

PERSONAL NARRATIVE AND POLITICAL NUANCE: THE LETTERS OF LUIS ALBERTO SÁNCHEZ AND MANUEL ALEJANDRO SEOANE CORRALES (1924- 1961)

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Abstract: Luis Alberto Sánchez, Peruvian author, lawyer, politician, and professor, carried on a voluminous correspondence with fellow Peruvian diplomat, lawyer, and journalist, Manuel Seoane Corrales, through nearly forty years of political and personal endeavors. Much of the correspondence has been preserved and stands as a testament to the growth and development of these important political activists from the ages of 24 until Seoane Corrales' death at age 63. The juxtaposition of this back-and-forth correspondence reveals a living relationship. The letters are undeniably connected to the life, emotions, and spirits of those who wrote them, but also to the temporal, cultural, and spatial milieu in which they are written. They present a multilayered portrait of *aprismo* that is not available in conventional histories of the party. An analysis of the correspondence reveals their growing concern for their beloved country and their roles in the inception of the APRA party in Peru. Also evident is the way in which they supported each other's writing and personal lives, creating a tie that would last for their lifetimes. This article reviews selected letters and highlights the themes that surfaced as the volatile political situation swirled around and between them.

Keywords: Peru, Luis Alberto Sánchez, Manuel Seoane Corrales, APRA, Víctor Haya de la Torre

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Introduction: Sánchez, Seoane and the Importance of Epistolary Narratives

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Between 1924 and 1963, an extensive epistolary exchange took place between Luis Alberto Sánchez, Peruvian writer, lawyer, politician, and professor, and Manuel Seoane Corrales, a fellow lawyer, journalist, and diplomat. Spanning nearly four decades, this correspondence offers not only a record of their political engagement and close relationship, but also a unique depository which invites an examination of the development of *aprismo* as both a political ideology and a lived experience. While much scholarship on the APRA party has tended to focus on party history, charismatic leadership, or ideology, this collection of private letters invites a close and human reading of political life.

The letters reveal the everyday concerns of ideology, identity, and friendship. They trace Sánchez and Seoane's evolution from young activists to prominent national figures, showing how political beliefs are not only cultivated in party platforms or speeches, but also through personal correspondence and the exchange of ideas. The archive also disrupts accepted readings of *aprismo* by exposing its internal workings, emotional landscapes, and changing strategies over time through periods of repression and exile. Overall, the correspondence contributes to a broader view of Latin American politics while offering a personal and multilayered view of the movement's progression.

Epistolary narratives such as this open a space for scholars to discern a writer's thoughts, perceptions, and conclusions that may not be openly visible in other ways; they often present an uncommon thread with which to bind personal elements together. Maria Tamboukou, in her analysis of letters as "technology of the self" recognizes that correspondence cannot show the whole persona of an author but serve as "documents of life," a designation used by Ken Plummer (qtd. in Tamboukou 626). Those "documents of life" are really documents of a current moment that offer a snapshot in time of an author's state of mind. Letters also represent a shared dialogue because the tone and vocabulary change to reflect the relationship with a recipient. Tamboukou also notes that letters do not provide an overarching authoritative narrative, but rather layers of perspectives on events. They are not a finished narrative, but "are always incomplete, unfinished, or dispersed" (628). Related to the idea of being incomplete, Liz Stanley points out in "The Epistolarium: On Theorizing Letters and Correspondences" that the scholar should also consider the relationship between "letters and time" (208). The letter exists for perhaps a moment of someone's life and represents thoughts that might cease to exist when the letter is finished. In some instances, the writer might be speaking of a future that will be the past when the recipient reads the letter. In "The Work of Making and the Work it Does: Cultural Sociology and 'Bringing into Being' the Cultural Assemblage of the Olive Schreiner Letters," Stanley calls it "the immediacy of here" (290). Correspondence, then, both exists in the present and preserves a metanarrative reflection into the future. In addition, the juxtaposition of back-and-forth correspondence, reveals a living relationship. Letters are undeniably connected to the life, emotions, and spirits of those who wrote them as well as the temporal, cultural, and spatial milieu in which they are written.

This collection of letters reveals insight into the political strategies of these two activists during a time of societal upheaval in Peru, while chronicling their development as leaders, scholars, and authors. The reader observes key events presented from both a political and personal perspective, which indirectly reveals the ideas, values, and experiences of their authors. Today the letters, as primary sources, serve to interweave political, historical, and human events. Because they are documents in time, they also preserve an overview of an era,

with its everyday concerns and social norms.

The letters also present a vibrant and multidimensional portrait of *aprismo*, with an emotional acuity that is often missed in histories written about the party. They describe the *aprista* spirit as nurtured through communal struggle, emotional support, and humor. Within that communal struggle, the correspondence establishes how the bonds of friendship within *aprismo* sustained its members during the trials of political oppression and exile.

Biographical Foundations

Luis Alberto Sánchez (1900-1994) and Manuel Seoane Corrales (1900-1963) were only three weeks apart in age, a fact that put them in the same class at the National University of San Marcos in Lima, Peru, in 1917. Besides their age, they also shared similar interests in sports, primarily boxing, as well as politics, law, and writing. While at the university, they formed a lasting friendship, which sustained them through political and personal turmoil for nearly forty years. As Sánchez developed into a prominent author, lawyer, politician, professor, and administrator, he carried on an extensive correspondence with Seoane, who became a well-respected diplomat, lawyer, and journalist.

Luis Alberto Sánchez was an eminent scholar, teacher, and politician. He wrote and published more than seventy books, which included literature, biography, literary criticism, political theory, philosophy, poetry, and history. He served as the Provost of his Alma Mater, the National University of San Marcos in Lima three times, from 1946-1948, 1961-1963, and 1966-1969. He also spent two years (1946-48) as the Minister of Education in the Peruvian government under President José Luis Bustamante y Rivero. From 1985-1990 he served as the Second Vice President of Peru. He was a founding member of the APRA party (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana) in 1924, a party which pursued a change in government from the oligarchy or the military, to democratic elections. Víctor Haya de la Torre, influenced by Marxism, founded the APRA party while in exile in Mexico. The platform of the APRA party was reformist, nationalist and populist. The *apristas* challenged the power of the “forty families.” McClintock notes the power base in Peru prior to 1969: “Forty families were widely believed to dominate Peru’s polity and economy. Often elite families did not formally lead the Peruvian government but backed military officers and politicians who sought the presidency” (64). The APRA platform, combined with strong rhetoric, led to violence on both sides, the government and the party (“Peru History” n.p.). As a result of his APRA affiliation, Sánchez was exiled for nearly twenty-five years. During those years, he served as a visiting professor or lecturer in many schools, such as Universidad de Chile, Instituto Hispano-Cubano de Cultura de la Habana, Instituto Nacional de Panamá, universities in California, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and the Université de Paris. His scholarship and influence made him a powerful member of APRA, a membership that had a tremendous impact on his life.

Manuel Seoane Corrales began a lifetime of involvement in the process of reform in Peru with early reformist activities in the University Reform Movement (1919-1924), which focused on perceived academic irregularities at the National University of San Marcos, particularly the mediocrity of the faculty. The University Reform Movement began with the creation of the F.E.P., or Federación de Estudiantes Peruanos in 1917, a movement which branched out into two very different areas. One was to reform the existing institutions and the other was to connect workers who might never have university experiences to learning through the creation of Popular Universities founded by students themselves (Klaiber 696). The Universidades Populares González Prada, which featured night classes for laborers, were started by Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre.

Manuel Seoane was asked to leave the university after two years of organizing students for the purpose of democratizing university education, and furthering academic freedom. He finished his education at Universidad Nacional de San Agustín in Arequipa, returning to San Marcos in 1924 to pursue his studies in Law. However, he was soon detained and exiled to Buenos Aires in October of 1924, due to his leadership and participation in protests against the government of Augusto Leguía. During the following year he directed the first group of *apristas* in Argentina while he worked on the staff of the newspaper, *Crítica*, and managed the journal, *Renovación*. This background of student activism signaled what would be a lifetime of exile and detention. For example, he returned to Peru at the end of Leguía's presidency on August 25, 1930, but was exiled again for a year from November 1930 to April 1931 in Santiago, Chile. This time he was exiled on account of his political activism and dissent against the authoritarian rule of Luis Sánchez Cerro. He did graduate with a Doctorate in Law from San Marcos and was then elected Representante Constituyente de la República del Perú en Lima, serving from December 8, 1931, to January 8, 1932. In February of 1932, he was exiled to Chile again, when he was arrested and deported with other members of the APRA party. He remained in Chile briefly, then returned to Argentina. In 1938 he was exiled to Chile again, where he edited *Ercilla*, a journal which played a major role in Latin American intellectual and political life. Later in life, he served as Ambassador in Holland, Ambassador in Chile, and the Peruvian Representative at OAS (Organization of American States) in Washington, D.C. He was also a candidate for the Vice-presidency of Peru in 1962, in an election invalidated by the military.

Breadth and Focus of the Letters:

The correspondence that has been preserved stands as a testament to the growth and development of these highly important political activists. In all, the Luis Alberto Sánchez Collection of Correspondence contains one hundred twenty-six letters between the two friends: sixty-seven from Manuel Seoane to Luis Alberto Sánchez, fifty-seven from Luis Alberto Sánchez to Manuel Seoane, with two additional anonymous pieces of correspondence. The letters are archived in the Historical Collections and Labor Archives, Special Collections Library, Pennsylvania State University. Scholars can request to work with the originals or view the letters on microfilm. Most of the letters are typed in Spanish, with occasional side comments written in cursive. Luis Alberto Sánchez is often addressed as "Cholo" in the letters, and Manuel Seoane is "Manolo" or sometimes just "Man." Although the *apristas* of the time used code names for each other, these personal letters do not use them. Manuel Seoane's code name was "Sunque," or "Sunke," Víctor Haya de la Torre was "Pacha," and Luis Alberto Sánchez was "Sumpo" (Henderson xviii and 390). Letter 888 September 7, 1935, from LAS to VR¹ adds more, citing Leonardo Villanueva Meyer as "Sunel," and Víctor Haya de la Torre as "Yaacs." Although they shared a good deal of private information and opinions in these letters, they were rarely concerned about remaining anonymous. The letters were written from or to the following places: Lima (MS), Buenos Aires (MS), Santiago (MS and LAS), Cartagena (MS), Lima (MS and LAS), Panama (LAS), Guayaquil (LAS), Quito (LAS), Puerto Rico (LAS), Mexico (LAS), The Hague (MS), and New York (LAS).

An overview of the correspondence reveals several themes that are woven throughout this thirty-seven-year exchange. The major themes are Peruvian politics, the development of APRA, personal and family concerns, university politics, as well as writing and publishing. As these powerful politicians grew and developed, their concerns turned from sports and writing to politics, eventually to life and death decisions, and personal tragedy. Subthemes in these letters include a view of the times, such as everyday activities and social norms. In addition, the letter collection serves to humanize historical events by connecting the

1. Throughout the letters and this study, MS stands for Manuel Seoane Corrales; LAS is Luis Alberto Sánchez, and VR is Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre.

personal and the political. This analysis draws on selected correspondence to illuminate key dimensions of APRA and Peruvian political developments. Particular attention will be paid to references within the letters that shed light on the evolution of the *aprista* movement, as well as to moments that reflect the deepening personal relationship between the correspondents, marked by growing mutual trust, solidarity, and emotional concern. Crucially, these letters offer a multilayered and textured account of *aprista's* emergence. Through the narratives, reflections, and lived experiences conveyed by both men, the correspondence opens a wider interpretive window onto the movement than conventional political historiography typically allows. The interest in this study is not an extensive political analysis of the contents of the letters, but rather a focus on the growth of human relationships and political action as revealed through an epistolary form.

Michel Montaigne's essay "On Friendship" is useful to understand the relationship between our two subjects. His conceptualization of perfect friendship was a union of souls beyond mere pleasure or usefulness. It was characterized as both intellectual and emotional, based on shared values and deep trust. It involved a mutual respect, openness, and vulnerability. The correspondence between Sánchez and Seoane reflects Montaigne's ideal by its demonstration of philosophical agreement, emotional support, and affection. The reader perceives a shared intellect, and emotional sincerity. In all, the collected letters show an unguarded honesty, affectionate tone, and moral reflection that align with Montaigne's vision.

Framing the Historical Moment

The first letter in this series, 1637 March 7, 1924, from MS to LAS, is on the official letterhead of the Peruvian Student Federation (Federación de los Estudiantes del Perú) and is a short and formal invitation from Manuel Seoane Corrales, President of the Student Federation, to Luis Alberto Sánchez, requesting him to serve as Director for the upcoming Juegos Florales (a poetry competition). According to the letter, the executive committee had met and voted unanimously for Luis Alberto, which "hace confiar que esa fiesta tendrá el brillo y lucimiento propios de toda fiesta de juventud." [It makes us trust that this occasion will have the brightness and brilliance of any youth party]. Interestingly, in his opening speech at the Juegos Florales the following October, Sánchez mentioned his invitation, saying, "Un motivo de lealdad para un compañero ausente púsome en el duro trance de aceptar la tarea que vengo a cumplir aquí" [my loyalty toward an absent friend put me in the difficult position of accepting the task I am here to fulfill] (Sánchez 109). Seoane was not present at the competition because he had been exiled by President Augusto de Leguía.

In an unfortunate twist of fate, Seoane had been chosen president of the Federation in place of Víctor Haya de la Torre, who was exiled in 1923 for his leadership in a demonstration against Leguía's plan for a ceremony to dedicate Peru to the "Sacred Heart of Jesus" (Kantor 10), which had been organized by President Leguía and the Archbishop of Lima, Carlos Lisson. Under Haya de la Torre's leadership, students protested that the ceremony was against personal freedoms established by the constitution. Haya de la Torre was arrested and attempted a hunger strike in jail to denounce governmental oppression. He was deported to Panama and eventually made his way to Mexico. It was there he founded the APRA party in 1924, and recruited like-minded thinkers in Lima, Buenos Aires, La Paz, and Paris.

The early letters between MS and LAS show youthful jesting, a love for Peru and an already somewhat casual view of the adventures and misadventures of political activism. For example, Letter 1638 August 23, 1924, from MS to LAS, describes seeing Sánchez in Lima as Seoane

was being escorted by police on his way to exile in Buenos Aires: “La noche en que me condujeron a la isla, tuve oportunidad de contemplarte, siempre fiel, en la clásica [sic] oficina del Cinema Teatro. Pero tu estabas abstraído [sic]. Y yo lamenté que no pudieras mirarme de héroe...”² [The night they took me to the island I had the chance to really look at you, always faithful, in that classic office of Cinema Teatro. But you were lost in your thoughts. And I regretted that you couldn’t see me as a hero.] The word “héroe” is used ironically here, as he was a hero under arrest at the time and being hurried off to exile in Argentina. His next comment reveals his somewhat jaded attitude toward these experiences, “Contarte de mi [sic] sería [sic] cansado. Ha habido mucho, pero todo lo mismo” [To tell you about myself would be tiresome. A lot has happened, but nothing really different]. Several words and phrases stand out from the others in this quote, “cansado” and “todo lo mismo.” At the young age of twenty-four, Seoane had already experienced enough interactions with government forces to say that just recounting them would be “tiring” and “just the same as ever.” The letter continues by lamenting his lack of credentials, by comparing Argentine and Peruvian sports, and by proposing that he send some sports articles to Luis Alberto, in exchange for a subscription to his journal. Letter 1643 December 27, 1927, from MS to LAS, discusses the merits of boxers such as Cossío and Lurquin. Sánchez, having been a prizefighter as a youth, had a special interest in boxing. In Letter 1649 June 15, 1929, from MS to LAS, Seoane described his efforts to get back to Lima, by posing as a sports reporter, “Esperaba ir hasta allá con los atletas argentinos. Pero mi corresponsalía deportiva, por cuenta de dos diarios argentinos, pareció disfraz y no me dieron el visto bueno” [I was hoping to go there with the Argentine athletes. But the sports journalism I had published in two Argentine journals seemed suspicious and I was not allowed in]. Seoane’s failure in this case was not due to a lack of talent for sports reporting, but most likely because of governmental suspicions about his political influence and the possibility of his using such a platform for political purposes.

These letters underscore the importance of youth and its vitality to the birth and continued growth of the movement. Blanco-Frías and Torres-Arrancivia analyzed selections from the *aprista* songbook and music of the 1930s. Their conclusions bring into view the camaraderie and interdependence underlying the basis of early *aprimo*, “La música aprista sirvió, además, para transmitir la idea que el APRA es una gran familia y que sus miembros forman parte de una gran fraternidad. Es decir, la música expresa un sentido identitario” (28) [The *aprista* music served, additionally, to communicate the idea that the APRA was a big family and its members were part of a fraternity. In other words, music showed a sense of identity]. That sense of fraternity and family over the years helped the *aprista* movement to stay strong despite repression and exile, as did the relationship between LAS and MS.

Over time the letters reveal personal development and maturing decision-making. Letter 1642 December 9, 1927, from MS to LAS, talks about changes. MS states that “Yo estoy resuelto a recibirme de abogado” [I am decided to graduate as a lawyer]. He also shares news of his upcoming second marriage, and his reason for re-marrying “...estoy por casarme con una chica argentina-me divorcié de la otra-había necesidad de engordar el presupuesto” [I am about to get married with an Argentine woman – I divorced from the other – it was necessary to fatten the budget]. Soon after, in Letter 1644 May 24, 1928, from MS to LAS, he reports more news, “Mi mujer es muy buena y muy comprensiva. Le hizo mucha gracia tu carta y me pide que te salude así como a tu señora y a la piba. (Dentro de unos 9 meses podrás retornarlos. Tengo indiscreción de viejo chocho).” [My wife is a good woman and very understanding. She was amused by your letter and she asks me to send her regards to you, your wife and your daughter. (You can send the regards back in nine months. I am as indiscrete as an old man)]. Two phrases stand out in these letters, “había necesidad de

2. The spelling and accent marks for all quotations from the letters are exactly as they appear in the correspondence.

engordar el presupuesto,” and “Tengo indiscreción de Viejo chocho.” These phrases reveal a Seoane who makes light of his situations in a charming way and expresses challenges in a slightly irreverent tone, without being negative.

But it is not long before the undercurrent of politics surfaces. In Letter 1641 November 13, 1926, from MS to LAS, Seoane, still in Buenos Aires, sends a critique of Peruvian nationalism to Luis Alberto. Above all, he is hopeful that Peru is at a crossroads that could lead to solidarity, and the possibility of a national resurgence of social justice. In his words,

Ignoro o si estoy influenciado definitivamente por un sentimiento místico que me lleva a creer en la justicia social. Pero cada día se hace mas fuerte en mi [sic] la convicción de que asistimos a una de las mas [sic] grandes transformaciones de la Humanidad.

[I don't know, I may be definitely influenced by a mystical feeling that leads me to believe in social justice. But every day the conviction that we are witnessing one of the greatest transformations of Humanity grows stronger in me.]

His use of the word “asistimos” is interesting because it can be translated in several ways, as “we attend,” “care for,” or “be present for,” which really speaks to the nurturing of attempts to effect political change in Peru. Seoane's phrases “un sentimiento místico que me lleva a creer en la justicia social” and “una de las mas grandes transformaciones de la Humanidad” bring the reader to ponder the sources of such sentiments. The 1920s must have been an electrifying time of growing idealism in Peru as the ideas of modernism caught hold in the new century. Its followers and thinkers in Latin America wanted to forge a new threshold, one true to its unique position in the world. Seoane, in particular, was a charismatic youth leader. Bergel emphasizes Seoane's role in igniting and encouraging the flame of this new movement, centered on youth culture,

De un lado, su viva presencia quiere comunicar en acto y en palabra la existencia de una nueva fuerza que dice haber llegado para remover y purificar el continente: las tantas veces mentada “la nueva generación americana” (204).

[On the one hand, his living presence wants to communicate with words and actions the existence of a new force that claims to have arrived to cleanse and purify the continent: that so often called “new American generation”]

But, in order to move forward, it was necessary to reject European ideas and forms and encourage a new freedom or permissiveness of thought and design across disciplines. The APRA party was founded by Víctor Haya de la Torre to further unity among Latin American countries to resist Yankee imperialism, to seek nationalization of businesses owned by foreign entities, to internationalize the Panama Canal, and to improve the circumstances of the indigenous populations.

Many progressive ideas found a home in the landmark journal, *Amauta*, which was launched in September 1926, under the editorship of José Carlos Mariátegui, a leading Peruvian intellectual, journalist, and political activist. *Amauta* published an article by Seoane, in December 1926, titled “Nacionalismo verdadero y nacionalismo mentiroso” [True Nationalism and Fake Nationalism] in which he expresses concerns similar to those in Letter 1641. Seoane, in this case, laments the lack of a unified civic consciousness, “una gran voluntad colectiva” (19) [A great collective will], which he regards as indispensable for confronting the country's enduring social difficulties.

In August 1930, Miguel Sánchez Cerro overthrew Augusto B. Leguía's dictatorship and moved swiftly to repress the APRA party. Luis Alberto Sánchez was the Provost of the National University of San Marcos and a party leader. Sánchez Cerro had him removed from his post to eliminate his influence over the institution and weaken his leadership in the APRA party. Letter 1657 September 1930, from MS to LAS, reveals that Seoane is very concerned about Sánchez's removal from his duties in Lima, "Desde luego mi protesta por tu desplazamiento. Ninguna causa justifica el alejamiento de un hombre de tu cultura, tu inquietud, y tu dedicación, de un puesto al que honrabas" [Of course I protested about your dismissal. No reason can justify removing a man of your knowledge, your willingness and dedication from a position that you honored]. He then outlines a rationale for not aligning APRA with the Communist Party, "Nuestra obra, por otra parte, es de nacionalismo económico de colaboración con la clase media, la pequeña propiedad, aunque predomine el objetivo obrero y campesino" [Our work, on the other hand, is that of a collaboration with the economic nationalism of the middle class, the small land owners, even if the main objective is that of helping the workers and farmers]. This is a theme that will repeat itself throughout the correspondence as APRA distinguishes itself from the Communist Party. A statement about his stance toward communism appears in *Manuel Seoane Corrales 50 Años*:

Yo no soy anticomunista. Simplemente no soy comunista. Creo que el comunismo, teóricamente, es un sistema perfecto. Pero creo, también, que ahora es inadaptable a Indoamérica. Traicionaría mi deber social si no lo dijera y procurara probarlo. Por eso, también milito en las filas del movimiento de justicia y nacionalismos antimperialista que el Aprismo propugna para toda Indoamérica.³ (Cossío Del Pomar n.p.)

[I am not anti-communist. I'm just not a communist. I think that communism, theoretically, is a perfect system. But I think, too, that it is unadaptable to Indo-America today. I would betray my social duty if I did not say so and try to prove it. For this reason, I am also active in the ranks of the justice movement and anti-imperialist nationalisms that *Aprismo* advocates to all of Indo-America.]

Seoane expresses his confidence in "una Lima de esperanzas" [a Lima of hopes] (1657). Letters throughout October demonstrate his efforts and yearnings to return to Peru. He plans to organize and strengthen APRA in various communities. Letter 1661 October 20, 1930, from MS to LAS contains a printed card for a farewell dinner for Seoane held October 16, 1930, at the Castelar Hotel in Buenos Aires. Seoane's brother sends him a cable on October 18 that advises him to stay in Buenos Aires, but he is determined to return. He wants to tell the true story, "Hay que destruir esta absurda leyenda, que nos pinta de comunistas mientras los verdaderos comunistas criollos disfrutaban de total libertad." [We have to destroy this absurd legend that paints as communists while the true Latin American communists are out there enjoying total freedom.]. Seoane returned to Peru with the hopes that he would be able to widen the breadth of political participation among the population.

However, Peru under Sánchez Cerro was not what Seoane expected. In Letter 1662 December 9, 1930, from MS to LAS Seoane indicates that he is under surveillance, like Luis Alberto, "Hubiera querido verte, pero he andado perseguido, como tu [sic]" [I would have loved to see you, but like you I am being followed]. He advises Luis Alberto to go into exile, "no podemos aceptar vivir inclinados en este regimen de un despota irresponsable." [we cannot accept living with our heads down during this regime of an irresponsible despot]. However, Seoane asserts that "No combatirlo es criminal" [It is criminal not to fight against it]. Seoane intends to leave for Chile the next day, "por segunda vez

3. Indoamérica was a term coined by Víctor Haya de la Torre. It was philosophically Marxist, and its intention was to bring indigenous culture and its contributions to the forefront.

desterrado" [exiled, yet a second time]. Their friendship and mutual support has become essential, "Ahora siento más que nunca nuestra amistad y nuestra solidaridad y por eso te escribo" [Now more than ever I cherish our friendship and our solidarity, that's why I am writing to you.]. Seoane's letter is both a call to action to resist Sánchez Cerro's government and an affirmation of the importance of unity in the face of repression. Sánchez replies to Seoane in Letter 1663, from December 1930, from LAS to MS, with no exact date. He expresses his agreement with Seoane and reacts to the statement in his letter that, "No combatirlo es criminal." Although he agrees with Seoane, he also thinks that fighting back from a distance will be difficult. He asks Seoane to prepare a path, "un camino," in Chile but thinks he will not be able to leave Lima until January or February because of "desenlaces naturales" [everyday matters]. Sánchez states that he would remain in Peru if it was possible to do it with dignity and working effectively. The tone of this letter is very comforting, as Sánchez calls Seoane "queridoísimo [sic] Manolo" [dearest Manolo], and ends his letter "El fraterno de siempre" [as fraternal as always]. Over the last ten years, they have learned to rely on each other's courage and wisdom as politics in Peru worsen and they themselves mature and change.

Seoane moves back to Buenos Aires and Letter 1665 February 12, 1931, from MS to LAS details "*neocivilismo*" in Peru, a movement which supports electing officials that are not related to the military. He encourages Sánchez to join "*Aprismo*," although he understands that Sánchez must choose the best moment to do so. However, he cautions that, "Esperar que un partido sea perfecto y completo para entrar en él, es renunciar a la acción personal" [Waiting for a political party to be full and perfect before joining it is to give up taking personal action]. He says that APRA is "un estado de conciencia, un fermento" [a state of consciousness, an upheaval], "un plan, con ideas centrales" [a plan with central ideas], though not yet an organization. He says that APRA needs to move forward because "Si no, estaríamos atados por mil compromisos" [Otherwise, we might be bound by a thousand other commitments].

In 1932, the letters take on a serious and imperiled tone. Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre is in prison. On March 6, 1932, there was an attempt on the life of President Sánchez Cerro by José Melgar Márquez outside a church in the Miraflores district of Lima. According to a March 15 article in *The New York Times*, lawyers attempted to connect Melgar to the *Aprista* movement. Haya de la Torre was in hiding, but other leaders were accused of conspiracy, including Juan Seoane (Manuel's brother) (Special Cable to *The New York Times* 6). Although Melgar's connection to APRA was not proven, Haya de la Torre was arrested on May 6 for his APRA activism. Letter 1666 May 8, 1932, LAS to MS from Panama, outlines Sánchez's fears that Haya de la Torre might be poisoned in prison: "Claro que si no fuera por el peligro de un envenamiento etc. acaso no estaría mal la prisión de Victor, pero ese rehen es molesto para cualquier acción." [It's clear that if it wasn't for the danger of poisoning, Victor's imprisonment wouldn't be entirely negative. But he's at risk for any action]. In this letter, Sánchez describes the political efforts he has made to have Haya de la Torre released to asylum, perhaps in Panama, or elsewhere in Central America. He encourages Seoane to also work for his release. Letter 1667 June 15, 1932, from LAS to MS reports that Haya de la Torre is being treated well in prison. Sánchez concludes his letter with, "SOLO EL APRISMO SALVARA AL PERU" [ONLY APRISMO WILL SAVE PERU]. He has made his decision to accept the ideals of APRA.

It was only three weeks later, on July 7, 1932, that an *aprista* uprising in Trujillo failed execrably. Iñigo García-Bryce recounts the circumstances of the insurrection. A group of *apristas* decided to take over the garrison

at Trujillo and managed to capture enough weapons to command the city. Haya de la Torre's brother, Agustín, lived in Trujillo and became a somewhat unwilling party to the takeover. Plans were made to seize some of the surrounding villages, but the Peruvian military responded with swift violence, sending 746 troops, two submarines, one warship, seven planes, and hydroplanes with bombs. By July 10, the insurrection had been nullified and the remaining *apristas* fled the city (287-91).

The tone of Letter 1668 August 1, 1932, from LAS to MS from Panama, becomes even more serious. This is the vocabulary Sánchez uses to describe both his situation in Panama and that in Peru: "grave," "urgente," "miseria," "polemico [sic]," "propagadístico," "URGENTISIMO," "suspicias," "muertos," and "fusilados." [serious, urgent, misery, polemic, propagandistic, VERY URGENT, suspicions, deaths, executions] Hundreds of people were shot down in Trujillo during a rebellion, "Varios centenares de Muertos--210 fusilados, entre ellos dos mujeres, en Trujillo, y muchos niños de 16 años--" [Hundreds of deaths – 210 executions among them two women in Trujillo and several 16-year-old kids] Letter 1669 August 11, 1932, from LAS to MS, emotionally recounts reading *La Tribuna*, the official periodical of APRA, and mentions the names of some of the women who were killed. Sánchez also details the terrible way some of them were treated.

...han fusilado a Luz Eguia, Enriqueta Eguren, Maria Asuncion Zaldumbeiti, en Trujillo. Y a muchas mujeres. Que Marcela Pinillos y otras están en la carcel [sic] . . . Y que a las muejers [sic] se las filia y se las examina como caballos para hacer una buena compra. Se [sic] concretamente que SC [Sánchez Cerro] en un caso que conozco directamente, vió una mujer en el Hotel Bolivar [sic], y enseguida la hizo seguir, mandó al jefe de XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX [the word investigaciones is crossed out here] sus soplones a propnerle [sic] una cita, como ella se negara, fue él mismocómo [sic] no fuera recibido, amenazó con prisión, y como ha desaparecido [sic] la mujer, la anda buscando disque por conspiradora. Esto hay que decirlo y denunciarlo para dar la medida de la satrapía.

[... They've executed Luz Eguia, Enriqueta Eguren, Maria Asuncion Zaldumbeiti, in Trujillo. And many other women. Marcela Pinillos and others are in jail ... women are put in lines and examined as if they were horses for sale. I know for a fact that SC personally saw a woman in the Hotel Bolivar and immediately had her followed. He sent the chief of XXXXXXXXXXX and his accomplices to ask her to meet with him. Because she declined the invitation, he threatened to put her in prison, and now he's now looking for her, claiming she is a conspirator. This [story] must be told and denounced to show the extent of the tyranny.]

This section of Letter 1669, so filled with typographical errors, was obviously written swiftly and in a deep emotional state; it is a tale of horror.

Sánchez also reports in Letter 1669 August 11, 1932, from LAS to MS that Haya de la Torre is conducting a hunger strike in prison. Sánchez feels that "hay que realizar el maximun [sic] de esfuerzo para rescatarlo" [We must do all that is possible to rescue him]. At the end of the letter, he also reminds Seoane of their common tie, "Puedes tener la seguridad de que en la acción, en la lucha, en el afecto y en el resultado, seguiremos más hermanos que antes" [Rest assured that in action, in our struggle, in our feelings and in our results, we'll be even closer brothers than before]. Haya de la Torre was imprisoned on San Lorenzo Island, a prison often used for political prisoners. Richard V. Salisbury noted that on October 9, 1932, the German ship *Negada* picked up a very weakened Haya de la Torre and transported him to the

Canal Zone, Port of Cristóbal, Panama (2). Letter 1669, written two months prior to Haya de la Torre's removal to Panama, reveals the emotions LAS is facing during the difficult times of exile, of knowing that their friend Haya de la Torre is suffering in prison and that the situation in Peru is growing ever worse. LAS finds strength in their friendship, ending his letter with "un abrazo fraternal" [a brotherly hug].

Reading this correspondence reveals the hardships these revolutionary leaders lived through, including the emotions of fear, anxiety, and uncertainty. At the same time, there are mentions of everyday concerns, giving a view of the times. For example, Letter 983 July 19, 1936, from VR to LAS describes how he and his followers are suffering in exile. VR has had to pawn clothing and other items to provide for them. He emphasizes his need for soap, socks, medicine and medical help. Letter 984 July 22, 1936, from VR to LAS, on a bit brighter note, states that he has received two hundred *soles*, things are somewhat better, and he now has socks. Money was a worry in exile for LAS as well. In Letter 1674 May 6, 1933, from LAS to MS, Sánchez shares his desperation with Seoane, asking him to place an article for publication:

Te adjunto otro artículo que deseo se publique pronto... Sobre cobranza: hijo mío, cobra y gira. Cobra como quieras, pero cobra ...Te ruego lo ejecutes con el hara kiri, si gustas, y que me mandes ///// [the word "parte" is crossed out here] el dinero. No viene mal. Considera que debo situar 15 libras mensuales en Lima para educación y gastos de mis niños etc ... Mandame [sic] soles o dólares o libras esterlinas. O arroz y trigo, pero manda.

[I'm attaching another article that I hope will be published soon... about collecting the money: My boy, ask for what is due and send it. Charge what you want, but charge... I beg you to execute it with hara kiri, if you like, and send me ///// [the word "part" is crossed out here] the money. It's not a bad idea. Consider that I have to find 15 pounds monthly in Lima for the education and expenses of my children etc... Send me soles or dollars or pounds sterling. Or rice and wheat but send it.]

Although LAS and MS used the time in exile to write, publish, and teach, their political sacrifices made securing steady living expenses difficult. Felipe Cossío del Pomar, in *Víctor Raúl* includes this quote from Haya de la Torre,

No quiero excusar mis deficiencias. Llegué a mi quinto destierro, envejecido y pobre, con duros problemas familiares y económicos, y tuve que buscar trabajo fuera de mi improductiva vocación periodística. (n.p.)

[I don't want to excuse my shortcomings. I made it to my fifth exile, aged and poor, with difficult family and economic problems, and I had to look for work outside of my unproductive journalistic vocation. (n.p.)]

History tends to extol the efforts of those who fought for their beliefs through difficult times and often idealizes or exoticizes their experiences. But this can be a flawed perspective because it overlooks the reality of the struggle, the day-to-day stresses and challenges. Of course, their efforts were laudable, but these letters reveal a backstory of determination and idealism, as well as showing the toll it took on health, family, friends, and economic well-being.

Throughout 1932, Seoane and Sánchez continue to position themselves to spread the ideals of *aprimo* in Argentina, Chile and Ecuador and

continue to suffer personal and economic reverses. In Letter 1673 October 14, 1932, from LAS to MS, Sánchez writes from Guayaquil. He was feeling unsafe and vulnerable. The day before he wrote Letter 1673, there was a break-in at Sánchez's home, and he received threats. He also shares that his father is ill, and he misses his family. These challenges, he states, "... me roba tranquilidad y sueño" [deprive me of sleep and calm]. For the first time in this correspondence, Sánchez uses secret codes to send private messages to Seoane in both this letter and letter 1669 from August 11, 1932, from LAS to MS. In Letter 1673, for example, the sentence reads, "Yo creo que debemos pensar ademas [sic] que S [unidentified] es un 517569515941884115555133694145517566596933392961333141227 4439o513551443369." [I believe we must also think that S is a 517569515941884115555133694145517566596933392961333141227 4439o513551443369]. There is also an increase in using initials instead of full names in the letters, an indication that Seoane and Sánchez did not feel their correspondence was secure. LAS is feeling stressed, lonely and tired, but he ends the letter with a further affirmation of their tie to each other: "Un abrazo *aprista* a los tuyos, y para ti la mano de siempre, fraternalmente" [I am sending an *aprista* hug to your family. And to you, I am extending my hand fraternally, as always]. Later, In Letter 37 1936, from LAS,⁴ Sánchez even included some "sugerencias confidenciales" [confidential suggestions] such as wording that should be used in telegrams in the future. For example, not to employ the word "armas" [guns], that "libros" [books] would stand for machine guns, "folletos" [leaflets] would refer to pistols, and "periódicos" [journals] would mean bombs.

The President of Peru from 1933-39 was Oscar R. Benavides, elected by congress after the assassination of Luis M. Sánchez Cerro. Benavides had been president previously for a year, from 1914 to 1915. Henry Albinson notes that Benavides believed in strict economic orthodoxy, limited social reform and carried out a campaign of repression against the left, especially APRA (72). The power of the military and the oligarchy had been re-established. Throughout the 1930s and a portion of the 40s, under President Bustamente y Rivero, APRA operated from underground as they were accused of being anticlerical, antimilitary communists. Albinson lists five "bloody events" of the 1930s: the Trujillo revolt, political assassinations, the imprisonment and torture of *apristas*, swift reaction to counter APRA's efforts to mobilize the masses, and challenges to the power of the forty families (73). Things became so difficult that Letter 1008 July 1938, from VR to LAS closes with a call for everyone to write to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, appealing to him to act in establishing amnesty and restoring democracy in Peru.

There is a gap in the correspondence between 1937 and 1949. During those years, Luis Alberto Sánchez was circulating as a guest professor and lecturer at universities in various countries. Manuel Seoane Corrales was exiled in Santiago, Chile, where he directed *Ercilla*, a widely read political and cultural magazine, which provided a platform for exiled intellectuals. He returned to Peru to serve as a Senator for Lima in the 1945-1946 session. It was also an important time for the APRA party as they transitioned from an outlawed revolutionary movement to a legal party. In the 1945 general elections, APRA allied with Bustamente y Rivero and dominated congress. But their foothold on government was brief, on October 27, 1948, General Manuel Odría conducted a successful coup against President Bustamente y Rivero. As president, he acted swiftly to brutally repress APRA leadership, in response to what he believed be Bustamente y Rivero's tolerance for the party. Seoane fled to Chile in early 1949 to escape the wave of repression that followed the coup.

During this time, the APRA party grew rapidly throughout Indoamérica. Donald Henderson, in his annotated calendar of the correspondence,

4. Henderson identifies this letter as being presumably from LAS, as it is an unsigned carbon copy (8)

noted that the party rejected any affiliation with communism, and wanted to create a system of “intellectually related” parties, or cells, for the purpose of working against Yankee imperialism, internationalizing the Panama Canal, fostering political and economic unity within Latin America, nationalizing land and industry, and encouraging solidarity with oppressed peoples (7). Letter 61 October 26, 1949, from Seoane to the *Compañero Secretario General del Comité Aprista Peruano de Santiago* demonstrates growth as it mentions active cells in New York, Guatemala, San Juan, Havana, Panama, Bogotá, Guayaquil, La Paz, Santiago, Buenos Aires, and Montevideo.

The gap years for the correspondence also saw changes in the government and the foundations of the APRA party. Under the administrations of Manuel Carlos Prado Ugarteche (1939-1945), and José Luis Bustamante y Rivero (1945-1948), APRA moderated some of its more leftist initiatives. APRA now looked not to redistribute wealth, but to create new wealth; their focus was less anti-imperialist and more pro-democracy; their nationalist stance was somewhat weakened by a call for more foreign investments; and they still maintained an interest in “hemispheric harmony” (Albinson 74). However, the overthrow of the government by Manuel A. Odría in 1948 returned dictatorial rule to Peru and reestablished the strength of the oligarchy. The dictatorship returned to oppression of the left, free market orthodoxy, and hostility toward APRA. The emphasis on exports and rising prices created a widening gap between the classes (Albinson 76).

On October 3, 1948, a pro-democracy rebellion by Naval Officers aboard the BAP Apurímac led to incrimination of Víctor de la Haya. The “Judgment of 20 November 1950” by the International Court of Justice summarizes the course of events: although the rebellion was suppressed on the same day, investigations were opened, and the President issued a decree that APRA had organized and directed the rebellion. According to the decree, the party had acted outside of the law and was now not allowed to carry out any political activities. In addition, the leaders would be brought to justice in national courts. On October 5, 1948, the Minister of the Interior issued a “note of denunciation” against Víctor Haya de la Torre and other members of the party. On October 27, a military junta seized power in a coup d’état and ordered a Courts-martial in cases of rebellion, rioting and sedition, with severe punishments and no appeal. November 16, a public summons for Haya de la Torre was published in *El Peruano*, demanding that he and others report to the office of the magistrate to answer the question of “military rebellion.” VR did not report and sought asylum at the Colombian Embassy in Lima (International Court Reports 273). The embassy requested safe conduct out of the country for VR, which was denied. The government charged that the embassy did not have the right to grant asylum in this case and the Colombian Embassy charged that the Peruvian government was bound to provide safe passage for Haya de la Torre. The case was heard by the International Court of Justice in 1950, which ruled that the embassy did not have the right to grant VR political asylum, and that the Peruvian government was not bound to provide for safe conduct out of the country (International Court Reports 278). VR lived in the embassy until 1954, when the government allowed him to leave the country.

Letter 1711 October 12, 1949, from MS to LAS, demonstrates their hopes for the decision of the court in VR’s case. There is talk of one or both going to The Hague for the proceedings, “He propuesto a Eque. Santos la consulta de si conseguiría, mediante los jueces de Chile, Uruguay, etc., que la Corte llame a Haya. (Va copia) También si es necesaria la presencia de alguien, todos opinan que vayamos tu [sic] y yo.” [I’ve asked Eque. Santos to see if the judges in Chile, Uruguay, etc. might allow the Court to call Haya (Attached copy). Also, if someone’s presence is necessary, everyone thinks you and I should go]. Sánchez and Seoane are both active in supporting VR’s case. In Letter 1711, MS

also notes U.S. reaction to the case, “Pero según mis informes, USA no quiere ver agitación en el remanso, y tampoco quiere que la NU vea asuntos latinoamericanos porque Rusia metería su cuchara.” [But according to my sources, the U.S. does not want to see any agitation in the backwater, and does not want to find the UN meddling in any Latin American affairs either because Russia would step in]. A sidenote here, MS hand-wrote a personal note to LAS in the top right space on the letter, “Y un abrazo especial por tu alegado 49° aniversario.” [A special hug for your alleged 49th birthday]. In this instance, as others, he upheld their close relationship.

Officially, APRA denied any part in the rebellion. According to a CIA Information Report based on a memorandum released by APRA, dated April 19, 1949, the party was surprised by the rebellion, which was “not ordered by the party on a nationwide basis” (Central Intelligence Agency). Nevertheless, Sánchez was very much against the group that he believed participated in the rebellion of October 3, 1948. For example, in Letter 1716 December 19, 1949, from LAS to MS, he proposes their expulsion from APRA, “Concretamente, Tambien [sic], pediré si se modifican las bases, la separación momentanea [sic], si no la expulsión de todos los que movilizaron la estupidez y traicion [sic] del 3 de octubre...” [Specifically, I will also ask if the foundation is altered, the immediate separation, if not the expulsion of all those who mobilized the stupidity and treachery of October 3rd...] Sánchez also outlines his criticism of the rebellion in Letters 1714 and 1720. Seoane replied to his concerns in Letter 1719 January 25, 1950, from MS to LAS, “Los promotores del 3 ni tienen influencia en un CAP⁵ donde estoy de Sec. Gen. ni serán llamados al CPD porque están en disciplina . . . [sic] Por qué tanto barullo sobre esto?” [Those responsible for the 3rd neither have influence on a CAP where I am Secretary General, nor will they be called to the CPD because they are all being disciplined... What’s all the fuss about this?] Seoane seemed to take a more practical view of the rebellion,

Discutir entonces que si el vote así o asá, que si este o lo otro, me parece superfluo. Y dramáticamente superfluo cuando los acontecimientos se precipitan en Perú, como lo preví en Octubre, y amenazan pillarnos con los pantalones abajo, como casi siempre.

[I think it is superfluous to discuss this vote here and this vote there, this way or the other. And it is even more superfluous when the events in Peru are unfolding so fast, as I had warned in October. They might catch us with our guard down, as they almost always do.]

It is apparent in this exchange, that the two leaders employed a type of check and balance on each other. While both were staunch *apristas*, they represented different intellectual tendencies within the movement. Sánchez was more of a literary scholar, with interests in culture and theory. Seoane, on the other hand, was invested in mobilizing people for activism and spreading the ideals of *aprimo* through his journalism. Though they did not necessarily agree on every point, their goal was to move forward with the ideals of APRA and better Peru’s social and political environment.

Letter 1748 May 21, 1959, from MS to LAS, describes a heartbreaking personal situation. Seoane thanks LAS for the condolences received from Luis Alberto and his wife, Rosa, on the death of his daughter Nora in childbirth. Five days had passed since the unfortunate accident. Nora had been attended for months by the best gynecologist in Paris. She went to the clinic under “condiciones óptimas” [optimal conditions] and gave birth to a little girl, Nora Caroline, “que felizmente vive, sana y linda.” [who is thankfully alive, healthy and beautiful]. Nora suffered “un accidente anestésico, se le cerró la garganta y murió en minutos”

5. CAP stands for the Confederación de Artesanos del Perú-a working class organization that supported the ideals of the APRA party. CPD refers to the Confederación de Profesionales Democráticos, an organization of middle-class professionals also aligned philosophically with APRA.

[an anesthesia-related accident closed her throat and killed her in minutes]. He ends the letter with “Un largo y sentido abrazo, sin palabras, y todo mi resuscitado y viejo afecto para siempre” [A long and heartfelt embrace, without words, and all my revived old affection forever]. The letter itself tells a story. It is typed on Embajada de Perú stationery with many typographical errors and handwritten corrections. It is centered on the page with very deep margins and seems compressed, but with the many corrections, just barely under control. Luis Alberto and Rosa supported Manuel through this experience, remembering the anniversary of Nora’s death in 1960 in Letter 1759 May 11, 1960, from LAS to MS, saying “nuestra profunda solidaridad en el primer aniversario de la muerte de nuestra Norita” [our deep solidarity on the first anniversary of our Norita’s death]. There are four words that stand out in this short excerpt from the letter. The word “solidaridad” can be interpreted here in two different ways, from a moral or ethical sense, and a religious sense. It shows both empathy, and interconnectedness. It is a comforting, solid word that speaks volumes about their friendship. The use of the word “profunda,” as the qualifying adjective, has the effect of making the noun “solidaridad” more resonant. The other two words that must have given comfort were “nuestra” and “Norita” because they indicate that the loss is shared by Luis Alberto and his wife Rosa, and that Nora was so special to the Sánchez family that they referred to her by her family nickname. Luis Alberto and Rosa also attended a mass for Nora’s soul in 1961, a kindness Seoane thanked them for in Letter 1763 June 5, 1961, from MS to LAS.

In Letter 1760 May 23, 1960, from MS to LAS, Seoane sounds sad and tired,

Fue un día muy triste y duro, y la carga va haciéndose mas [sic] pesada conforme transcurre el tiempo. Quizá por eso me lanzo encarnizadamente al trabajo, y quizá por eso también siento un ansia de independencia como el buey, que, solo, lame mejor sus heridas. Por eso quiero alejarme de la política y actuar como periodista, conferencista, escribiendo libros, pero sin pedir permiso a nadie, trabajando desde el fondo del alma.

[It was a very sad and hard day, and the burden is getting heavier as time goes by. Maybe that’s why I devote myself so fiercely to my work, and perhaps that’s why I also feel a longing for independence like the ox, which licks its wounds alone. That’s why I want to get away from politics and work as a journalist, lecturer, and write books, but without asking anyone’s permission, working from the depths of my soul.]

Seoane’s sadness comes from remembering Nora’s death, but also from years of struggle for the ideals of the APRA party in Peru. He also notes that they are both turning sixty later in the year. Sánchez replies within a few days, with brotherly concern, in Letter 1761 May 28, 1960, from LAS to MS. He expresses his surprise that Seoane would want to leave politics, saying, “No te imagino ajeno a la política” [I can’t imagine you far from politics]. It is interesting that this typed sentence is corrected in ink from “no te veo” to “no te imagino.” The word choice is deliberate; there is an ounce of judgment in “No te veo,” while “te imagino” is a less heavy expression, and seems to leave the door open for change. On a lighter note, LAS also suggests that MS take vitamins, advising that turning sixty could add to Seoane’s depression. “Me suena a un momentáneo desgano, tu carta. Si no tomas algo de hormonas, los 60 traerán una dosis de melancolía. Si 60, aunque dudes.” [Your letter sounds to me like a momentary lack of energy. If you do not start taking hormones, turning 60 will bring a dose of melancholy. Yes, 60, even if you come to doubt it].

Letter 1762 June 3, 1960, from MS to LAS, makes a swift reply that is meant to assuage Luis Alberto’s concerns for him. First, there is the

questions of the vitamins,

Yo no estoy cansado, vale decir no es problema de hormonas, porque las tomo Foypan y Gerovital, como quien confiesa un secreto útil a “cualquiera que lea esta carta.” (Apunta rápido en tu libreta) Yo estoy decepcionado, Luis Alberto, de la lucha interna, de los codazos en las costillas, de los cabe, de esas desapoderadas ambiciones de que hablaste en una de tus primeras cartas, de la notoria falta de relación entre aquellas y las capacidades para hacer cosas grandes.

[I'm not tired, I mean, it's not a problem of hormones, because I'm taking Foypan and Gerovital, as someone who confesses a useful secret to “anyone who reads this letter.” (Quick note in your notebook) I'm disappointed, Luis Alberto, in the internal struggle, in the elbows in the ribs, of the heads, of those disempowered ambitions of which you spoke in one of your first letters, of the notorious lack of relationship between them and the ability to do great things.]

As a moment of comfort for his friend, he continues, “Por lo pronto trabajo, escribo y sigo como siempre diciendo lo que creo que necesita el Perú, y a veces deseoso de sentirme muy libre para que nadie me diga que le pisé los callos.” [For now, I work, I write, and I continue as always saying what I think Peru needs. And sometimes wanting to feel so free that no one can tell me I stepped on their toes.]

Manuel Seoane Corrales died May 15, 1963, while still active in the APRA party and serving as a Senator for Lima in the Peruvian Congress. Upon his death, Luis Alberto Sánchez wrote these words about his longtime friend and colleague in *Manuel Seoane Corrales 50 años*, “Fue Seoane más de los que muchos creen y menos de los que algunos pocos hubiesen querido. Y en ese mucho más y poco menos está la exacta dimensión del hombre a cabalidad” (n.p.) [Soane was much more than what some people believe, and a little less than what some others wish he had been. And in the space between that ‘much more’ and ‘little less’ lies the exact dimension of the man].

Summation and Implications

Overall, these selected letters show personal and political growth as these two men establish careers and families, and as each increasingly commits himself to what he believes as the greater good for Peru, *aprismo*. The correspondence shows how their faith in *aprismo* grew from an intellectual idea into a real political force that promised Peruvians deliverance from oppressive regimes. It carried hope for a future free of the domination of the “forty families” and military intervention in the government. The letters trace the ways in which their influence, along with many others, caused an ideological shift in the political scene in Peru away from oligarchy and toward majority rule. In Letter 1758 November 1, 1960, from MS to LAS, Seoane expresses his most heartfelt hopes for the future of his country,

Y ahora viejo LAS, voy a acercarme tangencialmente al problema para el cual te pido, imploro, demando, suplico, impetro, ruego, solicito, tu comprensión y ayuda creadora: la educación en función de la necesidad de progresar socialmente.

[And now old LAS, I'm going to tangentially approach the problem for which I ask, implore, demand, beseech, imply, beg, [and] request your understanding and creative help: education based on the need to progress socially.]

This persuasive appeal from Seoane uses repetition and parallelism as a rhetorical strategy to demonstrate both the depth of his emotions and his personal dedication to social progress in Peru, as he implores his friend to use his creativity toward greater political education for the masses.

This collection of letters helps the reader not only to understand the workings behind key events in Peruvian history, but to connect to the emotional landscape beneath them. These authors reveal their own uncertainty, sometimes fear, and often ambition, which has the effect of humanizing history for the reader. The ideas, values, and experiences in these primary documents augment the reader's understanding of the underlying ideological shifts that took place during such a turbulent time in Peruvian history. Their value as "documents of life" (Tamboukou 626) lies in providing a living record of events that goes beyond a summation of historical "facts" to problematize accepted narratives. They reveal the power dynamics both within APRA and the government in general. It is easy to discern the formal and informal networks that worked for societal change and to comprehend the shifting political landscape. The correspondence also highlights the nurturing of *aprista* vitality in its descriptions of shared struggles, emotional support, and humor. Overall, this collection of letters between two twentieth century intellectual giants affords the reader "the immediacy of here" (Stanley 290), by opening the annals of Peruvian history and revealing the human core.

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