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**BARRIENTOS AND DEBRAY:
ALL GONE OR MORE TO COME?**

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The prominence and popularity of biography in explaining politics have been surprisingly little affected by the advent of social science. Moreover, we have in recent years seen the re-emergence of a rather distinct genre – that of ‘parallel lives’ – which was most notably developed by Plutarch in the first century A.D., with more than two dozen sketches of Greek and Roman figures.¹ Plutarch’s influence has, of course, proved enduring, not only through Shakespeare’s use of North’s translation but also via Dryden, Racine and Emerson amongst others. It is, then, somewhat surprising to discover no mention of him in three modern studies: J. H. Elliott’s *Richelieu and Olivares*, Michael Beschloss’s *Kennedy and Khrushchev*, and *Hitler and Stalin. Parallel Lives* by Alan Bullock.²

Perhaps this silence on the part of such eminent scholars, at least one of whom received a ‘classical education’, simply reflects modern acceptance of an approach that Plutarch himself never fully explained or defended. Yet even if this is the case, it is worth quoting the observation of D. A. Russell:

‘. . . either character or circumstance may be the basis of a *sunkrisis* (comparison); similar events affecting dissimilar persons and similar persons reacting to contrasting events alike provide a suitable field for the exercise. It is basically a rhetorical procedure; but it is rescued from purely rhetorical ingenuity by its value as a way of concentrating and directing the moral reflections which are the primary purpose of biography’.³

Of course, I don’t have the time to provide even a proper biographical sketch of René Barrientos and Régis Debray. Furthermore, one doubts the contemporary usefulness of an approach as didactic as that of Plutarch with respect to virtue and vice, even when reflecting on the politics of Latin America through the experiences of a conservative general and a radical intellectual.

Nevertheless, Russell’s argument is far from wholly redundant for these two individuals, who in fact never met each other and yet were the principal surviving protagonists on either side of the *guerrilla* staged by Ernesto Ché Guevara in Bolivia in 1967. They may, then, plausibly be taken as representative not only of polarised political traditions and outlooks but also of a binding antagonism. Although these phenomena are by no means ancient, memory is frequently tyrannised by fashion, especially when this operates as mercilessly as it does within academic life. At the same time, for most of us Bolivia is a place as obscure as it appears to be exotic. Let me, therefore, look at each man before reflecting very briefly on the proposition that the qualities

with which they are most closely associated now belong to a surpassed age and have been rendered redundant and ridiculous by the consolidation of a liberal democratic culture based upon modern capitalism and the hegemony of consensus.

General Barrientos's reputation has not stood the test of time or resisted the invective and denigration of his many enemies. But in the last decade of his life – including four years as President of Bolivia – he possessed an impressive image at home and abroad as a charismatic military strongman or *caudillo*. In his recent biography of De Gaulle – himself scarcely a besuited wimp – Jean Lacouture says that Barrientos's reputation 'made people tremble'.⁴ This is exaggerated but unsurprising since the picture abroad was very much that painted by *The Times* in its obituary of '... a handsome ... Airforce general (who) was the target of many assassination attempts, (a) dark-haired president (who) carried three bullets in his body'.⁵ This, too, was not strictly true, but it pales in comparison with some of the home-grown descriptions heaped upon Barrientos when he was at his zenith: Condor of the Andean Skies; Creator of the Second Republic; Paladin of Social Democracy; Restorer of Faith in the National Revolution; and General of the People.⁶ This last title is also that of a hagiography written for wages by Fernando Diez de Medina, who includes in his 350 pages the phrase, 'Barrientos was Bolivia, Bolivia was Barrientos'.⁷

Such an assertion strikes one as innocently foolish until we recall the declaration made by Rudolf Hess at a Nazi rally in 1934 that, 'Adolf Hitler is Germany, and Germany is Adolf Hitler'.⁸ Even if – as is quite likely – Diez de Medina was simply borrowing from the not inconsiderable corpus of National Socialist literature that had made its way into Bolivia in the 1930s and 1940s, this resonance between euphoric nationalist sentiment and personalist political leadership is not uncommon in modern Latin America.⁹ Barrientos, for all his authoritarianism, was no Nazi, and he never succeeded in organising a proper political party to replace the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR), the movement which had led the revolution of 1952, to which he himself had belonged even before that revolution, and which he overthrew in a coup in November 1964 when he was serving as constitutional Vice-President.

René Barrientos Ortuño was born in 1919 in the small provincial town of Tarata in the department of Cochabamba. Not untypically for this region, he was of mixed Quechua and Spanish blood, and his fluency in the Quechua language was later to play a key part in developing both regionalist backing and something of an indigenous identity in one of the two Latin American countries – the other is Guatemala – which still had a majority Amerindian population.

Barrientos's parents were of humble, rather than poor, background, but he was orphaned young and, losing his brother César in the Chaco War against Paraguay, his upbringing was overseen by sisters Corina and Elena, upon whom

he later depended heavily. His passage from local seminary to military college was not unusual for somebody of his background. Nor, in fact, was Barrientos particularly distinctive in his admiration for the radical nationalist officers Germán Busch and Gualberto Villarroel, who from the late 1930s attempted to curb the power of large tin companies and reduce Bolivia's political dependency on Britain and the USA. Too junior to belong to the nationalist military lodges that supported these leaders, Barrientos nonetheless opposed the conservatives who came to power in 1946, and he penned a very short and rather uninspiring pamphlet calling for 'the glorious and valiant army to free itself from vulgar obeisance to the tin companies'.¹⁰ Cashiered, but having already qualified as a pilot, he flew missions for the insurgent MNR in the civil war of 1949, and in April 1952, following the party's eventual capture of power in a three-day insurrection, it was Barrientos who volunteered to bring the MNR leader Víctor Paz Estenssoro back from exile in Buenos Aires.

The MNR nationalised the major tin mines, decreed an extensive agrarian reform, and introduced universal suffrage for the poorest country in mainland America. Under strong pressure from the left-wing miners' union, the party had little choice but to acquiesce in the formation of popular militias, which for a while threatened the very existence of the regular armed forces. Perhaps wisely, Barrientos spent a fair part of the 1950s on postings and courses abroad, including, according to his enemies, a spell in a US psychiatric hospital. In all events, it is only in the early 1960s, following the Cuban Revolution and the accelerating division and right-wing drift of the MNR that he came firmly into the public eye. As the party's authority decomposed and its rule became more violent, Barrientos exploited his dual role as commander of the airforce and leader of the MNR's military lodge to promote the restoration of the armed forces, staging a thinly disguised bonapartist campaign that attracted increasing support from Washington and the very private companies against which he had railed in the 1940s. Indeed, once he came to office, the general reversed a great many of the political positions that he had championed a decade earlier.

If Barrientos was widely denounced as an opportunist and traitor, at least he staked out his ground emphatically, using language that manifested little or no modulation:

'The Fatherland is in danger. A vast Communist conspiracy, planned and funded by international extremism has exploited the good faith of some sectors of labour in trying to pit the people against the armed forces . . . It doesn't matter that the snipers, the masters of blackmail, demagogy and lies heap up mountains of calumny against the armed forces. They are frustrated; their epilepsy and maladies do not impress our glorious institution, effectively at the service of the people and against the traffickers who suck on the credulity and good will of the workers.'¹¹

The same man who expressed these sentiments ensured that he was made a freemason days before coming to office, and having done so promptly appointed eight close relatives to ministries, ambassadorships or directorships of state corporations.¹² He was, perhaps, not overly prejudiced in such a macho culture by the fact that, rather like John Kennedy, he had a high sex drive over which he exercised poor control, although to describe him as Priapic is probably to give his activities an undeserved classical gloss.¹³ Only recognising eight children as his own but promising to adopt more than 50, Barrientos was thrice married, once bigamously, to his 'first lady' Rosemarie Galindo – a union that he failed to regularise, he said, 'because of pressure of work', instead contracting nuptials with Cati Rivas a month before he died.¹⁴

Such antics greatly exasperated the prelates, but the populace as a whole seemed more perplexed by Barrientos's efforts to justify the outlawing of trade unions, manipulations of the Constitution, erratic suppression of opposition parties, and attacks on the student movement:

'I am', said the President, 'a man of the Christian left – nationalist in economics, democratic in doctrine. But this democracy is just, active, belligerent, dynamic and profoundly revolutionary because I am seeking only social justice and the happiness of the peasant, worker and middle class majority; in sum, the happiness of the people.'¹⁵

Of course, one should never underestimate the power of even the most incomprehensible and leaden rhetoric when it is delivered with energy and conviction. And it is to this, I feel, that Barrientos owed his significant popularity. He was, above all else, a man of action for whom heroic feats were essential and sheer movement an adequate substitute for rationality.

Barrientos was by far the most peripatetic of Bolivia's presidents. Often he would conduct essential business in La Paz early into the morning so that he could spend the daylight hours moving around the republic, dropping into the smallest and most isolated communities to shake hands, share a drink or meal, distribute footballs and bicycles, speechify and, above all, ratify the existence of the president. Such paternalism was, of course, an integral feature of traditional patterns of authority, the exchange of hospitality and fealty for gifts and recognition reaffirming identities in a manner that is only partially understood in terms of patron and client. It was all made possible in an exceptionally mountainous country courtesy of the helicopter, first used over the Bolivian *altiplano* in mid-1962 and rapidly adopted by Barrientos, who enjoyed the permanent loan of a Bell craft from Gulf Oil, one of the companies favoured by his 'open-door' economic policies.

One civic-minded citizen concerned at the expense of such activity wrote to the press to observe that in two years these trips must have cost at least

\$700,000, the president having travelled the equivalent of two-thirds of the distance between the earth and the moon.¹⁶ This comparison is telling because, of course, Barrientos ruled Bolivia, and ruled it from the air, at a time when space travel had captured the global imagination. Sometimes this occurred rather too vividly, as when a puma was reported to have landed from outer space near the town of Ayo Ayo, just a fortnight before Telstar was launched and while John Glenn's capsule was on display in Mexico City.¹⁷ In such a context, though, even an aviator of most illiberal outlook and attachment to 'order' might appear not only glamorous but also dazzlingly modern.

It seems unlikely that René Barrientos would have comprehended Aristotle's bracketing of the virtue of courage with the vice of audacity as well as cowardice.¹⁸ Yet if he vacillated over major political decisions in a manner that belied his impulsive personal style, he could never be accused of bodily cowardice.¹⁹ Indeed, it might even be said that his career hinged on three instances of physical fortitude or suffering.

Barrientos first won widespread popular acclaim in October 1961 when some 20,000 people gathered at the El Alto aerodrome above La Paz to watch a demonstration of parachuting, which had been attempted only twice before in the country – in 1939 and 1947. This event – central to a much-publicised aeronautical week organised by the general – went horribly wrong when the 'chutes of three of the 15 soldiers who made the drop failed to open and they fell to their deaths in front of the crowd. Faced with accusations of allowing his men to use inferior equipment, Barrientos simply invited the press back to El Alto, put on one of the dead men's parachute and executed a faultless jump himself.²⁰

In February 1964 the general staged an energetic but futile effort at the MNR's Ninth National Convention to have himself nominated as vice-presidential candidate for the general elections to be held in August of that year. Upon hearing of his defeat, he got heartily drunk and indulged in a number of emotional outbursts that did not augur well for President Víctor Paz and the apparatchiks who had manipulated the convention. A month later at two in the morning, Barrientos was shot as he left the home of his sister Corina following a meeting with supporters. The attack, which was very probably staged by the MNR's political police, the *Control Político*, seemed finally to have removed a threatening loser as Barrientos, hit in the chest, collapsed to the ground. However, the bullet had struck the metal United States Airforce insignia habitually worn by the general, shattering on impact with the result that no organs were damaged and he suffered only slight flesh wounds, caused by splinters.

Perhaps the most sober lesson which can be drawn from this incident is that the important thing about uniforms is that they are different. But Barrientos and

his US friends were taking no chances. At 8.45 am, following a brief operation, he was taken to El Alto, and by 6.15 pm he was in the Panama Canal Zone, recovering in a US military hospital. Víctor Paz, fully able to read the writing on the wall, moved quickly to have the elected vice-presidential candidate resign and, after an enterprising re-interpretation of party statutes, he was able to send a cable to Panama offering Barrientos the position as his running-mate.²¹ This was readily accepted, the office being exploited within six months to depose Paz and end a dozen years of MNR rule.

A year later, having taken dictatorial power, the general was again shot, but because he was driving a jeep and wearing protective clothing, of the three bullets that struck him only one caused a major wound – in the buttocks. This shooting took place on the road between Tarata and Cochabamba, and Barrientos was immediately ferried to the house of his sister Elena, where he remained for several days in what appears to have been a deliberately contrived atmosphere of crisis – almost melodrama – as delegations of officers visited him to express their backing and urge a return to the capital. The tenuous gravity of the moment was not assisted by the fact that the detectives sent to investigate the crime had to exclude the general's underpants as evidence because they had, quite fittingly, already been laundered in 'Ace' washing powder by Leonor Lezama, Elena's maid.²² The tension cultivated during this incident was again exploited by Barrientos, who, having tested his support within the high command, and probably his own self-confidence as well, called a precipitate halt to the truce with his opponents and launched a major offensive against the left.

It is tempting – especially within the academy – to ignore all but the folkloric qualities of such matters. This, though, would be a mistake – one, I sense, made by Ché Guevara and Régis Debray in 1967. It is certainly true that René Barrientos had by then become a figure loathed by many in the working class for his violent record of repression, and he was despised by much of a middle class youth negotiating the rapids between the elitism of adolescent Christian Democracy and that of a socially deracinated Leninism. It is also the case that Barrientos himself played a minimal role in the military operations against Guevara. Moreover, his propaganda war against the *guerrilla* was seen abroad as complete buffoonery. And yet one has to ask oneself why his regime was so little threatened by this insurgency when, despite a multitude of errors made by the radical left, so many of its charges were entirely accurate and widely accepted. Undoubtedly, the calculating young rationalists were spectacularly wrong-footed by an expressive, instinctive politician whose populist edge lay precisely in his unpredictability, and whose vulnerability was masked – not revealed – by his capacity for mouthing gibberish.

Barrientos survived Ché Guevara by some 18 months. He died – as might have been expected – in a helicopter crash on one of his dashes around the

country. For a while foul play was suspected – not least on the part of Cati Rivas's ex-husband, the ebullient Captain Faustino Rico Toro – but the laborious autopsies practised on the defunct president could not shake the most sober explanation. Unable to accept this, some, including police Colonel Oscar Vargas Valenzuela, resorted to the astral plane of investigation and consulted the general's spirit – an inadvisable course of action since the Bolivian Church lacks a qualified exorcist, and there stands in the city of Oruro a house, once occupied by German dabblers in the occult, that remains empty and haunted even after the ministrations of officials sent from Rome. As it happens, Colonel Vargas was informed by the general's shade that his death was 'due to a simple accident'.²³

When he was in the realm of the quick Barrientos had declared, 'to die is part of life. Those who fear death cannot command'.²⁴ This is one of the few sentiments that he assuredly shared with Guevara. It is also, perhaps, not surprising, in view of his experience in Bolivia 25 years ago, to find in Debray's *Critique of Political Reason* the declaration that, 'Death is the lyrical core of the individual, the site where he discovers that he is irreplaceable'.²⁵

In turning to Régis Debray one might legitimately expect some relief from the kind of excitements that have just been described. This, however, can only be partial for although Debray may properly be described as an intellectual, he was very young when he resolved to harness his analytical skills directly to the struggle for revolutionary socialism. To the best of my knowledge, the only time that he has been fully employed in an academic post was in 1966, in Cuba. It is, then, not entirely surprising that when, on 20 April 1967, Debray was detained by elements of the Bolivian army's Fourth Division near the village of Muyupampa in the middle of the guerrilla zone of operations his protestations that he was only covering the campaign as a journalist were not readily accepted. Several days later a rather elated General Barrientos told the international press that Debray was a guerrilla and agent of Fidel Castro whose adventures would end in Bolivia.²⁶ In fact, neither claim was proved to be true, but the first was more than plausible and, for a while, the second seemed highly likely.

Jules Régis Debray was born in Paris in September 1940, the son of relatively affluent lawyers who were soon to become members of the Resistance. When he was arrested in Bolivia his mother, Janine, active in conservative politics, was Vice President of the municipal council of Paris, on which she had served for 20 years; his father, Georges, a distinguished attorney, was a member of the Council of Lawyers and a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. Such a respectable bourgeois background later proved vital in promoting a high-profile campaign in Debray's defence, but it did not apparently provoke an exceptionally talented youth to acts of social rebellion or idle iconoclasm. Indeed, Régis appears to have fulfilled the exacting

expectations of his parents, receiving the 1957 national philosophy prize for secondary students from his mother's hands and graduating first from the Lycée Louis-le-Grand in 1959. That year his parents rewarded him with a holiday in the USA, but when in Miami he diverted to Havana for several weeks in order to witness the recently triumphant Cuban Revolution. On his return Debray entered the Ecole Normale Supérieure to study for a master's in philosophy with Louis Althusser. In 1961 he visited South America for several months; and he returned there in 1963 for a stay of 18 months, visiting every country except Paraguay. Subsequently he began to study for a doctorate in social anthropology under the supervision of Maurice Godelier.

Debray was, therefore, scarcely wet behind the ears when he was arrested in Bolivia. However, local opinion seems to have been that the combination of his intelligence and self-esteem – even some sympathetic commentators talked of arrogance – had transformed the Frenchman into what is known in that part of the world as a *S'unchu Luminaria* – the sense of which might be translated as 'somebody whose fine words mesmerise only momentarily'. Another reaction was that Debray was a *Q'incha Qhara*, which literally means 'unlucky European' but which can also signify 'European who brings bad luck'. Certainly, as he awaited a court martial on the eve of his 27th birthday, charged with murder, robbery, grievous bodily harm and rebellion, Régis Debray appeared to be paying a very high price for a *folie de grandeur* that compounded the assurance of a comfortable metropolitan upbringing, the pretensions of Althusser's marxist theoreticism, and the presumptions of Cuban revolutionary internationalism. It is a heady mix and – combined with his significant literary talent – it should remind us that Debray, like Barrientos, can only be taken as 'representative' by virtue of his being outstanding.

A week after he had been arrested, beaten into a coma and threatened with death, Debray, understandably pessimistic about his prospects, started to write down some reflections on his short life. Initial declarations, such as 'Memories don't interest me', reverberate with the petulance with which he responded to his interrogators. But this brief memoir settles down as soon as its author casts his mind back to the regime at the rue d'Ulm and the outlook of the young philosophers at the Ecole Normale Supérieure:

'... we thought', he tells us, 'we could analyse our world and our hearts at arm's length . . . a fine philosopher who was guiding our steps as students, and had introduced us to Karl Marx, gave us the entrée to the kingdom that he was himself exploring, that of theoretical rigour and dialectical materialism, as a theory of general praxis . . . All very fine: theory draws its effectiveness from its rigorousness, and its rigorousness is effective because it separates "development in reality" from "development in thought", the "operation of society" from the "operation

of knowledge". In other words, all we had to do to become good theoreticians was to be lazy bastards.²⁷

Under the circumstances this is a pardonable exaggeration, but it is also quite a justified response to Althusser's progressive elimination of the core philosophical problem of the guarantees of knowledge and truth as well as his relentless invective against the ideological illusions of immediate experience.

This passage is from Althusser's book *Reading Capital*, published in 1965, when Debray was back in Paris:

'We must take seriously the fact that the theory of history, in the strong sense, does not exist, or hardly exists as far as historians are concerned; that the concepts of existing history are therefore nearly always "empirical" concepts . . . that is, cross-bred with a powerful strain of ideology concealed behind its "obviousness".²⁸

As Perry Anderson has observed, such a position is an almost exact replica of Spinoza's logical progression from the monist dictum that 'Truth is the criterion both of itself and of falsehood' to the assertion that the primary delusion of humanity is the conviction that individuals are free in their volition, or, as Spinoza puts it, 'Their idea of freedom is simply their ignorance of any cause of their actions'.²⁹

It is not too difficult to see how such an approach complicates the issue of political commitment and daily practice for the radical philosopher. Certainly, it places a large question mark over Ché Guevara's slogan that it is 'the duty of the revolutionary to make the revolution' – a call to which Debray was exposed even before he was to grapple with Althusser's rejection of

'the empiricist model of a chance "hypothesis" whose verification must be provided by the political practice of history *before* we can affirm its "truth"'.³⁰

Combine these two positions and you can readily attempt to make the revolution free of any prior 'historical' verification of your ideas, or, alternatively, you might stoically restrict yourself to contemplation and criticism. Althusser tended to the latter option, albeit at some cost to his real-world relations with the leadership of the French Communist Party. It is, perhaps, telling that on 1 March 1967, just as Debray was making his way from La Paz to the guerrilla zone, Althusser wrote his student a letter, commenting on Debray's recently published book *Revolution in the Revolution?*. Althusser says:

‘The struggle poses urgent demands. But it is sometimes *politically urgent* to withdraw for a while, and to take stock; everything depends on the theoretical work done at that time . . . Time thus taken away from the struggle may ultimately be a saving of time . . . I see this as being the duty of all working class and revolutionary intellectuals. They are entrusted by the people in arms with the guardianship and extension of scientific knowledge.’³¹

It was, of course, too late. Debray, like many students, had drawn rather different conclusions to those of his professor. ‘The intellectual’, he wrote in *Revolution in the Revolution?*,

‘will try to grasp the present through preconceived ideological constructs and live it through books. He will be less able than others to invent, improvise, make do with available resources, decide instantly on bold moves when he is in a tight spot. Thinking that he already knows, he will learn more slowly, display less flexibility.’³²

Some might think this observation good for most occasions, but Debray was applying it to guerrilla warfare, with which strategy for the Latin American revolution he had already become closely identified through the publication in 1965 of an extended essay, ‘Castroism: the Long March in Latin America’.³³ Perhaps, despite the pious disclaimers just mentioned, he saw in guerrilla warfare more than just a repudiation of the *mores* and experience of the Ecole Normale Supérieure. Maybe he discerned in the conjunction of intellect and force that praxis about which Althusser had lectured and around which no small part of classical literature revolves?

Whatever the case, Debray’s writing on this subject is not essentially original. Despite a distinctive polemical flair and analytical insight, its central thrust is clearly derived from the interpretation of the Cuban Revolution made by Ché Guevara, who within months of the overthrow of Batista’s dictatorship produced an admirably cogent defence of what became known as *foquismo*. Guevara tells us,

‘We consider that the Cuban Revolution contributed three fundamental lessons to the conduct of revolutionary movements in America. They are:

1. Popular forces can win a war against the army.
2. It is not necessary to wait until all conditions for making revolution exist; the insurrection can create them.
3. In underdeveloped America the countryside is the basic area for armed conflict.

Of these three propositions, the first two contradict the defeatist attitude of revolutionaries or pseudo-revolutionaries who remain inactive and take refuge on the pretext that against a professional army nothing can be done,

who sit down to wait until in some mechanical way all necessary objective and subjective conditions are given without working to accelerate them.³⁴

Of course, the disastrous defeat of Guevara's own guerrilla was but the most poignant example of the insufficiencies of this compelling voluntarism, against which the political objections and historical evidence mounted up with tragic velocity. For our purposes there is no need to detail this process, which is the subject of a rich literature.³⁵ However, it is certainly worth noting that the appeal of a political philosophy rooted so positively in *making* a revolution and overcoming objective constraints through *action* is not limited to periods of radical optimism and advance; it may also – if not equally – acquire a constituency in times – such as our own – of embattlement and despair.

Debray's practical experience of conducting this struggle was short and sobering. Arriving at Ché's camp in the first week of March 1967 together with two other foreign visitors, he was initially anxious to become a combatant although he had entered Bolivia officially and as a journalist for a Mexican magazine. Guevara, however, immediately asked him to organise a solidarity campaign in France, and noted pithily in his diary that the suggestion that Debray return to Europe via Cuba was 'an idea which coincides with his desires to marry and have a child with his woman'. A week later Guevara, who gave Debray three interviews, noted that, 'the Frenchman stated too vehemently how useful he could be on the outside' – an account that Debray, to his considerable credit, himself volunteered before Ché's diary was published.³⁶ Indeed, at his trial the Frenchman – whom the guerrillas nicknamed 'Danton' – made an eloquent defence speech around his declaration, 'I regret that I am innocent'.³⁷ In this he stresses that Guevara even gave his increasingly burdensome visitors a choice of how and when to leave the force – an offer which, given the progressively vulnerable position of the guerrilla, clearly indicated that they were not subject to military discipline.³⁸

The fact that Debray was able to make an unashamedly heroic defence speech owes not a little to his lawyer, Raúl Novillo Villarroel, whose enterprising but careful demolition of the loose case made against his client revealed the determination of the three military judges to pass a verdict of guilty and impose the maximum sentence of 30 years. This should not surprise us – a score of young conscripts had been killed during the seven weeks of Debray's presence with the rebels, and yet now not only De Gaulle and Sartre but also Malraux, Robert Kennedy and Bertrand Russell were requesting a pardon and scrutinising the legal procedures and moral rectitude of their country. Moreover, the *guerrilla* had clearly been set up and led by Cubans, and here was this Frenchman who supported the whole enterprise and yet expected with Olympian condescension to get off because he had not himself squeezed a trigger. Recognising the odds – but not, I think, quite why they were

so poor – Debray cast aside caution. In a closed session, following an officially contrived outburst by spectators, he informed the colonels,

‘Each one has to decide which side he is on – on the side of military violence or guerrilla violence, on the side of violence that represses or violence that liberates. Crimes in the face of crimes . . . You choose certain ones, I choose others, that’s all.’³⁹

But it is not quite all, for while a colonel might indeed *commit* a crime, an intellectual would only *be on its side*. Debray, then, standing on firm legal ground, makes a moral virtue out of a necessity. ‘Guilty of what?’ he asks his judges. ‘And on what grounds? Political? Granted. Criminal? Inadmissible’.

‘. . . tell me: “We are condemning you because you are a Marxist-Leninist, because you wrote *Revolution in the Revolution?*, a book that was read by some guerrillas in your absence. We are condemning you because you are a confessed admirer of Fidel Castro and came here to speak with Ché without first requesting permission from the authorities . . .” That’s fine. I have nothing to say.’⁴⁰

Debray’s wish was not granted. Apart from anything else, the international furore caused by his trial had persuaded Barrientos to execute Guevara summarily in order to avoid an even worse outcry. Now that this had been done and still held the world’s attention a month later, there was nothing whatsoever to be gained from indulging the Frenchman.⁴¹

Debray spent over three years in prison before being released by a military president. In February 1968 he was allowed to marry his sweetheart, Elizabeth Burgos, who was given visiting rights for ten days every three months. He had, of course, nothing to do with the events in Paris of that year – a fact that might explain his subsequent interpretation that their ‘real meaning’ was the establishment of a new bourgeois republic on a ‘modern or American individualist agenda’.⁴² Upon his release he interviewed the Chilean president Salvador Allende, the leading regional exponent of ‘the peaceful road to socialism’, but whilst there are clear signs of Debray being chastened, he showed no major shift in his line. Indeed, after Allende’s death in 1973, the Frenchman wrote in his account of Guevara’s last campaign that ‘it is right to fight’.⁴³

The shift, I think, comes after Debray has settled his analytical accounts with the guerrilla experience in the two-volume work *La Critique des Armes*, the publication of which in 1974 coincided with the onset of dictatorial regimes in South America. Aside from several novels, apparently written for personal catharsis and not without some quite nasty things to say about readily identifiable individuals, Debray leaves Latin America and concentrates upon

France itself.⁴⁴ It is unremarkable, even from what little has already been described, that he should write a study of modern intellectuals – a survey that was predictably controversial and unusually ‘empirical’ in its approach.⁴⁵ Indeed, it is refreshing to find – even if only in a footnote in the *Critique of Political Reason* – this author declaring, ‘no concrete analysis of a given historical period can proceed by deduction (the use of categories). At most it can infer certain localised results and contrast them with a global conception of social history’.⁴⁶

At times the sheer eclecticism and lack of focus of this work put one in mind of Ortega y Gasset’s comment of Stendhal – that he ‘possessed a head full of theories; but . . . lacked the gifts of a theoretician’.⁴⁷ This may sound harsh, but to a non-theorist it looks like pretty good company to be keeping, and the view, I think, is justified by Debray’s reluctance to develop theories beyond his immediate polemical needs. This is the case in his latest work, *Que Vive la République*, a quite emotional text that places its author in the tradition of Michelet and Durkheim as he revindicates the state and the collective – even when known or felt through myth – against the particularities of civil society. One does not baulk when Debray effectively fingers post-modernism as landscaped ethnomethodology, but when he protests that the media today pays inordinate attention to the death of a celebrity from AIDS, wondering why it cannot take corresponding interest in the grandeur of a speech by Saint-Just, one feels that this – rather than ‘Danton’ – would have been a more fitting *nom de guerre* for his earlier incarnation.⁴⁸

Debray, of course, has been a servant of the state for over a decade, first advising President Mitterand on third world affairs and subsequently joining the Conseil d’Etat as well as serving as secretary of the South Pacific Council. It is, perhaps, a fitting irony that in this latter capacity he not only promoted a new regional university to ‘combat Anglo-Presbyterian morality’ but also defended the testing of nuclear devices on the Mururoa atoll by approving the detention of protesting squatters, including one Mr Charlie Chang and 17 members of his Taata Tahiti Tiana party who were found guilty under a 1935 statute relating to economic crimes. One does not, of course, imagine that Mr Chang and his followers played any part in Mitterand’s recent call for other states to follow his ‘unilateral’ halting of nuclear tests, but one is grateful that the choice of violence on offer was so clear-cut.

Since we have moved on rather precipitately 25 years from 1967 let me turn briefly to the question raised in the title – ‘all gone or more to come?’ – which, apart from a not entirely misplaced evocation of infantile loss and deferred gratification, signals the lurking presence of some very grand theory in the shape of Francis Fukuyama’s *The End of History and the Last Man*. This text, published in 1992, declares quite unambiguously that the ideal-types represented for us by Barrientos and Debray have no significant role to play in future world

events although they may possibly linger on the margins of the stage until market economics and liberal democracy have finally seeped into every last cranny.

This is assuredly not the place to get to grips with Dr Fukuyama's expansive thesis, but we should at least take note of the extraordinary confidence with which it is propounded.

'Technology', Fukuyama informs us, 'makes possible the limitless accumulation of wealth, and thus the satisfaction of an ever-expanding set of human desires. This process guarantees an increasing homogenization of all human societies, regardless of their historical origins or cultural inheritances. All countries undergoing economic modernization must increasingly resemble one another; they must unify nationally on the basis of a centralized state, urbanize, replace traditional forms of social organization like tribe, sect, and family with economically rational ones based on function and efficiency'.⁴⁹

For Fukuyama this is clear because we have already crossed the threshold of 'the end of history'. He is in no doubt that there will be, as he puts it, 'no further progress in the development of underlying principles and institutions because all of the really big questions (have) been settled'.⁵⁰ Moreover, he gives Latin America a quite significant role in a transition that nobody could sensibly deny has started to take place but that few would deign to insist – even with such a glorious *mélange* of borrowed philosophy, poor history and wholesale wishful thinking – is going to end where he says it will, still less that it is the last transition of all. Nonetheless, one has to accept that this is a theory that – rather like post-modernism – has proved quite resistant to the collapse of many of its particular features, reflecting more than a purely philosophical mood. Indeed, it might even bear out some of Debray's laconic ruminations on 'developments in thought' and 'developments in reality'.

There is no need to embark upon a detailed survey to comprehend why the present conjuncture in Latin America might contribute to the conviction that 'liberal democracy remains the only coherent political aspiration' and free markets, or liberal economics, an inevitable destiny.⁵¹ As Victor Bulmer-Thomas showed us so clearly some weeks ago, the last five years in particular have seen an emphatic shift in regional economic policy away from corporatist capitalism towards free market principles, producing in several countries a notable reduction in inflation as well as state intervention; overall economic performance has registered a significant improvement.⁵² Moreover, the imposition of invariably harsh and initially inequitable and unpopular deflationary policies has almost everywhere been undertaken by elected civilian administrations – the result of an impressive if still unfinished transfer from dictatorship to constitutional rule over the last decade. Since 1988 every country

has held an election, and some – including Bolivia – have been governed by three or four successive civilian administrations resulting from the popular vote. Even in those cases, such as El Salvador and Guatemala, where the electoral process began very much as a US imposition and unashamedly excluded the left, there has been some – occasionally much – progress towards a negotiated truce.

It is surely telling that the region's one Communist state – Cuba – has not made this transition, but it is also a widely held view that spiteful US policy has played a major role in fortifying the nationalist resolve of the leadership in Havana. It may even be that poor Cuba is having to represent her sister republics in defying the arrogant Gringo with a kind of dusk chorus of denunciation. If Fidel Castro retains a remarkable popularity throughout the region, this now rests heavily on nostalgia, and in many ways he would serve as quite a passable amalgam of Barrientos and Debray.

Today the internationalist is not a European left-wing philosopher but a conservative North American economist – Professor Jeffrey Sachs of Harvard, who, having presided over the Bolivian stabilisation plan of 1985 proceeded to Warsaw and Moscow, and, although he may perforce have to dally there awhile, one can readily imagine him pushing on to Beijing via Hanoi.

In the political realm the fact that the Latin American dictatorships were generally able to determine the nature of their departure sets them apart from the experience of the east in 1989 and the west in 1945. It has also left a distinctly disturbing set of dilemmas between revenge and reconciliation that are largely being handled at an official level by a retreat from prosecution to amnesty to outright 'forgetfulness', as well as through a clear shift from the naming of those alleged to have committed crimes to that of those known to have been their victims. This may be successful in terms of statecraft, but it is much less so at the level of civil society, especially for the direct victims of repression and their families. Anybody who knows Ariel Dorfman's recent play *Death and the Maiden* cannot fail to appreciate this.⁵³

The question of human rights has not, in fact, provoked open conflict to the same degree as have economic policy and corruption. Moreover, if a refusal to forget or forgive remains at the core of both survival and deterrence, it is worth noting José Woldenberg's observation that as the victims and their repressors die the objective effects of this sentiment necessarily decline. In the case of Latin America, where the savagery of dictatorship has occurred very recently, the more likely scenario for *de facto* acquiescence is the coming maturity of a generation too young to have remembered – half the present population of Chile, for example, was born after Pinochet's coup in 1973.⁵⁴

This picture may not fully accord with Fukuyama's bouncy predictions, but it would appear to herald the disappearance of the likes of Barrientos and Debray. On the one hand, the warrior who grasps office with scant regard for policy and holds it by a combination of dashing deeds, demonisation and unabashed political dependency. And on the other, the radical thinker for whom foreignness and the terrible risks of failure on the insurrectionary road to civilisation are strictly secondary considerations in a decisive culture of commitment. Whether or not we deem these attributes even partly worthy, they are widely seen to be anachronisms. One is reminded of that passage in Gabriel García Márquez's *The General in his Labyrinth* where Bolívar admonishes a Frenchman: '... stop doing us the favour of telling us what we should do . . . Damn it, please let us have our Middle Ages in peace!'⁵⁵ Except, of course, that after 160 years the Middle Ages are over, and, Fukuyama assures us, there is now on earth no apparent problem that is not soluble on the basis of liberal principles.⁵⁶

Some caution is evidently called for. In the first place, not even Fukuyama's sources concur on whether the linear ascent of human history to this felicitous apogee will greatly reduce the incidence of warfare. As a result, we might expect the ancient disparities between the warrior and the scribe to continue for a while yet.

Secondly, it is typical of intellectuals to assign transcendent importance to underlying principles when ordinary folk are far more concerned with the tactile reality pressing in on them every day. One should not, then, underestimate the indisputably harsh price being paid by Latin America's poor for economic stabilisation or the cholera that is presently afflicting them or the sense of injustice over past violations of human rights and present corruption. It would be even more unwise to assume that these are consciously traded for acquiescence in liberalism on the belief that this is the true 'development in reality'. Unlike in eastern Europe, a great deal of what is currently occurring has been seen before and illusions are more modest in a region that has been far more and much longer market-oriented than some theorists – right- and left-wing alike – recognise.

Against the impressive quietude of Argentina and Chile over the last two years one must pitch the eruption of popular fury in Venezuela and the suspension of constitutional guarantees and government in Peru. Furthermore, one might note that in this latter country a particularly violent and remarkably resourceful insurrectionary movement – Sendero Luminoso – is headed by a man – Abimael Guzmán – who has not been seen in public for over ten years, suffers acutely from diabetes, and is the author of a thesis on Kant's theory of space. These are not obvious components of a charismatic leader although among several Bolivian figures who exercise an influence well beyond the customary parameters of public respect I would single out Eduardo Nava

Morales, for many years Dean of Economics at San Andrés University in La Paz, a man whose work on Keynes in the early 1950s had an influence on the MNR, and who now, with the loss of his middle ear aggravating a famously bad temper, poor eyesight and a tendency to obesity, may be seen each day being assisted down the street to his classes by students whom he will shortly berate.

It is, though, much more often a combination of healthy physique and oratorical energy that one associates with charismatic authority, as illustrated by the description given in the Mexican daily *La Jornada* of Comandante Hugo Chávez, the officer who led a violent coup attempt in Venezuela this last February against the deeply disliked regime of Carlos Andrés Pérez. Given Chávez's subsequent popularity, it would seem clear that many people shared *La Jornada's* view of him as

'young and slim. His trim and clean *mestizo* features highlighted a smooth sensuality. The contrast with the palid and flaccid masks of the parliamentary bureaucracy was striking . . . the sense of self-control and military discipline, honour and serene conviction in the face of uncertain destiny distinguished the soldier as a classic hero . . . his words invoked with tenderness the name in which independence is rooted: Bolívar . . . the soldier accepted full and absolute responsibility for the events of the night – something which surprised public opinion, tired of a political system that, in the name of anonymity, permits social crimes to be committed with impunity.'⁵⁷

This contrast, which is not too exaggerated, evokes that between Barrientos and the MNR. More importantly, however, the inclusion of Bolívar's name in the title of the rebel movement underlines the dangers of adopting Fukuyama's unproblematic division between ancient and modern, or the post-historical. For the fact is that in Latin America the two are not separate – not even parallel – but passionately entwined. It is not, then, simply a question of arguing that Latin American 'modernity' began in 1922 with the publication of César Vallejo's poem 'Trilce', or in 1946 with the opening of the Volta Redonda steelworks, or in 1973 with the coup in Chile. Rather, it is a matter of unburdening ourselves of the unilinear perspective that confuses the 'development' of political economy with the 'nature' of a society in its entirety.

Last month I attended a clandestine meeting in an industrial suburb of Mexico City where a man known as *El Hermanito* and reckoned to be inhabited by the spirit of the great lord Cuauhtémoc conducted major surgical operations with a regular household knife and without anaesthetic on patients who included qualified doctors and computer programmers as well as peasants and street-sellers. As a result, I am probably too impressed by and indulgent of the regional propensity for metaphysics in general and rebirth in particular, but one

ignores such phenomena at the cost of gravely misunderstanding the people for whom they possess great meaning. There is undoubtedly a quality of innocence about the persons and activities of Barrientos and Debray; they belong to a by-gone age. Yet innocence is defiantly relative.

I want to finish by upholding the claims of ‘the third man’. By this I mean a representative of those who died in defeat, as opposed to Barrientos, a victor felled in his prime, or Debray, one of the vanquished who was spared to ruminate. ‘All gone’ means ‘disappeared’, which in Latin America is immediately understood to signify physically executed with the body destroyed or hidden. As a result, there are very many names that one could pin on this third figure, but today I choose Jorge Ríos Dalenz – a man whom I never met and who does not appear in the report of the Rettig Commission set up by the new Chilean government. This is because investigation of those killed under Pinochet depended upon a submission by family or close friends, and Ríos was a Bolivian without relatives in Chile.

Chichi Ríos Dalenz, a member of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left exiled from Bolivia two years earlier, was executed at the same time as the singer Víctor Jara – on 15 or 16 September 1973 – in the Estadio Chile, where they had been held for three days.⁵⁸ Once described as ‘the flower of the Bolivian left’ for his restless creativity and organisational energy, he is now little more than a sentimental footnote in the past of Jaime Paz Zamora, who was his friend, admirer and party comrade, and who today subscribes to many of the views held by Fukuyama and is President of the Republic of Bolivia.

It is testimony to the generosity of the people of Chile that last year Jorge Ríos and the other foreigners who died in the Estadio Chile were each remembered in song alongside their compatriots as that place was subjected to a secular and remarkably optimistic ‘purification’, or exorcism. Perhaps a response more fitting to the present occasion would be to reserve a quota of doubt with respect to both the inevitability of history and the full identity of its authors.

NOTES

1. There is no contemporary English edition that reproduces Plutarch's 'coupling', but for a sampling see Ian Scott-Kilvert's translations for Penguin: *The Rise and Fall of Athens: Nine Greek Lives* (London, 1960), and *Makers of Rome* (London, 1965).
2. J. H. Elliott, *Richelieu and Olivares* (Cambridge, 1984); Michael R. Beschloss, *Kennedy v. Khrushchev: The Crisis Years, 1960-63* (London, 1991); Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives* (London, 1991). Elliott understandably organises his text around the Mantuan crisis whereas Beschloss is concerned only with a three-year period, within which the October 1962 'Cuban missile crisis' clearly provides a focal point. Bullock adheres to a much more precise (and extended) chronological parallelism, pausing for comparison in the year 1934, with Hitler newly established in power over a one-party state and Stalin about to embark on the purges.
3. D. A. Russell, *Plutarch* (London, 1973), p. 114.
4. Jean Lacouture, *De Gaulle: The Ruler, 1945-70* (London, 1991), p. 411.
5. *The Times*, London, 28 April 1969.
6. José Antonio Llosa, *René Barrientos Ortuño: Paladín de la Bolivianidad* (La Paz, 1966).
7. Fernando Diez de Medina, *El General del Pueblo* (La Paz, 1972), p. 15.
8. J. Fest, *Hitler* (London, 1974), p. 445.
9. Such a conjunction frequently produces a relationship described as 'charismatic'. For Charles Lindholm this is a 'concept of a compulsive, inexplicable emotional tie linking a group of followers together in adulation of their leader'. *Charisma* (Oxford, 1990), p. 6.
10. Teniente René Barrientos, *Mensaje al Ejército: Gestación Histórica de la Revolución Boliviana* (La Paz, 1948, reprinted 1965).
11. *El Diario*, La Paz, 18 April 1965.
12. Raul Peña Bravo, *Hechos y Dichos del General Barrientos* (La Paz, 1982), pp. 73-4.

13. However, the close contemporary association of 'sex appeal' with charisma is not one that would be readily recognised by Max Weber and would be difficult to square with the political standing of, say, Winston Churchill. Even the more frequently postulated linkage with sexual abstinence and religious order provides only a partial explanation. Max Weber, 'The Nature of Charismatic Domination', in W. G. Runciman (ed.), *Weber: Selections in Translation* (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 226-250.

14. Peña, *op cit.*, pp. 120-3.

15. 'Meditación para los bolivianos', in Diez de Medina, *op cit.*, p. 289.

16. *Presencia*, La Paz, 30 November 1968.

17. *El Diario*, 11 July 1962. The animal, rarely found in this region, had been killed by local *campesinos*, whose reports excited such attention that the Chief of the US Military Mission, Colonel Paul Wiemert, went to investigate and acquired the hide – apparently without exchange of cash – in his words, 'as a reward for travelling to test sensationalist reports'. *Ibid.*, 12 July 1962.

18. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 4.1.

19. Between January and May 1965 Barrientos publicly changed his position at least six times on whether he would stand in the planned presidential elections. Of course, this was partly a ritual to promote expressions of support, but close colleagues report a similar indecisiveness before the 1964 coup. Interview with Colonel Julio Sanjinés Goitia, La Paz, August 1989. Peña Bravo, a distinctly unsympathetic author, does not hesitate to charge cowardice, asserting that Barrientos was nicknamed 'huallpa Melgarejo', or a palid, insufficient version of the nineteenth century tyrant Mariano Melgarejo, who was also from Tarata. Peña, *op cit.*, p. 29.

20. *El Diario*, 15, 18, 19 October 1961.

21. *Ibid.*, 25 January, 26, 28 February, 1-7 March 1964.

22. *Ibid.*, 23-28 March 1965. Far less publicity was given to a not dissimilar occurrence in 1976 when, according to immovable popular conviction, General Hugo Banzer was shot in the posterior by his formidable wife Yolanda because of his liaison with a young lady from Tarija.

23. Tcnl. Oscar Vargas Valenzuela, *La Verdad sobre la Muerte del General Barrientos a la Luz de Investigaciones Policiales, Técnicas y Esotéricas* (La Paz, 1984), p. 179. Peña also attended a seance but did not himself commune with any spirit, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-6.

24. Díez de Medina, p. 15.
25. Régis Debray, *Critique of Political Reason* (London, 1983), p. 15.
26. An excellent condensed account of Debray's trial and its background is provided in *Keesing's Contemporary Archive*, vol. XVIII, 1969/70, pp. 23493 ff. The present account of Ché's *guerrilla* and Debray's links with it draws primarily on the following sources: Daniel James (ed.), *The Complete Bolivian Diaries of Ché Guevara and Other Captured Documents* (London, 1968); Luis J. González and Gustavo Sánchez Salazar, *The Great Rebel: Ché Guevara in Bolivia* (New York, 1969); Josef Luis Alcázar, *Nacahuazu: La Guerrilla del Ché en Bolivia* (Mexico, 1969); Gary Prado Salmón, *The Defeat of Ché Guevara* (London, 1990); Régis Debray, *Ché's Guerrilla War* (London, 1975) and *Prison Writings* (London, 1973), together with the reports of *The Times* and *The Guardian* of London and *Le Monde*, Paris.
27. Régis Debray, 'Some Literary Reflections', in *Prison Writings*, pp. 171; 186-7.
28. Louis Althusser, *Reading Capital* (London, 1972), p. 210.
29. Benedict Spinoza, *Ethica*, II, Propositions XLIII and XXXV, quoted in Perry Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism* (London, 1976), pp. 64-5.
30. Althusser, *Reading Capital*, p. 59.
31. Reprinted in Régis Debray, *A Critique of Arms* (London, 1977), p. 267, and also partially cited in Gregory Elliott, *Althusser: The Detour of Theory* (London 1987), pp. 68-9. In the Spring of 1968 Althusser repeats the same advice to Maria Antonietta Macciocchi, a militant of the Italian Communist Party: 'Politics is a protracted war. Do not be in a hurry. Try to see things in advance, and know how to wait today. Don't live in terms of subjective urgency. Know, too, how to put your defeats to use.' But in the same letter he appears to capitulate to 'empiricism' by declaring, 'Impressions are important, but above all it is the facts that count.' Maria Antonietta Macciocchi, *Letters from Inside the Italian Communist Party to Louis Althusser* (London, 1973), pp. 21 and 23.
32. Régis Debray, *Revolution in the Revolution?* (London, 1968), p. 21.
33. Reprinted in Régis Debray, *Strategy for Revolution* (London, 1970).
34. Ernesto Ché Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (New York, 1961), p. 1.

35. See, inter alia, Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy (eds.), *Régis Debray and the Latin American Revolution* (London, 1969); Richard Gott, *Rural Guerrillas in Latin America* (London, 1973); Geoffrey Fairbairn, *Revolutionary Guerrilla Warfare* (London, 1974).
36. Guevara, *Bolivian Diaries*, pp. 127; 132.
37. The full speech, which was taped and released to the press the following day, is reproduced in Debray, *Strategy for Revolution*, pp. 227-273.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 242.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 244.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 238.
41. A long-standing view recently restated by both General Gary Prado and CIA agent Félix Rodríguez in interviews with Amalia Barrón of *Tiempo*, Madrid, reproduced in *La Razón*, La Paz, 3 November 1991.
42. Régis Debray, *Modeste contribution aux discours et cérémonies du dixième anniversaire* (Paris, 1978), p. 15.
43. Debray, *Che's Guerrilla*, p. 11. It is perhaps telling that in this text Debray continues to use an analogy employed seven years earlier in *Revolution in the Revolution?* – that of the *guerrilla* as a ‘small motor’ (and external cause) starting up the ‘large motor’ of the Bolivian mass movement. *Ibid.*, p.143. This image is borrowed from Althusser, who states that Marx and Engels’ declaration in *The Communist Manifesto* that, ‘class struggle is the motor of history’ is a ‘basic Marxist proposition’. *For Marx* (London, 1965), p. 215. Although he pushes the point too far, E. P. Thompson is surely right to insist that it is, rather, an analogy that has been misinterpreted in a dangerously functionalist fashion. *The Poverty of Theory* (London, 1978), pp. 295-6. In all events, its appearance in a text written by Debray after his return to France clearly indicates a continued Althusserian influence, even as the philosopher entered decline and, eventually, tragic illness.
44. Régis Debray, *Les Masques* (Paris, 1987), which suggests that the differences between left-wing and right-wing are due to distinct ‘sensibilities’ but demonstrates little sensitivity towards Carmen Castillo, Debray’s long-time companion who had previously been the lover of the Chilean revolutionary leader Miguel Enríquez.
45. Régis Debray, *Teachers, Writers, Celebrities: The Intellectuals of Modern France* (London, 1981).

46. Debray, *Critique of Political Reason*, p. 346.
47. José Ortega y Gasset, *On Love: Aspects of a Single Theme* (London, 1967), p. 19.
48. *Que Vive la République* (Paris, 1989). It is notable that John Berger, writing about the photographs of Guevara's corpse in December 1967, meditates upon the role of Saint-Just in introducing a 'modern heroism': 'I despise the dust of which I am composed, the dust which is speaking to you; anyone can pursue and put an end to this dust. But I defy anybody to snatch from me what I have given myself, an independent life in the sky of the centuries'. *Discours et Rapports* (Paris, 1957), p. 90, quoted in John Berger, *Selected Essays* (London, 1972), p. 49. It is perhaps telling that the last recorded words of Saint-Just were, 'I am the one who wrote that', with reference to the Constitution of 1793, whereas Danton is widely reported to have addressed his executioner, 'Above all, don't forget to show my head to the people; it's worth seeing'. Norman Hampson, *Saint-Just* (London, 1991), p. 227; *Danton* (Oxford, 1978), p. 174. This latter incident is also compellingly captured in Andrzej Wajda's film *Danton*, which properly depicts this revolutionary figure as possessing more than a touch of Barrientos's populist flair, indecision and opportunist instincts.
49. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London, 1992), pp. xiv-xv.
50. *Ibid.*, p. xii.
51. *Ibid.*, p. xiii.
52. Victor Bulmer-Thomas, 'Life after Debt: the New Economic Trajectory in Latin America', Inaugural Lecture, Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London, 5 March 1992 (published as University of London, Institute of Latin American Studies Occasional Paper No. 1, 1992).
53. Ariel Dorfman, *Death and the Maiden* (London, 1992). See also the important essay, 'Political Code and Literary Code: the Testimonial Genre in Chile Today', in Dorfman, *Some Write to the Future* (London, 1991).
54. Interview with José Woldenberg in *La Jornada*, Mexico City, 1 April 1992. Woldenberg's first novel tackles some similar themes in its attention to the Jewish experience in Mexico: *Las Ausencias Presentes* (Mexico, 1992).
55. Gabriel García Márquez, *The General in his Labyrinth* (London, 1990), p. 124.
56. Fukuyama, *The End of History*, p. xxi.

57. Eduardo Subirats, 'Venezuela: Crónica de un golpe inacabado', *La Jornada*, 5 April 1992. The brief radical manifesto of the *Movimiento Militar Bolivariano* is reprinted in *Latin American Chasqui*, London, March/April 1992.

58. Details of the fate of those held in the Estadio Chile are recounted in *Informe de la Comisión Nacional de Verdad y Reconciliación* (Santiago, 1991), vol. I, pp. 143 ff.