

A COLLECTIVE BIOGRAPHY OF THE RIO DE LA PLATA CLERGY, 1806–1827*

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This essay will report the results of research on the Río de la Plata clergy during the transition to Argentine nationhood, between 1806 and 1827. It will examine a database compiled from manuscripts, printed primary sources, and biographical dictionaries on 204 clerics residing in the Río de la Plata during those years (about 40 percent of the estimated 560 individuals). The database is analyzed according to descriptive and correlation procedures. The statistical analyses were undertaken to relate the demographic characteristics of the churchmen to their attitudes toward independence from Spain and the religious reforms initiated in the ensuing years by Bernardino Rivadavia, chief minister under Martín Rodríguez, governor of the Province of Buenos Aires. The quantification complements the secondary literature (mostly narratives) on the nineteenth-century Catholic Church in the Río de la Plata region.¹

Many studies have focused on Spanish American relations between church and state, which affected the careers, lifestyles, prestige, and wealth of both regular and secular clergy. Since the late fifteenth century, this situation has at times been referred to as “the religious problem.” John Mecham studied the close relationship between the two realms in the colonial period, concluding that this “affiliation of the civil and religious authorities was known as the royal patronage of the Indies. . . . No adequate comprehension of the difficult church problem which confronted

* My thanks to David Bushnell for his assistance with my dissertation and an earlier version of this essay. Thanks also to the editors and anonymous referees of *LARR* for their help with this research note.

1. These narratives are exemplified by biographies of clerics, mission histories, and studies of church rituals and the religious orders. Many of them were written decades ago, resulting at least partly from the shift toward social history among Latin Americanists studying the colonial era in the 1960s. See Luis Altamira, *El deán de Córdoba: Actuación del pbro. dr. dn. Gregorio Funes en la primera silla del cabildo eclesiástico de la ciudad natal* (Córdoba: Imprenta de la Universidad, 1949); Cayetano Bruno, *Historia de la iglesia en la Argentina*, 12 vols. (Buenos Aires: Don Bosco, 1966–1981); Enrique Ruiz-Guiñazú, *El deán de Buenos Aires: Diego Estanislao de Zavaleta, orador sagrado de mayo constituyente, opositor de la tiranía, 1768–1842* (Buenos Aires: Peuser, 1952); James Saeger, “Another View of the Mission Frontier Institution: The Guaycuruan Reductions of Santa Fe, 1743–1810,” *Hispanic American Historical Re-*

the nascent republics when embarking upon their independent careers, and which disturbed them for many years thereafter, is possible without an understanding of the nature of the relationship which existed between the Spanish crown and the Catholic church in America."² David Bushnell examined the strained relations among priests and revolutionaries of Gran Colombia during the early nineteenth century. He concluded that liberal ideas about education, property ownership, and religious freedom challenged clerical interests. Despite "a long habit of obedience to the state, the church was bound to fight for its own views" on these issues, which were debated by ecclesiastics and government officials throughout much of Latin America.³

In general, however, the scholarship on the clerics of the Río de la Plata region in the early 1800s has ignored the quantitative methods employed in studies of churchmen who lived elsewhere in the region.⁴ Prosopographies (collective biographies) and other methodologies have been used to investigate the administrative, attitudinal, and socioeconomic elements of various dioceses in the Americas, including their secular clergy. Histories of the church in Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela as well as collective biographies of clerics from these countries round out the bibliography that scholars today can consult in researching the ecclesiastical history of the late colonial and early national periods in South America.⁵

view 65, no. 3 (Aug. 1985):493–517; Antonio Santa Clara Córdoba, *La orden franciscana en las repúblicas del Plata (síntesis histórica)*, 1536–1934 (Buenos Aires: Imprenta López, 1934); and Américo Tonda, "La colecta et famulos tuos de 1812," *Archivum* 3 (1945):132–42.

2. John L. Mechem, *Church and State in Latin America: A History of Politico-Ecclesiastical Relations* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966), 3.

3. David Bushnell, *The Santander Regime in Gran Colombia* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1954), 195.

4. Descriptive statistics were used extensively in only a few works on the clergy of the Río de la Plata of the time, including Guillermo Furlong Cardiff, "Clero patriótico y clero apatriótico entre 1810 y 1816," *Archivum* 4 (1960):569–612; Ludovico García de Loydi, "El clero porteño en el cabildo abierto del 22 de mayo," *Archivum* 4 (1960):517–39; Eduardo Saguier, "La crisis eclesiástica: La lucha interna del clero en el régimen capellánico rioplatense," *Revista de Historia del Derecho "Ricardo Levene"* 30 (1995):183–211; and Fernando Urquiza, "Iglesia y revolución: un estudio acerca de la actuación política del clero porteño en la década 1810 hasta 1820," *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 69 (1992):441–95. But inferential methods (such as correlation) were not employed by scholars studying the Río de la Plata in the early nineteenth century, as far as I know.

5. For example, see Fidel Araneda Bravo, *Historia de la iglesia en Chile* (Santiago: Paulinas, 1986); Juan Arteaga, María Coolighan Sanguinetti, and Juan Villegas, *La iglesia en el Uruguay: Libro conmemorativo en el primer centenario de la erección del obispado de Montevideo, 1878–1978* (Montevideo: Instituto Teológico del Uruguay, 1978); Luis Astigarraga, *El clero de 1800 en la Banda Oriental* (Montevideo: Museo Histórico Nacional, 1983–1986); Jeffrey Klaiber, *The Catholic Church in Peru, 1821–1985* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1992); Juan Larrea Holguín, *La iglesia y el estado en el Ecuador* (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 1954); Daniel H. Levine, *Religion and Politics in Latin America: The Catholic Church in Venezuela*

The clergy along the Río de la Plata wielded material and spiritual influence in the region during a time of significant economic, political, and social change. A clearer picture of their role is needed to understand the process whereby Argentina became a viable nation-state. The data analyzed herein will help answer three important questions in studying this elite's part in national formation. What were the demographic characteristics of the clergymen? How were clerical views regarding independence from Spain and the religious reforms implemented by Rivadavia influenced by these features? And why were church-state relations so acrimonious during the years following independence in the Río de la Plata?

The findings of this research note are tentative in nature, being based on dissertation research.⁶ For example, the conclusions are derived in part from a nonrandom sample of ecclesiastics constructed from various sources.⁷ But the records in the database include a large percentage of the clerical population of the region through 1827. And the literature on the contemporary Catholic Church in the Río de la Plata region generally substantiates the results of the prosopography. Biases in the data are limited by the size of the sample, the relevant scholarship, and my own interpretations, which will be conveyed in the conclusion.

The Río de la Plata Church in the Early Nineteenth Century

South American independence created several problems for the new nations. For example, who was to inherit the royal patronage from

and Colombia (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981); James Lockhart, *The Men of Cajamarca: A Social and Biographical Study of the First Conquerors of Peru* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972); *The Conflict between Church and State in Latin America*, edited by Frederick B. Pike (New York: Knopf, 1964); María Sparks, "The Role of the Clergy during the Struggle for Independence in Peru," Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1972; Antonine Tibesar, "The Lima Pastors, 1750–1820: Their Origins and Studies as Taken from Their Autobiographies," *The Americas* 28 (1972):39–51; Tibesar, "The Peruvian Church at the Time of Independence in the Light of Vatican II," *The Americas* 26 (1970):349–75; Julio Tobar Donoso, *La iglesia ecuatoriana en el siglo xix*, vol. 1 (Quito: "Editorial Ecuatoriana," 1934); and Ivan Valier, "Comparative Studies of Roman Catholicism: Dioceses as Strategic Units," *Social Compass* 19 (1969):147–83.

6. Fidel Iglesias, "The Cross and the Sword: The Argentine Clergy, Independence, and the Rivadavian Reforms, 1806–27," Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 1994, 57–61, 105–10. A revision of this work is to be published by the Edwin Mellen Press.

7. They included manuscripts from the Archivo General de la Nación, Biblioteca Nacional, and Museo Mitre, all in Buenos Aires. Biographical dictionaries are the cornerstone of this prosopography. See Francisco Avellá Cháfer, *Diccionario biográfico del clero secular de Buenos Aires, 1580–1900*, 2 vols. (Buenos Aires: Instituto Salesiano de Artes Gráficas, 1983–1985); Vicente Cutolo, *Nuevo diccionario biográfico argentino, 1750–1930*, 7 vols. (Buenos Aires: Elche, 1968–1985); Ludovico García de Loydi, *Los capellanes del ejército: Ensayo histórico*, 3 vols. (Buenos Aires: Artes Gráficas Bartolomé U. Chiesino, 1965); Bernardo González Arrili, *Historia de la Argentina, según las biografías de sus hombres y mujeres* (Buenos Aires: Nobis, 1964); *Revista del Instituto Argentino de Ciencias Genealógicas, Genealogía: Hombres de mayo*

the defeated metropolis? After usurping the *patronato real*, did the revolutionaries exercise the same powers that Catholic sovereigns had? John Mecham observed in an article on the post-independence church in the area that a “predominantly Roman Catholic populace, which lived for centuries under a common politico-religious regime . . . after independent governments had been organized” applied “diverse remedies for the solution of the religious problem.”⁸ One approach in the Río de la Plata was to control the institution—especially its liturgy, monastic orders, personnel, and wealth—via restrictive legislation. The aim here was to strengthen the state at the expense of the church. Corruption and inefficiency in various forms undermined the ecclesiastical defense against this onslaught because they discredited the clerics of the Río de la Plata (as did the clergy’s lukewarm resistance to the British invasion of 1806) and led to calls for “enlightened religious reform.”⁹ The Age of Reason was encouraging new ideas, including the economic and political agendas of late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century liberalism for the Catholic Church (which was viewed as an obstacle to Western-style modernization) and for the state (which stimulated the reformist spirit of the time). Rivadavia’s policies of the 1820s exploited this weakness. According to Bushnell, they ex-

(Buenos Aires: Macagno, Landa, 1961); and Enrique Udaondo, *Diccionario biográfico argentino* (Buenos Aires: “Coni,” 1938). The collective biography was based on clerical biographies as well. In addition to the two listed in the first note, consult Guillermo Gallardo, “El capellán de la Primera Junta, don José León Planchón,” *Archivum* 4 (1960):5–61; and José Otero, *Estudio biográfico sobre Fray Cayetano José Rodríguez y recopilación de sus producciones literarias* (Córdoba: La Velocidad, 1899). Government documents, newspapers, and travelers’ accounts provided additional data for the statistical procedures. Examples of these writings are Manuel Borda, *Documentos tucumanos: Actas de la Sala de Representantes*, 2 vols. (Buenos Aires: Imprenta López, 1938); *El Argos de Buenos Aires* (1821–1825), 5 vols. (Buenos Aires: Atelier de Artes Gráficas “Futura,” 1931–1942); *El Eco de los Andes* (1824–1825) (Mendoza: Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, 1943); *Gaceta de Buenos Aires* (1810–1821), 6 vols. (Buenos Aires: Compañía Sud-Americana de Billetes de Banco, 1910–1915); Samuel Haigh, *Sketches of Buenos Ayres, Chile, and Peru* (London: Effingham Wilson, 1831); Francis Head, *Rough Notes Taken during Some Rapid Journeys across the Pampas and among the Andes* (1826) (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967); *Asambleas constituyentes argentinas* (1813–1833), *seguidas de los textos constitucionales, legislativos y pactos interprovinciales que organizaron políticamente a la nación*, edited by Emilio Ravignani, 6 vols. (Buenos Aires: Peuser, 1937–1939); and *Registro nacional de la República Argentina que comprende los documentos desde 1810 hasta 1891*, 14 vols. (Buenos Aires: “La República,” 1879–1991). Unfortunately, only after the correlation and descriptive statistics for this note were compiled did I come across Carlos Mayo, *Los Betlemitas en Buenos Aires: Convento, economía y sociedad, 1748–1822* (Seville: Diputación Provincial de Sevilla, 1991).

8. John L. Mecham, “A Survey of the Church-State Conflict in Latin America during the First Century of Independence,” in Pike, *Conflict between Church and State*, 165.

9. For introductions to the British presence in the La Plata region in the early nineteenth century, see Arturo Capdevilla, *Las invasiones inglesas: Crónica y evocación* (Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe Argentina, 1951); and Ernestina Costa, *English Invasion of the River Plate* (Buenos Aires: Guillermo Kraft, 1937).

emplified “a fundamental tension or inconsistency running through all Latin American liberalism of the past century, prepared as it was to curb the liberty of the institutional church for the sake, supposedly, of the greater liberty of the greatest number.”¹⁰

Uneasy relations between church and state were aggravated by demographic, economic, and political changes in the Río de la Plata after 1810. The recorded population grew by 30 percent from 406,000 persons in 1809 to 527,000 in 1819, and by another 20 percent for a total of 634,000 by 1829.¹¹ These years were characterized by economic stagnation. For example, viceregal authorities collected over 1 million pesos in taxes from the interior between 1806 and 1810. David Rock found that the amount plummeted to “a mere 180,000 pesos in 1811–1815, reflecting both political breakdown and the extent of economic dislocation in the interior.”¹² Córdoba’s income declined from a little more than 200,000 pesos in 1810 to less than 73,000 in 1817. Salta also lost revenues, which dropped from 453,000 pesos in 1811 to 72,000 in six years.¹³

The church, like other institutions, was in a difficult position because of unpredictable developments in the provinces of the Río de la Plata. One consequence was that tithe collections were cut in half: from almost 104,000 pesos in 1806–1810 in Buenos Aires to about 51,000 in 1811–1815.¹⁴ Government officials meddled in religious matters on numerous occasions. For instance, they continued the colonial tradition of ordering a *te deum* by dedicating a mass in 1812 to the “consolidation of our just system and the success of our armies.”¹⁵ Another example was an edict of 1813 enacted ostensibly in the interest of public health. It stated, “The General Assembly declares, after being informed by a suffering population of the many infants that die . . . because of cold baptismal waters . . . shortly after birth, that only warm water be used—throughout the land—in baptisms during the entire year.”¹⁶ The religious reforms of the

10. David Bushnell, *Reform and Reaction in the Platine Provinces, 1810–1852* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1983), 26.

11. Ernesto Maeder, *Evolución demográfica argentina de 1810 a 1869* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Universitaria, 1969), 21.

12. David Rock, *Argentina, 1516–1982: From Spanish Colonization to the Falklands War* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 82.

13. Tulio Halperín Donghi, *Guerra y finanzas en los orígenes del estado argentino (1791–1850)* (Buenos Aires: Belgrano, 1982), 114, 121–25. A second indicator of the interior’s depression were land values, which declined by 85 percent in Córdoba in 1826. But regional production and trade increased in the 1830s as a result of the growth in exports from the La Plata region after the conclusion of the independence struggle. See Jonathan C. Brown, *A Socioeconomic History of Argentina, 1776–1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 202–4.

14. *Ibid.*, 43.

15. “Suplemento a *La Gaceta Ministerial*,” *Gaceta de Buenos Aires*, 29 May 1812, p. 2. Unless otherwise stated, translations from the Spanish are by the author.

16. Emilio Ravignani, *Asambleas constituyentes*, 1:63.

1820s went beyond the regalist Bourbon policies of the late colonial era by disbanding the regular orders (which were secularized) as called for in Article 16 of the Reform Law of the Clergy in 1822. It declared: "The Bethlehemite communities . . . and those of the other orders in the Province are suppressed."¹⁷ Moreover, church property in the port city was confiscated in 1822—to the tune of over 577,000 pesos. In sum, church autonomy was challenged by Enlightenment ideas and by demographic and politico-economic trends in the Río de la Plata under the Bourbons and their revolutionary successors.

Nancy Farriss, in discussing liberalism in Mexico, described the situation as a "crisis of ecclesiastical privilege . . . [which was] fundamentally incompatible with the interests of the state."¹⁸ How did the clerics in the Río de la Plata react to this crisis? In this region, according to Bushnell, the "suppression of the ecclesiastical *fuero* was one installment of the broader abolition of judicial privileges" characteristic of the Rivadavian reforms.¹⁹ The clergy's response, which was determined by several factors, influenced church-state relations in the Río de la Plata in the first three decades of the nineteenth century.

A Prosopography of the Clergy of the Río de la Plata

The clerical reply to independence and the liberal reforms in the Río de la Plata region will be dealt with here by summarizing the statistics derived from the collective biography of ecclesiastics.²⁰ Various techniques were used to interpret the 204 records, including correlations, cross-tabulations, a frequency distribution, and the means of eleven variables: age, class, clergy, location, nation, office, race, reforms, revolt, strength, and vigor (see tables 1 and 2).²¹ A normal distribution of the sample and its linearity were determined by studying histograms and scattergrams of the database.

17. Guillermo Gallardo, *La política religiosa de Rivadavia* (Buenos Aires: Theoría, 1962), 278. For his data on the value of confiscations in Buenos Aires, see 100–101.

18. Nancy M. Farriss, *Crown and Clergy in Colonial Mexico, 1759–1821: The Crisis of Ecclesiastical Privilege* (London: Athlone, 1968), 237.

19. David Bushnell, *Reform and Reaction*, 28.

20. Useful for the statistics were Roderick Floud, *An Introduction to Quantitative Methods for Historians* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1973); and John Hedderson, *SPSS-X Made Simple* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1987).

21. The variables measure the clerics' age in 1827 or when they died (AGE); where they were born, in the Americas or Europe (NATION); their socioeconomic background (CLASS); and their race, white or other (RACE); what kind of clergy (regular or secular) they were (CLERGY); the province (Buenos Aires or elsewhere) where they spent the majority of their careers (LOCATE); and the highest ecclesiastical office they held (OFFICE). Additional variables measure the stands taken by the churchmen for or against independence (REVOLT); and on Rivadavian policies (REFORMS); including how vigorously they felt about the confrontation with Spain (STRENGTH) and the religious reforms (VIGOR) of the 1820s (the

TABLE 1 Sample of Correlation and Descriptive Data on Río de la Plata Clergy, 1806–1827

Factor	Class	Clergy	Office	Location	Revolt	Strength	Reforms	Vigor
Age			.1767 ^a					
Race	-.1773 ^a				-.0576		.0625	
Nation					.1703 ^a		.0855	
Class		-.3184 ^b	.2833 ^b	-.2584 ^b	.0111			.2245 ^b
Clergy			-.2079 ^a		-.0395		.4354 ^b	
Office						.1709 ^a		.1859 ^a
Location		.2135 ^a			-.0057		.0110	-.1752 ^a
Revolt							.2994 ^b	
Strength								.2770 ^a
Reforms	-.1931 ^a							

Note: N = 204. The average age is 55.5 (ranging from 29 to 86).

^a 1-tailed significance at -.01.

^b 1-tailed significance at -.001.

The average age of the sample was about 56 years. According to the frequency distribution of the variables, 4 (2 percent) of the clergymen were nonwhite. Eighteen (8.8 percent) of the priests were Europeans, and their class backgrounds were categorized as 31.4 percent in the lower ranks (64 individuals), 49.5 percent in the middle (101), and 19.1 percent (39) in the higher. Seculars (parish priests or those not in regular orders) constituted 124 (60.8 percent) and regulars 80 (39.2 percent) of the records. Sixty-nine (33.8 percent) of the churchmen resided in Buenos Aires during most of their professional lives, while 135 (66.2 percent) lived elsewhere in the region. The tallies for hierarchical status came to 88 (43.1 percent) in the lowest organizational level, 92 (45.1 percent) in the middle, and 24 of the clergymen (11.8 percent) in the highest organizational levels. The relationship between personal antecedents and institutional patterns is evident in correlation coefficients reported in table 1. To state the numerical findings in words, the clergy in the Río de la Plata in the independence and early national periods was mostly secular, a bit aged, overwhelmingly American and white, primarily of middle-class origin, and disproportionately from Buenos Aires. This group of clergy tended to advance institutionally according to its familial beginnings.

How did the institutional and personal characteristics of the clerics influence their attitudes toward the political events of the day? The struggle for independence and the Rivadavian reforms were important developments of the early 1800s in the Río de la Plata. The clergy in this region were not like their counterparts in Mexico, where the church and its hierarchy had worked closely with the viceroy and been firmly established via

clergymen were categorized according to their actions in low, middle, and high levels). See the appendix for an extended explanation of the variables, how they were measured, and the statistical analyses.

TABLE 2 *Sample of Frequencies and Percentages on Río de la Plata Clergy, 1806–1827*

Factor	Value	Frequencies	Percent
Nation	0 American	186	91.2
	1 Other	18	8.8
Class	1 Low	64	31.4
	2 Middle	101	49.5
	3 High	39	19.1
Clergy	0 Secular	124	60.8
	1 Regular	80	39.2
Race	0 White	200	98.0
	1 Other	4	2.0
Office	1 Low	88	43.1
	2 Middle	92	45.1
	3 High	24	11.8
Location	0 Buenos Aires	69	33.8
	1 Other	135	66.2
Revolt	0 Pro-independence	175	85.8
	1 Anti-independence	29	14.2
Strength	1 Low	39	19.1
	2 Middle	69	33.8
	3 High	96	47.1
Reforms	0 Pro-reforms	96	47.1
	1 Anti-reforms	108	52.9
Vigor	1 Low	107	52.5
	2 Middle	63	30.9
	3 High	34	16.6

ample resources since arriving in the sixteenth century. The ecclesiastics of the Río de la Plata, in contrast, overwhelmingly favored the confrontation with Spain.²² The data establish that 175 (85.8 percent) of them adopted this stance.²³ Attitudes toward independence differed, however, according to nationality. Only 12 (67 percent) of the European clerics wel-

22. See Farriss, *Crown and Clergy*, on the Mexican clergy's reaction to the developments of this era. I would like to thank one anonymous *LARR* reader for pointing out several important aspects of church-state relations in colonial Mexico, as well as the local nature of its revolution against Spain. In *Historia de la iglesia en Chile*, Fidel Aranceda Bravo described how the Chilean Catholic Church eventually followed the path of its eastern neighbors. In contrast, Peruvian clerics resisted independence more than their colleagues in the La Plata region. See the data in Sparks, "Role of the Clergy during the Struggle for Independence in Peru," which confirm the existence of significant support for the war against Spain, but not to the degree present in the Río de la Plata. The extent of church influence and wealth and the strength or weakness of viceregal governments (not to mention of royalist troops in the area) undoubtedly influenced the respective national clergies' views on independence.

23. In other words, 29 of the churchmen in the prosopography (14 percent) opposed separation from Spain. Guillermo Furlong estimated that 10 percent of the Río de la Plata clergy opposed independence. See "Clero patriótico y clero apatriótico entre 1810 y 1816," 611.

comed the fight against the imperial authorities. These results support the traditional interpretation that antagonism between creoles and Spaniards contributed to the outbreak of hostilities.

Clerical reactions to Rivadavia's religious policies were mostly negative. In fact, 108 (52.9 percent) of the sample objected to them. The regulars, the target of many of the reforms, were especially critical of the minister. Sixty-four (80 percent) objected to his treatment of the church. A correlation coefficient of .4354 between REFORMS and CLERGY demonstrates the connection between institutional factors and political attitudes. The importance of social background in explaining these views was evident in a coefficient of -.1931 between REFORMS and CLASS. This finding reflects the large proportion (42 persons or 52.5 percent) of the regulars from the lower sector, the social group most antagonistic to the Reform Law of 1822. Forty-three (67.2 percent) of these individuals disliked the law.

A Sampler of Clerical Biographies

The careers of three Spanish regulars—Manuel Albariño, Ramón de la Quintana, and Domingo Rama—exemplify several of these findings.²⁴ Albariño was born in 1763 in Galicia, emigrating to the Río de la Plata as a child with his parents. Departing from a family tradition of military service, he joined the Dominicans of Buenos Aires in 1781. The friar taught philosophy and theology at their convent until 1804, when he became rector of the Dominican house in Asunción. Albariño accepted the same position in Buenos Aires in 1810, the year he participated in the *cabildo abierto* (public meeting) that deposed the viceroy in favor of local autonomy. His friendly relations with the new regime were short-lived, however. Albariño was prosecuted in 1820 for insulting a judge and in 1822 signed the Dominican protest against the Rivadavian reforms. He was secularized after 1823 because of these policies, which extinguished the order in the port city, and he became an army chaplain for several years. He also had problems with the regime of Rivadavia's nemesis, Juan Manuel de Rosas, who removed Albariño from this post before his death in 1830.

Ramón de la Quintana was born in 1774 in Santander. He became a Franciscan novice in the Recolectión del Pilar of Buenos Aires in 1795. The friar taught philosophy at the convent school from 1806 to 1810, when he became guardian of the convent at Catamarca. Quintana was associated with this house for the rest of his life, including a stint as a teacher of grammar and rhetoric. He served as provincial of the order from 1839 to 1842. Described by one of his students as "generous" and "sincere," he had no evident enemies and did not participate in political controversies.

24. Luis Astigarraga, *El clero de 1800*, 181–82; Antonio Santa Clara Córdoba, *La orden franciscana*, 178–79; and Vicente Cutolo, *Nuevo diccionario argentino*, 59–60.

Little evidence exists to verify his views regarding independence and the liberal reforms that followed, but his long and uneventful career seems to indicate the cleric's adaptation to independence and suggests that religious reforms were not implemented to any great extent in Catamarca. Death claimed Quintana on 8 October 1851.

Domingo Rama was born in 1776. He entered the Mercedarian Order at the age of twenty-five and taught at the convent in Buenos Aires until 1818. At that time, he was exiled to Uruguay because of his nationality (as were other Spanish regulars). He was not one of the thirteen Spanish clergymen who opted for naturalization between 1810 and 1828.²⁵ Rama was described by his superior in Montevideo as having studied in Buenos Aires and being "exemplary in character, and an avid patriot." Yet his petition to return to the port city was denied by Supreme Director José Rondeau the next year, despite the support of American colleagues. The friar endeared himself to the Uruguayans by restoring their *iglesia matriz* after its destruction in 1823. As with Quintana, scant proof has been found of Rama's views regarding the Rivadavian reforms or their Uruguayan equivalents. He passed away in 1844, and his ashes were deposited in the church he renovated.

These three churchmen seem to have been less concerned with independence and the reforms than might be expected, given their impact on the clergy in the Río de la Plata. In this respect, they reflected the other Spanish regulars' feelings: in contrast to others in the database, this smaller sample of 9 Spanish-born clerics evidenced less concern with independence (as measured by the variable STRENGTH) and with the reforms (as measured by VIGOR). The figures for the first variable were about 33 percent in the first level, 22 percent in the second level, and 45 percent in the third. Such a lack of interest was even more pronounced with regard to VIGOR. Almost 78 percent of the peninsular monks were unconcerned about the religious policies of the 1820s, while the others were divided equally into the second and third levels. They were clearly affected by contemporary events that could not be avoided, and they could not have been ignorant of these events. Thus their apathy (or at least the absence of overt partisanship) might have resulted from their weakness in the face of radical change engineered by the revolutionary authorities and backed by a sociopolitical elite increasingly critical of the church.²⁶

25. Henry Vogel, "Elements of Nation-Building in Argentina: Buenos Aires, 1810–1828," Ph.D. diss., University of Florida, 1987, 305–14.

26. The nine Spanish regulars in the sample differed from the other 195 clerics in age, class, office, location, revolt, and reforms. Their average age was 59.7 years (55.5 was the average for the entire database); 6 (66.7 percent) were from the lower class, 2 (22.2 percent) from the middle, and 1 (11.1 percent) from the upper class; 5 persons (55.5 percent) and 4 individuals (44.5 percent) held positions in the first and second ranks of the church. Six of them (66.7 percent) resided outside Buenos Aires. In addition, 7 (77.8 percent) were pro-independence, and the proportion opposing the religious reforms was very large (8 or 88.8 percent). In sum, they

Clerics born in the Río de la Plata had their own opinions on independence and Rivadavia's policies. Luis Beltrán was chosen by José de San Martín to take charge of artillery for the famous crossing of the southern Andes into Spanish-held Chile because he was "well versed in chemistry, physics, mathematics, forging and mechanics."²⁷ Beltrán had been born in Mendoza in 1784. His father was a French merchant and his mother, Doña Manuela Bustos, was a native of San Juan, Argentina. Beltrán studied with the Franciscans in Mendoza under the supervision of Fray Benito Gómez, a mathematician and physicist who headed the school (1798–1809) and later served as guardian of the monastery (1812–1814). Beltrán continued his religious training at the mother house in Santiago, Chile, where he eventually volunteered as a chaplain and officer of artillery in the revolutionary army led by José Miguel Carrera. After the defeat of the Chilean Army at Rancagua, the Franciscan friar fled to Mendoza in 1814. It was there that San Martín found Beltrán, whom he described as "a genius."²⁸ The Mendozaan served as arms director of the patriot forces in Peru from 1820 to 1824. After a nervous breakdown, he left for Buenos Aires the next year. Beltrán fought in the war against Brazil, as chief of munitions under Martín Rodríguez, until health problems forced him to retire to the religious life that he had never formally abandoned. He died in 1827. Beltrán contributed greatly to the success of revolutionary struggles (against Spain and Brazil) in the early nineteenth century. As Fritz Hoffman summarized his life, ". . . Beltrán's services to his country as well as to Chile and Peru can hardly be overestimated. It was his genius that made possible the victories of Chacabuco and Maipú, of Junín and Ayacucho. San Martín recognized his zeal and ability by recommending for him one promotion and honor after another. . . . It was [Beltrán], more than any other one person, who forged the arms of the revolution in South America."²⁹

Conclusion

The collective description of the clergy of the Río de la Plata as generally white, middle-class, and *porteño* is not surprising if one considers the role of the Catholic Church. It was a major employer (with numerous agencies based in Buenos Aires) of educated individuals who usually belonged to that social milieu and were politically sophisticated. The fact that many regulars were Spaniards living outside Buenos Aires should not

were older, poorer, and more provincial, less enthusiastic about independence and more critical of institutional reform than their colleagues.

27. Fritz L. Hoffman, "A Franciscan Fighter for South American Independence: Fray Luis Beltrán," *The Americas* 10 (1954):289–300.

28. *Ibid.*, 292.

29. *Ibid.*, 300.

surprise anyone familiar with the regional history of Franciscan and other missions.³⁰

As has been established in this research note, pro-independence sentiments were widespread among clergymen. But the significant percentage of patriots among the Spanish regulars was unexpected in that many of them were punished because of their nationality, as with those who were expelled from Buenos Aires. The lower-class beginnings and limited career opportunities of most of these peninsular friars and monks in conjunction with their frequent opposition to the Rivadavian reforms illustrate unforeseen connections among the attitudinal, institutional, and social variables of my model. Clerics who came from wealthier families usually occupied important ecclesiastical posts and had liberal views regarding the church's proper role in Río de la Plata society. Those from poorer backgrounds held subordinate positions and were politically conservative, as shown by their resistance to the religious policies of the 1820s. These findings challenge the thesis that the revolutionary views of clerics were inspired primarily by their dismal careers.³¹

Do the manuscript and printed primary sources depict the Río de la Plata clergy as favoring independence but opposing the Rivadavian reforms? Is the correlation between the churchmen's familial and professional roles substantiated by these writings? The case of Pedro Luis Pacheco supports these interpretations. This Franciscan friar of modest beginnings was born in Buenos Aires on 17 September 1762. In 1817 he delivered a Thanksgiving sermon supporting a revolution against Spain: "Long live the nation, gentlemen! May our amiable, generous, and tender motherland—which honors and nurtures us with her conduct, doctrine, and hard work—live long and triumph, but by God, in God, and for God, by whom, in whom, and for whom all immortal souls should live."³² Fray Pacheco decided to relocate to Rome in 1823, his exile caused in part by the decade's liberalism. He lived in Rome until his death thirteen years later.

Newspapers and diplomatic reports of the time documented the involvement of clerics in politics, including their enthusiasm for indepen-

30. See, for example, Magnus Mörner, *The Political and Economic Activities of the Jesuits in the La Plata Region: The Hapsburg Era* (Stockholm: Library and Institute of Ibero-American Studies, 1953); John L. Phelan, *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970); and Thomas Whigham, "Paraguay's *Pueblos de Indios*: Echoes of a Missionary Past," in *The New Latin American Mission History*, edited by Erick Langer and Robert H. Jackson, 157–88 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995).

31. For a discussion of how limited job prospects contributed to clerical support for independence, see Saguier, "La crisis eclesíastica: La lucha interna del clero en el régimen capelánico rioplatense," 185.

32. Quoted in *El clero argentino de 1810 a 1830: Oraciones patrióticas*, edited by Adolfo Carraza (Buenos Aires: Imprenta de M. A. Rosas, 1907), 223–24. For information on Pacheco, consult Cutolo, *Nuevo diccionario*, 253–54.

dence and distaste for religious reform. For example, curate Juan Antonio Negrot was praised by Manuel Belgrano for his donation of twenty horses to the revolutionary authorities in 1818.³³ Other priests participated in assemblies as provincial representatives. For example, Pedro Medrano attended the Congreso de Tucumán in 1816. Rivadavia wrote a letter to the editor of one periodical in 1823 suggesting the existence of anti-reform sentiments among the regulars who objected to secularization: "When this [clerical loyalty] is not verified [by the ecclesiastical authorities], then the moment has arrived when the vicar-general of the diocese, using his authority to satisfy the wishes of the government, but more than anything else to maintain public order, should eliminate all traces of this never-ending dissension and its causes; he should apply effective remedies, especially in circumstances that demand vigorous solutions."³⁴ Also, John Murray Forbes, a U.S. diplomatic agent, noted the displeasure of friar Francisco Castañeda over the reforms. A prolific writer, the Franciscan went so far as to urge excommunication of the government in 1822.³⁵ Thus even a cursory review of the published primary works appears to reinforce several of the findings of my study.

The manuscript sources substantiate these conclusions. Despite Castañeda's hostility toward the revolutionary authorities because of their attitudes toward the church, he affirmed his stand on the fight against Spain in a sermon given in Buenos Aires in 1818: "I tried to promote—in my admonitions—the revolution (described by the Sage in the eighth chapter of the Proverbs) in our nation, our land, to the best of my limited abilities and talents."³⁶ The archival materials also detail the hardships suffered by the royalist clerics. One victim was Juan Josef Ortiz de Rozas, a priest in Salta who was exiled from his parish in 1811 and forced to pe-

33. "Oficios de los Sres. Secretarios de Estado sobre becas dotadas para el nuevo establecimiento de la Unión del Sud," *Gaceta de Buenos Aires*, 26 Aug. 1818, p. 2. On Pedro Medrano, see "Extraordinaria," *Gaceta de Buenos Aires*, 2 Aug. 1815. Contributions to the revolutionary cause or public service regarding it by priests were sometimes motivated by considerations other than sincere patriotism. But the numerous instances of actions and other indices (letters, sermons, and so on) indicating clerical sentiments favoring independence used in the database underline the widespread support for the revolution in the Río de la Plata region.

34. "El Gobierno al señor Gobernador del obispado," *El Argos de Buenos Aires*, 29 March 1823. One measure of clerical involvement in politics, albeit an impressionistic one, is the number of articles in the newspapers of the time on the church—its clergy, rituals, and wealth, and clerical reactions to government policies. For example, 7 pieces were published in *El Argos* in 1821, 16 in 1822, 18 in 1823, 22 in 1824, and 46 the next year. See Fidel Iglesias, "The Cross and the Sword: The Argentine Clergy, Independence, and the Rivadavian Reforms, 1806–27," 73–74.

35. John M. Forbes, *Once años en Buenos Aires, 1820–31: Las crónicas diplomáticas*, compiled and translated by Felipe Espil (Buenos Aires: Emecé, 1956), 195.

36. Museo Mitre, 21–1-13, Fr. Francisco Castañeda, "La mejor revolución insinuada en los Sagrados Libros para instrucción de los políticos inexpertos, 1818," p. 4.

tition Deán Gregorio Funes for reinstatement.³⁷ He failed in this effort. Another victim of the revolution was Mariano Rodríguez de Olmedo, a cleric evicted from Buenos Aires despite his claim of an “unblemished patriotism, [which was] so violently outraged” by the actions of the regime.³⁸

Despite the inevitable problems associated with an interim study of this kind, discernible patterns were found regarding the demographic origins of the ecclesiastics, their recruitment and promotion, and clerical attitudes toward independence and the Rivadavian reforms. The attack and counterattack (or “reform and reaction”) that typified church-state relations in the first years of nationhood will not be fully understood until the individual and institutional dynamics that influenced these interactions are clarified by fresh approaches.

37. Archivo General de la Nación, X-338–554, Juan Josef Ortiz de Rozas to Gregorio Funes, 25 May 1811.

38. Biblioteca Nacional, legajo 338, pieza 5547, Petición, 1.

APPENDIX 1

The major sources for the sample of 204 clerics were biographies, biographical dictionaries, histories of the several Río de la Plata orders, and various manuscripts. Only those individuals for whom certain kinds of information were available were included in the database. Data gathered as demographic indices on these individuals were their age in 1827 or year of death, birthplace (in the Americas or Europe), class background (determined by the lineage and socioeconomic characteristics of their families of origin), and race (white or other). Institutional variables included type of clergy (regular or secular), location of primary residence (Buenos Aires or elsewhere), and hierarchical status as established by the highest office attained through 1827 (e.g., parish priests rated as lower rank, deans as middle rank, and bishops as upper rank). Attitudinal indicators illustrated ecclesiastical views regarding independence (for or against) and the Rivadavian reforms (for or against), along with how strongly these opinions were held (according to the clerics' actions, including their public pronouncements). The fields were named AGE, NATION, CLASS, RACE, CLERGY, LOCATE, OFFICE, REVOLT and STRENGTH, and REFORMS and VIGOR.

Interpretative discretion was employed at times in deciphering the data generated for the prosopography. The details most difficult to collect were those concerning the political sentiments (REVOLT and REFORMS) of the clergy. I relied on behavior in judging how passionately an ecclesiastic felt about the public events of the time (STRENGTH and VIGOR). For instance, did a clergyman contribute his property to the war against Spain or did he participate in a *cabildo abierto* of the day and vote for independence? Did he write and deliver a sermon against the religious reforms of the 1820s? Or did a priest vote with the majority as a member of a legislative body critical of the church (as evidenced by its laws)? The results of such inquiries were ranked on a continuum of one to three (from low to high) levels according to the preponderance of the documentation.

Several additional findings should be mentioned for the record. With reference to STRENGTH and VIGOR, the first correlated—or was associated—the most with OFFICE (.1709), at the .01 significance level, and the correlation coefficient for the second variable and CLASS was .2245 at a significance level of .001. These results stressed once again the relationships among attitudinal, demographic, and organizational factors. The different scores for STRENGTH and VIGOR probably reflected widespread support for independence from Spain, whereas clerical views regarding the religious reforms were splintered along the partisan (class-related) lines already mentioned.

The validity of the conclusions will depend ultimately on enlarging the sample via further archival research in Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and

Salta. Numerous collections could be consulted in these locations, including the Archivo Histórico de Córdoba, which contains an unpublished biographical dictionary on the local clergy. But the results to date and the available materials so far point in the same directions.

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