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# RESEARCH REPORTS AND NOTES

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## CITY AND SOCIETY: THEIR CONNECTION IN LATIN AMERICAN HISTORICAL RESEARCH

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The first part of this essay reviews some of the strengths and weaknesses in the current state of social history of Latin American cities. Specifically, it tries to create an awareness that quantitative urban studies need not be, and should not be, limited to aggregate data for sources. Unfortunately, many of the nascent quantitative studies of postindependence Latin American cities achieve their figures through published materials, principally demographic and commercial censuses. However, manuscript census returns, notarial records, judicial assessments, and other primary documentation can also provide the base from which we can observe frequencies both of personal vital records and of popular quotidian behavior; moving, marrying, going to school, buying or selling goods or property, and so on.

Social history is difficult to define with great specificity since by nature it is concerned with the variety found in humans and in human activity. "Definition" here takes on the dimensions of the thrust or focus and nature of questions posed by the researcher. James Lockhart, whose *Spanish Peru* inaugurated a new era in Latin American historiography, argues that "any branch of history can be converted into social investigation by turning attention from its main object of study, whether laws, ideas, or events toward the people who produced them."<sup>1</sup> We would go further to define social history as a historical framework that emphasizes the inclusion of ordinary men and women into the historical process, and attempts to approximate their perspectives on that process. The mechanics

of this approximation are based in letting the ordinary people "speak for themselves" through the fragmentary and usually nonliterary evidence they left behind. Moreover, such research implies more than merely looking at ordinary people; it represents an attempt to view history from a different perspective.

As E. P. Thompson writes, the average scholar "reads history in the light of subsequent preoccupations, and not as in fact it occurred. Only the successful (in the sense of those whose aspirations anticipated subsequent evolution) are remembered. The blind alleys, the lost causes, and the losers themselves are forgotten."<sup>2</sup> Thus, examining ordinary people from their perspective affords us the opportunity to reconstruct an alternate world view—the one belonging to the historically anonymous. To add, then, to Lockhart's formula—diverting attention from "facts" to the people who produced them—we would argue that social history studies the relationships among people and their reactions to their environment. Economic and social implications stem from these considerations to the extent that what is usually termed "political" can easily be derived from accepted "social" history.

The second part of this article presents observations on methodological problems based on our respective research activities in Argentina. What we are calling for is not at all esoteric: we believe that Latin Americanists lag behind in what urban historians of other areas have been doing successfully for over a decade. At the same time, we are encouraged by the interest in interdisciplinary history among Latin American scholars, and by vital and sophisticated questions that for some time have characterized the field of Latin American social history.

#### NEW SOCIAL HISTORY: THE LATIN AMERICAN RESPONSE

Social history, despite its widespread popularity among European and North American scholars, has not been enthusiastically greeted by Latin Americanists who specialize in the period following the middle of the nineteenth century. This hesitation may reflect some traditional qualities of the period's historiography: a relative lack of interest in research about the anonymous and the poor (with the important exception of the historiography of slavery); the stress on intuitive humanism; the belief that data for social histories are lacking—a problem that colonialists have encountered and overcome with laudable doggedness; and, finally, apprehensions about the computer. Now that a growing number of Latin American historians are borrowing and adapting social science techniques to their own work, it is appropriate to review some of the assumptions underlying current sociohistorical research and to raise some methodological problems. Because of our research interests, we focus on issues and concerns in Argentine social history; yet, these problems are likely to recur and affect specialists in other areas.

If Lockhart's own work stresses continuity, other social historians argue that research must be more aware of conflict than of accommodation. Thus, American historian Clyde Griffen warns against relying too greatly on the absence of contention in the historical setting to arrive at a consensual interpreta-

tion of history. In his assertion that "lack of challenge to elite leadership does not necessarily imply that the other inhabitants shared its perspective and opinions, nor does political challenge imply their rejection," he uses the example of relative peace among laborers to illustrate that without direct evidence of attitudes, "one can argue plausibly that workers did not challenge elite leadership because they lacked the solidarity, confidence, and resources to do so."<sup>3</sup>

Still others believe that what separates social history from folklore is the connection between the masses' daily activities and their expression in politics. Here we sometimes forget Eric Hobsbawm's caveat to political and labor historians: "To dip into the past for inspiring examples of struggle or the like is to write history backwards and eclectically. It is not a very good way of writing it."<sup>4</sup> Depending on whether the purpose is solely descriptive or also analytical, some scholars believe that social history should be explicitly apolitical; for others the political element is a *sine qua non*.<sup>5</sup> Because of the variety of approaches, no consensus has yet surfaced concerning the scope of social history or the best ways to study it. Such disparity is not all problematic; it stimulates flexibility and it suggests that social historical considerations are limitless. Further, while social history implies a connection with sociology, historians have now begun to integrate anthropology and other social sciences in a continuing effort to broaden their parameters still further.<sup>6</sup>

Modern scholars have successfully incorporated heretofore alien fields into social history. Nancy Streuver's work on Renaissance Florence is an examination of the relationship between mental states and languages.<sup>7</sup> Her reasoning for using linguistics in historical research is both valid and direct: given that in semiology communication is based "on the model of language, then history, which attempts to read all signs, is primarily a language skill."<sup>8</sup> Among students of Spanish American history, Peter Boyd Bowman has done pioneer studies of early demographic patterns and migration to the New World. In this case, linguistics and archival documentation are combined with modern computer techniques to shed light on the types of Spaniards who first helped to forge an American society. The project, entitled *Linguistic Analysis of Spanish Colonial Documents (LASCODOCS)*, maintains a computer-assisted linguistic data bank based on sixteenth century documents.<sup>9</sup> We can begin to make new assertions not only about the linguistic makeup of different regions of the New World, but also about the social and economic bases for Spanish emigration and their effect on American enterprise.

For social historians who are concerned with ordinary people—men and women who left no documents for posterity, who as individuals left no mark and shook no earth, and for whom little biographical data exist—the study of groups or classes is emphasized. Given the fragmentary picture available for any single individual, the accretion of data on a limited number of social variables from a representative number of people is the method usually employed to gain a general picture of group attributes and behavior. The high level of bureaucratization in cities originally facilitated the gathering of such data, especially in terms of municipal vital records and notarial sources. One of the characteristics that distinguishes urban from folk society rests in its heterogeneity and special-

ization. Whether classic theories of cities derive their arguments from geographic (e.g., Robert Park and Louis Wirth) or interpersonal approaches (Robert Redfield), the conclusions are similar: urban society generates group formation and action by differentiating people. Labor demands, residential patterns, financial considerations, and other factors conspire to categorize and differentiate people in the city who once—in the pastoral ideal—had been bound together in kin and familial patterns. The theoretical literature on these matters is extensive and has been influential in the formulation of theories on group action in cities.<sup>10</sup> The study of groups, therefore, is inherent in the questions social historians ask of urbanites.

There is, finally, a conceptual dimension behind the study of groups: the implicit position that a few highly visible individuals are not as important as many traditional historians assume. Social historians often define history itself as the past experienced by clusters of people. Though quantitative approaches are very useful here, not all of this research is quantitative and some of the most enterprising work is done with little or no regard for the precise incidence of a variable. Luis González's biography of a small town in Mexico is a good example of urban social history that still employs narrative style and intimate knowledge of a town, bringing us very close to the mental states of its inhabitants. Similarly, Mario Góngora's treatment of early Santiago's social strata is not at all laden with quantitative paraphernalia and still gives a lucid picture of how early Chilean society determined its own divisions in the city.<sup>11</sup> James Lockhart, for example, searches for patterns of cultural facets with a mechanism that uses a large set of data. Yet, in order to differentiate "social types," he relies on his own mental perception and manual dexterity and not on discrete categories discernable by machine.

Problems naturally arise over the issue of selectivity, especially when the research focuses on a city, class, neighborhood, or social entity too large or complex to retain in one's mind or notes. Reading widely and collecting relevant examples of such social types is a commendable but not intrinsic goal of accurate, reliable research.<sup>12</sup> R. C. Padden has observed that such management of evidence may result in the substitution of the deductive mode by the induction process; sometimes, too, the expected connection between evidence and generalization remains unclear.<sup>13</sup> It appears at this point that the debate depends largely upon one's agreement that a "social type" is more an operative indicator reflecting culture than a group of people with vital records and economic bases.<sup>14</sup> When the historian employs an assumption to define a term nebulously, it becomes difficult to subject it to specific tests; on the other hand, if parameters of social types are based on clear and consistent socioeconomic variables, they then become quantifiable.

Obviously, no choice must be made to the exclusion of the other: the problem is of degrees. Thus, Peter Stearns noted that "while social history demands assessments of physical conditions and other quantifiable material and constant attention to the representative quality of any material, it must deal with values and behavior that can never be graphed or charted."<sup>15</sup> At the same time, Stearns' own work on strike activity indicates that while class consciousness, for

example, cannot be quantified, its reflections can be counted.<sup>16</sup> The connections between the rhetoric of working-class leadership groups and real activity by workers then becomes testable. Thus, in the political order, voting behavior takes on an important and quantifiable aspect; at the militant level, participation in and incidence of strike activity becomes similarly important.

Many quantitative historians bask in the glow of what has been called the "new" social history, distinguished from the "old" by its attempt to expand the thematic study of history through research on groups or classes normally omitted from historical inquiry. Their emphasis on social mobility reflects the popularity of sociological themes placed within historical perspectives. To separate this type of investigation from more traditional sorts of history that emphasize elites and their institutions, social historians consider their work to be "history from the bottom up."

The focus now shifts to the masses and their relationship with the environment created largely by institutional regimentation. This type of history carries its own methodological implications. The social historian, in general, and the quantitative social historian, in particular, are usually less interested in examples of individual action or accomplishment than in the study of representative samples. The intensive study of individuals and the aggregation of the resulting data can be more revealing than the use of published statistics. Data of the kind readily available in census summaries, almanacs, and annuals, have been previously clustered and cannot usually be broken down into their component parts. Historians are thus restricted to many categories that may not be of their own choosing. On the other hand, data on individuals, gathered by researchers with their own interests in mind, may be manipulated in a variety of ways.

Here we can see that the type of questions asked is largely determined by the historian's approach. Ecological questions often call for an ecological approach, which stresses geographic area in the course of research. If the questions are related primarily to social attributes and behavior, then the area is incidental to the research method, which relies on techniques that remain focused on members of groups. An apparent contradiction immediately arises: are we here not speaking of *urban* history, thereby stressing locale? Yes, but only in the sense that the principles of social history are still applied to urbanites rather than to the city itself. To the extent that we study metropolitan areas, we see the boundaries of the city, or sections within it, as somewhat artificial, since units of study are not geographic but socioeconomic. The point is illustrated by a research method that would include tracing individuals who move out of a city and observing their socioeconomic characteristics in their new locations. The energy spent on such research, as one may suspect, would be enormous; moreover, findings would depend entirely on the efficiency of many archives charged with keeping records.<sup>17</sup> The expanded geographic boundaries of this example should lead us to become increasingly suspicious of statements that claim to distinguish a discipline as "new," as is the case with "urban" vs. other types of history. The theory underpinning such a distinction lags far behind its practice.

The breadth of available data raises two important issues: sampling and

using the computer. The last few years have witnessed complex discussions among social historians over the most accurate sampling procedures and their effects on significance levels.<sup>18</sup> None, however, disputes the fact that sampling is a valid procedure that saves the historian much time. If the researcher is faced with manipulating large amounts of data, using the computer makes good sense. We suggest that a historian with fifty cases, each with a few variables, should think about using the computer; and a set of one hundred cases should be sufficient to induce a visit to a data processing center for counseling. We would be remiss not to warn that working with the computer is expensive and involves additional data processing steps; it may also require learning a program or language. These problems, however, entail commonsense considerations best left to the discretion of individual researchers.<sup>19</sup> Some publications, like *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, frequently present articles on some aspect of historical methodology, while the *Historical Methods Newsletter* is entirely devoted to new and evolving methods. These journals try to preserve the crucial distinction between the historically meaningful and the statistically significant, thus reminding us that the two are not synonymous.<sup>20</sup>

A relatively new technique involves tracing specific individuals, sampled from one or more sources at one point in time, through other sources for subsequent years. New computer programs, such as SOUNDEX, have been employed successfully in tracing people through space and time. With such a method, known also as record linkage, we can quantify and clarify patterns of geographic, occupational, educational, and other forms of mobility; we can also investigate changes in family structure and kinship patterns.<sup>21</sup> On a broader level, the technique allows the researcher to pose meaningful questions about the nature of acculturation and assimilation, collective social protest, and various aspects of working class history, "phenomena which in the past had been discussed on the basis of colorful examples and casual impressions."<sup>22</sup>

Latin Americanist researchers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are conspicuously absent from these endeavors; for example, no Latin American work has joined those on the family by Edward Shorter or Lawrence Stone.<sup>23</sup> In a recent anthology on history of the family, essays appeared on the European, American, and Chinese experiences—none on the Latin American versions.<sup>24</sup> Nor have any Latin American results come out of the family history project at the Newberry Library. Similarly no historians appear in the Roper Center's *Latin American Data Catalog* as doing any quantitative research on household composition and social relations, nor on the past of the working class in Latin America.<sup>25</sup> This is not to say that these institutions contain the totality of such scholarship.<sup>26</sup> Also, historians of the colonial period have taken important steps toward reworking traditional problems or rephrasing old questions and answering them on the basis of quantitative techniques and new data. For example, the work done on the seventeenth century in Spanish America by Bakewell, Brading, and TePaske are eminent statements of the potential stored in quantified social history.<sup>27</sup>

Still, our generality holds true: as William McGreevey reported in 1974, the field of quantitative urban history contains gaps between hypotheses on



such matters as urban alienation or the general social process and the manipulation of population data.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, it is apparent that the type of data normally employed in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century studies is gathered in the aggregates—little room is given to manuscript materials and notarial records. And while economic and political questions are well entrenched, social questions are not. It becomes evident from these lacunae that historians have been reticent to explore the social data in primary documentation and join them with nonquantifiable sources of information in order to reach an existential understanding of the Latin American past. We are still too much involved with creating “expository metapersons representing a collective world-view and experience—the seventeenth-century Puritan, the Jacksonian American, the Renaissance humanist.”<sup>29</sup> To this list can be added the Extremaduran conqueror, the Peronist *descamisado*, the student revolutionary.

Our research interests in the “new” social history revolve around the so-called “new” urban history. The projects were stimulated by the publication of Stephan Thernstrom’s *Poverty or Progress* and the volume *Nineteenth Century Cities* edited by Thernstrom and Richard Sennett. In 1971, Thernstrom outlined five major areas of investigation including: (1) “physical mobility” or migration; (2) “class and ethnic differences in spatial mobility”; (3) “rates and trends in social mobility”; (4) “immigration and differential opportunity”; and (5) “Negro migrants and European immigrants.” While these suggestions stemmed from the peculiar needs of United States urban history, their value is evident for Latin American studies. Thernstrom also identified four other areas of research interest: (1) family structure of groups in nineteenth- and twentieth-century cities; (2) the “texture” of neighborhood life and “the flow of people between socially distinct sections of the city”; (3) urban institutions; and (4) “the interaction between urban environments and the social organization of work.”<sup>30</sup> These topics, too, remain neglected among Latin Americanists.

The research avenues suggested by Americanists form useful alternatives to the way Richard Morse’s historicist structure defined the parameters of the field.<sup>31</sup> Morse asserts, for example, that “backlands charisma drew legitimacy from the substrata of Brazilian agrarian society—and even thrust up its own urban challenge to ‘order and progress’—long after ‘civilization’ had won a Pyrrhic victory in Argentina. The failure of the Argentine backlands to mobilize and long delaying action helps to account for the special pathological dimensions to Argentine urbanization.”<sup>32</sup> But this analysis cannot tell us what the fiber of life was like as it threaded people together or pulled them apart in the city’s daily processes. Members of the society are subsumed in the analysis of structural components. Earlier historians wrote biographies of cities, neighborhoods, or institutions, but lacked the interest, techniques, or desire to examine closely the people who lived in the city.

Other urbanists investigated the geographical expansion of urban centers, their increasingly complex political and economic functions, and their political histories.<sup>33</sup> In the Argentine area, urban studies by historians have followed the key issues of the Argentine experience: centralism vs. federalism, the location of the capital, the distribution of national wealth and services among cities,

and the role of immigrants. Examples of early research in Argentine urban history are Amilcar Razori's three volume *Historia de la ciudad argentina* and Nicolás Besio Moreno's *Buenos Aires*. Neither of them, however, was interested in sociourban relationships or patterns of life-work experiences: Razori provides much on the natural environments in preurban and early urban areas, and recapitulates the legalistic background to the existence of cities; Besio Moreno's population data for Buenos Aires, likewise, are not well integrated with porteño social life.<sup>34</sup>

In the end, the largest share of responsibility for the social history of cities—at least in Argentina—fell to the sociologists.<sup>35</sup> Because of the methodological assumptions underlying their discipline, however, sociologists frequently conducted their investigations in ways that made it difficult to gauge historical change. Yet, the expansion of historical interest has adopted not only the use of previously neglected sources of information and the development of more sophisticated data processing techniques; it has also engaged a number of sociological tools and questions to produce new approaches to the history of the city.

#### RESEARCHING THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF ARGENTINE CITIES

The following section attempts to present questions and problems we found throughout the course of our respective research efforts in Buenos Aires and Córdoba. The type of available documentation and some of the ways we employed it provide examples of what is feasible in urban social history in Latin America.

More than 50 percent of all Argentines in 1914 lived in cities. Such a striking proportion alone is enough to focus our attention on the dynamics of Argentine urbanization. Writing in the 1840s, long before this demographic transition became a reality, Sarmiento defined Argentine history in terms of a rural-urban dichotomy.<sup>36</sup> In *Facundo*, he portrayed cities as crucibles of progress, inhabited by hardworking people who by dint of their conscientiousness and diligence would create a Europe in America. The pampa, on the other hand, populated by the barbaric gaucho, represented reaction and Catholic backwardness. In one sense, Sarmiento's work was as historical as it was polemical: the overwhelming importance of Buenos Aires in Argentine life was clear by 1870. Indeed, the split that had prevented Argentine unity was settled only by force of arms. The federalization of Buenos Aires in 1880 ratified, in fact, what most Argentines already knew: the city controlled the country.

A concomitant to Argentine urban growth beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century is that responsibility for attracting immigrants was assigned to the Executive in the Constitution of 1853. Patterns of immigration and the social role of immigrants offer historians the opportunity to examine Argentine development both in its own right and in a comparative perspective. The Argentine experience might be contrasted profitably with that of the United States, Brazil, Canada, South Africa, and Australia. The history of immigrants cannot be separated from the socioeconomic effects of urbanization and the



closely related process of industrialization. The two combined to foster the development of urban working classes in Buenos Aires, Rosario, and Córdoba, at different times and at different rates. The lure of these cities affected patterns of land tenure and rural-to-urban migration. Our research, particularly on Córdoba, offers the first significant insight into the long history of internal migration.<sup>37</sup> The fact that migrants were entering and leaving cities in the mid-nineteenth century provides a corrective to the notion that potential migrants stayed put until the rise of Peronism.<sup>38</sup>

The integration of Argentina into the world economy stimulated the expansion of an infrastructure organized around railroad lines. The social effects of the transportation system remain largely unexamined; so far, historians have been content to dwell on its economic effects. The social historian, on the other hand, should see the matter in broader perspective. A good beginning in this direction appears in Scobie's discussion of the effects of urban transportation on the city of Buenos Aires.<sup>39</sup> In addition to rephrasing the questions that have dominated Argentine historiography since the nineteenth century, new topics abound. The openness of the Argentine system, sources of Radical and Peronist support, and the social effects of late industrialization are all ripe for investigation. How viable are these studies of Argentine social structure, industrialization, landownership, and political integration? Are they overly ambitious proposals or do the sources exist to bring them to fruition? Our response, based on research in Buenos Aires and Córdoba, is that given sufficient time, training, and, above all, flexibility, all of these themes may be fruitfully researched. Our work spanned the period 1869 to 1945 and took us into several uncharted areas. Some held valuable material, others contained nothing, and still others refused us entry.

Latin Americans have lagged behind North Americans and Europeans in adopting quantitative methods. While to a certain extent this hesitancy can be traced to their "humanist" *ensayista* tradition, there is a more strictly technological explanation. The computer is the result of technological sophistication, the product of wealth that was siphoned off into research. In some Latin American countries quantitative history is still perceived as a luxury. Further, much quantitative history in the United States and Western Europe was the result of pressing political and social priorities that raised the issues of social integration, race relations, and the nature of the class structure to academic problems.

Thus far a number of reasons have combined to guide the student of Latin America to look to other historiographies for methodological models. The danger that sources available elsewhere may not be available in Latin America should not deter researchers from working in Latin American archives. They still need to have a grasp of other models in order to develop viable alternatives of their own, but they must also retain sufficient flexibility to substitute sources adequately. United States scholars, for example, have made good use of city directories. In Argentina, however, such directories are few and far between.<sup>40</sup> Instead, telephone books can be used, in some circumstances and with caution, to good advantage. Students of the nineteenth century must discover still other substitutes. Several possibilities are discussed below.

In general, the most serious obstacle the investigator must overcome is the bureaucracy. As new as the "new social history" may be in the United States, it is an even more recent arrival in Argentina. Many sources are closed to scholars simply because the archivists in charge are reluctant to hand them over when they cannot understand why the data are historically meaningful. The scholar should therefore be prepared with an articulate explanation of the aims of his research project and the determination to see each lead through to the end. To a degree, the accessibility of materials depends on circumstances: one scholar may find an archive closed, while a colleague will be allowed in. This suggests that, armed with proper letters of introduction from his university, from the Archivo General de la Nación, and from any useful contacts he is able to establish in Argentina, one should attempt to gain entry even when the expectations are negative.

Far-sighted quantitative historians may ready themselves for research in Argentina before leaving home. Several guides exist to published statistics of Argentina and published censuses in the United States; also the Mormon Church has undertaken an extensive microfilming project in Argentina, including the entire 1869 and 1895 schedules. The basis for most quantitative urban history, however, remains the manuscript census schedules. Several Argentine municipal censuses for the pre-1869 era exist, but that of 1869 is the first national one, and only the 1869 and 1895 manuscripts remain—succeeding censuses have been destroyed. In this regard, the student of the nineteenth century has advantages over the historian of the twentieth century.

Samples from the general population of Argentina can be gathered from the manuscript census returns of the first and second national censuses, which are in the Archivo General de la Nación in the Federal Capital. They contain the name, age, sex, marital status, province or country of birth, occupation, physical defects, ownership of real property, and type of housing for each resident (the last two variables were recorded only in 1895). Some of the categories are suspect: data on physical well-being and age can not be accepted blindly. The great variation in the quality of the work of census takers and in the information from respondents presents other difficulties for those who are interested in questions on extended households and residential mobility. Some enumerators of the 1895 census neglected to identify extended families and housing types, while others included addresses at whim.

The officials in charge of each census divided the cities into numbered sections and districts, but no detailed maps of these divisions have survived. Census returns must first be ordered and arranged to recreate the original boundaries of each section. When precision is impossible or when boundaries shift over time, an alternative is to devise map divisions that reflect the needs and aims of the proposed study. If the need for sampling arises, individuals should be sampled together with their families in order to verify their identity throughout the tracing process. For example, many common surnames appeared in the Córdoba schedules, but with the names of wives or children it was possible to confirm or discard those individuals in subsequent documents who had identical first and last names as the original sample group. Illiteracy and the

absence of standard spellings makes tracing difficult. Naturally, any satisfactory method of grappling with linguistic considerations rests with the researcher.

In 1880, Córdoba became the first city in Argentina to operate a civil registry, antedating the rest of the nation by ten years. Death records were complete from the beginning; births and marriages were recorded more rigorously toward the end of the decade. Municipal civil registries' archives are not normally open to the public; entry is nearly impossible (to the best of our knowledge, we were the only ones ever permitted to use it). Córdoba's provincial Dirección General de Registro Civil does not contain volumes from before 1890, but its archive is nominally public. However, one must present a letter of introduction from a sponsoring institution and/or a local authority, since, in effect, one applies for admission. The death acts contain data concerning occupation, address, literacy, next of kin, and whether or not the deceased had made a last will and testament. Each volume has an index, alphabetized only by the first letter of the surname, which, together with a surprisingly high number of the same given and surnames, makes this phase of tracing extremely tedious.<sup>41</sup>

Córdoba's archdiocese contains the city's best-ordered archive. The staff is small but very helpful. The records are excellently maintained in a fire-proof, humidity-controlled facility. Unfortunately, it is closed in the afternoons. The holdings serve a number of functions for researchers: its death records antedate those of the civil registry and can be used to fill the gaps of the intercensal period; its marriage records provide great insight into questions of immigrant integration and social mobility through marriage. The archive contains all the *expedientes matrimoniales*, or special requests for marriage, through 1914. Persons wishing to be married by the Church but who were not natives of the city were required to present applications for marriage that give valuable personal data on the brides, grooms, and their families. The *expedientes matrimoniales* are contained in approximately two-hundred volumes encompassing two and a half centuries. Their format is fairly constant throughout this long period. Included are the names of the bride and groom and of their parents; places of birth and residence; ages; and the sworn statements of at least two members of the community that there were no obstacles to the marriage. The witnesses' affidavits often were essential in rounding out information on the early Argentine experiences of European immigrants.

The *expedientes matrimoniales* do not provide data on occupations or addresses, but these can be gleaned from the holdings of civil registry archives. Thus, to obtain a more complete data set for a single individual, the researcher must be prepared to employ a variety of sources. The archive of the archdiocese is helpful on the question of intermarriage between *cordobeses* and nonnatives, but only the civil registry can provide data on the geographic-occupational components responsible in part for the results.

Córdoba's are, perhaps, the most complete and best organized of the provincial archives, but the extent to which their volumes provide information depends upon the format of the research questions. Sometimes it becomes necessary to rephrase questions in order to make the most of the available data, for example, in the determination of economic status. During the nineteenth

and early twentieth centuries the province did not assess real and personal property on a yearly basis. However, the civil code provided that property left by a deceased must be probated for subdivision. Thus, economic questions can be approached through the notarial and judicial records that provide a complete accounting of the items left at time of death: livestock; land measurements and assessments, location, and, often, date of acquisition; jewelry; cash; tools of the trade; clothing. Finally, the subdivision states what each survivor received. The notarial and judicial archives contain further economic data. The researcher may examine embargoes; debt payments (*cobro de pesos*); legalization, proof, or measurement of land possession (*treintenaria* or *mensura*). Often, an inheritance may be listed as other than "probate" (*juicio sucesorio*), yet its contents yield the same information (e.g., *declaraciones de herederos, testamentaria, inventarios, posesión de herencia, por herencia, and división*).

Data on the commercial growth of cities or on the commercial role of sample members may be gleaned from a variety of sources. In Buenos Aires, the holdings of the Unión Industrial Argentina, the Argentine Cámara de Comercio, ethnic merchant and business associations, and the commercial archive for Sociedades de Responsabilidad Limitada are fruitful sources. This last seems particularly rich in economic data, providing information on partnerships, capitalization, sources of funding, and foreign corporations. The archive for Sociedades Anónimas is organized by name of corporation and, as a result, is far more difficult to work with. Commercial court records in Córdoba begin at the turn of the century. The indices contain both civil and commercial cases. Printed matter relating to late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century merchants usually refers to them as *comerciantes, miembros del comercio*, and, sometimes wrongly, as *industriales*. The commercial court records offer data on activities that might indicate the intricacies of a business—its volume and solvency—and the peculiarities of a financial system in which borrowing from established lending institutions was exceptional. The types of cases include: *cobro de pesos, disolución de sociedad, cesión de bienes, convocatoria de acreedores, and quiebra* (in Buenos Aires, quiebras are found in the Archivo de Tribunales, but they are not open to scholars).

Bias is inherent in using civil and commercial judicial records, since only those who had some material stake in society presented themselves before the courts and appear in the records. The destitute are usually not found, although cases of legitimization of squatters' settlements and declarations of poverty do occur with regularity. On the other hand, these records by no means reflect the economic activities of only the elite; rather, the city's middle class forms the bulk of court cases. For Buenos Aires before 1876 the sources are vast and for the most part available in the Archivo de la Nación. Many approaches and areas can be studied in that period through the police records for all of Argentina up to 1870, notarial records and *protocolos* in the archive of the Interior Ministry, and military records.<sup>42</sup>

The municipal census of Buenos Aires for 1904 lists more than two hundred native and immigrant voluntary associations and social clubs. These associations were very influential in Creole circles and performed essential duties

especially within the immigrant urban communities. They varied greatly in size, longevity, and social composition. The records of the Chevrah Kedescha Aschenasi (Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina), for example, are remarkably complete. They contain precise, readily quantifiable data on nationality, occupation, length of residence in Argentina, family size, and marital status. All told, it was possible to isolate thirty-three variables. Moreover, the flavor of the times, the concerns of average people, as well as extensive and general information about the period's life-styles was also gathered by quantifying the incidence of requests for social welfare and charitable, medical, and commercial assistance. Not all associations will have records so complete, but for those interested in some aspect of immigration history, the voluntary association is a type of source well worth investigating.<sup>43</sup> Several sprang up in Córdoba during the nineteenth century, but of the three largest immigrant groups, only the French and the Spanish associations retain materials from that period for examination. Since the primary purpose of the associations was to facilitate mutual aid and contact among members and not to serve an archival function, it is not surprising that the records are in varying degrees of disarray. In fact, materials forgotten or misplaced many years earlier can still be discovered. In addition to the registries of members, the associations' books of the minutes of meetings provide valuable insight into the activities, as well as the needs and preoccupations, of the members.

The researcher confronts several problems when working in the interior, where "new social history" is as unfamiliar to students and scholars as in the Federal Capital. Communication with those trying to render aid will be strained, and archive personnel may be reluctant to provide the dozens of volumes daily that the researcher requires. However, it is possible to be given free access and to be assigned a work area in the stacks, where one will not have to limit requests to two volumes each. This service is more likely to be rendered in the interior, where the traffic of historians is lighter than in the Federal Capital.

In sum, much material is available for the pre-1869 period, while research in the subsequent era is hindered by the destruction of records, the multiplicity of depositories that require the permission of several bureaucrats, and the uneven nature of the holdings. But if these difficulties present significant challenges, they are by no means insurmountable. The fundamental lesson is that disaggregate, judicial, notarial, and nontraditional documents offer excellent opportunities to create quantified social histories of the city.

Looking into documentation authored by the individuals who form social histories is essential to seeing the differences between the ideal and the real, between symbolic expressions and execution of choices. Good histories involve the ideal and the actual; yet, much Argentine urban historiography has been satisfied with untested and unconvincing documentation. Perhaps we are fortunate at this stage in not having too much of the literary support that Barthold Niebuhr saw as essential to historical truth. For him, no further detailed evidence would be required to make true an inference in history when it had been generally accepted by other scholars. That common persuasion "furnishes the same reinforced verification as would new sources of evidence."<sup>44</sup>

We have the opportunity to go beyond inferences, however, thanks to new techniques and to a healthy initial skepticism toward the quality of commonly accepted evidence. In this manner, those interested in the progress of Argentine history and social history in general can share in actuating James Harvey Robinson's philosophy that "history should not be regarded as a stationary subject which can only progress by refining its methods and accumulating, criticizing, and assimilating new material, . . . it is bound to alter its ideas and aims with the general progress of society and of the social sciences and . . . it should ultimately play an infinitely more important role in our intellectual life than it has hitherto done."<sup>45</sup>

NOTES

1. James Lockhart, "The Social History of Colonial Spanish America: Evolution and Potential," *LARR* 7, no. 1 (Spring 1972):6.
2. Edward P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York, 1966), p. 12.
3. Clyde Griffen, "Public Opinion in Urban History," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 4 (Winter, 1974):472. Other American historians would deny that relative peace existed between workers and employers in the nineteenth century, among them: David Montgomery, *Beyond Equality* (New York, 1967), and Herbert G. Gutman, *Work, Culture and Society* (New York, 1977). Both indicate that substantial resistance to the "norm" did, in fact, exist in the United States.
4. E. J. Hobsbawm, "Labor History and Ideology," *Journal of Social History* 7 (Summer 1974):375.
5. The intimacy between political and social life is exemplified in Stanley J. Stein and Barbara H. Stein, *The Colonial Heritage of Latin America* (New York, 1970); and Tulio Halperin-Donghi, *The Aftermath of Revolution in Latin America* (New York, 1973).
6. The connections between history and other social sciences, such as anthropology, are discussed in depth in Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *A Behavioral Approach to Historical Analysis*, (New York, 1969); sociological approaches in history appear in Richard Hofstadter and Seymour M. Lipset, eds., *Sociology and History: Methods* (New York, 1968).
7. Nancy S. Streuver, *The Language of History in the Renaissance: Rhetoric and Historical Consciousness in Florentine Humanism* (Princeton, 1970).
8. Nancy S. Streuver, "The Study of Language and the Study of History," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 4 (Winter 1974):401.
9. The most recent exposition of the results of LASCODOCS appears in Peter Boyd Bowman, "Patterns of Spanish Emigration to the Indies until 1600," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 56 (Nov. 1976):580–604; a compilation of previous findings may be found in Bowman, *Patterns of Spanish Emigration to the New World, 1493–1580* (Buffalo, 1973).
10. For a discussion and exposition of the most enduring ideas on city life, see Richard Sennett, ed., *Classic Essays on the Culture of Cities*, (New York, 1969).
11. Luis González, *San José de Gracia: Mexican Village in Transition*, trans. John Upton (Austin, 1974); Mario Góngora, "Urban Social Stratification in Colonial Chile," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 55 (Aug. 1975):421–48.
12. Lockhart's methodological approach to prosopography is summarized in James Lockhart, *The Men of Cajamarca: A Social and Biographical Study of the First Conquerors of Peru*, (Austin, 1972), pp. 115–18; a more extensive consideration of method appears in Lockhart, "The Social History." An eminent example of Lockhart's technique is Frederick P. Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524–1650* (Stanford, 1974).
13. See R. C. Padden's review of Lockhart, *Men of Cajamarca*, *Hispanic American Historical Review* 54 (Feb. 1974):125–27.



14. Lockhart, "The Social History," p. 34.
15. Peter N. Stearns, "Some Comments on Social History," *Journal of Social History* 1 (Fall 1967):5.
16. Peter N. Stearns, "Measuring the Evolution of Strike Movements," *International Review of Social History* 19 (1974):1-27. An in-depth treatment appears in Peter N. Stearns, *Revolutionary Syndicalism and French Labor: A Cause Without Rebels* (New Brunswick, 1971). Julio Godio, *El movimiento obrero y la cuestión nacional* (Buenos Aires, 1972) attempts rudimentary strike analysis based on reports of the Argentine Department of Labor, *Boletín*, No. 36 (enero 1918), p. 68 and goes on to analyze Sebastián Marotta, *El movimiento sindical argentino* 2 (Buenos Aires, 1961). Godio's calculations, however, are made pell-mell and are often incorrect; see p. 217.
17. For an illustration of precisely such a research approach, see chap. 6 of Peter Knights, *The Plain People of Boston, 1830-1860: A Study in City Growth* (New York, 1971).
18. Historians can benefit from some of the more recent discussions in Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., *Social Statistics* (New York, 1960); Linton C. Freeman, *Elementary Applied Statistics for Students in Behavioral Science* (New York, 1965). Charles M. Dollar and Richard J. Jensen, *Historian's Guide to Statistics: Quantitative Analysis and Historical Research* (New York, 1971) contains a very engaging and understandable discussion, esp. pp. 11-15; another good discussion may be found in Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., *Causal Inferences in Nonexperimental Research* (New York, 1972), pp. 87-91. For a debate over actual sampling usage, see Richard S. Alcorn and Peter R. Knights, "Most Uncommon Bostonians: A Critique of Stephan Thernstrom's *The Other Bostonians, 1880-1970*," *Historical Methods Newsletter* 8 (June 1975):98-114; and in the same issue, Stephan Thernstrom, "Rejoinder to Alcorn and Knights," pp. 115-20. See also Maris A. Vinovskis' review of Knights' *The Plain People of Boston*, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 3 (Spring 1973):781-86.
19. An extremely readable work that will bring to light the rationale for computer usage, if necessary, is Edward Shorter, *The Historian and the Computer: A Practical Guide* (New York, 1971).
20. For example, the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* published three articles in 1973-74 on the historical usage of ecological fallacy and regression. See J. Morgan Kousser, "Ecological Regression and the Analysis of Past Politics," *JIH* 4 (Autumn 1973):237-62; Allan J. Lichtman, "Correlation, Regression, and the Ecological Fallacy: A Critique," *JIH* 4 (Winter 1974):417-33; and E. Terrence Jones, "Using Ecological Regression," *JIH* 4 (Spring 1974):593-96.
21. For an arduous exercise in record linkage in order to discover kinship patterns among members of the Chilean elite, see Maurice Zeitlin and Richard E. Ratcliff, "Research Methods for the Analysis of the Internal Structure of Dominant Classes: The Case of Landlords and Capitalists in Chile," *LARR* 10, no. 3 (Fall 1975):5-61. Record linkage is the methodological tool employed in Mark D. Szuchman, "The Limits of the Melting Pot in Urban Argentina: Marriage and Integration in Córdoba, 1869-1909," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 57 (Feb. 1977):24-50; and in Eugene F. Sofer and Mark D. Szuchman, "Educating Immigrants: Voluntary Associations in the Acculturation Process," Thomas J. LaBelle, ed., *Educational Alternatives in Latin America: Social Change and Social Stratification* (Los Angeles, 1975), pp. 334-59. A most thorough effort in U.S. history can be found in Knights, *The Plain People of Boston*. Even the same document can become the basis of temporal movement; by using the 1811 manuscript census returns for Mexico City, certain dependent conditions have been posited about families who had earlier migrated to the capital, and the effects of such movements. See Alejandra Moreno Toscano and Carlos Aguirre Anaya, "Migrations to Mexico City in the Nineteenth Century: Research Approaches," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 17 (Feb. 1975):27-42. On SOUNDEX, see Charles Stephenson, "Tracing Those Who Left: Mobility Studies and the SOUNDEX Indexes to the U.S. Census," *Journal of Urban History* 1 (Fall 1974):73-84.
22. Stephan Thernstrom, "Reflections on the New Urban History," *Daedalus* 100 (Spring 1971):370.

23. Europeanists and Americanists are far ahead in the field of family history. Some notable examples: Edward Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family* (New York, 1975); Philip J. Greven, Jr., *Four Generations: Population, Land and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts* (Ithaca, 1970); Michael Anderson, *Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1971); and John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (New York, 1970).
24. Charles E. Rosenberg, ed., *The Family in History* (Philadelphia, 1975). The same can be said of a previous anthology, Theodore K. Rabb and Robert I. Rotberg, eds., *The Family in History: Interdisciplinary Essays* (New York, 1971).
25. Roper Research Center, *Latin America Data Catalog* (Williamstown, Mass., 1976).
26. See, for example, Diana Hernando, "Casa y familia: Spatial Biographies in 19th Century Buenos Aires," Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1973; and Maria Luiza Marcilio, *La Ville de São Paulo: Peuplement et Population, 1750-1850* (Rouen, 1972).
27. A recent review of quantitative colonial histories appears in John J. TePaske, "Recent Trends in Quantitative History: Colonial Latin America," *LARR* 10, no. 1 (Spring, 1975):51-62.
28. William P. McGreevey, "Recent Materials and Opportunities for Quantitative Research in Latin American History: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *LARR* 9, no. 2 (Summer 1974):76.
29. Rosenberg, *The Family in History*, p. 5.
30. Thernstrom, "Reflections," pp. 366-70.
31. Among his many writings, see Richard M. Morse, "A Prolegomenon to Latin American Urban History," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 52 (Aug. 1972):359-94; "Recent Research on Latin American Urbanization: A Selective Survey with Commentary," *LARR* 1, no. 1 (Fall 1965):35-74; "Trends and Issues in Latin American Urban Research, 1965-1970 (Part I)," *LARR* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1971):3-52; Part II appeared in *LARR* 6, no. 2 (Summer 1971):19-75.
32. Richard M. Morse, "Cities and Society in 19th Century Latin America: The Illustrative Case of Brazil," in Jorge H. Hardoy and Richard P. Schaedel, eds., *El proceso de urbanización en América desde sus orígenes hasta nuestros días*, (Buenos Aires, 1969), p. 305.
33. José Luis Romero, "La ciudad latinoamericana y los movimientos políticos," in Jorge E. Hardoy and Carlos Tobar, eds., *La urbanización en América Latina* (Buenos Aires, 1969), pp. 297-310.
34. Amilcar Razori, *Historia de la ciudad argentina*, 3 vols. (Buenos Aires, 1945); Nicolás Besio Moreno, *Buenos Aires: puerto del Río de la Plata, Capital de la Argentina. Estudio crítico de su población, 1536-1936* (Buenos Aires, 1939). For a more extensive study of how Argentines have treated the city in their research, see Mark D. Szuchman, "Visiones del crisol en la ciudad americana: esperanzas europeas y nacionales en los Estados Unidos y en la Argentina durante el período de la inmigración masiva," Paper presented at the X Jornadas, Asociación Argentina de Estudios Americanos, Buenos Aires, 1976.
35. Gino Germani has been the pioneer of urban studies in Argentina and other Latin American countries; his activities and training methods in sociology at the Universidad de Buenos Aires have generated a number of urbanists. Examples of his works are: Gino Germani, Jorge Graciarena, and Miguel Murmis, *La asimilación de los inmigrantes en la Argentina y el fenómeno del regreso en la inmigración reciente* (Buenos Aires, 1964); Germani, *Assimilation of Immigrants in Urban Areas: Methodological Notes*, 2d ed. (Buenos Aires, 1966); *Estructura social de la Argentina* (Buenos Aires, 1955); *El proceso de urbanización en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires, 1959). For a specific treatment of Germani's formation and contribution see Joseph A. Kahl, *Modernization, Exploitation, and Dependency in Latin America: Germani, Gonzalez-Casanova, and Cardoso* (New Brunswick, 1976), pp. 23-68.
36. Domingo F. Sarmiento, *Facundo* (Mexico, 1958). For some overviews of sarmientista philosophy, see Hector F. Bravo, *Sarmiento, pedagogo social* (Buenos Aires, 1965); and Enrique Anderson Imbert, *Genio y figura de Sarmiento* (Buenos Aires, 1967).

37. Mark D. Szuchman, "Mobility and Integration in Urban Argentina: Córdoba in the Liberal Era," Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1976, esp. chap. 2.
38. James R. Scobie, *Buenos Aires: Plaza to Suburb, 1870–1910* (New York, 1974), particularly chap. 5.
39. For a review of the debate over the political implications of in-migration to the city of Buenos Aires and its effects at the time of Peronist formation, see Eldon Kenworthy, "Interpretaciones ortodoxas y revisionistas del apoyo inicial del peronismo," *Desarrollo Económico* 14 (enero-marzo 1975):749–63; Peter H. Smith, "The Social Base of Peronism," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 52 (Feb. 1972):55–73; and "Las elecciones argentinas de 1946 y las inferencias ecológicas," *Desarrollo Económico* 14 (julio-setiembre 1974):385–98; and Gino Germani, "El surgimiento del peronismo: el rol de los obreros y de los migrantes internos," *Desarrollo Económico* 13 (octubre-diciembre 1973):435–88.
40. The works of Knights and Thernstrom have already been mentioned. An example of good use of directories and school registers when manuscript census schedules are not available is Howard P. Chudacoff, *Mobile Americans: Residential and Social Mobility in Omaha, 1880–1920* (New York, 1972).
41. While the data are similar, the admissions process for archives and their accompanying restrictions are different in the Federal Capital. The civil registry, under the control of the courts and located in the Palacio de los Tribunales, does not permit researchers to examine the period after 1930. Those interested must formally petition the Director of the Judicial Archive for permission to enter.
42. The educational mobility of children in the sampled households can be traced only at the university level, since no records exist of primary or secondary school enrollment. The archive of the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba contains the Libros de Grados, which lists each graduate with his degree and discipline.
43. Eugene F. Sofer, *From Pale to Pampa: A Social History of the Jews of Buenos Aires* (New York, 1979).
44. Barthold Georg Niebuhr, "Vorrede zu der ersten Ausgabe," in M. Isler, ed., *Römische Geschichte*, rev. ed., 3 vols. (Berlin, 1873); quoted in Fritz Stern, ed., *The Varieties of History* (Cleveland, 1956), p. 48.
45. James Harvey Robinson and Charles A. Beard, "Preface," *The Development of Modern Europe*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1907); quoted in Stern, *The Varieties of History*, p. 266.