada and Doña Josefa Ulloa de Prada."³⁵ He had dropped the nobiliary particle de from his father's surname, and thereafter signed his signature simply as Manuel G. Prada. As one would expect, his mother was indignant and hurt, regarding this act as a mutilation of the family name.

As was his regular custom, González Prada left his country retreat in 1876 to spend the Christmas holiday with his mother, and then remained to celebrate his birthday on January 6. This birthday celebration had, however, special significance because one of the guests was a little French girl, Adriana de Vernueil. She and her brother were the surviving children of a sickly French lawyer who had come to Lima in 1875 in the hope that the mild climate might improve his health.

González Prada was smitten by this little girl with the blue eyes and the long, golden hair, although she was only twelve as against his twenty-nine years. He was not, however, the first Peruvian admirer of this golden hair. Two years previously,

³⁵Sánchez, op. cit., p. 65.

aboard the boat travelling from Panama to Callao, General Rufino Echenique, former president of Peru and close friend of González Prada's father, spent over a half hour each morning combing Adriana's hair.³⁶ Not to be outdone by Echenique, Manuel combed his wife's hair every morning until the time of his death. Even Luis Alberto Sánchez is not above this Peruvian predilection for blond hair as golden metaphors hurtle through the pages of Don Manuel whenever he writes about González Prada's wife and children.

Like the conquistadores, Doña Josefa's fondness for gold was more practical than poetic, preferring the substantial rather than the accidental. Discounting Manuel's love for Adriana as mere infatuation, she flatly opposed the marriage.³⁷ She advised him to marry a girl from one of the wealthy and socially prominent Peruvian families. As in so many other things when his mother was involved, Manuel temporized, and a romance that budded in 1877 did not blossom into marriage until 1887, shortly after his mother's death.

To add to Manuel's domestic problems, national and international events began to complicate his life. The Atacama desert question, long simmering between Peru and Bolivia on one side and Chile on the other, reached an explosive point in the late 1870's because of the increased demands for nitrates, and finally

³⁶ Adriana de González Prada, op. cit., p. 40.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 124.

erupted with Chile's declaration of war in 1879. Latin American politics reached a new level in odd gyrations when President Prado left for Europe on a fundraising tour while his country was at war. In the meantime, Piérola staged a coup d'etat and took over the government.

Towards the end of 1879, González Prada left the life of a country squire to join a reserve army batallion. Given the rank of captain, he spent the following year engaged in training maneuvers, using the term in a very loose sense. If the situation was confused in high government circles, it was even worse in the lower echelon of the national effort. Always with a gallery of admiring women, they spent more time eating sandwiches and drinking liquor than undergoing serious training.³⁸

When the Chileans entered the country, mass desertions occurred among the Peruvian troops. Soldiers feigned sickness and dressed as women to avoid being re-taken into the army. The conduct of the officers was even worse. In an essay in Tonel de Diogenes, González Prada says that in view of the many desertions in officer ranks, had the battle been deferred till June, he would have become a brigade general or chief of the military staff.³⁹ Chang-Rodríguez infers from this article that González Prada had serious designs on these ranks.⁴⁰ Actually, this is a

³⁸ Manuel Gonzalez Prada, Tonel de Diogenes, p. 32.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 33.

⁴⁰ Chang-Rodríguez, op. cit., p. 59.

good example of the irony he so often employs in his writing. Incidentally, he had been advanced to the rank of lieutenant colonel in 1880.

On the morning of January 13, 1881, the Chilean offensive began with a heavy bombardment attack. Generally, the Peruvians offered no resistance, abandoning defensive positions and fleeing to Lima. González Prada's battery was one of the few that remained manned. Sánchez gives an epic quality to González Prada's role in the abortive battle. According to his own account, his most serious encounter was not with the enemy but with a fellow colonel who was brutally mistreating the Indian soldiers.⁴¹ The Indians, given new rifles and totally ignorant as to their operation, placed the shell in the mouth of the barrel.⁴² Mercifully, this military travesty ended on January 16, three days after its inception.

After the defeat, González Prada, displaying a good example of his extremism, incarcerated himself in his mother's house for three long years, until the signing of the Treaty of Ancón and the evacuation of the Chilean soldiers from Lima.⁴³ During this period of seclusion he studied and wrote, producing works in almost every form of literary endeavor, much of it containing

⁴¹González Prada, Tonel de Diogenes, p. 35.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid., p. 38.

a sarcastic and cynical streak.⁴⁴

González Prada's lionization began in 1885 when he was made vice-president of the Club Literario, an exclusive organization for authors and intellectuals.⁴⁵ Periodicals and newspapers vied for his poems and articles. With his inflammatory attacks on most institutions, he was the lodestone of the young Peruvian intellectuals who had become thoroughly disillusioned as a result of the disastrous War of the Pacific.⁴⁶

By this time the radical cast of his mind was becoming hardened. Two of his articles, "Victor Hugo" and "Grau," both written in 1885, serve as a frame of reference to the development of his ideology. To him, Hugo was the personification of the progressive spirit, "a royalist in adolescence, a Bonapartist in youth, a republican in manhood, and a socialist in old age...To pass from a monarchist to a republican, from a believer to a freethinker, signifies ascension."⁴⁷ The warrior, though, is still a venerated figure in his pantheon: "France had the glory of producing Napoleon Bonaparte--the man of the sword, and Victor Hugo--the man of the pen."⁴⁸ Nor has he discarded patriotism as is evident in his eulogy to Grau who lost his life

⁴⁴Sánchez, op. cit., p. 97.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 102.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 104.

⁴⁷González Prada, Páginas Libres, op. cit., pp. 178-179.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 182.

fighting the Chileans: "Without Grau fighting on the bridge of the Angamós...would we have the right to call ourselves a nation?"⁴⁹

A number of young poets eager to reform the country, under the leadership of Luís Enrique Marqués and Abelardo Gamarra, had founded a new literary organization, the Círculo Literario. The members of this organization, desiring to enlarge its scope so as to include social and political objectives, enlisted the support of González Prada.⁵⁰ He was resolved to give these men a new orientation. In his first address to the Círculo Literario, delivered at the Ateneo in Lima, González Prada paraded his vast literary erudition before his listeners, discussing and analyzing the European poets of the nineteenth century, castigating those who remained tied to the forms and the thought of the past and extolling those who were original in expression and gave new directions to contemporary thought. Towards the end he made this appeal to Peruvian writers:

Our liberty will be useless if we limit ourselves in form to the exaggerated purism of Madrid, or if in substance we submit ourselves to the Syllabus of Rome. Let us rid ourselves of the tendency that induces us to prefer the foliage of words to the fruit of ideas. ⁵¹

On July 29, 1888, the same organization presented a literary-musical program to collect funds for the ransoming of Tacna

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 70.

⁵⁰Sánchez, op. cit., p. 104.

⁵¹González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 26.

and Arica, lost in the War of the Pacific. The major address, written by González Prada, was delivered by Miguel Uribe, the young Ecuadorian orator. An extremely weak voice and excessive fear of speaking before crowds prevented González Prada from delivering his own speeches.⁵² Calling upon his great powers of imagery, wit and sarcasm, González Prada submitted Peru to a ruthless and exacting pathological examination. An external factor greatly aggravated the national ailment, but the chief cause of the disease lay within the organism itself: "The brutal hand of Chile cut up our flesh and crushed our bones; but the real conquerors, the arms of the enemy, were our ignorance and our spirit of servitude."⁵³ Every level of society had glaringly demonstrated its corruption and was indicted. Older Peruvians had clearly displayed their total ineptitude in not being able to save the country; the burden had now devolved upon the young; "The old people to the tomb, the young to the work."⁵⁴ These words became the battle-cry of the young intellectuals and social apostles.

The address was a complete success. The crowded Teatro Politeama reverberated with delirious cheers. President Cáceres who was in the audience said "I did not know whether to arrest him or embrace him."⁵⁵ Being the prudent politician he did nei-

⁵²Sánchez, op. cit., p. 119.

⁵³González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 64.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 68.

⁵⁵Adriana de González Prada, op. cit., p. 145.

ther, but prohibited the publishing of the speech in the Lima newspapers. A new star was now shining in the political firmament.

The joy of this success was quickly transformed into intense grief: Cristinita, his infant daughter, contracted measles and died before the doctor could diagnose the sickness. González Prada was so distraught that he proposed a suicide pact to his wife.⁵⁶ Less than a month afterwards, his elder sister Cristina died as a result of imposing long fasts and extreme penances upon herself. His wife says that Manuel's reaction to this death was "rebellion against God Whom he denied, but Whom he admitted so that he could reproach Him for His injustice."⁵⁷ Their second child was born on February 9, 1890 and died eleven days after his birth, shortly after the priest had baptized him. This time it was Adriana who experienced inconsolable grief: "I did not cry, an immense fury penetrated me...I rebelled before such injustice."⁵⁸ Thereafter, both denied the existence of God.

The movement for a radical party based on González Prada's radical ideology was gaining momentum. Gamarra published one of González Prada's speeches in which he advocated "a crusade against the decrepit spirit of the past, a war against everything which implies retrogression in science, art, and literature."⁵⁹ The enthusiasm of the members of the Circulo Literario

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 150.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 155.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 164.

⁵⁹González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 45.

and many supporters could not be contained.

Fearing the movement, the government tried to seduce González Prada with the offer of a senatorship, the head of a legation in Europe, or the editorship of a daily newspaper.⁶⁰ Casting these temptations aside, he rallied the liberal and radical elements, and under his guidance the Unión Nacional party came into being in 1891.

Even the realization of this great dream, the founding of the Unión Nacional, could not fill the void in González Prada's life. In the face of so much grief and bitterness, he and his wife decided that a trip to Europe might be the right antidote to the despair that was threatening to engulf them. They left Callao for France in June, 1891.

New dimensions were added to their lives in France. Amidst great rejoicing their third child, Alfredo, was born on October 16, 1891. No religious ceremony was to threaten the life of this child. Meanwhile, Manuel was attending lectures at the College de France. Here he realized one of his fondest desires in being able to attend Renan's lectures. He also attended lectures given by Maspero in Oriental history, Barbier de Meynard in Oriental languages, Chermont-Ganneau on Hebraic inscriptions, and Louis Menard on positivism. He enjoyed all of these lectures, but had a pronounced preference for Renan. This man was the object of González Prada's unbridled adulation.

⁶⁰ Adriana de González Prada, op. cit., p. 176.

Ernest Renan and Jean Marie Guyau had a profound influence on González Prada, the former furnishing the form, the rationalistic approach, the latter the content, biological vitalism, to his philosophical orientation. They were the intellectual progenitors of his atheism.

In Peru, meanwhile, the Unión Nacional was threatened with disintegration. Because of its lack of political activity, some members joined other parties. Close friends prevailed upon González Prada to publish a book as a means of restoring party solidarity. In 1894 his first book, Páginas Libres, appeared. Actually, it was a collection of speeches and articles that he had previously written. It had the desired effect. González Prada again became the center of controversy in Peru. His effigy was burned in Arequipa. A priest in Lima, F. B. González, wrote an apologetical treatise⁶¹ to answer González Prada. It completely lacks the bite and sparkle of Páginas Libres.

Cancelling plans to visit Germany and the Scandinavian countries, the González Pradas travelled through Belgium and Southern France before arriving in Barcelona in December, 1896, where they remained for six months. This part of Spain captured González Prada's fancy because of the independent, anarchic streak in its people. After the Barcelona sojourn, he visited the other parts of Spain, and through the good offices of influential men, had access to the great libraries and book collec-

⁶¹F. B. González, Páginas razonables en oposición a páginas libres (Lima: Centro de Propaganda Católica, 1895).

tions of the country. Although he was shown many courtesies by the Spaniards, Sánchez says "he found they mistrusted indianos."⁶² Nevertheless, he established lifelong friendships with Pi y Margall and Unamuno.

Yearning to re-enter the Peruvian political fray, González Prada departed from Europe in March, 1898. He was enthusiastically welcomed by his old comrades of the Unión Nacional on his arrival in Lima. Piérola, fearing the political consequences of his return, uttered the sarcastic statement: "The Sybarite has returned."⁶³

Complying with the urgent demands of the members, the leaders of the Unión Nacional called a meeting at which González Prada gave the main address. He outlined the sad features of the history of Peru, excoriated the presidents for their incompetence, and warned his hearers of the nation's bleak future unless "a profound, radical revolution" were set in motion.⁶⁴ His listeners demanded that he accept the presidency of the country.

This course of events was extremely disturbing to Piérola. He banned the publication of news concerning the activities of the Unión Nacional. González Prada founded successively two publications, Germinal and El Independiente, both of which were closed by order of the government.⁶⁵

⁶²Sánchez, op. cit., p. 156.

⁶³Ibid., p. 161.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 164.

⁶⁵Chang-Rodríguez, op. cit., p. 68.

González Prada continued his virulent attacks on leaders and institutions, but he was offering little or nothing in the way of a concrete program to remedy the ills of the country. Some of the members of the Unión Nacional, disgruntled at his lack of political intuition, joined forces with the Liberal Party.⁶⁶ Seeing the trend, Gamarra proposed that the Unión Nacional join forces with the liberals. González Prada vehemently opposed this proposition. Gamarra and the other dissidents of the Unión Nacional, meeting separately, approved an alliance with the Liberals. Seeing his impossible position, González Prada, in April, 1902, resigned from the party which he had founded.⁶⁷

Periodically, after this rupture with organized politics, his name was mentioned, or he was approached, in regard to the presidency, but he resolutely refused affiliation with any political party.⁶⁸ Henceforth, he would be a solitary figure, a movement unto himself, judging and censuring all phases of national life.

This political eclipse in no way affected his popularity as an occasional speaker. Invited by the Stella d'Italia organization, he delivered a scathing attack on the political machinations of papacy in September, 1905.⁶⁹ In the same year he ad-

⁶⁶Armando Bazán, Biografía de José Carlos Mariátegui (Santiago de Chile: Empresa Editora Zig Zag, 1939), p. 31.

⁶⁷Chang-Rodríguez, op. cit., p. 68.

⁶⁸Sánchez, op. cit., pp. 183-184.

⁶⁹Manuel González Prada, Horas de lucha (Callao: Tip. "Lux-Constitution 54," 1924), pp. 107-123.

addressed La Federación de Obreros Panaderos, giving his famous discourse, "El Intelectual y El Obrero," in which he advocated a close working alliance between the thinker and the worker as the only salvation for society.⁷⁰ In 1908 his second book, Horas de Lucha, was published. Like Páginas Libres, it was a collection of articles and speeches, including the above-mentioned discourses.

Bereft of all political moorings, González Prada's political convictions became even more radical. He now identified himself with Kropotkin and Reclus, outright proponents of anarchism. Instead of his doctrine of fervent patriotism, he advocated "destroying with one blow all countries, all governments, all authorities."⁷¹ Gone was his worship of military heroes: Napoleon and his ilk were butchers.⁷² He had completely unwound his spool of radicalism.

In 1911 he was approached by Germán Leguía y Martínez, Minister of State, a friend and erstwhile member of the Unión Nacional, to accept the directorship of the Colegio de Guadalupe. Referring to the rule which required students to receive the sacraments, he declined the offer on the grounds of clerical interference.⁷³

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 66-77.

⁷¹Manuel González Prada, Prosa Menuda (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Iman, 1941), pp. 241-242.

⁷²Manuel González Prada, Ararquía (Lima: P.T.C.M., 1948), p. 92.

⁷³Sánchez, op. cit., p. 196.

Ricardo Palma, the famous Peruvian author, was director of the Biblioteca Nacional. Resigning three times, after having quarreled with the government, his resignation was finally accepted. Leguía again approached González Prada to accept this directorship. After much debate he accepted the position. A storm of criticism enveloped González Prada. The man who had railed against government corruption had finally succumbed to its allurements. Palma tagged him with the epithet "Cato for hire."⁷⁴ González Prada rode out the storm with dignity.

To prove that his convictions had not weakened, González Prada resigned his position when Colonel Oscar Benavides overthrew the government. He was reinstated as director in 1915 after José Pardo had assumed the presidency. Somewhat mellowed but just as anticlerical as ever, he continued to fulfill this position until death claimed him on July 22, 1918.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 207.

CHAPTER II

The Role of the Church in Peru

Thundering out his denunciations upon every phase of Peruvian life, González Prada seldom failed to include the Church as one target of his innumerable and diverse fulminations. Some of his basic ideas underwent startling transformations, but his attitude towards the Church maintained a steady and undeviating course: absolute and enduring opposition.

There is no gainsaying the inherent logic in González Prada's approach. State and Church were as basic a pair of factors to colonial Peru as a father and mother to a family. Each complemented the other in such an essential manner that to ignore the interplay of these two institutions would be inconceivable in the study of Peruvian history. Although the power of the Church had been attenuated since independence, it continued to exert a strong and prestigious influence over national affairs. There have been arguments, recriminations and quarrels between the two, but the parts of every smoothly-running machine always involve a certain amount of friction in the meshing of their operations. The point here is not that this politico-religious regime has failed in the discharge of its obligations to the common good, but that it has been eminently successful in the realization

of the aims of a small minority in control of the country. The evolution of this system merits a brief examination.

The politico-religious arrangement in colonial Peru, as in the rest of the Spanish American empire, was based on papal concessions and immemorial customs, giving the Spanish monarch virtual control of the Church in America, and is generally referred to as the patronato real de las Indias or the royal patronage of the Indies.¹

Because of the vast distance between Spain and America, the king could not personally exercise the powers contained in the royal patronage. He, therefore, delegated these powers to the viceroys, governors, and audiencias, this delegation being approved by the pope, of course. The Spanish kings jealously guarded their patronal rights and gave strict instructions to the viceroys in safeguarding them from infringement by the clergy.² By right of delegation, the viceroy was vice-patron of all ecclesiastical endeavor. Since education, health, and social welfare lay largely within the Church's domain, any venture in these fields came under the jurisdiction of the viceroy; in a sense, he was superintendent of schools, hospitals, and charitable institutions.³

¹J. Lloyd Mecham, Church and State in Latin America (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1934), pp. 18-21.

²Lillian Estelle Fisher, Viceregal Administration in the Spanish American Colonies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1926), pp. 169-170.

³Ibid., pp. 249-250.

The custom of appointing clerics to government positions, even to that of viceroy, added to the complexity of this politico-religious arrangement. Often a cleric was the only educated and talented person available to fill a position, so by force of circumstances the king was compelled to choose him. In fact, three of the viceroys of Peru were bishops.⁴

Disputes over spheres of authority were not long in developing, which gave rise to regalist and ultramontane interpretations of royal patronage. Supporters of the former view claimed that royal patronage was a logical and legal right flowing from temporal considerations, and not dependent upon the pope whose domain was strictly spiritual. Ultramontanists contended that since the pope had supreme jurisdiction over the whole Church, royal patronage was but a concession, spiritual in character, given as a reward for the performance of good works. Since so many clerics in the colonies were beholden to the king, most of them supported the regalist view. Stanger gives a pertinent summary:

The controversy, in final analysis, was merely a doctrinal rationalization of local disputes which did not alter the larger relation between king, Church, and people. Nevertheless, it contained germs of a natural rivalry between clericalism and liberalism which has persisted in subsequent history. 5.

⁴C. H. Haring, The Spanish Empire in America (New York: Harbinger Book, Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1963), p. 118.

⁵Francis Merriman Stanger, "Church and State in Peru," Hispanic American Historical Review, VII (November, 1927), p. 413.

The Church being such a vital factor in colonial life, the king strove to enhance the prestige of its clergy. Like the military, the clergy were a privileged class, not burdened with ordinary civic duties. The most conspicuous sign of this special treatment was the fuero eclesiastico, or the ecclesiastical charter whereby clerics had the right to establish their own legal tribunal which had jurisdiction over all cases, either civil or criminal, involving clerics. The lone exception to this was litigation arising from royal privilege.⁶ These ecclesiastical courts were not abolished in Peru until 1856.

Economically, the Church was given the same favored treatment. The tithes, which by papal decree belonged to the king, were, with the exception of one-ninth of the amount, returned to the Church to support various phases of its activity. This one-ninth, though always claimed by the king, was generally devoted to ecclesiastical purposes.⁷ Since the Spaniards refused to make these payments, the tithes fell upon the Indians.⁸

In addition to the tithes, the Church was entitled to collect the first fruits of all agricultural products, and to receive fees, gifts, dowries, bequests, alms, and perpetual trust funds. Gradually, it gained possession of enormous land holdings and property. In Lima, shortly before independence, 1135 of the

⁶Fisher, op. cit., pp. 249-250.

⁷Mecham, op. cit., p. 29.

⁸Stanger, op. cit., p. 414.

2806 houses in that city belonged to the Church.⁹ The common practice of preparing wills to include a clause of vinculation of the estate further enriched the Church by guaranteeing a stable income for the financing of pious causes.¹⁰ In 1804 the Spanish government ordered the sale of properties held for pious foundations, but the Church, being the largest moneylender in the colony, simply withdrew the paper money backed by its vast holding, thus making sale impossible.¹¹

The Church contributed to the perpetuation and expansion of latifundia in Peru not only because of its vast land possessions, but also because of its surplus of liquid capital and easy credit terms. The improvident and extravagant landowner, by paying relatively light interest, had no fear of mortgage foreclosure. The ambitious landowner, on the other hand, could invest all available money in new land with the assurance that he had easy access to a source of operating capital.¹²

The large number of religious in proportion to the population further strained the Peruvian economy. Statistics from 1611 indicate that ten percent of the 26,500 inhabitants were religious.¹³ They were, for the most part, non-productive in the

⁹Mecham, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

¹⁰Stanger, op. cit., p. 415.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Mecham, op. cit., p. 47.

¹³Haring, op. cit., p. 176.

economic sense. The burden of their support fell upon the Indian through the forced labor devices of the mita and repartimiento. Generally, this labor was not used productively because of primitive agricultural techniques.¹⁴ The Jesuits were an outstanding exception to this mismanagement. They had 203 haciendas in Peru,¹⁵ and even such a severe critic as Mariátequi praises them for their economic efficiency.¹⁶

According to Dávalos y Lissón, a population of 8,255,000, calculated by the Marques of Toledo in 1572, had shrunk to 800,000 by the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹⁷ John Howland Rowe, in a careful analysis, estimates that in 1525, there were 6,000,000 Indians in the Andean region.¹⁸ Even on the basis of Rowe's estimate, these figures represent an alarming decline in the Indian population. In view of her great wealth, prestige, and economic incomprehension, it would be difficult to exonerate the Church as a factor in the decimation of the Indians.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 242.

¹⁵Moisés Sáenz, Sobre el Indio peruano y su incorporación al medio nacional (Mexico: Publicaciones de la Secretaría de educación Pública, 1933), p. 252.

¹⁶José Carlos Mariátequi, Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana (Lima: Editorial Librería Peruana, 1934), pp. 6-7.

¹⁷Pedro Dávalos y Lissón, La Primera Centuria; Causas geográficas, políticas y económicas que han detenido el progreso moral y material del Perú en el primer siglo de su vida independiente (Lima: Librería e Imprenta Gil, 1919), Vol. I, p. 21.

¹⁸John Howland Rowe, "Inca Culture at the Time of the Spanish Conquest," Handbook of South American Indians, ed. Julian H. Steward (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), Vol. II, p. 185.

The first endeavors in Peruvian education were under the auspices of the Church. Actually, the first schools were order novitiates to which lay people were admitted, since there were no other schools. Even after the separation of the schools from the monasteries, the Church continued to dominate this sphere of colonial life. By law the municipal authorities were obliged to support a primary school, but by their default this service devolved on the secular clergy. The orders established their famous colegios or minor universities in the cities. Cuzco, for example, had two of these institutions, one under the Jesuits, the other under the Dominicans.¹⁹

The education of the Indians was emphasized in royal decrees and instructions, and efforts were made to teach them to read and to write. However, these efforts were sporadic and haphazard and the vast majority of the Indians remained illiterate. Education, reflecting the society to which it ministered, remained essentially aristocratic, confined to the Spaniards, Creoles, and upper-class mestizos. Spain was not exceptional in this regard, since this pattern was typical throughout the whole of Europe.²⁰

Much has been written about the backwardness of the Peruvian school system, that it was anti-scientific, stagnated in scholasticism and was centuries behind its European counterparts.

¹⁹Haring, op. cit., p. 214.

²⁰Ibid., p. 209.

Stanger supports this view.²¹ John Tate Lanning, in a well-documented article, using examples from colonial Peru, refutes this generality and maintains that it was "approximately one generation from European innovator to American academician."²²

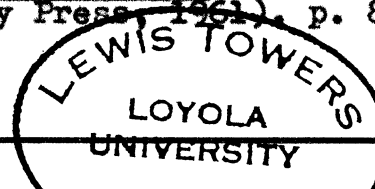
In the final analysis, when the importance of education to society is considered, the rendering of the service, even with its obvious shortcomings, was not a small accomplishment, particularly since the Church had to finance the system with its own money. This fact mitigates to a certain extent the harsh aspects of the ecclesiastical economic policy.

The Church began her ministrations to the sick and the poor with the establishing of the colony. San Andrés Hospital was founded in 1545, and shortly afterwards Santa Ana was established to look after the needs of the Indians. In succeeding years other hospitals were established to look after lepers, sailors, destitute clerics, and abandoned infants. These hospitals also served as poorhouses, caring for all types of indigents. Although these institutions have been criticized for their failure to accommodate all cases and for their inferior medical standards,²³ even in our own age no nation has completely solved either of these problems. As in education, this organized effort

²¹Stanger, op. cit., p. 416.

²²John Tate Lanning, "The Reception of the Enlightenment in Latin America," Latin America and the Enlightenment, ed. Arthur P. Whitaker (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1961), p. 89.

²³Haring, op. cit., p. 182.



to alleviate the misery of the sick and the poor, involving a considerable outlay of time, energy, and financial resources, indicates that the motivation in the Peruvian Church could be lofty and noble.

The Inquisition was another institution closely associated with the Church. Until it was officially established by Philip II in 1570, its powers were exercised by bishops. This institution was entirely under the control of the king. Its function was to maintain the purity of the faith, but it also was made to serve a political purpose in censoring books containing political philosophy inimical to the state. Since the Indians were considered socially immature, they did not come under its jurisdiction.²⁴

The Inquisition was worse for the fear and repression it engendered than the atrocities it committed. The sad fact cannot be denied that, occasionally, it put people to death for following their conscience. However, as Madariaga points out, no episode in its history ever approached the hysteria of the witch execution orgy in Salem.²⁵ Lanning cites examples indicating that the late eighteenth century Peruvian Inquisition officials actively aided the dissemination of the new European political phil-

²⁴Mecham, op. cit., p. 41.

²⁵Salvador de Madariaga, "The Church and the Inquisition in the Spanish American Colonies," The Conflict between Church and State in Latin America, ed. Frederick B. Pike (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p. 57.

osophies and concludes that the Inquisition itself was "essentially bureaucratic and ineffectual."²⁶

Many charges of grave moral misconduct have been laid against the Peruvian clergy. Regretably, there are chapters in Peruvian history to substantiate these charges against many clerics. In the middle of the seventeenth century Diego León de Pinelo wrote a letter to Count Alva de Aliste, Viceroy of Peru, giving a detailed account of the outrages committed by priests against the Indians.²⁷ Juan and Ulloa make the following observations in their famous Noticias Secretas de América, written in the eighteenth century: the whole of Peru--Europeans, Creoles, the married, the single, secular and regular clergy--was addicted to concubinage;²⁸ monasteries were bordellos;²⁹ many priests, completely ignoring the great spiritual needs of the Indian missions, looked for a wealthy benefice which would involve no work.³⁰

The picture, however, is not totally black. The same authors not only clear the Jesuits of these charges, but lavishly extol their conduct: "Here shines continuously the purity of the

²⁶Lanning, op. cit., p. 72.

²⁷Philip Ainsworth Means, "Indian Legislation in Peru," Hispanic American Historical Review, III (November, 1920), p.520.

²⁸Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa, Noticias Secretas de América (London: John Murray, 1826), p. 490.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 494-495.

³⁰Ibid., p. 382.

faith."³¹ They also commend these men for their zealous work among the Indians, attributing this zeal to their superior spiritual formation.³² Mariátequi acknowledges the high moral quality of the Jesuits by implication, when in lauding their economic acumen, he contrasts them with "nobles, doctors, and clergy of Lima, dedicated to a soft and sensual life."³³

After independence Peru was in a constant state of turmoil with one caudillo succeeding the other in a long series of revolutions. If anything, the moral fibre of a nation declines when such conditions prevail. And priests can be only as good as the people from whom they come. Keeping the social context in mind, Clorinda Matto de Turner presents a very plausible portrayal of the profligate village priest in Aves sin Nido.³⁴ Dávalos y Lissón presents an equally dismal picture:

In other times thousands of persons of both sexes entered convents [and] monasteries....Very few in Peru today wish to serve God in the priesthood...There are so few who stand out that the government has great difficulty in presenting a double terna to Congress for the election of a bishop...On the part of the pastor, there is neglect in the teaching of catechism, and a lack of abnegation and dedication necessary to reform the moral and social conditions of the parish. 35

³¹Ibid., pp. 494-495.

³²Ibid., pp. 384-385.

³³Mariátequi, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

³⁴Clorinda Matto de Turner, Aves sin Nido (Cuzco: Librería e Imprenta, H. G. Rozas, Sues, 1948), pp. 70-73.

³⁵Dávalos y Lissón, op. cit., pp. 200-203.

Analyzing the role of the Church among the Indians in the early part of this century, Moisés Sáenz regarded the priest as a negative social influence, primarily occupied in extorting money through exorbitant sacristy fees; fiestas--not to speak of their deplorable social effects, and cofradía (pious lay organization) land and labor practices, and with little interest in education.³⁶ On the other hand, Philip Ainsworth Means, although critical of the general lack of policy displayed by the Church toward the Indian, maintains a sense of objectivity. Using concrete cases, he contrasts a mediocre priest, who allows his parishioners to languish aimlessly on a hacienda, with an energetic, dedicated priest who, through a stimulating parochial program, helps his people live a better moral and material life and, most important of all, gives them an appreciation of their dignity.³⁷

The ideas and attitudes of González Prada concerning religion in general and Roman Catholicism in particular must be interpreted within a context embracing this convoluted ecclesiastical history of Peru and his own psychological state. As the above summation indicates, there was ample justification for, and pressing need of, a forceful, constructive critic. A mind with the most elastic standards could not place González Prada in this category. In no way can his religious attacks be compared with

³⁶For a more thorough analysis of the Church in relation to the Indians, see Saenz, op. cit., pp. 246-257.

³⁷Philip Ainsworth Means, "Race and Society in the Andean Countries," Hispanic American Historical Review, I (November, 1918), p. 421.

the objective criticism of the dispassionate intellectual; they go far beyond the interested criticism of a man vitally engaged with his environment; they seem to indicate a psychological problem. There are grounds for such a supposition.

As already mentioned, González Prada was extremely shy and timid. This could have been the result of mother domination which is indicated in three important areas of his life: career, literary recognition, and marriage. He was forced to go to the seminary by both his father and mother. Later, his mother prevented him from pursuing an engineering career. He would not sign his articles for fear of offending his mother, thereby losing the recognition which a young author so greatly desires. Finally, because of his mother's opposition, his marriage had to be postponed until after her death.

Resorting to Freudian concepts, his resistance to maternal authority is transferred to the authority of the Church. His mother loved and venerated the Church. Subconsciously, there was an urge to punish his mother and it manifested itself in a compulsion to tear down and destroy the Church.

This is just a possible explanation of González Prada's virulent attitude towards the Church. One could present numerous arguments to the contrary, such as his courage, his independent spirit, his philosophical orientation, and his lack of obsequiousness before national leaders. Also, of course, there was the sad condition of the Church. However, the three points on which this hypothesis is constructed--mother domination, timidity, and

absolute hatred for the Church--are palpably evident in his biographies.

As mentioned before, Ernest Renan and Jean-Marie Guyau furnished González Prada with the philosophical postulates for his atheistic conception of reality. This orientation received a strong assist from positivism which, through his own reading and the lectures of Louis Menard, became a kind of religion for him. He saw man's consummation in science. Actually, he capitalized the first letter of the word in all of his writings.

The influence of Renan, who subscribed to the rationalistic approach and methods of the German school of higher criticism, is readily discernible in González Prada: a total rejection of metaphysics in interpreting reality; absolute trust in the inductive method; the conviction that all truth comes ultimately from the laboratory and library. He considered La Vie de Jesus as one of the great masterpieces in scholarship. He wrote: "If Jesus should return to this world, perhaps he would prefer to see his human actions enhanced in this book rather than see his miracle worker prodigies glorified in the gospels."³⁸

The third person of González Prada's atheistic trinity is Guyau who propounded a theory of biological vitalism. The full life is rooted in the biological rather than the psychological terrain; not codes but the vital impulse surging through man predicated his existence; moral rectitude and altruism are manifes-

³⁸González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 188.

tations of this impulse. Religion is not only anthropomorphic but sociomorphic; since it seeks the ultimate answer outside of man, it must wither; actually, the more intelligent have begun to renounce it.

González Prada incorporates the ideas of these men in two articles, "Jesus Christ and his Doctrine" and "Catholicism and Science," which were written while he was in Europe. These articles are outright attacks on religion rather than an attempt to offer a systematic exposition of his philosophy. However, these attacks can be taken as an involuted expression of his philosophy.

In "Jesus Christ and His Doctrine," he declares that Christianity, like Islam, is but a schism of Judaism. Christ, far from being original, was just a good organizer of existing ideas. Furthermore, He was not a redeemer but a political figure who sought to remove the foreign yoke from His people, His divinization not occurring until the Council of Nice. The Trinity was nothing but a concession to the polytheistic proletariat, and it was superseded by the cult to Jesus and Mary. Finally, there is the barren picture of the virgin-mother who never loved a man and the god-man who never loved a woman, presenting a kind of effeminate Manicheism--the very antithesis of the full life.³⁹

Sharpening his focus, he directs the thrust of his next article, "Catholicism and Science," at Roman Catholicism, con-

³⁹Manuel González Prada, Nuevas páginas libres (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Ercilla, 1937). The points referred to are developed in this book, pp. 17-40.

trasting it with the new religion, science. The Catholic faith is a melange of superstitions, myths, and philosophies ranging from the gross fetishism of Egypt to the subtle philosophy of Alexandria. It added parts as the need arose, from proclaiming Christ was divine in the fourth century to the declaration of the infallibility of the pope in the nineteenth century. Each age and place has its own distinct Catholicism; schismatics like Arius, Luther, and Calvin were conscientious men who wanted to go back to primitive Christianity. The relation between religion and science is opposition. Protestantism, being more progressive, opened its doors to science and, almost immediately, its beliefs began to disintegrate. Catholicism has profited from this lesson and keeps its doors closed. Science, relying on the inductive method, is active, always searching for truth. Religion, possessing the truth, is passive and stagnant. Science, continuously disproving religious myths, teaches man the true nature of things, as for example, that the earth is not the center of the universe or that man is not a privileged being, but just another species belonging to the zoological scale.⁴⁰

As a final confirmation of the blighting effect of Catholicism, González Prada offers Spain and Ireland, the lands of his forefathers, as examples:

The apogee of Catholicism coincides with the greatest moral abasement, with the greatest ignorance, with the

⁴⁰Ibid. The points referred to are developed in this book, pp. 42-60.

greatest misery. Ireland and Spain, the Catholic peoples par excellence, are they not the most backward and miserable peoples in Europe. 41

González Prada never intended the scientific anathemas which he was hurling at religion to be mere rumbles in an ivory tower. The expunging of religion from the body politic was the most evident plank in his rather circumscribed political platform. For him political and social improvement always involved a religious question. To seek to improve political and social conditions without facing the religious question was utter folly. The complete separation of Church and state was not an answer to the problem because Catholicism had entwined itself around the vitals of the nation. The only solution was the eradication of religion from all spheres of Peruvian life. He wrote in Horas de Lucha:

Whoever preaches propaganda for liberty preaches irreligious propaganda. No one can conceive of a half-revolutionary; he who fights for the individual against the state has to fight for the individual against religion. 42

Victor Andrés Belaúnde, in commenting on Gonzalez Prada's radicalism, makes this relevant observation: "It is curious to observe that radicalism adopts precisely the same line of conduct as medievalism or exacerbated clericalism."⁴³ Contrasting the

⁴¹Ibid., p. 59.

⁴²González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 344.

⁴³Victor Andrés Belaúnde, Meditaciones peruanos (Lima: Compañía de Impresiones y Publicidad: Editores, 1932), p. 53.

liberal and radical positions, Belaúnde upholds the absolute authority of the state in the face of clerical encroachment. He is quick to point out, however, that this authority should not protrude into extra-political areas, especially conscience. Safeguarding religious freedom, he holds that religious sentiment has its seat in conscience and to attack this religious sentiment is to invade the sacred area of conscience.⁴⁴ Rather than extinguishing clerical dominance, he regards González Prada's advocacy of war on religion as a means of inducing a tremendous wave of exaggerated clericalism in Peru.⁴⁵ He sees the Church and the state as complementing each other and suggests that the state, always respecting the distinct domains of politics and religion, utilize the teaching office of the Church in the moral and social uplifting of the people.⁴⁶

For one who is continuously singing the glories of evolution, González Prada shows a surprising disdain for its intermediate levels. Only the final stage receives his recognition. This frame of mind is very apparent when one surveys the political situation in Peru immediately before and after independence.

The man with the most liberal orientation in Peru immediately preceding independence was Pedro Chávez de la Rosa, bishop of Arequipa. His advanced political thinking was easily assumed

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 55.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 56.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 57.

into the separatist movement when it became viable. He had a pronounced influence over a group of young priests, the two most famous of whom were Francisco Luna Pizzaro and Francisco Vigil. Stanger furnishes us with this abbreviated biography of Luna Pizzaro who later became archbishop of Lima:

He was a native of Arequipa, well educated in theology and law, and held high positions in educational institutions and in the cathedral in Lima. He became the most prominent of a group of priests who were penetrated with the ideas of the French Revolution, and leader of the Nationalist Liberal Party. He worked against San Martín's monarchical plans and even favored freedom of worship. He was the first president of the Peruvian Congress and for a number of years a dominant figure in the government. 47

Luna Pizzaro, who did not take the ultimate step but remained a priest, striving from within for reform, is ignored by González Prada. On the other hand, Vigil, who pursued the radical course and renounced his priesthood, receives the accolade: "The men in Peru who fight for reason and science against faith and ignorance should be very grateful to the true precursor, the older soldier who leveled the road."⁴⁸

After having just reviewed González Prada's categorical rejection of Catholicism as a philosophy of life and a political influence, one would be completely shocked or have a tremendous admiration for his sense of humor if he were openly to advocate Catholic education. There is much wit but little humor in his

⁴⁷Stanger, op. cit., p. 420.

⁴⁸González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 106.

writings, and none whatsoever towards Catholic education. Catholic influence must be removed from the schools: "Among the ideas we should incessantly disseminate is the secularization of schools."⁴⁹

González Prada saw Catholic pedagogy as anti-scientific, authoritarian, and metaphysical, immeasurably inferior to one based on positivist principles: "One century of positive science has produced through industrial application more goods for humanity than have millennia of metaphysics and theology."⁵⁰ Having made his point--one with which a number of fairly objective critics of the Peruvian school system would be in substantial agreement, he now made one of his corrosive comparisons:

The priests convert man into a species of palimpsest: they obliterate reason from his brain so as to impose reason, like the copyists of the middle ages who erased a discourse of Cicero from a parchment in order to write a chronicle of the monastery. ⁵¹

Since the Jesuits with their extensive scholastic organization best represented the Church's dominant position in education, they were the particular target of González Prada's wrath. His major criticism of their system was its emphasis on passivity, which debased human dignity, since their goal was "to convert humanity into a single flock ruled by one pastor, cerebrally amputating the multitudes by removing from them the possibility of

⁴⁹González Prada, Frosa Menuda, p. 19.

⁵⁰González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 67.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 124.

elevating and emancipating themselves."⁵² Reciting a hackneyed litany of Jesuit vices, he scorns their morality as one of appearance, emphasizing the avoidance of scandal rather than evil. Accusing them of stressing subtlety of argument at the expense of solid judgment and the mutilating of the classics for their own devious purposes, he contends that such a moral system molds the amoral type of person so frequently encountered in public life in Catholic countries.⁵³

González Prada maintains that in contrast to Catholic peoples, peoples of Protestant nations appreciate their human dignity and, consequently, respect their fellow man, because they reject infallible authority and passive obedience.⁵⁴ Pointing to the lack of appreciation of human dignity in Latin American republics, he holds that the Church, in downgrading this concept and engendering a slave mentality in its members, is, in the final analysis, the matrix of Latin American dictatorships.

John A. MacKay, longtime missionary in Peru and professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, and Haya de la Torre's close friend and admirer, sees González Prada as having an appreciation of the Protestant religion: "Yet Prada was ready to acknowledge the fruits of true religion when he saw them. In his opinion

⁵²González Prada, Propaganda y Ataque (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Iman Sarmiento, 1939), p. 86.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 85-88.

⁵⁴González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 127.

Protestantism produced a higher ethical type than Catholicism."⁵⁵ One does not have to read many pages of The Other Spanish Christ to realize that MacKay lived in a pre-ecumenical age, for he sees very little good in Catholicism. MacKay seems to misinterpret González Prada's view of Protestantism. González Prada acknowledges Protestantism for what it is not rather than what it is. The Protestant concept of human dignity, in his view, flows not from positive religious content but from the "rejection of infallible authorities and passive obediences."⁵⁶ MacKay regards Protestantism as a worthy expression of Christianity, but if it is a true form of Christianity, then it is impossible to reconcile its positive content with the idea of human dignity on the basis of a statement which González Prada makes: "Christianity sows resignation in the souls of the oppressed, and lulls to sleep the spirit of rebellion with charming celestial music, and contributes to perpetuate the reign of injustice in the world."⁵⁷

Gonzalez Prada sees no danger to morality with the elimination of religion from education, since "rules of morality are derived from principles established by science."⁵⁸ Furthermore, the revolting actuality of Catholic morality as lived by reli-

⁵⁵ John A. MacKay, The Other Spanish Christ (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1933), p. 165.

⁵⁶ González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 127.

⁵⁷ González Prada, Anarquía, pp. 24-25.

⁵⁸ González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 124.

gious proved that religion is a distinct deterrent to social and ethical progress. Condemning the cleric for both chastity and incontinence,⁵⁹ he endows him with amazing sexual versatility--a hermaphrodite, a homosexual, and a heterosexual--within the space of two paragraphs in his Páginas Libres.⁶⁰ Sisters driven by avarice degenerate into kleptomaniacs, stooping even to starving girls in order to accumulate vast sums of money.⁶¹

It is seldom that González Prada forsakes the flashing metaphor or the slashing contrast for statistical analysis. Probably it is just as well. He refers to a case of homosexuality involving a friar and a young boy in a school in Lima. From Lima he wings his way to Santiago, Chile, where two similar incidents occurred, and quotes a Santiago newspaper to the effect that 60 percent of the students are subjected to this debasement. Then through an amazing feat of numerical legerdemain, he estimates that 99 percent of the students attending Catholic schools in Lima suffer the same fate.⁶²

Other Peruvians saw glaring inadequacies in the school system, but neither possessing González Prada's literary style nor his poetic flexibility in interpreting reality, their criticism never caught the popular fancy. Javier Prado, rector of

⁵⁹González Prada, Prosa Menuda, p. 19.

⁶⁰González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 110.

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 118-199.

⁶²González Prada, Prosa Menuda, p. 72.

San Marcos University, saw intellectualism with its static and dogmatic knowledge and its reliance on the memory as the great defect in Peruvian education.⁶³ He proposed the overhauling of the supervisory system, making it free from political interference and giving it a technical organization, the goal of which would be to equip the student with a training suitable for facing the necessities of life.⁶⁴

According to Belaúnde, González Prada did have an influence on the University of San Marcos. He does not mention González Prada explicitly, but there is no doubt that he is referring to him when he says "there developed a certain scientific anxiety, a certain itching for erudition, a certain mania for citing authors and referring to exotic facts."⁶⁵ The result of this campaign was the introduction of positivism into the university. Belaúnde was not enthusiastic with the outcome: "We took the hypotheses from positivism but not the method, that is, we took the bad and left the good."⁶⁶

Nowhere in his writings does González Prada make a real analysis of the Church as a factor in the Peruvian economic order. Unlike Mariátequi who has a solid grasp of economic reality, he is the moralist censuring individual or group conduct. Whenever

⁶³Dávalos y Lissón, op. cit., vol. I, p. 156.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 162.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 152.

⁶⁶Ibid.

he does refer to clerical economic practices, it is only as a premise leading to the conclusion that priests are totally depraved:

They enjoy fat rents, monopolize education, dominate the family, and exercise an incessant suctioning of all social juices: they are something of an impossible nature; like the leeches that suck through the head and the tail.⁶⁷

For González Prada priests are inimical to social progress, always co-operating with oppressors of humanity if they themselves are not the chief oppressors, and this oppression is always directed at the underprivileged:

In the past they did nothing to abolish pauperism and to better the social condition of the multitudes; at present they conduct themselves in the same manner in Europe and Asia or in America, Africa, Oceania, serving as auxiliaries to the oppressors of peoples and sanctifying every crime, always that the criminal may store riches or use soldiers. ⁶⁸

Although the picture is vastly overdrawn, there are elements of truth in what González Prada says. The Church, because of its absolutist structure and the proprietorship of the papal states, has been slow in recognizing a social philosophy based on democratic principles. Also, there has been too much emphasis on the cult of the saints to the detriment of love of neighbor. Yet despite excesses and defects in cult and serious aberrations in the moral sphere, the Church has never lost sight of one of the great truths in the gospel: the equality of all men before God. Frank Tannenbaum, in his Slave and Citizen, takes a position on

⁶⁷González Prada, Propaganda y Ataque, p. 29.

⁶⁸González Prada, Prosa Menuda, p. 81.

slavery in Latin America that parallels González Prada's position on human dignity in Protestant countries. He points out that in Latin America the master and slave were equals before the law and in religious practice, whereas in the United States the slave was a chattel before the law and an anomaly in religion. With the recognition of the slave's legal and spiritual rights in theory and practice in Latin America, a process of gradual emancipation was set in motion. What was accomplished through peaceful evolution in Latin America where basic legal and religious rights were respected, required a long and violent war in the United States where these rights were not recognized.⁶⁹

After González Prada's blanket condemnation of the Church in relation to the whole of Peruvian society, one would expect a veritable onslaught on it in his treatment of the Indian question. There are a few scathing remarks, but he ignores it for the most part, concentrating his ire on the government and the hacendados.

On the doctrinal level, his sarcasm very much in evidence, he challenges the propriety of Catholicism supplanting the Inca religion:

It is true that Atahualpa did not know the Our Father, nor did Calcuchima dwell upon the mystery of the Trinity; but perhaps the cult of the sun was less absurd than the Catholic religion and perhaps the high priest of Pachacamac did not match Valverde in ferocity.⁷⁰

⁶⁹Frank Tannenbaum, Slave and Citizen (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), p. 110.

⁷⁰González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 332.

In the moral realm he refers to a brief prepared by the Marquis of Mancera in 1648, denouncing the avarice of the curas in their dealings with the Indians, and remarks that this condition still prevails.⁷¹ He says there are two great lies in Peruvian life: the republic and Christianity; and he sums up the latter as follows:

We speak of evangelical charity, we preach it from the masonic temple to the Catholic Union, and we view impassively the crucifixion of a race. Our Catholicism is reduced to an inferior paganism without the grandeur of a philosophy nor the magnificence of an art. ⁷²

A man with an entirely different cultural background, an American, Philip Ainsworth Means, writing on the Indian question in 1920, two years after González Prada's death, sounds like the personification of optimism, after one has waded through González Prada's quagmire of pessimism and hatred: "The Roman Catholic Church has, potentially, a magnificent future in Peru, indeed spiritually and morally magnificent, but that future will never be realized under present conditions."⁷³ Offering constructive criticism, he suggests separation of Church and state, and the Church divesting itself of its colossal properties and vast areas of under-productive land. This, he maintains, would create a better religious atmosphere in Peru and attract a more dedicated type of person to the ministry.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 324.

⁷²González Prada, Prosa Menuda, p. 156.

⁷³Means, "Indian Legislation in Peru," p. 534.

Chang-Rodríguez maintains that González Prada's opposition to religion stemmed from moral rather than doctrinal grounds.⁷⁴ If it were just a question of morality, his stricture would have been toned down and not carry that characteristic ring of finality. This chapter adduces sufficient evidence to support the contention that he was unalterably opposed to the church, philosophically as well as morally, and, maybe most important of all, offers a tentative explanation of his psychological opposition. In the final analysis, the affective order is the determinant of our philosophical and moral attitudes. And González Prada hated the Church. There was no place for it in a Peru renovated after his plan. He crystallizes his lifelong attitude in this couplet:

Donde una luz de libertad asoma,
Corre a matarla un sacristán de Roma.⁷⁵

⁷⁴Chang-Rodríguez, op. cit., p. 86.

⁷⁵Manuel González Prada, Presbiterianas (Lima: Librería e Imprenta "El Inca," 1928), p. 92.

CHAPTER III

Society and the Social Structure

Here the noble class does not exist; he who knows how the noble families lived during colonial times laughs maliciously at the idea of pure lineage...Here the clergy lack knowledge, intelligence, and virtue...Here we do not know the European bourgeoisie; yes, there is a species of middle class, intelligent, possessing good sense, industrious, Catholic, but indifferent to the religious quarrels and disgusted with politics from which they receive only injuries, disappointments, and dishonor. Here the people of the sierra, an inert body, obey the first pressure; those of the coast, a floating body, yield to all the winds and the waves. ¹

This was how González Prada viewed Peruvian society in 1888. The only level of society in which he saw any merit was an almost non-existent middle class. Since the date mentioned was close to the War of the Pacific, this attitude could be attributed to the defeatist post-war mood. However, ten years later, even the minuscule middle class had fallen into disfavor:

The artisans of Lima, situated between the simple laborers (whom they scorn) and the superior class (whom they adore) constitute a pseudo-aristocracy with all the ignorance of the low class and all the depravity of the high class. ²

The passage above is representative of González Prada's writings on Peruvian society. Although he provides one with many insights

¹González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 41.

²González Prada, Horas de Lucha, pp. 18-19.

into the Peruvian way of life, nevertheless his rancor, his unrelieved pessimism, and his penchant for choosing the most extreme example and allowing it to color his whole presentation seriously affect the value of his interpretation of society. Before examining his ideas and attitudes in this area, an attempt will be made, on the basis of opinions and judgments of other writers in the field, to furnish an outline of the different levels of Peruvian society so as to have a frame of reference.

Since frequent reference is made to the racial strains which constitute Peruvian society, a study made of the ethnic composition of the population of 1876 might be of some interest. Estimating a population of approximately 3,000,000, the author gives the following statistics: 70 per cent Indian, 25 per cent Mestizo, 2 per cent Negro, 2 per cent Chinese, and 1 per cent white.³

This minute white element has dominated every phase of national life in vast disproportion to its numerical size. The Peruvian aristocracy began with the thirteen men who remained loyal to Francisco Pizarro on the Isle of Gallo and were subsequently ennobled by Charles V in 1529.⁴ Eager to enhance the prestige of the viceroyalty, Spanish monarchs proceeded to make this aristocracy a flourishing institution in Peru. Its ranks

³Luis Pesce, Indigenas e Immigrantes (Lima: Imprenta de "La Opinion Nacional," 1906), p. 13.

⁴J. F. Bannon and P. M. Dunne, Latin America: An Historical Survey (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1947), pp. 141-142.

eventually included one duke con grandeza de España, forty-five counts, fifty-eight marquises, crusade knights in the religious orders, and numerous other noblemen.⁵ The creation of a nobility was also a source of revenue for the royal treasury, since the nobles had to make yearly contributions in lieu of furnishing the king with a quota of soldiers and for the privilege of having been ennobled.⁶

The Peruvian aristocrats were subject to the same rules, regulations, and traditions as their counterparts in Spain. According to the terms of the mayorazgos, or the laws of primogeniture, all property had to be given to the eldest son. Enormous tracts of land acquired in the early colonial period were kept intact from generation to generation. This vinculation of land proved to be detrimental to the Peruvian economy since it not only prevented a system of limited shareholdings but also fostered a spirit of laziness and negligence among the landholders.⁷ Another Spanish aristocratic custom to which the Peruvian nobles faithfully adhered was the avoiding of anything that remotely resembled work. Not only industrial undertakings but even intellectual pursuits were considered beneath aristocratic dignity.⁸

⁵Javier Prado, Estado social del Perú durante la dominación española, I (Lima: Liberia e Imprenta Gil, S.A., 1941), p. 133.

⁶Ibid., p. 132.

⁷Ibid., pp. 133-134.

⁸Ibid., p. 134.

Education was almost as lightly regarded as work. In the rural sections they could hardly read or write. Superstitions and prejudices which they received from their mothers and servants became their practical guides.⁹ Ignorance, indolence, and lack of discipline led to many hasty marriages which ended in legal separation. As in Spain after the Reconquest, concubinage became an accepted custom.¹⁰

The Spanish monarchs, desiring to keep the colonial empire under their direct control and fearing to entrust the Creoles with its government, sent Spaniards to fill all the important positions. Almost immediately the Creole aristocracy developed feelings of envy and scorn towards the Spanish aristocracy: feelings of envy because the Spaniards occupied the important positions; feelings of scorn because the Spaniards, with the exception of the viceroys, came from rather obscure origins.¹¹ Keenly resenting this exclusion, the Creoles sought compensation in emphasizing their social position and adopted a marked aristocratic and courtly manner. They spent enormous sums of money on jewels and clothing; gilded coaches and carriages were a common sight in Lima.¹² With nothing else to do, they occupied themselves with the frivolous routine of the salon and the celebration of pompous

⁹Ibid., p. 145.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 149-150.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 130-131.

¹²Ibid., pp. 142-143.

and interminable fiestas.¹³ This aristocratic way of life with its flamboyant manners and its grave excesses and defects was a solidly entrenched reality on the eve of independence.

Independence did not leave in its wake any radical changes affecting the inequalities of the classes. Dávalos y Lissón comments: "The democratization consequent upon the republican system proclaimed in 1821 was purely nominal."¹⁴ There was a change in the highest level of society, but it could not be construed even as a gesture to social consciousness. The plutocratic element emerged as the dominant force in the superior class. A person without a pedigree but with money was readily admitted into the highest social circles, whereas a person with only a pedigree fell into social oblivion.¹⁵ However, this importance attached to money could not be mistaken for anything like the Protestant ethic becoming evident in this level of Peruvian society:

The persons of whom we treat inherited money and pedigrees, but they also inherited the indolence and the idleness of their parents, the ostentation and the waste, little fondness for goods of the soil, and the horror that our ancestral nobles had for work. They lacked energy, physical and moral courage, intelligence and audacity.¹⁶

Widening the range of his analysis of the dominant class in Peru to include intellectuals, artisans, and administrators,

¹³Ibid., p. 149.

¹⁴Dávalos y Lissón, op. cit., p. 378.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 378-380.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 380.

Dávalos y Lissón says that for brilliance in imagination and spirited debate these men cannot be excelled, but that these talents usually degenerate into verbosity. They have a weakness of will which prevents the facing of questions which have been endlessly debated. The intellectuals display a superior quality of initiative in discussing and planning projects, but have no talent for applying these plans and carrying them to their completion. The brutos (those who lack scholarly attainment and facile expression, but not intelligence) are the best administrators, for they undertake private and public projects with skill, method, and perseverance. Maintaining that Peruvians are idealists who prefer the better to the good when it is economically and morally unattainable, he draws the inference that Peruvians make very poor legislators. Pointing out the tremendous power that oratory has over the multitudes, he says that often the man with better ideas loses out to the man with more culture and a gift for expression.¹⁷

Jorge Basadre maintains that there were only two classes in Peru: the nobility-plutocracy and the masses. He says that for the development of a middle class three conditions must prevail: adequate education; an extensive commercial system; and the development of an industrial system. These conditions were lacking in Peru. He compares his country with eastern European countries like Rumania, Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria. Industrializa-

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 378-383.

tion, which came to both areas at the beginning of the twentieth century, was located in a few urban focal points. The feudal system was maintained despite political emancipation from Spain and Turkey; the rural masses remained abandoned and ignorant in both areas which had a political history approaching the comic.¹⁸

Dávalos y Lissón says the middle class constituted a very tiny element in Peru, and although somewhat circumscribed in its economic development, it was not plagued with the national ills affecting the other classes.¹⁹ Always embarrassed and self-conscious because of their small numerical number, members of this class made great efforts to identify themselves with the upper class.²⁰ This middle class enjoyed a relatively secure economic position because its members possessed professional or specialized skills which could not be duplicated without extensive training. They patiently suffered the national crises and limited their aspirations to eking out a livelihood and educating their children.²¹ In the final analysis, however, their social and economic position was vastly superior to that of the Negroes or the Indians.

Negro slaves were brought to colonial Peru very early in

¹⁸Jorge Basadre, Peru: Problems y Posibilidad (Lima: Librería Francesa Científica, 1931), pp. 114-115.

¹⁹Dávalos y Lissón, op. cit., II, p. 394.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

its history with the purpose of placing them in the mines as well as on the sierra and coast plantations. Not adapting easily to the sierra, they seemed to thrive well on the coast, where most were soon employed on the plantations.²² Branded and beaten, they lived in a brutal environment, victims of a schizophrenia which apparently afflicted their Spanish masters. Prado describes it as a "strange mixture of fierceness and magnanimity, of cruelty and charity, of alienation and avarice which split the character of the conquerors of America."²³ Through time the Negroes' situation improved, their masters looking upon them with real fondness, though sometimes tinged with mockery. Given their affectionate nature, lack of sexual inhibitions and inferior racial position, when bidden by their white superiors, they readily responded in propagating numerous mulatto offspring.²⁴ Living in such proximity with their Spanish overlords, they proved themselves susceptible to quick conversion to the Christian faith and easy accomodation to Spanish culture. Frank Tannenbaum observes that the Negroes, generally speaking, were much more psychologically adept in embracing the Spanish American way of life than the Indians.²⁵ Jorge Basadre maintains that Negro slaves

²²Prado, op. cit., pp. 161-162.

²³Ibid., p. 161.

²⁴Ibid., p. 164.

²⁵Frank Tannenbaum, "Agrarismo, Indianismo y Nacionalismo," Hispanic American Historical Review, XXIII (August, 1943), p. 395.

were much better treated in Peru than in the United States,²⁶ and as a portrayal of this superior treatment, refers to Enrique López Albújar's novel, Matalaché.²⁷ Despite a few instances of

²⁶Basadre, op. cit., p. 120.

²⁷Enrique López Albújar, Matalaché (Lima: Juan Mejía Baca y P. L. Villanueva, Editores, 1955). This novel deals with the tragic relationship of Matalaché, the son of a female Negro slave and, presumably, a white aristocratic landowner, and María Luz, the daughter of a landowner and soap manufacturer with the same background as Matalaché's presumed father. Matalaché, intelligent, handsome, and well-educated, had the same privileges as a recognized son and was deeply loved by Don José Manuel, the hacendado. Upon Don José Manuel's death, the hacienda was sold, and without any provision being made for him in a will, Matalaché was reduced to the rank of an ordinary slave by the new hacendado. Quarreling with the overseer over patently unjust treatment, Matalaché was reprimanded by the hacendado and, shortly afterwards, sold to María Luz' father. Resourceful and obedient, but always maintaining a respect for his personal dignity, Matalaché won his new master's confidence and soon became overseer of the soap operation. In the meantime, María Luz, who had been attending school in Lima, returned, and she and Matalaché became attracted to each other. Engaging herself in endless debates on the evils of slavery and its negation of human dignity as opposed to honor of family and the prevailing customs of Peruvian society, she finally morally justified a liason between herself and Matalaché, and with the connivance of a servant she was successful in her seduction. Renowned for his singing and guitar playing, Matalaché had only one rival, Nicanor, who could challenge his supremacy as the leading musician in the area. With the wholehearted approval of the cura, the two masters arranged a contest between the singers, agreeing that the master of the winner should receive the loser as a prize. Indignant over the inhumanity of the contest and fearful of its possible result, María Luz could hardly contain herself. However, Matalaché won handily. This did not prevent María Luz from becoming very ill. Although all known remedies were employed, María Luz did not respond to treatment. Finally, she disclosed to her servants that she was pregnant and pressured them into promising to assist her in committing suicide. Rejecting the suggestion of abortion, she insisted that pride of family demanded the death of herself and her unborn child. Through an indiscretion, one of the servants revealed the nature of María Luz' illness to her father. Rage and vengeance swiftly succeeding shock, he soon discovered the identity of María Luz' paramour. Sitting up all night in a state

benevolent paternalism, the whole thrust of López Albújar's novel is one of social protest. Episodes such as the disinheritance of Matalaché, the lack of recourse in redressing the injustice of the overseer, the chattel aspect of the slaves in their sale, the callousness of the musical contest, and the life and death power of the master over the slave, all underline the horrible injustice of the Peruvian slave system. There is an illusory hope of redemption in Maria Luz' appreciation of the Negro's human dignity. However, after seducing Matalaché and becoming pregnant, her first thought is to save the family honor by committing suicide rather than face the harsh social sanctions which would be imposed upon her. The symbolic implications in the final episode are the real key to the Negro's redemption--the white man cleansing himself with soap made from the Negro. This novel does seem to give much support to Basadre's contention.

Prado, Dávalos y Lissón, and Basadre seem to attribute the shortcomings and defects of the Negro to heredity rather than environment. Quoting Ruis, Prado writes: "The Negro is a thief when he is born, finding here the motive principle of his impulses and criminal acts."²⁸ Further on he says that there is "an

of cold fury, he finally decided upon a fitting punishment. The following morning Matalaché was led to the grinding machine, the first step leading to his being made into soap.

²⁸ Prado, op. cit., p. 166, quoting D. Hipólito Ruiz, Fragmentos históricos en la colección de documentos literarios del Perú, IV, p. 247..

irresistible lasciviousness which runs impetuously through African blood."²⁹ Dávalos y Lissón incorporates a substantial part of Prado's study into his work, including the above quotations.³⁰

Basadre says:

It has been said that the Negroes have the levity, lack of foresight, volubility, tendency towards lying, lively and limited intelligence, laziness towards work, which a child has. Their influence corresponds to these characteristics...In summary, theirs was a contribution of sensuality and superstition. ³¹

Interestingly, Dávalos y Lissón, commenting on his own period, says that the Negro and mulatto constitute the most stable element on the coast of Peru.³²

During a visit to the district of Lambayeque which lies along the coast of Peru north of Trujillo and includes the city of Chiclayo, Dávalos y Lissón wrote what he calls a monograph of a sociological character, the observations in which, he says, can be applied to all of coastal Peru. There are Negroes and whites in this area but the mestizos double their combined number. Their diet is mostly corn and fish. The higher classes have a passion for work and pursue study with energy. They live a life without pretension or luxury. Farming and commerce are the principal means of livelihood. Since they preoccupy themselves with

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Dávalos y Lissón, op. cit., II, p. 439.

³¹Basadre, op. cit., pp. 120-121.

³²Dávalos y Lissón, op. cit., II, p. 440.

the obtaining of material goods, their intellectual life is neglected. There are few lawyers. Their first concern in politics is the elimination of gamonalismo. Organized religion has ceased to be a force in their lives, but despite this, lust, laziness and alcohol are almost unknown in the towns or on the plantations. Concubinage being the general practice, marriage is the exception rather than the rule. They are very gracious and hospitable and lawbreaking is alien to their character. They distinguish themselves by their good judgment, loyalty and dignity.³³ According to this portrayal, there is a striking contrast between these people and the hacendados who have generally been described as living at the expense of other segments of society and causing indescribable agony in the process, as in the case of the Chinese coolies.

After Ramón Castilla abolished slavery in 1854, there was a great demand for plantation workers and laborers. This demand became more acute with the expanding market for guano and the extravagant railway construction program undertaken by Peru. A plentiful supply of labor was found in China, with approximately 90,000 Chinese coolies arriving in Peru from 1849 to 1874, and probably another 10,000 perishing enroute because of the intolerable conditions aboard the ships.³⁴ After arriving in Peru they signed a contract with the hacendados, whereby they would receive

³³Ibid., pp. 440-442.

³⁴Watt Stewart, Chinese Bondage in Peru (Durham: Duke University Press, 1951), pp. 74-75.

\$1.00 weekly, plus food, shelter, clothing, and medical care, and remain in Peru for eight years after which time they would return to China.³⁵ This contract turned out to be a practical form of slavery. To insure total submission and maximum productivity, the hacendados subjected the coolies to whippings, chains, deprivation of food, and even branding.³⁶ Even the consolation of family life, granted to the Negro slave, was denied the coolie.³⁷ A. J. Duffield's gruesome description of the coolie working in the guano deposits does not indicate more humane treatment.³⁸ Henry Meiggs, about whom more will be said, employed 6,000 Chinese coolies in the construction of the Oroya railway.³⁹ However, the coolie was primarily employed by the hacendado. When these Chinese were able to extricate themselves from the grasp of their brutal contractors, they became, as a rule, law-abiding and respectable citizens.⁴⁰

Finally, the original, the most numerous, and, in many ways, the most isolated member of Peruvian society is the Indian. Previous to the coming of the Spaniards, he had lived under the highly centralized authority of the Inca, but that this society

³⁵Ibid., pp. 42-44, 105-107.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 117-118, 148.

³⁷Ibid., p. 117.

³⁸A. J. Duffield, Peru in the Guano Age (London: Richard Bently and Son, 1877), pp. 77-78.

³⁹Watt Stewart, Henry Meiggs, Yankee Pizarro (Durham: Duke University Press, 1946), pp. 163-164.

⁴⁰Duffield, op. cit., p. 48.

was the most perfect form of communism, as some maintain, can be seriously questioned. Although all of the land belonged to the state, the individual Indian owned his house and also his movable property which he could accumulate without theoretical limitation.⁴¹ The economic system under which he lived was based on intensive or hoe agriculture and its purpose, excluding all commercial or profit motives, was to provide the subjects of the empire with the necessities of life which it did adequately.⁴² The Indian worshipped the sun personified by the Inca, thus reinforcing the autocracy of the governing authority.⁴³ This system was not conducive to self-development in the humanist sense of the word. The Indian manifested very little in the way of excess or defect, not through his own effort, but because his conduct was rigidly determined by religious, economic, and social factors. Actually, his personality was crippled because initiative had been taken away from him.⁴⁴

When the Spaniards arrived in Peru and both races met, there was a cultural collision from which neither ethnic group has fully recovered. With such disparate values and meeting so inauspiciously, both races saw only the negative characteristics of each other. Basadre summarizes the clash:

⁴¹Rowe, op. cit., p. 273.

⁴²Tannenbaum, op. cit., p. 403.

⁴³Prado, op. cit., p. 168.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 169.

Because of their ignorance of Christianity, writing, money, the wheel, iron, gunpowder, and many plants and animals, the Indians appeared to the Spaniards as barbarians. Because of their destruction of sidewalks, terraces, temples, granaries and places of worship; because of their rapine, cruelty, lasciviousness, and even their superiority in war, the Spaniards appeared as barbarians to the Indians. ⁴⁵

Prado, considering the submissive mentality of the Indians as an important factor in this cultural conflict, says: "The Spaniards, accustomed to fighting virile men, experienced, in their turn, sorrow and scorn for these people who surrendered themselves without resisting, protesting, or complaining." ⁴⁶

The Spaniards displayed the same contempt towards the Indians in the economic order as they did in the cultural and moral orders. Completely ignoring the communal character and the intensive method of the Incan agricultural system, they took huge tracts of land and introduced the extensive method which involved the plough, the horse and ox, and the large ranch. ⁴⁷ Again, the Indian, a farmer by inclination, was forced to convert himself into a miner and work under the most inhumane conditions. ⁴⁸

Another factor impeding cultural exchange between the Spaniards and Creoles and the Indians was the containment policy fostered by some missionaries. Solicitous for the welfare of the Indians, they sought to ward off all contact with Spanish Ameri-

⁴⁵Basadre, op. cit., p. 13.

⁴⁶Prado, op. cit., p. 171.

⁴⁷Tannenbaum, op. cit., p. 403.

⁴⁸Haring, op. cit., pp. 65-66.

cans, even refusing to teach the Indians the Spanish language. The Jesuits rigorously pursued this policy in Paraguay, reducing contact with the Spanish element to a minimum and teaching catechism and prayer in Guaraní.⁴⁹

With the Spaniard treating the Indian as a cultural and moral outcast and exploiting him outrageously in the economic sphere, and the priest, if not exploiting him, pursuing a cultural containment policy in his regard, a true cultural interchange between the two groups was an impossibility. Tannenbaum, viewing the differences between the two ethnic groups in language, religion, and economic approach, says: "Spanish and Indian cultures have proved opaque and impenetrable to each other."⁵⁰

Peruvian society had certain features which would make the most stoical of social critics uneasy. For a volatile person such as González Prada, it threw him into a paroxysmal rage. He never shared the sociologist's dread of making value judgments. Actually, he was not imbued with any great love for the scientific study of society, or at least the methods of some of its leading exponents such as Gustave Le Bon. Sociologists do not escape González Prada's sarcasm in his definition of their discipline: "Sociology can be called not only the art of giving new names to old things, but the science of contradictory affirmations."⁵¹

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 185.

⁵⁰Tannenbaum, op. cit., p. 402.

⁵¹González Prada, Horas de Lucha, pp. 311-312.

Citing race as a major point over which sociologists diverge, he quickly allies himself with James Novicow whom he quotes: "All these pretended incapacities of the yellow and black people are foolish fancies of sick minds."⁵² As an antidote for white supremacy, he recommends that those who are afflicted compare Booker T. Washington and Benito Juárez with Edward VII of England and William II of Germany.⁵³ He excoriates the Social Darwinists who divide humanity into superior and inferior races, mainly on the basis of color, and arrogate to themselves the right to govern the world:

As in the selection or elimination of the weak and in-adaptable which is realized in the supreme law of life, the eliminators or violent oppressors do not do more than accelerate the slow and lazy law of nature; they abandon the walk of the tortoise for the gallop of the horse. ⁵⁴

González Prada does not present a formal exposition of his theory on racial equality, confining himself to attacking the champions of racial superiority. He takes particular exception to Edmond Demolin's A quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons, an amplification of Taine's chapter on the superiority of Anglo-Saxon education, which exalts the Anglo-Saxons and denigrates the Latins.⁵⁵ González Prada says that implicit in this work is this axiom:

⁵²Ibid., p. 313.

⁵³Ibid., p. 334.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 313.

⁵⁵Edmond Demolins, A quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons (Paris: Maison Didot, [1897]), pp. 389-390.

Crimes and vices of the English and North Americans are things inherent in the human species and do not indicate the decadence of a people; on the other hand the crimes and vices of the French or Italians are anomalies that point to the degeneracy of the race. Fortunately, Oscar Wilde and General MacDonald were not born in Paris.⁵⁶

In his Psychology of Socialism, Gustave Le Bon, mustering all the gloom and foreboding he can command, treats the whole of Latin America as a social disaster area without any hope of rehabilitating itself. It is only the presence of English and German business interests that save the republics from falling into a state of barbarism.⁵⁷ He attributes the social turmoil, endless revolutions and depressed economic conditions of Latin America to the inherent inferiority of its peoples:

Peopled by exhausted races, without energy, without morality, without strength of will, the twenty-two Latin republics of America, although situated in the richest countries of the earth, are incapable of making use of their rich resources.⁵⁸

Eager to vanquish Le Bon, González Prada points out the mistake in the number of Latin American republics.⁵⁹ Then he asks why Le Bon, in view of the fact that no Latin American nation is now afflicted with the misery that reigned in feudal Europe, can regard European feudalism as a step in the evolution of Europe, yet look upon Latin American revolutions as an irremedia-

⁵⁶González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 315.

⁵⁷Gustave Le Bon, The Psychology of Socialism (New York: The Mac Millan Company, 1899), p. 194.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 193.

⁵⁹González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 317, n.

ple and definitive state.⁶⁰ Finally, in another rhetorical question, he asks how Le Bon can deny to American Latins what he accords to European Latins.⁶¹

González Prada has every right to attack Le Bon's pessimistic view of Latin America, but this does not give him the prerogative to use any method of attack. He points out Le Bon's error in counting the Latin American republics, yet he himself displays a more serious disregard for facts. He quotes Le Bon as saying that "the final destiny of this half of America is the return to primitive barbarism, unless the United States...conquers it,"⁶² when, in actuality, Le Bon says that English and German business interests are saving it from falling into barbarism as the reference above indicates. He seems to be trying to win his point at any cost when he says that no Latin American nation embodies misery equal to that of European feudalism. As mentioned in the previous chapter, he says that the plight of the Indians remains the same as in colonial times. He also says that the Indians constitute the real Peruvian nation.⁶³ How can he say that there is no misery in Peru comparable to that of European feudalism without ignoring the Indians? In this case, it seems that wounded Latin sensibilities take precedence over loudly proclaimed nativist aspirations:

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 317-318.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid., p. 317.

⁶³González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 67.

"What was colonial Peru? A society channelled between two walls--fanaticism and concupiscence."⁶⁴ Opening his article "El Lima Antigua" with this bitter salutation, he devotes the whole of the article to muckraking in this channel and throwing the dregs in the face of Limeños.

By all accounts, Lima was by no means a Platonic utopia. Basadre, Prado, and Dávalos y Lissón, while admitting Peruvian proclivities towards eroticism, always maintain a balance. González Prada presents a sex-drenched version of his native city:

In general Lima presented the case of a society sick with chronic erethism. Instead of curing themselves the people aggravated their sickness: the home with its hot and violent odor and excitant foods; the street with its waddling attraction of feminine hips; the church with its aphrodisiacal perfume of incense. Married and single, priests and lay people, viceroys and stevedores, they all revolved around the phallus. 65

Continuing with his observation of life in colonial Lima, González Prada says that there was no respect for age: sons and daughters behaved atrociously towards their parents, openly ridiculing them.⁶⁶ There was little in the way of conversation except gossip.⁶⁷ Because of the loose sexual habits of both the master and mistress and the consequent children, incest was inevitable on the large plantations.⁶⁸ He makes the following state-

⁶⁴González Prada, Tonel de Diogenes, p. 21.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 24-25.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 22-23.

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 23-24.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 23.

ment with regard to the white women of Lima:

Although godas [Spaniards] to the bone and consequently monarchists, the Lima women professed a truly democratic republicanism in matters of love: it did not matter whether the skin of the male was milkwhite, copper, chocolate or bituminous. One saw the union of the white female with the Negro. Had the females lost that instinct of bettering the species, that instinct which induces them to prefer the strongest and most handsome male? The Negro lacked relative beauty, but not force: with his lust of the monkey and satyr, he calmed the fury of the Creole Messalinians. 69

Usually, for most so-called inferior peoples, the suggestion of semblance between them and the monkey is the ultimate in pejorative comparisons, it not mattering to what phase or function of life reference is made. This reference to the Negro seems rather strange coming from the pen of González Prada, the champion of the downtrodden and the apostle of science. Furthermore, it demonstrates that he could be as susceptible to popular myths as the people whom he mercilessly ridicules for this tendency.

González Prada was appalled by the cruelty and thoughtlessness in Lima and its environs: a kick was the usual form of greeting; beatings reaching a thousand strokes were inflicted upon the slaves; the master arranged marriages among his slaves in much the same way as he matched a stallion with a mare.⁷⁰ He says that the slaveholders in Lima were much more sympathetic than the hacendados in the provinces, but seemingly fearful that he is tipping the scales too much to the side of compassion, has-

⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 24-25.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 26.

tens to balance the picture with this revolting account: the old women of Lima, distressed at the sight of their flaccid flesh, were very envious of the young female slaves and forced them, as a form of revenge, to drink their urine.⁷¹

Various references and allusions would indicate that González Prada pondered over the seeming tendency towards cruelty in the Spanish temperament. He says that the ferocity of the conquest and the rapacity of the domination is understandable when one considers that the "inherited cruelty of the Spaniards" was aggravated by greed, and that the white Peruvians and mestizos, not having been able to eliminate the "felino-espanola" blood, follow the footsteps of Pizarro.⁷² Elsewhere, pursuing the same train of thought, he incorporates this quotation in his text: "Here the passions are so primitive that they are not satiated but with death."⁷³ González Prada is not alone in remarking upon this trait of cruelty in the Spaniard. Note has been made already of Prado's observation on the cruelty-sympathy dichotomy in the Spanish character. Victor Andrés Belaúnde, with his usual keen power of analysis, says that the main characteristic of the Peruvian psychology is "poverty of sentiment. And it explains all: the predominance of intellectualism, the absorbing personal-

⁷¹Ibid., p. 27.

⁷²González Prada, Prosa Menuda, p. 155.

⁷³González Prada, Tonel de Diogenes, p. 42, quoting Las Dominicales del Libre Pensamiento, Madrid (diciembre 17, 1887).

ism or individualism, the decorativism and our nefarious cult of the golden calf."⁷⁴

González Prada's wrath knows no bounds when he attacks the detitled aristocrats of the republic and others who maintain similar pretensions. Using all the contempt and satire which he commands, he peels away layer after layer of vice and weakness, as if he were working on an onion, until he comes to the core which is not there. Impugning their claim to pure racial ancestry, he says the proper form of address for a group of these people should be: "I salute all the races and the castes."⁷⁵ Referring to the prevalence of interracial promiscuity, he says the dirty and clean womb theory was concocted to offset the scandal.⁷⁶ Since any claim to white ancestry had to be on the paternal side of the family, the aristocratic mestizos developed a cult of mother hatred.⁷⁷ Blood lines were further corroded with a sacrilegious strain, since every Spaniard has the blood of a friar in his veins.⁷⁸ The sacerdotal and African strains produced a type of religious fanaticism which proved anything but an aristocratic background:

Adhesion to Catholicism, instead of proving the aristocratic origin of a person, denounces his Africanism. The

⁷⁴Belaúnde, op. cit., p. 24.

⁷⁵González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 208.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 210.

⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 210-211.

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 212-213.

intensity of religious fervour grows in proportion to the darkness of the skin....Measuring, then, the religiosity of a Lima matron, the percentage of Negro blood contained in her veins becomes evident. ⁷⁹

Applying this norm to his mother and sisters, González Prada would have to accept as his ancestor some Congolese tribesman who, at his chief's command, sent tom-tom messages to neighboring tribes rather than the haughty Spanish nobleman who acted as Philip II's secretary of state. Despite his protestations to the contrary, González Prada leaves the impression that he has a guarded admiration for pure blood and what he would call "authentic aristocrats." Basadre puts his finger on this when he says: "There is in him something of the old nobility, above all, of provincial origin, who, discontented with the new oligarchy, seeks popular support."⁸⁰

Dismissing heredity as a factor in forming the aristocracy, González Prada regards money as the only social delineator, and he is particularly incensed over the manner in which their money was accumulated: "descendents of usurers enriched by the consolidation, guano, and saltpeter."⁸¹ The facts of history support González Prada in implicating consolidation, guano, and, to a lesser extent, saltpeter or nitrates in the social evils of the period.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 214.

⁸⁰Basadre, op. cit., p. 159.

⁸¹González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 208.

To improve its image abroad whereby credit might be obtained more easily, Peru consolidated the external debts it had incurred during the independence struggle. This funding arrangement, negotiated in London in 1849, stipulated that half of the revenue from the sale of guano be applied to the payment of interest and the amortization of the debt.⁸² The consolidation of the external debt seemed to be such a simple and convenient plan that the government adopted a similar plan in 1850 for internal debts incurred during the fight for independence.⁸³ The implementation of the consolidation and conversion law fell to the lot of General José Echenique who became president in 1851.⁸⁴ Coincident with his assumption of the presidency was a huge expansion in the sale of guano, the gross product value of which was \$45,000,000.00 from 1850 to 1855, thus providing a vast reserve against which claims could be recognized.⁸⁵ Echenique lacked foresight and administrative ability, and although he himself was honest, he was surrounded by unscrupulous and grasping officials.⁸⁶ With a poor processing system for claims and the whole procedure veiled in secrecy, the sharing of this immense quantity of money

⁸² Daválos y Lissón, op. cit., IV, p. 31.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 38.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 50.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 60.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 52, quoting Felix Barriga Álvarez, El Gobierno del general Echenique, without reference to page or publisher.

was restricted to a select group of friends.⁸⁷

Through a happy conjunction of natural factors involving climatic and geographical conditions, fish, and birds, a portion of the coast and some of the offshore islands of Peru contained huge deposits of guano or bird manure. Possessing a high nitrogen content and, therefore, making an excellent natural fertilizer, this guano became a much sought after commodity by other nations.⁸⁸ In 1869, the peak year of marketing, total sales amounted to 574,790 tons with a gross product value of \$20,117,695.00.⁸⁹ The Peruvian government, declaring the guano deposits national property, made contracts with individuals and companies--Peruvian by preference--called consignees who sold the guano in foreign markets on a commission basis.⁹⁰ Glaring anomalies appeared in this arrangement: in 1842 the per ton gross product value of guano was \$45.00, but the government was receiving only a \$4.07 per ton revenue;⁹¹ there was usually an enormous discrepancy between the tonnage leaving Peru and that arriving in foreign ports.⁹² The most brazen practice of the consignees, however, was the delaying of settling accounts with the government, thus

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 55, quoting Barriga.

⁸⁸Duffield, op. cit., p. 91.

⁸⁹Daválos y Lissón, op. cit., IV, p. 368.

⁹⁰Stewart, op. cit., p. 266.

⁹¹Daválos y Lissón, op. cit., IV, p. 61.

⁹²Ibid.

depriving the treasury of funds with which to meet national expenditure. The government, to prevent the collapse of essential services, had to borrow money from the same consignees at exorbitant rates of interest. Actually, Peruvian citizens were paying usurious rates of interest for the use of their own money.⁹³

Daválos y Lissón says: "The products of guano corrupted Peru as previously the gold and silver of Peru and Mexico corrupted Spain."⁹⁴

When the demand for guano began to decrease, the government, faced with bankruptcy, tried to impose a monopoly on nitrate production.⁹⁵ According to the terms of a law passed in 1873, private producers were to sell their nitrate to the government.⁹⁶ This law, however, had a loophole which permitted the producers to export nitrate so long as they paid a duty of 15 centavos a quintal exported, thus rendering the monopoly ineffective.⁹⁷

In relating the sad state of Peruvian society to imprudent economic policies, González Prada regards Auguste Drefus and Henry Meiggs as the chief perpetrators of the economic evils which afflicted the country. There is no mistake about his dis-

⁹³Ibid., p. 62.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 67.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 394.

⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 396-400.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 401.

dain for them when he associates them with President José Balta:

More than a degenerate, President Balta ought to be called a primitive, an indomitable brute in which action follows reaction. On the slightest contradiction he would flush, stamp the floor with his foot, and threaten to deliver a blow. A species of dumb monster, he spoke little and badly, for nature had denied him eloquence and verbosity...If as a subaltern he had acquired the reputation of being cruel in punishment and pure in matters of money, as president he preserved his defect of cruelty and lost his stamp of honesty...It is sufficient to say that in his period arose Dreyfus and Meiggs. 98

In 1874, after a bitter struggle with business men and politicians, Nicolás Piérola, minister of finance under Balta, persuaded the government to abandon the consignee system.⁹⁹ The Peruvian government entered negotiations with Auguste Dreyfus, head of Dreyfus Brothers and Company, and that same year a contract was signed, giving this firm a monopoly over the guano sales in Europe in return for which it was to buy two million tons of guano, provide loans, and service the foreign debt.¹⁰⁰ González Prada makes no effort to analyze the contract; he just denounces Dreyfus. Daválos y Lissón says: "The contract was not bad; on the contrary, it was good."¹⁰¹ Watt Stewart says: "Peruvian economists and historians of a later day agree that the Dreyfus contract represented a great improvement in the manage-

⁹⁸González Prada, Figuras y Figurones (Paris: Tipografía de Louis Bellenand et Fils, 1938), pp. 128-130.

⁹⁹Daválos y Lissón, op. cit., IV, p. 241.

¹⁰⁰Stewart, op. cit., pp. 267-268.

¹⁰¹Daválos y Lissón, op. cit., IV, p. 241.

ment of guano."¹⁰² Nevertheless, because of the easy credit it provided, much evil followed in its wake. From 1869 to 1872, Dreyfus loaned the Peruvian government \$164,765,000.00 and a reckless spending spree ensued.¹⁰³

The titan among the spenders was Henry Meiggs, an American who had made and lost a fortune in California, and after committing forgery there,¹⁰⁴ fled to Chile where he soon enjoyed a well-merited reputation as an efficient railway builder.¹⁰⁵ Invited to Peru to undertake railway construction, he arrived with a large technical staff and thousands of Chilean rotos whom he employed as laborers.¹⁰⁶ Possessing sharp psychological insights and a kindly nature, he could manage even the fractious roto.¹⁰⁷ It is alleged that Meiggs tailored his business ethics very quickly to domestic standards. William Clark, a representative in Peru of British financial interests, lends support to this allegation: "The late Henry Meiggs hinted at it when he informed me that the only way to get on with successive Governments of Peru was to let each sell itself for its own price."¹⁰⁸ Stewart says:

¹⁰² Stewart, op. cit., p. 268.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 266.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 110.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., quoting William Clark, Peru and its Creditors (London, 1877), pp. 118-119.

"Francisco Pizarro had his Atahualpa; Henry Meiggs his Balta... The Yankee conquistador, by skillful maneuvers, aided by influential and grasping Peruvians, induced the president of Peru to plunge his country into a financial orgy."¹⁰⁹ From 1869 to 1872, Meiggs received from the Peruvian government as payment for railway projects \$86,543,163.88, more than half of the money borrowed from Dreyfus.¹¹⁰ It is true that railways constructed by Meiggs totalled 700 miles.¹¹¹ It is Stewart's contention, however, that the program should have been pursued more slowly, and part of this wealth devoted to other phases of national development.¹¹²

González Prada views the negotiating of these contracts with foreign entrepreneurs as reflecting the depraved state of Peruvian society:

The contracts with Dreyfus, Meiggs, and Grace were equivalent to the celebration of great fairs where daily newspapers, presidents of the Republic, tribunals of justice, the Houses of Congress, ministers of State, consuls and other public functionaries figured as articles of sale and barter...No means of acquisition seemed illicit. The people would have thrown themselves into a sewer, if at the bottom they had glimpsed a golden sol. Husbands sold their wives, fathers their daughters, brothers their sisters...Meiggs had a seraglio among the directing classes of Lima. ¹¹³

Though González Prada does attack Meiggs for his lack of

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 263.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 276.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 224.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 345.

¹¹³González Prada, Propaganda y Ataque, pp. 225-226.

probity in financial matters, he seems to be much more concerned with his amatory escapades and the willingness of Peruvians to accomodate him:

Some of the most learned, severe, and respected men, who today found chairs of morals, virtue, and urbanity, were then unbearded boys with all the sophistries of Gil Blas, since they earned gold watches and pure blooded bays for mounting guard while their mothers, their sisters, or their cousins took the horizontal position on the couch of Meiggs. 114

Stewart has recourse to Davalos y Lissón, Basadre, Carlos Lissón, Duffield, Clark and others in limning the various facets of Meiggs life. When, however, he views Meiggs' relationship with the opposite sex, he relies on González Prada alone, referring to his works on four occasions. In his investigations in Lima, he found residents who said that Meiggs had had this reputation, but he could not document the charges.¹¹⁵ González Prada is his main source and he seems to take his statements at face value. Considering González Prada's hyperbolic tendencies, these references should be treated with caution.

González Prada regarded the lot of Peruvian women as being a modified form of slavery.¹¹⁶ As would be expected, he designates the Church as the perpetrator of this evil. He says that although the husband has access to his wife's body, the

¹¹⁴González Prada, Tonel de Diogenes, p. 154, n. This quotation is from the author's marginal notes which Alfredo González Prada includes as footnotes.

¹¹⁵Stewart, op. cit., p. 246.

¹¹⁶González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 85.

priest exercises dominion over her soul, since she has been "morally deflowered in the indecorous manipulations of the confessional."¹¹⁷ She has been scorned and condemned by the fathers of the Church as the handmaid of the devil, always ready to lead men of God astray.¹¹⁸ Legally, through the influence of the Church and its canon law, she is treated as little more than a chattel in Peru.¹¹⁹ The most obvious sign of her inequality in the Church is the refusal to grant her any official role in the divine services.¹²⁰ Nevertheless, she has not only surrendered herself but she has delivered her sons and daughters to this clerical dictatorship, causing incessant domestic struggle among Peruvian families.¹²¹

Some of the arguments which González Prada adduces, such as the temptress role, legal discrimination and exclusion from ceremonies cannot be disputed. Nevertheless, Latin American Catholicism has an unmistakable feminine stamp with its innumerable women's cofradías or lay organizations and its interminable novenas and litanies which only feminine patience could endure. One could say that the clerics were forced to give the women the type of Catholicism which they desired. An anonymous author,

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 83.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 88.

¹¹⁹Ibid., pp. 88-89.

¹²⁰Ibid.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 83.

writing in 1774, commenting on the unsurpassed vanity of the women of Lima, goes on to say that "nor in any other part is the dominion of women better established, allowing one to say with propriety (although against the opinion of the burden placed upon women) that the men are subject to them."¹²² A. J. Duffield, by no means an admirer of Catholicism, writing a century later, says:

The women of Lima, who have retained the old religion with ten times more firmness than the men, are the sole opponents of all religious reforms in the Peruvian constitution. And because it is the women who stand in front of their Church, guarding it with their lives, let us have some respect for them. They are a powerful and determined body, as courageous as they are beautiful, which is saying much. ¹²³

Francisco García Calderón, writing contemporaneously with González Prada, considers Catholicism as engendering sadness and renouncement in Peruvian women, leading to a spirit of fatalism. ¹²⁴ However, avoiding the total pessimism of González Prada, he regards Peruvian women as being capable of altering their role in society, and mentions examples, one of whom, Dora Mayer, played a prominent part in the movement to better the conditions of the Indians. ¹²⁵

True to form, González Prada proposes unorthodox correctives for reforming the Peruvian familial structure, such as

¹²²Prado, op. cit., p. 151 n., quoting Descripcion de Lima, author unknown.

¹²³Duffield, op. cit., p. 33.

¹²⁴Francisco García Calderón, Le Perou Contemporain (Paris: Dujarric et Cie., 1907), p. 183.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 184.

maintaining that "adulteresses are honorable who publicly abandon an abhorrent spouse and establish a new family sanctified by love."¹²⁶ Appealing to Shakespeare as an authority, he says that

the illegitimate child born in the clandestine voluptuousness of nature possesses better substance and more virile energies than the swarm of fops or dandies begotten between a sleep and a vigil in a sad, monotonous and filthy bed. ¹²⁷

In calling upon Shakespeare for support instead of a geneticist, he would seem to be more concerned with the dramatic effect of this statement rather than its scientific value.

González Prada deals with immigration, not as a theoretician, like Juan Bautista Alberdi, but as a moral crusader, facing its concrete problems and denouncing the evils he sees in its practice. The Chinese were the largest ethnic group entering Peru after the proclamation of independence and, as mentioned earlier, the status accorded to most of them amounted to practical slavery. Despite great handicaps, some of these Chinese prospered, but periodically, they were subjected to acts of vandalism. After one such sacking, the Peruvian government decreed that a Chinese have five hundred pounds in his possession to gain entrance into the country.¹²⁸ González Prada protests against the inherent injustice of this decree since it prevented free Chinese from entering Peru, yet allowed the hacendados to conti-

¹²⁶ González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 103.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 104.

¹²⁸ González Prada, Prosa Menuda, p. 207.

nue importing Chinese coolies as virtual slaves.¹²⁹ He points out that had this decree been in effect for all nationalities fifty years previously, men controlling substantial interests in the Peruvian economy would never have been able to enter the country.¹³⁰ As would be expected, he considers the cleric as the most despicable type of immigrant. He catalogues the vices and defects peculiar to French, Italian, Anglo-Saxon, and Spanish clerics, heaping invective and sarcasm on the latter. Contrasting the Chinese and the cleric, he says:

They anathematize Asiatic immigration and remain silent before the clerical invasion, without understanding that the Chinese laborer, honest and peaceful, exercises a more elevated social function than the lazy, begging and seditious friar.¹³¹

Gaining firsthand knowledge of the plight of the Indian in the provinces, González Prada became the champion of the Indian cause in Peru, and perhaps the most eloquent defender of Indian rights in the whole of Latin America. Viewing the problem from the perspective of history, he regards the official policy of the Spanish monarchs as an example of consummate inconsistency: "Officially the exploitation of the conquered was ordered and humaneness and justice were sought from the executors of the exploitation."¹³² To have extirpated the abuses committed against

¹²⁹Ibid.

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 208.

¹³¹González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 266.

¹³²Ibid., p. 323.

the Indian, for González Prada there was only one solution which would have been the abolishing of the repartimiento and mita system.¹³³ Instead of following this approach, the Spanish crown, impelled by considerations of the treasury, placed the Indian under the heartless domination of the corregidor, the cura, and the cacique.¹³⁴ Independence brought a change in personnel but not in treatment towards "a race that lies under the tyranny of the juez de paz, the gobernador and the cura, that brutalizing trinity of the Indian."¹³⁵ Sixteen years later he substitutes the hacendado for the juez de paz in this trinity.¹³⁶

González Prada views the Indian as a hybrid of two civilizations, retaining his barbaric vices, but never given an opportunity to acquire European virtues.¹³⁷ Instead of elevating him, the republic has preserved him in his ignorance and servitude, brutalized him with alcohol, debased him in the barracks, and destroyed him in civil wars.¹³⁸ Since the hacendado has the gobernador and the juez de paz under his control, most of the evil practices become embodied in one individual. The hacendado arrogates to himself the arranging of marriages, the designating of heirs, and the distributing of inheritance; he arranges debts in such a way as to keep the family in debt indefinitely; he admin-

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 324.

¹³⁵González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 67.

¹³⁶González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 324.

¹³⁷González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 67.

¹³⁸González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 326.

isters corporal punishment; every Indian woman, married or single, is in danger of being called to satisfy his desires.¹³⁹

Insisting that it is impossible for the Indian to become a civilized human being in these circumstances, González Prada says:

"Where there is no justice, mercy or benevolence, there is no civilization."¹⁴⁰ While conceding that the caciques and gamonales are the ostensible exploiters of the Indians, he nevertheless maintains that the roots of this gamonalismo or bossism are being nourished in the legislative chambers, in the tribunals of justice, and even in the salons of the presidential palace.¹⁴¹

González Prada is convinced that the Indian, given the same opportunities, can compete with the white man. He points out that when the Indian is placed in a civilized atmosphere, he acquires the same degree of morality and culture as the descendant of the Spaniard, buttressing his assertion with concrete examples: Santa Cruz as giving the most promising form of government; Cahuide as the embodiment of heroism; Olaya as a model of fidelity.¹⁴² Actually he regards the Indian as the backbone of Peru:

The true Peru is not formed by the groups of Creoles and foreigners who inhabit the belt of land situated be-

¹³⁹Ibid., pp. 328-329.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., p. 331.

¹⁴¹González Prada, Prosa Menuda, p. 156.

¹⁴²González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 333.

tween the Pacific and the Andes. The nation is formed by the multitudes of Indians spread out over the eastern arm of the mountain range. 143

González Prada unhesitatingly singles out the abysmal ignorance of the Indians as the underlying cause of their debasement, stating that in many villages there was not even one Indian who could read and write. To illustrate his point, he says that the Indians viewed the War of the Pacific as a civil war between General Chile and General Peru.¹⁴⁴ Writing in 1888, he is convinced that education is the main antidote in combatting this ignorance: "Teach him even to read and write, and you will see whether or not in a quarter of a century he will lift himself up to the dignity of a man."¹⁴⁵ Sixteen years later, his thinking has undergone a drastic transformation:

If by a superhuman phenomenon, the illiterates of the nation would wake up tomorrow, not only knowing how to read and write, but with university diplomas, the problem of the Indian would remain unsolved: the proletariat of the ignorant would be followed by that of the bachelors and doctors...Where the haciendas of the coast comprise four or five thousand fanegadas, where the estancias of the sierra measure from ninety to one hundred and fifty miles, the nation has to be divided into masters and servants. 146

Maintaining that education alone does not endow the will with firmness or vigor, González Prada regards property as the catalyst in the personality transformation where man emerges as

¹⁴³González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 67.

¹⁴⁴González Prada, Horas de Lucha, pp. 334-335.

¹⁴⁵González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 67.

¹⁴⁶González Prada, Horas de Lucha, pp. 335-336.

a responsible human being: "Nothing changes the psychology of man more quickly or radically than property."¹⁴⁷ Predicating the rehabilitation of the Indian on the concept of property, he thus sums up the problem: "The Indian question, more than pedagogical, is economic, is social."¹⁴⁸ In regard to redressing the Indians economically and socially, he quickly dismisses the possibility of a change of heart and mind in their white oppressors. History seems to bear witness to his contention. After such a perceptive analysis of existing conditions, one would expect a more sophisticated solution than this admonition:

If the Indian would utilize in rifles and cartridges all the money which he squanders in alcohol and feasts, if in a corner of his hut or in the crevice of a rock he would hide an arm, he would change his condition, he would enforce respect for his property and his life.¹⁴⁹

In dealing with the Indian question, González Prada offers the best illustration of his strength--the faculty of exposing defects and vices in the existing system--and his weakness--the inability to suggest even an embryonic plan for bettering conditions--as a social critic. His exposition of the Indian problem, admired though it is, fails to touch upon the duality in the Spanish mentality, the acceptance-rejection syndrome towards the Indian which underlies the existence of two almost distinct worlds in Peru. The Spanish Peruvians' orthodoxy would

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 336.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 337.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 337-338.

never allow him to deny the Indian's substantial worth, thus preventing him from holding an extreme position like, for instance, that of a Nazi ideologist on race. Yet in the practical sphere he has allowed the accidents of race and culture to becloud this truth of substantial equality, producing sad consequences for himself and the Indian. It may be significant that President Ramón Castilla who abolished the Indian tribute and liberated the slaves had no Spanish blood in his veins, his father being Italian and his mother a full-blooded Indian.¹⁵⁰ The Church in following the cultural pattern with notable exceptions--these exceptions show how efficacious her intervention can be--has compounded the problem.

If González Prada is eager to depict the ills of Peruvian society, he is just as eager to point out what he thought was the source of these ills. He regarded the confluence of the highly centralized, autocratic, and monolithic Spanish and Inca systems as the fountainhead of the ailments which would plague future generations:

Do not imagine, sirs, that the spirit of servitude is peculiar only to the Indian on the plateau; we mestizos on the coast must remember that we have in our veins the blood of the subjects of Philip II mixed with the blood of Huayna Capac. Our spines tend to be inclined.¹⁵¹

Seemingly considering the Indian contribution as negligible, González Prada devotes all of his attention to the Spanish

¹⁵⁰Duffield, op. cit., p. 140.

¹⁵¹González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 65.

influence on Peruvian society, branding the descendents of the Spanish as wasteful and degenerate and the progeny of the conquerors of independence as a multitude of militarists and office seekers.¹⁵² The plight of the latter elicits from him a comment that is partly plaintive and partly ironical. Lamenting their lack of initiative, their fear of private enterprise, their dependence on the government treasury, and, above all, the atrophy of their talent, he concludes: "At the doors of Congress, of the Palace, and of public offices, we ought to repeat the lamentation of the English poet in village cemetery."¹⁵³

Viewing the whole of Peru as a social calamity, there is no doubt in González Prada's mind as to where the culpability should be placed. For him the influence of Spain has had a crippling effect on all phases of national life. In a short essay which he entitles Nuestra Madre, he presents Spain as the tail of Europe, easily identified by her odor of moss, incense, and fried oil, in contrast to the other western European nations characterized by their odor of industrial fumes. Working down from the king to the ordinary people, he soon exhausts the criteria of decadence: Alfonso XIII sires syphilitic cretins; parliament is engaged in a perpetual pantomime; Spanish writing can be best described as a mummification process; the whole Spanish nation is a community of friars without the tonsure; work is alien to

¹⁵²Ibid.

¹⁵³Ibid., p. 165.

every class of Spaniard; not having emerged from the primitive stage, they react immediately and then think after they have acted.¹⁵⁴

Apart from the freedom-loving, anarchistic Barcelonans, the works of Cervantes and Quevedo, and his friendship with Unamuno and Pi y Margall, González Prada has little but contempt and loathing for Spain. Regarding it as essentially monarchist and ultramontane, and wallowing in a swamp of dead forms and conventions, he urges young Peruvian writers to cut the umbilical cord joining Peru to Spain and to seek their intellectual sustenance elsewhere:

The hewers of the primitive forest, the sowers of the new seed do not belong to Spain: Hegel and Schopenhauer were born in Germany; Darwin and Spencer in England; Fourier and Comte in France. Then why drink from the rivulet when one can go to the source? The water from the rivulet--Madrid--comes from the source: Paris. Today, with few exceptions, there is no Spanish literature, only French literature in Spanish.¹⁵⁵

Many of the things which González Prada says about Spain are true: she lags behind her European neighbors; she committed blunders in her colonial administration. However, to categorize all of her colonial endeavors as negative and prejudicial to the best interests of the people is tantamount to abandoning the norms of responsible criticism. In his remonstrances against

¹⁵⁴González Prada, Tonel de Diogenes. This is a summation of the essay, Nuestra Madre and its footnotes, pp. 40-43.

¹⁵⁵González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 40.

Spain González Prada repeatedly compares her with her European counterparts in different phases of national life. Yet he pointedly omits comparing her colonial record with that of her contemporary colonial peers. Some of his condemnations are made on the basis of impressions gained during his visit to Spain. Depending upon the individual emotional makeup, first impressions can be prolific progenitors. González Prada was not a man with balanced emotions. He observes that in passing from France to Spain, he noticed a great difference between the French and the Spaniards in quickness of perception, that the French could understand by means of a sign whereas the Spaniards could not grasp things even if the one speaking was a member of the Royal Academy. He says that after speaking to two or four Spaniards, he was convinced that the Spaniards are stupid.¹⁵⁶ This conclusion based on such fragmentary observation hardly befits the stout defender of science and the inductive method.

¹⁵⁶González Prada, Tonel de Diogenes, p. 43 n.

CHAPTER IV

A Political Odyssey in Peru

Yes, politicians are the true enemies, and in their regard there is required not only a general and in globo attack, but an individual expurgation so as to collect them one by one and perform a moral vivisection. Yes, politics is the evil, and all propaganda should endeavor to utilize in advancing social reforms all the efforts squandered today in political fights and digressions. ¹

Giving his animus free rein, as was his wont in dealing with particular persons and the class to which they belong, González Prada betrays the evanescent character of his moral strictures. He hurls the ultimate condemnation at a certain group, but very shortly uses the same terms to castigate an entirely new segment of society. As with the Church and the aristocracy, so now with the politicians and the military, the reader is led from level to level, thinking that the true culprits are finally emerging, only to find that a new group stands in the wings labelled for, to use his own words, "moral vivisection."

Destiny seems to have eventuated Peruvian political history, so as to provide González Prada with a blotter on which he could splatter his peculiar literary vitriol. It is generally recognized that Peruvians have regarded the paternity of their independence as somewhat tarnished. In regard to this contention,

¹González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 168.

Rufino Blanco-Fombana, the Venezuelan pensador, makes this observation: "Almost all Peruvian historians have a harshness and unthinking injustice against the liberators of America."² Daválos y Lissón puts it very tersely and plaintively: "The coming of Bolívar was a fatal fact, inevitable and of absolute necessity."³ Mariano Paz Soldán, in commenting upon the dictatorial powers given to Bolívar by the Peruvian Congress makes no effort to cloak his bitterness: "Would that even the memory of those scenes be erased."⁴ With a kind of masochistic delight, González Prada elaborates on this demoralization theme in regard to succeeding stages of Peruvian political history.

The broad lines of the Peruvian political structure seem to have been determined during José de San Martín's administration. Firmly convinced that republicanism was not viable in Latin America, San Martín, during a conference with the Viceroy de La Serna at Punchauco, asked that a Spanish prince be sent to Peru to reign as an independent constitutional monarch. Demand met counterdemand and the negotiations collapsed.⁵ Daválos y Lissón, fondly imagining what might have been, doubtless having

²González Prada, Figuras y Figurones, p. 35. This book contains Blanco-Fombana's critical study of Manuel González Prada which originally appeared in Grandes Escritores de America, Siglo XIX.

³Daválos y Lissón, op. cit., III, p. 152.

⁴Mariano Felipe Paz Soldán, Historia del Peru Independiente, cited in Daválos y Lissón, p. 170.

⁵Ibid., p. 84, quoting García Gamibia without further identification.

in mind the relatively smooth transition in Brazil from colony to autonomous nation, maintains that the failure of the conference at Punchauca was the most important factor in determining the political course of Peru in the nineteenth century. In his opinion, so decidedly a monarchical country as Peru with its social, political, and economic elements historically inclined towards a monarchical system, demanded a prince and not a democratic president.⁶

Another episode fraught with political significance was the withdrawal of 10,000 Spaniards from Lima. These people were the backbone of mining and commercial activity. Failing in his efforts to obtain a Spanish prince, San Martín was convinced that these Spaniards could not be integrated in an independent Peruvian nation. Rather than hazard the security of Peru, he entrusted the removal of these people to Bernardo Monteagudo, his closest advisor. These Spaniards were shot, imprisoned, exiled or went voluntarily to Spain or Chile.⁷ Although Monteagudo displayed exceptional ability in many spheres of government, this action, coupled with his vanity and sensuality, which Basadre implies as stemming from his being a mulatto, made him the most detested man in Peru.⁸ Through this action the nation lost a class which could have given the political organization a degree

⁶Ibid., p. 87.

⁷Ibid., pp. 69-70.

⁸Jorge Basadre, La Iniciación de la República (Lima: Librería Francesa Científica, 1928), p. 29.

of social and economic stability.

Despite the setback suffered at Punchauca, San Martín was determined to establish a constitutional monarchy. As a prelude, he instituted the Orden del Sol, endowing it with a hereditary character, thus establishing a new nobility in Peru.⁹ San Martín's monarchic and aristocratic tendencies and his relatively inactive policy towards the Spaniards did much to undermine his position with Peruvians possessing strong republican convictions. Harassed from both the royalist and republican sides and unable to persuade Simon Bolívar to come to his assistance, he resigned from his position in 1822. The complexities and cross-purposes evident during San Martín's regime portended the course of politics in subsequent Peruvian history.

Following the departure of San Martín in September, 1822, the constituent assembly appointed a three-man junta to govern the country. In February, 1823, the army led by Andrés Santa Cruz delivered an ultimatum to congress that the presidency be given to José de la Riva Agüero. Having no alternative, the Congress had to accede to this demand. Shortly after assuming office, Riva Agüero gave a patent demonstration of personalismo which has nearly always so adversely affected Latin American leadership. Fearing that General Sucre would gain the ascendancy, Riva Agüero dissuaded Santa Cruz from joining forces with Sucre in the battle at Desaguadero, thus impeding the certain

⁹Ibid., p. 21.

defeat of the Spaniards.¹⁰ With the situation deteriorating and Riva Agüero realizing his untenable position, he invited General Bolívar to Peru. Nevertheless, desperately desiring to maintain a grip on political power--a characteristic trait in the caudillo psychology--he fled to Trujillo and established a regional government in that city. Arriving in Peru and receiving limitless powers from Congress, Bolívar quickly deposed Riva Agüero. Simon Bolívar, the greatest caudillo that Latin America has ever produced, was now in control of the destinies of Peru.

Caudillismo has been the most outstanding characteristic of Latin American politics since the inception of the national period. In the early part of the nineteenth century every country except Brazil experienced the emergence of these leaders or caudillos. Since Peru was almost continually under the rule of caudillos, and González Prada's political criticism for the most part is directed towards them, a brief examination of caudillismo is necessary. Scholars have endeavored to explain or conceptualize the proclivity in the Latin American character to accept this type of government. The following summarizations attempt to outline these explanations.

Carlos Octavio Bunge, an Argentinean scholar, seeks to explain in his Nuestra America this caudillo phenomenon in terms of social psychology. Adducing what he considers the chief

¹⁰Daválos y Lissón, op. cit., III, p. 150, quoting Bulnes' Bolívar in Peru without identifying the page.

psychological traits of the ethnic elements in Latin America, he proceeds to fashion a construct in which all these disparate traits are blended and become more or less the characteristics of Latin Americans. He maintains that arrogance is the dominant trait in the Spanish psychology. From this arrogance, he argues, are derived the following components in the Spanish character: disdain for work, religious fanaticism, desire for conquest, avarice, prodigality, the cult of the painful, the ugly, and the unclean, and sadness. The Indian's main characteristics are an Oriental fatalism, a consuming desire for revenge, and, as a corollary of this Oriental fatalism, a sadness which pervades every aspect of Indian life. The third element, the Negro, is marked by an excessive servility and a pronounced infatuation.

Resorting to Darwinian theory, Bunge says that the coming together of these elements had an atavistic reaction or the producing of a primitive man. The mulato, an amalgam of Spanish arrogance and Negro infatuation, is servile, irritable, extremely envious, and hyper-ambitious. The mestizo inherits the fatalism and apathy of the Indian, but Spanish arrogance appears in him in the form of extreme rapacity. These amalgams and other combinations have produced for each of the Latin American republics a national psychology, the chief features of which are laziness, sadness, and arrogance.

For Bunge, laziness is the dominant trait in the Latin American character. He distinguishes it from all other forms of

laziness, defining it as "an absolute lack of activity, either physical or psychic."¹¹ In charging Latin Americans with habitual lying, he links this tendency to laziness: "It is a continuous deception of accomodation to an instinctive inactivity."¹² Bunge regards laziness as the key to Latin American caudillismo. In their mania for idleness, Latin Americans foist their responsibilities on any available person with utter disregard for his qualifications. Obviously, the caudillo is an exception to this general tendency. Comparing caudillismo with the divine right of kings, Bunge says: "One is imposed by the will of God; the other is imposed by the will of men without will."¹³

Continuing his analysis, Bunge says that at times caudillismo is a government of blood and rapine. In this form it feeds from two sources: the innate cruelty and fierceness of the Indian, as exemplified in his religious rites, and the self-inflicted pain of the Spaniard as an expression of his religious devotion. More often, and by its nature, caudillismo government is pacific, since it is based on inaction.

Originally, according to Bunge, Spanish arrogance was geographic. It gradually acquired an overlay of religious fanaticism. Finally, in Latin America time and the Enlightenment

¹¹Carlos Octavio Bunge, Nuestra America, 6 edicion; con una introducción de José Ingenieros (Buenos Aires: Casa Vacarra, 1918), p. 170.

¹²Ibid., p. 175.

¹³Ibid., p. 226.

stripped it of every vestige of environment and religion, transforming it into egolatria. This egolatria changed the military officer into the caudillo and infected him with delusions of Napoleonic grandeur.

Bunge describes caudillismo society as having three tiers: the supreme chief, the oligarchic nucleus consisting of relatives and favorites, and the people. All initiative works on a horizontal level or downwards; democratic action is completely impeded. The virus permeating all levels of society, doctors bow to the diagnosis of the medical caudillo just as their counterparts do in law, commerce, and education. In short, it leads to the eventual paralysis of a nation.

José Ingenieros, a fellow Argentinean, wrote a long critical introduction to Bunge's Nuestra America. He is lavish in his praise of Bunge's psychological analyses of the Spaniard and the Indian and agrees with what amounts to a caricature of the mulatto, although he says that it is overdrawn in certain areas. He differs with Bunge as to the origin of Latin American laziness, perceiving it mainly as the result of economic and social factors. Choosing Argentina as an example, he points out that the wealthy landowners are renters by character and consider work vile, whereas the landless class, knowing from experience that land is the fruit of privilege rather than hard work, consider effort in the latter regard as useless. Indeed, Ingenieros is an exponent of social and economic determinism as the following statement reveals:

Men do not make history; they do not guide evolution; they recognize it or ignore it, adapting their efforts to it...A complex process of causes which we cannot elude or modify, then, pre-exist and animate the evolution of social aggregates. 14

He does not regard caudillismo as a political phenomenon arising from laziness. Rather, he contends that both caudillismo and laziness have their origin in the feudal conditions which prevailed in Latin America. According to his view, the political anarchy following the break from Spain had its basis in an unorganized or anarchic economic system. The people had no recourse but to accept the tutelage of a caudillo. Defined political parties have followed in the wake of economic differentiation and the era of caudillismo has begun to recede. He says that this economic theory is in harmony with the Darwinean conception of evolution.

Unlike Ingenieros, Francisco García Calderón does not anchor his historical presentation so fixedly to economics. In his integral revision of Latin American History, he makes use of such concepts as Spencer's military to industrial era, Bagehot's authority to discussion transition, and Sumner-Maine's status to contract stage.¹⁵ Beginning with the early national period, he compares the immediate post-Bolivarian era with the break-up of Alexander the Great's empire when his lieutenants began fighting

¹⁴Ibid., p. 22. Critical introduction by José Ingenieros.

¹⁵Francisco García Calderón, Les Démocraties latines de l'Amérique (Paris: Ernest Flammarion, Éditeur, 1912), p. 70.

among themselves for pieces of territory. He says that Bolívar left America in the hands of a dynasty of caudillos and it was they who actually fashioned the physical boundaries of the Latin American republics. This period was characterized by its recurrent aspect with anarchy succeeding dictatorship and followed by restoration. Finally, strong caudillos emerged like Díaz, García Moreno, and Guzmán Blanco. Under their practical, autocratic rule, material progress was realized. Although democratic and parliamentary forms were studiously cultivated, in actual fact they were hollow, as all authority was exercised by the caudillo.¹⁶

However, with the growth of industrialism, society became more complex and differentiated. Co-operation, organization, and solidarity were aspects of this new economic development. The ideological quarrels began to lose their force and more emphasis was placed on constitutional liberties. The caudillos gave place to the industrial leader and wealth rather than courage became the measure of status. However, for García Calderón, the "fundamental revolution has been sterile since President-autocrats replaced the caudillos or vice-kings and the whole of society is still greatly influenced by colonial cultural attitudes."¹⁷

In contrast to the above three writers, Jorge Basadre treats militarism and caudillismo from a specifically Peruvian

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 74-75.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 81-82.

point of view. He points out that the Church and the army were the only well organized and powerful forces in the immediate post-independence period, with the difference, however, that the former had deep roots in the colonial experience while the latter was a product of independence. Having no colonial traditions, the Peruvian army never had a dynastic or priestly stamp, nor was it dominated by the nobility. Actually it had a kind of democratic character, since the barracks broke down the separation of castes and there very quickly developed a social mobility which did not depend on old cultural values.¹⁸ As to military competence, efforts were made towards developing a proficient officer class. Laws were formulated limiting the number of officers and basing promotions on merit, and the Colegio Militas was established in 1826, offering a full curriculum of military subjects.¹⁹ There were, however, factors which impeded the growth of true professionalism in the Peruvian army, especially militarism.

Basadre says that militarism develops from three causes: national acknowledgement of decisive victories, caution after a defeat or times of political and social indecision. All three factors have been present in Peru.²⁰ Explaining the origin of the first type of militarism, Basadre says that the army, disproportionately exceeding all other social forces in achieving

¹⁸Basadre, La Iniciación de la República, p. 91.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 93.

²⁰Basadre, Peru: Problema y Posibilidad, p. 106.

independence, became the most important social force in Peru. Since the military contribution to independence was so enormous, officers were given the most important public offices. It was implicitly understood that one had to be a distinguished soldier to be a candidate for president. Ambition was whetted by the honors and rewards awaiting the one who would dominate the situation. Lack of discipline increased and rivalry for position became more pronounced. As late as 1849, despite attempts at proper training and reform, there were six grand marshalls on active duty, not to mention other ranks.²¹ This militarism was synonymous with caudillismo.

Basadre contends that Bolivar was a great caudillo, but that he was succeeded by mediocre caudillos who subverted his domain into a "corrupt and discordant Byzantium."²² He sees a striking parallel between the caudillos and the conquistadores: both were nomadic; as the conquistadores had realized the marvel of discovery and conquest, so did the caudillos realize the marvel of independence and the consequent struggle for spheres of power.²³ The Napoleonic syndrome--supreme confidence in their own ability, the issuing of proclamations, and an infatuation with decorations--was strongly evident in their make-up.²⁴

²¹Basadre, La Iniciación de la República, p. 95.

²²Ibid., p. 118.

²³Ibid., p. 119.

²⁴Ibid., p. 120.

Other factors which contributed to the predominance of caudillismo were the lack of commerce and industrialism and the consequent dependence on government positions, the lack of people with a social conscience to rebel against such a system, and the abject attitude of the academic class. Basadre says that this militarism could have been checked if a central figure like Napoleon had emerged or if there had been a selfless group, as in the Russian revolution. Not even Bolívar, however, could check the onslaught of his lieutenants. Basadre concludes: "The emancipation, a spontaneous and multiple historical phenomenon, favored the formation of minuscule rivalries."²⁵

In view of Bunge's withering appraisal of the mestizo element, it is interesting to note how Basadre evaluates Peruvian caudillos from an ethnic viewpoint. He says that the white caudillos, like Salaverry, Nieto, Vivanco and Echenique, were spectacular but ineffective and were usually conquered by mestizos like Gamarra, Santa Cruz, Castilla, and San Román who displayed superior daring, cunning, constancy and strength. Maintaining that the mestizos had more success in their endeavors, he points out the individual accomplishments of these men: the vision of Santa Cruz in revitalizing the dream of Bolívar; the durable political control exercised by Gamarra and Castilla; Castilla's tactical superiority and his military victories; the capability of Castilla and San Román in organizing armies.²⁶ There is no doubt in

²⁵Ibid., p. 121.

²⁶Ibid., p. 129.

Basadre's mind as to the superior talents of the mestizo caudillos.

Although González Prada does not undertake a formal comparison, he substantially agrees with Basadre's viewpoint. As to the most effective and successful president, he unequivocally chooses Andrés Santa Cruz. He also singles out Ramón Castilla for outstanding foresight, especially in regard to national defense.²⁷ However, eulogizing national leaders or caudillos never became a distraction for González Prada. Towards the end of his life, many years after his feeble foray in the political arena, with his hopes for a Peruvian Utopia completely shattered, González Prada, bitterly disillusioned, makes this observation on the Peruvian political situation of that time:

We have followed a course diametrically opposed to that run by nature: life began with the inferior animals and culminated with man; our political evolution began with the San Martíns and Bolívars and came to a stop with the Benavides'.²⁸

It was not ever thus with González Prada. In 1888, when he was the brightest literary and political star on the Peruvian horizon and had visions of reconstructing Peru's social and political fabric, he describes his country's transition from colony to nationhood in this unflattering manner: "We shook off the tutelage of the viceroys and vegetated under the tyranny of the militarists in a way that our real form of government was caporal-

²⁷González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 5.

²⁸González Prada, Propaganda y Ataque, p. 222.

ismo."²⁹ With the hope of shaking Peruvians from their lethargy, he analyzes the caudillo phenomenon in the background of the War of the Pacific, a period in which he himself underwent acute experiences. Lamenting the lack of intelligent leadership during that catastrophic occurrence, he says that the youth of the previous generation, instead of sowing wheat and extracting minerals, entered the barracks and government offices where their brains underwent a process of atrophy.³⁰ Ignoring the interests of their country which was in desperate need of sacrifice and money, men willingly placed themselves under a caudillo in return for bread and honors, thus placing an intolerable burden on the public treasury.³¹

Analyzing the caudillos who ruled the nation, González Prada says that they were nothing more than "agents of large financial societies, astute peasants who made politics a lucrative labor or soldiers who saw in the presidency of the republic the last rank of a military career."³² Belittling their leadership, his sarcasm strikes with whiplash effect:

Who here is called Francia, García Moreno, or even Nuñez? The badly named parties of Peru are organic fragments which agitate and cry for a brain, pieces of a serpent that palpitate, jump, and wish to unite themselves with a head that does not exist. ³³

²⁹González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 164.

³⁰Ibid., p. 65.

³¹Ibid., p. 66.

³²González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 2.

³³González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 42.

Continuing his analysis, González Prada says that although there always were liberals and conservatives in Peru, there never were truly Liberal or Conservative parties because of the absence of patriotism. He asserts that there were "three great divisions: the governors, the conspirators, and the indifferent because of selfishness, imbecility, or disillusionment."³⁴ When the supreme test came, the enemy encountered "not a bronze colossus but a cluster of lead filings" and Peru experienced the most humiliating episode in her history.³⁵ Pointing to the difference in the definition of nationhood between Chile and Peru, he says:

Therefore, when the most obscure soldier of the invading army had nothing but the name of Chile on his lips, we, from the first general to the last recruit, repeated the name of a caudillo [General Andrés Avelino Cáceres]. We, who were slaves of the Middle Ages, called upon the feudal lord.³⁶

As this analysis indicates, González Prada had, before the turn of the century, what could be called a conventional attitude towards patriotism, politics, and the army. Appealing to Peruvians for a change in mentality, he says: "When we have a people without the spirit of servitude and soldiers and politicians meeting the demands of the century, we shall recover Tacna and Arica."³⁷ In fact, his patriotism bordered on xenophobia in

³⁴Ibid., p. 66.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid., p. 67.

his attitude towards neighboring nations. Naturally, Chile bore the brunt of his attacks. Reprimanding Peru for her blundering policies in the War of the Pacific, he uses his scathing sarcasm to pay homage to Chile for her spirit of practicality and humility in obtaining foreigners to reform her universities, redact her codes, regulate her public treasury, and "even aim Krupp guns at Peru," while Peruvians proceeded on a course of "semi-theological and semi-scholastic empiricism."³⁸ Taking aim at the ethnic elements of the Chilean nation, he says that it was not what Chile took from Peru in the form of slaughter, destruction, and plunder, but what she left behind: "Chile taught us her Araucanian ferocity...In a magnanimous nation there remains today, after the fight, the hate of Basque enemies, the rancor of tiger against tiger."³⁹

Trust and co-operation were not qualities that González Prada recommended in formulating Peru's South American policy, as this exhortation indicates:

Though our geographic position, surrounded by Ecuador, Brazil, Bolivia, and Chile, fatefully condemned to be a battlefield where the destinies of South America are raffled, we have to transform ourselves into a belligerent nation. ⁴⁰

Argentina does not escape censure. He says that a people who submitted to the bloody Rosas dictatorship, crucified Paraguay

³⁸Ibid., p. 77.

³⁹Ibid., p. 73.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 79.

in an alliance with Brazil and Uruguay, and ignored the plea of Peru and Chile during the Spanish invasion in 1865, do not merit much confidence.⁴¹ Yet his major preoccupation always was Chile; every fiber in his being cried out for revenge against that nation. Maintaining that France became more powerful than ever because of her intense hatred towards Prussia, he advocates a similar attitude for Peru towards Chile.⁴²

Considering the disaster that Peru suffered in the War of the Pacific, González Prada's advocacy of preparedness is amply justified. However, to base the external affairs policy exclusively on saber rattling and hatred is not a very imaginative procedure. It is strange to find a man always professing to be in the camp of reason and science, seemingly without one original or progressive idea relating to the South American complex of nations.

González Prada's approach to the internal Peruvian political situation reveals a similar negative character. Defining his method of operation in this area, he says: "Arduous is the task of the writer called to counteract the influence of bad politics: his work has to be one of propaganda and attack."⁴³ Elaborating on this idea, he says that pamphlets, newspapers, and articles are perhaps more effective than books. In any case,

⁴¹González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 41.

⁴²González Prada, Páginas Libres, p. 70.

⁴³Ibid., p. 163.

propaganda, even the most fiery type, will not accomplish anything if it is not supported by a determined attack on political institutions and politicians.⁴⁴ This, in effect, is a definition of González Prada's literary production. Apart from his poetry, his books are nothing more than collections of his discourses, essays, and newspaper articles. Outside of his literary criticism and a few essays on random topics, his literary endeavors are essentially attacks on institutions and politicians, and present little that has positive content. González Prada was too successful in achieving his goal. If one can use the term, his works are a good illustration of critical overkill.

At this stage in the development of his political thinking, González Prada has no far-reaching ideas that would radically change the structure of Peruvian institutions. The main theme underlying his attack is the use that men are making of these institutions. He contends that many reforms have been initiated, but have been thwarted because of the monopolistic manner in which Peruvians have manipulated these institutions to favor a small segment of society. In his view, the civilizing effects of political institutions must be measured not by the riches and intellectual attainments of a few but by the common welfare and intellectual level of the masses.⁴⁵ Accusing the Peruvian congress of constant obsequiousness, he says:

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 164.

We all know the history of Peruvian Congresses, from the one that meekly knelt before Bolívar, conferring on him the dictatorship, to the one that has just silently approved the protocol [the proposed settlement regarding Tacna and Arica]. 46

His point here is that the politician accepts this servile role to further his personal aims at the cost of confinement to the narrow interests of the political party, thus subverting the purpose of congress. Actually, González Prada does not question the nature of Peruvian political institutions in theory. His quarrel is with the practical manifestations of these institutions when they are under the control of politicians. In reality, he is making an in globo attack on Peruvian politicians. Relatively speaking, this attack is moderate when compared with his treatment of individual politicians.

In dealing with almost all politicians concretely and particularly, González Prada's personal animosity renders his judgment devoid of objective worth. His political essays take on the character of a political diatribe delivered by a demagogue at the plaza of some Peruvian coastal village. This virulence and invective is best exemplified in his attacks on President Nicolás Piérولا. Here is a man who is severing Piérولا's jugular with every stroke of the pen: "He would have given his mother's honor, his father's life, he would have groaned a hundred years on the gridiron of St. Lawrence, he would have sold his soul to the devil for a few inches of stature."⁴⁷ Piérولا could even

⁴⁶González Prada, Horas de Lucha, p. 7.

⁴⁷González Prada, Propaganda y Ataque, p. 180.

make him forget his credo of racial equality: "His mental processes resemble the psychological state of the Negro who, before violating and murdering, recites the prayer of the Just Judge or kisses the scapular of Our Lady of Carmel."⁴⁸ Summing up Piérola's tenure of office, he says: "With Piérola we had economic waste, political pandemonium, lewd militarism and dictatorship anointed with the oil of a military chaplain and perfumed with the mixture of a mother abbess."⁴⁹ Manuel Pardo emerges as a noble figure when González Prada compares him with Piérola:

Manuel Pardo, despite his unhappy countenance, had an arrogant, sympathetic, and manly appearance; whereas Nicolás Piérola had no perfection which would make one forget the over-development of the jaw, the pigment of the skin, or the kinkiness of the hair. In moral matters they presented greater divergencies than in the physical or the social; when Pardo is spoken of, his defects are mentioned and immediately his private and public virtue is remembered; when Piérola is treated, his vices are remembered and nothing else...With all his defects, better said, with all his errors (some very grave), Pardo distinguished himself as the only ruler who, after Santa Cruz, had a political plan...Piérola does not know where he is going and does not understand what he wants because he tangles and spoils everything. 50

Treating Pardo separately, González Prada reduces the heroic proportions of his subject considerably. Singling out Pardo's greatest defect as the love of money, he says: "But if he possessed the science of enriching himself, he did not have it in enriching the country."⁵¹ Charging him with social pretensions

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 192.

⁴⁹González Prada, Horas de Lucha, pp. 9-10.

⁵⁰González Prada, Propaganda y Ataque, pp. 195-197.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 141.

and political deception, he says: "Manuel Pardo, without being noble, presumed to be of the nobility; without being republican, he announced the practical republic."⁵² Reversing his previous judgment, González Prada says that Pardo could not be compared with Santa Cruz because he lacked foresight, an essential quality of a good administrator. His reason for this judgment was that Pardo plunged Peru into a fiscal chaos by issuing the decree of the inconvertibility of the peso and declaring a state of national bankruptcy.⁵³ Assuming that he uncovered new material or examined the old material more closely, González Prada had every right to revise his judgment. However, if Piérولا were introduced into this study, it is very conceivable that Pardo would appear with his halo intact. In treating degrees of evil, González Prada became so emotionally involved with the greater evil that he instinctively endowed the lesser evil with the appearance of virtue.

In view of González Prada's unbridled attacks, it is interesting to note how three respected Peruvian historians estimate Piérولا and his administration. Daválos y Lissón says:

The Democratic Party ended with the death of its chief, the prestigious man of public affairs, Don Nicolás Piérولا, the best prepared politician that Peru had for its national government. ⁵⁴

More critical, Jorge Basadre points out that Piérولا's government

⁵²Ibid., p. 127 n.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 143-145.

⁵⁴Daválos y Lissón, op. cit., I, p. 89.

persecuted deputies in the minority, closed periodicals, and left the socio-economic structure untouched, but concludes that it gave "stability, dignity and respectability to the country; it undertook administrative and economic reforms; it established the basis for the modernization of the country."⁵⁵ Francisco García Calderón catalogues the shortcomings of Piérola's administration, particularly the little that was done to enact law in favor of the workers or better the condition of the Indians. However, he is not hesitant in proclaiming Piérola's virtues:

Like all the great American caudillos, he was an excellent administrator of the fiscal wealth of the country... His organizing talent, his patriotism and his extraordinary ability surprised those who had known him only as the revolutionary leader. ⁵⁶

Devastating attacks on personal honor, physical deficiencies and ethnic background have never been wholly foreign to Latin American politics. When González Prada wrote the essay on Piérola, he was the most influential member of the Unión Nacional, and although he denied interest in political office, he might have had serious political ambitions. As mentioned earlier, he had denied literary ambitions. Nevertheless, even if he had designs on a political career, such immoderation was at variance with what he was preaching to Peruvian journalists.⁵⁷

González Prada's political pitchfork was a very unbalanced

⁵⁵Basadre, Peru: Problemas y Posibilidad, pp. 146-147.

⁵⁶García Calderón, Les Démocraties latines..., pp. 102-103.

⁵⁷González Prada, Horas de Lucha, pp. 127-141.

implement in that it had a very long attack prong and a woefully short propaganda prong. As the recognized theoretician of the Unión Nacional, he formulated its principles and goals.⁵⁸ To retain its idealistic connotation, it was to shun all alliances and compromises with all other Peruvian parties. It was to be representative of the whole of Peru and not have its center of gravity in Lima as in the case of the other parties. The personalista character was to be avoided so as to preserve its nature as a collective party. Nevertheless, to avoid its remaining an abstraction, the party would have to appear incarnate in the ideal man, and when he was discovered, all members would sacrifice personal ambition and accept his leadership. The party would support a federal type of government and establish liberty of worship. In formulating a program, González Prada is the soul of brevity:

A party cannot and should not be condemned to follow an invariable program and the strict creed of a religion; it is sufficient to establish some guideposts and to mark the course without fixing with precedence the number of steps. The Unión Nacional could condense its program in two lines: to evolve in the sense of the most ample liberty of the individual, preferring social reforms to political transformations.⁵⁹

The vagueness and imprecision of González Prada's political formulations are inconsistent with his pleas that Peru adopt the scientific method in all phases of national life. Despite his rejection of the mystical approach, his program seems to

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 23-31.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 31.

imply a dabitur vobis quality. In a very cogent analysis, Victor Andrés Belaúnde underlines the inherent weaknesses in González Prada's political modus operandi:

The prodigious writer, the incomparable political slanderer did not have a rich and fruitful ideology; he was neither a thinker nor a sociologist...Between the lines of the radical catechism there palpitates the ingenuous hope of the regeneration of Peru through the explosion of aggressive and destructive verbalism. How far are we today from thinking that sonorous clauses and lapidary phrases contain the secret of the country's salvation...The guideposts and the fundamental bases are the work of philosophy; the laborious steps are the preserve of politics. How to obtain the greatest liberty for the individual, with what organization, with what laws, with what pedagogical supervision, with what institutions? Only giving answers to these questions is it possible to form a political program. On the other hand, social reforms cannot be separated from political transformations, and much less in Peru where the state is all. 60

González Prada's direction of the Unión Nacional was as amorphous as the so-called program he formulated for it. Because of his literary reputation, young intellectuals, brimming with exuberance and ready to lend their aid to the ills of their country, hastened to join the party. Armando Bazán, Mariátegui's biographer, states the case well when he says that González Prada was completely bereft of attributes necessary for the effective politician. In his view, González Prada was a sentimentalist and a romanticist who, lacking a sense of history, desired to place Peru on a level with the great Western nations, totally ignoring the intermediary steps. He was found wanting in the realism of a politician, Bazán insists, who demands one hundred per cent but

⁶⁰Belaúnde, op. cit., pp. 45-48.

will work with the elements at his disposal, even if the returns are negligible, providing that there is hope of improvement. Optimistic and enthusiastic youth, according to Bazán, realizing the impossibility of formulating anything like a realistic program, joined forces with Fléröla and Leguía, effective and practical financiers who, despite their failures, impelled Peru towards the road of progress.⁶¹

Resigning from the Unión Nacional in 1902, González Prada became an island unto himself politically. His disenchantment with his former Unión Nacional associates was total; he regarded their participation in a political alliance as a betrayal of Unión Nacional principles.⁶² Subsequently, he adamantly refused offers to contest political offices, even that of the presidency, avowing that any venture in politics would be tantamount to compromising his integrity. The bitterness of this period was somewhat allayed by his devotion to his wife Adriana, his son Alfredo, his pet dog, and his books. More and more, he fell under the influence of the apolitical ideas of Reclus, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Tolstoy, and other proponents of an anarchistic form of society. This trend is apparent in El Intelectual y el Obrero, an address which he delivered to the bakers of Peru in 1905. Pointing out how their common interests override their differences and how they can complement each other in the quest for a better life,

⁶¹Bazán, op. cit., pp. 29-31.

⁶²González Prada, Horas de Lucha, pp. 353-356.

he asks them to unite in bringing about the revolution for justice. Chiding the intellectuals for their weak revolutionary spirit, he admonishes them not to regress to conservatism, as in the case of the French Revolution, but to allow the revolution to evolve to its conclusion. He exhorts them to be flexible so as to modify their thought systems in the light of new events and ideas. On the other hand, he perceives in the workers a new spirit, as the May Day celebrations bear witness, causing them to disdain the mere change of political personalities or even political systems, and to favor a complete revolution which would erase frontiers, suppress nationalities, and give everyone a fair share of earthly goods. Maintaining that the "greedy bourgeoisie" have always used force to guard their unjustly acquired property, he is now convinced that the workers will use the same force to eliminate exploitation. Arriving at the core of his address, González Prada reaches the height of abbreviated glory in giving what he calls his "luminous lesson" in two words: "Seamos justos."⁶³

This address has been hailed by Peruvian liberals as one of the great thrusts in the Latin American social evolution. It is said to be the inspiration of the Universidades Populares González Prada founded by Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre. Although it was new to Peru, the union of intellectuals and workers was not González Prada's original idea. As is apparent from his work,

⁶³For the text of the speech, see ibid., pp. 63-77.

González Prada was a prodigious reader and kept abreast of development throughout the world. What he proposed theoretically in Peru was being actually pursued by British and continental intellectuals in the labor movement. Perhaps González Prada would have accomplished much more if, like his European counterparts, he had worked within the context of existing Peruvian institutions. However, in the final analysis, considering the climate of opinion towards the working classes in Peru and the fact that a man of González Prada's literary reputation defended the cause of labor, his contribution in the awakening of social consciousness in that country must be taken as significant.

The "Intellectual and Worker" address with its accent on abandoning frontiers, discounting national origins, and an equal distribution of material goods marks the turning point in González Prada's ideological development. Henceforth, his writings display a total disapproval of all traditional institutions. Once being proud that he was a reserve officer in the Peruvian militia, he now scornfully rejects the conventional army, viewing it as a vicious corrupter of men: "The barracks has not been nor will it be a school of civilization. It is a piece of primitive jungle encrusted in the breasts of modern cities."⁶⁴ Casting the ultimate insult at the soldier, he regards him as being even more despicable than the cleric: "The friar gluts himself, drinks, gambles, and seduces women; the soldier commits not only similar

⁶⁴González Prada, Anarquía, p. 37.

deeds, but robs, burns, violates and murders."⁶⁵ This is not just a particular condemnation of the Peruvian military institution; he lumps Alexander, Caesar, and Napoleon with the frontier caudillos and condemns all military endeavor:

All military science is always reduced to the art of brutalizing and making men savage: to wish to civilize with the saber is the same consequently as to clean with soot or extinguish with sulphuric acid. ⁶⁶

González Prada's ideas of patriotism and the ideals that motivate nations undergo a radical change. Now he views nations, previously enjoying a sacred place in his esteem, in a different light: "Among the international fauna, all hands grasp and all jaws bite, even though the hand is called England and the jaw is called France."⁶⁷ He lashes out at the anarchists' trial in Chicago, declaring that it not only reflected the timidity of the Illinois capitalists but was a condemnation of North American judges.⁶⁸ Even the War of the Pacific begins to lose its old significance, since he regards wealth rather than countries as the demarcation line between peoples. Taking exception to Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna's statement that the rotos were thieves and murderers, he insists that the Chilean bourgeoisie were the real murderers, thieves, and instigators of the war, and recommends that enemy armies forget the farce of patriotism and turn their

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 36.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 38.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 125.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 97.

guns on those behind them.⁶⁹

Going far beyond the theme of subverted patriotism, González Prada attacks the concept of the national state. In his analysis, classical Rome developed the God-State and medieval Rome the Church-State, both of which underlie the structure of the modern state and cancel out the rights and dignity of the individual. He regards the modern statesman as a Duns Scotus who, through conceptual trickery, maintains the supremacy of the state which is nothing more than an abstraction. This abstraction is embodied in certain persons who take possession of us from the cradle and oppress and exploit us during our entire lives.⁷⁰ Condemning the idea of the state as one great being with persons as mere parts, he holds that such a conception, because of the division of labor, divides individuals into noble and vile parts of the body politic. Conceding that man is social by nature, he nevertheless objects to the submission of the individual to parliamentary or popular majorities, or being forced to render service to one country.⁷¹ In regard to the distribution of goods, González Prada argues that the sharing of a common nature dictates the levelling of ownership. Therefore, if his work does not provide him with the means of enjoying a full life, the individual should appropriate the surplus and superfluous goods of the wealthy.⁷²

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 109.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 114.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 114-115.

⁷²Ibid., p. 116.

Despite oversimplification, González Prada displays a perceptive view of the theory of statehood generally accepted in his age. The powerful European nations maintained colonial empires which were regarded in terms of what they could contribute to national power and prestige rather than the good that would accrue to the individual in either the nation or the colony. Also, one must admire his humanistic view of the dignity of man and his insistence on the right of the individual to a just share of earthly goods. However, he again demonstrates his proneness to ignore workable solutions within existing institutions. While he was conceiving his vague theories, many intellectuals and politicians were striving to implement graduated income tax systems, compensation laws, and other welfare programs in other countries, utilizing moral, social and political pressure. Such methods were too prosaic for González Prada. He wanted nothing less than the complete repudiation of the political and legal institutions that had been developing since the dawn of history--anarchy.

In defining anarchy, González Prada uses his familiar capsule formula: "The anarchic ideal can be summed up in two lines: the unlimited liberty and the greatest possible well-being of the individual, with the abolition of the state and of private property."⁷³ Contending that anarchy is superior to Christianity because it is based solely on brotherly justice, he says that the true anarchist "rejects charity as a hypocritical falsification,

⁷³Ibid., p. 12.

as a bloody irony, as the infamous and vexatious gift of the usurper to the usurped."⁷⁴ He denies laws, religions, nationalities and the authority and obedience that they imply, so as to recognize only one jurisdiction--that of the individual.⁷⁵ Taking a rather deterministic view of history, which seems out of character for him, in view of his denunciation of evil men, he regards all scientific, political, social and religious experience, including the Jesuit casuistic theory on tyrannicide, as inevitably leading to an anarchic structure of society.⁷⁶

As to the manner in which anarchic society will become a reality, González Prada dismisses either a moral regeneration in the oppressors or a concerted effort by the masses to eliminate their oppressors. Rather, it will come about through an extended series of victories and setbacks, through the ideas of the intellectuals and the action of groups in scattered areas of the world.⁷⁷ He emphasizes the necessity of fostering an adult education program among the workers, elucidating general principles rather than a scholarly exposition. He contends that without educating the multitudes, a social revolution cannot be achieved, for the workers must be conscious of the ends of a revolution.⁷⁸

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 13.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 19.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 19-20.

Warning that the emergence of a dominant class precludes the harmonious arrangement of individual interests demanded by an anarchic society, González Prada says that even the proletariat must avoid this temptation in the ensuing class struggle.⁷⁹ In his view, the bourgeoisie, with their exaggerated attachment to property, are the barrier to progress. He accuses them of distorting the social aims of society: "The excessive rigor of punishment assigned for crimes against property reveals who animate the spirit of the code."⁸⁰ It is precisely in the most advanced bourgeois societies of Europe and North America, however, that he expects anarchy to flourish because "where political and civil laws are assured by law and custom, social questions arise as a consequence of social evolution."⁸¹

In regard to the administration of property which is the touchstone of any ideological system, González Prada deals with the issue in negative explanations and vague generalizations. While admitting that anarchy is interested in the harmonious arrangement of property, he adds that it does not consider the evolution of history as a series of economic struggles.⁸² Accepting the proposition that property is a social function rather than a subjective right, he admits that he is at a loss as to how this

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 22.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Ibid., p. 23.

function should be exercised. Branding the notion of apportioning Rockefeller's fortune among the proletariat as a misconception of anarchy, he says that such a disposition of property would result in "the momentary advantage to the individual of what belongs to the collectivity."⁸³

González Prada seems to be using a modified form of the Marxist dialectic when he refers to the inevitable struggle of the classes, but with the difference that the proletariat would not be the predominant class. Actually, he does not refer or even allude to Karl Marx in his exposition of anarchy. This is understandable in view of his rejection of the economic interpretation of history. As a matter of fact, González Prada considers anarchy and any type of socialism as irreconcilable: "Socialism in any of its multiple forms is aggressive and regulatory, differentiating itself from anarchy which is amply free and rejects all regimentation or the subjecting of the individual to the laws of the greater number."⁸⁴

González Prada regards religion and politics as contradicting the anarchic ideal, since both involve the exercise of authority. Vehemently rejecting all forms of authority, he says: "Nothing corrupts or vitiates so much as the exercise of power, however momentary or reduced it may be."⁸⁵ On the basis of this

⁸³Ibid., p. 24.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 30.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 27.

assumption, he condemns all governments and advocates their overthrow:

Given the general inclination of men towards the abuse of power, every government is bad and every authority desires to be a tyranny, as every law is translated by the sanction of inveterate abuses. To combat forms of government, authorities, and laws, the liberator, in rising to dissolve political force, levels the road for revolution.⁸⁶

The most remarkable feature of González Prada's ideological formulation is that while he rejects authority, he insists on the use of force in the forging of an anarchical system: "If force destroys injustices, it also serves to vindicate rights. All privileges and abuses are based on force; with force they have to be destroyed."⁸⁷ In suggesting a way in which the oppressed might alter their state, he clearly indicates that he is not unsympathetic to the use of this force in its most elementary form: "If they had a sudden burst of energy, if they gave a few blows with the pick and the axe, it would not be long before the edifice of all abuses and injustices would come tumbling to the ground."⁸⁸ It is difficult to envision the intelligent use of force in society without corresponding authority. Rather than resolving this problem, González Prada is simply proposing a transfer of authority: he would give to the wielders of the pick and the axe what he wants taken away from the manipulators of the

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 27.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 125.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 126.

congress and the pulpit. Actually, by advocating the use of force in the ordering of society, he is undermining the cornerstone--the abolition of authority--on which the anarchical system is based. Considering his deep-seated distrust of every manifestation of authority, anarcho-pacifism would seem to be a more logically consistent ideology than that which he is proposing. Ignoring the seemingly contradictory aspects of his system, he provides the usual vague formula to solve all problems: "With the exception of a few refractory persons, perverse by nature and more sick than delinquent, the human species is educable and corrigible."⁸⁹ Such an optimistic outlook on the human race is to be commended. However, it is difficult to reconcile this optimism with his frequent denunciation of persons, classes, and even nations.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 117.

CHAPTER V

González Prada's Influence

In a stinging analysis of Peruvian pensadores, Daválos y Lissón draws a picture which faithfully reflects the image of González Prada, with the exception of the references to moral integrity and rectitude:

There is in our best thinkers a great store of wisdom, profundity in concept, order, clarity and brilliance in idea and conception, but they lack the power of analysis, moral integrity, rectitude and, sometimes, nobleness. The contradictions of life irritate them. Few there are who regard with benevolent indulgence, with a sense of grief, the fall of others, their vices and defects. It is very common to become enraged, to threaten flight and actually abandon everything when reverses multiply. They all know the inefficacy of individual action in an adverse atmosphere; and, nevertheless, nobody furnishes the means to form a collective conscience endowed with a healthy spirit and a fruitful solidarity. The future causes unrest and sadness, the past regret and scorn, there being few whose soul remains serene before the disaster and who do not scold the misfortunes of wounded sentiment. ¹

After a cursory examination of González Prada, one might be tempted to give a quick amen to Daválos y Lissón's analysis, accepting it as a definitive estimate of the man and his works. After all, his literary output, quantitatively speaking, was rather small, especially in view of the talent which he possessed. Furthermore, his social and political commentaries were mainly

¹Daválos y Lissón, op. cit., II, p. 385.

negative in character and frequently displayed the most callous form of vituperation. The positive content of his work ranged from vague generalizations of Unión Nacional policy to murky pronouncements on the goals of anarchical society, patently demonstrating his inability to formulate a practical politico-economic plan which would extricate Peru from her difficulties. His association with the Unión Nacional underlined his lack of leadership qualities. It is true that he devoted the last six years of his life to the Biblioteca Nacional, but this did not significantly affect the national life of Peru. On the basis of these considerations, one might write him off as a Peruvian H. L. Mencken who entertained the people of his period with witty remarks and cynical observations, but having no enduring influence on the Peruvian nation. Such an interpretation would be an incorrect evaluation of the man and his works.

González Prada himself readily admitted that his works had a negative content. As noted earlier, his thesis was that before anything of a positive nature could be accomplished, the evils afflicting Peruvian society had to be examined, condemned and expunged. What were the merits of this approach? Considering the sad social conditions of Peru, the psychology of its people and the particular talents of González Prada, this approach seems to have been the most fruitful course of action. As observers indicate, apart from the select few, Peruvians lived in conditions ranging from scratching penury to intolerable wretchedness. Making the situation more discouraging they seemed to

accept their lot. The need for a social prophet was urgent. To have any impact, however, this man's message would have to be clothed in eloquence. Like all peoples, and perhaps more than most peoples, Peruvians love beautifully expressed thoughts. As mentioned earlier, Daválos y Lissón says that they will even sacrifice thought content for form. González Prada was peculiarly equipped for the mission. Gifted with biting wit and a mastery of language, he could phrase a thought into a trenchant sentence which had the quality of an aphorism about it. Recognized as a poet of unusual ability, he could employ this talent in his attacks with bludgeoning effect, as he did in his collection of anti-clerical verses entitled Presbiterianas. Like the prophets of the Old Testament, Gonzalez Prada pursued an essentially denunciatory approach to remedy the evils of his homeland, sparing neither president nor peon from censure when he thought that the occasion demanded it. That he was heard is entirely beyond doubt; that he was heeded is another question.

It is very difficult to measure the accomplishments and estimate the influence of a man like Gonzalez Prada who, although keenly interested in, and dedicated to, the betterment of society, was engaged in the realm of ideas rather than deeds. One method is to survey evaluations of him made by his peers or fellow pensadores; another is to appraise the progress or evolution of his ideas in his spiritual heirs. Both methods will be employed here.

Rufino Blanco-Fombona regards Gonzalez Prada's appearance on the stage of Peruvian life as the transcendent event of the

nineteenth century in that country. Previously, life in Peru flowed with the ease of a meadow stream, unperturbed by considerations which propelled a country like Chile to adopt Spartan measures to achieve a position of distinction in the ranks of the newly formed nations. Blessed with a mild climate, bountiful natural resources and centuries of development under the Spanish regime, Peru, and especially Lima, emanated an aura of security. Blanco-Fombona says that both Alexander von Humboldt and José Hipólito Unánue were of the opinion that even the dogs in Lima possessed a gentle nature.² In Blanco-Fombona's view, such a languid environment did not make for virile leadership or an independent literary tradition. Referring to the time between 1821 and 1879 as "a half century of organized disorder," he says that not even Castilla could be compared with Portales, Mosquera or Juárez.³ Treating Peru's literary accomplishments with the same contempt, he dismisses its greatest man of letters, Ricardo Palma, as a product of a servile spirit, traditionalism, Hispanicism and colonialism.⁴

Attributing a kind of Promethean character to González Prada, Blanco-Fombona regards him as being primarily responsible for bringing about a new era in Peru through his literary and

²Rufino Blanco-Fombona, Grandes Escritores de America, Siglo XIX (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1917), p. 270.

³Ibid., p. 291.

⁴Ibid., p. 283.

social ideas. Classifying González Prada as a social philosopher rather than a speculative thinker, he further specifies his role in Peruvian national life with the assistance of medical and chemical metaphors: "His vigorous social function was not that of a critic but a reagent. He would not only be a cautery against gangerine but a conductor of energies."⁵ Describing González Prada as an atheistic idealist with a strong positivist base, a man who combined experiential knowledge with scientific and philosophical concepts, Blanco-Fombona says that he was able to conceive advances in reality because of this combination of qualities and his desire to make the world a more humane place. Blanco-Fombona's essential definition of González Prada is "a sower of ideals, an apostle of good."⁶

Carlos Fernández Sessarego is as eulogistic as Blanco-Fombona in his assessment of González Prada. However, he catches the essence of González Prada when he says that he looked at reality not as a politician but as an artist, and that his presentation of reality was not in the phraseology of the economist, the statesman or the sociologist, but in literary phrases, elegant and concise, and replete with rhetoric. Like Blanco-Fombona, Fernández Sessarego views him as fashioning a new way of life in Peru: "He is the indefatigable mason who, by word and examples, constructs, builds, raises a whole new national structure."⁷

⁵Ibid., p. 296.

⁶Ibid., p. 307.

⁷Fernández Sessarego, op. cit., p. 21.

Arturo Torres Rioseco, chiefly concerned with the literary aspects of González Prada's life, is carried away on the crest of a laudatory wave and sums up his life in this manner:

He stands out in the mire and the night of America like a rebellious oak tree assailed by a hundred tempests. He denies, he strikes, he destroys, but the searching eye can find beneath such violence and zeal a depth of optimism. And he possesses extraordinary courage. He equates life with thought, he sacrifices himself for his ideal...He is the most eminent example of manhood we have. Few men can look him in the face without feeling the shame of being so distant from his nobility. 8

Jorge Mañach, in a very perceptive analysis of González Prada, makes the statement that he was the greatest Peruvian writer of the nineteenth century, but with this qualification: "His writings leave us enriched, but not changed."⁹ He says that like Sarmiento, Martí, Montalvo and other Latin American writers, González Prada was more a great man who wrote than a great writer; that like the others, if taken away from his historical circumstances, he suffers a reduction in size. He considers González Prada's great work as attempting to form a Peruvian conscience. This explains his becoming an agitator, a man who used ideas as weapons of combat and not as instruments of investigation. The chief weapons in this arsenal were Irredentism fed on rancor towards Chile, the challenge to cast off the spirit of servitude,

⁸ Arturo Torres Rioseco, "Apuntes sobre el estilo y el carácter," González Prada: Vida y Obra (New York: Instituto de las Españas, 1938), p. 29.

⁹ Jorge Mañach, "La Obra: Ideas y Estética," González Prada: Vida y Obra (New York: Instituto de las Españas, 1938), p. 16.

and nativism.¹⁰ Mañach regards González Prada as being the personification of what he preached, casting aside personal temptations and attractive tangents which would have diverted a person of lesser dedication.¹¹

Mañach concedes a role to French positivism in González Prada's intellectual formation, but he contends that he was closer to eighteenth century rationalism because of his faith in reason, his anti-clericalism and his intolerance which at times was unintelligent. Comparing González Prada with a prêtre manqué, Mañach maintains that within him was a smothered religiosity which engendered a mysticism centering on certitude. This mysticism was not based on passionate conviction, but on his deep-seated insecurity which he tried to offset with attitudes of absolute affirmation. Mañach is of the opinion that this desperate passion for rational security restricted his poetic sensibilities.¹²

Summing up his judgments and impressions, Mañach concludes that in spite of his rigoristic doctrine and his singular delays, González Prada was one of the most agile spirits that America has ever produced, capable of leaping ahead in time and space as well as living a life of inconformity in any given situation. In regard to his influence, Mañach offers this comment:

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 18-20.

¹¹Ibid., p. 20.

¹²Ibid., pp. 23-25.

Peru could never understand or follow him perfectly in life. His voice could never find an echo except in the ambit of posterity. Sacrificing esthetic sensibility to moral duty, the individual to the public, he achieved a mastery in austerity and integrity, and lived and died in constant vigil, marking the roads over which today the filial generation of his rebellion marches. ¹³

Victor Andrés Belaúnde who, as indicated earlier, has grave misgivings about González Prada's philosophy, social outlook and methods of approach, nevertheless, concedes that there were some admirable facets in the man and his works. He says that even those most opposed to his radical solutions had to admire "the beauty of his style, the vigor of his apostrophes and the incomparable mastery of his attacks."¹⁴ Appraising González Prada's political thought and objectives, Belaúnde says:

The radical movement neither formulated a scientific program nor indicated concrete solutions; but it represented a sincere desire for progress, and, above all, a lively and acid zeal for the liberty of thought and for the liberty of word, sustaining a counterpoising force to conservative dogmatism and governmental authoritarianism.¹⁵

Classifying González Prada as a combative writer with only Juan Montalvo, the Ecuadorian writer, as his rival, Belaúnde seeks to trace the threads that made up the complex fabric of his being:

Within the same spiritual context of this colossal personality there were united opposing faculties: the polemicist who knew how to arouse the masses, chisel a

¹³Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁴Victor Andrés Belaúnde, "González Prada, escritor de combate," Mercurio Peruano, I (1918), p. 65.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 66.

rondel and write a rhyme. In his spirit were united force and fineness. As in all sublime figures, the claws of the lion knew how to imprison roses. 16

Jorge Basadre, in an effort to interpret González Prada, offers a rather complicated analysis. On the basis of his exaggerated patriotism, his anti-clericalism and his absolute faith in science, all of which are bourgeois traits, González Prada's mentality was essentially bourgeois. Flawing his serene bourgeois existence, however, was a resentment stemming from a deeply established consciousness of inferiority or impotency which was the result of a diffuse interior uneasiness. This resentment impelled him to apostatize his bourgeois values, and, as a true apostate, he devoted his energies to cursing the old faith rather than practicing the new. Related to this resentment was a snob mentality--a psychological state in which the subject desires notoriety because of his fundamental opposition to the social order--which induced in him the urge to reject his ancestors, his descendents, and his country, and even engendered a desire for suicide. He expressed this suicidal desire by embracing anarchy as directly opposed to socialism. Anarchy is essentially a negative protest against the transforming character of capitalism and is espoused by those who have been uprooted in the process of forming new social patterns, especially persons of the decadent bourgeoisie. Socialism, on the other hand, seeks to incorporate all positive aspects into its system, and even has an admiration

¹⁶Ibid., p. 69.

for the creativity of capitalism which it intends to transform. González Prada's inflexible comportment concerning dress, schedules, hobbies and habits of life, and his last years as a bureaucrat in the Biblioteca Nacional further accentuated his bourgeois mentality. A true revolutionary would not have enslaved himself to such a rigid code of behavior.

In this assessment, Basadre contends that resentment, snobbishness, anarchy, anticlericalism, bureaucracy and simplicity of life can produce superior types as well as monstrosities, and that González Prada must be included in the former category. In Basadre's view, González Prada bequeathed to posterity the gifts of purity and beauty, the former manifested in his moral life and the latter in his literary works. Basadre argues that in view of the colonial ethos permeating González Prada's milieu, his expression of bourgeois discontent was a bold and revolutionary undertaking. However, he says that if this spirit of colonialism had been less pervasive, perhaps González Prada's reaction would not have been so caustic and aggressive. As to González Prada's influence, Basadre considers the colonial mentality as being so impregnable that it impeded an immediate repercussion from his ideas and works.¹⁷

With anticlericalism and, in fact, a general attack on religion assuming such a prominent role in the works of González

¹⁷For an elaboration of this analysis, see Basadre, Peru: Problema y Posibilidad, pp. 156-168.

Prada, one wonders whether this helped or hindered the cause of justice. As indicated earlier, Belaúnde regarded his antireligious attacks, if actually implemented, as a means of nurturing a more rigidly entrenched form of clericalism. Dora Mayer de Zulen, a woman who dedicated her life to the Indian cause, considered this assault on religion as not only superfluous but harmful. She maintained that rationalism had undermined the structure of Catholicism even before pensadores such as Vigil and González Prada initiated their campaign, and that these attacks degenerated into a fanaticism which negated to a certain extent the constructive features of their struggle for justice.¹⁸

An attempt has been made here to present a cross section of evaluation of the life and work of González Prada. As is evident from the summarization and excerpts, from the outright adulation of Blanco-Fombona and Torres Rioseco to the guarded statements of Belaúnde and Basadre, these men recognize a greatness of being in González Prada. In the final analysis, then, personal integrity was the mainspring of González Prada's influence. Divorced from this integrity, his literary works and social thought would, most probably, have lost their efficacy.

Working on the assumption that good is diffusive of itself, the acid test of true greatness is the influence that it

¹⁸Robert Edwards McNicoll, "Intellectual Origins of Aprismo," Hispanic American Historical Review, XXIII (August, 1943), p. 427, citing Dora Mayer de Zulen, El desarrollo de las ideas avanzadas en el Peru, p. 10.

eventually exercises on people and conditions in a given area. A positive judgment seems to be in order on González Prada in this regard. His ideas and manner of life are best exemplified in Clorinda Matto de Turner, José Carlos Mariátegui and Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre. These three persons, in one way or another, took his basic ideas, developed them, co-ordinated them with other ideas, and made them vital realities in Peruvian life. They also displayed the same dedication and singleness of purpose towards dispossessed Peruvians that distinguished González Prada from most of his contemporaries during his life time. Therefore, a brief examination of the life and work of each of these persons is central to an evaluation of González Prada, for they carried on and broadened the revolution begun by him.

Clorinda Matto was born on November 11, 1854, in Paullu, in the province of Calca, about twenty miles from Cuzco. Her parents were Román Matto and Grimonesa Usindavoros, both of Spanish extraction. After completing her education at the Colegio de Educados, she married the Englishman Joseph Turner in 1872. In Cuzco she became associated with a group of novelists and poets, chief among whom were Narciso Aristégui and Abraham Vizcarra, and collaborated with the latter in editing El Pensamiento, a literary novel.¹⁹ This association with Cuzco and its writers was an important factor in literary and social development. Just

¹⁹Alfredo Yopez Miranda wrote an introduction to, and a critical judgment on, Aves sin Nido, see Matto de Turner, op. cit., p. xviii.

as Lima has always been a city with a Spanish heritage, Cuzco has always been identified with Inca culture, so it is not surprising to find a keener appreciation of the Indian character and a greater awareness of the problems facing the Indian in the works of writers from Cuzco.

Moving to Lima, Clorinda Matto de Turner joined the Cir-clo Literario of which González Prada was president. In 1889 she published her novel Aves sin Nido and dedicated it to González Prada. This novel catapulted her to the forefront of the Indianist movement and assigned her a permanent niche in the pantheon of the champions of the Indian cause.

If Aves sin Nido were judged solely on its literary merits, it would receive secondary attention. Perhaps its most glaring fault is lack of character delineation; for the most part, the protagonists do not seem to relate to reality. The author is too moralistic in her condemnation of vice and employs a very didactic manner in presenting the latest findings in science. On the whole, the novel has the wooden movement of an old movie serial with one contrived incident following the other. Francisco García Calderón summarizes Matto de Turner's literary contribution in this manner: "Clorinda Matto de Turner, who would not be remembered if she had not written Aves sin Nido, an acceptable novel, published in two series of Tradiciones Cuzcuenas."²⁰

²⁰ Ibid., pp. xix-xx, quoting Francisco García Calderón, Del Romanticismo al Modernismo (Paris, 1910).

Aves sin Nido, despite its shortcomings, was a milestone in the literary history of Peru. Previously, Peruvian novelists adhered to the romantic formula; here the author directly relates her artistic conception to conditions actually existing in Peru. This realistic approach established important precedents in the history of the Peruvian novel. It was the first time that the Indian problem appeared as the central theme. It also marks the first real attack on the clergy and the abuses which the Church tolerated. For this feature in her novel, she was excommunicated from the Church. As Concha Meléndez observes, what gives the novel enduring importance is that it is the first portrayal of the interaction of Indian life with the other components of Peruvian society.²¹

González Prada's influence on Clorinda Matto de Turner is obvious in Aves sin Nido. González Prada stated and often reiterated that Peruvian writers had to break away from the romantic tradition and address themselves directly to the problems that affected the nation before they could fulfill themselves as persons or contribute anything of value to Peru. In its realistic presentation of the Indian problem, Aves sin Nido is an exemplification of what González Prada was preaching. Like González Prada who viewed the Indian as being victimized by "the brutalizing trinity of the gobernador, the juez de paz and the cura,"

²¹Concha Meléndez, La Novela Indianista en Hispanoamérica (Madrid: Imprenta de la Librería y Casa Editorial Hernández, 1934), p. 176.

Clorinda Matto de Turner presents Sebastián Pancorbo, Estéfano Benítez and Padre Pascual Vargas who deny the least vestige of personal dignity to the Indian and strive to maintain their wicked hegemony even at the price of murder. In his Politeama address which he delivered in 1888, González Prada maintained that education was the solution to the Indian problem. Clorinda Matto de Turner, in commenting on the savagery and injustice of Killac, says that like other towns and villages in the sierra district, its sad condition results from the lack of schools.²² González Prada declared that Peruvians accomplished in the heart of the Indian what was seldom realized in a human being--the death of hope. One finds the same black depression in Aves sin Nido:

Martina says: "We were born Indians, slaves of the cura, slaves of the gobernador, slaves of the cacique, slaves of all who seize the staff of authority."

Isidro replies: "Indians, yes! Death is our sweet hope of liberty." ²³

On one point on the negative side, Clorinda Matto de Turner bears a striking resemblance to González Prada. Although she is a stout defender of the Indian cause and pays tribute to some aspects of Indian culture, she betrays an ingrained racist attitude in the presenting of her thesis: non-nordic physical characteristics are identified with evil. The leading villain, Padre Pascual, is short of stature, has dark skin, small, dark eyes, a fleshy nose, thick lips and a sparse growth of beard. The

²²Matto de Turner, op. cit., p. 66.

²³Ibid., p. 248.

virtuous defender of the Indians, Fernando Marín, on the other hand, is tall, has white skin, green eyes and a finely chiseled nose. Then there is Margarita, the incarnation of beauty, who is obviously indebted to her white father, Bishop Pedro de Miranda y Claro, for her unique physical attributes.

The role of the clergy in society is a point of divergence between Clorinda Matto de Turner and González Prada. Although she paints Padre Pascual in the most distressing color, she hastens to demonstrate that clerics can be a definite influence for good in their milieu. After her unpleasant encounter with Padre Pascual, Lucia de Marín recalls to mind priests who were imbued with a deep sense of Christian charity and social consciousness; always solicitous towards the needs of the poor and upright in their personal habits, these men helped to mitigate the sting of cruel social conditions.²⁴ In contrast to González Prada, she always displays a sense of sympathy. Even in the case of Padre Pascual's moral depravity, she points to the law of celibacy as being an extenuating circumstance.

The absolute application of the clerical law of celibacy is a major issue in Aves sin Nido. As is obvious, the sad social consequences of this law are central to the construction of the story. Since this law is not of divine origin and on the basis of the checkered history of its strict observance among Peruvian clerics, Clorinda Matto de Turner seriously questions the validity

²⁴Ibid., p. 50.

of the unlimited application of the law. This always being an extremely sensitive issue for Church authorities, perhaps her attitude towards the law was a major determination in her excommunication process.

Despite its literary shortcomings, Aves sin Nido depicts in a graphic manner the terrible plight of the Indian. After reading this novel, González Prada made the often quoted statement that the Indian problem was social and economic rather than pedagogical.²⁵ It has often been referred to as the Latin American counterpart to Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin. Harriet Beecher Stowe is sometimes credited with galvanizing the American nation to state of action where the acquiring of theoretical liberty became a reality for the Negro. Clorinda Matto de Turner began the much more difficult task of translating the theoretical liberty which the Indian already possessed into practical consequences, thus enabling him to enjoy complete social and economic equality. The difficulties involved in such an undertaking are underlined by the slow pace of a similar endeavor in the United States, a country which has much better structuralized form of society than Peru. In evaluating individual contribution in such an effort, one is generally faced with the fact that the obtaining of civil rights is a cumulative effort and does not lend itself readily to mathematical analysis. Keeping in mind, however, that the obtaining of equality for the Peruvian Indian

²⁵Ibid., p. ix.

is a long-range process involving the transformation of economic, social and racial attitudes, the early efforts of Clorinda Matto de Turner, and, consequently, the inspiration that she received from her mentor, González Prada, must be accorded an important place in Peruvian social history.

Clorinda Matto de Turner concentrated on one facet of Gonzalez Prada's social thought--Indianism. There are implicit answers such as education, equitable market procedures, a balanced diet, improved transportation and a rededication of the Church to the Indian cause in her presentation of the Indian question, but these ideas are not developed to any degree. This is understandable in view of the fact that her approach was the protesting novel which precluded the systematic exposition and development of ideas.

José Carlos Mariátegui, the most illustrious social thinker of the next generation, not only treated all of the ideas introduced by González Prada, but applied in their treatment a passion for facts, a power of analysis, and a precision of statement--a combination of qualities not intensively cultivated by González Prada.

José Carlos Mariátegui, the second child of Jose Francisco Mariátegui and María Amalia La Chira, was born in Huacho on June 14, 1895. He was a mestizo of Basque-Indian extraction. The circumstances surrounding his family life differed greatly from those of González Prada in that he had no illustrious family background, suffered from tuberculosis and a severe knee condition,

was the victim of a broken home and had to begin working at the age of twelve to help his mother support the family.²⁶ Gifted with exceptional intelligence, at the age of sixteen he could correct the mistakes in spelling and syntax of famous Peruvian writers whose works he handled at the La Prensa press.²⁷

Although reared in a fervent religious atmosphere and devoutly practising his Catholic faith, Mariátegui associated with a group of radicals which included Abraham Valdelomar, César Falcón, César Vallejo and Percy Gibson Moller, and embarked on a number of publishing ventures with one or the other of this group. More interested in worker-intellectual collaboration than affiliating with a political party, Mariátegui gave enthusiastic support to the general strike in Lima, in 1919, in his publication La Razon. The Archbishop of Lima, who looked upon the labor uprising with great disfavor, refused Mariátegui the use of his press which, until then, had been used for printing La Razon.²⁸ Shortly afterwards, offered a scholarship to Europe by President Leguía, Mariátegui accepted it and departed to Europe. The acceptance of this scholarship has always been a blot on an otherwise idealistic image.²⁹

²⁶Bazán, op. cit., p. 40.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Chang-Rodríguez, op. cit., p. 137.

²⁹Alberto Baeza Flores, Haya de la Torre y La Revolucion Constructiva de la Americas (Buenos Aires: Editorial Claridad, 1962), p. 62.

For Mariátegui, the four-year stay in Europe was a profound intellectual experience. He spent most of his time in Italy where he married an Italian girl Ana Chiappe. He visited Germany and France, and in the latter country had a conference with the French communist leader, Henri Barbusse, a man whom he greatly admired.³⁰ In Italy he became acquainted with many intellectuals and politicians, some of whom were Benedetto Croce, Giovanni Papini, Don Luigi Sturzo and Georges Sorel. Perhaps his most memorable acquaintance was with Maxim Gorki who made a deep impression on him.³¹ While in Europe he devoted himself to the study of agrarian reform, spending much time on the works of Marx, Lenin and Henry George. This European experience would be a powerful influence on Mariátegui's thought and action in the ensuing years.

Returning from Europe in 1923, Mariátegui renewed his socialistic ties. He joined forces with Haya de la Torre, assuming the editorship of Claridad, the journal of the Universidades Populares Gonzalez Prada and giving lectures at the above-mentioned institution.³² He became a member of the Apra movement in 1926, and about the same time founded Amauta, a periodical dedicated to the cause of Indianism and the dissemination of socialistic ideals. With Haya de la Torre in exile, Mariátegui was the

³⁰Manuel Moreno Sánchez, José Carlos Mariátegui (Mexico: Imprenta Universitaria, 1937), pp. 51-52.

³¹Ibid., pp. 60-63.

³²Chang-Rodríguez, op. cit., p. 141.

most prestigious radical in Peru. In 1928, Haya de la Torre, still in exile, decided that the Peruvian Apra movement should assume a political role. Mariátegui vigorously opposed the formation of a political party. Like González Prada, he wanted the movement to confine its action to a worker-intellectual union, and using the Marxian dialectical process, formulate a type of socialism adapted to Peruvian conditions. Haya de la Torre's view prevailed. This led to a rupture in their friendship. In a letter protesting Aprista propaganda, Mariátegui declared: "It belongs to the most detestable literature of the old regime--Creole demagoguery. The word socialism was not even used once." Haya de la Torre replied:

I observe that you are infected with tropical demagoguery, with absurd, lamentable sentimentalism. You are filled with Europeanism...Recapture reality and try to ally yourself not with revolutionary Europe but with revolutionary America. 33

Breaking away from the Peruvian Aprista movement which he, mainly, had organized, Mariátegui, pressured by extremists, founded the Partido Socialiste Peruana in 1928. Harry Kantor states that this party was affiliated with the Third International.³⁴ Chang-Rodríguez differs. According to his version, Mariátegui opposed the idea of a party including only the proletariat; he organized his Partido Socialista on a worker-farmer

³³Bazán, op. cit., p. 112.

³⁴Harry Kantor, The Ideology and Program of the Peruvian Aprista Movement (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1953), p. 12.

base. Mariátegui sent a representation to the first Latin American Communist Conference, held in Buenos Aires in 1929, to explain the program of the Partido Socialista. Communist authorities condemned this program. His leg being amputated and his health steadily deteriorating, Mariátegui died in 1930. A month after his death, a communist element in his party changed its name to the Partido Comunista de Peru.³⁵

Unlike the disorganized presentation of González Prada's social thought, Mariátegui's main views and ideas are systematically set forth in two volumes. In La Escena Contemporaneo, published in 1925, the product of his four years of residence in Europe, Mariátegui examines the post-war world: he analyzes the ideas and principles of political movements, statesmen and political theoreticians, always from the Marxist dialectical viewpoint. In Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana, published in 1928, using the same Marxist dialectical approach, he analyzes the economic, social, institutional and cultural phases of Peruvian life and proposes solutions in keeping with ideological orientation. An attempt will be made to present the more important views and ideas contained in these books.

Living in Italy during the infant years of fascism, Mariátegui had definite views on this ideology and the man behind it. Regarding fascism as reactionary and counter-revolutionary, he contends that it owed its growth to bourgeois fear of revolu-

³⁵Chang-Rodríguez, op. cit., p. 166.

tion and post-war unrest. To combat revolutionary mysticism, fascism would generate a nationalistic mysticism, whereas liberalism would use the weapons of criticism, skepticism and rationalism. With such dependence on the tools of reason, Mariátegui predicted the demise of Italian liberalism.³⁶ He regarded Mussolini as an extremist and an activist without theory or philosophy but strong in sentiment and passion.³⁷

Maintaining that democracy was in a critical condition in Europe, he charges Woodrow Wilson with the major culpability. He views Wilson's fourteen-point program as the best weapon that the allies had in wartime, but it proved to be sterile during peace negotiations. In sum, according to Mariátegui, Wilson was not the creator of a new ideology, but the frustrated renovator of the old bourgeois ideology.³⁸

The League of Nations, in Mariátegui's view, was doomed to failure for the reason that it had to balance bourgeois nationalism with humanistic internationalism. The most anomalous feature of the bourgeois state, in his opinion, is that while its politics is nationalistic, its economy is international.³⁹

Mariátegui had a deep admiration for the British way of

³⁶José Carlos Mariátegui, La Escena Contemporanea (Lima: Editorial Minerva, 1926), pp. 36-37.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 12-13.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 45-50.

³⁹Ibid., p. 54.

life, and, particularly, for its freedom of speech. He regards Great Britain as the seat of capitalistic civilization where the forces of Protestantism, capitalism and liberalism conjoined and eventually produced the most perfect form of bourgeois democracy. However, for Mariátegui, the movement of history towards socialism is irreversible. With the historical dialectic always operative, the Conservatives and the Liberals clashed and polarized, the latter usually espousing some new humanitarian cause. However, when the workers realized their independence and the Labor Party was formed, the Liberal Party concluded its historical role. The conflict between conservative and revolutionary ideology rejects a third ideology.⁴⁰

The election of Calvin Coolidge, in Mariátegui's view, was a confirmation of "Yankee Imperialism." He regards the United States as both a democracy and empire, but more an empire than a democracy. Owner of half the world's gold, she wishes to increase this amount. Not being able to develop anymore in her own colonies, North American capitalism must expand her dominions. Making one of his few facetious remarks, Mariátegui calls Wilson the Word and Coolidge the Silence and says that although the word is loved, silence is respected, adding: "Moreover, silence is golden. And this explains his prestige in the United States."⁴¹

Mariátegui greatly respected Leon Trotsky, and admired

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 63-69.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 104.

his organizational ability and thought. He enthusiastically accepted Trotsky's theory of the ends of production: that in contrast to the bourgeois profit and savings view of production, the true revolutionary ideal would be to regulate production so as to answer human needs and remove economic anxieties.⁴²

One of Mariátegui's great experiences in Europe was his encounter with Maxim Gorki. With obvious delight, he recounts his conversation with the Russian author. Mariátegui shows intense interest in one aspect of Gorki's thought: the role of the farmer in the Russian Revolution. Gorki contended that the farmer was the implacable enemy of the revolution. The Russian Revolution owed its success to the urban proletariat; the farmer supported it only to acquire land. Gorki saw little prospect of the farmer exchanging his selfish and sordid psychology for the altruistic ideology of the urban worker. He held that the city has always been the center of civilization. This farmer mentality, he maintained, extended to the rural aristocrat in contrast to the industrialist or banker who was always inclined to compromise and work out agreements with the revolution. In view of the Peruvian latifundia problem, it is not surprising to find that Mariátegui is in wholehearted agreement with Gorki's views.⁴³

Another man who had a profound influence on Mariátegui was Henri Barbusse. He sees deep significance in Barbusse's

⁴²Ibid., pp. 117-120.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 223-229.

conception of the plight of humanity:

His argument said in few and poor words is this: the intelligence, too sick with negative, skeptical, dissolvent, nihilistic ideas, cannot now return, repentant, to the old myths, and cannot yet accept the new truth. ⁴⁴

Despite this pessimism, Barbusse sees salvation in revolution. He reminds intellectuals of the revolutionary duty of intelligence: that it is creative and should not be used for any other function. He also points out to intellectuals that the poor, the humble and the miserable are now ready to march to the utopia which intelligence in its fecund hours has conceived.

It is evident from the above summarizations that the social views with which Mariátegui left Peru were enormously developed and strengthened during his four years in Europe. A recurring word throughout the book is revolution. One gains the impression that the whole of Europe is on the brink of a vast revolution which will radically change the basis of European society, and consequently, the world. The amazing aspect of this proposed revolution is that it is based on only one category: the economic dialectical process. Over forty years have passed since the publishing of Mariátegui's book but the Marxist historical mechanism has not yet generated sufficient revolutionary mysticism to transform the Western European countries which Mariátegui regarded as being on the threshold of a communist type of society.

Mariátegui learned his lessons well while in Europe,

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 199.

developing a distinct European point of view. He saw nothing of any significance as coming from the Orient; he dismissed Gandhi with his non-violence and spinning wheel campaigns as standing in the way of progress.⁴⁵ For him, Europe was the matrix of progressive ideas. Haya de la Torre was not merely indulging in rhetorical flourishes when he accused him of being Europeanized. This definitely colored his view in interpreting what he calls Peruvian reality. He readily admits this:

I have made my best apprenticeship in Europe. And I believe that there is no salvation for Indo-America without European or Western science and thought. Sarmiento, who is still one of the argentinidad, was in his epoch a Europeanist. He did not encounter a better way of being an Argentinian. ⁴⁶

Using the Marxian dialectic with unswerving fidelity, Mariátegui never departs from the economic approach in analyzing Peruvian society. He contends that the Spanish conquerors, ignoring the existing means of production, implanted a new economic and social system in Peru: they redistributed land and men on a grand scale; they eradicated the Inca religion, a stabilizing force in the economic order; they placed a major emphasis on the extraction of precious metals; they brought the Negro slave into the country.⁴⁷ He maintains that the Spaniards, with the exception of the Jesuits, did not realize the tremendous means of

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 258-259.

⁴⁶Mariátegui, Siete Ensayos, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 6-7.

production at their disposal. On their arrival, there were ten million Indians living under the Inca system, whose needs were adequately met, but towards the end of the colonial period the number had been reduced to one million. He interprets this population decrease as an indication of the Spaniards' total ignorance of the economic value of manpower, and says that such a policy contradicted Alberdi's dictum: "To govern is to populate."⁴⁸ In his view, the Anglo-American system of colonization was vastly superior in that there was a large flow of European immigrants, almost unlimited access to land, and an emphasis on agriculture rather than the extraction of precious metals.⁴⁹

Mariátegui maintains that the Spaniards brought the Medieval system to America in the form of the Inquisition, scholasticism and feudalism.⁵⁰ However, in destroying the Inca system, they removed the basis for absolute feudalism. Nevertheless, this imperfect feudalism, particularly its latifundia aspect, became solidly entrenched. The revolution, although suppressing some medieval features, did not even touch feudalism. Formulating what might be called a politico-economic axiom, he says: "The forces in control of the land dictate the political and administrative system in every country."⁵¹ Control passed from the

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 40.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 42-43.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 37.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 38.

crown to the landholders. The aristocratic landholder preserved his special position if not his title. The mita and servitude were abolished in theory but remained in fact on the latifundia. The aristocrats in league with the military checked the growth of urban power. Two factors prevented the growth of a bourgeois class: finance and commerce were in the hands of foreigners; the educational system emphasized the training of theologians, doctors, and lawyers as opposed to technical and commercial experts.⁵² It is Mariátegui's contention that even up to his time, all phases of national life, generally speaking, reflected the thinking of the ruling economic class, the landowners.

For Mariátegui, the major obstacle to social and economic improvement is the latifundia system. The hacendados have always viewed their land in terms of rent and not productivity. Unused land and primitive techniques have always characterized the management of latifundia. To a lesser degree, the same charges can be applied to plantations under foreign control along the coast. Such tight land control discourages the entry of immigrants who could greatly improve the economic and cultural conditions of Peru, and tenants who work on the latifundia never display the same productive capacity as small landowners. For these reasons, Mariátegui proposes the nationalizing of foreign-controlled plantations and the expropriation of latifundia which would be devoted

⁵²Ibid., p. 53.

to "allyu" and small landholding types of farming.⁵³

One of the great impelling forces in Mariátegui's life was the Indianist cause. In view of this, and despite the fact that he himself was a mestizo, he had some strange notions on race. He refers to the Negro as "human alluvium" deposited upon the Peruvian shore by the colonial regime, summing up his cultural contribution in this manner: "The Negro brought his sensuality, his superstition and his primitivism."⁵⁴ He is totally opposed to Negro-Indian fusion: "When he has mixed with the Indian, he has bastardized the latter, communicating to him he wheedling domesticity and his pompous and morbid psychology."⁵⁵ He regards the Chinese immigrant in much the same way: "Chinese immigration has brought us none of the essential elements of the Chinese civilization, perhaps because on their own land they have lost their dynamic and generative power."⁵⁶ Mariátegui's outlook on the mestizo is by no means optimistic. He regards José Vasconcelos' "cosmic race" theory as unrealistic.⁵⁷ In his view the mestizo integrates himself with an industrial milieu because of the heavy pressure exerted towards conformity. However, this integration extends only to material considerations; the mestizo

⁵³Ibid., pp. 72-75.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 251.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 256.

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 255-256.

fails to comprehend the beliefs, myths and sentiments underlying this civilization. Finding himself in a feudal society where there is little pressure to conform, he reverts to type, loses all initiative and lives a life of torpor, the virtues and values of the mixed races annulling each other.⁵⁸ He maintains that the Indian, although not incorporated in an expansive civilization, has not broken with the past, and for this reason, unlike the mestizo, has always maintained his individuality. He still has his language, his customs and traditions, which form a pattern that integrates his personality. For this reason, Mariátegui considers the "allyu" as an important factor in maintaining the Indian way of life.⁵⁹

Mariátegui interprets the Indian problem, as would be expected, in economic terms: the Spaniards imposed a brutal system of exploitation on the native element, and this system has never been changed substantially. He says that persons such as Las Casas, González Prada and Dora Mayer de Zulen have made religious, moral and humanitarian appeals, but with no result other than to evoke sporadic waves of sympathy.⁶⁰ He maintains that the solution must be a social one, and must come from the Indians themselves. Pointing out that Indian protests have always been regional, he insists that they must be national to produce substan-

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 259.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 259-260.

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 32-33.

tial results. He also regards the native congresses as important instrumentalities in Indian rehabilitation, if they can be rejuvenated.⁶¹

Mariátegui gives an analytical thrust to González Prada's rhetorical attack on Peruvian education. In examining the Peruvian educational system, he traces three currents of influence: Spanish heritage, French pedagogical content, and American pragmatism. After the revolution, he points out, Peruvian leaders incorporated many features of French education into the Peruvian system. Conceding that the French have reached a high level of intellectual attainment, yet he views their educational system as being deficient. They have never attuned it to revolutionary ideas. Furthermore, capitalism has never developed in France to the extent that it has in England, Germany or the United States, and this is reflected in the French educational system: no serious attempt has been made to modernize, democratize or unify it.⁶²

However, Mariátegui regards Spanish cultural influence as the main obstacle to progress in the Peruvian educational system. In contrast to the liberal and Protestant Anglo-Saxons, Spaniards have displayed an almost total incapacity to adapt themselves to the machine or industrialism. Consequently, they have never been able to appreciate capitalistic values. These values are most evident in their educational system. Education is a

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 26-27.

⁶²Ibid., p. 83.

privilege and not a right; it is refused to the poor even though they are exceptionally talented. Education and work are incompatible; the educated man considers work undignified. To illustrate his point, Mariátegui quotes Dr. Deustua, contemporary rector of San Marcos University, that education is the realization of values while work is related to selfish tendencies that enslave the soul.⁶³

Mariátegui prefers the American pragmatic approach to education with its accent on technical and commercial training and its accessibility to all levels of society. He observes that although it has been introduced to Peru, its influence is very weak in the educational system.⁶⁴

In evaluating the role of the Church in Peru, Mariátegui is always consistent with his Marxian ideology, but at the same time, he is fair in his treatment, and never indulges in the contemptuous attacks that characterize González Prada's works. He considers the Roman Catholic Church, particularly in its ecclesiastical aspect, as being organically linked to feudalism or medievalism, just as Protestantism is to liberalism and capitalism.⁶⁵ The inference is that it is a systematized cultural expression.

He has deep admiration for the evangelical-minded Spanish missionaries who spread the faith throughout the whole of Latin

⁶³Ibid., p. 113.

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 86-87.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 131-132.

America. However, he views their successors as bureaucrats who were more interested in establishing a solid ecclesiastical system than in delivering the gospel message. He maintains that in stressing cult and ritual and generally neglecting catechism, the priests never gave the Indians a true understanding of Christianity.⁶⁶ He readily admits that the Church was the civilizing influence, and acknowledges its role in education. Also, it was the one consistent defender of the rights of the Indian.⁶⁷

Mariátegui contends that with feudal landowners still in control after the revolution, the Church was able to retain all its privileges. He considers anticlerical campaigns without well-defined socio-economic programs as ineffective, and points to González Prada's anticlericalism as an example.⁶⁸ In his view, Protestantism will not become a strong force in Latin America, except in the case that it can provide social service. In fact, he does not even see a role for Catholicism. Actually he subscribes to Georges Sorel's idea that revolutionary or social myths can effectively take the place of old religious myths.⁶⁹

Mariátegui was not simply indulging in a speculative exercise in formulating his thought. A convinced revolutionary, he had specific objectives in mind, and advocated the use of force

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 128.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 127.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 141-142.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 142.

in realizing them: "Revolutionaries of all latitudes have to choose between suffering violence or using it. A revolution, unfortunately, is not made without force."⁷⁰ He submitted a memorandum to the Latin American Communist Conference, held in Buenos Aires in 1929, outlining measures to implement his socialist program. The following are the most important points: expropriation without indemnification of latifundia; the confiscation of all foreign and the most important national bourgeois enterprises; non-recognition of national debt; the liquidation of any type of imperialist control; the transformation of the army into a workers' and farmers' militia; and the establishment of worker, farmer and soldier municipalities to displace the influence of landowners and the Church.⁷¹

Mariátegui has fashioned a beautifully co-ordinated interpretation of Peruvian history with the economic factor as the vital principle of its development. There are comparisons and contrasts between Peru and other countries to illustrate the retardation of Peruvian economy and society. Most of his points are well taken. However, in using the one interpretive criterion and being so selective in his examples, he seemingly desires economic progress at any price. He extols British bourgeois progress, but never mentions the tremendous economic dislocation and appalling misery associated with the Industrial Revolution. He

⁷⁰ Mariátegui, La Escena Contemporaneo, p. 259.

⁷¹ Chang-Rodríguez, op. cit., p. 165.

displays the same high regard for American economic progress, but ignores the treatment accorded the Indian and Negro in this capitalist-oriented system. Concentrating on Peru's economic system, he ignores its legal and religious systems which, in contrast to those of the United States, gave a legal and moral position in society to the Indian. Despite these shortcomings, it would be difficult to challenge most of his contentions regarding Peruvian society.

In the final analysis, his works and life constitute an important chapter in the history of Peruvian social thought. His lucid comprehension of Peruvian problems is unexcelled. Some of the remedies he proposes seem to contain the seeds of solution; others are precipitate and doctrinaire. The one flaw in the picture of this committed idealist is his racist attitude towards Negroes and Chinese. According to all accounts, his life was one of great sacrifice and utter dedication. Actually engaged in promoting the labor union movement and continuously supporting the Indianist cause, he did not allow bribes and the offer of a secure government position to deter him from this course of action. John A. MacKay, former president of Princeton Theological Seminary, masterfully conveys the sincerity of the man:

...To visit him in his home and listen to that mellow voice pour out in measured accents a militant philosophy of life, so strangely dissonant from the fragile physique of its author, was indeed an inspiring experience. For Mariátegui Communism was a religion, a religion which he professed and propagated with all the passion of his soul.⁷²

⁷²MacKay, op. cit., p. 191.

Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, born in Trujillo on February 22, 1895, son of Raúl Edmundo Haya de Cárdenas and Zoila María de la Victoria y de las Mercedes Rosa Francisca de Paula de la Torre de Cárdenas, is the third gonzález pradista under consideration. Impoverished but with an illustrious background, one great-grandfather being the Duke of Estrada,⁷³ he had to work to support himself as a student at San Marcos University. Transferring to the University of Cuzco in 1917, he remained in this region for eight months and gained an intimate knowledge of the Indian way of life.

Returning to Lima, Haya de la Torre resumed his law studies. A voracious reader, he devoted himself to the works of Renan, Marx, Sarmiento and González Prada during this period. He became acquainted with González Prada shortly before the latter's death. Haya de la Torre had a deep respect and affection for González Prada, as this statement reveals: "In the month that followed his death, I felt hunger for the first time. I began to understand the grief of others."⁷⁴

Joining the Federación de Estudiantes at San Marcos, Haya de la Torre became one of its most active and eloquent members. The workers of Lima, seeking an eight-hour day, requested assistance from this student organization, and Haya de la Torre was

⁷³Chang-Rodríguez, op. cit., pp. 209-210.

⁷⁴Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, "Mis recuerdos de González Prada," Repertorio Americano, XV, 6 (13 agosto, 1927), p. 84.

chosen as one of the representatives. He is credited with the major role in the negotiations that led to the realization of the workers' demand.⁷⁵ Shortly afterwards, he singlehandedly organized the Federación de Tejidos.⁷⁶ In October of that same year, 1919, he was elected president of the Federación de Estudiantes. Clamoring for changes in personnel, administration and course-content, the student went on strike. Haya de la Torre successfully conducted negotiations with President Leguía, resulting in the enactment of reform laws.⁷⁷

Working on the González Prada proposition of a close intellectual worker alliance, students from Lima, Arequipa and Cuzco discussed the idea of an adult education movement. The result of this discussion was the establishment of the first Universidad Popular on January 22, 1921, with Haya de la Torre as its rector.⁷⁸ Later these night schools were called Universidades Populares González Prada. Among others, José Carlos Mariátegui and Jorge Basadre taught at those schools. Writers have given these schools a romantic aura, but their effectiveness is another question. Bazán says that the intellectual formation of most of the teachers was based on the books of Tolstoy, Kropotkin, Hugo, Barbusse, Ingenieros and González Prada, and that the rhetorical

⁷⁵Baeza Flores, op. cit., pp. 54-55.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 55.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 57.

literature of the latter produced a sentimental surge in the pulse of the students; also, in so far as a political program or the molding of leadership was concerned, the teachers had no clearly defined ideas.⁷⁹

On May 23, 1923, Haya de la Torre, with the assistance of students and workers, successfully thwarted President Leguía's plan to consecrate Peru to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.⁸⁰ Arrested and then deported as a result of his opposition to the consecration, he eventually arrived in Mexico.

In Mexico Haya de la Torre cultivated the friendship of José Vasconcelos, Gabriela Mistral and Diego Rivera. Through their efforts, he was able to obtain the necessities of life. The most momentous occasion of his stay in Mexico was on May 7, 1924, when he unveiled his Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana plan before Mexican university students.⁸¹ He departed from Mexico for Russia in 1924.

During his visit in Russia, Haya de la Torre had conferences with the leading revolutionary figures, attended lectures and studied Marxist ideology in its applied state. Overtures were made that he join the Communist Party, but to no avail. He left Russia with the firm conviction that Marxism as applied

⁷⁹Bazán, op. cit., p. 93.

⁸⁰Thibaldo González, Haya de la Torre: Trayectoria de una Ideología (Caracas: C. A. Tipografía Garrido, 1958), pp. 44-46.

⁸¹Baeza Flores, op. cit., p. 65.

there could not be repeated mechanically in Peru.⁸²

Enrolling in the London School of Economics in 1925, Haya studied under Harold Laski. However, this period of his life included an extraordinary amount of travelling. In 1927, he organized the Center for Anti-imperialist Studies of Apra in Paris. In 1928, he organized a number of Apra cells throughout the central American countries. Attempting to return to Peru, he was not allowed to enter Panama, and took up residence in Germany.

Arriving in Peru in 1931, Haya de la Torre immediately began campaigning for the presidency. Owing to Mariátegui's efforts, the Aprista movement was firmly rooted, and it had assumed political form in 1928, as noted before. Haya de la Torre's chief opposition was Luís Sánchez Cerro, leader of the army group. The election was held on October 11, 1931. With wide scale fraud and voting irregularities, Sánchez Cerro was proclaimed the winner. However, most students of Peruvian politics consider that Haya de la Torre won the election.⁸³ Although 27 members of the Aprista Party were elected to congress, it did not matter, for Sánchez Cerro was not interested in constitutional government. Oppressive measures culminated in Haya's arrest in 1932. Near victory followed by rigorous repression shaped the political pattern of Haya de la Torre and the Apristas before and after the Second World War.

⁸²Ibid., pp. 65-66.

⁸³Kantor, op. cit., p. 14.

In 1936 the Aprista movement was declared an illegal movement and not allowed to run a candidate. In 1945 it joined forces with other groups to form the Frente Democratico Nacional. Luis José Bustamante, the candidate of this fusion, easily won the election, and a high percentage of Apristas were elected to both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. However, Bustamante became very conscious of his presidential power and nullified the legislative advantage of the Apristas. Bustamante was succeeded by General Manuel Odría, and the persecution of the Apristas increased with Haya having to seek refuge in the Colombian legation on January 3, 1949. His incarceration attracted world-wide attention. Finally, on April 6, 1954, after many protests and interminable negotiations, he was released.

In 1962, mellowed with age and the fiery revolutionary spirit not so evident, Haya again contested the Peruvian presidency. He won by a small plurality, but not the percentage required by law. It seems that he will never be given a chance to lead Peru through the economic and social revolution about which he has so often written and lectured.

Haya de la Torre's proposed social and economic revolution is based upon his Apra or Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana program which, in turn, is based on his Espacio-tiempo histórico theory. This is a very abstruse elaboration of Latin American "realidad" in which Haya ranges from Heraclitus through Marx and Einstein to Toynbee to establish the relative uniqueness of Latin American experience. One facet--that Latin America

cannot follow the path of economic development traversed by Europe--points to the essence of the complicated theory.⁸⁴

Haya supports this claim of Latin American uniqueness on an anthropological theory. He says that Indian influence is the key to the identity of Latin American peoples. Citing Jung and Keyserling, he maintains that hero worship, love of sports, and the qualities of concentration and determination, so characteristic of the peoples of North and South America, stem from Indian rather than European influence. This Indian influence has produced a new type of people, even in countries with a largely European ethnic background, distinct from their European forbears.⁸⁵ Haya views this Indian influence as the single most pervasive quality in Latin American peoples and, of course, advances it as an argument in favor of his Apra program.

According to Haya, the major obstacle preventing Latin American peoples from realizing their unique social and economic development is economic imperialism. He points out that, with the collaboration of the ruling classes, the highly industrialized nations have imposed unjust trade and commerce pacts on the Latin American nations, and singles out the United States as the leading practitioner of this imperialistic policy. He says that Alfred Thayer Mahan was the theorist of this policy; Josiah Strong

⁸⁴Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, Espacio-tiempo histórico (Lima: Ediciones La Tribune, 1948), p. 12.

⁸⁵Idem, A Dónde Va Latinamérica (Buenos Aires: Editorial Inda-América, 1954), p. 13.

gave it a racial coloration with his preaching on the providential mission of the Anglo-Saxon race; and Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge implemented it politically.⁸⁶

To allow Latin America to develop in accord with its own native genius, Haya de la Torre formulated the Aprista maximum program: action against Yankee imperialism; for the political unity of Latin America; for the nationalization of land and industry; for the internationalization of the Panama Canal; for the solidarity with all peoples and all oppressed classes. Because he looks upon Latin America as a unit, Haya believes that the fundamental problems facing the twenty republics can be resolved by the adoption of the Aprista maximum program.⁸⁷

To facilitate the realization of the Aprista maximum program, Haya proposes the formulation of an Aprista minimum program for each country. The platform of the Partido Aprista Peruana is an illustration of what this minimum program constitutes. He insists that the Apristas would not impose a new form of dictatorship; they would expand and extend all liberties to every class and not only retain democracy but make it a vital force in Peruvian life.⁸⁸

In changing the economic structure in Peru, Haya does not

⁸⁶ Idem, Treinta Años de Aprismo (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1956), pp. 138-139.

⁸⁷ Idem, Politica Aprista (Lima: Editorial Cooperativa Aprista Atahualpa, 1933), p. 96.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 56.

resort to the radical and violent measures proposed by Mariátegui. Rather, he follows Ramsay MacDonald's principle in aiming at the diffusion of private property and not its abolition. Actually, he approves of the capitalistic stage of imperialism in Latin America, but, of course, with proper safeguards. He contends that the area must undergo this capitalistic stage in order to emerge from the agricultural or feudal stage. However, the supervision of this stage must not be the exclusive province of capitalists but of all productive classes.⁸⁹ He would immediately nationalize the extraction of precious metals and demand that a percentage of the earnings of other mining enterprises be invested in new national industries.⁹⁰ Since agriculture is so basic to Peru, and particularly to the Indian, it would receive preferential treatment.⁹¹

In respect to the educational phase of Peruvian life, Haya unfolds an impressive program. Among many proposals, the training and financial position of teachers would be improved, a vast program in agricultural science would be undertaken, adult education centers and circulating libraries would be established throughout the country, and new centers of superior education would be founded.⁹²

⁸⁹Haya de la Torre, Treinta Años de Aprismo, p. 125.

⁹⁰Idem, Politica Aprista, pp. 18-19.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 16.

⁹²Ibid., p. 22.

As would be expected, Haya gives special attention to the Indian problem in his minimum program. The major consideration, of course, is to integrate the Indian with the rest of the nation. In regard to his material betterment, attention would be given to the preservation and modernization of the "comunidad," the protection of the small landholder, the encouragement of Indian industries and art, and the development of agrarian co-operatives. In the educational sphere, Indian teachers would be trained and instruction given in Indian as well as in Spanish. In the moral sphere, a campaign would be initiated to eradicate the use of coca and alcohol.⁹³

Haya would retain the professional army to safeguard the honor and integrity of the country. However, he would give it a social and cultural dimension. Indians, upon their induction, would be educated and trained in a specialized skill. After their discharge, with their newly acquired ideas and skills, they could be an uplifting force in their sierra communities. Certain battalions would be engaged in highway construction and play a role in Indian education, health and agriculture.⁹⁴

Haya does not assign any explicit role to the Church in his proposed revolution. Actually he aims at restricting its influence. The minimum program states: "We will separate the Church from the State and we will guarantee the neutrality of the State

⁹³Ibid., p. 22.

⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 59-62, 154-155.

in religious subjects."⁹⁵ With education a state monopoly, the influence of the Church would be further restricted. In his personal life, Haya has never shown any open hostility to the Church. To all appearances, he viewed the dedication of Peru to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as more a political maneuver than a religious act. On the day of the demonstration, he gave a discourse on Christ's justice and charity.⁹⁶ John A. MacKay, his life-long friend, says: "He is truly interested in conserving and cultivating true religious values."⁹⁷ It seems, though, that with his highly intellectualized conception of history and his all-embracing programs, he has a theology and a liturgy which render conventional religions superfluous in revitalizing Latin American life.

In view of his great popularity, it is most perplexing that Haya has never gained control of the presidency. In discussing the Aprista movement, Carleton Beals makes this comment on Haya's appeal: "Haya de la Torre has inflamed not only the imagination of his own people, but that of a continent and a half."⁹⁸ Still, this popularity was not sufficient to surmount all obstacles. Unlike González Prada or Mariátegui, Haya has never

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 11.

⁹⁶González, op. cit., p. 45.

⁹⁷MacKay, op. cit., p. 197.

⁹⁸Carleton Beals, "Aprismo: The Rise of Haya de la Torre," Foreign Affairs, XIII, 2 (January, 1935), p. 245.

believed in employing naked force to achieve social ends. He points out that in using force to obtain power, the Bolsheviks became more interested in maintaining this power than pursuing the ends of the revolution.⁹⁹ On the basis of his writings, one is tempted to say that if he had been less the dilettante and more the practical politician, he would have achieved more success. However, this would be unfair. Without his intellectual curiosity and idealism, there would not have been an Aprista party.

When all aspects of his life are considered, it is difficult to avoid saying that Haya de la Torre has been a significant figure not only in Peru, but in the whole of Latin America. It was he who spearheaded the successful student agitation for university reform. By actually organizing labor unions during his student days, he set a precedent for the whole of Latin America for close student-worker collaboration. In the same context, he was the first rector of the Universidades Populares. His Aprista ideology centered on the reclamation of the Indian. More than any other Latin American writer, he dramatized the unfair economic practises perpetrated by the leading industrial nations, especially the United States, in their dealing with Latin America. It could be said that he was elected to the presidency twice, but was prevented from assuming office by fraud and a constitutional

⁹⁹Kantor, op. cit., p. 56, from a personal interview with Haya de la Torre, Los Angeles, California, April 1, 1948.

technicality. Refusing sinecures, imprisoned, and exiled, he symbolizes the struggle for social justice throughout Latin America.

CONCLUSION

Some of González Prada's admirers, notably Blanco-Fombona, in treating his life and thought, offer something approaching an apotheosis rather than a critical study. Despite their distaste for anything associated with the medieval period, they bear a striking resemblance to the hagiographers of that period. In their presentation, he seems to be above and beyond the swirl of ordinary human affairs. From his Olympian height he pronounces unerring analyses of the sad human condition and prescribes infallible remedies for the faltering social mechanism. In not relating his social thought and political action to national, family and personal circumstances, one arrives at only surface conclusions concerning the man.

González Prada lived during a period which was probably the most difficult and crucial in the entire history of Peru. Despite its lethargic state, the Peruvian nation had evident stresses and tensions. Although a republican form of government had been imposed upon the nation, the controlling element stoutly resisted any change from the colonial aristocratic way of life. Nominally Catholic, Peruvians chose either a legalistic and fanatic approach or an attitude of indifference to religion. In the economic sphere, controlling interests refused to face the fact that new agricultural and industrial systems had to be introduced

to supply the pressing needs of the masses. Those in control of the schools, clinging to aristocratic values, refused to democratize and modernize the educational system to meet industrial and commercial demands. Peru, brought to the threshold of the modern age, was prevented from crossing it by strong reactionary and conservative forces.

González Prada's family was a microcosm of the Peruvian nation. His father, although occupying a high position in the republican form of government, was an aristocrat, a conservative and a Hispanicist at heart, fondly clinging to unfulfilled dreams of family honor and a return to colonial grandeur. His mother and sisters represented the end product of Peruvian Catholicism: fanaticism and a refusal to relate religion to social conditions.

To make this environmental problem even more complex, there are strong indications that González Prada was dominated by his mother. Metaphorically tied to his mother's apron strings, he manifested throughout his life signs of immaturity in his relationships with people and his reactions to events. Two outstanding examples of this immaturity were his falling in love with a twelve-year-old girl and the suicide pact he proposed to his wife after the death of their infant daughter. He always became too involved with people and movements. A more mature attitude would have helped him strike a balance between involvement and detachment. Over-identification with his infant daughter almost triggered existential suicide. Over-identification with the Union Nacional compelled him to commit political suicide.

A perusal of González Prada's works seem to confirm the above mentioned considerations. His reaction to most national problems seems to be one of personal affront. His analyses of problems always have an emotional coloration. His judgments tend to take polar positions. His solutions display the same erratic quality, ranging, for example, from chauvinism to anarchy with very little between these two poles.

González Prada assembled a formidable array of enemies during his lifetime. For him, the most enduring and detested of these enemies was the Roman Catholic Church. This enmity can be easily related to his family background. Reared in an over-religious atmosphere, seemingly dominated by a mother who gave signs of being a fanatical Catholic and forced to enter a seminary, González Prada's reaction was predictable. This emotional reaction was given an intellectual foundation through his contact with rationalist authors and reinforced by his visit to Europe. The most compelling reason, however, was that the Church provided the occasion by tolerating evident abuses within her official structure.

In any evaluation of Peruvian history, one cannot disregard the achievements of the Church. Missionaries accompanied the conquistadores, undertaking the evangelization of the Indians at the cost of great suffering and sacrifice. In the colonizing of Peru, the Church assumed the burden of all educational, social welfare and cultural enterprises. It may be said that it was the buffer between the Indian and institutional slavery. Yet the

Church's interests were so closely entwined with those of the state, and her influence and privileges were so great that abuses were inevitable. Clerics became complacent with, and engrossed in, the material advantages accruing from their position of influence. Privileges rather than obligations became their primary consideration. Clerical immorality was sometimes rampant. The most sacred trust of the clergy--the religious and social formation of the Indian--was often gravely neglected. This provided the occasion for González Prada.

Impelled by this deep-seated hatred, González Prada waged a relentless attack on the Church during his whole life. For him Catholicism was the greatest form of parasitism afflicting the country. He saw no hope for social reform without eradicating the most tenuous form of Church influence from society. He attacked education under religious auspices as fostering a mentality of servile superstition. He attributed the anomalous position of the Peruvian woman in society to the machinations of domineering clerics. He derided clerics who honored celibacy and he denounced those who ignored their vows. The rapacious cura was a big factor, in his view, in the wretched plight of the Indian.

As a statement of fact, or a precise account of the record of the Peruvian Church, González Prada's work does not merit much consideration. However, in dealing with him, one is not dealing with a historian or a sociologist but a polemicist and revolutionary. The central fact is that there were abuses in the

Church. Making allowances for his gross overstatements, González Prada rendered a distinct service to Peru and to the Church. Seemingly, officials of the Church, in their triumphalist cocoons, disregarded his attacks as another manifestation of the anti-christ. His forays in this area have had very little apparent results.

González Prada's attacks on the leading segment of Peruvian society displayed as much virulence as those directed against the Church. He had an even more vulnerable target here. The Spaniards, in establishing an aristocracy in Peru, planted the seeds of a destructive social organism that has continuously upset the economic and social equilibrium of the nation. This minute element with its total disregard for work, its luxury, its ostentatious manners and its appropriation of vast tracts of land largely frustrated the development of other segments of Peruvian society. This feudalistic conformation of society prevented the emergence of a strong middle class. It victimized the Indian by taking huge tracts of his allyu lands and subjecting him to the mita or forced labor. Although receiving better treatment than his American brother, the Peruvian Negro did not enjoy an enviable position in Peruvian society. It is true that he possessed legal and religious rights. However, even after emancipation, he was looked upon as a buffoon, and regarded as innately inferior to the white.

González Prada struck at the Peruvian aristocracy with unrestrained vengeance. Tracing its existence down through the

years, he sneered at its proclivities towards miscegenation and lamented its innate cruelty towards inferiors, sometimes making sweeping generalizations on the basis of one particular case. Condemning the doctrine of the innate superiority of certain classes or races, he, nevertheless, betrayed an admiration for the "true aristocrat" and scornfully compared some of the customs of the Peruvian aristocracy with the depraved practises of the Negro race. He excoriates the leading families for their dishonest dealings in guano and nitrates and their subservience to Dreyfus, Grace and Meiggs, charging them with selling their wives and daughters to the latter.

In analyzing the attitude of Peruvians to work and responsibility, González Prada contends that the servile ethnic components mitigated against producing a responsible type. Rather than embark on agricultural or mining endeavors, they were utterly dependent on the civil and military branches of the government. Ultimately, though, he regarded all of Peru's vices as stemming from its relationship with Spain. Among other unflattering qualities he branded Spaniards as being lazy, cruel and stupid, and made no effort to balance the picture with even one redeeming quality.

González Prada's exposition of the Indian problem is the most relevant of all of his social criticisms. He presents the historical factors which worked towards the creation of the Indian's wretched situation and graphically describes present-day conditions under the cruel exploitation of the hacendado. He

concludes that education alone is not equal to the task of the Indian's social redemption. He recommends a sweeping social and economic transformation which would give the Indian an equitable share of property, the responsibility of which would develop a sense of human dignity. However, he then advises the Indian to place his trust in a rifle and cartridges.

The central fact in Peru's awkward political evolution was the political policy pursued by the Spanish colonial regime. All the major facets of government were under the control of Spanish functionaries. As a result of this policy, when independence became a reality, Peru totally lacked a corps of competent administrators to assume the direction of the nation. The military caudillos took advantage of this vacuum of administrative competence.

González Prada is more preoccupied with the political situation as it manifested itself in his day. However, he does trace the emergence of the caudillos to the completely unstructured political state of the country at the time of the revolution. He regards Spanish influence as being the root of this state of affairs. In his view, the people lacked a sense of social involvement, seeking their own limited ends to the detriment of society at large.

In the early phase of his political thought, González Prada advocated a national policy based on ultrapatriotism and a wariness towards all Latin American nations, especially Chile. Hatred towards Chile was to provide the motive power for national

redemption and the recovery of Tacna and Arica. There are no constructive features in his criticism of political institutions of that time. His program for the Unión Nacional was not to have a program. He formulated its guiding principle as the effecting of social reforms rather than political transformations. In the political realm, he preferred focussing his attention on the ac-
tuations of individual politicians rather than the examination of political ideas or institutions.

González Prada's essays and discourses on individual politicians examine various facets of government policy. However, these criticisms are interlaced with derogatory character references, sometimes reaching brutal proportions. His attack on Nicolás Piérola is the most flagrant example in this regard. Contrary to the verdict of respected Peruvian observers, González Prada regards Piérola's administration as absolutely lacking in positive content.

González Prada extended the contempt that he reserved for clerics and politicians to include the military towards the latter part of his life. In his view, they are the chief disruptive and demoralizing influences in society. This attitude is more apparent when he deals with soldiers in a concrete situation.

González Prada's distaste for classes and individuals in concrete situations might be related to his conception of an anarchical society. Most utopianists, while professing their love for people in the abstract, indicate a kind of revulsion for people in the concrete with their weaknesses, imperfections and

tendencies towards evil. Even the most fruitful idea emerging from González Prada's ideological formulations--the intellectual-worker alliance--has an abstract quality about it. Despairing in the imperfect political, legal and religious systems to effect the perfectability of man, González Prada envisioned a new Garden of Eden wherein, by the fiat of the population at large, the human race would undergo a rebirth, casting aside the old man and putting on the new man to enjoy the perfect happiness of anarchical society.

Naturally, the question presents itself as to how González Prada, with his lack of objective analysis, his ineffectual and visionary solutions and his propensity for alienating himself from people and movements, could contribute to Peru's social revolution. However, through the maze of his immoderate attacks, his overstatement and his sarcasm, there always shone his thirst for social justice and his desire for the abolition of all forms of social inequities. González Prada was a poet and not a social scientist. He saw everything in terms of absolute good and absolute evil. In his spectrum there were no intermediary colors between black and white. His absolute approach to Peruvian problems attracted persons of an idealistic cast of mind, particularly young intellectuals. His works became a cult among university students. The three most outstanding examples of this gonzález pradista influence are Clorinda Matto de Turner, José Carlos Mariátegui and Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre.

Clorinda Matto de Turner, a contemporary, was the first

to fall under González Prada's spell. Having a keen interest in the Indian problem, Clorinda Matto de Turner developed and strengthened her convictions on the Indianist cause by her association with González Prada. Her manner of attacking the problem was the realistic presentation of the exploitation of the Indian in her novel Aves sin Nido. Although it is not considered a literary success and has maudlin features about it, it successfully delineates the social forces which prevent the Indian realizing anything remotely approaching human dignity. So far, this novel has not produced any visible signs of betterment in the life of the Indian. However, one can never discount the influence of such an intangible weapon as a novel in the ultimate vindication of the Indian's rights.

González Prada's social protest was the big factor in the first stage of Mariátegui's social consciousness. He was a firm believer in González Prada's worker-intellectual alliance and dedicated himself, both by his writing and active participation, to the organization of the workers in Lima. Becoming a convinced Marxist in Europe, he returned to Peru as an even more zealous social reformer and resumed his labor union activities. Joining the Aprista movement, he was the organizing genius in the first stage of its development. Using the Marxian dialectical approach, this man wrote a penetrating analysis of Peruvian society and its institutions. Many of his proposals still have valid application. The one sour note in an otherwise idealistic image is his racial bias towards Negroes and Chinese.

Like Mariátegui, Haya de la Torre came under González Prada's influence in the early stages of his development. Inspired by the intellectual-worker idea, he became an outstanding labor organizer while still a university student. With the same motivation, he was the key figure in the establishment of an adult education movement known as the Universidades Populares. He was also prominent in bringing about university reform. Formulating an esoteric ideology, he used it as a basis for his Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana movement. The maximum program of this movement is aimed at converting the whole of Latin America into a political and social unit. The minimum program--the intermediary stage of the conversion--is aimed at each republic. The minimum program provides a solution for almost every problem confronting the nation. A remote danger is the philosophical coloration of the movement.

Although receiving a majority in two presidential elections, Haya de la Torre has never been able to assume control of Peru. Although the Aprista movement has stirred the imagination of Peruvians, it has not changed the social contours of the nation. Whether this movement will implement the social revolution begun by González Prada, only time will tell.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Reverend James Gillis, S.F.M. has been read and approved by the director of the thesis. Furthermore, the final copies have been examined by the director and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

6/28/67
Date

Joseph A. Haglino
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