

SECTION 1 REVIEW

- 1. Locate:** (a) Guatemala, (b) Chile, (c) El Salvador, (d) Cuba, (e) Nicaragua.
- 2. Identify:** (a) Salvador Allende, (b) Fidel Castro, (c) Sandinistas, (d) contras, (e) Augusto Pinochet, (f) economic nationalism.
- 3. Define:** (a) coup d'état, (b) embargo.
- 4.** Describe two causes of unrest in Latin America.
- 5.** How did Castro's revolution affect Cuba?
- 6.** How have Latin American nations tried to achieve economic independence?
- 7. Drawing Conclusions** Why do you think attempts at land reform have failed in many countries?
- 8. Writing Across Cultures** United States aid to the contras became a subject of debate during the 1980s. Write a letter to your representative in Congress opposing or defending United States support of rebels in other countries. Give three reasons for your position.

2

CHANGING PATTERNS OF LIFE

FIND OUT

- What are some effects rapid urbanization has had on Latin America?
How has life in rural areas changed?
How are women's lives in Latin America changing?
What role does the Roman Catholic Church play in Latin America today?

Vocabulary liberation theology

In Buenos Aires, a teenage girl listens eagerly to the latest song by Ignacio Copani. Copani's songs provide more than entertain-

ment. Many protest government corruption, overemphasis on material goods, and other social ills. In "I'm Gonna Win," Copani offers a message of hope to young people. He urges them to look

“For an exit not through the airport,
or through drugs or death,
or stealing from others,
I'm gonna win,
I'm gonna win . . .
Laughing at those I don't trust,
Joining those who tell the truth.”

For many people in Latin America, the “airport”—migration to the United States—offers an escape from a harsh life. Yet others are determined to seek justice and opportunity at home. Protest singers like Ignacio Copani express the people's desire to build a better future at home.

Move to the Cities

As in other developing nations, modernization and the population explosion in Latin America have led to rapid urban growth. Population growth indicates progress. As a result of improved health care, people live longer and more children survive to become adults. The population boom, however, strains scarce resources. In rural areas, there is neither enough fertile land for peasants to farm nor enough jobs for young people. As a result, many young people move to the cities to find work.

In the larger, more industrial countries of Latin America, more people live in urban areas than in the countryside. People flock to the large metropolitan areas. With a population of more than 20 million people, Mexico City is one of the largest cities in the world. São Paulo, Brazil, has more than 18 million people. Today, one out of every five people in Brazil lives in either São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro.

Finding work. People who move to the cities often have more education than those who remain in rural areas. Still, finding a job is difficult. Modernization has created jobs in offices and industry, but city populations are

growing faster than the number of new jobs. The cost of making interest payments on foreign debt cuts into the amount of money available for investment. Because so many people are in search of work, wages remain low.

Many newcomers earn their living as street vendors, selling food, drinks, and lottery tickets. Others drive taxis. Still others, especially women, turn their homes into workshops where they make clothes, repair shoes, and produce handicrafts. A Colombian woman, Maria Agudelo, described the long hours she worked in her home.

“When everybody else went to bed, I stayed up at my sewing machine. I learned to do without sleep. Sometimes I would fall asleep when I was sewing, but then I woke up and thought, ‘No, I have to get this done before morning.’”

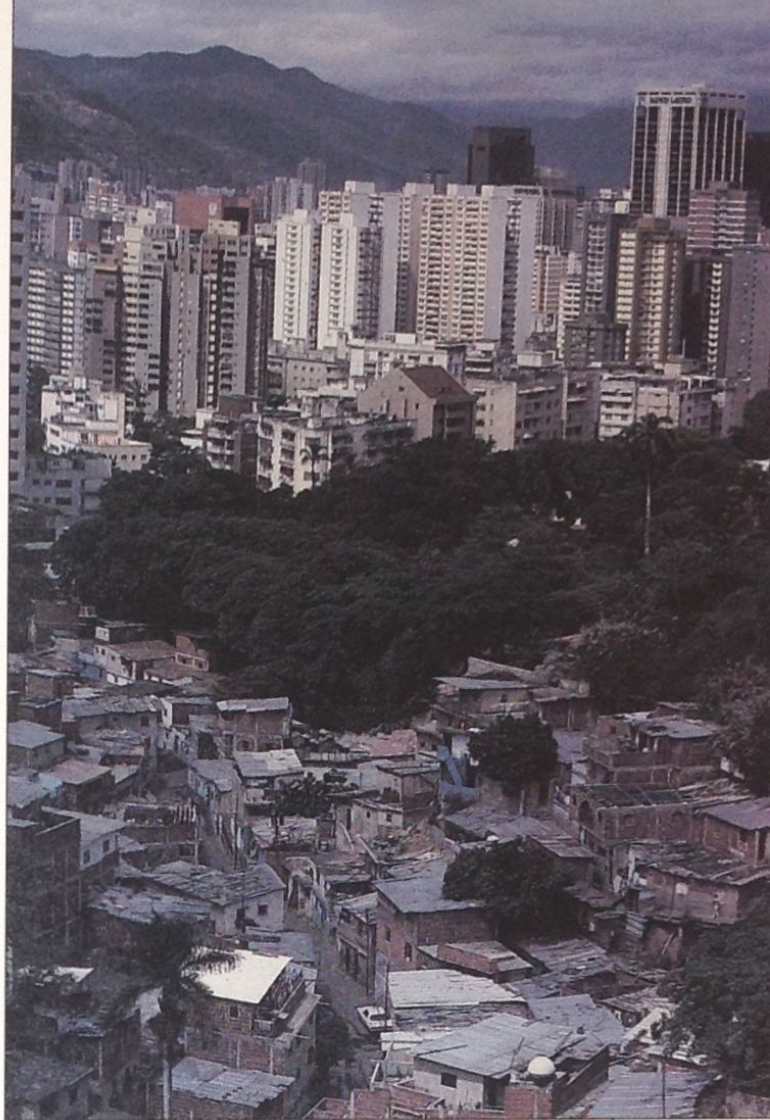
Self-help housing. The flood of newcomers has created a severe housing crisis. Sprawling slums have sprung up around every city. They are known by different names, such as *villas miserias* (cities of misery) in Colombia, *pueblos jovenes* (young towns) in Peru, or *favelas* (shantytowns) in Brazil.

Often, groups of poor people claim vacant land that is too swampy, hilly, or dry to attract housing developers. Using scraps of wood and metal, they build makeshift homes. At first, these self-help settlements lack electricity, running water, sewers, and services such as health clinics or schools. In time, however, the residents improve their homes. They might then set up schools and a police force, or apply to the government for water and other services. Some of these self-help settlements eventually develop into stable communities.

Despite the difficulties of urban life, people continue to flock to the cities. As bad as the slums are, they are often better than the rural life that farmers leave behind.

Rural Life

In very poor countries, such as Bolivia and Guatemala, the majority of the people still live in rural areas. For most farmers, life is



Caracas, Venezuela Makeshift houses cluster in the shadow of modern apartment buildings. In 1930, only three Latin American cities had more than 1 million people. Today, more than 30 cities are this large. In some cities, as many as one fourth of the people live in slums. **Change** Why have cities grown so rapidly in recent years?

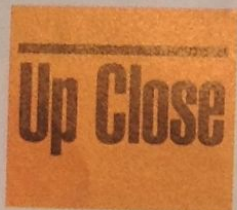
extremely hard. On small, half-acre plots, they raise chickens and grow corn, beans, and squash. Their homes are one-room shacks with thatched or tin roofs. Hunger and disease are constant threats. Children attend school for only a few years, if at all. Many never learn to read and write.

Tenant farmers. Landless peasants work on large estates either as tenant farmers or as house servants. In exchange for the labor they provide, they get a small plot of land to farm for themselves. Often, they receive little or no pay. If they need money, they must

borrow it from the landowner. As a result, many tenant farmers remain permanently in debt to the landowner.

Effects of modernization. Modernization has brought changes to rural areas. In Mexico and Central America, for example, multinational corporations have bought much of the land. They then set up huge cotton and coffee plantations or cattle ranches. Because they are efficiently operated, these large operations have increased the output of both food and export crops.

These changes have had some negative effects, however. Many commercial farms produce foods for export rather than for home markets. Locally grown food is often scarce, which results in higher food prices. Governments tend to use their limited financial resources to help city dwellers. As a result, they have neglected the needs of rural peasants. The growing gap between rural and urban conditions encourages still more people to migrate to the cities.



Elvia Alvarado— Peasant Organizer

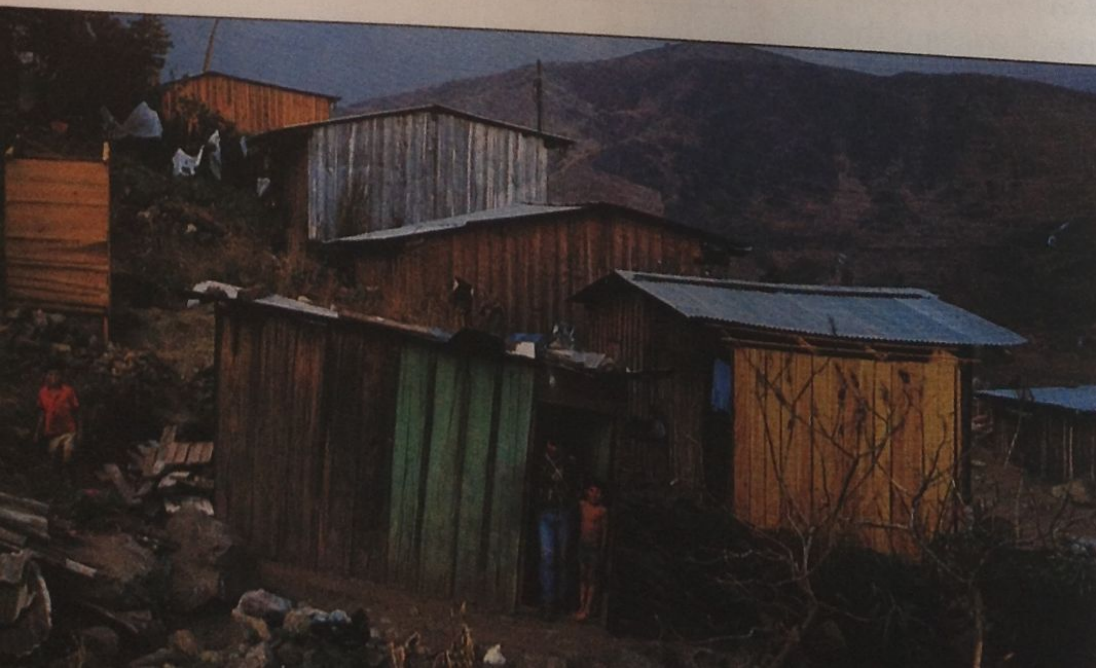
Elvia Alvarado is typical of many *campesinos*, or rural peasants, of Honduras. Even as a child, she was aware of her family's daily struggle to survive:

“My father was a *campesino*. He didn't have any land of his own, so he worked for the big landowners as a day worker. . . . My mother worked like a mule to take care of us, and we all helped out. We'd get up at three in the morning, in the dark, to help bake bread, make tortillas, feed the pigs, and clean the house. All my brothers and sisters worked hard—the boys in the fields of the big landowners, the girls in the house.”

Alvarado's mother wanted her daughter to get an education. The village school had only two grades. “But I really wanted to learn, so I kept repeating second grade over and over again.”

Despite her eagerness to learn, Alvarado was soon trapped in poverty like so many others in her village. She eventually had six children. At one point, she left her children with her mother and went to Tegucigalpa (tuh goo see GAHL puh), the capital of Honduras. There, she worked as a maid for a rich couple. She earned \$15 a month, which she sent home to her mother and children. Part of her job was feeding the family's dog.

“My boss would give me meat, tomatoes, and oil and tell me to cook it up for the dog. And every time I fed that dog, I'd think of my own children. My children never got to eat meat. The



The Campesinos Life is often difficult for Hondurans. About one third of the people are unemployed, and the average worker earns only about \$850 a year. The diet of most poor people consists of tortillas and beans. Malnutrition is a constant threat. **Scarcity** Why might people who live in rural areas lack proper food?

\$15 I sent them was hardly enough to buy beans and corn. But that dog got meat every day. ”

Alvarado eventually returned to her village. One day, she joined a mothers' club that her church organized. There, women met to talk about problems such as getting food and medicine for their children. Although her husband objected, Alvarado began to help other villages to set up similar women's groups. Through her work, she realized that all of the campesinos had the same problem—lack of land.

“ If they have any land at all, it's usually the worst land—hilly with poor soils. Because the best land is the flat land the big landowners own. . . . I felt that without land, we'd never get out of our poverty. ”

Alvarado soon became active in a movement to recover land that large landowners had taken from the campesinos in the past. Because she stood up to these landowners, she was arrested and tortured. Alvarado knows that her life is in danger. “The only way they can stop me from what I'm doing,” declares Alvarado, “is by killing me. But that won't stop the others from following my path. In that sense, I'm stronger than they are.” ■

Changes in Family Life

Throughout Latin America, family ties remain strong in both rural and urban areas. In rural areas, parents, children, aunts, uncles, and cousins usually live nearby. If a relative is sick or hurt, other family members are there to help. They take care of the young children and provide food and other support. Today, as in the past, the man still dominates the family. However, in families where men have died or left the village to find work, women take full responsibility for the family.

In cities, newcomers often find they are completely on their own. If they have an accident or lose their jobs, they face disaster.

Some people, though, move to cities where family or friends have already settled.

Godparents. The custom of godparents helps families to forge new links in the harsh urban environment. Frequently, parents ask wealthier or better-educated people to serve as *padrino* and *madrino*—“godfather” and “godmother”—to their children. These godparents provide their godchildren with advice and support.

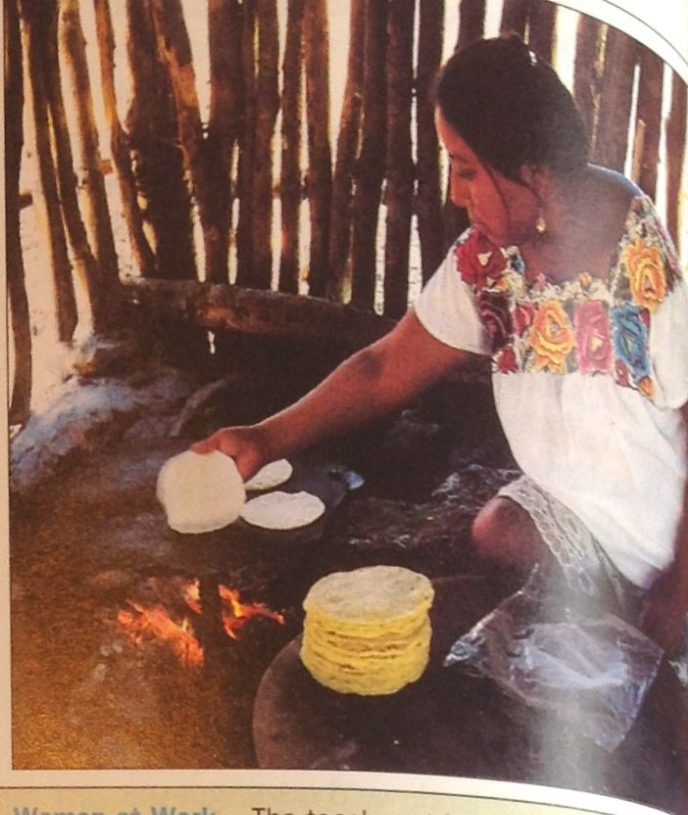
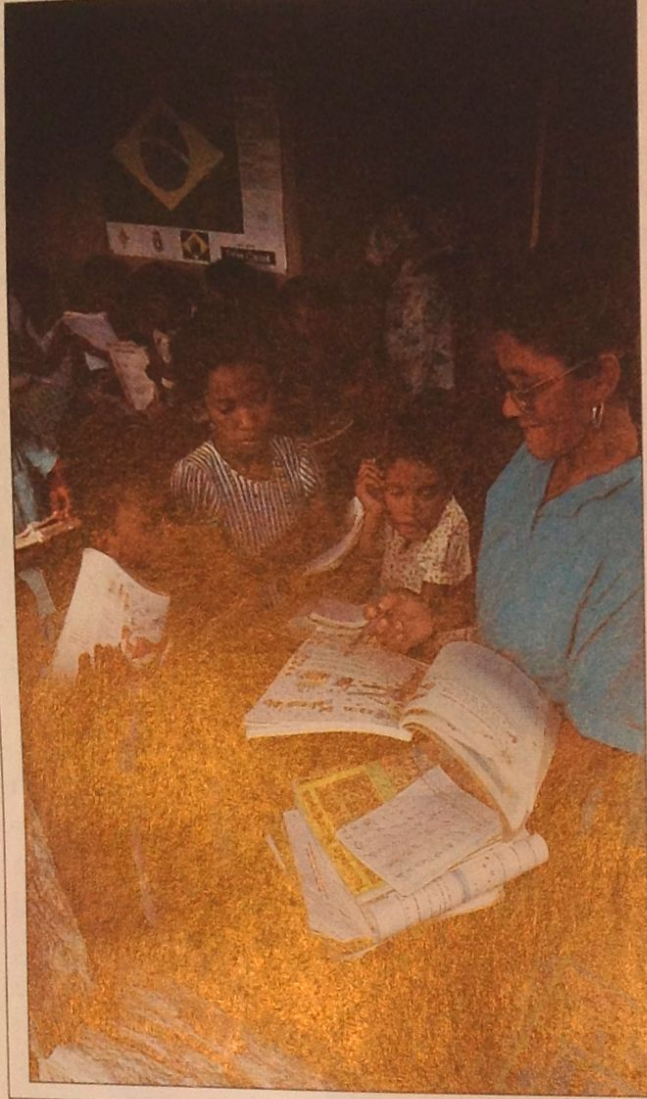
Parents and children. Traditionally, parents have expected complete obedience from their children. At an early age, a boy either learned his father's trade or worked with him in the fields. Girls worked with their mothers both in the fields and at home. They prepared food, carried water, and looked after the younger children. Those traditions survive in rural areas.

In cities, children have more freedom while their parents are away at work. They also have greater opportunities, because urban schools are better equipped than rural schools. Still, child labor is common among poor urban families. Instead of working in the fields, children work in factories or set up street stands. Some poor children even rummage through the garbage from wealthy neighborhoods in search of food or other useful objects that have been discarded. In the cities, crime and drugs tempt children with the lure of easy money.

Changing Lives of Women

In rural areas, the custom of *machismo*, or male domination, remains strong. A woman is not expected to question her husband's decisions. Many parents raise their daughters to marry and have children. Because they do not think girls need an education, illiteracy is higher among women than among men in rural areas.

At the same time, women like Elvia Alvarado have helped to organize peasant groups in rural areas. By speaking out on issues, women have gained confidence in their ability to make changes. As a result, a growing number of women now urge their daughters as well as their sons to attend school.



Women at Work The teacher at left is instructing pupils in an elementary school in Brazil. At right, a woman in rural Mexico cooks tortillas over a fire. Although more women now work outside the home, the number of women wage earners in Latin America is small compared with the number in Africa and East Asia. **Culture** Why might relatively few Latin American women work outside the home?

In the cities, many women have jobs outside the home. This increases their contact with new ideas and opportunities. Furthermore, their earnings give them a sense of independence. One Peruvian woman noted that in cities, “both spouses express opinions about life in their home.”

As more women earn university degrees, they enter professions such as law and medicine. Yet, they often have a hard time finding jobs in societies dominated by men.

Changing Role of the Church

Today, as in the past, the Catholic Church is a powerful force in Latin America. About 90 percent of the people are Catholic. Traditionally, the Church supported the ruling elite. As a large landowner, it opposed reforms that might threaten its power.

As people moved to cities, their ties with the Church weakened. During the 1960s, popular support for Marxism and revolutionary movements alarmed Church leaders. In response, Church leaders called for new efforts to help the poor. They set up programs to build schools and clinics in poor neighborhoods.

Liberation theology. Some members of the clergy felt that those programs did not go far enough. Poverty, they said, is caused by people, not by God. Therefore, they called on the Church to take a more active role in changing the conditions that contributed to poverty. This doctrine became known as **liberation theology**.

Thousands of priests, nuns, and Church workers moved into shantytowns and peasant villages. There, they helped the poor to organize for change. They also asked

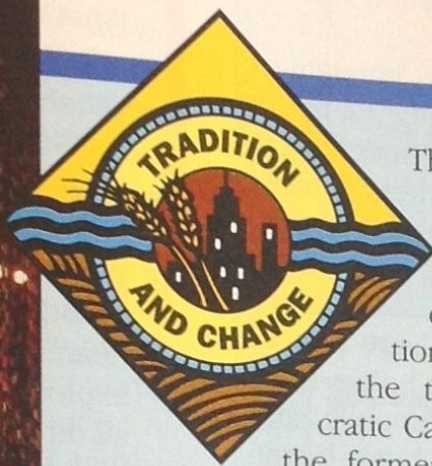
the governments of these nations for sweeping reforms to end social and economic inequalities.

However, liberation theology created divisions within the Church. Many bishops argued that the Church should keep out of politics. The pope ordered priests not to become political leaders. Despite official dis-

approval, however, many clergy continue to organize programs for social reform.

Migration to *El Norte*

Millions of Latin Americans have reacted to political violence and economic hardship by leaving their homes. Many headed to *El Norte* (The North), their name for the United States.



Carnival!

“This is real happiness,
Not a soul with prejudice,
Play your ‘mas’ as you like. . . .
When the steel orchestra
Blast the rhythm in your ear,
From Monday ‘til
Ash Wednesday morning.”

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, the 40 days of penitence and fasting before the Christian celebration of Easter. Each year in the Caribbean and Brazil, the 48 hours before Ash Wednesday become one big party. This tradition is called Carnival.

The Caribbean island nation of Trinidad and Tobago is host to one of the wildest, splashiest celebrations. Its Carnival blends the European, African, and American roots of the “Trinis,” as the people of the nation are called.

The celebration began as a festival of French aristocrats. It was a dignified affair, with carriage promenades and fancy dress balls. After the emancipation of enslaved Africans in 1834, the tempo quickened. The aristocratic Carnival was then combined with the former slave festival of *canbou-lay*. From this blend of traditions evolved today’s yearly series of parades, music, and outdoor dances.

During Carnival, tourists flock to Trinidad and Tobago. The islands hum to the sounds of music. Neighborhood pan-bands, playing specially tuned oil drums, compete for prizes. Other singers perform in a musical style known as *soca*, or social calypso. These songs often criticize government officials or address pressing social problems. For the poor, Carnival is a time to blow off steam by mocking the rich and powerful.

Perhaps Carnival is most memorable for its elaborate “mas,” or masquerade. Some costumes take weeks to make and can weigh as much as 150 pounds. “I guess it’s still an art,” remarked one tired seamstress, “but more and more I think the art has become structural engineering.”

1. How does Carnival represent the mixed European and African heritage of the Trinis?
2. **Making Inferences** How might a celebration such as Carnival benefit the people of a nation or community?

Political refugees. Some immigrants were political refugees who sought safety from harsh governments. Hundreds of thousands of Cubans have migrated to the United States since Fidel Castro took power in 1959. Many people from El Salvador and Guatemala fled to the United States to escape civil war and right-wing death squads. During the 1970s, immigrants from Chile, Argentina, and Haiti also headed north to escape brutal military regimes.

Economic refugees. Other immigrants were economic refugees who sought a better life. Some had legal papers that entitled them to work in the United States. Others entered the United States illegally. They had to take whatever jobs they could find no matter how low the pay.

Economic refugees send a large part of their earnings to their families at home. In Jamaica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and other countries, the money sent home by migrants in El Norte is vital to the nations' economy.

SECTION 2 REVIEW

1. **Identify:** (a) machismo, (b) El Norte.
2. **Define:** liberation theology.
3. Describe two effects of urban growth in Latin America.
4. (a) What traditions affect the lives of women in rural areas? (b) How has urbanization changed the lives of women in Latin America?
5. How has the role of the Catholic Church changed in Latin America?
6. **Evaluating Information** (a) What are the benefits and disadvantages of commercial agriculture in Latin America? (b) Have the benefits outweighed the disadvantages? Explain.
7. **Writing Across Cultures** Write a letter that a Latin American immigrant to El Norte might send to a friend back home. Explain why you left your country and whether you are meeting your goals in the United States.

3

MEXICO

FIND OUT

What were the causes and results of the Mexican Revolution?

How has Mexico tried to build a stable government?

What economic progress has Mexico made?

Vocabulary ejido, free trade, maquiladora

“**F**irst, a distant shot; then another, nearer, sharper, echoing like the explosion of a rocket. Then shots in all directions. Round a corner galloped a body of horsemen, their carbines raised. Hoofs struck sparks from the paving stone. Bullets passed whining.”

In the short story “The Bosses,” the Mexican writer Mariano Azuela described the arrival of revolutionary forces in a small Mexican city.

For years, the Del Llano family has used its control of the bank and land to destroy many people. Esperanza and Juanito seize the moment to take revenge. As his sister watches, Juanito sprinkles oil on the store the Del Llanos stole from their father.

“They heard an explosion and black smoke was soon pouring from the doors and windows. . . . from the top floor spirals of smoke rolled up to the clouds. The house of Del Llano Bros., Inc, burned very well.”

Azuela had witnessed violence as a doctor in a revolutionary army. His stories captured the bitterness and anger that led to the Mexican Revolution. The revolution, which lasted from 1910 to 1920, ended years of dictatorship and brought about social reforms.