Postmodernism, Politics, and Paradigms in Latin America

by
Ronaldo Munck

El futuro ya no es oscuro, sino solo complejo.

—Mario Payeras, Guatemalan guerrilla, 1990

Puzzling things are happening in Latin American politics. One of the most powerful labor movements on the continent, that of Argentina, is supporting a government that is implementing the most comprehensive antilabor measures ever. In Mexico an almost mythical nationalist regime is engaged in an alliance with the United States that depends on the erasure of dominated nationalism. In Peru, the Tupac Amaru guerrillas are seen by Richard Gott (1996: 11) as "postmodern," reflecting "current abstruse theories about culture" in deploying "the weapons of imitation, parody and pastiche." Is this "the end of history"? Or is it "the world turned upside down"? To analyze the array of puzzling events—to which one might wish to add that the "grandfather" of dependency theory, F. H. Cardoso, has become president of Brazil—we can either turn back to our reflective orthodoxies or open our minds to the new ideas floating around in this era of paradigmatic transition.

A few years ago, the influential Latin American journal *Nueva Sociedad* carried out a survey asking intellectuals where they thought the region would be in 2020 (*Nueva Sociedad*, 1995). As was to be expected, there was a wide range of responses, but a number of these related to the topic of this intervention were repeated:

> The most certain thing is that all will remaining confusing. (Fernando Calderón, quoted in *Nueva Sociedad*, 1995: 82)

Ronaldo Munck, a participating editor of *Latin American Perspectives*, is professor of political sociology and director of the Globalization Unit at the University of Liverpool. He is the author, with Anny Brooksbank Jones, of *Cultural Politics in Latin America* (in press). He has recently published *Marx @ 2000: Late Marxist Perspectives* (1999). This article was delivered as an address to the U.K. Society for Latin American Studies Annual Conference in 1997.

LATIN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES, Issue 113, Vol. 27 No. 4, July 2000 11-26
© 2000 Latin American Perspectives

> A very characteristic feature of our times is that we are living a truly epochal mutation. (Enrique Correa Rios, quoted in *Nueva Sociedad*, 1995: 91)

> The crisis of the Latin American left is not only a crisis of paradigms but a crisis of locations in a rapidly changing world. (Xabier Gorostiaga, quoted in *Nueva Sociedad*, 1995: 107)

> The continent has a long road ahead of it to find a new paradigm of political life and organization. (Luis Salamanca, quoted in *Nueva Sociedad*, 1995: 145)

There was a shared understanding that Latin America is part of the broad process of globalization and that we live in postmodern times, even if these are defined in different ways. Increasing heterogeneity and social fragmentation is proving resistant to social and political analysis. The era of the totalizing theory and the search for foundational truths seems to be over. Intellectual work is lagging behind the changing realities of our time.

Before embarking on an analysis of postmodernism, politics, and paradigms in Latin America we need to remind ourselves about the nature of the intellectual field we are operating in. Following Bourdieu (1988), we can think of an "intellectual field" as a site of knowledge contestation consisting of networks of power and patronage. In these areas the sources of power define what is intellectually and culturally legitimate. Latin American studies, like other "area studies," have always been set within a highly politicized intellectual field. As Richard Harvey Brown (1995: x) has noted in relation to Soviet studies, many academics in this field have maintained close public ties to the political and economic sectors of American society that have decisively affected "both the autonomy of knowledge producers and the character of the knowledge they produce." This is not to suggest that the agenda of Latin American studies is set solely by the State Department and the Foreign Office, but we cannot afford to ignore the nature of power/knowledge relations in the intellectual field we all share, albeit from different subject positions and with different political interests.

POSTMODERNISM

Jean-François Lyotard, considered one of the most serious, rigorous, and "political" of the postmodernist thinkers, provides us with a brief definition: "I define postmodern as incredulity towards metanarratives" (1984: xiv). The modern belief in universal theory is simply rejected. Lyotard in particular rejects metadiscourses such as the narratives of progress and emancipation, including all metaphysical philosophies and all forms of totalizing, whether Marxism, liberalism, or positivism. For Lyotard, the metanarrative tends

inevitably toward exclusion and the desire for universal metaprescriptions. From Jacques Derrida I will borrow the term *logocentrism*, which refers to a modernist procedure that imposes a hierarchy within uncritically accepted binary oppositions such as man/woman, modern/traditional, or core/periphery, the first term of each being seen to belong to the realm of *logos*—a pure, invariable presence in no need of explanation.

Postmodernity is also an era or a type of socioeconomic-cultural dispensation. The postmodern condition is sometimes referred to as consumer society, the society of the spectacle, the knowledge society, postindustrial society, or post-Fordism. The new times hinge on a new level of global interdependency, the emergence of flexible specialization in production, a decline in manufacturing and in class politics, and an increased visibility of culture and consumption. For Lyotard "postmodernity is seen as a post-metaphysical, post- industrial, pluralist, pragmatic and restless set of partially differentiated social orders" (Boyne and Rattansi, 1990: 18). To this pattern we could add Foucault's influential post-Marxist view of power as ubiquitous but ultimately decentered. There is, of course, no agreement on the precise nature and significance of the mutations embraced by the term "postmodern." Thus in Frederic Jameson's influential reading there is indeed a fundamental break in the social and cultural organization of society, but this is situated within a Marxist framework in that postmodernism is seen as simply the cultural logic of late capitalism (Jameson, 1991).

Postmodernism is also a politics. For some (e.g., Callinicos, 1989) it is the politics of despair and nihilism. For others (e.g., Bauman, 1986) it is a last-ditch philosophy of resignation in the face of the crisis of the historic left project around 1989. Yet others (Beilharz, 1994) call for a new postmodern socialism that is differentiated, skeptical, and pragmatic. We would probably have to distinguish between, for example, postmodern radicals like Lyotard, postmodern liberals like Rorty, and more superficial writers like Baudrillard. A simpler distinction would be that drawn by Boaventura de Sousa Santos between conservative postmodernism and what he terms "oppositional postmodernism," by which he means "a conceptualization of our current sociocultural condition that, while assuming the exhaustion of the emancipatory energies of modernity, does not celebrate this fact but rather seeks to oppose it with a new map of emancipatory practices" (Santos, 1995: 5). Postmodernism is, indeed, at its most attractive when it criticizes the institutional authority, bureaucracy—in short, the disciplinary element of modernity.

In the modernist tradition, as articulated by Habermas, development is seen as a "telos" for humankind as a while. Yet modernism is notoriously Eurocentric in its approach. The blind spot regarding the Third World is revealed in an interview with Habermas: asked about the relevance of his

approach to progressive forces in the Third World and whether these might contribute to the democratic transformation of the advanced industrial societies, he replied, “I am tempted to say ‘no’ in both cases. I am aware of the fact that this is a Eurocentric limited view. I would rather pass the question” (1985: 104). Thus the universal theory suddenly ends up excluding four-fifths of the human race. As for the postmodernists, Foucault also admitted to a silence on the question of imperialism. Nevertheless, his work has been absolutely pivotal in developing our understanding of the discourses implicated in the exercise of imperial power. From Edward Said’s now-classic *Orientalism* (1985), which traced the West’s construction of the Orient, to Arturo Escobar’s imaginative dissection of the development discourse (Escobar, 1984-1985), Foucault’s influence on/in the Third World has been considerable.

There has recently been a flourishing of interest in articulating a postmodern view of development. In a sense postmodernism reflects the loss of Eurocentrism and Orientalism’s dialectical reversal. Thus, for Robert Young, “Postmodernism can best be defined as European culture’s awareness that it is no longer the unquestioned and dominant center of the world” (Young, 1990: 19). There is a new awareness, much promoted by the postcolonial theorists (see, e.g., Williams and Chrisman, 1994), that Western words need to be situated within Western worlds. In relation to the concept of development there are now some serious attempts to challenge the discourse, for, as Jonathan Crush (1995: 3) argues, “the forms in which it makes its arguments and establishes its authority, the manner in which it constructs the world, are usually seen as self-evident and unworthy of attention.” Not only is more attention now being paid to the language of development and deconstructing its presuppositions, but there is even a move to “reinvent” the very meaning of development (see Sachs, 1992). The links between modernism and development theory are now clear, and postmodernism inevitably leads to a conception of “postdevelopment.”

Where the postmodernist approach has had most purchase has probably been in relation to Third World women’s studies. Universal claims to knowledge are part of patriarchy as much as Western thought and would therefore be rejected by feminists who stress difference(s). Others have rejected the postmodernist attack on the subject just when women and colonial peoples were finding their voices. Yet, overall, there seems to be a confluence between feminism and a certain type of postmodernism (see, e.g., Nicholson, 1990). Thus Chandra Mohanty (1991) has provided an influential critique of a certain approach to Third World women that represents them as uniformly poor, powerless, and vulnerable, thus distorting their multiple identities. Rejecting the essentialist construction of the category “woman” and the universalist assumptions of (some) Western feminism(s), some scholars have

now moved to a more "postmodernist" terrain concerned with issues such as identity, representation, and the importance of indigenous knowledge (see, e.g., Marchand and Parpart, 1995).

In Latin America there has been "a sort of regional postmodernism *avant la lettre*," to use Brunner's (1987: 33) apposite phrase. This characteristic is due in part to the coexistence of different levels of socioeconomic development and in part to its cultural hybridity. In the era of the "New Economic Model" the dispersed and heterogeneous nature of identity in Latin America is quite clear. What is happening, in part, is the failure of the metanarratives of development, modernization, dependency, and revolution. There are no more global answers, only partial truths. Political disenchantment is leading to fragmentation. The world has no fixed center. Within the Latin American debates (Williams, 1995: 14) key words and phrases are now *lo indeterminado* (the indeterminate), *la problematización del centro* (the problematization of the center), *la discontinuidad* (discontinuity), *la simulación* (simulation), and *precariedad* (precariousness or provisionality).

Where the postmodern approach in Latin America has advanced furthest is undoubtedly in the field of literary studies (see, e.g., Yúdice, Franco, and Flores, 1992). Gabriel García Márquez's *Cien Años de Soledad* of 1967 can be seen as the high point of the modernist project. The grand narrative had not yet lost its credibility. Following Williams, we can see the work of Jorge Luis Borges, or at least such stories as "The Library of Babel" (picked up by the likes of Foucault), as "foundational texts for postmodern fiction in Latin America. . . . the line between essay and fiction is blurred, opening the gates for the fictionalized theoretical prose of Piglia, Sarduy, Balza, Pacheco and several others" (Williams, 1995: 13). The modernists' centered universe and truth claims are now rejected. The global theories and textual truths of the past were always based on the exclusion of the heterogeneous. Deconstructionist criticism has taken a heavy toll of binary thinking, with the other of postcolonial and feminist theory striking back in earnest. The new literature (Isabel Allende comes to mind) is having its impact.

I would certainly not wish to advance a naive postmodernist stance for Latin American studies. For one thing, postmodernism in Latin America does not imply a simple exhaustion of the modernist project (cf. Calderón, Hopenhayn, and Ottone, 1996). It is more a response to the ambiguity and perverse effects of modernization in Latin America. Rather than an entry into a tranquil sea of postmodern, postscarcity, postpolitics existence, what is seen by many observers as postmodern in Latin America is a challenge to modernity's complacent self-understanding. The critique of modernity-as-development may take on a postmodern flavor, but it is also reflected in the growth of the informal economy and narco-traffic. For all the paradoxes and

contradictions we see around us in Latin America, there is no "new era." As Brunner (1987: 39) puts it,

> The future of Latin America will not be that different from its present: that of a peripheral, decentered modernity, subject to conflicts whose outcome depends in part, but only in part, on what the societies themselves manage to make of the process of producing themselves through their complex, changing heterogeneity.

POLITICS

The profound transformations that have occurred in Latin America over the past 20 years could not fail to have an impact on the nature of politics in the region. In particular, the very notion of a progressive politics is called into question. The essential backdrop to current debates is the definitive crisis of the nationalist-statist-populist model that had dominated the region since 1930. When democracy was reimplanted throughout the region in the 1980s after the demise of the bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes, it did not adopt the old state-centric model. Globalization and the region's increased structural heterogeneity rendered the old model inoperative, and the old progressive politics was left stranded. The centrality of the working classes and the "natural" representation of these layers by the left had simply evaporated. The left, as Marcelo Cavarozzi (1993) argues, although closest to the popular classes, was singularly inept in interpreting these changes and in seeking to reintegrate its historic project into the new reality.

An influential wide-ranging and sober appraisal of the role of the left in the new dispensation by Carlos Castañeda (1993) begins with a painful recognition of the magnitude of the defeat suffered by the left in Latin America and the need for a complete overhaul of its founding assumptions and guiding strategies. The end of the motivating utopia of socialism is acknowledged. Now, "the very idea of a totalizing alternative to the status quo is called into question" (1993: 267). The very idea of revolution is questioned, and the need for a new paradigm is stressed throughout. Castañeda focuses on the pressing need for an alternative progressive socioeconomic strategy to counter the neoliberal hegemony, one that will entail a national development strategy oriented toward exports and the establishment of a genuine welfare state. He calls for a new political paradigm based on a new social pact embracing a broad coalition in pursuit of radical democratic transformation. Redemption times are over, but the struggle for transformation is beginning again.

Of course, one reaction to Castañeda's reasonable revolutionary reformism has been simply to repeat the old incantations. One hostile reviewer of *La*

utopía desarmada called it "an attempt to justify politically the rightist and pro-imperialist course that the continent's 'left' has been taking in practice and to provide it with a systematic theoretical generalization" (Oviedo, 1996). There is shock and horror that the word "socialism" is being abandoned and the market economy taken as a given. Castañeda's call for a viable reformist program is castigated as doing imperialism's dirty work, betrayal, and so on. In its stead this current simply repeats all the old watchwords, by now become ritual incantations of some obscure sect. Even more extraordinary, some prominent North American academics (e.g., Petras, 1990) have joined in with vicious attacks on Latin American intellectuals who have taken jobs in U.S.-funded research centers, gone soft (actually Petras accuses them of "intellectual dishonesty" and "intellectual decay"), and taken up innocuous research topics. It seems that the appeal of the "noble savage" is still a powerful one: better a glorious failure than a critical realistic confrontation with the world around us.

There are various currents of the left, broadly defined, that are seeking a renewal of classic socialist themes. The Chilean socialists and the Uruguayan Frente Amplio are examples. As Cavarozzi (1993: 229) notes, one of the main characteristics of this current is the belief that in the postauthoritarian era a prerequisite for a progressive alternative is "the (re)construction and consolidation of a party system that embraces distinct political and ideological options." This is a postmillenarian left with a post-Marxist understanding of class reductionism and the centrality of democracy. The economic strategy of this *renovador* left has stressed the need for dynamic growth and for income distribution, although in practice it has often reverted to the measures of neoliberalism. In his own way, Fernando Henrique Cardoso is part of this paradigmatic shift, albeit with a more clearly defined social democratic intonation (Cardoso, 1993) the viability of which in Latin America is still an open question.

A distinct, original, and philosophically grounded *renovador* discourse is that of Roberto Mangabeira Unger, who went from Harvard law professor to "populist" politician in Brazil. Following his theoretical writings (1987a; 1987b), Unger argues in his collection of political writings (1990) against the standard Marxist and other interpretations of institutions as simple effects of general laws of social evolution. He identifies Brazil's two main structural problems as economic dualism and the political cycle. For Unger "no political project has a necessary social agent" (1990: 20). With revolution becoming a mirage and its lack of achievement an excuse for inaction, Unger advocates for Brazil a revolutionary reformism and a bold transformation project going beyond that of social democracy. He argues against institutional fetishism and the mystification of economics. He also goes beyond one of the

crucial limits of modernizers in recognizing the profound duality of Brazilian society, with his militancy in the "populist" Partido Democrático Trabalhista (Democratic Labor party—PTB) making sense in that regard and reinforcing his critique (see Unger, 1995) of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers' party—PT).

Whereas the *renovadores* still operate within a modernist framework, there are other currents that seem to be responding more to postmodern themes. Decentralization is emerging as a new guiding theme in radical development thinking, and a new "municipal left" has emerged particularly in Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina. Decentralization, or the "new localism," is taking place in response to the effects of globalization. Part of a general ferment involving social movements and the radical church has been a flourishing of local activity by the left. In part this is a response to failures at the national level and a fading of the socialist dream, but there is also a positive aspect in the revalorization of democracy and increased popular participation. It is not a trend free of contradictions, as the left local governments in Buenos Aires, Montevideo, and many cities of Brazil have found to their cost. Nevertheless, while the left may have found itself in possession of a poisoned chalice, this new dimension of progressive politics needs to be carefully analyzed.

For Frans Schuurman this new decentralizing discourse informing local democracy and municipal government is less a "progressive political project" on which the masses can bet their scarce resources and more "a globalized neoliberal scam resulting in disempowering the poor" (Schuurman, 1996). Leaving aside the somewhat forced binary opposition, we should consider carefully the real ambiguity of this new politics. It would seem, indeed, part of a postmodern tendency to reject the universal in favor of the particular. It also seems to reflect the vigor, imagination, and energy of the new social movements that began to hold sway among the left in the 1980s. Yet we should heed David Harvey's warning against practices that seek "to reinforce local community solidarity and tradition" (1989: 277) against universalism and globalism, with its echoes of Nazism. The reality in Latin America is likely to be more prosaic, with a balance being struck between some political gains in terms of "empowerment" and a failure to "translate" these local advances to the national terrain, where media-based popularity contests are likely to prevail.

The phenomenon of the "postmodern guerrilla" has now become a somewhat facile media construction. Nevertheless, the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico, does present some extremely relevant novel aspects. The Zapatista rebellion is, indeed, "postmodern" in its combination of an indigenous character with the use of modern computer networks to spread its

message. It is democratic in its program, its methods, and its activities: "Our struggle follows the Constitution, which is held high by its call for justice and equality" (Declaration of War, 1996). It addresses the functionaries of the Mexican state in the discourse of the Mexican revolution: "We ask that other powers of the nation advocate to restore the legitimacy and the stability of the nation." Against the tradition of personalism, Sub-Comandante Marcos "speaks in a more collective heart, not a caudillo in the old style, in that image," as he puts it himself. In their struggle against the centralized and corrupt Mexican political system, the Zapatistas have launched a new democratic imaginary. The power of these words and images through the electronic networks of their supporters has added a new dimension to democratic struggle.

If the Zapatistas have been taken up as exemplars of the new postmodern politics, the Senderistas in Peru are seen to represent its darker side. That is to say, Sendero Luminoso is a product of the perverse, decentered modernity that we call postmodernism. Sendero is a reflection of the massive poverty and social disintegration that peripheral postmodernism produces. It is at once the past, with its harking back to bygone eras, and the terrifying future of Latin America if a viable transformation project does not materialize. Condemnation is somewhat beside the point from a left that continues to bicker, jump on opportunist bandwagons, and singularly fail to articulate an alternative hegemonic vision for its society. There are now at least fragments of an opposition to neoliberalism from the *renovadores*, the *basistas* of the Brazilian Partido dos Trabalhadores, the municipal left of the Southern Cone, and quite distinct currents such as the Zapatistas, who demonstrate that the Sandinistas were not the last revolutionaries in Latin America.

PARADIGMS

Our paradigms, our problematics, our "ways of seeing" are all in question. Postmodernism in its various guises, languages, and political projects is both symptom and cause of this crisis. As Sousa Santos says, "Ours is a time of paradigmatic, epistemological, and, though less visibly or more embryonically, sociocultural-political transition as well" (1995: 445). Postmodernism, if nothing else, points us toward the ambiguity, the complexity, and the ephemeral nature of these new/transitional times. In this positive and progressive reading of postmodernism—not the only one, of course—we take for granted "the idea that all forms of knowledge are partial and local; they are contextualized" (1995: 438-439). These are some of the notions that will guide our survey of some of the recent debates around a development paradigm, particularly in Latin America. Our purpose, inevitably, will be the

deconstruction of absolute knowledge and an exploration of the "crisis of truth" reflected in many disciplines today.

The general debates on development in the 1980s began to focus on the perceived "impasse" in the field. In Frans Schuurman's influential collection *Beyond the Impasse*, the conclusion was that "the construction of a post-impasse development theory on a non-reductionist and non-teleological basis is the challenge of the 1990s" (1993: 32). The felt need to return to a more conventional field was expressed by Schuurman in a later collection when he argued somewhat bluntly (and ultimately one-sidedly) that "postmodernism is merely the last phase of a longer process whereby cultural identities in the Third World have been appropriated by Northern imperialism" (1994: 44). Another way out of the perceived impasse was articulated by David Booth along anti- rather than post-Marxist lines leading straight back to the tired categories of conventional sociology. This return to the safety of the academy and the false rigor of the disciplines is manifest in his glib dismissal of poststructuralist feminism (1994: 300): "To my mind, the suggestion that there is a special magic associated with social research that concentrates on gender issues is naïve."

In Latin America, the development theory debates played themselves out around the rise and fall of the modernization and dependency paradigms in particular. These were grand paradigms, metanarratives in the best modernist tradition. Dependency went the way of *dependentismo* to be "consumed in the U.S.A." (Cardoso, 1977). The modes-of-production perspective was unable to fill the vacuum and prone to degenerate into a vulgar or theological Marxism. The bureaucratic-authoritarian state framework and the subsequent transition-to-democracy school provided much valuable understanding but tended toward rather rigid schematizing in the best tradition of U.S. political science. With the Foucauldian boom of the 1980s, much social science work in Latin America constituted an epistemological break from the grand totalizing perspectives. As Francisco de Oliveira (1986: 25) notes, the Foucauldian turn away from generalization and the various structuralisms signaled "a loss of confidence in social change and the theories and paradigms which called for social transformation."

If dependency was the last of the radical metaparadigms, its demise would repay careful scrutiny. The genesis, development, and crisis of this paradigm is well described by Cris Kay (1989). What needs reinforcing, from a poststructuralist perspective, is the fatal flaw of dependency as mirror image of the developmentalist mainstream. Derrida has alerted us to the dangers of "logocentrism," through which "even the most radically critical discourse easily slips into the form, the logic, and the explicit postulations of precisely

what it seeks to contest" (Manzo, 1991: 8). As Audre Lorde used to say, "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house." This is why it has been so difficult to construct a critical counterdiscourse to the mainstream development theories. It is only with the advent of poststructuralism and postcolonialism that the real crisis of authority of the Western knowing subject has been fully recognized. These approaches have developed a critique of foundationalist theories of knowledge and sought to open up contested epistemological spaces.

Apart from geography it has been in anthropology that this new critical move has had most effect. This goes beyond the so-called literary turn in anthropology to the situation described by Stephen Tyler (1987: xi) in which

> the easy assumptions of the old order of discourse—of wholeness, consensus, clarity, closure, telos, and even order itself—seem awkward, unfamiliar, and almost embarrassing, rather in the way of someone speaking of last year's fashion as if it were last year, speaking seriously, and not in parody of the unspeakable.

The "crisis of representation" that affected the whole of the social sciences was particularly acute in anthropology, where the accepted notion of "culture" was seriously undermined by postmodernism. As Antonius Robben (1995: 157) argues, "Postmodernism criticizes the tendency of anthropology to make the world commeasurable through an epistemology of totalizing holism." The arrogance and self-confidence of the modern is replaced by a critical science of the discontinuous, the paradoxical, and, ultimately, the unknown.

In Latin American studies, we have seen a slow and uneven growth in awareness of the postmodernist challenge. For a time, many on the left rejected postmodernism as yet another metropolitan fad and a dangerous distraction from the tasks of the struggle. At best, postmodernism was seen as a form of disenchantment with modernity. Yet in literary and cultural studies more generally the postmodern turn began to take effect (see, e.g., Bell, Le May, and Orr, 1993). In post-Pinochet Chile, the *Revista de Crítica Cultural* marked a determination by part of the progressive intelligentsia not to fall back into the old ways of the party political left as if nothing had happened since Allende. The journal's editor, Nelly Richard (1995: 308-309), argues against reducing postmodernism to good/progressive or bad/reactionary:

> The uses of the postmodernist register for critical debate in Latin America lie, above all, in the appropriation-reconversion of certain figures (fragmentation, hybridism, de-centering, etc.) that are singled out for the concrete ways in which they bear on *local* problematics of our histories and societies.

The new concerns made themselves felt in David Lehman's 1990 text *Democracy and Development in Latin America*, which reviewed the shift from the dependency to the democracy paradigm but then went on to focus on the radical church and on the new social movements. Lehman developed a theory of *basismo* based on grassroots empowerment that points to "another" mode of development (cf. Sachs, 1992). There are signs here of a Foucauldian conception of power and notions of the private/public deeply influenced by feminism. If this text was transitional toward postmodernist concerns, Sarah Radcliffe and Sallie Westwood's 1996 *Remaking the Nation* was explicitly influenced by poststructuralism, seen as "exciting and illuminating." A focus on national identities, cultural formations, and imaginaries placed this text, if unevenly and uneasily, in poststructuralist terrain. Examining the Zapatista movement among others, the authors conclude that "the power of these alternative discourses to displace and reformulate prevailing practice is highly contingent and localized" (Radcliffe and Westwood, 1996: 169). Something similar could be said about the type of analysis advanced in their book.

Although there is as yet no new paradigm, there are two areas in particular where the new concerns are making themselves felt. There is a large body of literature on the new social movements (see, e.g., Slater, 1985; Escobar and Alvarez, 1992) that both derives from and contributes to the development of poststructuralist theory. Sousa Santos refers in this regard to "the remarkable reinvention of community life that has been carried out throughout Latin America for the past two decades by means of innovative research-and-action, popular movements, human rights struggles, liberation sociology, and communitarian popular culture" (1995: 38). The human rights movement in particular has reminded us that politics is more than a marketplace. The other crucial area is in relation to feminism and the women's movements (see, e.g., Jelin, 1990; Alvarez, 1990). New discursive spaces have been created where the voices of Latin American women themselves can be heard. There is a new emphasis on multiple identities and a celebration of difference. Parpart and Marchand (1995: 18) refer, appositely, to a new recognition that "women's identities are constructed and fluid, and the world is full of uncertainty and confusion."

To conclude, we would at most have a nonparadigmatic paradigm to guide our enquiries, because a repetition of the old notion would be alien to the postmodernist spirit. We need, as Sousa Santos puts it, "to accept and reassess chaos" in part because this is a strategy "capable of tilting knowledge toward emancipation" (1995: 27). Our theories should, perhaps, seek less to order the disordered world around us, to impose hierarchy on all phenomena. The idea of an integrative modernization and of smooth homogenization makes little sense in the "hybrid" Latin America of uneven development. The

"chaos" some call postmodernism in Latin America cannot be dissolved by scientific sleight-of-hand. The crisis of authority of all metanarratives leaves the field open. Postmodernism can be/is appropriated by the preachers of neoliberalism and its clichés used to naturalize the new oppressions. Yet postmodernism is also the rebellion of the margins and the decentering of Western man. As Nelly Richard says, "Postmodernism lends itself to a multiplicity of significations. . . . Postmodernism signifies for us . . . a *horizon of meanings*" (1995: 308).

REFERENCES

Alvarez, S.

1990 *Engendering Democracy in Brazil: Women's Movements in Transition Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bauman, Z.

1986 "The left as the counter-culture of modernity." *Telis*, no. 70.

Bell, S., A. Le May, and L. Orr (eds.)

1993 *Critical Theory, Cultural Politics, and Latin American Narrative*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Beilharz, P.

1994 *Postmodern Socialism*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Booth, D.

1994 "How far beyond the impasse? A provisional summing up," in D. Booth (ed.), *Rethinking Social Development: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Harlow: Longman.

Bourdieu, P.

1988 *Homo academicus*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Boyne, R., and A. Rattansi

1990 "The theory and politics of postmodernism: By way of an introduction," in R. Boyne and A. Rattansi (eds.), *Postmodernism and Society.* London: Macmillan.

Brown, R. U.

1995 "Postmodern representation, postmodern affirmation," in R. U. Brown (ed.), *Postmodern Representations*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Brunner, J. J.

1987 "Notas sobre la modernidad y lo postmoderno en la cultura latino américana." *David y Goliath* 17(52).

Calderón, F., M. Hopenhayn, and E. Ottone

1996 *Esa esquiva modernidad: Desarrollo, ciudadanía y cultura en América Latina y el Caribe*. Caracas: Nueva Sociedad.

Callinicos, A.

1989 *Against Postmodernism*. Oxford: Polity Press.

Cardoso, F. H.

1977 "The consumption of dependency theory in the United States." *Latin American Research Review* 12 (3).

1993 "Desafios de la socialdemocracia en América Latina," in M. Vellinga (ed.), *Democracia y política en América Latina*. Mexico City: Siglo XXI.

Castañeda, C.
1993 *La utopía desarmada*. Buenos Aires: Ariel.
Cavarozzi, M.
1993 "La izquierda en América del Sur: la política como unica opción," in M. Vellinga (ed.), *Democracia y política en América Latina*. Mexico City: Siglo XXI.
Crush, J.
1995 "Introduction," in J. Crush (ed.), *Power of Development*. London: Routledge.
Declaration of War
1996 *El Despertador Mexicano*, January 1.
Escobar, A.
1984-1985 "Discourse and power in development: Michel Foucault and the relevance of his work to the Third World." *Alternatives* 10 (Winter).
Escobar, A. and S. Alvarez (eds.)
1992 *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy.* Boulder: Westview Press.
Gott, R.
1996 "No future for rebels trapped in past." *The Guardian*, December 21.
Habermas, J.
1985 "Jürgen Habermas: a philosophical, political profile." *New Left Review*, no. 151.
Harvey, D.
1989 *The Condition of Postmodernity.* Oxford: Blackwell.
Jameson, F.
1991 *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. London: Verso.
Jelin, E. (ed.)
1990 *Women and Social Change in Latin America*. London: Zed Books.
Kay, C.
1989 *Latin American Theories of Development and Underdevelopment*. London: Routledge.
Lehman, D.
1990 *Democracy and Development in Latin America*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
Lyotard, J. F.
1984 *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Manzo, K.
1991 "Modernist discourse and the crisis of development theory." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 26(2).
Marchand, M. and J. Parpart (eds.)
1995 *Feminism, Postmodernism, Development*. London: Routledge.
Mohanty, C.
1991 "Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses," in C. Mohanty, A. Russo, and L. Torres (eds.), *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Nicholson, L. (ed.)
1990 *Feminism/Postmodernism*. London: Routledge.
Nueva Sociedad
1995 "América Latina: la visión de los cientistas sociales." No. 139.
Oliveira, F. de
1986 "Política y ciencias sociales en el Brasil, 1964-1985." *David y Goliath* 16 (49).

Oviedo, L.
1996 "'La utopía desarmada': El futuro de la izquierda en América Latina." *En Defensa au Marxismo*, no. 12 (May).
Parpart, J. and M. Marchand
1995 "Exploding the canon: an introduction/conclusion," in M. Marchand and J. Parpart (eds.), *Feminism, Postmodernism, Development*. London: Routledge.
Petras, J.
1990 "The metamorphosis of Latin America's intellectuals," in J. Petras and M. Morley (eds.), *U.S. Hegemony Under Siege*. London: Verso.
Radcliffe, S. and S. Westwood
1996 *Remaking the Nation: Peace, Identity, and Politics in Latin América*. London: Routledge.
Richard, N.
1995 "Reply to Vidal (from Chile)," in J. Beverley, M. Aronna, and J. Oviedo (eds.), *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin América*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Robben, A.
1995 "Who's afraid of post-, modern, and ism?" in K. Genijen, D. Raven, and J. de Wolf (eds.), *Post-Modernism and Anthropology: Theory and Practice*. Assen: Van Gorcum.
Sachs, W. (ed.)
1992 *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power.* London: Zed Books.
Said, E.
1985 *Orientalism*. London: Penguin.
Santos, B. de Sousa
1995 *Toward a New Common Sense*. London: Routledge.
Schuurman, F.
1993 "Introduction: development theory in the 1990s," in F. Schuurman (ed.), *Beyond the Impasse: New Directions in Development Theory.* London: Zed Books.
1994 "Agency, structure, and globalization in development studies," in F. Schuurman (ed.), *Current Issues in Development Studies*. Saarbrucken: Verlag für Entwicklungspolitik Breitenbach.
1996 "The decentralization discourse: Post-Fordist paradigm or neoliberal cul-de-sac?" Mimeo, University of Nijmegen.
Slater, D. (ed.)
1985 *New Social Movements and the State in Latin America*. Amsterdam: CEDLA.
Tyler, S.
1987 *The Unspeakable: Discourse, Dialogue, and Rhetoric in the Postmodern World*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
Unger, R. M.
1987a *Social Theory: Its Situations and Its Tasks*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
1987b *False Necessity: Anti-Necessitarian Social Theory in the Service of Radical Democracy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
1990 *A alternativa transformadora: Como democratizar o Brasil*. Rio: Guanabara Koogan.
1995 "The future of Brazil's Workers' party." *Constellations* 2(2).
Williams, P. and L. Chrisman (eds.)
1994 *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory.* London: Harvester.
Williams, R. L.
1995 *The Postmodern Novel in Latin America*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Young, R.
1990 *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West*. London: Routledge.
Yudice, G., J. Franco, and J. Flores (eds.)
1992 *On Edge: The Crisis of Contemporary Latin American Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.