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Disrupting Environments: Boarding School Domesticity and the Making of Catholic Colombians and Socialist Cubans in Twentieth-Century Latin America

By

Jaime Enrique Gómez Meneses

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Architecture
in the
Graduate Division
of the
University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Greg Castillo, Chair
Professor Emeritus Paul Groth
Professor Margaret Crawford
Professor Margaret Chowning

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Disrupting Environments: Boarding School Domesticity and the Making of Catholic Colombians and Socialist Cubans in Twentieth-Century Latin America

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Jaime Enrique Gómez Meneses

Abstract

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Jaime Enrique Gómez Meneses

Doctor of Philosophy in Architecture

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Professor Greg Castillo, Chair

Disrupting Environments explores how boarding school domesticity was a central tool to instill Catholic and Socialist values in two twenty-century Latin American nations. In Colombia, an elementary boarding school for indigenous children that operated between 1913 and 1958 in La Guajira region was the most influential component of a project of Christianization and "Colombianization" of the Wayúu indigenous group. Founded by the Catholic Capuchin order with funding from the Colombian government, the boarding school was set to be the center of a new town meant to facilitate missionaries' control of the indigenous territory. In Cuba, a program of rural boarding schools for middle-school students that operated between 1971 and the early 1990s was intended to shape the *hombre nuevo* (new man) for the emerging Socialist society. Hundreds of these boarding schools were built in rural areas across Cuba as part of the government's push to upgrade the countryside's physical conditions. This dissertation shows how the social transformation campaigns in both Colombia and Cuba relied heavily on the built environment and used boarding schools as their catalyst elements. I contend that the Capuchin order and the Cuban government used their power to produce physical interventions while simultaneously spreading narratives prescribing how to interpret these interventions. Such narratives shaped the boarding schools' domesticities, situating them as part of larger coherent landscapes (physical and rhetorical), making it difficult for students to contest the values they were set to learn. The two ideologies promoted in both campaigns, Catholicism and Socialism, were carefully spatialized and domesticated to change children's lives through quotidian activities. Disrupting Environments, therefore, understands boarding schools as domestic spaces. It claims that the academic activities performed in these institutions are secondary to their domestic use. It also shows that readings of domesticity require the analysis of the narratives that shape it, which circulate beyond the traditionally understood boundaries of domestic space.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments…………………………………………………………….……………… iv

INTRODUCTION………………………………………………………………………….... vii

PART I

CHAPTER 1. **Bringing Christian Civilization:** The Capuchin Catholic Order and the Control of the Wayúu Territory

Introduction……………………………………..…………...…….………... 2

Christian Civilization and the Corrupting Influence of the Environment…...…... 4

Church and State.

Justifying Physical Interventions in the Wayúu Territory.

Place and the Wayúus' Character.

Controlling the Wayúu Territory……………………………………………….. 11

Nazaret's Boarding School and the Capuchins' Territorial Strategy.

Overseeing Christianized Wayúus in the New Town.

Conveying the Idea of Control……………………………………………….. 22

Circulating Ideas.

Control and Civilization by Car.

Conclusion………………………………………..……………………… 28

CHAPTER 2. **New Families for Christian Civilization:** Making Proper Families in the Boarding School

Introduction……………………………………………………………..……….. 31

Bringing Children to Stay: Monogamous Marriage and Spatial Concentration in Nazaret……………………………………………… 33

Polygyny and the Wayúu Territory.

Bringing Children to the Boarding School.

Two Genders Mediated by the Church……………………………………………… 39

Physical Segregation of Genders in the Boarding School.

Circumventing the Gender Divide.

Learning Proper Gender Roles.

Populating the Town with Catholic Families……………………………………… 52

Marrying off Wayúus.

Proper Homes for Proper Families.

Conclusion………………………………………………………………………… 57

PART II

CHAPTER 3. **Building the Socialist Society:** Cuba's Revolutionary 'Escuelas en el el Campo' and the Physical Transformation of the Countryside

Introduction……………………………………………………………………… 62

The Rural Boarding School Program and the Pedagogical Attributes of Work in Cuba's Revolutionary Countryside……………………………………… 64

Education to the Countryside: The Rural Boarding School Program.

The Central Role of Education in the Revolution.

Learning from Working in the Countryside's New Productive Landscape.

The Built Environment and the Construction of the Socialist Society…………… 72

The Transforming Attributes of the Built Environment.

The Country's Political and Architectural Vanguard and the Conception of the Boarding School Typical Building.

Technology to Re-shape the Country: Facilitating a Typical Boarding School Experience.

A Prescribed Interpretation of the Built Environment…………………………… 86

Teaching People how to Read Physical Interventions.

The Boarding School Typical Building Joins the Government Prescription.

Conclusion.. 91

CHAPTER 4. **Making the Collective:** Domesticating 'La Emulación'

Introduction.. 94

Work Takes a Central Stage in Mothers' and Children's Lives............................ 96

Working Mothers and Children's Admission to Boarding Schools.

Stretching the Role of Work to Shape the Hombre Nuevo.

Making the Student Collective through Efficient Work 100

The Open Gallery Corridor, the Plaza, and the Importance of the Student Collective.

Striving for Efficiency in the Agricultural Fields.

The Building's Surroundings as Socialist Battleground.

Living the Revolution in the Dormitories.. 111

Government Narratives and Life in the Dormitories.

Contesting the Publicity of Private Life

Conclusion.. 119

CONCLUSION. **Disrupting Domesticities**... 124

BIBLIOGRAPHY.. 130

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Universidad de los Andes in Colombia helped cover most of my tuition and living expenses for almost five years. These funds were part of the Faculty Development Program of which I was beneficiary. Colombia's Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (formerly known as Colciencias) awarded me a doctoral studies grant, which was useful to complement my tuition and living expenses, and fund part of my fieldwork in Colombia and Cuba. I also received a fellowship-loan from Colombia's Colfuturo, which was essential to cover extra costs due to ongoing increases in tuition and living expenses in the San Francisco Bay Area. All this funding was crucial to keep me focused on my work, not distracted by financial concerns.

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I am also indebted to my family, and friends in the Bay Area and abroad. They really helped me enjoy my time as a Ph.D. student. I am particularly grateful to my writing group. Noah Allison, Eric Peterson, Trude Renwick, Valentina Rozas, Alec Stewart, Elaine Stiles, and Stathis Yeros (alphabetical order) read my chapters and provided excellent feedback on their content, structure, and style. I learned to write by listening to them and reading their work. I am also thankful for the multiple exchanges, formal and informal, that I had with other graduate students in the program "History, Theory, and Society." These include Laura Belik, Alexander Craghead, Caitlin DeClercq, Giuseppina Forte, Jennifer Gaugler, Razieh Ghorbani, Mónica Lamela, Jolene Lee, Heba Najada, Tania Osorio, Rina Priyani, Alberto Sanchez, Ettore Santi, Noam Shoked, Desirée Valadares, and Swetha Vijayakumar. Finally, big thanks to my friend Julia Tischer from McGill University for having been a permanent interlocutor on multiple subjects, including my dissertation, from the days I was a master's student at McGill until now.

– Non, dit le petit prince. Je cherche des amis. Qu'est-ce que signifie "apprivoiser"?

– C'est une chose trop oubliée, dit le renard. Ça signifie "créer des liens…"

The Little Prince
Antoine de Saint -Exupéry

INTRODUCTION

On a rainy afternoon of November 2011, Andrea, a woman in her mid-thirties, walked me through her home in a central area of Bogotá, Colombia, where she had been living for the past thirteen years. Upon entering her home, we walked by the kitchen and a small area with stools next to it where she told me she spent most of her time. This area was also the place where she had "family meals" and received most visitors. Past a corridor, Andrea showed me her living room. Furnished with a sofa and armchair, it opened onto a garden she felt proud of. On the upper level, the master bedroom hid behind a curtain that substituted what otherwise would be a door. Two storage rooms and a guest bedroom complemented the upper level. Unlike the image this description suggests, Andrea's home was not a typical middle-class dwelling in Bogotá. Her home had no doors or windows, and its notational "rooms" opened directly onto public space. She squatted on the bank of a water canal under a bridge (figure 0.1). Andrea was legally homeless.

Andrea's description of her home and the way she arranged the space recreated the domestic life she used to have with her husband and two children —no longer part of her life— before moving to the bridge. Ideas that had shaped her former domestic life were reflected in her home under the bridge. There was a gradual transition between public and private spaces, an area mainly used to display hospitality, a place for gatherings that underscored the idea of family even though Andrea did not live with relatives, a bedroom with more hierarchy than other bedrooms, and a garden —actually a small table with plants grown in pots— that was a source of pride. All these things and Andrea's account of them spoke of ideas that she believed in and carried with her. What was the role of domesticity in reproducing the ideas that Andrea stuck to and kept informing her life? Most important for this dissertation, if domesticity plays a role in the reproduction of ideas, can it be used to instill ideas intended to change a society? This latter question gave origin to this dissertation, and the case studies I analyze show that some people believed it was possible.

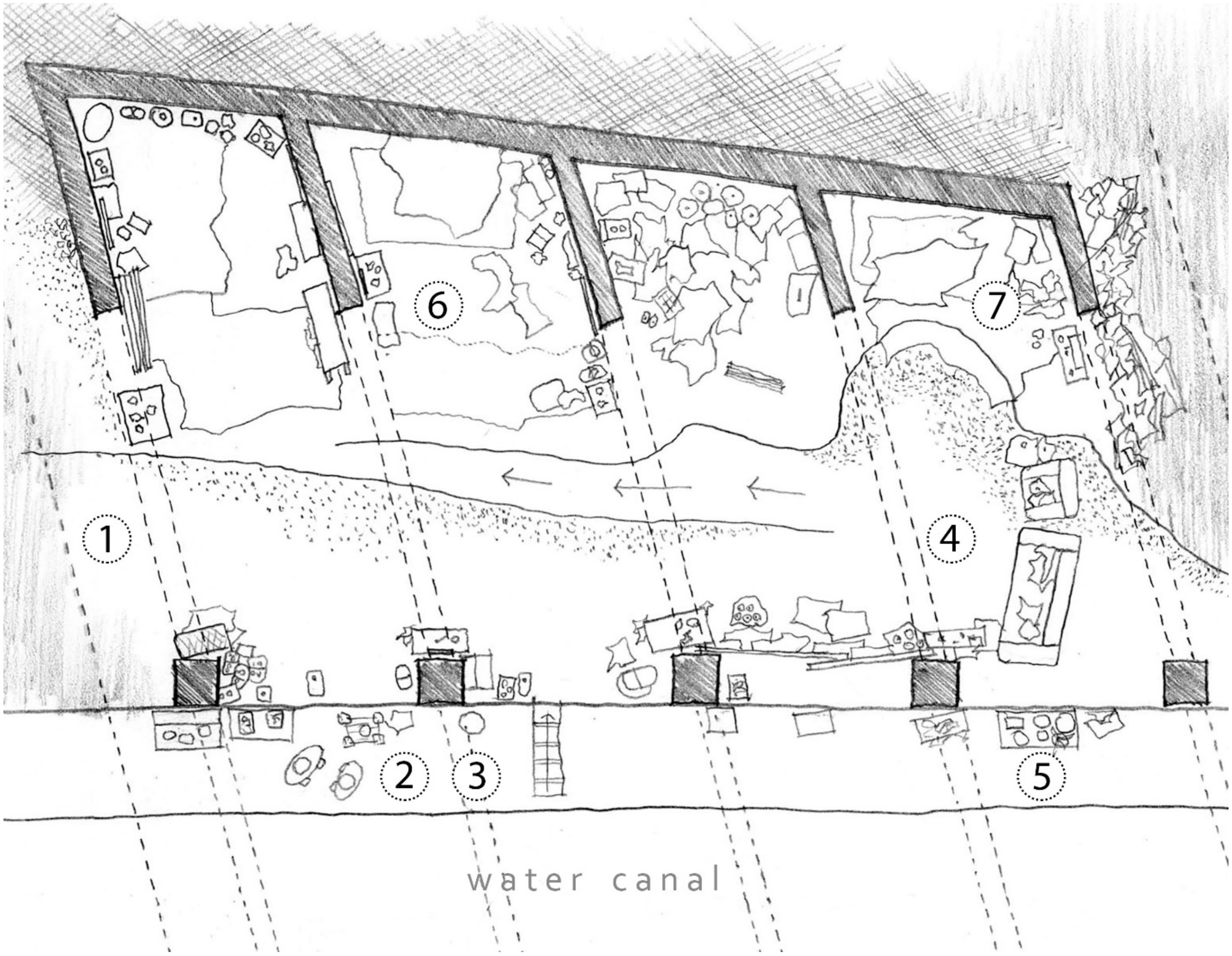

Figure 0.1. Andrea's home under a bridge in Bogotá, Colombia. 1) entrance; 2) kitchen; 3) place for "family" meals; 4) living room; 5) garden; 6) master bedroom; 7) guest bedroom. Source: author.

Domesticity and Boarding Schools

Before getting to my case studies and why I chose them, I must first explain the idea of domesticity that this dissertation deals with and the value of looking at it in boarding schools. Born in the eighteenth century as a category to designate an emerging attention on home and family life that was particularly apparent in fiction and non-fiction writings, domesticity has been an ambiguous term in architectural history.[1] It has been widely used in scholarship on housing and domestic space, but in most cases authors assume that the term is self-explanatory and refrain from exploring it. Overall, as expected from a field focused mainly on space, architectural historians usually depict domesticity as determined by the spatial setting where it unfolds. This dissertation, although rooted in architectural history, takes a slightly different approach. Domesticity here is understood as daily life in the place a person is most familiar with (usually the place that person calls home.)[2] As such, space is only one of its components, albeit not the most important. Other two essential components of domesticity are the stories that inform the operation —the daily life— of that familiar place, which I call *narratives*, and the users' agency when operating under the influence of such narratives.

---

[1] Michael McKeon traces the origin of the concept back to the modern separation between 'public' and 'private' which, he argues, stemmed from the division of knowledge that took place in what he calls the 'Age of Separations' (sixteenth to eighteenth century). Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2005). See particularly part one.

Narratives influence how a domestic space is used and are based on the values of the individuals controlling that space. These individuals also control the narratives. These can take the shape of rules governing the space, or stories explaining why that space is the way it is and works the way it does. For example, in a family home, parents (or individuals having an equivalent role) control the narratives. Parents decide how domestic space is organized, set the rules of how it works, and offer explanations about its organization and operation. By identifying the narratives operating in a domestic space, it is possible to trace the values of those controlling that space. Rules requiring children to keep the bathroom door closed when using it, for example, might be articulating values related to privacy and moral goals that parents want to teach. Even though home dwellers might try to ignore these narratives, these are constantly emphasized and reinforced because they help reproduce the ideas of who controls the space. Narratives operating in the domestic space can be connected to narratives operating outside it. These latter narratives are sited representations (i.e., tied to a place) of ideologies made by entities controlling, or attempting to control, a specific territory.

Boarding school domesticity is a type of institutional domesticity in which an educational institution sets up the spatial setting and narratives to instill the values it touts.[3] Looking at boarding school domesticities to address the question that started this dissertation helped me circumvent the problems that looking at home domesticities would have brought, hence my choice of boarding schools. First, home domesticities are difficult to decode. Many rules operating in homes, which are essential components of these homes' narratives, are implicit. Even if explicit, they are often rolled out without a clear understanding of how they connect to the values that parents (or those controlling the space) identify with.[4] They may even be the unconscious repetition of the narratives these persons grew up with. Boarding school domesticity, on the contrary, has narratives that are easier to read and whose connection with the values behind them is usually stated. In boarding schools, narratives and values are written down in rule books, official correspondence, propaganda material, student records, and any other material related to the life of an educational institution. Second, unlike home domesticities, boarding school domesticities are crafted following generalizations, assumptions, and classifications about the social groups to be educated, which are usually recorded in documents chronicling the schools' origin. These assessments of social groups are often used to justify publicly the establishment of the schools and are useful to understand how their domesticities were intended to respond to perceived situations, either by reinforcing them or by challenging them.[5] In home domesticities, assessments (including self-assessments) are usually part of these domesticities' fluid unfolding, instead of departure points. Commonly, there are no written accounts explaining these assessments or how home domesticities relate to them. Lastly, in increasingly mass-produced housing markets in which few people can decide the spatial characteristics of their dwellings, there is usually distance between spatial settings and people's spatial needs. This situation can make it difficult to identify correspondences between space, narratives, and values, which in this dissertation is essential to understand how ideologies are distilled to become daily life in a domestic setting. Boarding schools commonly operate in purpose-built structures, and when this is not the case, in structures thoroughly adapted to the institutional needs.

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[2] I am not referring here to the "ideology of domesticity," a set of prescriptive ideas on gender roles in the private sphere that had its heyday in the nineteenth century, and whose legacy is still present in representations of home as a mostly female environment. The definition of domesticity I use is mostly informed by scholarship on literature studies and cultural history, particularly, Susan Fraiman, *Extreme Domesticity: A View from the Margins* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017); Jane E. Simonsen, *Making Home Work: Domesticity and Native American Assimilation in the American West, 1860-1919* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity*; Amy Kaplan, "Manifest domesticity," *American literature* 70, no. 3 (1998): 581-606; Mary P. Ryan, *The Empire of the Mother: American Writing about Domesticity, 1830-1860* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1985).

[3] Quintin Colville uses the terms "institutional domesticity" and "corporate domesticity" interchangeably to describe the domestic characteristics of the on-board quarters British Naval officers had in the 1920s and 1930s. Quintin Colville, "Corporate Domesticity and Idealised Masculinity: Royal Naval Officers and Their Shipboard Homes, 1918–39," *Gender & History* 21, no. 3 (November 1, 2009): 499–519. Vesna Curlic uses "institutional domesticity" to refer to the domesticity of insane asylums. Vesna Curlic, "Home Sweet Home: Domesticity in English and Scottish Insane Asylums, 1890-1914" (master's thesis, The University of Western Ontario, 2019), https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/6329.

In this dissertation, I read boarding schools as domestic spaces. I explore how the governments of Colombia and Cuba used boarding school domesticity to disrupt existing social models and set new ones based on clearly stated ideologies. In Colombia, an elementary boarding school for indigenous children founded in 1913 in the La Guajira region was the most influential component of a larger project of Christianization and Colombianization of the Wayúu indigenous group. Executed by the Capuchin Catholic order with government funding, the transformation campaign started with physical interventions in the Wayúu territory to control and settle the indigenous population, including the foundation of a town, Nazaret, for Christianized Wayúus. For this case study, I focus on the period between the foundation of the school and the move to a new building in 1958, a few years after a new group of missionaries took control of the mission. In Cuba, a program of rural boarding schools for middle-school students started in 1971, La Escuela en el Campo (The School in the Countryside), was intended to shape the *hombre nuevo* (new man) for the new Socialist society. Hundreds of these boarding schools —in which students learned through a combination of academic and agricultural work— were built by the government in rural areas across Cuba and complemented a larger campaign of physical transformation of the countryside. For this case study, I focus on the period between the program's experimental start in 1968 and its silent dismantlement in the early 1990s, when the collapsing Soviet Union stopped subsidizing the Cuban economy.

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[4] In *Home Rules* geographer Denis Wood and environmental psychologist Robert J. Beck decode the values associated with the rules guiding the behavior of Wood's children in his home's living room. Even though one the authors' home is the object of inquiry, the book shows how painstaking and indefinite mapping rules and values in home domesticities can be. Denis Wood, and Robert J Beck, *Home Rules* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

[5] An obvious example of boarding school domesticities intended to challenge perceived situations are the indigenous boarding schools built in Latin American countries, the United States, Canada, and Australia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to assimilate indigenous populations into Western societies.

In both cases, I argue, boarding schools were catalyst elements of large projects of social transformation in which the built environment was central. The organizations behind these projects (the Capuchin order acting on behalf of the Colombian government and the Cuban government) had a privileged position in the territories where they operated, allowing them to simultaneously control physical interventions and narratives interpreting, publicizing, and governing these interventions. In Colombia, narratives representing the Catholic doctrine and visions of progress and nation coalesced in the idea of Christian civilization and were embodied in the figure of the assimilated Wayúu, a town dweller and member of a Catholic household. In Cuba, narratives representing Socialism underscored the idea of a collective ethos best practiced through the cult of work and allegedly able to counterbalance leftovers of the country's capitalist past. In each case, narratives operating at the territorial scale converged in the boarding schools, where they informed both the production of the spatial setting and the schools' domesticity.[6] These narratives, I contend, situated the boarding schools as part of larger coherent landscapes (physical and rhetorical), which made it harder for students to contest the values they were expected to learn. Both case studies show how two ideologies, Catholicism and Socialism, which combined or separated marked twentieth-century Latin American societies, were intentionally spatialized and domesticated to alter people's lives.

Social Change through the Built Environment

The two case studies in this dissertation address campaigns to push social change in which the built environment had a central role. The built environment was read as a reflection of social models considered undesirable and, as such, as the means to introduce new models. In Colombia, the Capuchins saw in the Wayúus' dwellings and patterns of territorial occupation signs of their alleged inferiority as social group. In Cuba, the government saw in the gap between Havana's and the countryside's physical infrastructures signs of the unequal capitalist society it opposed to. Both entities carried out interventions in the built environment that started at the scale of the territory but whose most advanced expression produced the domesticity of the boarding schools. In addressing these physical/social transformation campaigns, this dissertation engages in discussions on the influence of the built environment on people, a recurrent subject in architectural history.[7] More specifically, it addresses environmental determinism, the belief that the built environment can be designed to determine people's behavior. Although publicly frown upon, environmental determinism, as architectural historian Simon Richards argues, keeps permeating architectural practice and theory even if unstated.[8] In both case studies, I enter this discussion by showing how the influence of physical interventions on people stemmed more from the narratives governing and offering prescribed interpretations of these interventions than from the spatial settings themselves.

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[6] By acknowledging the influence of narratives operating outside the boarding schools on the school's domesticities, I recognize the contentious boundaries between the public and private spheres. These boundaries have been explored from different angles in Victoria Haskins, "Domesticating Colonizers: Domesticity, Indigenous Domestic Labor, and the Modern Settler Colonial Nation," *The American Historical Review* 124, no. 4 (2019): 1290-1301; Krishan Kumar, and Ekaterina Makarova. "The Portable Home: The Domestication of Public Space," *Sociological Theory* 26, no. 4 (December 1, 2008): 324–43; Jane E. Simonsen, *Making Home Work;* Hilde Heynen, "Modernity and Domesticity: Tensions and Contradictions," in *Negotiating Domesticity: Spatial Productions of Gender in Modern Architecture*, ed. Hilde Heynen and Gülsüm Baydar (New York: Routledge, 2005), chapter 1; Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity*; Thomas Foster, *Transformations of Domesticity in Modern Women's Writing: Homelessness at Home* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

In studying the boarding schools, I only focus on activities and spaces that underscore their condition of domestic spaces. I purposely avoid focusing on curricula or purely academic activities unless they are helpful to support my points on the schools' domesticity. By using this approach, I contend that in boarding schools the academic activities are secondary to their primary function, housing, which makes sense considering the hundreds of thousands of children in the world who live for years in these institutions.[9] In Colombia, the boarding schools run by the Capuchins in La Guajira, particularly the one I focus on, became a feasible housing option for Wayúus wanting their children to be housed, clothed, and fed for free, and for children that their families allegedly abandoned. Although children were supposed to live there for three years, a few children continued living there permanently. Others moved to houses built by the Capuchins next to the school, which were expected to replicate most characteristics of the school's domesticity. In Cuba, about one-third of the country's middle-school population lived in schools of the rural boarding school program by 1980, and thousands more lived in rural high boarding schools modeled after their middle school counterparts. Generations of Cubans were raised in these boarding schools, and many of them, after six or seven years living far from their parents, never returned to their homes and instead started independent lives. Boarding school life became so common in the country that almost any Cuban has something to say about the *beca*, a term Cubans use to refer to the experience, which alludes to the government fellowships covering the students' expenses in the boarding schools.[10] In both case studies, boarding schools were intended to be, and in some cases effectively became, the dwellings that students considered home.

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[7] Different authors writing from architectural history explore the role of planned environments in the reproduction of social and cultural values. Salient examples this dissertation relates to are Carla Yanni, *Living on Campus: An Architectural History of the American Dormitory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019); Paula Lupkin, *Manhood Factories: YMCA Architecture and the Making of Modern Urban Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Abigail Van Slyck, *A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth, 1890-1960* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006); Gwendolyn Wright, *Moralism and the Model Home: Domestic Architecture and Cultural Conflict in Chicago, 1873-1913* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Dolores Hayden, Seven American Utopias: The Architecture of Communitarian Socialism, 1790-1975 (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1976).

[8] Simon Richards, *Architect Knows Best: Environmental Determinism in Architecture Culture from 1956 to the Present* (London: Routledge, 2016). Writing a few decades earlier, Karen Franck already reminded environment-behavior researchers of the problems for research of enhancing the influence of the physical environment on behavior, eclipsing other factors. Karen A. Franck, "Exorcising the Ghost of Physical Determinism," *Environment and Behavior* 16, no. 4 (1984): 411–435.

[9] Other scholars have addressed the domesticity of boarding schools and other similar institutions, even though they do not claim these to be domestic settings. For example, Clyde Ellis, "Boarding School Life at the Kiowa-Comanche Agency, 1893-1920," *The Historian* 58, no. 4 (1996): 777-793; K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994); Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, "Experience," in *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges from Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s* (New York: Knopf, 1984), part two.

Individually, each case study tells a story never told before from the lens of the built environment. In Colombia, the Capuchins' campaign in La Guajira has been recollected by historians in two academic books, one on the cultural exchange between indigenous groups and Catholic missions in two regions of Colombia, and another on the boarding schools built by the Catholic order in La Guajira.[11] Although in the first book, *En Tierras Paganas*, the author includes a part that acknowledges the importance of buildings in the Capuchins' missionary goals, his analysis mainly addresses their formal contrast with Wayúu buildings and their use of local materials. The second book, *Los Guajiros: 'Hijos de Dios y La Constitución,'* although focusing mainly on the boarding schools, is mostly a factual account to show the "civilizing" goal of these institutions, a well-known objective of almost any Catholic mission in early twentieth-century Latin America. The author provides almost no information on the students' lives in these buildings. In the case of Cuba, almost any document published in the 1970s by the government and local scholars on the education programs brought by the Revolution talk about the rural boarding school program. However, these are primarily accounts intended to publicize the Revolution's commitment to widespread access to education rather than thorough analyses of the actual implementation of the government plans.[12] Information on daily life in the program's boarding schools, when available, usually focuses on intentions rather than on what actually happened. Although a few pieces have discussed the program's typical building —some of them from recent years—, these have used it to support broader arguments on architectural and technical innovation in the Revolution, and not to support readings of the Revolution as a social project that relied heavily on the built environment.[13]

Challenging Official Accounts

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[10] A relatively recent book published in Cuba with short fiction stories on boarding school life bears testimony to how attending a boarding school has been a widespread experience for many generations of Cubans. Roberto Ginebra Palenzuela, and Josué Pérez Rodríguez, comps., *País con Literas: Cuentos Cubanos sobre Becas*, 2nd ed. (Havana: Unicornio, 2013).

[11] Juan Felipe Córdoba-Restrepo, *En Tierras Paganas: Misiones Católicas en Urabá y en La Guajira, Colombia, 1892-1952* (Bogotá: Editorial Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2015); Vladimir Daza, *Los Guajiros: 'Hijos de Dios y La Constitución'* (Riohacha: Fondo Mixto para la Promoción de la Cultura y las Artes de La Guajira, 2005).

[12] For example, in *La Educación en Revolución*, a richly illustrated volume showing the Revolution's education programs, these are presented using only excerpts from Fidel Castro's speeches. Fidel Castro, *La Educación en Revolución* (Havana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1974).

[13] For example, Juan de las Cuevas Toraya, Gonzalo Sala Santos, and Abelardo Padrón Valdés, *500 Años de Construcciones en Cuba* (Madrid: Chavín, 2001); Milene Soto Suárez, María Victoria Zardoya, and Flora Morcate Labrada, "Educación," in *La Arquitectura de la Revolución Cubana 1959-2018: Relatos Históricos Regionales - Tipologías - Sistemas*, ed. Manuel Cuadra (Kassel: Kassel University Press, 2018), 155-157.

The control over the production and distribution of information about the boarding schools by the organizations that built and operated them resulted in narrow accounts about their purpose, characteristics, and operation, which exclude other voices. One of the challenges of this dissertation was to transcend these accounts, which I partially do by bringing the voices of people who studied and lived in the boarding schools. In the Colombian case study, most of the primary sources available show only the perspective of the male Capuchin missionaries that started and controlled the mission.[14] The perspective of the Capuchin nuns, essential in the operation of the boarding school I focus on, is almost absent. Archives from their order in Colombia are not open to researchers, so the few accounts produced by nuns that I use are either academic records from the boarding school or part of publications run by male missionaries.[15] Wayúu accounts produced in the period I cover are also scarce. Wayúu people have their own language, *Wayunaiki*, which in its original form has no written component.[16] The only account I include from a Wayúu author of the period is written in Spanish and focuses on the general conditions of La Guajira in the early twentieth century.[17] To make up for these absences, I interviewed boarding school graduates, women and men, who identify as Wayúu and live in Nazaret, the town that grew around the boarding school, or in nearby places. Although the nuns' perspective remains scarce in this dissertation, I hope that it is somehow represented in the accounts of female students who, like the boys' case with monks, interacted with nuns in the context of a relationship intended to imitate that of children and parents.

In the Cuban case study, most accounts produced in the period studied come from government entities or local scholars operating under conditions that dissuaded them from challenging official narratives.[18] These accounts celebrate and idealize the rural boarding school program without any criticism, even when students' opinions are included to demonstrate documentary objectivity.[19] Even though I include information from yearly reports printed by the Ministry of Education that offers a less celebratory perspective, it is mainly limited to general aspects of the program. Accounts on the program that were produced outside Cuba in the period also tend to celebrate it. These are usually part of surveys highlighting Cuba's innovations in education which, although genuinely revolutionary for Latin America, have shortcomings that these works do not explore thoroughly.[20] Oral accounts from former students helped me counterbalance the celebratory narratives on the program. Although restricted to people currently living in Havana, my interviewees attended rural boarding schools in different parts of Cuba, which was useful to confirm that the schools not only shared the same principles but had similar problems. These persons had disparate opinions on the program and their experience, complicating the program's official accounts.

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[14] Only one of the archives I use for this case study, the archive of Nazaret's boarding school (Archivo Internado Indígena de Nazaret AIIN), held information that was not produced or curated by the male Capuchin missionaries.

[15] Historian Juan Felipe Córdoba acknowledges the lack of information on the Capuchin nuns who worked in La Guajira. Juan Felipe Córdoba Restrepo, "Misiones Católicas en Femenino," *Boletín Cultural y Bibliográfico* 49, no. 89 (2015): 46-65.

[16] In fact, the first known written version of Wayunaiki was produced by Catholic missionary Rafael Celedón in 1873. Rafael Celedón, "Gramática, Vocabulario y Catecismo Guajiro" (unpublished manuscript, 1873), digitized copy available at https://babel.banrepcultural.org/digital/collection/p17054coll10/id/2283/.

[17] Antonio Joaquín López, "Pampas Guajiras" (unpublished manuscript, ca.1936), paper copy held in Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango, Archivo Gregorio Hernández de Alba, Bogotá, Colombia.

[18] For example, between 1971 and 1976, censorship of intellectuals and artist critical of the government was actively promoted by the Consejo Nacional de Cultura (National Council of Culture). This period came to be known as the *Quinquenio Gris* (Five Grey Years).

[19] One book celebrating the rural boarding school program is entirely based on interviews with students who, not surprisingly, only have positive opinions about it. Ismael Cruz Parada, Jesús Cabrera Cabrera, and Albadio Pérez Assef, *Puñado de Semillas: Testimonio Colectivo sobre las Escuelas en el Campo* (Havana: Gente Nueva, 1984).

The information I collected from interviews came with its own challenges, particularly when addressing what daily life was like in the boarding schools. Former students' accounts sometimes followed official narratives. Differentiating these from the students' actual experience entailed verifying information with other sources or comparing details gathered in different interviews to identify possible inconsistencies. Another major challenge came from omissions in the information, some of these related to my interviewees' characteristics. In the case of Colombia, I did not include former students who did not speak Spanish, and in the case of Cuba, I did not interview people who were part of the boarding schools' staff (teachers, principals, cooks, etc.).[21] Other omissions stemmed from the distance between the time of the interviews and that of the events, and the interviewees' perceived lack of impact of certain experiences (e.g., mealtimes) in their lives. I address these omissions by complementing information with other sources and leaving behind aspects of the schools' daily life about which I could not obtain detailed information from my interviewees. Challenges aside, accounts from former students helped me understand how narratives penetrated the boarding schools and — even if not explicitly acknowledged in the chapters— were instrumental in identifying which official accounts I should pay more attention to and how to read them.

Organization

This dissertation is organized in four chapters divided into two parts, each corresponding to one case study. Together, both parts show how seemingly disparate sets of ideas informed operations of social transformation that had a common ground in the use of boarding school domesticities. The first part focuses on the Capuchin order campaign in the Colombian La Guajira region, and the second part on the Cuban rural boarding school program. Chapters 1 and 3, the first chapters of each part, focus on the territorial scale of the case studies, including the reasons why the built environment was used as a tool for social transformation, the ideas that informed physical interventions in the territory, the narratives accompanying these interventions, and the role of the boarding schools at this scale. Chapters 2 and 4, the second chapters of each part, focus on the boarding schools' domesticities.

In the first part, chapter 1 focuses on the Capuchin order's quest to control La Guajira territory as part of the government commission to Colombianize the indigenous population and the order's own Christianizing goals. I explore how the Capuchins, justifying their actions with a narrative of Christian civilization, tried to change the Wayúus' patterns of territorial occupation to have better access to the indigenous population and counteract behaviors they associated with these patterns. I also explore the foundation of the boarding school and the town expected to grow around it. This scale of intervention constituted a first step towards the indigenous group's social transformation, and the Capuchins publicized it among external observers to convey the idea of a successful campaign. I argue that for the Capuchins, the re-conceptualized Wayúu territory operated as a dual tool to, on the one hand, optimize their scarce resources to have an effective influence over the indigenous population and, on the other hand, to keep getting financial and operational support from external allies.

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[20] For example, Theodore MacDonald, *Making a New People: Education in Revolutionary Cuba* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1985).

[21] In Colombia, I conducted one interview in Wayunaiki using an interpreter because my interviewee did not have a good command of Spanish. However, upon realizing that my interpreter was not translating all the information that my interviewee was telling me, I decided to stop the interview and not use that information here. Eneida, interview by author, Nazaret, May 17, 2018.

Chapter 2 focuses on Nazaret's boarding school and how the narrative of civilization entered it via training in gender roles aimed to disrupt Wayúu gender customs. I explore how the boarding school spatial setting set a strict physical division of genders that helped produce and sustain the school's gendered domesticity. I also explore how the Capuchins persuaded children to form monogamous couples, which clashed with Wayúu polygynous customs, in part by enthroning the celebration of marriages among graduates and giving new couples houses in the town. I argue that the boarding school domesticity instilled gender roles that advanced the idea that adulthood fulfillment would be best achieved through monogamous Catholic marriage.

Chapter 3, which begins the dissertation's second part, focuses on Cuba's rural boarding school program in the context of the government campaign to transform society through physical interventions in the countryside. I explore how the state, informed by Marxist-Leninist ideas, saw in the old regime's abandonment of the countryside acute traces of capitalist values and, consequently, embraced the countryside's physical transformation to introduce a new social order. I also explore the tenets and origin of the boarding school program, including the conception of its typical building, how it fits in the government efforts to transform the countryside physically, and the narratives accompanying these efforts. I argue that Cuban government officials believed that narratives on the built environment were an essential component of physical interventions to produce social change and, accordingly, promoted narratives to teach people how to interpret these interventions.

The last chapter, chapter 4, focuses on how the practice of "Socialist Competition," or *La Emulación*, brought the government narratives to the boarding schools and helped define their domesticity. I explore how *La Emulación* turned the schools' spatial setting into a tool to teach children the values of the Cuban *hombre nuevo* (new man), a new kind of subject required for Socialism to thrive. I also explore how this framework penetrated all aspects of school life and turned any activity into a lesson centered on the benefits of collective work, coherent with Socialist values. I argue that *La Emulación* made the spatial setting of each boarding school work as a Socialist venue where daily activities were rendered as contributing, in parallel, to the personal construction of the self and the collective construction of society.

In developing my argument, I deal with sensitive issues that I do not thoroughly explore because they are beyond the scope of this dissertation. The Colombian case study fits in a large body of scholarship on the establishment of boarding schools as part of colonial projects to eradicate indigenous cultures. The violence of these projects has been widely established.[22] Although in this case study I focus on one boarding school built specifically to assimilate an indigenous group, I underscore the mechanisms more than the intentions and consequences, a better approach to answer the questions regarding domesticity that started this dissertation. In the same case study, I deal at some point with the exchange of goods and cash for children, a practice that I only address to illustrate one of the means by which students were enrolled in the boarding school.[23] Regarding the Cuban case study, there is an ongoing debate on the separation of children from their families to send them to the rural boarding schools. Although this separation also happened in the Colombian boarding school, it is not a point of debate among former students. In Cuba, former students and their relatives still bring up this issue with fierce arguments in favor or against it.[24] I do not engage in this debate. However, it is important to clarify that despite the Cuban government did not force families to send their children to the rural boarding schools, it spread persuasive information to convince them to do so (supported by its powerful official apparatus) and offered them few alternatives.

The two parts that compose this dissertation can be read independently from each other. Although in the chapters I do not include explicit comparisons between the two case studies, the Capuchins' and Cuban government's campaigns are closely entwined through their purposes and strategies. Readers should be able to easily identify commonalities and disparities. Nevertheless, in the conclusion, I concisely summarize salient comparison points between the two campaigns. I end this manuscript by indicating how in the progressively globalized world a particular type of boarding school domesticity is becoming increasingly common.

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[22] Only a few scholars have focused on how the architecture of indigenous boarding schools contributed to this process. Magdalena Milosz, "Comparative (Post)Colonialisms: Residential School Architectures in Canada, USA, Australia, and New Zealand," in *QUOTATION: What Does History Have in Store for Architecture Today? Proceedings of the 34th Annual Conference of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand*, ed. Gevork Hartoonian and John Ting (Canberra: SAHANZ, 2017), 443-457; Geoffrey Paul Carr, "'House of No Spirit': An Architectural History of The Indian Residential School in British Columbia" (PhD dissertation, The University of British Columbia, 2011), http://hdl.handle.net/2429/34181.

[23] To date, there is no scholarship on republican (post-independence) missions in Latin America exploring this issue.

[24] This debate can be followed in almost any online forum where rural boarding schools in Cuba are discussed.

PART I

CHAPTER 1

Bringing Christian Civilization:

The Capuchin Catholic Order and the Control of the Wayúu Territory

Introduction

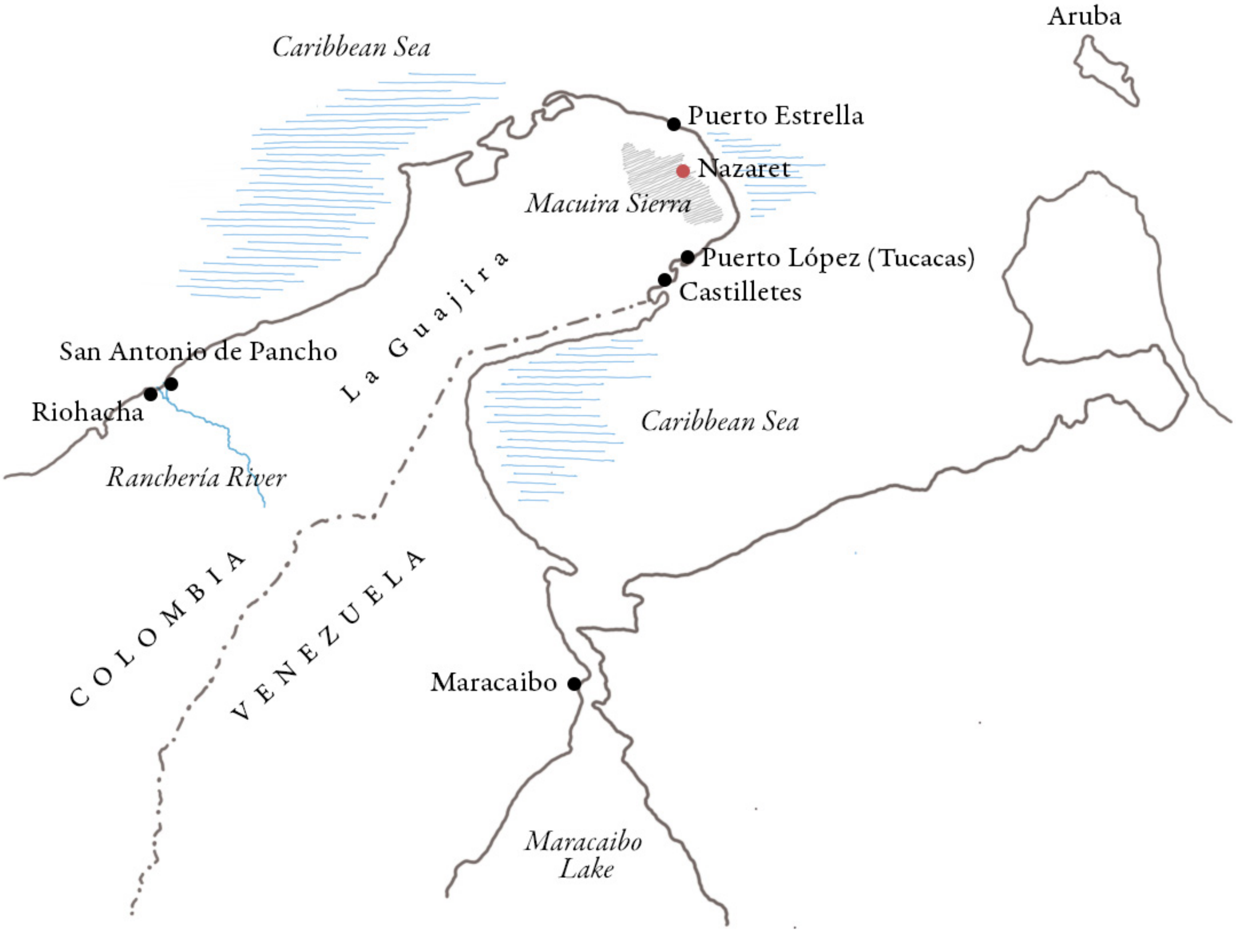
Aruba
Caribbean Sea
Puerto Estrella
Nazaret
Macuira Sierra
Puerto López (Tucacas)
Castilletes
La Guajira
San Antonio de Pancho
Riohacha
Ranchería River
Caribbean Sea
COLOMBIA
VENEZUELA
Maracaibo
Maracaibo Lake

Figure 1.1. Map showing La Guajira, its surrounding area, and the main places mentioned in this chapter. Source: author.

A letter sent on June 18 of 1912 to the Vatican's representative in Colombia explains why the Capuchin Catholic mission working in the Northeast of the country saw the establishment of indigenous boarding schools as an ideal means to assimilate the indigenous population. In the handwritten letter, Friar Atanasio Vicente Soler y Royo, Vicar Apostolic of La Guajira and Sierra Nevada, asked the Vatican's appointee to seek funding from the Colombian government to open three boarding schools in the Vicariate.[1] Soler y Royo begins by mentioning an earlier failed venture in educating indigenous people:

> The creation of these new centers of scientific and religious education stems from a long experience. The illustrious brother bishops of Dibona and Santa Marta were able to educate only the natives they took to Santa Marta's seminary, but once they were sent back to their territories, they reacquired their people's customs.[2]

Addressing specifically the case of La Guajira, the focus of this and the next chapter, the Vicar singled out that the Wayúus lack of towns and their seasonal migration habits, misunderstood as nomadism, were the two main obstacles for their assimilation:

> The Capuchin friars have their schools in El Pájaro, Carrizal, Tucacas, and San Antonio. They had schools in Guamachal, Caraipía, Guarero and Cotopriz. In none of these schools they have managed to have Indians attend classes longer than one month. This situation is caused by the absence of towns in La Guajira. There are castes, such as those living in Carazua, Muramana, and Guamachal, which live after their cattle, moving frequently like transient livestock, pushed by need.[3]

To illustrate the Capuchin mission's level of confidence in what could be achieved by establishing boarding schools, the writer mentions a 1910 precedent, the boarding school that the mission had opened in the settlement of San Antonio de Pancho. Located in what was regarded as the entry point into Wayúu territory, just 2 miles from the "civilized" town of Riohacha, this school was far from the Alta Guajira, La Guajira's most northeastern part and home of the Wayúus that the mission considered "less civilized." Only in 1913 did the Capuchins venture to address the two alleged obstacles for the Wayúus' assimilation in the very core of the Wayúu territory by opening the Internado de La Sagrada Familia de Nazaret (from here on Nazaret's boarding school) in the Alta Guajira. With this new school the mission not only aimed to have a permanent place for Wayúu children to live while being educated, but also expected it to become the center of a new town of "civilized" Wayúus. Located nearly 23 miles from the border with Venezuela, the school would benefit from flows of goods and people in the area, which meant potential souls and material resources for the Capuchins' endeavor. School and town together would give the friars the opportunity to exercise their influence, first on students living in the school, and later on graduates establishing their homes in the new town.

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[1] In the territorial organization of the Catholic Church, the Apostolic Vicariate is the highest level a mission can reach before becoming Diocese.

[2] Atanasio Vicente Soler y Royo to Apostolic Delegate, June 19, 1912, volume 80 Vicariato Goajira, 801 Proyecto, 802 Vicarios, 8020 Atanasio de M., folder 802 Vicariato Apostólico de La Guajira, 8020 1er Vic. Ap.: Mons. Atanasio Soler y Royo (1905-1912), subfolder 8020 Atanasio de Manises, 1911-1912, Archivo Provincial de HH. MM. Capuchinos de Valencia APCV. The letter is written by an undisclosed writer on behalf of the sender.

[3] Atanasio Vicente Soler y Royo to Apostolic Delegate.

In this chapter, I address the Capuchin Catholic order's strategy to control La Guajira territory and its indigenous inhabitants in the first half of the twentieth century. As part of its efforts to control frontier territories, the Colombian government signed agreements with Catholic orders to Colombianize indigenous populations. Spanish Capuchins, who had returned to La Guajira in 1888, joined the government campaign in the first years of the century and justified their work through a narrative of Christian civilization that fused colombianizing and evangelizing goals. Their territorial strategy for La Guajira anticipated and supported the mechanisms to assimilate Wayúu children that operated at the architectural scale in Nazaret's boarding school, discussed in detail in the next chapter. In the first part of this chapter, I explore the foundation of Nazaret's boarding school in the context of the state and Catholic Church relationship in Colombia. I also explore how the Capuchins' belief in the connection between environment and character justified their physical interventions in the Wayúu territory. In the second part, I focus on what the Capuchins' territorial strategy for La Guajira was, and how it was expected to disrupt the Wayúus' patterns of territorial occupation and provide easy access to the indigenous population. I also explain how the foundation of Nazaret, a town for Christianized Wayúus, and Nazaret's boarding school fitted in this territorial strategy, and the Capuchins' attempt to control the town's population. In the last part, I focus on how the Capuchins publicized their work in La Guajira among external observers to claim successful control over the territory.

The Capuchins saw in the Wayúus' patterns of territorial occupation the main problems to prevent the indigenous group's assimilation. This belief was fed by the missionaries' imagined relationship between the Wayúus' character and La Guajira's physical environment. Accordingly, justified in a narrative of Christian civilization, the Capuchins introduced new patterns of territorial occupation to have better access to the Wayúu population. A crucial component of this strategy was Nazaret's boarding school and the town that grew out of it. The mission used this re-conceptualized territory as a dual tool to, on the one hand, optimize its scarce resources to have an effective and long-term influence over the Wayúus and, on the other hand, spread the idea of a triumphing Christian civilization to keep getting financial and operational support.

Christian Civilization and the Corrupting Influence of the Environment

Church and State

The construction of a three-room hut built with mud walls and thatch roof in 1913 marked the foundation of Nazaret's boarding school in the Alta Guajira. In the school's first years, two of the rooms served as bedrooms for the two Spanish friars running the institution, and the third served as a provisional chapel.[4] The first children living in the school were housed in improvised sheds.[5] Roughly seven years later, a 1920 report sent to the national government showed that a new structure, which included a purpose-built chapel, had already replaced the old building.[6] One 1928 photo is useful to show how the new structure highlighted the religious character of the government-funded institution (figure 1.2). In the image, the chapel's central position, bell tower, and sleek spire contrast with the smaller buildings on each side, stressing the chapel's importance. The building in Nazareth followed a scheme that had already been employed in the San Antonio boarding school. In both schools the chapel was the central element of the composition and mediated physically between the boys' and friars' quarters and the girls' and nuns' quarters. This scheme was the work of Friar Antonio de Valencia, a Spanish Capuchin who, prior to his arrival in Colombia, had participated in the construction and operation of indigenous boarding schools in the Capuchin mission in Yap islands, by 1899 part of the Spanish colony of Philippines.[7] The chapel dominating the composition specifically highlights the central role of the Catholic doctrine in the indigenous children's education. Funded largely by the Colombian government as part of its campaign to Colombianize and civilize indigenous groups, in Nazaret's boarding school the government's message was articulated through Catholic values.

The establishment of Nazaret's boarding school was a crucial step toward the "civilizing" goals of the Capuchins and the state in La Guajira. The Capuchin's aim of Christianizing the Wayúu people stemmed from the Vatican's late-nineteenth-century efforts to give a new impulse to missions in the world. These efforts coincided with Colombia's political climate in the period, favorable to the Catholic Church. After over three decades of church-state separation, a political agreement between conservative and liberal leaders re-established the union between the two powers in the new 1886 national constitution.[8] In 1887, one year after the constitution's adoption, Colombia signed a Concordat with the Vatican which granted the church an important role in public education.[9] In the country's peripheral regions, this role would be enhanced with the *Convenio de Misiones* (mission agreement) signed in 1902 between the government and the Vatican and renewed in 1928 and again in 1953. This agreement commissioned Catholic orders to "*5educer* [control by grouping] and evangelize the savage tribes," and opened the door for the orders to approve or veto the appointment and removal of top public servants in mission territories.[10] To be sure, there is no information leading to believe that the Capuchin mission in La Guajira used this power. The introductory text to the 1902 mission agreement, as published in the country's official journal, summarizes its main goal as "to spread the Christian civilization in the immense regions inhabited by savage Indians and attempt to push these rich territories into the road to progress."[11] For the government, "progress" meant consolidating the idea of nation among indigenous populations and having its allies — Catholic missionaries— in territories with weak governmental control. Accordingly, the government became the main source of funding for Catholic missions in the country, including the Capuchin mission in La Guajira.

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[4] Apuntes Autobiográficos de Fray Crispin de Palma desde el Año 1867 de su nacimiento hasta 1947, 1947, 23-24, folder Fray Crispin de Palma de Gandio, APCV, Valencia, Spain.

[5] Crónica sobre la Fundación del Orfelinato de Nazareth, ca. 1915, folio 3, volume Vicariato Apostólico de La Guajira, 8072, Relaciones, folders 8072a, 8072b, APCV, Valencia, Spain.

[6] A poorly printed photo included in the report shows the chapel. *Las Misiones Católicas en Colombia, Informes Años 1919, 1920, 1921* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1921), 64-101.

[7] *Las Misiones Católicas en Colombia: Labor de los Misioneros en el Caquetá, Putumayo, La Goajira, Magdalena y Arauca, Informes Año 1918-1919* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1919), 133. The report mentions that the building was "drawn and built under the competent direction of Father Antonio de Valencia, the school director." On the experience of friar Antonio de Valencia before arriving in La Guajira, see Vladimir Daza, *Los Guajiros: 'Hijos de Dios y La Constitución'* (Riohacha: Fondo Mixto para la Promoción de la Cultura y las Artes de La Guajira, 2005), 34.

[8] For a clear analysis of the relationship between Catholic Church and political power in Colombia, see, Christopher Abel, *Política, Iglesia y Partidos en Colombia: 1886-1953* (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 1987).

[9] Lars Schoultz, "Reform and Reaction in the Colombian Catholic Church," *The Americas* 3, no. 2 (1973): 232.

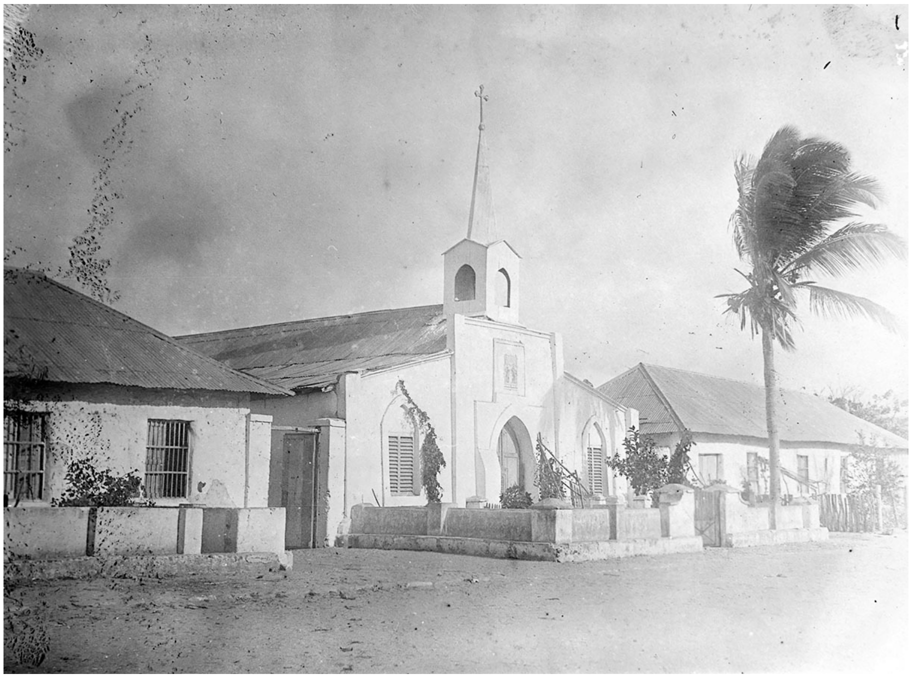

Figure 1.2. The chapel dominates the composition of Nazaret's boarding school, signaling the central role of the Catholic doctrine in the government-funded institution (ca.1928). Source: Archivo Histórico de HH. MM. Capuchinos de Bogotá AHCB, box 9, folder Guajira.

The Colombianizing and Christianizing mission in La Guajira would be the job of Spanish Capuchins. Expelled in 1818 by the recently independent Colombian government, they returned to La Guajira in 1888 attending a request from Santa Marta's bishop. Worried by the absence of missionaries in La Guajira and Santa Marta's Sierra Nevada, regions that were part of his diocese, the bishop had written directly to the Capuchins' superior in Rome asking for help.[12] After a slow start that lasted almost two decades, the mission officially became the Apostolic Vicariate of La Guajira, Sierra Nevada and Motilones in 1905.[13] Established by the Vatican in agreement with the national government, the status of Apostolic Vicariate gave the Capuchins autonomy from Colombia's ecclesiastical jurisdictions. This new status left the mission in a more comfortable position to execute its own strategy in La Guajira and advance the state and church agendas. Both assimilationist agendas were articulated in the narrative of Christian civilization that the government and the Capuchins used to refer to their campaign in La Guajira. The narrative portrayed Wayúu people as uncivilized subjects who, in the view of the Spanish missionaries, needed first to have a proper physical environment if they were to be civilized.

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[10] Jane Rausch, "Church-State Relations on the Colombian Frontier: The National Intendancy of Meta, 1909-1930," *The Americas* 49, no. 1 (1992): 49-51. Also, article XII in "Convenio con la Santa Sede sobre Misiones Encargadas de la Evangelización y Reducción de Tribus Salvajes," *Diario Oficial* (Bogotá, Colombia), Feb. 12, 1903. The 1928 renewal of the 1902 agreement kept the article.

[11] "Convenio con la Santa Sede sobre Misiones Encargadas de la Evangelización y Reducción de Tribus Salvajes," *Diario Oficial* (Bogotá, Colombia), Feb. 12, 1903.

Justifying Physical Interventions in the Wayúu Territory

As revealed in the letter sent by La Guajira's Vicar Apostolic, the missionaries acknowledged that they were not as successful as they had expected in their regular schools when it came to the indigenous children's education. Early in their newest endeavor in the region, they realized the challenges they would face with the Wayúus and their territory. A 1900 report sent by the mission to the order's superior in Rome depicted a somber state of affairs.[14] The report began quoting "Colombia's most competent writers" to describe the Wayúus' violent character, taste for alcohol, and skills with weapons. Complementing these accounts, the report's author, Friar Antonio de Valencia, included his own observations on the Wayúus' "improvised" homes, lack of towns, and what missionaries saw as "total nomadism," which according to him made their evangelization difficult. On top of the challenges related to the Wayúu people, a yellow fever epidemic had recently killed four missionaries, and the recently started *Guerra de Los Mil Días* (Thousand Days War) between liberals and conservatives had interrupted the mission's regular activities.[15] Left with eight friars and eleven lay brothers, the mission was stretched thin given its responsibility for evangelizing La Guajira as well as the Sierra Nevada region, home of the Arahuaco indigenous group, and providing clerical services in its parish in Barranquilla, a large town outside La Guajira. Friar Antonio ended the report emphasizing the need to learn the Wayúus' language and establish a boarding school in the region "if we are going to achieve something among the Wayúu people." His report, invested with the authority of someone with experience on indigenous boarding schools, was the first of a series of official requests sent to the order superiors and authorities that resulted in the

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[12] Andre Bosa Bastien, "Volver: Retorno de los Capuchinos Españoles al Norte de Colombia a Finales del Siglo XIX," *Historelo* 7, no. 14 (2015): 151-154; Vicente Taroncher Mora, *La Goagira: Período Fundacional de la Misión Capuchina 1888-1913* (Valencia: EDICEP, 1995), 26.

[13] The creation of the Vicariate had been prefigured in the 1902 *Convenio de Misiones*. The Vicariate was originally intended to cover not only La Guajira, but also the Santa Marta's Sierra Nevada and its surrounding area. On the creation of the Vicariate, see Vicente Taroncher, *La Goagira*, 103-111; and Andre Bosa Bastien, *Volver*, 170-173. For an explanation of what an Apostolic Vicariate is, see note 1.

[14] Antonio de Valencia to Bernardo de Andermatt, June 4, 1900, volume Vicariato de La Guajira, 8071 Informes, 8072 Relaciones, folder Antonio de Valencia, ACPV, Valencia, Spain.

[15] The Guerra de los Mil Días, a nationwide civil confrontation, started in October of 1899 and ended in November of 1902.

1910 opening of the San Antonio boarding school, the 1912 approval by the Colombian Congress of stipends specifically for boarding schools in La Guajira, and the 1913 establishment of Nazaret's boarding school.

The Wayúus' patterns of territorial occupation, explained in part by their need to adapt to a harsh environment, became a salient feature of their culture and a logical target for the Capuchins. The Wayúu people —originally composed of different indigenous groups sharing La Guajira peninsula— traditionally lived in small settlements known as *píichipala,* spread unevenly across the territory (most still live in this type of settlement). Each *píichipala* was composed of groups of huts, each one usually occupied by a family related to other families in the same settlement through the female line of descent. These families and their relatives living elsewhere formed what scholars refer to as clan. Each clan had different *píichipala* across the territory located on land they had the right to exploit, which gave the Wayúus flexibility to move from one place to another.[16] Members of one clan could gain access to lands controlled by other clans through marriage, which given the Wayúus' polygynous customs, could result in multiple and complex inter-clan alliances. The flexibility provided by this pattern of territorial occupation, hardly achievable if the Wayúus lived permanently in towns, was crucial when the long dry season (usually lasting nine months) forced them to move temporarily to places with better access to water to save their lives and cattle. Although in the 16h century the Wayúus switched from an economy based on agriculture, hunting, and fishing to one based primarily on cattle herding (supplemented by fishing and agriculture), the network of *píichipala* remained essential to get access to good fishing banks and lands for cultivation.[17] A map by anthropologist Virginia Gutierrez based on her ethnographic work in La Guajira shows that as late as 1947, in the last years of the Spanish Capuchins' control of the mission, Wayúus still acknowledged the clan-based distribution of lands across La Guajira (figure 1.3). Dark lines in the map show culturally defined boundaries dividing the portions of the territory controlled by the different clans. However, partly because of the Catholic marriage practice introduced by missions and mestizos, this territorial organization was under threat, and traditional intra- and inter-clan relationships were disappearing by the time the map was published (on Catholic marriage among Wayúus, see next chapter).[18]

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[16] On the Wayúus' use of their territory, see Weidler Guerra, "Historia y Cultura," in *Vivienda Guajira*, eds. Lorenzo Fonseca and Alberto Saldarriaga (Bogotá: Carbocol, 1992), 90-97. Otto Vergara González, "Los Wayu: Hombres del Desierto," in *La Guajira: De la Memoria al Porvenir. Una Visión Antropológica*, ed. Gerardo I. Ardila (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 1990), 141-146.

[17] On the Wayúus' transition to agriculture, see Weidler Guerra, "Historia y Cultura," 60-63.

[18] For reasons why the Wayúus' clan system and traditional territorial organization was being disrupted in the late 1940s, see, Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "Organización Social en La Guajira," *Revista del Instituto Etnológico Nacional* 3, no. 2 (1948): 169-177.

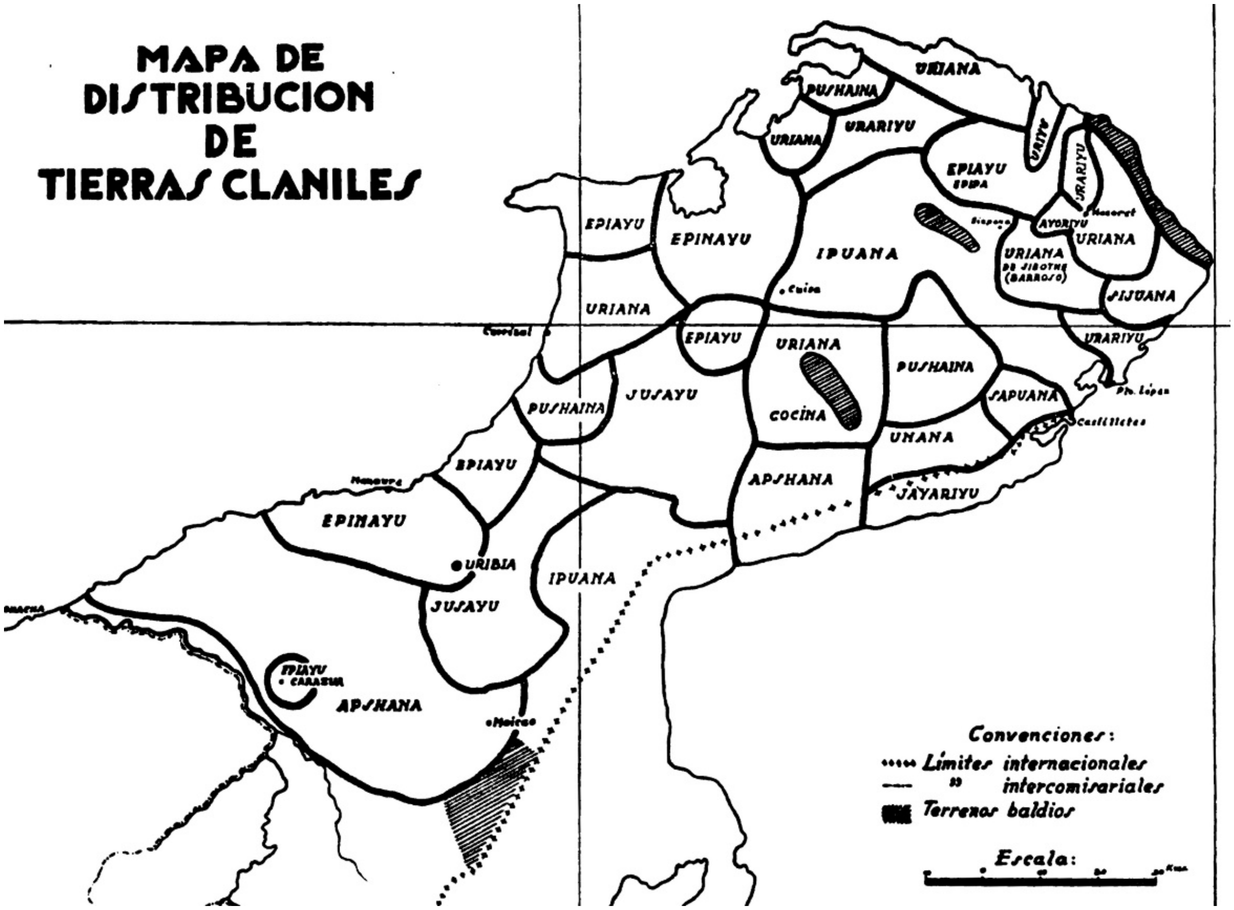
MAPA DE DISTRIBUCION DE TIERRAS CLANILES
URIANA
PUSHAINA
URARIYU
URIANA
URIYU
URARIYU
EPIAYU
EPIAYU
EPINAYU
IPUANA
Cuisa
AYORIYU
URIANA
URIANA DE JIBOTHE (BARROSO)
JIJUANA
URIANA
URARIYU
EPIAYU
URIANA
PUSHAINA
JUSAYU
COCINA
SAPUANA
Pto. López
Castilletes
PUSHAINA
UNANA
EPIAYU
APSHANA
JAYARIYU
EPINAYU
URIBIA
IPUANA
JUSAYU
EPIAYU CARAZUA
APSHANA
Maicao
Convenciones:
Límites internacionales
" intercomisariales
Terrenos baldios
Escala:
Kms.

Figure 1.3. Map showing La Guajira's land distribution among Wayúu clans in the late 1940s. The dark lines represent the boundaries between different clans' lands. Source: Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "Organización Social en La Guajira."

The seasonal mobility of Wayúus across their territory is reflected in their typical hut (*piichi* or *miichi*), traditionally made of dried cactus trunks and mud roofed with thatch. A prominent space of the hut is the *luma* (arbor), an area where family members hang their *chinchorros* (wide hammocks) during the day and visitors are allowed to stay at night (figure 1.4). The Wayúus' seasonal migration between *píichipala*, the small size of these, and the ephemeral construction quality of the Wayúu hut fed the idea of nomadism that populated the Capuchins' and other observers' descriptions of the Wayúu people.[19] The weight that observers —including the Capuchins— gave to the Wayúus' relationship with their physical environment influenced the missionaries' interest in using territorial and physical interventions as tools for their assimilation. Yet for the Capuchin friars and nuns, the Wayúu-environment link, particularly their alleged nomadism, also offered morally based reasons to intervene.

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[19] Weidler Guerra, Wayúu anthropologist, explains this misconception. Weidler Guerra, "Historia y Cultura," 91-93.

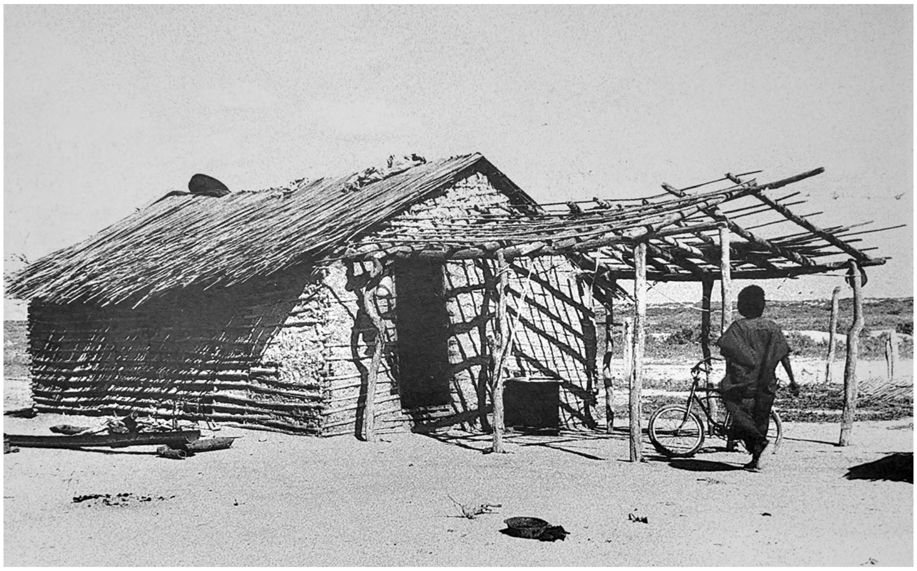

Figure 1.4. Typical Wayúu dwelling (still used today) with the *luma* (arbor) preceding the entrance (c.1990). Source: Lorenzo Fonseca and Alberto Saldarriaga, eds., *Vivienda Guajira* (Bogotá: Carbocol, 1992).

Place and the Wayúus' Character

The image of nomadic Wayúus wandering the desert, a recurrent subject in texts by Capuchin friars, provided opportunities to comment on the natives' moral condition. As late as 1946, a book published by Friar José Agustín de Barranquilla, director of Nazaret's boarding school in the mid-1930s, used the natives' mobility to criticize their moral character. The book's perdurance in time — its fifth edition was published in 1991— and widespread availability reflect its importance among the texts authored by Capuchins and the extent to which the critique of nomadism was entrenched in the Capuchins' mindset. In the book, Friar José Agustín calls the Wayúus footloose (*andariegos*) because of their "almost natural tendency to stroll."[20] Later on, he implicitly recalls this assessment to criticize the Wayúu man's relationship with his wife by stating that despite loving her so passionately, "after one week of marriage he has no problem to leave with his cattle to another region without his wife, and stay there for weeks, months and even years, without sending her food nor even greetings."[21] Again invoking the Wayúus' mobility to criticize them, the author recognizes that they are "very" hospitable by allowing any visitor, even strangers, to stay in their homes. However, he warns that this has nothing to do with "moral virtue" but with the host's understanding that willingness to welcome any visitor may someday benefit him by being allowed to stay in a stranger's home.[22] This interpretation of native customs suggested an instrumental connection between the Wayúus' hospitality, which was reduced to a strategy to cope with the environment stripped of any ethical motive.

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[20] José Agustín de Barranquilla, *Así es La Guajira* (Barranquilla: Empresa Litográfica, 1946), 64.

[21] José Agustín de Barranquilla, *Así es La Guajira*, 73.

[22] José Agustín de Barranquilla, *Así es La Guajira, 82.*

Associations between physical environment and behavior justified to a great extent the Capuchins' approach to La Guajira. An influential voice in the period in which the boarding schools were established in the region was that of Friar Segismundo del Real de Gandia. In 1912, he became a crucial figure in persuading the government to allocate permanent funds for La Guajira's boarding schools. Well respected by Capuchins and government officials, he believed that certain physical environments could have a negative influence on individuals. In a text addressed to the public advocating more governmental support for boarding schools in La Guajira, he criticized how the government seemed not to be concerned about how the region's "soil, climatic and topographic conditions" influenced an "individual's character and moral conditions." After suggesting that the Wayúus' mobility did not allow them to be hard working and peaceable, he stressed how the missionaries' work would be successful if the natives were pushed toward a "more stable and fixed life" (*a una vida más estable y fija)*, a direct reference to the Capuchin boarding schools.[23] De Gandia's belief in the harmful influence of La Guajira's environment on its people echoed the Pope's similar belief in the physical environment's transformative effect in regions inhabited by Latin American indigenous populations. In a 1912 encyclical asking the Latin American archbishops and bishops to help protect indigenous populations from the abuses still inflicted upon them (whipping and slaughtering) by non-indigenous people, Pius X acknowledged that although the "lust of lucre" could explain the abusers' behavior,

> something is also due to the nature of the climate and the situation of these regions. For, as these places are subjected to burning southern sun, which casts a languor into the veins and as it were, destroys the vigor of virtue, and as they are far removed from the habits of religion and the vigilance of the State, and in a measure even from civil society, it easily comes to pass that those who have not already come there with evil morals soon begin to be corrupted, and then, when all bonds of right and duty are broken, they fall away into all hateful vices.[24]

In the Pope's words, environmental factors, in addition to the absence of church and state, explained in part the cruel behavior of people who abused indigenous populations in Latin America. Explanations such as Friar Segismundo's and the Pope's set morality as the direct outcome of the physical environment and contributed to bring space to the foreground in the Capuchins' *mission civilisatrice* in La Guajira.

Controlling the Wayúu Territory

Nazaret's Boarding School and the Capuchins' Territorial Strategy

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[23] Segismundo del Real de Gandia, *La Sierra Nevada y Los Orfelinatos de La Guajira* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1912), 78.

[24] Pius X, "Lacrimabili Statu: Encyclical of Pope Pius X on the Indians of South America to the Archbishops and Bishops of Latin America," *Vatican*, June 7, 1912, http://www.vatican.va/content/pius-x/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-x_enc_07061912_lacrimabili-statu.html, translated from Latin by the Vatican.

The mission's scarce human and material resources and the high hopes invested in Nazaret's boarding school demanded a wise selection of where to locate it. The few non-Wayúu settlements in La Guajira, including Puerto Estrella, Castilletes, and Puerto López, were small mestizo hamlets that did not offer much to a boarding school. Each had only a few homes and almost no infrastructure, and establishing a boarding school in one of these would have meant for the Capuchins to deal with eventual opposition from their inhabitants, particularly from non-Catholics. With these places out of the equation, the Capuchins chose a place for the boarding school that fitted well the school's purpose, took advantage of the relationships they had forged with important actors in the region, and boosted the strategy they had used since 1888 to spread their influence across La Guajira's 8,000 square miles (roughly the area of New Jersey).

The Capuchins used a strategy to reach the different corners of La Guajira that mixed permanent stations, temporary stations, and expeditions departing from these stations.[25] The permanent stations were places where the mission had a house, school, or church for their exclusive use, and the most important of these was the town of Riohacha. Located close to La Guajira's western border in the adjacent department of Magdalena, Riohacha was the location of the mission headquarters. It constituted the boundary between the mostly westernized Colombian population living to the west —the most notable exception being the indigenous groups of the Santa Marta's Sierra Nevada— and the mostly Wayúu population living to the east in La Guajira. Although the mission preferred building permanent stations for its representatives, the lack of missionaries and funds made this aim impossible. A 1911 handwritten note reporting on the state of the mission, for example, shows that out of the five permanent stations that the mission had by then in La Guajira, two had no resident priest.[26] The temporary stations, usually in properties owned by Christianized Wayúus or mestizos, were places where the missionaries could stay for short periods. Their expeditions, called *correrías apostólicas*, were short trips that departed from the different stations to reach areas targeted for Christianization and those where Catholics needed attention.[27] A portable altar facilitated the administration of sacraments like marriages, masses, and baptisms during the excursions, often done while on the road from one place to another. Nazaret's boarding school became an essential permanent station to reach the Wayúus living in Alta Guajira, as a 1925 map of the mission shows (figure 1.5). In the map, small drawings of buildings identify Nazaret's and San Antonio's boarding schools, and their importance is only dwarfed by the larger and more intricate drawing identifying the mission headquarters in Riohacha.

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[25] Writing about one Catholic mission operating in Brazil in the first half of the twentieth century, Silvina Bustos explains that a missionary territory is composed by a "continuous and fixed" territory and a "discontinuous and mobile" territory. Silvina Bustos, "Modalidades Misioneras de Gestión Territorial: Los Capuchinos de la Umbría (Italia) en el Alto Solimões (Amazonas-Brasil), 1910-1960," in *Actas del 6o. Congreso Chileno de Antropología*, ed. Colegio de Antropólogos de Chile A.G., Vol. 2 (Valdivia: Colegio de Antropólogos de Chile, 2007), 1607.

[26] Relación del Estado de la Misión Mandada a la Obra de la Propagación de la Fe Año 1911, volume 80 Vicariato Goajira, 801 Proyecto, 802 Vicarios, 8020 Atanasio de M., folder 802 Vicariato Apostólico de La Guajira, 8020 1er Vic. Ap.: Mons. Atanasio Soler y Royo (1905-1912), subfolder 8020 Atanasio de Manises, 1911-1912, ACPV, Valencia, Spain.

[27] Juan Felipe Córdoba, writing on the Capuchin mission in La Guajira and the Carmelite mission in the Urabá region, calls these expeditions "*excursiones misionales*" (missionary excursions). Juan Felipe Córdoba, *Misiones Católicas en Urabá y en La Guajira, Colombia*, 1892-1952 (Bogotá: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2015), 180. On the expeditions in the Capuchin mission in Caquetá and Putumayo (Colombia's Amazon region), see Misael Kuan Bahamón, *Civilización, Frontera y Barbarie: Misiones Capuchinas en Caquetá y Putumayo, 1893-1929* (Bogotá: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2015), 122-124.

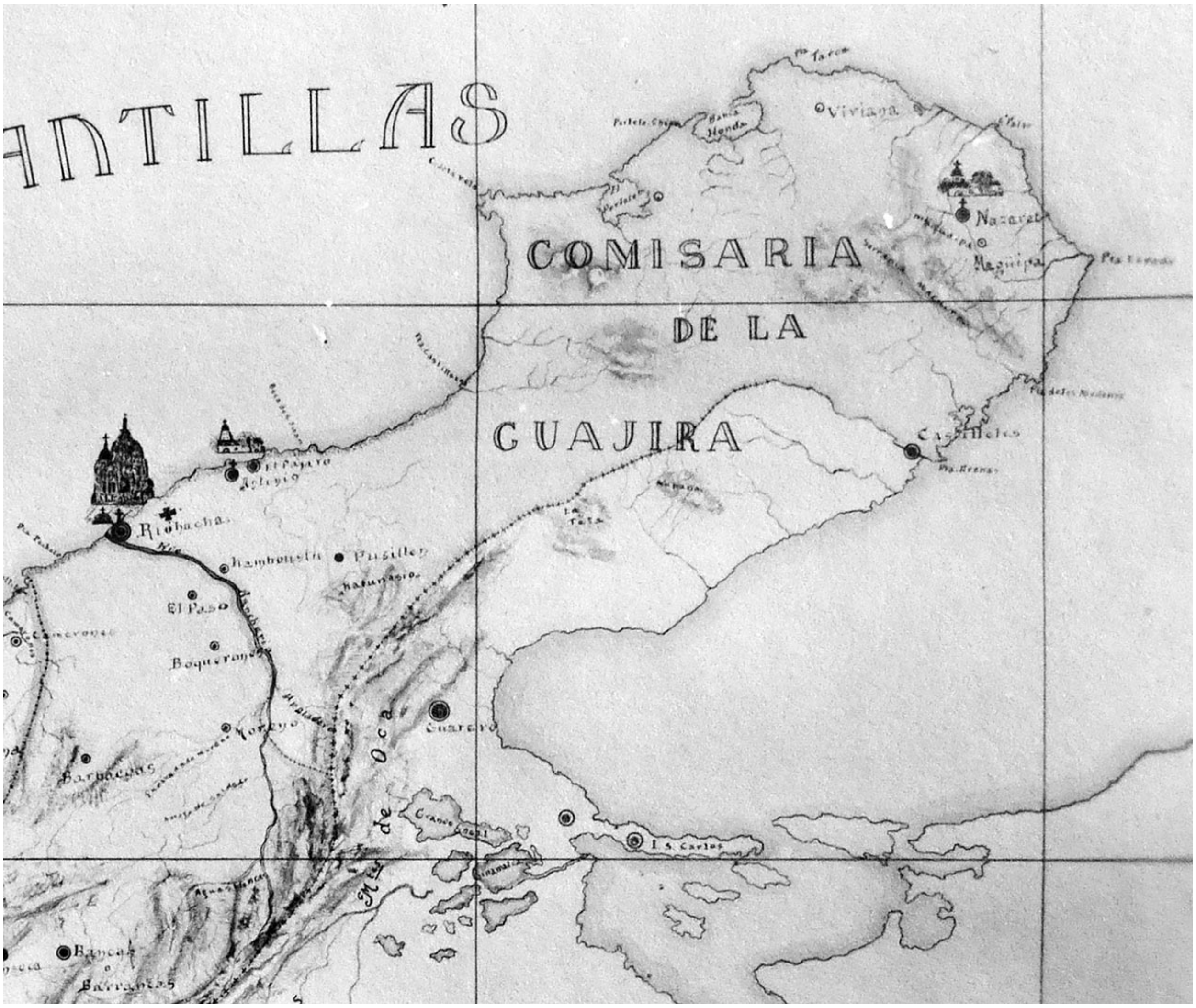

Figure 1.5. The importance of the boarding schools for the Capuchin mission is apparent in their inclusion in this ca.1925 map (fragment). Each boarding school is represented with a simple drawing of a low building crowned with a chapel tower. The schools' importance is only dwarfed by the mission headquarters in Riohacha, represented with a larger and more intricate drawing (left). Source: Archivo Provincial de HH. MM. Capuchinos de Valencia APCV, Album fotos, 6.2.4./1.

One of the aspects that influenced the location of permanent stations, including Nazaret's boarding school, was proximity to potential protectors and patrons. Before the foundation of the boarding school, the Capuchins took advantage of their relationship with regional authorities to locate these stations next to government facilities. In Puerto López (also known as Tucacas), for example, the Capuchins had established a house in 1911 next to a customs post controlling the border with Venezuela.[28] The following year, as a 1913 letter from Friar Antonio de Valencia shows, the Capuchins were working together with government officials to establish a boarding school and a police post in a place called Guaráguaráu, in what was expected to become the capital of La Guajira.[29] However, this plan was never realized. In the case of Nazaret's boarding school, a mestizo trader named Samuel Weeber was instrumental. Coming from a family of traders and born to an immigrant father from Curaçao (Dutch Antilles) and a Wayúu mother, Weeber had a house in Puerto Estrella where the Capuchins stayed while looking for a place for the boarding school.[30] He was well respected by the Wayúu chiefs of the Alta Guajira and convinced them to sell the monks land for the school.[31] Throughout the first years of the school, Weeber was an active supporter of the mission, hosting friars and nuns in Puerto Estrella on their way to the school, being a civil witness in the school's final exams, and even acting as the godfather of Wayúus getting married, baptized, or having their first communion.[32] People like him also lent money to the mission when the government funds were late, which was often the case. The Capuchins' territorial strategy, although shaped in part by proximity to potential protectors and patrons, also required easy access to convertible souls and supplies. This latter aspect was particularly important in the case of Nazaret's boarding school, located on the opposite side —and with a desert in-between— of the Riohacha's mission headquarters from where money and supplies were sent.

The 120 miles that separated Nazaret's boarding school from the mission's headquarters in Riohacha, although partially compensated by the school's relative closeness to Venezuela and the Antillean islands of Aruba and Curaçao, often jeopardized the school's operation. Up until the mid-1920s traveling from Riohacha to Nazaret's boarding school was mainly done in a schooner that would take between 2 and 5 days depending on the winds and tide (nowadays it takes between 7 hours and 2 days by car depending on the weather). The other option was to travel by horse, which required dealing with the harsh dry weather and the road dangers, which included potential encounters with the Wayúus known as *Cocinas*, feared even by other Wayúus because of their alleged aggressiveness.[33] Money, letters, and food sent to Nazaret's boarding school from Riohacha were always at risk of getting lost or arriving late due to the schooners' unreliability. A series of telegrams from 1932 suggests that the lack of proper means to send supplies to Nazaret sometimes set in motion extraordinary measures. In the telegrams, sent from Riohacha to the Capuchin's representative in Bogotá, the mission in La Guajira asks for a coast guard ship from the government to send food to Nazaret because "they ran out of food and there are many children there."[34] Although the ship was finally sent, it sank, endangering the boarding school and pushing the mission to bring food from Maracaibo, which, although not that complicated to get, was more expensive and implied the payment of import taxes.[35] The disconnection between the Alta Guajira and the rest of La Guajira in the early decades of the boarding school was also evident in that some of the materials used for a failed mission station near Castilletes in the Alta Guajira came from Maracaibo (Venezuela) instead of Colombia.[36] This lack of connection to the mission's headquarters in Riohacha would be partially solved with the advent of the automobile and the adaptation of some of La Guajira's old mule trails for the automobile's operation. Nevertheless, the school's isolation was only relative to Riohacha as flows of people and goods constantly traversed the territories surrounding the school.

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[28] "Crónicas de la Misión de La Guajira, Sierra Nevada y Motilones, Años 1888-1913" (unpublished manuscript), 85-92; Antonio de Valencia to Atanasio Vicente Soler y Royo, April 25, 1911, volume 80 Vicariato Goajira, 801 Proyecto, 802 Vicarios, 8020 Atanasio de M., folder Antonio de Valencia, ACPV.

[29] Antonio de Valencia to Minister of Government, January 7, 1913, volume 80 Vicariato Goajira, 801 Proyecto, 802 Vicarios, 8020 Atanasio de M., folder Antonio de Valencia, ACPV.

[30] On Samuel Weeber, see, Joaquín Viloria De la Hoz, *Empresarios del Caribe Colombiano: Historia Económica y Empresarial del Magdalena Grande y del Bajo Magdalena, 1870-1930* (Bogotá: Banco de la República, 2014), 154.

[31] The 1923 report that the mission sent to Colombia's Primate Archbishop indicated that the Alta Guajira's most important Wayúu chiefs lived in the area where Nazaret's boarding school was located. Bienvenido Ma. de Chilches, "Informe que el Provicario Apostólico de La Guajira y Sierra Nevada Rinde al Iltmo. y Rvmo. Doctor Sr. D. Bernardo Herrera Restrepo, Primado de Colombia y Presidente Honorario de la Junta Nacional de la Obra de Misiones Católicas en la República," *Florecillas de San Francisco*, August 1923, 183.

[32] For the 1915 girls' final exams in Nazaret's boarding school, for example, Samuel Weeber sent a representative and even offered to use his influence among Wayúus to convince parents not to withdraw their children from the school. Calificaciones Niñas 1914-1921, p. 3, 14, Secretaría, AIIN, Nazaret, Colombia.

[33] Based on his own's and other authors' experiences Swedish Anthropologist Gustaf Bolinder, who visited La Guajira three times between 1920 and 1955, explained in his book on La Guajira that the Cocinas were Wayúus expelled from

Smuggling played an important role in the Capuchins' selection of a place to locate Nazaret's boarding school. However, more than the goods smuggled, the Capuchins wanted to benefit from the flows of people associated with the business. After roughly two decades of missionary endeavor in La Guajira, the missionaries knew well that smuggled goods transported by ship from the Antilles to the prosperous Venezuelan city of Maracaibo stopped in the La Guajira's natural ports of Puerto Estrella and Puerto López before entering Venezuela. From the two Colombian ports these goods were then transported westward to other places in La Guajira and other Colombian coastal cities, or southward to Venezuela.[37] The place chosen for the boarding school was located in-between Puerto Estrella and Puerto López (figure 1.1). At the foot of the Macuira sierra, on the margin of one of the few rivers steaming from it, the boarding school would have easy access to water, fertile land (scarce in the arid landscape of La Guajira), supplies coming from Riohacha via Puerto Estrella, and, most importantly, people. Along the trading routes, the flows of people included Wayúus enslaved by other Wayúus through warfare or as part of debt payment, or by Venezuelan farm owners from the

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their clans or who had left their clans to avoid paying debts. He calls them "Cusinas." Gustaf Bolinder, *Indians on Horseback* (London: Dennis Dobson, 1957), 150-158.

[34] Bienvenido Alcaide y Bueso to Father Vicente, October 14, 1932, Telegram, Vicariato Riohacha, Correspondencia - Telegramas, Archivo Histórico de HH. MM. Capuchinos de Bogotá AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

[35] Telegram announcing the shipwreck, Bienvenido Alcaide y Bueso to Father Vicente, November 10, 1932, Telegram, Vicariato Riohacha, Correspondencia - Telegramas, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia. Telegram announcing that the mission will request to the government the waiving of the import fee to bring food from Venezuela to Nazaret, Bienvenido Alcaide y Bueso to Father Vicente, November 12, 1932, Telegram, Vicariato Riohacha, Correspondencia - Telegramas, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

[36] The materials for a mission station in Mécoro, close to Castilletes, were bought in Maracaibo. Apuntes Autobiográficos de Fray Crispin de Palma, 19.

[37] The exploitation of pearls in La Guajira, since the late-sixteenth century controlled by Wayúus, prompted them to start trading directly with foreigners (Dutch, English, and French), circumventing the Spanish rules. Santiago González-Plazas, *Pasado y Presente del Contrabando en La Guajira: Aproximaciones al Fenómeno de Ilegalidad en la Región* (Bogotá: Universidad del Rosario, 2008), 21-24.

State of Zulia.[38]

Starting in the first two decades of the twentieth century, oil exports from Maracaibo lake by foreign-funded companies boosted the Venezuelan State of Zulia's economy, pushing the demand for agricultural products.[39] To keep up with the demand, some Venezuelan farmers employed cheap labor coming from Colombia, including enslaved Wayúus. According to various accounts, enslaved Wayúus were openly sold in Maracaibo and the Colombian ports of Puerto López and Castilletes, 18 and 22 miles from the boarding school, respectively. In a report on La Guajira's problems sent to the Colombian president and senate in 1936, the Wayúu writer Antonio Joaquín López characterized the Wayúus' enslavement as the worst problem that La Guajira was facing. A Wayúu native educated among mestizos, the writer drew his information from oral accounts by Wayúus, official correspondence, and printed media reports:

> The owners of agricultural farms, cattle farms, and trading companies send middlemen with cash bags to La Guajira borders. There, anonymous traffickers - either Colombian, Venezuelan or Dutch- sell Wayúus at approximately the following prices depending on their age and sex: a forty-year-old male costs between 60 and 100 pesos; a male between fourteen and forty, 150 pesos; boys and girls between eight and fourteen, 80 pesos; the price of females older than fourteen varies according to the buyer's needs."[40]

López's careful analysis included a detailed list of 108 Venezuelan haciendas along the Escalante and Zulia rivers that held Wayyú slaves. The list, which included the number of slaves in each hacienda and the name of the hacienda's owner, calculated in 8,173 the number of enslaved Wayúus held in these places.[41] The author warned, however, that his calculations only included one of the nine districts of Zulia State, and ventured to suggest that the total number of Colombian Wayúus enslaved in Venezuela could reach 40,000.[42] Even if the author's numbers are inflated, slavery existed, and the Capuchins were aware of it. Since the Wayúus sold as slaves included children, closeness to the center of slave negotiation was an important consideration to locate Nazaret's boarding school. This situation would eventually provide children for the boarding school, as I will discuss in detail in the next chapter.

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[38] On the different forms of slavery in La Guajira, see Gustaf Bolinder, *Indians on Horseback*, 60-66; Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "Organización Social en La Guajira," 139-151. Virginia Gutiérrez, who did ethnographic work in La Guajira in 1947, distinguishes between slavery and servitude in the Wayúu society. For her, slavery is the outcome of confrontations between clans, and slaves are considered their masters' property. Servitude, according to her, is the outcome of economic need, debt payment, inter-clan alliances, or retribution for offenses, and only the serfs' labor is owned by their masters. As she explains, both slaves and serfs were openly sold to non-Wayúus, including Venezuelan hacienda owners. The Capuchin missionaries did not distinguish between slavery and servitude, therefore I only refer to "slavery" in this dissertation.

[39] Nilda Bermúdez and Marison Rodríguez, "Dinámica de la Economía Agroexportadora de Zulia con la Explotación Petrolera en Venezuela (1914-1935)," *América Latina en la Historia Económica* 19, no.1 (2012), 132-156.

[40] Antonio Joaquín López, "Pampas Guajiras" (unpublished manuscript, 1936), paper copy held in Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango, Archivo Gregorio Hernández de Alba, Bogotá, Colombia, 32 (front and back).

[41] "Pampas Guajiras," 31 (back) - 33 (front).

[42] "Pampas Guajiras," 33 (back).

Before establishing Nazaret's boarding school, the Capuchins had already tried to open a boarding school near the centers of slave trading. In 1911, the mission built a house in Puerto López after a failed attempt to build it closer to Castilletes, a more important venue for slave trading.[43] Written accounts indicate that this house was set to become a boarding school, and indeed a few children ended up living there.[44] Although the Capuchin facility included a 12-meter-tall chapel, which suggests it was set to be an important mission station, correspondence shows that this venture was in decline by the time of the foundation of Nazaret's boarding school. A 1911 letter from Fray Antonio de Valencia to his superiors implies that running the house was costly because water had to be brought from a place located three hours away, which given the lack of personnel and funds that the mission had, was problematic.[45] A later report from 1921 mentions that the Puerto López chapel was in ruins, suggesting that the mission had abandoned this endeavor to focus on the Nazaret's boarding school.[46] All the variables considered, the place chosen for Nazaret's boarding school not only met the criteria for a potentially fruitful mission station, but also for the creation of a town of "civilized" people that could radiate its influence among the Wayúus living in the Alta Guajira.[47]

Overseeing Christianized Wayúus in the New Town

The boarding school was set to become the seed of a town, Nazaret, where Christianized Wayúus were expected to settle permanently to form Catholic families. Although since colonial times Catholic orders founded towns to control mission territories, Nazaret would be the first town among those founded by Capuchin missions in Colombia to be established mainly to consolidate the work begun in a boarding school. In colonial Latin America, Catholic orders established *reducciones,* towns to group indigenous populations in order to Christianize them. In the case of the frontier missions, these *reducciones* proved essential for Spain to protect its borders from foreign invaders, control indigenous people, attract colonizers, and foster economic development in regions disconnected from the colonies' main productive activities. After Latin American countries gained their independence from Spain, a few governments re-installed the mission system in frontier areas.[48] In Colombia, as I have explained, the 1887 Concordat and the subsequent mission agreements instituted government funding for the establishment of Catholic missions. However, the government prioritized the missions operating in territories considered at high risk given their economic potential. This situation caused that, in comparison to the Capuchin mission established in the regions of Putumayo and Caquetá (Colombian Amazon area) —where early twentieth-century tensions between Colombia and Peru over rubber exploitation pushed the government to invest more resources there— the mission in La Guajira was poorly funded.[49] As a result, while by 1925 the mission in Putumayo and Caquetá had founded (or re-founded based on existing settlements) nineteen towns, the mission in La Guajira had only founded Nazaret. The government's lack of interest in La Guajira also marked Nazaret's character. Unlike the towns founded in the country's south, made to attract colonizers from other regions and mix them with indigenous populations, Nazaret was aimed to be "a colony of civilized Indians," a town set for Wayúus recently converted to Christianity.[50] The Capuchins also expected the town to counteract the Wayúus' alleged nomadism, which they saw as a sign of the natives' uncivilized life. To be sure, by the time Nazaret was founded, the mission was also trying to establish a new settlement with similar purposes next to its San Antonio's boarding school. Called "Granja María Auxiliadora", the settlement never prospered.[51] Its closeness to Riohacha —only 2 miles away— and the flooding problems associated with the adjacent Ranchería (Calancala) river may have sealed this endeavor's fate, or at least the lack of information on this new settlement after 1930 suggests so. Not a colonizing enterprise, Nazaret was expected to group newly converted Wayúus, starting with the boarding school's graduates.

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[43] Apuntes Autobiográficos de Fray Crispín de Palma, 19-20.

[44] For example, a manuscript held in Valencia and Bogotá narrating the history of the mission refers to the Capuchin house in Puerto López as boarding school. Crónicas de la Misión de La Guajira, Sierra Nevada y Motilones, Años 1888-1913, 94.

[45] Antonio de Valencia to Atanasio Vicente Soler y Royo, April 25, 1911, 80 Vicariato Goajira, 801 Proyecto, 802 Vicarios, 8020 Atanasio de M., folder Antonio de Valencia, APCV, Valencia, Spain.

[46] Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, p.20, Secretaría, Archivo Internado Indígena de Nazaret AIIN, Nazaret, Colombia.

[47] One Wayúu creation myth tells how Wayúus were created in the mountains close to where Nazaret's boarding school was located. However, there is no evidence suggesting that the Capuchins were aware of this myth when choosing the place for the school.

[48] Robert H. Jackson, Introduction to *The New Latin American Mission History*, ed. Erick Langer and Robert H. Jackson (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), vii-xviii.

As the first graduates of the boarding school began to form Catholic marriages, the mission started building houses for them next to the school. These were Nazaret's first homes. The first account of the town appears in a letter sent by the mission superior to *Florecillas de San Francisco*, the magazine of the Valencian Capuchins in Spain. In the letter, published in the magazine in August 1918, the superior mentioned the incipient town, adding that it was "constituted by two Christian households or married couples formed by youth educated in this [Nazaret's] boarding school."[52] One year later, according to a 1919 report that the mission sent to Colombia's Primate Archbishop, six couples were living in the town in houses built by the mission.[53] A picture included in the report shows one of the houses with a few Wayúus and Friar Antonio de Valencia posing in front of it (figures 1.6 and 1.7). On the left, in the background, the boarding school chapel is visible, and its presence in the town's daily life is enhanced by the void of what has been described in a few accounts as the town's plaza. The only account available on the origin of the town's layout is mentioned in a 1915 letter from Fray Antonio de Valencia. He recalls himself walking with measuring tape and helped by a student carrying sticks, apparently tracing Nazaret's streets.[54] A 2003 aerial photograph of the town is helpful to understand how Nazaret stemmed from the boarding school (figure 1.7). In the image, dense and tall vegetation in the town's largest regular block suggests the location of the original boarding school. Following the custom of Spanish foundations in colonial Latin America (based on the Laws of the Indies), the boarding school's chapel was oriented east-west and was preceded by a central plaza measuring 80 by 80 meters. The town's foundational core began to lose its original character in 1954 when a new boarding school building broke ground on a different site. Until then, with the boarding school's chapel located at the center of the school and town, the Capuchins sent a clear message on the intended role of the mission in the lives of Nazaret's inhabitants.

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[49] The government's strong support to the Capuchin mission in the Colombian Amazon area was also fueled by fears of losing this territory. The 1903 separation of Panama from Colombia fed these fears. Augusto Javier Gómez López, "La Misión Capuchina y la Amenaza de la Integridad Territorial de la Nación, Siglos XIX y XX," *Boletín Cultural y Bibliográfico* 49, no. 89 (2015): 13-22.

[50] On the colonizing character of the mission in Caquetá and Putumayo and the foundation of towns there, see Misael Kuan Bahamon, *Civilización, Frontera y Barbarie*, 141-157.

[51] The mission even built a few houses for boarding school graduates in this settlement. *Las Misiones Católicas en Colombia, Informes Años 1919, 1920, 1921*, 69.

[52] Atanasio V. Soler y Royo, "Cartas del Vicario Apostólico de la Guajira. 3a.," *Florecillas de San Francisco*, August 1918, 181.

[53] Atanasio Vicente, "Informe que el Suscrito Vicario Apostólico de La Goajira Rinde al Ilustrísimo y reverendísimo Señor Doctor Don Bernardo Herrera Restrepo, Arzobispo de Bogotá, Primado de Colombia, Presidente Honorario de la Junta Nacional Arquidiocesana de Misiones, sobre los Trabajos de los Reverendos Padres Capuchinos, Misioneros de La Goajira, Sierra Nevada y Motilones, durante el Año de 1918-1919," in *Las Misiones Católicas en Colombia: Labor de los Misioneros en el Caquetá, Putumayo, La Goajira, Magdalena y Arauca, Informes Año 1918-1919*, 137.

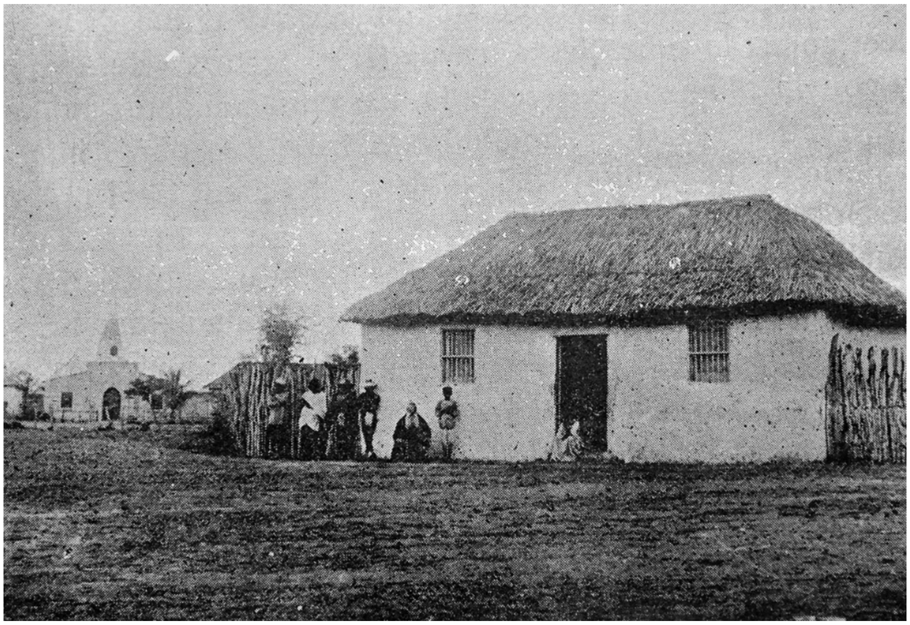

Figure 1.6. Friar Antonio de Valencia and a group of Wayúus pose in front of a house that the mission built for a newly married couple formed by graduates of Nazaret's boarding school. On the left, the boarding school's chapel signals the mission's watchful eye over the town's daily life (1919). Source: Eugenio de Valencia, *Historia de la Misión Guajira, Sierra Nevada y Motilones (Colombia) a Cargo de los PP. Capuchinos de la Provincia de la Preciosísima Sangre de Cristo de Valencia*, 1868-1924 (Valencia: Imprenta de Antonio López y Comp., 1924).

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[54] Antonio de Valencia, "Del Orfelinato de Nazaret. Carta Interesantísima," *Ecos de la Misión*, April 30, 1915, 519.

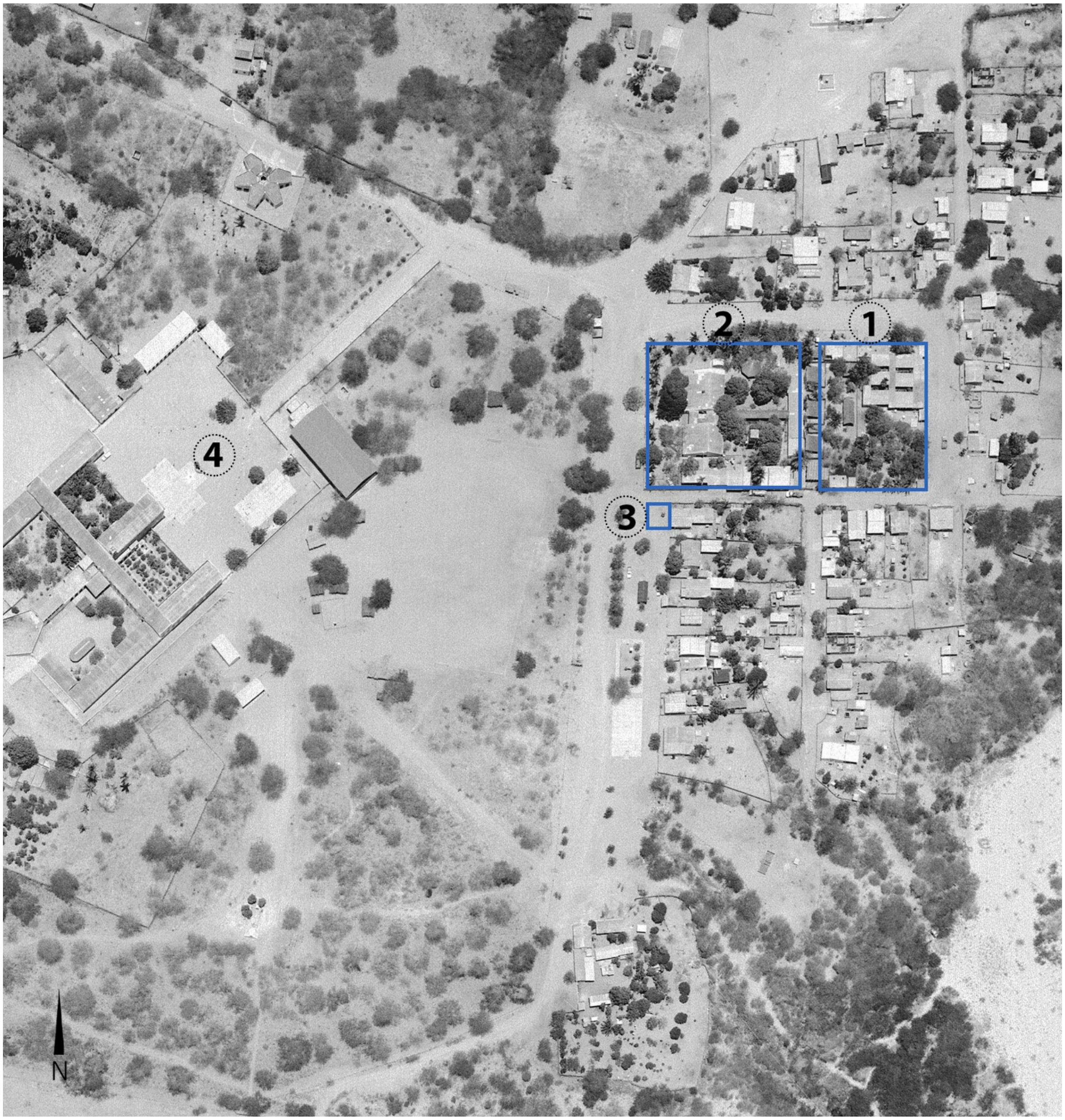

Figure 1.7. Aerial photograph of Nazaret (2003) showing 1) likely location of original Nazaret's boarding school; 2) 80m x 80m block; 3) likely location of the house shown in Figure 1.6; 4) new boarding school building started in 1954. Source: C-2687-21, C-2687-22, Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi IGAC.

The mission did not have the legal authority to enforce the law in La Guajira. However, the Capuchins' moral and economic control over Nazaret's new inhabitants made up for this situation. Different accounts indicate that save controlling public instruction the missionaries did not have civil powers. A 1915 article written by general Francisco Pichón, the region's highest civil authority, advocated granting civil powers to the mission if "real progress [*progreso efectivo*]" was to be achieved.[55] A few years later, a 1921 report that Nazaret's boarding school principal sent to the mission headquarters implied that the missionaries did not participate in law enforcement. In the report, the school principal explained his coordination with law enforcement officials to protect the boarding school from occasional intruders.[56] Despite the lack of civil powers, the periodical reports sent from Nazaret showed that there was a careful follow-up of the couples living in the town. One report sent in March of 1921, for example, informed that the town inhabitants "attend mass every Sunday and refrain from working this day."[57] Later that year, the same report informing of the coordination with law enforcement officials included a "Married Couples" section detailing the couples' whereabouts. In the section, the report's author mentioned that the town's males worked for the mission and criticized that two of the couples had abandoned their houses temporarily to cultivate their own lands out of town, taking advantage of the rainy season.[58] The case of these two couples suggests that despite their moral surveillance and economic subjection to the mission, newly Christianized Wayúus found ways to combine the unstable income coming from doing agriculture in such an arid region with the steady income offered by the mission. Yet what seemed to be the biggest problem in the new town, according to the report, was alcohol consumption. The writer called the problem "a tendency determined to destroy the foundations of the future town" and reported a recent incident in which he had to leave the school at night to soothe a disturbance caused by alcohol abuse.[59] Trying to gain more control over the Wayúus years later, the mission proposed a 1932 law that, although intended to curtail slavery and other abuses against the natives, in the opinion of the Colombian president's office, would leave them subject to the missionaries' will. If approved, the law would have prohibited Wayúus to change their residence freely, and non-Wayúu people would have had to request permission from the missionaries to live or even spend the night in Nazaret.[60]

The watchful eye of the Capuchins over the town life raised concerns from Nazaret's 1936 inspector, the town's highest civil authority. In a letter that ended up in the Colombian Ministry of Government and the country's Apostolic Nuncio (the Vatican's representative in the country), the inspector underscored what he saw as the mission's abuse of power in Nazaret. To be clear, this happened amid the liberal party's rule in the country, which since returning to power in 1930 had advocated the separation of state and Catholic Church. In the letter, the inspector accused the mission of seizing the water coming from the windmill pump built by the government, selling groceries at high prices and not allowing the establishment of competing businesses, and evading accountability by asserting that La Guajira's highest authority was the Apostolic Vicar.[61] The representative of the Capuchin missions in Colombia rejected the accusations. He contended that the government decided to build the wind pump inside the boarding school grounds, that the mission did not restrict people's access to water, and that the Capuchins exchanged products with Wayúus and exchanged or sold these products to non-Wayúus out of altruism. He also recognized that La Guajira's highest authority was not the Vicar Apostolic, but qualified his position by observing that the Vicar was the representative of the Ministry of Education in the region.[62] This power struggle over the town contrasted with the image of effective control over the territory that the mission tried to maintain among Catholics in La Guajira and external observers, as I show next.

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[55] Francisco Pichón, "Para Civilizar La Guajira," *Ecos de la Misión*, June 30, 1915, 549.

[56] Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, p.24-25, AIIN.

[57] Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, p.21, AIIN.

[58] Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, p.27-28, AIIN.

[59] Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, p.28-29, AIIN.

[60] Concepto sobre el Proyecto de Decreto por el cual se Organiza la Protección y Gobierno de los Indígenas no Civilizados del Vicariato Apostólico de la Goajia, Sierra Nevada y Motilones, folder 805, Vic. Ap. de La Guajira, Relaciones con el Gobierno Nacional, APCV, Valencia, Spain.

Conveying the Idea of Control

Circulating Ideas

The mission's permanence in La Guajira depended in part on its ability to spread information conveying the idea of control over its assigned territory. This information reached people in La Guajira, mainly Catholics, the national government —the mission's primary funder—, the Capuchin order in Valencia and Rome, and potential donors. The information spread presented promising results of the civilizing campaign even though sometimes misleading information was provided. A local venue to spread the idea of control was the mission's periodical, *Ecos de la Misión*. Published from 1910 to 1949 and printed in the mission's own printing press, the periodical circulated mainly in the mission's area of influence.[63] However, issues were also sent to Capuchin communities in other parts of the country, national authorities, and the Capuchin house in Valencia, Spain.[64] The periodical pages included news from the mission's schools, letters of support to the mission's work, articles answering to complaints against the mission, reports on new laws that might benefit or affect the mission, news on public works in which the mission played any role, and pastoral information. Often the periodical included letters and trip chronicles written by friars and nuns describing their struggles in overcoming the natural obstacles posed by La Guajira's climatic and topographic conditions. These accounts showed the missionaries' physical sacrifice, which was seen as a sign of commitment to their work and depicted a confrontation between Christian civilization and the "primitive" conditions of La Guajira that was worth fighting. As if signaling a successful enterprise after a few decades of missionary work in La Guajira, the issues of *Ecos de la*

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[61] Cargos contra la Misión de la Guajira, Según el Informe del Inspector de Nazaret, Arturo Ruiz Erazo, Rendido al Comisario de la Península, February 6, 1936, Educación y Misiones Vicariato Riohacha, Polémica Educación Nazaret Guajira, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

[62] Informe Contestación a los Cargos Acumulados por el Ministerio de Educación contra la Misión Capuchina de La Guajira, April 30, 1936, Educación y Misiones Vicariato Riohacha, Polémica Educación Nazaret Guajira, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

[63] *Ecos de la Misión* was originally published every week, although soon it began to be published every other week. In its last years it was a monthly publication.

[64] Or so is suggested by the issues found in the Capuchin archives in Bogotá (AHCB) and Valencia (APCV) and in the collection held in Colombia's National Library in Bogotá.

Misión in the periodical's last years included in their front page a powerful image that spoke of a conquered territory despite the harsh conditions (figure 1.8). In the image, cacti and two Wayúus wearing their traditional clothes are drawn surrounding La Guajira's map as if all were part of the region's natural conditions. A cross in the middle of the composition emerges from Uribia, the new capital of La Guajira founded in 1935 by the government, and its height surpasses that of the cacti and the two persons.[65] From there, the cross seems to radiate its power across the territory and, along with the recently founded town, suggests that Christian civilization is triumphing.

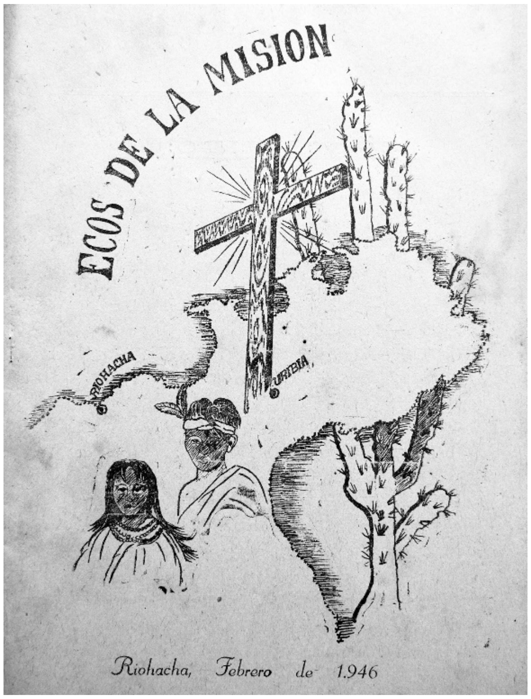

Figure 1.8. The cover of this 1946 issue of the mission's periodical *Ecos de la Misión* coveys the idea of a triumphing Christian civilization in La Guajira despite the harsh "natural" conditions. Source: *Ecos de la Misión*, February 1946.

Statistics on the mission's work that the missionaries collected and reported periodically constituted another way to show their alleged control over La Guajira. Correspondence shows the routine reporting of the number of Catholic rituals celebrated in the Wayúu territory.[66] The meticulous data joined the statistics coming from the Sierra Nevada and its surrounding area, also in charge of the Spanish Capuchins, and was sent to the Capuchins' superiors in Valencia and Rome, and to the Vatican's Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide (Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith), the Catholic Church's entity charged with coordinating missionary work around the world. This information appeared monthly in *Analecta Capuchina*, the magazine of the Capuchin order in the world. Published in Rome and written mostly in Latin, *Analecta Capuchina* included updated statistical information of each Capuchin mission worldwide. In the April 1915 issue of *Analecta*, for example, the information on La Guajira's mission included the number of Catholics, infidels and heretics, converted to Catholicism, and the number of sacraments administered (baptisms, confirmations, marriages, communions, burials) in 1914.[67] The raw numbers of the mission, striped of details that may disclose problems in its territory, depicted the region as a controllable and coherent entity, and made it comparable to other territories covered by Catholic missions around the world.

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[65] Uribia was not founded by the Capuchins, although they were present in the foundation ceremony and likely supported the endeavor.

[66] For example, the 1939 annual report sent from Nazaret to the mission headquarters in Riohacha mentioned 324 baptisms and 2 marriages celebrated in the area of influence of Nazaret's boarding school. Although there is no mention of how many of these sacraments were celebrated among Wayúus, the vast majority of the population living around Nazaret was Wayúu. Andrés M. de Benisa, "Informe Anual que Rinde el P. Director del Orfelinato de Nazaret – Guajira– al Excmo y Rvdmo. Sr. Vicario Apostólico. Diciembre de 1939," *Ecos de la Misión*, March 1940, 6.

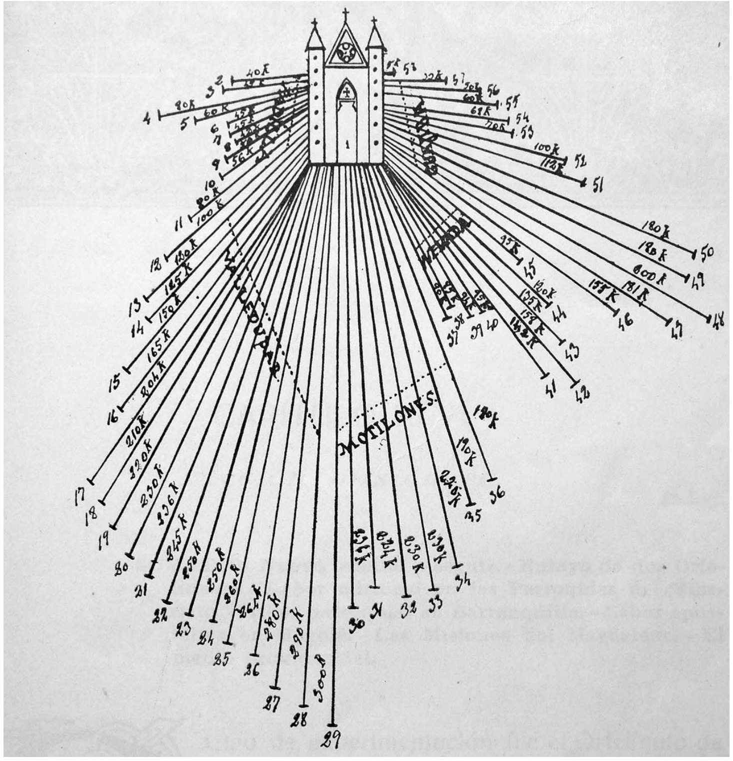
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Figure 1.9. This illustration (1924) published in a book on the history of the mission in La Guajira shows Riohacha, where the mission headquarters were located, radiating its influence over the different places where the mission was present. Source: Antonio de Valencia, *Historia de la Misión Guajira, Sierra Nevada y Motilones*.

Images and artifacts were also part of the Capuchins' communication strategy. One image included in a 1924 book on the history of the mission in La Guajira tells the story of a powerful Capuchin mission (figure 1.9). The drawing shows Riohacha, the location of the mission headquarters, as a potent center that radiates its influence over the different territories of Northern Colombia where the Valencian Capuchins were present. Continuous straight lines whose lengths correspond to the mission stations' distance from Riohacha convey the idea of smooth direct control over the stations blurring, in the case of La Guajira, the actual difficulties to reach them. Artifacts displayed in missionary exhibitions also fed the idea that the Capuchins were successfully controlling La Guajira territory, and stressed the belief that Wayúus were primitives in need of civilization. One exhibition held in Bogotá in 1924, in preparation for the world's missionary exhibition to be held in Rome the next year, included artifacts from La Guajira sent by the Capuchins. By collecting and curating artifacts made by Wayúus, the Capuchins implied that territorial control also included the artifacts' makers. Moreover, on display in Colombia's largest and most modern city, these artifacts underscored the alleged primitivism of the Wayúus. The text of the exhibition catalog supported this claim. Summarizing all the artifacts brought from the different Colombian regions where Catholic orders had missions, the catalog noted the contrast between the "primitive, rudimentary, backward and miserable state" depicted by the indigenous groups' traditional artifacts and the progress towards civilization seen in the work of the schools for indigenous children —likely shown through photos of the students.[68]

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[67] "Statistica Generalis Missionum Ordini FF. Min. Capucc. Creditarum, juxta Acta Anni 1914," *Analecta. Ordinis Minorum Capuccinorum*, April 15, 1915, 108-109. These numbers also include data from the Sierra Nevada region, home of the Arahuaco indigenous group, also in charge of the Spanish Capuchins.

Control and Civilization by Car

The mission's participation in road construction and the introduction of the automobile in the Alta Guajira in the mid-1920s made easier the missionaries' operation and were helpful to convey the idea of control. Backed by the national government, the Capuchins participated in the construction of infrastructure in La Guajira. Reports sent by the mission to its superiors in Rome show that the Capuchins played important roles in the construction of roads, bridges, infirmaries, and aqueducts in the region.[69] This information was reported in *Ecos de la Misión*, *Florecillas de San Francisco*, and *Analecta Capuchina.* The construction of roads and the improvement of existing trails were the public works that the Capuchins were most directly involved in.[70] However, building roads to connect the different mission stations in La Guajira was not as challenging as building roads in other regions where the Capuchins were also present. Indeed, the mostly flat topography of La Guajira and its long-lasting dry season facilitated the circulation of vehicles where no roads existed (still the case today). The chronicle of a 1925 road trip from Riohacha to Nazaret, published in *Florecillas de San Francisco*, describes that the car rode without much problem through the mostly flat topography of the region.[71] Likely the first trip by car between the two towns, problems arose only when approaching Nazaret due to the rugged topography of La Macuira sierra where the car got stuck many times despite portions of an old trail had been improved by the mission to accommodate the vehicle. Despite the lack of automobile roads and the ease with which cars could travel where no roads existed, the Capuchins spread the idea of a territory well connected through roads built mainly by the mission. A 1924 map held in Bogotá, for example, claimed that the mission had built a 150-mile road between a place called Piyushipana and Nazaret (figure 1.10). The map also shows roads in construction, even though some do not exist even today. Although the map legend does not claim that the roads being built are the mission's work, it is ambiguous enough to suggest so. Still, the map successfully depicts a territory where moving from the main mission stations in the 1920s was a smooth and straightforward task.

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[68] "Relato Historial del Congreso y de la Exposición de las Misiones," in *Congreso y Exposición Nacionales de Misiones Católicas, República de Colombia, Bogotá, Agosto MCMXXIV* (Bogotá, 1925), 57, 61.

[69] For example, a report on the mission published in 1923 informed that it had funded and built a 34-mile vehicular road between Riohacha and Tomarrazón, and was leading the construction of Riohacha's aqueduct and hospital and of a bridge over the Ranchería (Calancala) river. Bienvenido Ma. de Chilches, "Informe que el Provicario Apostólico de La Guajira y Sierra Nevada rinde al Iltmo. y Rvmo. Doctor Sr. D. Bernardo Herrera Restrepo, Primado de Colombia y Presidente Honorario de la Junta Nacional de la Obra de Misiones Católicas en la República," *Florecillas de San Francisco*, October 1923, 230-231.

[70] This was not only de case of La Guajira. The Capuchin mission in Putumayo and Caquetá (south of Colombia) was crucial in the opening of roads connecting the Colombian Amazon region to the country's highlands. See Simón Uribe, *Frontier Road: Power, History, and the Everyday State in the Colombian Amazon* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2017).

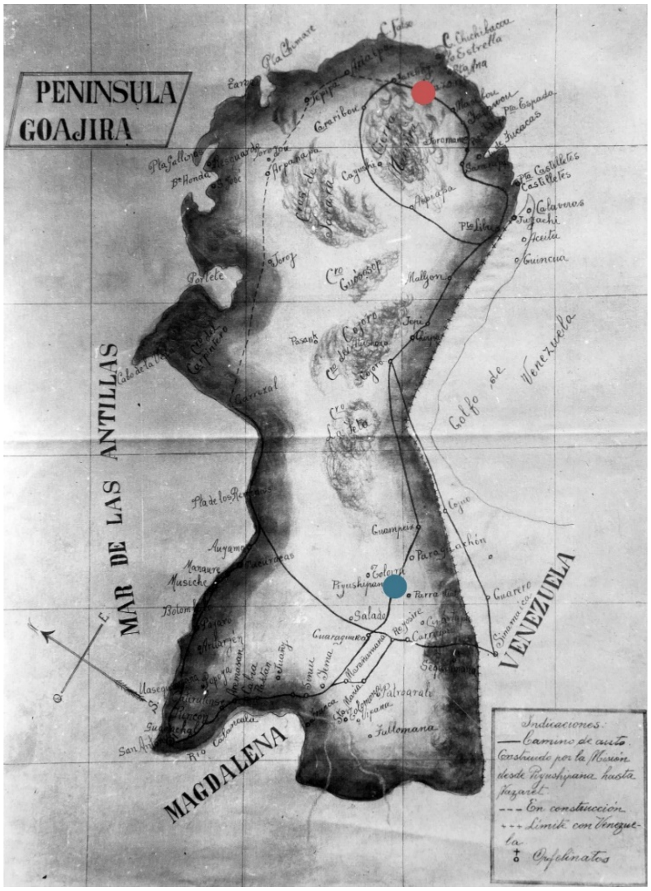

Figure 1.10. Map (ca.1924) showing automobile roads in La Guajira. The map legend indicates that the mission built an automobile road (continuous line) between the place called Piyushipana (blue dot, added by author) and Nazaret (red dot, added by author). Dotted lines show roads in construction. Although the legend does not specify who is building these new roads, it is ambiguous enough to imply that they are being built by the mission. Source: AHCB, box 9, folder Guajira.

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[71] Atanasio V. Soler y Royo, "La Vuelta a La Guajira en Automóvil," *Florecillas de San Francisco*, April 1927.

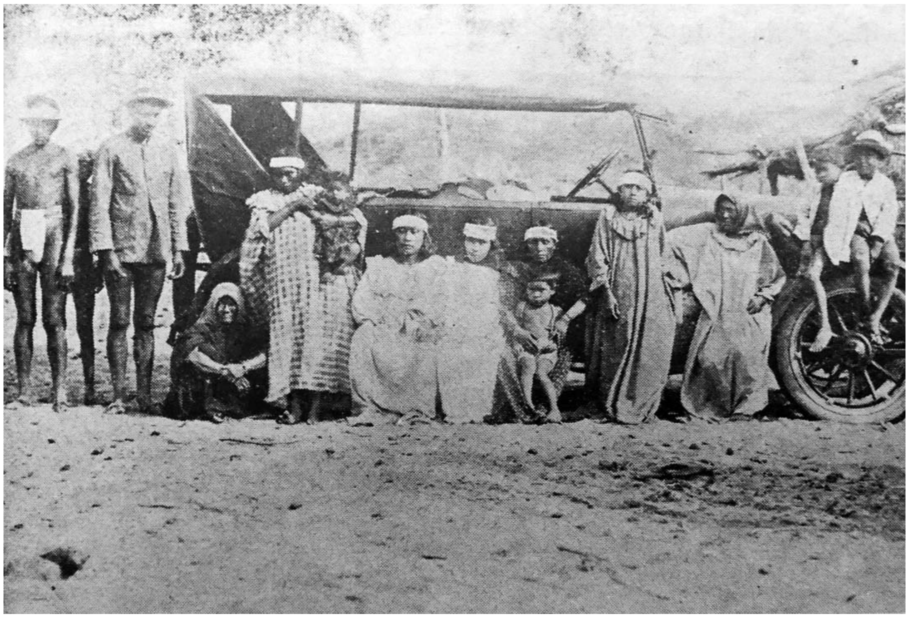

Figure 1.11. In this picture, published in *Florecillas de San Francisco* in 1927, a group of "primitive" Wayúus poses in front of an automobile, following the spatial order imposed by the modern machine. Source: *Florecillas de San Francisco*, April 1927.

Roads also presented opportunities for the Capuchins to display their self-attributed role as harbingers of civilization. In 1925, when the trip reported in the chronicle took place, a few trucks already circulated through La Guajira, mostly in its southern part where there was a more intense flow of goods between Colombia and Venezuela. For most Wayúus, however, seeing the Capuchins traverse La Guajira by car likely constituted their first encounter with the automobile.[72] Not wasting the opportunity to suggest that the Capuchins were bringing civilization to primitive lands, the chronicle's author, one of the travelers, included the natives' alleged reaction to the novelty of the machine: "since the car arose colossal curiosity among the natives to the point that handless and lame people came to the road crawling on their crutches, as soon as we stopped they approached the car in great numbers."[73] Even if the chronicler was exaggerating on the Wayúus' reaction, the trip by car across La Guajira, intentionally or not, constituted a statement to Wayúus and local authorities proclaiming the Capuchin mission as the precursor of progress and civilization. For the readers of *Florecillas*, a picture accompanying the chronicle offered a more convincing proof of the mission's success (figure 1.11). As if suggesting the reign of civilization over the primitive, a group of Wayúus poses in front of the car aligned in a way that follows the order dictated by the modern machine. Associations between roads and automobiles and the mission, along with the Capuchins' participation in the construction of other public infrastructure, contributed to building the idea of a successful campaign and fed the narrative of Christian civilization that the mission used to justify its work.

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[72] According to a book on La Guajira published by the Colombian army, as late as 1944 only 30 vehicles circulated through the region. Estado Mayor de las Fuerzas Militares, *Diccionario Geográfico de La Guajira* (Bogotá: Sección de Imprenta y Publicaciones, 1944), 34.

[73] Atanasio V. Soler y Royo, "La Vuelta a La Guajira en Automóvil," 135.

Conclusion

The Capuchins found in the arid landscape of La Guajira and the Wayúus' adaptation to it reasons to use the natives' physical space as a tool to transform them, starting with the control of their territory. Struggling with scarce funds and personnel, the missionaries understood that the foundation of a boarding school and a town in the Alta Guajira would be critical to achieving their goals. Nazaret, the town for civilized Wayúus founded next to the boarding school, became the pinnacle of the mission's territorial strategy. School and town materialized the missionaries' knowledge of the region, their need to optimize their operation in the territory, and their vision of a center from where they could have a long-standing influence over the Wayúus. The boarding school building was the town's central element. With the chapel dominating the composition and enhanced by the plaza in front of it, the building was a clear reminder of the Capuchins' watchful eye over the town dwellers. As the boarding school was set to regulate the lives of the newly married couples forming the town, the chapel separating the boys' and girls' quarters was set to regulate the students' lives in the building. As I show in the next chapter, this physical separation was a powerful statement on the church's expected role in the relationships between women and men and on the distinct roles both were to have in society.

Located on the opposite corner from the mission headquarters in Riohacha, Nazaret became a landmark in the landscape, signaling the mission's northeastern limit. Surrounded by the scattered pattern of territorial occupation customary of the Wayúu people, the concentration of buildings from Nazaret and the boarding school composed an easily recognizable complex. Its distinct look, different from that of Wayyú architecture, made it more noticeable. Town and school sat in contrast with their surroundings, highlighting the clash between the "savage" and the "civilized" that was at the core of the Capuchin's narrative of Christian civilization. This narrative offered an interpretative framework to read any of the schools, houses, and chapels that the mission built across the region, reinforcing the image of the Capuchins as harbingers of progress. Small physical intervention and the roads connecting them constituted a network built to have convenient access to the Wayúu population. Together with the narrative of Christian civilization, this network also became a rhetorical device to draw support for the mission.

As represented in maps and travel chronicles, real and imaginary connections between Riohacha and Nazaret depicted the image of a controlled territory. The Wayúus' allegedly converted souls, reduced to statistics, became tangible enough to contribute to this image. All the information that the Capuchins produced turned the idea of territorial control into proof of a successful enterprise. This idea of success was instrumental in getting support for the mission and pleasing the church hierarchs, eager to include La Guajira on the map of the Catholic world. While the pages of the mission's periodical and the reports sent to Valencia and Rome showed that Christian civilization was triumphing, on the ground, the mission struggled. The few missionaries that the missions had to cover the 8,000 square miles of territory, the harsh natural characteristics of La Guajira, and the changing political environment of the country constantly threatened the mission's survival. Under these conditions, the stakes for Nazaret's boarding school were always high. The boarding school was expected to live up to the Capuchins' expectations by turning Wayúu girls and boys into Catholic families, disrupting, as I show in the next chapter, essential tenets of the Wayúu society.

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CHAPTER 2

New Families for Christian Civilization:
Making Proper Families in the Boarding School

Introduction

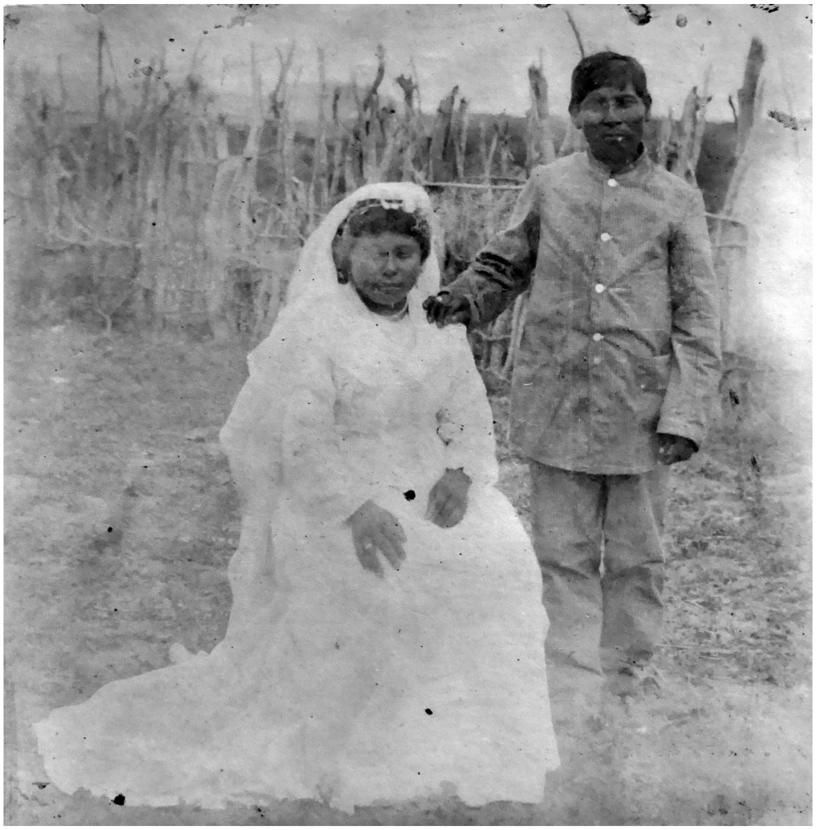

Figure 2.1. This 1922 photo taken in Nazaret celebrates the Catholic marriage of a woman educated in the boarding school. Source: Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, p.56, AIIN.

The "married couples" section of the 1922 annual report sent from Nazaret's boarding school to the mission headquarters in Riohacha begins with news of a new married couple that just joined the new "civilized" town of Nazaret. The news, which includes a photo of the new married couple, suggests that only nine years after its foundation, the Capuchin mission's strategy of founding a boarding school in the Alta Guajira and a town stemming from it was working:

> A new Christian home has opened in the town on October 4th, feast of Our Seraphic Father Francis. The bride is one of the girls rescued [rescatada] by the orphanage and educated with care by the Reverend Sisters. Including this new couple, ten couples in total form Catholic families in this part of the mission. Among them, only one couple is not living in town, and their home is rented to the National Government for the corregimiento [township] officer. The rest of the families, save for a few seasonal absences, are usually in town. Each one of them has a job in the establishment and get paid sixty cents per day. Their work consists of farming, construction, and carpentry, and has been overseen by the Missionary Brother so they don't waste time.[1]

The bride had been educated in the boarding school. She was considered "rescued" for being one of the children that the Capuchins exchanged for goods or money to allegedly prevent families (or families' creditors) from selling them as slaves. Originally called orphanage, the boarding school had given her a Christian education and now a house for her and her husband in the new town. As suggested by the jobs listed in the report, it was her husband who worked for the mission, which was congruent with the gender roles she learned throughout her education in the boarding school. The incipient town was becoming important in the region, or so suggests the fact that the head of the *corregimiento*, a mostly rural jurisdiction, was based in Nazaret. The married couple, seen in the photo wearing Western attire —different from the Wayúus' traditional wedding attire—, was now a Christian family that was expected to start populating the new town with their children, who would likely be educated in the boarding school (figure 2.1). But how is it that a "rescued" girl came to form what was considered a "civilized" couple? What led Wayúu people to get married and form monogamous couples despite their polygynous customs? What was the role of the boarding school and its spatial setting in this process?

Nazaret's boarding school was a crucial component of the Capuchin mission's territorial and spatial strategy for La Guajira. Town and school together were expected to exert a long-lasting "civilizing" influence over the Wayúus living in the Alta Guajira, whom the Capuchin mission considered the least civilized among the Wayúu people. The new town was set to counteract the lack of towns in the Wayúu territory, and, by grouping Christianized and Colombianized populations under the overseeing eye of the Capuchins, it was to be both a civilized and civilizing center. The narrative of Christian civilization, whose landscape at the territorial level was composed of mission stations, roads connecting them, and the Christian town of Nazaret, would be articulated at the architectural scale by the Internado de la Sagrada Familia de Nazaret (Holy Family of Nazaret Boarding School). Aimed to turn Wayúu children into married Catholic couples, the boarding school was to provide the families that Nazaret required to fulfill its purpose.

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[1] Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, p.56-57, Secretaría, Archivo Internado Indígena de Nazaret AIIN, Nazaret, Colombia.

In this chapter, I show how the gender-segregated domesticity of Nazaret's boarding school taught Wayúu children prescribed gender roles that were to be ideally performed in the context of monogamous Catholic marriage. I focus on the original boarding school built by the Spanish Capuchins, which slowly deteriorated until the Italian Capuchins, who took over the mission in 1953, started building a new school where they finally moved in 1958. In the first part of the chapter, I explain how Nazaret's boarding school aimed to tackle the Wayúus' polygynous customs, which the Capuchins highly criticized, and how addressing this problem had a toll on the Wayúus' traditional patterns of territorial occupation. I also explain how the school's location helped the Capuchins bring children to the school and why Wayúu families enrolled their children. In the second part, I show how the architectural scheme of the school promoted the physical separation of genders, how this separation was enforced, and how students circumvented it. In this part, I also explain how the school's domesticity and spatial setting taught students the "proper" gender roles they were expected to follow. In the last part, I focus on the Capuchins' influence on the boarding school graduates. I particularly explore how alumni getting married got houses from the mission and jobs for the male breadwinners so they stayed in Nazaret, and the alternative path for girls not getting married. Given the piecemeal process of construction of the original boarding school, its constant transformations, and the lack of documentation on it, I recreate the students' experience in the building and the building's spatial setting using multiple sources. These include, students' accounts, written descriptions and partial photos of the building, the existing building built by the Italian Capuchins but originally commissioned by the Spanish monks, and an early floorplan of the building that replaced San Antonio's boarding school in southern La Guajira, drawn by a Spanish Capuchin.

The spatial gender divide in Nazaret's boarding school, although preventing interaction between boys and girls, placed monogamous relationships between men and women as the foundation of spiritual, economic, and social righteousness. The school chapel played a crucial role in this process. It was both the barrier separating boys from girls physically and the place where marriage was celebrated as the best option to bridge the gender divide. It helped define the boarding school domesticity, which articulated the narrative of Christian civilization that informed the Capuchins' campaign through lessons in gender roles that clashed with Wayúu customs. These lessons and the push for monogamous Catholic marriage targeted Wayúu marriage practices, which played an important role in the indigenous group's social organization and use of the territory. While long-term social disruption was achieved, an equipped home in Nazaret, a stable job for the male breadwinner, and the mission's ongoing support helped set married graduates apart from their "uncivilized" relatives.

Bringing Children to Stay: Monogamous Marriage and Spatial Concentration in Nazaret

Polygyny and the Wayúu Territory

Every day at 6AM, one hour after the awakening bell went off, students of Nazaret's boarding school met in the school chapel to celebrate mass.[2] It was a daily display that hinted at the school's main purpose in the Capuchins' civilizing endeavor. Boys sat on the left side of the nave and girls on the right side, separated only by the aisle that connected the altar to the chapel's main entrance. This was the closest girls and boys could sit together during the school's normal operation. The reunion of both genders happening in the school's most sacred space, the chapel, signaled spatially that boys and girls were to be close only under the terms established by the Catholic doctrine. This was a daily lesson for children expected to marry someday to form Catholic families, and was congruent with the Capuchins' crusade against the Wayúus' polygynous customs.

Since the early days of the mission in La Guajira the Capuchins despised the Wayúus' marriage practices, making these prime targets of their campaign. In his 1924 book on the mission, for example, Friar Eugenio de Valencia criticized the Wayúu's polygyny and bridewealth payment, dismissing the latter as a mere economic transaction:[3]

> Wayúu men are polygamous, and they can have as many wives as they can buy. […] When an Indian is in love, he meets the bride's parents to talk about his interest in marrying her. If the bride's father likes him, her mother or maternal uncles set the number of animals required as bridewealth. The bride is never asked whether she wants to marry and must accept the husband chosen for her. As seen, marriage among these Indians is a sales contract.[4]

Bridewealth payment was indeed central in the Wayúu culture (and still is). However, rather than a transaction, it was part of a larger negotiation process in which the groom's and bride's clans got to know each other and understood the benefits and responsibilities of becoming relatives.[5] Unlike what the excerpt states, only when powerful clans wanted to establish ties to increase their prestige did negotiations happen without the bride's consent.[6] Since the couple's future children were expected to identify as part of their mother's clan, bridewealth was paid (in goods) to this group. The only exception was when the payment was made for the first daughter, in which case the father received the payment as payback for the goods that he and his clan had given to cover his wife's bridewealth. To be sure, as per Wayúu customs, a daughter's bridewealth could not be lower than what had been paid for her mother. Bridewealth was considered an anticipated payment for the benefits that a couple's children were to get in the future as members of the mother's clan (social and economic support, and education on Wayúu customs), and as a compensation for the resources this clan had spent in her upbringing.[7] Members of the clans related through marriage gained access to both clans' lands for herding, cultivating, and settling, which given La Guajira's long drought periods was essential to ensure the clans' prosperity.[8] A clan in which men had multiple wives had access to more land, which gave its members more mobility through La Guajira, increasing their livelihood options.

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[2] Although mass times changed slightly over the years, mass was the first activity students did every day after waking up and getting dressed.

[3] I use here the term "bridewealth" to refer to the gifts (or their cash equivalent) the groom and his family traditionally give to the bride's family before marriage in some societies.

[4] Eugenio de Valencia, *Historia de la Misión Guajira, Sierra Nevada y Motilones (Colombia) a Cargo de los PP. Capuchinos de la Provincia de la Preciosísima Sangre de Cristo de Valencia, 1868-1924* (Valencia: Imprenta de Antonio López y Comp., 1924), 65-66.

[5] A recent controversy arose in Colombia when a radio host joked on air that he wanted to buy a Wayúu virgin woman, echoing the Capuchins' reading of Wayúu bridewealth as a mere economic transaction. The host's words sparked national outrage. The Organización Nacional Indigena de Colombia – ONIC (Colombia's National Indigenous Organization) issued a public communication explaining the nature of Wayúu bridewealth and making clear that "women are not for sale in the Wayúu Nation." Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia, "ONIC Rechaza la Cosificación, Trata de Personas, Discriminación, Racismo y Burla contra la Mujer Indígena de la Nación Wayuu," May 24, 2020, https://files.rcnradio.com/public/2020-05/Comunicado_ONIC_P_Wayuu_24052020_0.pdf.

[6] Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "La Familia Tradicional de la Comunidad Guajira" (unpublished manuscript, 1986), 9.

Through monogamous Catholic marriage and the consequent loss of inter-clan alliances, Wayúu families were at risk of increasing their economic dependency on *alijunas*, the word in Wayuunaiki used to refer to non-Wayúu people, which could push Wayúus to leave their territory. By getting married by the Catholic Church and not paying bridewealth, a groom was considered an intruder in the bride's clan, damaging the bride's relationship with her clan.[9] Contrary to Wayúu customs, he was expected to be the family breadwinner and settle in the same place permanently, limiting his chances of getting income from any activity that implied moving through La Guajira. With reduced opportunities and having assumed the role of breadwinner, he was then pushed to rely on wage jobs such as the few ones offered by the mission. This increasing dependence on jobs offered by *alijunas*, which were scarce in the Wayúu territory, forced entire families to migrate to places such as Maracaibo, Venezuela, for the most part of the twentieth century a city where Colombian Wayúus went to find jobs.[10] Indeed, according to Nazaret's boarding school principal, up to four vehicles arrived to Nazaret every week in 1940 to take Wayúus to Venezuela.[11] Although this exodus of Wayúus outside La Guajira had multiple causes, it is safe to say that the disruption of traditional inter-clan dynamics brought by monogamous Catholic marriage pushed Catholic families to rely on sources of income that were hard to get within La Guajira territory.

Bringing Children to the Boarding School

The majority of the boarding school students came from places located either within a 25 miles radius from the school, or from places as far as 90 miles away but close to the roads that the mission monks and nuns frequented.[12] Some of these children were exchanged by the Capuchins for goods and cash to allegedly prevent their enslavement in nearby Puerto López and Castilletes (see previous chapter). Entries in the school's accounting books show that the inspector of Castilletes participated in the children's "rescue" (rescate) by ransoming them on behalf of the Capuchins —presumably to prevent them to be sold to Venezuelan haciendas—, and that monks did the same during their evangelizing excursions (correrías apostólicas).[13] Occassionally, Wayúu families went directly to the boarding school to leave their children, which was also considered a "rescue":

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[7] Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "La Familia Tradicional de la Comunidad Guajira," 12.

[8] Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "La Familia Tradicional de la Comunidad Guajira."

[9] On the consequences of Catholic marriage among Wayúus, see Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "Organización Social en La Guajira," *Revista del Instituto Etnológico Nacional* 3, no. 2 (1948): 95-98.

[10] Indeed, Wayúus migrating from Colombia and Venezuela to Maracaibo founded in the early 1940s the Ziruma neighborhood whose population by 1958, according to Venezuela's Indigenous Commission, reached 1,500 Wayúu families. "Proyecto de Reubicación en el Medio Rural de Indígenas No Adaptados a la Vida Urbana, Residentes en los Barrios Indígenas de Maracaibo," *Boletín Indigenista Venezolano* 6, no. 1-4 (1958): 19.

[11] Historia de la Misión en La Guajira, Particularmente de los Orfelinatos, ca.1979, p.59, book Riohacha (Guajira), Vicariato Apostólico de La Guajira, 1905 a 1952, section 2: Campo de Acción Misional, Archivo Histórico de HH. MM. Capuchinos de Bogotá AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

> Today, September 8th, 1929, in Nazaret, a boy [chinito] called Jorge was brought to Father Gaspar María Orijuela, principal of the boarding school, by his mother and uncle, the Indians Minacal and Kausítein from nearby Santa Ana, part of Nazaret's jurisdiction. The boy is left here in the condition of rescued [en calidad de rescatado]. The Reverend Father reached an agreement and, in the presence of Nazaret's inspector [one of the corregimiento officers], gave Minacal and Kausítein 33.50 pesos in cash and goods. From now on Jorge belongs to the Mission [queda de propiedad de la Misión] and his family cannot take him back. [The document, stamped with the corregimiento's seal, is signed by Father Gaspar, Nazaret's inspector, and two witnesses on behalf of the boy's relatives who are illiterate].[14]

This "acta de rescate" (rescue registry) shows the participation of Nazaret's civil authorities in the transaction. Their willingness to register this transaction in an official document, suggests that the practice was common and accepted by the government.[15] The document also suggests that, even if the Capuchins justified the practice on the basis of preventing slavery, they benefited from it by claiming the children's custody, securing in this way long-term control over the minors. While the Capuchins saw bridewealth as a market transaction, overseeing its cultural and social value, the ransoming of children was framed as a charitable act, overseeing its economic component. Children brought to the school through this practice, with their families likely hesitant to reclaim them in the future to avoid any conflict with the mission, were arguably better candidates to marry and settle permanently in Nazaret after their school years.

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[12] Based on girls' and boys' enrollment records from the years 1914, 1915, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1941, and 1942. Matrículas Niñas 1914-1944, Secretaría, Archivo Internado Indígena de Nazaret AIIN, Nazaret, Colombia; Matriculas Niños 1914-1960, Secretaría, AIIN, Nazaret, Colombia. Information on the location of the places where these children came from is based on, Satellite View of La Guajira, Google Earth, accessed March 5, 2021, https://www.google.com/maps/place/La+Guajira,+Colombia/@11.7775348,-72.2224051,9.28z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x8e8b8914627238ff:0x22e6d8831a7d9716!8m2!3d11.3547743!4d-72.5204827; and, *Rancherías de La Guajira*, Oficina Asesora de Planeación Monitoreo y Evaluación, Departamento para la Prosperidad Social, accessed March 6 2021, https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a436417452a4410590e04818b6f9a9d9.

[13] Cuentas Internado 1915-1923 – Actas de Rescate, Secretaría, AIIN, Nazaret, Colombia.

[14] In 1929, 33.5 Colombian pesos could buy approximately 250 pounds of rice. Acta de Rescate, September 8, 1929, folder Cartas de Rescate 1917-1972, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

[15] Indeed, in the 1918-1919 report that the mission in La Guajira sent to the national government, a section called "Rescue of Indigenous Children" explains the practice and justifies it on the grounds of freeing children from slavery. *Las Misiones Católicas en Colombia: Labor de los Misioneros en el Caquetá, Putumayo, La Goajira, Magdalena y Arauca, Informes Año 1918-1919* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1919), 138-144.

The practice of ransoming children was not new to Catholic missions, and was based on the idea of "redemption," which explains why Nazaret's boarding school was originally called orphanage. The closest precedent to this practice was the late nineteenth-century evangelizing campaign in Africa, where Catholic missionaries ransomed children with the double purpose of redeeming their souls from sin and their bodies from slavery. Children were then sent to so called orphanages, boarding schools where redeemed (or rescued) children and other children from nearby communities —not necessarily orphans— were educated.[16] Although the labeling of boarding schools as orphanages has not been thoroughly explored, the context suggests the assumption that children were orphans, or had parents considered unable (for economic reasons) or unfit (on moral grounds) to care for their children. The ransoming of children, reported in Africa since the late 1870s, received official support from Rome in 1888 when Pope Leo XIII, setting the church's stance on slavery, recommended missionaries to redeem slaves.[17] Facing growing opposition, first from anti-clerical actors and later from within the church ranks, the practice gradually weaned off in the second decade of the twentieth century. The practice was brought to Colombia by European missionaries whose orders, like the Capuchin order, had practiced it in their late-nineteenth-century missions in Africa, Asia, and Oceania.

In Nazaret, the number of "redeemed" children was high in the first years of the school's operation if compared to later years, and was apparently discontinued in the late 1930s. In 1915, for example, the mission "rescued" 35 children (girls and boys), a significant number considering that the year had begun with 107 children enrolled in the boarding school[18]. In 1919, the Capuchins reported having redeemed 33 more children between 1916 and 1919, an average of 8 per year. Although there is no consistent information on the number of "rescued" children for the years following 1919, it is still possible to see children listed as such in the school registries from the 1930s. From 1940 on, no child is listed as "rescued."[19] Even if the practice of ransoming children disappeared in the late 1930s, as I suggest, Nazaret's boarding school retained the word "orphanage" in its official name until 1958, when the mission moved to the new building.

Other children enrolling in the boarding school were sent by their families following advice from a Catholic acquaintance, or the steps of relatives who had studied there. The latter was particularly common towards the middle of the twentieth century, when the boarding school had already educated one or two generations of Wayúus. More graduates meant more people knowing that unlike the vast majority of schools in La Guajira, attending Nazaret's boarding school included free access to food, clothes, and health care; likely one of the reasons why parents sent their children to the school. Gloria, who lived in the boarding school from 1949 to 1951, enrolled when she was 12 following her mother's steps:

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[16] For a general overview of children's redemption by Christian missions in Africa, see, William G. Clarence-Smith, "The Redemption of Child Slaves by Christian Missionaries in Central Africa, 1878-1914," in *Child Slaves in the Modern World*, ed. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller (Athens, Ohio University Press, 2011), 173-190. On the double meaning of redemption in a specific Catholic mission in Africa, see, David M. Gordon, "Slavery and Redemption in the Catholic Missions of the Upper Congo, 1878-1909," *Slavery & Abolition* 38, no. 3 (2017): 577-600.

[17] William G. Clarence-Smith, "The Redemption of Child Slaves by Christian Missionaries in Central Africa, 1878-1914," 176.

[18] Crónica sobre la Fundación del Orfelinato de Nazareth, ca.1915, folio 36, Vicariato Apostólico de La Guajira, 8072, Relaciones, folders 8072a, 8072b, APCV, Valencia, Spain; *Las Misiones Católicas en Colombia: Labor de los Misioneros en el Caquetá, Putumayo, La Goajira, Magdalena y Arauca, Informes Año 1918-1919*, 89.

[19] Matrículas Niñas 1914-1944, AIIN; Matriculas Niños 1914-1960, AIIN.

> My mom was the third girl to ever attend the boarding school. She was orphan. Her mother had died of smallpox. […] She married my father in the boarding school. […] My mom wanted us to attend the boarding school. […] I had a few relatives already living there.[20]

Although we do not know the whole reason why Gloria's mother was sent to the boarding school, it is logical to assume that had she not benefited from her time there, she would not have pushed Gloria to attend. The fact that Gloria had family members living in the boarding school by the time she enrolled suggests that ideas about the school circulated among relatives, and that these ideas portrayed an experience that sounded positive and convenient enough to persuade parents to enroll their children.

The number of students in the boarding school was never stable. In 1915, only two years after the school's foundation, the year began with 60 girls and 47 boys.[21] Twelve years later, in 1927, the year began with 154 girls and 74 boys, and in 1937 with 115 girls and 67 boys.[22] The numbers fluctuated due to escaped and deceased students, parents withdrawing their children, or lack of provisions forcing Capuchins to send most students to their homes. Even though the boarding school was intended for Wayúu children, records from the girls' section show a few of them listed as "mestizas." In 1915, for example, 15 of the 60 girls enrolled at the beginning of the year were listed as such. This classification, kept only in the girls' section, no longer appears in the school records from 1931 on, and the criteria used to produce it are unclear. However, nuns probably counted as "mestizas" girls born to Wayúu mothers and *alijuna* fathers, even though by Wayúu traditions (in which kinship is matrilineal) they were considered Wayúu. Although the fluctuating number of students over the years portrays a struggling institution, a 1951 document listing the mission's requirements for the new boarding school building asked for dormitories for 120 boys and 120 girls.[23] As per these numbers, by 1950 the Capuchins were feeling confident enough on the mission's future as to envision a building able to accommodate a larger number of students than the number it had usually accommodated.

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[20] Gloria, interview by author, Riohacha, Colombia, April 28, 2018.

[21] "El Orfelinato de Nazaret," *Ecos de la Misión*, March 30, 1915, 506-507. I have added 13 male toddlers to the list published in *Ecos de la Misión* based on records kept in the boarding school.

[22] "Lista de Niños y Niñas Goajiros Matriculados en el Orfelinato de Nazaret. Año de 1927," *Ecos de la Misión*, May 10, 1927, 5-6; Informe del Vicario Apostólico de La Guajira al Nuncio Apostólico sobre la Misión, March 1, 1938, Vicariato Riohacha, Informe, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

[23] Número de Dependencias y algunas Peculiaridades del Edificio para Internado Guajiro de Nazaret, ca.1951, Educación y Misiones Vicariato Riohacha, Polémica Educación Nazaret Guajira, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

The Capuchins expected enrolled children to stay in the boarding school for as long as possible without visiting their homes, although this was difficult to achieve given the lack of means to enforce this goal. Students were distributed into three or four grades, depending on the number of children, which meant that they were expected to live at least three years in the boarding school.[24] Since the school's early years, students were allowed to leave at least once a month and during the end-of-year vacations, which the Capuchins sometimes resented. A 1922 entry in one of the school registries, for example, mentions that a well-behaved boy had left the school to travel with his father for eight days. In a display of fear for what the trip might do to the boy, the entry also read, "we pray for the boy, so he returns soon and is not deranged."[25] Even if the Capuchins, as the government representatives for public education, wanted to force students to stay, they did not have the means to do so. The presence of law enforcement agencies was scarce (as is still the case in the Alta Guajira), and, when available, they did not have enough agents or equipment to operate properly[26]. With few mechanisms in place to enforce the students' permanence in the school, the mission followed a soft line that included, allowing students periodical visits to home, granting extraordinary permissions to attend family matters (attend celebrations and burials, visit sick relatives, help parents during harvest season), taking students to weekend leisure trips to nearby places, and gaining the Wayúus' trust through charitable work. Despite these strategies, sometimes students escaped, as the school registries show. Calixta, who lived in the school between 1945 and 1949, remembers that she ran away once with eleven other girls because a teacher insulted them, "telling us to go back to our homes to eat snakes! That hurt us a lot."[27] A few days later her mother returned her to the boarding school, a common practice among parents wanting to be in good standing with the mission, and those who understood the benefits of not having to feed their children. Brought from different parts of La Guajira and persuaded to stay, students had to get used to live close to dozens of other children, but separated from students from the opposite gender group, as I show next.

Two Genders Mediated by the Church

Physical Segregation of Genders in the Boarding School

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[24] Calificaciones Niñas 1914-1921, AIIN; Calificaciones Niñas 1922-1934, Secretaría, AIIN, Nazaret, Colombia; Calificaciones Niñas 1935-1953, Secretaría, AIIN, Nazaret, Colombia; Calificaciones Niños 1916-1944, Secretaría, AIIN, Nazaret, Colombia.

[25] Huidas, Ingresos, Oficios 1917-1927, p.61, Secretaría, AIIN, Nazaret, Colombia.

[26] In an article published in 1934, general Francisco Pichón, La Guajira's highest authority from 1911 to 1934, acknowledged that the Capuchins operated without any support from Colombia's military forces. Francisco Pichón, "Incorporación de La Guajira a la Vida Nacional," *Florecillas de San Francisco*, January 1935, 1. Referring specifically to Nazaret, a 1921 report on the mission sent to Colombia's Primate Archbishop included comments from Nazaret's boarding school principal noting that the town's inspector, the town's highest civil authority, had no means to enforce law. Bienvenido Ma. de Chilches, "Informe que el Provicario Apostólico de La Guajira y Sierra Nevada Rinde al Iltmo. Y Rvmo. Doctor Sr. D. Bernardo Herrera Restrepo, Primado de Colombia y Presidente Hononario de la Junta Nacional de la Obra de Misiones Católicas de la República," *Florecillas de San Francisco*, August 1923, 183.

[27] Calixta, interview by author, Nazaret, Colombia, August 4, 2018.

At 7AM, after the daily mass, girls sitting on the right side of the chapel would go to the female quarters located on the right side of the school building, and boys sitting on the left side would go to the male quarters on the building's left side. Gender separation was strict, and this included monks and nuns. Contact between boys and girls was not supposed to happen during the school years, but later through the rite of marriage. Only then, the space that separated boys and girls, the chapel, would depart from its use as a spatial mechanism of gender segregation to become a place uniting one man with one woman for a lifetime.

Since the boarding school's foundation in 1913, the building was under ongoing transformation, its only fixed characteristic being the chapel's position and function within the scheme. There was never a long-term plan directing the school's transformations and extensions. Buildings were added as they were needed according to the number of children living in the school and as rainy seasons and unstable soil deteriorated the structures. One 1922 report sent from the boarding school to the mission headquarters in Riohacha, for example, noted that "the classroom in the girls' courtyard, near the water tank, fell down likely because ants destroyed its foundations."[28] The use of rammed earth or *bahareque* (mix of mud and wood sticks) in the construction of the buildings, although plastered in lime for their protection, did not favor their lifespan. Bringing more durable materials to Nazaret was expensive because of the town's isolated location (see previous chapter). The easiest way to bring such materials was through Aruba or Maracaibo (Venezuela), 90 miles and 105 miles away respectively. Despite the difficulties, in 1935 the mission had managed to build a few brick walls, and in 1941 a pavilion with concrete structure had been completed, which suggests that bringing materials to Nazaret was getting easier.[29] In this slow process of deterioration, fixing, and addition, the chapel was the only element that retained its original location and layout, which bears testimony to its role in organizing life in the boarding school. A 1917 picture showing the school before the chapel was erected anticipates the chapel's conspicuous presence in the school life (figure 2.2). Taken from the school's back, the image shows that the girls' and boys' quarters (left and right respectively) were already separated by a void that in the future would be the school's central component.

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[28] Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, p.97, AIIN.

[29] Andrés M. de Benisa, "Orfelinato de Nazaret: Informe que Rinde al Excelentísimo Seños Obispo de Castoria y Vicario Apostólico de La Guajira, Fr. Bienvenido J. Alcaide y Bueso, el Suscrito Director del Orfelinato," *Ecos de la Misión*, August 1936, 4; Relación Anual sobre el Estado de la Misión, 1939-1940, Vicariato de La Guajira, 8071 Informes, 8072 Relaciones, folder Gaspar de Orihuela, Archivo Provincial de HH. MM. Capuchinos de Valencia APCV, Valencia, Spain; Relación Anual sobre el Estado de la Misión, 1940-1941, Vicariato de La Guajira, 8071 Informes, 8072 Relaciones, folder Gaspar de Orihuela, APCV, Valencia, Spain.

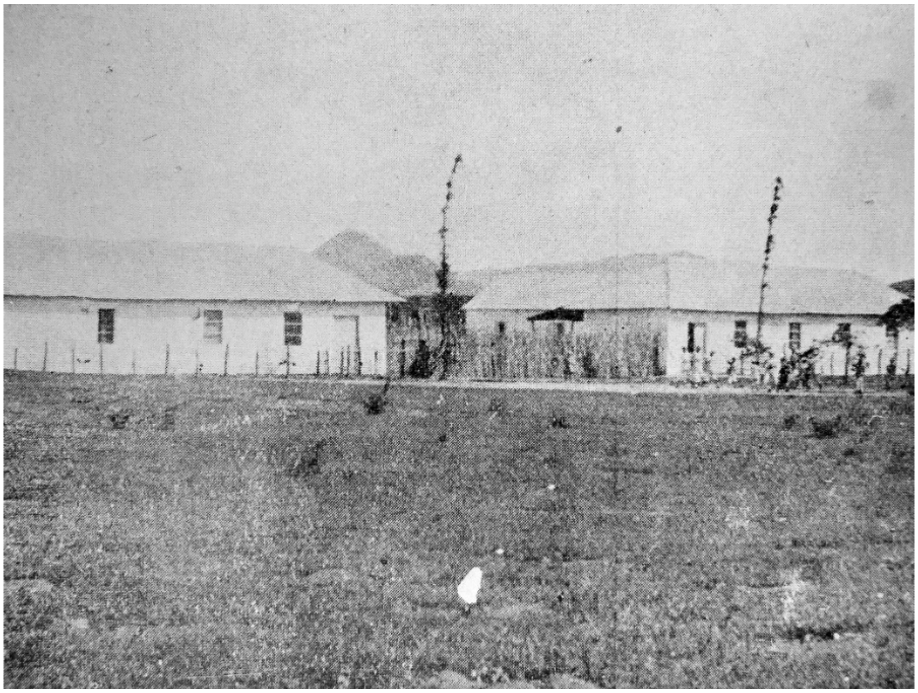

Figure 2.2. This 1917 image from Nazaret's boarding school, taken from the school's back, shows the girls' and boys' quarters (left and right respectively) separated by a void to be occupied by the chapel, the central element of the architectural scheme. Source: *Informes que Rinden el Vicario Apostólico de la Goajira y el Prefecto Apostólico del Caquetá y Putumayo al Ilmo. y Rev. Señor Arzobispo Primado, Sobre los Trabajos Realizados por los Misioneros en los Respectivos Territorios de su Jurisdicción, 1917-1918* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1918).

A floorplan from the building designed to replace the old San Antonio's boarding school (southern La Guajira), and the extant building that replaced the original building of Nazaret's boarding school, are useful to understand how the physical separation of genders operated in the latter. Both the project for the new San Antonio's boarding school and the extant building in Nazaret collect the lessons that the Capuchins learned in their old boarding school buildings. In 1935, the first boarding school in La Guajira, San Antonio's, was almost in ruins, so the mission asked one of its members, Friar Jesualdo de Bañeres, an amateur architect, to draw the plans for a new school.[30] An early floorplan circulated on a 1947 postcard intended to collect funds for the new building (figure 2.3).[31] In the floorplan, the school chapel is the central element of the composition, and the only space of the school intended for both genders to be together. Besides the chapel, only one additional connection between the male and female quarters is contemplated. Located towards the building's back, a hallway intended to facilitate the circulation of cooked meals between the kitchen and the dining rooms connects the female and male quarters. The building that in 1962 replaced the original boarding school in Nazaret, included a similar spatial layout (figure 2.4). Breaking ground in 1954, the building was designed by a government agency, the INSFOPAL (Municipal Development Agency), with direct input from the Spanish Capuchins.[32] Like in the project for San Antonio's boarding school, the central element of the scheme is the chapel, the only place where both gender groups were to meet. The nuns' and monks' quarters are located on the second floor, so each quarter has its own set of stairs connecting with the first floor's main gallery that leads to the chapel. Two extra sets of stairs behind the chapel's altar connect the chapel directly with the nuns' and monks' quarters on the second floor. Other connections between both sides of the school were restricted to a corridor behind the chapel, controlled by two doors, and the kitchen, run by nuns and girls, from where meals were delivered to each side. In both schemes, like in the original Nazaret's boarding school building, the chapel's exterior walls separated the two gender groups while its interior space allowed controlled interaction between both.

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[30] The new building for San Antonio's boarding school was built 13 miles east from the original building in a place called Aremasain and was inaugurated in 1953. Aremasain: Internado Indígena San Antonio de Padua. Notas Históricas, 1988, Vicariato Riohacha, Misión Guajira, Historia, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

[31] The postcard was printed in Bogotá instead of the mission's own printing press in La Guajira, which suggests that it was meant to circulate among people affluent enough to help fund the building or influential enough to push the national government to fund it.

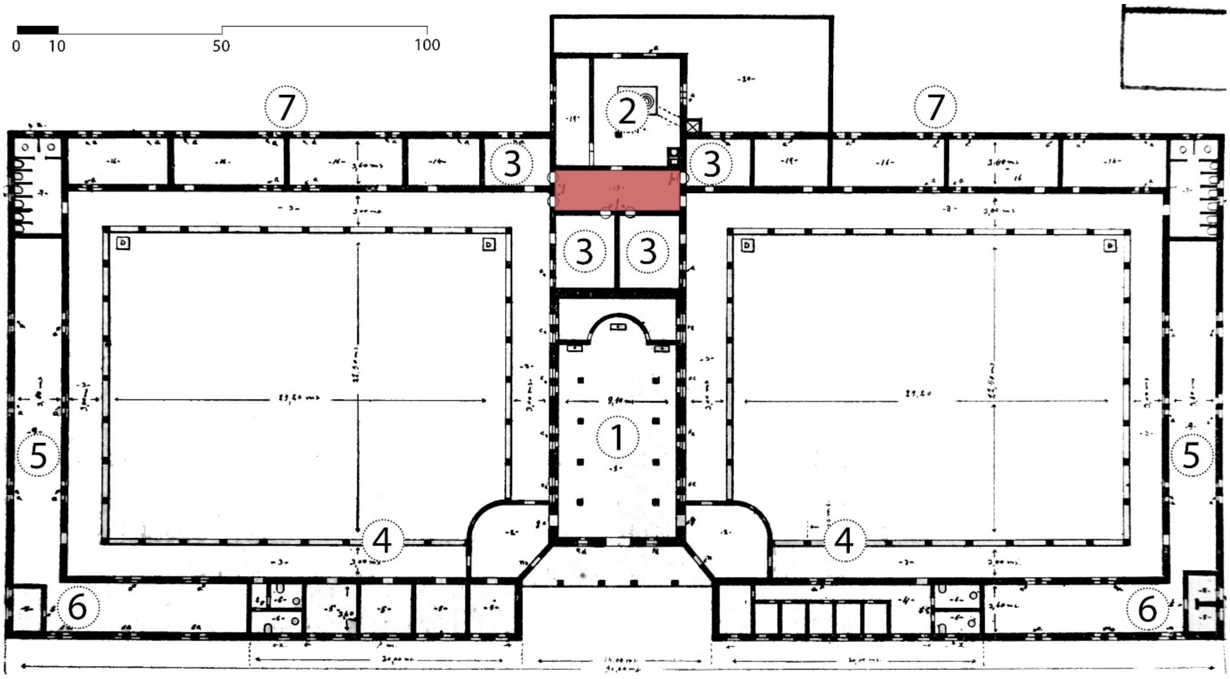

Figure 2.3. 1947 floorplan for new San Antonio's boarding school. Boys' and monks' quarters on the left, girls' and nuns' quarters on the right. 1) chapel; 2) kitchen; 3) dining rooms; 4) monks' (left) and nuns' (right) rooms; 5) dormitories; 6) night guard's room; 7) classrooms. In red: connection between both sides not mediated by the chapel. Source: APCV.

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[32] One document suggests that the design was made by the INSFOPAL, and mentions that one Italian Capuchin from the mission was ready to stay in Bogotá helping revise the project. Consideraciones Generales sobre Retraso de Obra del Internado, ca.1953, Vicariato A. Guajira, Correspondencia, Hno. Jerónimo de San Benito, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

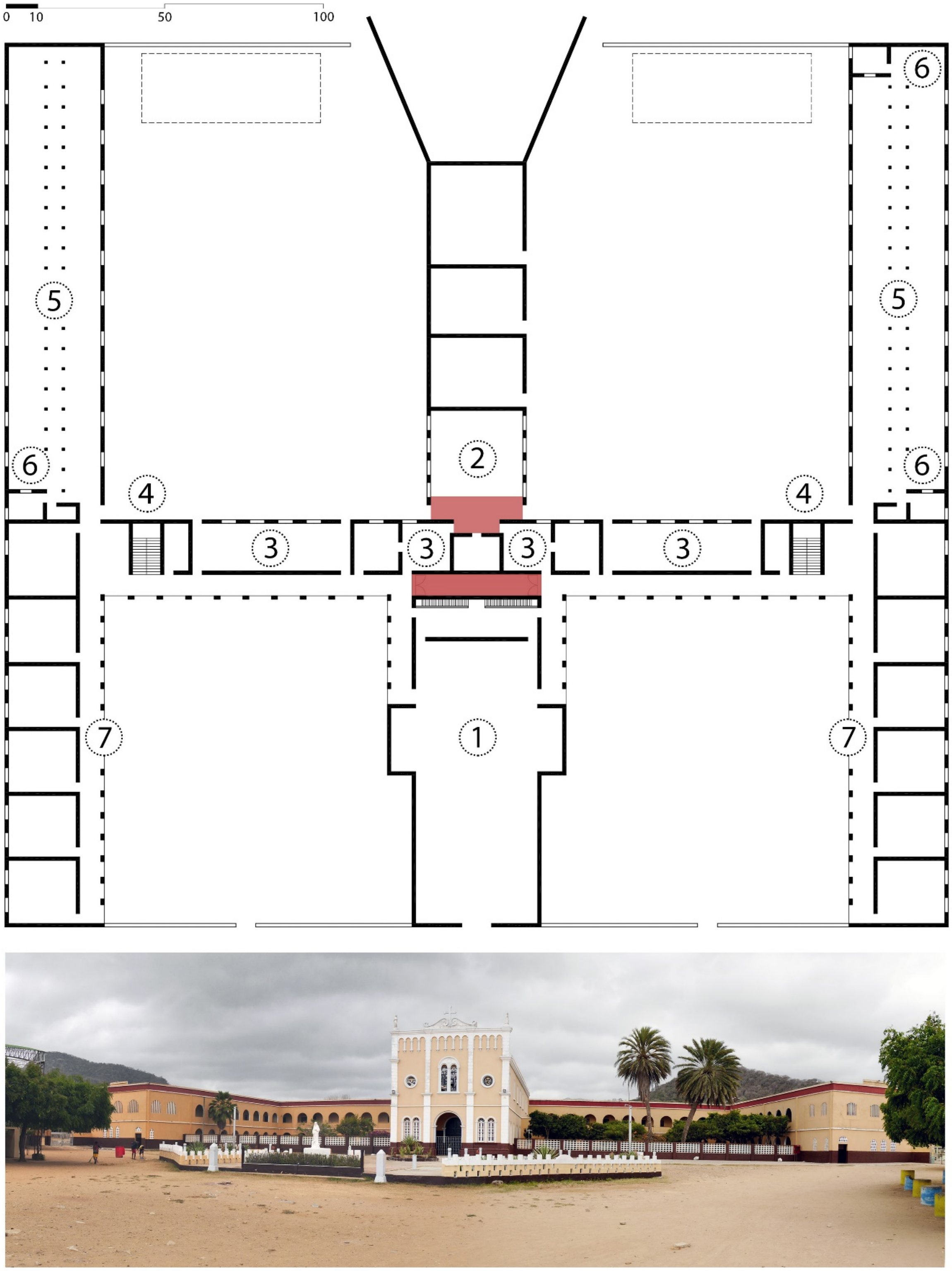

Figure 2.4. Above: Floorplan of Nazaret's boarding school in the early 1960s, based on the extant building and recollections from students. 1) chapel; 2) kitchen; 3) dining rooms; 4) monks' (left) and nuns' (right) rooms; 5) dormitories; 6) night guard's room; 7) classrooms. In red: connection between both sides not mediated by the chapel. Below: Nazaret's boarding school in 2018. Source: author.

The Capuchins saw gender segregation in La Guajira's boarding schools as an essential attribute of the schools' daily life, similar to what comparable institutions did in the first half of the twentieth century. In the first decades of the twentieth century, for example, the Franciscan mission among the Chiriguanos in Bolivia, and the Capuchin mission among the Mapuches in Chile, had boarding schools with strict gender segregation in place.[33] Although no scholarly analysis to date explains how the spatial setting helped enforce the gender divide in these schools, images suggest that the chapel played a prominent role in it. In American and Canadian indigenous boarding schools, gender segregation was also central. In Canada, for example, Indian Residential Schools operated by Catholic and Protestant orders followed an architectural scheme that helped school officers enforce the gender divide. Using an "H" scheme, the central block usually housed administrative offices, staff bedrooms, and a chapel, which mediated between the boys' and girls' quarters located on both sides of the building.[34] Unlike the boarding schools in La Guajira, however, the chapel in the Canadian scheme was not the main component separating both genders. The only account explaining why gender segregation in La Guajira's boarding schools was important comes from Friar José Agustín de Barranquilla's 1944 book, *Así es La Guajira*, which he wrote after living eight years in Nazaret. The policy, which according to him turned each boarding school into two schools, one for girls and another for boys, was justified on moral grounds,

> To keep the most exquisite morality in the relationship between both genders, and to avoid misunderstandings among those who do not know well the operation and duties of religious life, no person, child or religious [nun or monk], must access the opposite gender's section without explicit permission from the respective Superior.[35]

Circumventing the Gender Divide

A student trying to meet a child from the opposite gender had virtually no opportunity to break the close supervision children were subject to. Although the boys' section of the boarding school was always short of personnel, this situation was compensated by the number of people looking after the girls' section. Reports on the mission's performance show that for most of the first half of the twentieth century the boys' section operated only with between two and four Capuchins, and one or two occasional collaborators recruited from among graduates.[36] Although the girls' section was larger than the boys' and operated for most of this period with between four and six nuns, it had permanent extra help. Since the school's early days, this section had the aid of the so-called "Hijas de la Perseverancia," a congregation of female students and graduates that supported the mission's work (I talk more about this group later). In 1937, for example, the school had at least fifteen Hijas de la Perseverancia helping nuns in activities such as teaching, taking care of the youngest children, cooking, and housekeeping.[37] Even though the number of personnel in the girls' section should have been enough to prevent encounters between boys and girls, extra care was paid at nighttime.

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[33] Angélico Martarelli, *El Colegio Franciscano de Potosí y sus Misiones: Noticias Históricas*, 2nd ed. (La Paz: Talleres Gráficos "Marinoni," 1918): 212; Juan Guillermo Mansilla Sepúlveda, Claudia Andrea Huaiquián Billeke, and Gabriel Alfonso de Dios Pozo Menares, "Infancia Mapuche Encerrada: Internados de las Escuelas-Misiones en la Araucanía, Chile (1900-1935)," *Revista Brasileira de Educação* 23 (2018): 1-28.

[34] Geoffrey Carr, "Educating Memory: Regarding the Remnants of the Indian Residential School," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada* 34, no.2 (2009): 87-99.

[35] José Agustín de Barranquilla, *Así es La Guajira* (Barranquilla: Empresa Litográfica, 1946), 216.

[36] For example, in 1923, the boys' section had 2 friars and the girls' section had 5 sisters; in 1939, there were 2 friars in the boys' section and 4 nuns in the girls' section; and in 1946 it was reported that the boys' section had usually 4 friars and the girls' section 6 sisters. "La Misión de Nazaret en La Guajira Colombiana," *Florecillas de San Francisco*, January 1923, 18-19; Andrés M. de Benisa, "Informe Anual que Rinde el P. Director del Orfelinato de Nazaret –Guajira– al

To deter improper behavior at night, including getting in contact with children from the opposite gender group, students slept under permanent supervision. Each gender group had its own dormitory, separated from the nuns' and monks' bedrooms. Children went to bed at 8PM, after the night prayer, and slept in *chinchorros* (wide hammocks).[38] A makeshift cell inside each dormitory accommodated a nun or monk. Gloria recalls that,

> We were not allowed to speak in the dormitory. Never. You had to remain silent. Shhhhhh, the nun [monjita] would say. […] A nun had a cell inside the dormitory. It was made of fabric. It had no window, just a little door. Every time she heard something she would peek through the door.[39]

The makeshift cell evolved into a permanent room (with bathroom in the girls' dormitory) in the project for the new San Antonio's boarding school (figure 2.3). In the new building for Nazaret's boarding school, there was one of these rooms in the girls' dormitory and two in the boys' (figure 2.4)[40]. Although the 1951 list of requirements for this building specified only one night guard's room in each dormitory, the fact that there were students of different ages sharing the same space likely was the reason why the Capuchins included an extra room in the boys' case. Especially in the school's first years, the ages of "boys" enrolled in the school ranged from 1 to 18, and the ages of "girls" ranged from 1 to 22.[41] To be sure, toddlers, boys and girls, lived in a different room in the girls' quarter under the care of the Hijas de La Perseverancia.[42] Close supervision in the dormitories and separate sections divided by the chapel —spatial mechanisms to enforce gender segregation— were complemented by the sacrament of confession.

Excmo y Rvdmo. Sr. Vicario Apostólico. Diciembre de 1939," *Ecos de la Misión*, March 1940, 5; José Agustín de Barranquilla, *Así es La Guajira*, 212-216.

[37] José Agustín de Barranquilla, "Carta Abierta," *Ecos de la Misión*, December 1937.

[38] Bedtime changed over time. In 1915, children went to bed at 8pm. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, they went to bed at 7pm. Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, p.3, AIIN; Gloria, interview by author, Nazaret, Colombia, Mayo 12, 2018.

[39] Gloria, interview by author, Riohacha, Colombia, April 28, 2018.

[40] Sagrario, who lived in the new building between 1962 and 1969 remembers this room. Gentil, who lived in the same building between 1963 and 1969, reports two rooms inside the boys' dormitory, one on each side. Sagrario, interview by author, Nazaret, Colombia, January 14, 2019; Gentil, interview by author, Nazaret, Colombia, May 18, 2018.

[41] This information corresponds to 1915 and is representative of the school's first years of operation. Matrículas Niñas 1914-1944, Secretaría, AIIN; "El Orfelinato de Nazaret," *Ecos de la Misión*.

[42] In fact, toddler boys were included in the girls' school records and not in the boys' school records.

Confession and its associated rite, communion, had the potential to persuade students to behave well. In Catholicism, confession and communion are based on the idea of a judgmental God, a single authority, who oversees all human action and can punish and reward based on it, with the ultimate reward being access to heaven. It is up to the individual to acknowledge his offenses following his conscience, and to repent and confess these to a priest in order to seek God's and church's forgiveness. This view contrasted sharply with the traditional spiritual universe of the Wayúus, composed of supernatural beings whose actions controlled natural forces and cycles, which were not organized hierarchically, and neither punished nor rewarded. Although Wayúus believed in life after death, there was no notion of reward or punishment that could affect their afterlife existence.[43] Christianizing missions —including the Capuchins'— turned *Maleiwa*, spirit creator of people in the Wayúu mythology, into the Christian God, and by doing so granted him the power to judge all humans acts and decide people's afterlife fate.[44] The annual reports sent from Nazaret to the mission headquarters often included information on the numbers of students confessing and participating in the communion.[45] This reporting suggests that monks and nuns promoted both rites among students and used them as valid indicators of missionary success. It also suggests that some students either believed in the rationale behind these rites or, understanding their importance for monks and nuns, practiced them just to be in good standing before the school officers' eyes. Despite the spatial mechanism in place, and the ubiquitous confession, students still managed to communicate with children from the opposite gender group.

In lieu of spoken communication among students from the opposite gender, students used their newly acquired skills in written Spanish to bypass the school's spatial gender divide. Wayúu children were banned from speaking Wayunaiki, by then a purely oral language without written component, and learned to speak and write Spanish, one of the skills that would be a marker of their civilization in the future.[46] Further signaling the children's enrollment in the new civilization, the Capuchins changed their Wayúu names for names in Spanish once accepted in the boarding school[47]. They also learned to pray and sing in Latin —the Vatican-sanctioned language for mass celebration until 1965— although they did not understand what they were saying.[48] Chances to see students from the opposite gender group were scarce. Calixta remembers that she only saw boys when they brought water and wood for cooking.[49] Another instance was when repairs or new constructions in the girls' quarters required the boys' help, in which case the "rare" event was consigned in the reports sent to the mission headquarters.[50] These short interactions with students were opportunities to exchange written messages. Alicia, who studied in the school between 1957 and 1959, when the original building was almost in ruins and under the control of the Italian Capuchins, recalls that one girl used to leave notes to a boy inside a bucket.[51] Perhaps aware of this situation, Alicia's mother, who had studied briefly in the boarding school, did not want Alicia to attend the school: "You will learn there to write and then will start writing to men," her mom would say.[52] These words disclose Alicia's mother's anxieties about gender mixing, and her belief that boarding school education, rather than helping her daughter preserve her virginal virtue, would contribute to the opposite. Gentil recalls that as late as 1962, in the brand new building that replaced the original boarding school, boys and girls still exchanged written messages, although now these traveled hidden inside the pockets of the boys' shirts, which girls washed and ironed.[53] The ban on Wayunaiki and the imposition of Spanish paradoxically ended up helping students circumvent the strict spatial gender divide in place.

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[43] Michele Perrin, "El Viaje al Más Allá," ch. 3 in *El Camino de los Indios Muertos: Mitos y Símbolos Guajiros* (Caracas: Monte Ávila Editores, 1980), 179-220; Otto Vergara González, "Los Wayu: Hombres del Desierto," in *La Guajira: De la Memoria al Porvenir. Una Visión Antropológica*, ed. Gerardo I. Ardila (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 1990), 157-160.

[44] Michele Perrin, *El Camino de los Indios Muertos: Mitos y Símbolos Guajiros* (Caracas: Monte Ávila Editores, 1980), 129-130; Roberto Pineda Giraldo, "Mareiwa y Wanuru: o las Nociones del Bien y del Mal entre los Guajiros," in *Indios y Blancos en La Guajira: Estudio Socio-Económico*, ed. Lino Rampón (Bogotá: Ediciones Tercer Mundo, 1963), 139-150.

[45] For example, the boarding school principal wrote in the 1939 annual report that "girls take communion more frequently: around ten every day. Boys barely take communion: around six on Sundays, and few of them do it two Sundays in a row." Andrés M. de Benisa, "Informe Anual que Rinde el P. Director del Orfelinato de Nazaret –Guajira– al Excmo y Rvdmo. Sr. Vicario Apostólico. Diciembre de 1939," 5-6.

[46] The first known written version of Wayunaiki was produced by a Catholic missionary. See note 16 in Introduction.

[47] School records show that friars and nuns changed the children's Wayúu names for names in Spanish when they were accepted for enrollment. Huidas, Ingresos, Oficios 1917-1927, AIIN.

Learning Proper Gender Roles

Activities and spaces inside each school section got students used to the gender roles they were expected to have as husbands and wives, instilling in boys a breadwinner mentality that was at odds with Wayúu customs. In the traditional Wayúu family, the wife provided shelter, food, and clothing to her husband and children by selling or exchanging woven products. The bride price a Wayúu man paid for his wife entitled him to live from her wife's income or, in case she did not earn enough, from her clan.[54] It also entitled his wife to get her anticipated inheritance (usually represented in livestock), which helped the couple establish its new household.[55] Activities in the boarding school, as summarized in the 1925 annual report sent to Riohacha, show stark differences between what boys and girls did, in line with the new roles they were to have in their adulthood:

> From 7 to 9 in the morning, boys are busy with work [trabajos manuales], usually consisting of harvesting cotton, bringing wood for the kitchen or stone for

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[48] Gloria, interview by author, Nazaret, Colombia, May 12, 2018. As late as 1963, when the Spanish Capuchins were no longer in charge of the mission, students still prayed and sang in Latin. Gentil, interview by author, Nazaret, Colombia, May 8, 2018.

[49] Calixta, interview by author, Nazaret, Colombia, August 4, 2018.

[50] For example, boys entered the girls' quarters to help in the construction of a new dormitory started in 1940. Jesualdo de Bañeres, "Informe Correspondiente al Año de 1940 que el Suscrito, Director del Orfelinato de la Sagrada Familia de Nazaret, Rinde a Excmo. Y Rmo. Sr. Vicario Apostólico," *Ecos de la Misión*, March 1941, 7.

[51] Alicia, interview by author, Nazatet, Colombia, August 4, 2018.

[52] Alicia, interview by author, Nazatet, Colombia, August 4, 2018.

[53] Gentil, interview by author, Nazaret, Colombia, May 18, 2018.

[54] Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "Organización Social en La Guajira," 63, 105.

[55] Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "Organización Social en La Guajira," 79-80, 96.

> construction work, caring for the goats and pack animals, grinding corn, cleaning the school patios, and, once in a while, traveling to buy and bring groceries. […] The girls' handwork [trabajo manual] has been interspersed with civic and religious instruction, which keep them busy. With this practice we seek various goals, mainly the teaching of the woman's proper chores [oficios propios de la mujer], order, and economy. They have 4 usable sewing machines, and have been in charge of sewing, and of the boys', girls', and personnel's laundry.[56]

A few of these activities were materially represented in each of the two school quarters. In 1946, the boys' quarter included a grain and grocery storage room, carpentry and mechanics workshops, and a handcrafts workshop (boys weaved huts and sandals in the school's early years). The girls' quarter included the school's kitchen, a slaughter area, a pantry, a sewing room, laundry and ironing area (*ropería*), and a workroom (*salón para labores*), likely used for weaving. Based on these descriptions, an adult man was expected to provide for his family, while his wife was to guide it morally and spiritually, care for its proper feeding and appearance, and keep a clean and economically efficient home.[57] Although girls also learned weaving, and their woven products generated a modest income for the boarding school, in the Capuchins' version of Christian civilization the woman's place was the home, and her products, if sold, were only to provide extra income for her household. By depicting a normalcy that stripped women of their breadwinning role, the gendering of spaces and activities in the boarding school was set to teach girls that although unable to interact with boys while in the school, men were to be essential in their future lives.

The gendering of spaces and activities also extended to the fields surrounding the school building. The building sat amid a large terrain where the mission kept animals and grew crops whose produce was either used for consumption or sold in Puerto Estrella. The draft of a 1931 report addressed to the Ministry of Education mentioned 28 hectares (69 acres) of crops, including cotton, corn, beans, peanuts, and sesame.[58] No information is available on the area destined to animals, but a 1923 inventory implies that there was room for at least 3 horses, 15 donkeys, 33 cows, and 233 medium-size animals (goats and sheep).[59] As shown in the (aforementioned) 1925 description of activities, boys were mostly in charge of these fields, to which they devoted at least one and a half hour every day[60]. They were supported by (male) hired labor, and, as reported by Fray Agustín de

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[56] Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, p.104, AIIN.

[57] On societal expectations for girls in early twentieth-century Colombia, see, Cecilia Muñoz V., and Ximena Pachón, "Las Niñas a Principios de Siglo: Futuras Esposas, Religiosas o Célibes Caritativas, Bogotá, 1900-1930," in *Las Mujeres en la Historia de Colombia*, ed. Magdala Velasquez Toro, vol. 2, *Mujeres y Sociedad* (Bogotá: Editorial Norma, 1995), 424-453. On the Catholic Church's discourse on family and women in Colombia's northern regions at the turn of the twentieth century, see, Dalín Miranda Salcedo, "Familia, Matrimonio Y Mujer: El Discurso de la Iglesia Católica en Barranquilla (1863-1930)," *Historia Crítica* 23 (2002): 21-41.

[58] Informe al Ministro de Educación Nacional, 1931, April 5, 1932, Vicariato de La Guajira, 8071 Informes, 8072 Relaciones, folder Bienvenido Alcaide y Bueso, APCV, Valencia, Spain. Despite the area devoted to crops, the school's accounting books show that production was not enough to feed the school population.

[59] Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, p.90, AIIN.

[60] The daily time boys spent working in the fields surrounding the boarding school building changed over time. In 1925, they spent two hours. In 1941, they spent one and a half hours. Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925,

Barranquilla in *Así es La Guajira*, by the schoolgirls, who helped collect cotton and peanuts during harvest times. However, Fray Agustín notes, when girls participated in these activities, they were accompanied by nuns and boys were not present.[61] To be sure, he also mentions that girls had a small open area which they cared for. Yet, as if wanting to emphasize the largely male character of the school open areas, he adds that, "the girls' orchard is more a garden where they learn to take care of flowers and shrubbery."[62] Although there is no archival information to confirm this, in a likely continuation of the gendering of open areas in the original boarding school building, the girls' front patio of the new building has different plants from the boys' front patio. As the present-day narrative goes, the girls' patio has flowers to represent female delicacy, and the boys' patio has fruit trees to honor their devotion to work.[63] Even if girls had control over some open areas, plant types in these places also encoded the gender roles they were to follow.

Activities performed beyond the school's property lines reinforced the message, already transmitted by activities and spaces in the school, that places different from home were mostly the men's domain. The 1925 report shows that the boys were in charge of bringing wood for cooking, stone for construction, and groceries. As mentioned, they were also in charge of bringing water, which by the early1930s, when the government built a well powered by a windmill pump in the school terrains, implied leaving the school grounds.[64] These activities clashed with the traditional Wayúu division of labor, in which bringing water, wood for cooking, and groceries were women's activities, and were linked to their role as breadwinners[65]. Accounts of Wayúu women carrying water or wood behind their empty-handed husbands populated the Capuchins' chronicles and justified the teaching of the new gender roles on grounds of preventing presumed woman mistreatment. In one 1934 chronicle published in *Florecillas de San Francisco*, for example, a monk relating his first trip through La Guajira lamented the situation:

> Male Indians don't carry anything on their shoulders, while the poor women are seen with heavy coal sacks on their backs. [...] Wasn't this the women's situation before Christianity came to protect their rights and privileges?[66]

To be sure, the Hijas de La Perseverancia, whose full members were adult students, left the school regularly as part of their evangelizing trips, although most of the time accompanied by a nun. The

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p.103, AIIN; Andrés M. de Benisa, "Informe Anual que Rinde al Excelentísimo Sr. Vicario Apostólico de La Guajira e Inspector Nacional de Educación el Suscrito Director del Orfelinato de Nazaret," *Ecos de la Misión*, January 1942, 5.

[61] José Agustín de Barranquilla, *Así es La Guajira*, 212.

[62] José Agustín de Barranquilla, *Así es La Guajira*, 212.

[63] Sister Lucia, interview by author, Nazaret, Colombia, June 15, 2015.

[64] A 1932 trip through La Guajira led by a Capuchin missionary included the visit of two government representatives to Nazaret "who studied" the feasibility to improve water supply in the boarding school. In 1935, according to the annual report sent from Nazaret to the mission headquarters, the boarding school already had a well and a windmill supplying water. Angel María de Carcagente, "Por La Goajira," *Ecos de la Misión*, June 22, 1932, 5; Andrés M. de Benisa, "Orfelinato de Nazaret: Informe que Rinde al Excelentísimo Señor Obispo de Castoria y Vicario Apostólico de La Guajira, Fr. Bienvenido J. Alcaide y Bueso, el Suscrito Director del Orfelinato."

[65] On women's and men's traditional roles in Wayúu culture, see, Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "Organización Social en La Guajira," 226-235.

[66] Vicente María de Guadasuar, "Notas de un Viaje por La Guajira: II," *Florecillas de San Francisco*, August 1934, 203.

limiting of girls' activities outside the school building likely gave Nazaret's Inspector the idea that women remained enclosed in the boarding school against their will; a point he included in his 1936 letter of complaints against the mission (see previous chapter).[67] Although genuine concern for the girls' well-being, and enforcement of the gender-divide policy, surely played a role in the Capuchins' decision of limiting most of the girls' activities to the school building, this decision clearly aligned with the lifestyle that the mission promoted for them.

Photos sent from La Guajira to Bogotá and Valencia, Spain, constituted evidence of the mission's success instilling in Wayúu children the gender roles of Christian civilization. This material complemented the statistics sent periodically to show how the Catholic Church's Christianizing endeavor was successfully enrolling souls (see previous chapter). The photos included scenes of girls cooking, doing laundry, weaving "hammocks," or sewing, and of boys doing carpentry, learning to drive, operating book printing machines, and weaving hats and *waireñas* (typical Wayúu sandals). Two images taken in Nazaret's boarding school underscore what audiences outside La Guajira were eager to see. One 1925 photo shows a group of girls doing laundry in an open but walled area of the school (figure 2.5). The girls are physically too close to be actually doing laundry, which suggests that the intention was to show as many girls as possible doing what was believed to be a female activity. The laundry sink on the right is lower than the sink on the left, and the first girl using it is younger than the others, visual cues signaling that girls got used to doing housework from an early age. Another photo from 1920 shows a boy weaving waireñas in one of the school patios, using a pedal machine (figure 2.6). A handwritten caption on the photo's backside reads, "a boy from one of our boarding schools in La Guajira weaves to earn a living," which suggests that the photo circulated to show how the school was successfully turning "savage" boys into hardworking men. Put together, images like these lured observers to believe that these children were getting ready to fulfill, one day, their roles as wives and husbands in proper Catholic families.

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[67] Cargos contra la Misión de la Guajira, Según el Informe del Inspector de Nazaret, Arturo Ruiz Erazo, Rendido al Comisario de la Península, February 6, 1936, Educación y Misiones Vicariato Riohacha, Polémica Educación Nazaret Guajira, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

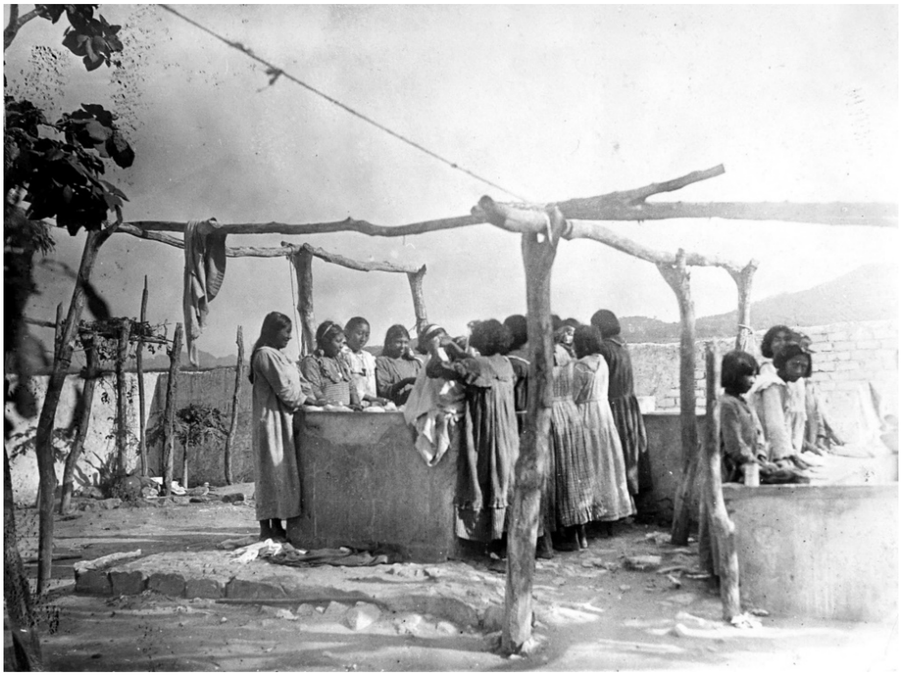

Figure 2.5. This ca.1925 photo of girls doing laundry in Nazaret's boarding school circulated as proof of their training in what was considered a female activity. Source: Box 9, envelope Guajira, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

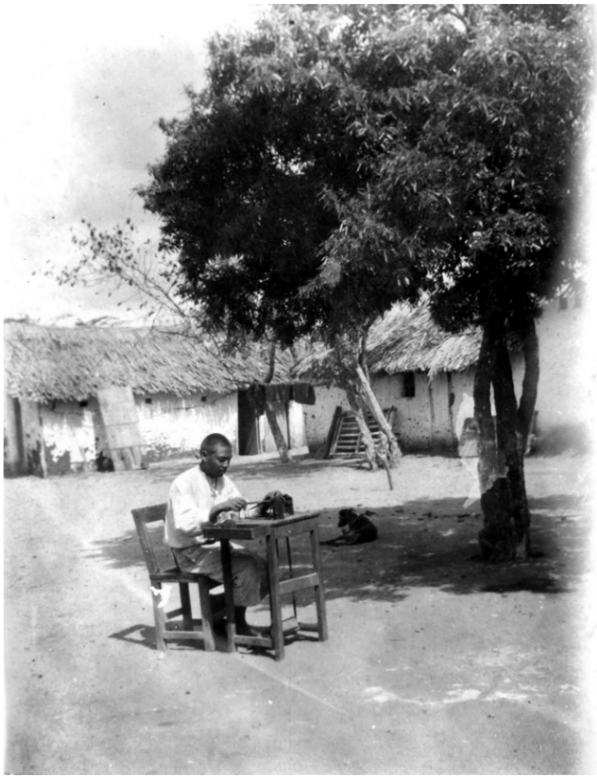

Figure 2.6. This ca.1920 photo of a boy weaving sandals in Nazaret's boarding school was intended to show how work was turning "savage" boys into "civilized" individuals. Box 7, envelope Guajira, Serra Nevada y Motilones 2, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

Populating the Town with Catholic Families

Marrying off Wayúus

On July 21, 1924, María del Tránsito, a Wayúu woman who had lived in Nazaret's boarding school for ten years, walked the aisle of the school chapel as a married woman. An article about the event, published in *Ecos de La Misión,* explains that a small canon was shot three times to "let people [living nearby] witness the nice fruits of the culture and civilization that are cultivated in this boarding school."[68] More than 300 guests attended María del Tránsito's marriage, including well-known Wayúu chiefs of the region, which the priest presiding the ceremony considered an important milestone for the "civilization and moralization of La Guajira." The high number of guests, which undoubtedly required huge coordination efforts by the mission, and the article's appearance in the mission's periodical, bears testimony to how crucial it was for the Capuchins to marry off school graduates. For students attending the event, seeing one of their own walking the aisle holding hands with someone from the opposite gender while everybody around celebrated must have validated the "rightness" of monogamous Catholic marriage. For readers of *Ecos de La Misión*, knowing that María del Transito had decided to leave the school after ten years only to get married, must have been proof of the mission's success in both teaching children that Catholic marriage was the ideal path to follow, and counteracting their families' cultural influence.

Keeping children in the boarding school, far from their families and for as long as possible, was crucial to curtail their inclination to follow their parents' marriage practice. This was particularly important in the girls' case, in which the boarding school replaced the place where they were traditionally enclosed for a period as part of their transition to adulthood. In Wayúu culture, when a girl started menstruating, a rite of passage prepared her to become a young woman (*majayura),* and a potential wife. This rite (still common) usually lasted between one month and a few years depending on the social position of the girl's clan; the higher the position, the longer the duration.[69] During this time, the girl remained enclosed in a small hut or room under the care of a female relative, following a strict diet and taking herbal potions to clean her body and prepare it for the new stage. Her caretaker —and eventually other women— was the only person allowed to visit the girl and taught her all what was required for her new stage: sexual life, responsibilities with her husband and family, housekeeping, maternity, and how to weave to support her family.[70] Although school records showing girls' long absences suggest that a few girls went home to participate in the rite, this was likely restricted to those who were not poor. Poor families would have preferred to keep their girls in the school, fed and dressed by the Capuchins, while avoiding any conflict with the mission, a potential source of aid in times of scarcity. Nevertheless, as anthropologist Virginia Gutierrez found in her 1947 ethnographic work in La Guajira, girls who stayed in the boarding schools got help from their classmates to, at least, take the herbal potions that they would usually take at home as part of the rite.[71] Even if this was the case, a girl living in the school while becoming a *majayura* missed all the teachings that would culturally prepare her for Wayúu marriage.

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[68] Andrés M. de Benisa, "Una Fiesta de Familia en Nazaret," *Ecos de la Misión*, May 5, 1925.

[69] There are different versions about the duration of this rite. Virginia Gutiérrez gives a range of between almost one month and five years. Maria-Barbara Watson-Franke gives a range of between two and five years. Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "Organización Social en La Guajira," 56; Maria-Barbara Watson-Franke, "Seclusion Huts and Social Balance in Guajiro Society," *Anthropos* 77 (1982): 452.

[70] Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "Organización Social en La Guajira," 51-58. On this rite of passage, see also, Maria-Barbara Watson-Franke, *Now You Are a Woman, Ahora Eres una Mujer* (México D.F.: Ediciones Euroamericanas, 1983).

There is no clear explanation of how boys and girls met and got engaged in the gender segregated setting of Nazaret's boarding school, particularly in the few cases in which current students got married, or when graduates married right after leaving the school. The exchange of written messages in Spanish might have played a part in fostering romance between students. Another feasible explanation could be that contact between boys and girls occurred when they escaped or while on vacations. Regardless of the actual circumstances, the lack of opportunities for courtship raised questions on whether marriages between students, graduates, or between graduates and outsiders were arranged by the Capuchins. A 1934 letter sent by La Guajira's highest government official to the Ministry of Education raised this issue, arguing that, "the missionaries' ideal (perhaps not the girls') is to graduate girls with all the sacraments, finding husbands for them among the boys educated by the mission at the missionaries' will. There is no clue if marriages constituted in this way are happy."[72] Another critique raised a similar issue. When Nazaret's Inspector, in his 1936 letter of complaints against the mission, noted that women remained enclosed in the school, he added that they remained in such condition until they found "the love of 'redeemed' men wanting to marry them." The answer from the coordinator of the Capuchin missions in Colombia to the Inspector's comments rejected the accusations, adding that both boys and girls were encouraged to live independently from the institution when becoming adults, but arguing that a few girls decided to stay, afraid of being forced by their families to marry men they did not like.[73] Although made in a period where the Colombian liberal government was trying to curtail the Catholic Church's power in the country, accusations like these, even if intended to harm the mission, suggest that observers had enough proof of what they considered suspicious marriage practices to confidently denounce the Capuchins for it.

The girls' main alternative to getting married, becoming an Hija de la Perseverancia, also implied walking the aisle of the boarding school chapel in a public ceremony. Female students who enrolled in the Hijas de la Perseverancia congregation helped nuns in the boarding school and participated in charitable and evangelizing trips to Wayúu settlements in the Alta Guajira. Descriptions of the congregation members highlight their value for the mission's Christianizing endeavor, particularly because by being Wayúu their message encountered less resistance.[74] Their work was so crucial to the mission interests that members could stay in the boarding school indefinitely after graduating, which was probably the case of María del Tránsito.[75] To become a full member of the group, an aspiring student had to be at least 18 years old, have direct approval from the Apostolic Vicar of La Guajira, and participate in a public ceremony in the school chapel.[76] The initiation ritual was celebrated in front of the chapel altar, where the initiate accepted to work on "the conversion of the unfaithful," and received a crucifix that would identify her and mark her "consecration to the service of God."[77] Although there is no information on the whereabouts of the Hijas de La Perseverancia after leaving the boarding school, given the nature of their work and the symbolism involved in their initiation, it is not hard to imagine a few of them taking religious vows as nuns. Marriages and the initiation ceremonies of the Hijas de la Perseverancia were rites that marked the end of the girls' boarding school education and set the path for their new lives. A few of the girls walking the chapel's aisle with their new husbands would remain in Nazaret in one of the homes that the mission had built for them.

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[71] Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, "Organización Social en La Guajira," 55.

[72] Informe de la Comisaría de La Goajira, Retransmitido por el Ministerio de Gobierno Mediante el Sr. Nuncio a Mons. Bienvenido de Chilches, Vicario Apostólico de La Guajira, Sept. 5, 1934, folder 8020, APCV, Valencia, Spain, quoted in Historia de la Misión en La Guajira, Particularmente de los Orfelinatos, p.63.

[73] Informe Contestación a los Cargos Acumulados por el Ministerio de Educación contra la Misión Capuchina de La Guajira, April 30, 1936, Educación y Misiones Vicariato Riohacha, Polémica Educación Nazaret Guajira, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

Proper Homes for Proper Families

The houses built next to the school that graduates getting married got from the mission, physically marked these couples' enrollment in the Colombian Catholic society.[78] As I mentioned in the previous chapter, these homes started the town of Nazaret, meant to be a "civilized" center controlled by the mission. Each rammed-earth house had 430 square feet of space distributed in two rooms, one serving as bedroom and another doubling as socializing and female work area (when the couple had children, this space also served as children's bedroom).[79] Given that wood was used for cooking, the kitchen was located under a roof against one of the house's exterior walls and opened towards a fenced backyard. This basic specialization of areas contrasted with the single room hut that was traditional of the Wayúu people, although, similar to the Wayúu hut, the cooking area was separated from the rest of the dwelling (see previous chapter). No arbor or other place for visitors to hang their hammocks was provided, contrasting with the welcoming feature present in traditional

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[74] Informe al Ministro de Educación Nacional, 1931, APCV; Relación Anual sobre el Estado de la Misión, 1941-1942, November 1, 1942, Vicariato de La Guajira, 8071 Informes, 8072 Relaciones, folder Gaspar de Orihuela, APCV, Valencia, Spain.

[75] Indeed, the Apostolic Vicar of La Guajira issued a decree in 1934 that ordered the Vicariate to cover the Hijas de La Perseverancia's living expenses, something that until then had been done at the missionaries' discretion. Libro 1° de Actas de Santa Visita del Orfelinato de Nazaret, 1932-1967, p.3, Secretaría, AIIN, Nazaret, Colombia.

[76] Libro 1° de Actas de Santa Visita del Orfelinato de Nazaret, 1932-1967, p.2-3, AIIN.

[77] Libro 1° de Actas de Santa Visita del Orfelinato de Nazaret, 1932-1967, p.7, AIIN.

[78] An interesting parallel are the homes where American Indians lived after graduating from Indian boarding schools, which US government agencies used as measure of their dwellers' assimilation into American mainstream culture. K. Tsianina Lomawaima, "'All our People Are Building Houses': The Civilization of Architecture and Space in Federal Indian Boarding Schools," in *Indian Subjects: Hemispheric Perspectives on the History of Indigenous Education*, ed. Brenda J. Child, and Brian Klopotek (Santa Fe: SAR Press, 2014), 148-176.

[79] A general description of the houses was included in*, Las Misiones Católicas en Colombia: Labor de los Misioneros en el Caquetá, Putumayo, La Goajira, Magdalena y Arauca, Informes Año 1918-1919*, 137.

Wayúu dwellings. In lieu of the anticipated inheritance that a Wayúu wife traditionally received as dowry, the mission provided what was needed to establish the couple's household. One couple that married in 1926, for example, apart from a furnished home, got from the mission a Singer sewing machine, a cooking pan, a coffee pot, a corn grinder, a women's shawl, a heifer, 12 goats, 1 peso in cash, groceries, and the promise of 24 extra pesos.[80] With two rooms, furniture, a sewing machine, no exterior area for visitors, and a kitchen facing the back of the house, the new homes were settings made to keep devoted housewives protected as much as possible from the perceived dangers of the public sphere. As such, these dwellings embodied the notion advanced in the boarding school that home, not the street, was women's "proper" place, setting their dwellers apart from non-Christianized Wayúus.

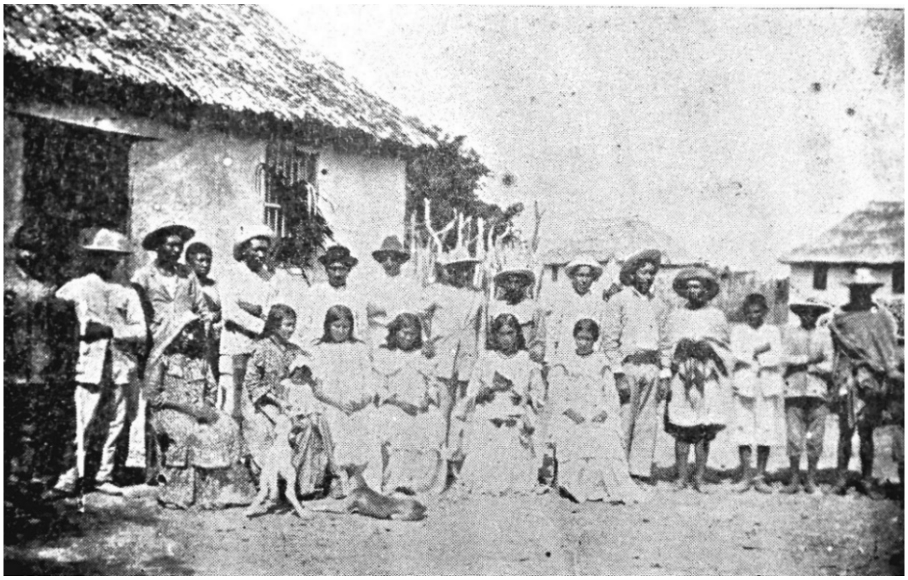

Figure 2.7. Included in a 1919-1921 report sent to the national government, this photo shows Christianized Wayúu families in Nazaret posing in front of homes that the mission built for them. Source: *Las Misiones Católicas en Colombia, Informes Años 1919, 1920, 1921* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1921).

The exterior appearance of the mission homes set the newly married couples further apart from other Wayúus. A photo included in the 1919-1921 report that the mission sent to the national government is useful to explain this point (figure 2.7). The photo, included as proof of the mission's Colombiainizing and Christianing work, shows a group of Wayúus in front of three homes (one in the foreground, two in the background) that the mission had built. The caption reads, "Christian couples in the new town of Nazaret." Most of the men wear pants instead of a loincloth, and all women wear a Westernized version of their traditional dress, implying that they are now civilized. Amid La Guajira's landscape, however, the homes in the photo are a more noticeable sign of these person's alleged civilization. The dwellings walls, finished in lime to protect them from water damage, suggest that the structures are built to last, unlike the traditional Wayúu dwellings. The home in the foreground is perpendicular to the two homes in the background, a notable difference between Nazaret and the more organic arrangement that was characteristic of Wayúu settlements (see previous chapter). Unlike the Wayúu setlements, traditionally inhabited by relatives, people living in the mission homes came from different clans, which disrupted long-held associations between Wayúu clans and particular areas of La Guajira territory. The presence of fences, visible in the middle of the picture and at the back, discloses new forms of land tenure in which boundaries were necessary to mark property lines. The window bars in one of the houses further stress the need for theses boundaries in the new spatial and social orders. Although the homes of *alijunas* —built in places such as Puerto Estrella, Puerto López, and Castilletes— had similar characteristics to the mission homes, the fact that the latter were identical to one another made Nazaret a unique setting in the Alta Guajira. Moreover, boarding school and homes together constituted a hierarchical landscape (headed by the school building) that contrasted with the non-hierarchical arrangement of the traditional Wayúu settlements. Yet, differences between Nazaret's inhabitants and non-Christianized Wayúus went beyond the formal characteristics of the homes and town, as the relationship between men working for the mission and the Capuchins suggests.

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[80] In 1926, 1 Colombian peso could buy approximately 6 pounds of rice. Acta de Entrega de Casa y Enseres a Matrimonio de Nazaret, 1926, folder Cartas de Rescate 1917-1972, AHCB, Bogotá, Colombia.

Congruent with the gendered division of labor that operated in the boarding school, men living in the mission homes worked for the boarding school to support their families, although under different conditions than non-Christianized Wayúus. They helped the Capuchins with the school's animals and crops, and building and repairing furniture and buildings, including the mission homes. Their wives were not supposed to work. Even if in need of a job, getting one in the boarding school would have been hard for these women, as female students did most of the school housework.[81] Men living in the mission homes reportedly earned more than non-Christianized Wayúus doing similar jobs for the mission, and were not required to pay rent.[82] This display of paternalism was seen with suspicion by Nazaret's Inspector. In his 1936 letter of complaints, he accused the Capuchins of enslaving these men, suggesting that the rent waiver evidenced their state of enslavement.[83] The coordinator of the Capuchin missions in Colombia addressed this accusation in his response letter, arguing that the mission paid fair wages and that men living in the mission homes were free to work for whoever they wanted. Although he did not address the rent waiver, he explained that when a couple living in one of the mission homes behaved well for ten years, it became the property's owner.[84] Regardless of the kind of relationship that graduates living in Nazaret had with the Capuchins, the town was a place of contention to comment on these relationships. Living in Nazaret necessarily meant having a relationship with the boarding school that, depending on the observer, could make a town dweller a graduate, a worker, a person exploited by the mission, or all three.

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[81] The boarding school principal reported in 1925 that they did not hire any women to help with housekeeping that year because female students had done all the work. Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, 104, AIIN.

[82] The 1922 annual report on Nazaret mentions that the mission paid men living in the mission homes 0.60 pesos per day for their work, and only 8 pesos per month (more than half of it in food) for equivalent work to Wayúus that had not been educated in the boarding school or were not married to boarding school graduates. The latter workers were referred to in the reports as "peons" (*peones*) or "Indians," while the former workers were referred to as "young married men" (*jóvenes casados*). Informe Funcionamiento General Casa, 1915-1925, 50-72, AIIN.

[83] Cargos contra la Misión de la Guajira, según el Informe del Inspector de Nazaret, Arturo Ruiz Erazo, Rendido al Comisario de la Península, AHCB.

[84] Informe Contestación a los Cargos Acumulados por el Ministerio de Educación contra la Misión Capuchina de La Guajira, AHCB.

Conclusion

The gendered environment of Nazaret's boarding school articulated spatially the narrative of Christian civilization that the Capuchin Catholic order used to frame their evangelizing campaign in La Guajira. At the school level, this narrative meant the making of Catholic families that would settle permanently in Nazaret, complementing the mission's territorial strategy (see previous chapter). Catholic monogamous marriage was to be the foundation of these families and was meant to curtail the Wayúus' polygynous customs. It disrupted traditional alliances between Wayúu clans, forged around bridewealth negotiations, which could end up restricting one clan's use of other clans' lands. Limited use of the territory could force some Wayúus to abandon their traditional economic activities to seek income as wage workers, pushing them to live permanently in places where jobs were available, often outside La Guajira.

Domestic life in the boarding school instilled in children a family model in which the husband was the breadwinner and the wife was the homemaker, at odds with Wayúu customs. The strict spatial gender divide operating in the school allowed officials to turn each school quarter (girls' and boys') into a gendered venue for teaching these roles. Spaces and activities in each quarter were limited to what the Capuchins considered was appropriate for each gender. The daily repetition of these activities would subtly teach students to rely on the opposite gender group for essential tasks, generating dependency, which was to be ideally addressed through marriage. The gendering of activities also extended to the town, Nazaret, a practicing field for the new families enrolling the Capuchins' version of civilization. Breadwinning men would work for the mission, homemaker women would stay at home. The mission homes that initially formed the town constituted the first material expression outside the school of the life the Capuchins wanted for their graduates. Permanent and well-equipped, with their own fenced backyard, and close enough to the boarding school, the homes stood as markers of what clearly was not a Wayúu lifestyle.

The school chapel played a central role in the school's domestic life as both a spatial and symbolic mechanism. As a spatial mechanism, it worked as a barrier separating the school's female and male quarters while allowing controlled visual interaction between girls and boys at mass times. Even if a student managed to bypass the spatial gender divide to get in contact with a student from the opposite gender group, the chapel's presence would remind him that a ubiquitous God could still punish him. Adding another layer of symbolism, the chapel, by facilitating a certain degree of contact between boys and girls, conveyed the message that interaction between both genders was acceptable only under the church terms. This message, which directly supported the school's goal, would occasionally become explicit in the celebration of marriages of school graduates. Along with rites to consecrate Hijas the La Perseverancia, marriages were life-defining ceremonies that marked students' and recent graduates' transition to adulthood. As the venue of this transition, the chapel closed a cycle that could also be summarized spatially: first, separation of boys from girls; then, controlled interaction between both; later, reunion of both, or in the case of the Hijas de la Perseverancia, celebration of the absence of such reunion.

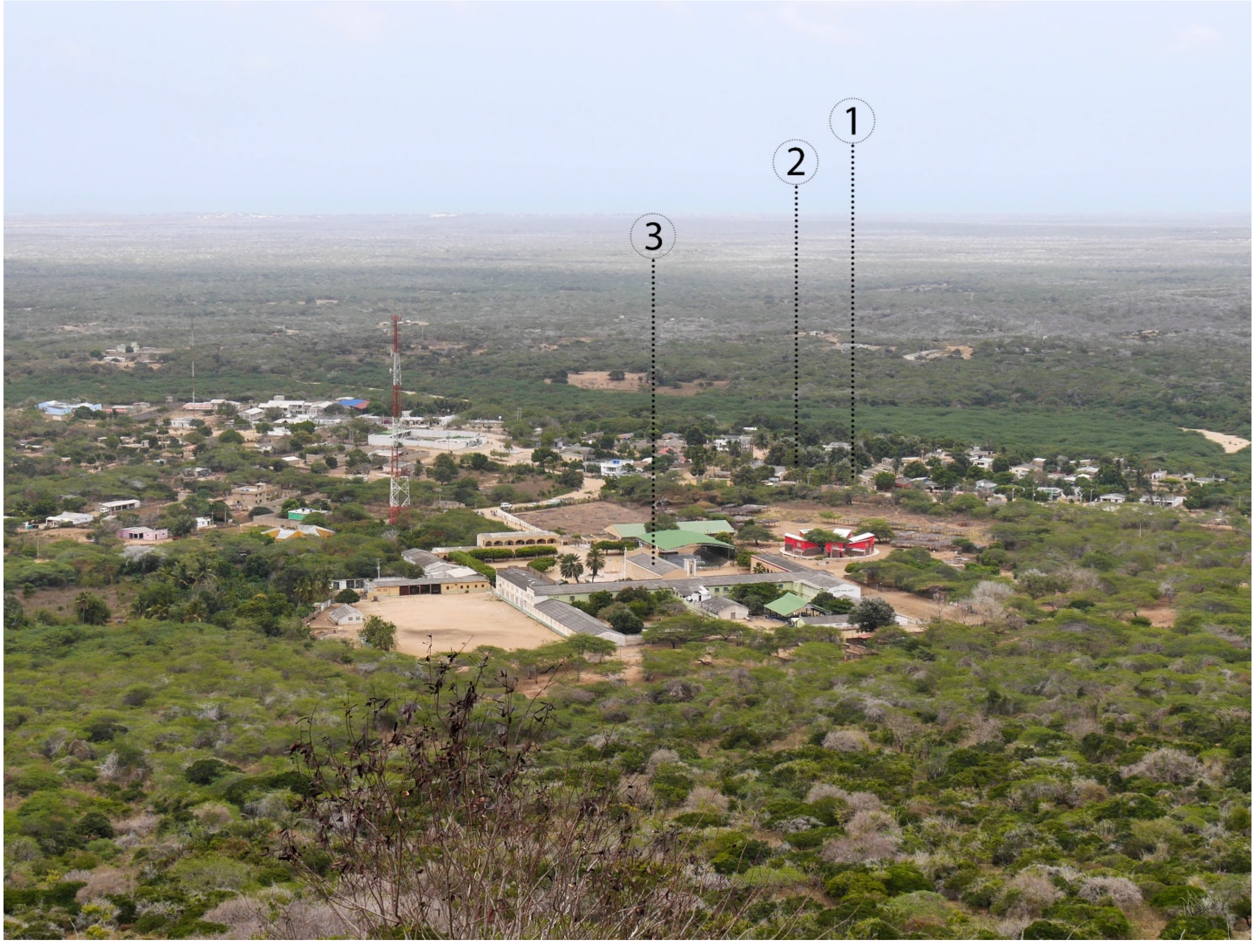

Figure 2.8. Nazaret in 2018, with the new boarding school sitting far from the site once occupied by the original boarding school building. 1) location of mission homes (now gone); 2) site of original boarding school and town plaza; 3) new boarding school building.

In 1958, the walls of the girls' dormitory were falling apart, so the Capuchins decided it was time to move to the new boarding school building, started in 1954 but still unfinished.[85] The original building was almost in ruins, echoing the decay of the original Spanish Capuchin mission that had arrived in La Guajira in 1888. Seven years before moving to the new building, in 1951, a group of young Capuchins coming from Italy had arrived to give fresh energy to the decaying mission, and by 1953 they had taken control.[86] The arrival of the Italians was a blessing for the mission, after urgent requests for missionaries that the Spanish mission had made to Valencia and Rome for over two decades had been mostly unfruitful.[87] The move to the new building, although designed with direct input from the Spanish Capuchins, marked spatially a new era for the mission. Located 1,100 feet away from the original building, the new building was distant from where the mission homes were located, which suggests that the Capuchins either no longer expected to control closely the town dwellers, or that the nature of that control would no longer rely on physical proximity (figure 2.8). The site of the original boarding school and town plaza are now occupied by a hospital, the main health facility in the Alta Guajira. The boarding school still exists, although the Capuchins left in 1989, leaving the school under the management of the Diocese of Riohacha. Since 1978 Colombian laws require schools in indigenous territories to develop curricula in consultation with local communities. However, only in the late 1980s these laws began to have practical effects.[88] Although the narrative of Christian civilization officially disappeared, Nazaret's boarding school still teaches the Catholic doctrine to Wayúu children.

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[85] Alicia, interview by author, Nazatet, Colombia, August 4, 2018.

[86] Informe a Roma sobre Estado de la Misión, July 1,1952, p.17, Libro Riohacha (Guajira), Documentos Varios, 1947-1989, AHCB; Historia de la Misión en La Guajira a Partir de sus Protagonistas y Resumen Estadístico de Distintos Años, book Riohacha (Guajira), Vicariato Apostólico de La Guajira, 1905-1952, section 1: Protagonistas, AHCB.

The degree of success of the boarding school in assimilating Wayúu people is difficult to assess. However, the fact that a few of the school graduates I interviewed identify as Catholics and praise their time in the school suggests that the Capuchins' endeavor bore some fruits. To be sure, all my interviewees lived either in Nazaret or nearby by the time I interviewed them, which unfortunately left behind graduates who returned to their places of origin. Some of my interviewees repeated the narrative of civilization that the Capuchins spread. Gloria, for example, when telling me her version of the boarding school's history, mentioned that "the Wayúus didn't know the civilization," implying that it had been brought by the Capuchins.[89] After graduating and working as a teacher in other places of La Guajira for a few years, she herself worked for the government spreading among Wayúus a version of civilization that echoed what she had learned in the boarding school. Working as "Mejoradora del Hogar" (home improver) in the 1960s, she visited Wayúu families in their homes to teach them "proper" gender roles, hygiene principles, basic-furniture making, flower planting, rudiments to organize the home by functional zones, and the importance of separating the sleeping areas of teenage boys and girls.[90] Today, despite having been banned from speaking Wayunaiki during her boarding school years, she speaks the language when communicating with her family and other Wayúus, and proudly identifies as Wayúu. Her ability to operate smoothly within two frameworks is not unique to her but has been observed among Wayúus for years. As anthropologist Roberto Pineda explains, miscegenation —stemming from the historically long contact between Wayúus and *alijunas*— has produced generations of Wayúus and mestizos (mix of Wayúu and *alijuna*) that identify with one group or the other according to what circumstances demand.[91] The Spanish Capuchins would never have approved this hybrid operation of the "civilized" Wayúu. Although they tried to link Catholic and Wayúu traditions as part of their evangelizing strategy (for example, by turning a Wayúu spirit into the Catholic God), the path they laid out for Wayúus to become Catholic Colombians was defined to a great extent in opposition to what being Wayúu was.

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[87] A few of the urgent requests for missionaries are, Fr. Bienvenido de Xiles to Fr. Ludovico de Castellón, Superior of Capuchin Order in Valencia, December 26, 1931, volume 804 Vic. Ap. Guajira, Superiores Regulares (1913-1952), folder 80411 Bienvenido de Xiles, APCV; Fr. Bienvenido de Xiles to General Secretary of Capuchin Missions in Rome, July 18, 1934, volume 804 Vic. Ap. Guajira, Superiores Regulares (1913-1952), folder 80411 Bienvenido de Xiles, APCV; Fr. José de Suesca to Fr. Ludovico de Castellón, Superior of Capuchin Order in Valencia, October 23, 1948, book Riohacha (Guajira), Documentos Varios, 1947-1989, AHCB.

[88] Tulio Rojas Curieux, "La Etnoeducación en Colombia: Un Trecho Andado y un Largo Camino por Recorrer," *Colombia Internacional*, no. 46 (2010): 45-59.

[89] Gloria, interview by author, Riohacha, Colombia, April 28, 2018.

[90] Gloria, interview by author, Nazaret, Colombia, May 12, 2018. A document from a "home improver" working in La Guajira in the early 1970s is useful to understand the scope of these government agents' work, Plan o Proyecto de Labores Factibles de Realizar entre la Comunidad Guajira Dentro de las Funciones de Mejoradora del Hogar, December 16, 1971, CO.AGN.AO, 100.MGOB[2]-3, 98.4.1, Archivo General de la Nación AGN, Bogotá, Colombia.

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[91] Roberto Pineda Giraldo, "Dos Guajiras?," in *La Guajira: de la Memoria al Porvenir. Una Visión Antropológica*, ed. Gerardo I. Ardila (Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 1990), 257-274.

PART II

CHAPTER 3

Building the Socialist Society:

Cuba's Revolutionary 'Escuelas en el Campo' and the Physical Transformation of the Countryside

Introduction

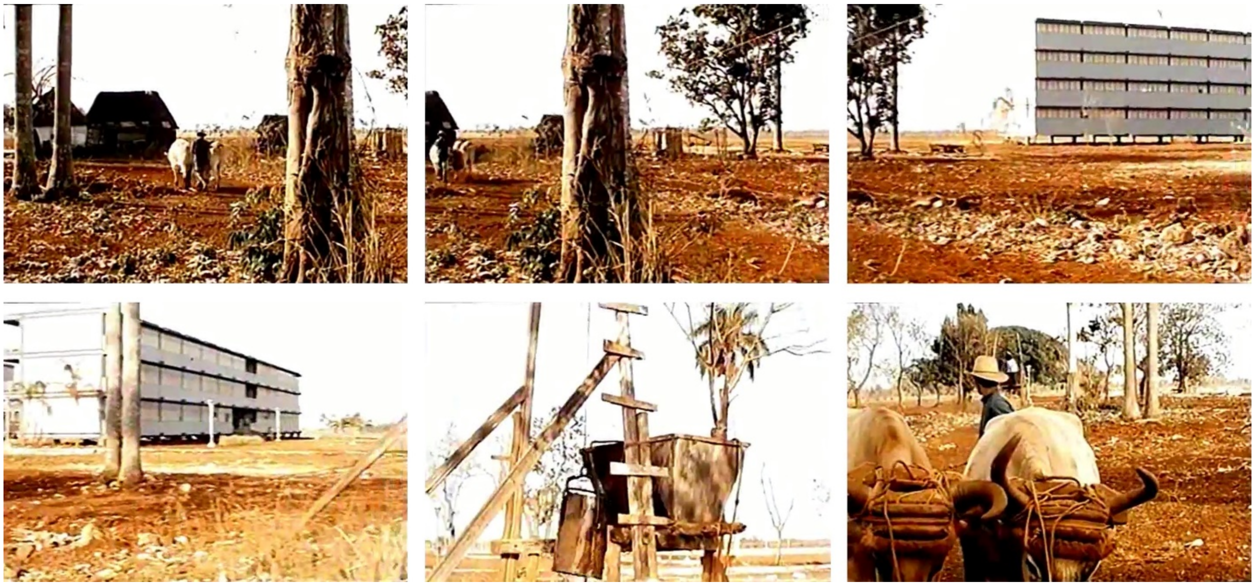

Figure 3.1. Cuba's past, present, and a potentially better future are confronted in this scene of the documentary film *La Nueva Escuela*. Source: *La Nueva Escuela*, directed by Jorge Fraga (1973; Havana: ICAIC), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z4syxjmJRg0.

A scene in the 1973 documentary film *La Nueva Escuela* (The New School), produced by the Cuban government to promote its rural boarding school program, La Escuela en el Campo (The School in the Countryside), compresses into a sweeping pan across the landscape traces of the past that the revolutionary government wanted to eradicate, the state of rupture set by the triumph of the

Revolution in January 1959, and the future to come.[1] Introduced officially in 1971 and silently dismantled after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the program was created to shape the *hombre nuevo* (new man) for the emerging Socialist society while promising prosperity to populations in the countryside. As part of their formation, middle-school students enrolled in the program attended classes and supported agricultural production by working the land surrounding the school buildings. In the scene, shot in an undisclosed location in the Cuban countryside, a farmer walks toward what appears to be his home herding two oxen pulling a rope. The camera pans to the right following the rope and lures the viewer to discover what lies on the other side. Before the viewer realizes the purpose of the animals' effort, the camera, which never stops moving, shows a modern four-story school building that contrasts harshly with the farmer's small wooden hut or *bohío*. The camera keeps moving until it finds a bucket tied to the rope that the animals have been pulling. Two additional shots confirm the viewers' assumption that a human and two oxen are needed to accomplish the basic task of getting water from a well (figure 3.1). The scene answers the narrator's question of what the country's future would be if Cuba stopped educating all their children and youth just to save money. The answer seems to be that without education, represented in the scene by the new school building, Cuba would remain in a state where both lifestyle and production in the countryside would keep lacking the advantages of the modern world. Echoing Fidel Castro's frequent use of the *bohío* in his speeches to represent the countryside's backwardness, the hut in the film stands as a symbol of the past. Its presence next to the school building —an odd occurrence in a site that had to be cleared for heavy machinery to operate during the school's construction— suggests that it was left there for the symbolism it might have in propaganda material.

Before the Revolution's triumph on January 1st, 1959, Cuba was not a poor country in comparison to other Latin American countries, yet the quality of life in the countryside lagged well behind that of urban areas. This situation created an urban-rural divide that the revolutionary leaders wanted to address, congruent with the long-held Communist ideal of eliminating the antagonism between town and countryside.[2] Part of the new government's strategy to bridge the divide was the creation of a more decentralized national territory through physical interventions in the countryside that counterbalanced the importance of Havana. Called by scholars the "urbanization" of the countryside, the strategy included agricultural production plans whose most recognizable elements were the buildings of the rural boarding school program.[3] This reinvented countryside was set to become central in Cuba's social transformation, which largely explains why the government chose it for the ambitious program. Although there is no official information on the total number of rural boarding schools built before the program ended, up to 1980, when the number of students enrolled in Cuban middle schools reached its peak, 418 of these schools had been built.[4] That year, about 225,000 12-to-14-year-old children were living in these buildings, roughly one third of Cuba's middle school population, which bears testimony to the program's importance and the government's confidence in its agenda for the countryside.[5]

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[1] The documentary film, directed by Jorge Fraga, was a national success. One article reported "crowded movie theaters" and "long lines to see the film." E. Valper, "La Nueva Escuela," Cine, *Bohemia*, August 24, 1973, 54.

[2] Richard Gott notes that in the 1950s Cuba had the second highest per capita income in Latin America. Richard Gott, *Cuba: A New History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 165.

[3] Susan Eckstein and David Barkin are among the scholars who use the term "urbanization" to refer to the revolutionary government's construction of infrastructure in Cuba's rural areas. Susan Eckstein, "Las Ciudades en la Cuba Socialista," *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 40, no. 1 (January - April 1978): 155-180; David Barkin, "Confronting the Separation of Town and Country in Cuba," *Antipode* 12, no. 3 (1980): 31-40.

In this chapter, I outline the complex political and ideological forces behind the conception of the rural boarding school program and its spatial setting, and how the program fits into a government strategy to use the built environment to induce social change. In the first part, I focus on how the importance the government gave to education and the pedagogical attributes of work are embedded in the origin of the program, and how these attributes played out in the productive environment of the countryside. In the second part, I establish why interventions in the built environment were considered crucial in the revolutionary government's endeavor to transform society and how the conception of the program's spatial setting was congruent with this idea. In this part, I also explore how the designers of the program's spatial setting followed the officially touted "scientific" approach to problem-solving to conceive, in parallel, a typical building and a prefabrication system to build it. In the last part I look into the diffusion in the press of the government-promoted physical interventions, including the program's spatial setting, to shed light on how the government wanted people to interpret the built environment it was either producing or transforming.

The Cuban revolutionary government saw the built environment as a mirror of the country's social conditions and, acting accordingly, embraced its transformation as a means to change society. Yet, as I show in this chapter, the built environment was not supposed to work alone in its transforming endeavor. Official narratives accompanied the government-promoted physical interventions, including the spatial setting of the rural boarding school program, to offer interpretations of the built environment that supported the construction of Cuban Socialism. These narratives, which propaganda material such as the documentary film helped spread, offered people a guide to read the built environment as both proof of a successful revolutionary process and a glimpse of the brilliant future that Socialism would allegedly bring.

The Rural Boarding School Program and the Pedagogical Attributes of Work in Cuba's Revolutionary Countryside

Education to the Countryside: The Rural Boarding School Program

The whitish building choreographically presented in the documentary film corresponds to the first architectural scheme of the rural boarding school program's typical building. Built for the first time in 1970 and composed originally of four blocks connected through an open gallery corridor, the scheme was adjusted in 1972 to save costs (figure 3.2). The new scheme, the most widely built and the focus of this and next chapter, was composed of three blocks instead of the original four: one three-story block containing classrooms and laboratories, one single-story block holding the kitchen and dining room, and one four-story block containing the dormitories —the original scheme had two (smaller) blocks containing the dormitories. The open gallery corridor that in the original scheme connected only the blocks' first floors was modified to connect also the blocks' second floors in the 1972 scheme. A very different scheme —more compact and with fewer square meters per student— was introduced in 1979 to save even more costs, although a reduced number of schools based on this scheme were built compared to the 1972 scheme. With its characteristic three interconnected blocks, the 1972 version of the boarding school building became the rural boarding school program's predominant building.

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[4] Ministerio de Educación, *Resumen del Trabajo Anual del MINED, Año Escolar 1980-1981* (Havana: MINED, 1981), 460.

[5] The exact number was 223,364 out of the 690,503 students enrolled in middle schools in 1980. Ministerio de Educación, *Resumen del Trabajo Anual del MINED, Año Escolar 1980-1981*, 346.

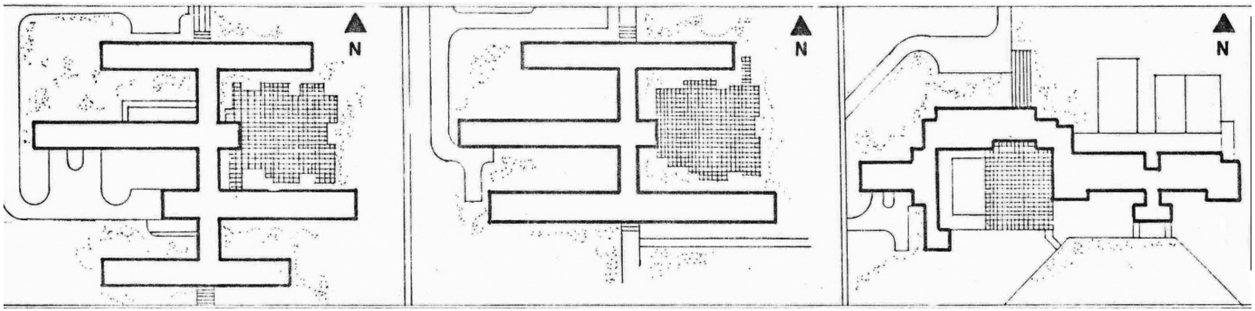

Figure 3.2. The 1970 scheme of the typical building (left) was composed of four blocks which were reduced to three in the 1972 scheme (middle), the most widely built. A third and more compact scheme was introduced in 1979 (right), although few schools based on it were built compared to the 1972 scheme. Source: MICONS, *Criterios de Racionalización* (Havana: MICONS, 1987).

The rural boarding school program La Escuela en el Campo was introduced in 1971 after having started its experimental stage in 1967 in extant buildings adapted for the program.[6] As part of the program, 7th to 9th grade students coming from rural and urban areas would live together in the countryside for up to three years, dividing their day between classroom and farming activities.[7] La Escuela en el Campo was the evolution of a shorter program introduced in 1965, La Escuela al Campo (The School to the Countryside), where high school and university students were taken to the countryside for six weeks to work in agricultural production.[8] By working the land along local peasants, one of the goals of the rural boarding school program was to connect urban and rural dwellers, contributing in this way to the campaign to bridge the rural-urban divide.[9] However, the program's main goal was to exploit the pedagogic potential of work to shape the future society. As explained in a pamphlet published by the Ministry of Education in 1972, the idea was to "educate children with a producers' mentality instead of a consumers' mentality."[10] In the context of Communism, the program was arguably the most sophisticated mechanism that the Cuban Revolution ever devised to shape the *hombre nuevo*, a new subject willing to put the society's well-being before his own; the human basis of the country's social transformation (The following chapter unpacks the idea of the *hombre nuevo* more thoroughly).[11]

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[6] Denise Blum mentions June 28, 1967, as the experimental beginning of the program. Denise F. Blum, *Cuban Youth and Revolutionary Values: Educating the New Socialist Citizen* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 55.

[7] Up until 1976, when middle school education went from 7th to 10th grade, students were expected to live up to four years in the rural boarding schools.

[8] Ministerio de Educación, Comité Provincial del Partido Comunista de Cuba, *La Escuela al Campo: Programación 1968 - La Habana* (Havana: MINED, 1967), 7-11.

The Central Role of Education in the Revolution

In August 1959, only eight months after the Revolution's triumph, a decisive moment sent a clear message on the new government's commitment to education. As if explicitly signaling the central role to be granted to education and, at the same time, the rupture between the old and the new regimes, the revolutionary government handed over the main military post in Havana, Camp Columbia, to the Ministry of Education to be transformed into a huge school complex, Ciudad Libertad.[12] Similar interventions were to be made in military barracks in different parts of the island.[13] With this act, widely publicized in the national press, a place associated with the defeated Fulgencio Batista regime became a place associated with a better future, suggesting that the old regime's use of force to instill social order would be replaced with education.

Although a commitment to offer widespread access to education had been included in the 26 of July Movement's (the revolutionary movement) plans for the country since early on, it was the official narrative of the guerrillas' struggle against government troops in the eastern Sierra Maestra which had set education as a mythical component of the revolutionary fight. Overshadowing the crucial contribution of the urban militias, official accounts have framed the late-1950s' struggle in the rural Sierra Maestra as a decisive period for the revolutionary endeavor.[14] Writing on this subject,

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[9] In the Revolution's early years there was a clear difference between peasants (*campesinos*) and farm workers (*obreros agrícolas*). A peasant worked the land he owned, and a farm worker was hired to work in land owned by either peasants or the government. In this dissertation, I use the term peasant to refer to both *campesinos* and *obreros agrícolas*.

[10] Ministerio de Educación, *Secundaria Básica en el Campo* (Havana: MINED, c.1972).

[11] For a detailed official description of the program, see Max Figueroa, Abel Prieto, and Raúl Gutiérrez, *La Escuela Secundaria Básica en el Campo: Una Innovación Educativa en Cuba* (Paris: Editorial de la Unesco, 1974).

[12] Denise Blum mentions the symbolism of this action, and signals how it has been used by the Revolution to stress the contrast between the "benevolent, humanitarian 'revolutionary style' and the immoral, unjust 'Batistiano style'." Denise F. Blum, *Cuban Youth and Revolutionary Values,* 54.

[13] María Victoria Zardoya, "La Arquitectura Educacional de los Sesenta en Cuba," *Revista Científica de Arquitectura y Urbanismo* 36, no.3 (2015): 5-19.

[14] In her discussion of how mass media and massive rallies enhanced the image of Fidel Castro as leader of the Revolution, Lillian Guerra explains the media's role in attributing the triumph of the Revolution to the guerrillas led by Castro in the Sierra Maestra, downplaying the crucial role of the urban fighters. Lilian Guerra, "The Olive Green Revolution: Media, Mass Rallies, Agrarian Reform, and the Birth of the Fidelista State," chap. 1 in *Visions of Power in Cuba: Revolution, Redemption, and Resistance, 1959-1971* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 37-74.

Ernesto "Che" Guevara depicted this experience not only as a stage that strengthened the revolutionary army in terms of numbers and confidence, but also as a period of learning:

> As a result of daily contact with these people and their problems, we became fully convinced of the need for a complete change in the life of our people. The idea of an agrarian reform became crystal-clear. Communion with the people ceased to be a mere theory to become an integral part of ourselves.[15]

As described by Guevara, awareness of the importance of introducing an agrarian reform —the engine of the countryside transformation— resulted from the exchange between peasants and guerrillas in the mountains. There, Guevara was not only a warrior, but also a medical doctor and instructor teaching people to write and read.[16] Stressing the pedagogical component of the Sierra Maestra experience, written and graphic accounts of guerrillas teaching peasants in the mountains circulated broadly in the late 1950s and became part of the 26 of July Movement's rhetoric supporting its ambitious educational plan.

One of the first noticeable efforts showing the Revolution's commitment to education took place in 1961. That year, officially labeled Año de la Educación (Year of Education), the government launched a literacy campaign without precedents in Latin America. Thousands of Cubans coming mostly from urban areas, among them over 100,000 volunteers, flooded the countryside to teach peasants to read and write.[17] Setting the ideological tone that education has in Cuba, the pedagogical material employed in the campaign revealed the new Communist ideology of the Revolution, officially announced in April 1961, although prior to this day the revolutionary movement had been framed as purely nationalist.[18] The success of the literacy campaign not only demonstrated the Revolution's commitment to education, but also set the basis for a second campaign started in 1962, the Batalla por el Sexto Grado (Battle for the Sixth Grade). This time the aim was that the now literate people continued their education taking advantage of the growing number of schools being built by the government in rural areas. The success of this new campaign was evident in the increasing demand for middle-school education in the late sixties, which justified to a certain extent the government's interest in introducing the rural boarding school program. Another reason justifying the program was that the countryside would be a good scenario to take full advantage of the pedagogical attributes of work that the government promoted.

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[15] Ernesto Guevara, *Episodes of the Revolutionary War* (New York: International Publishers, 1968), 56-57, originally published in Spanish in 1963.

[16] Denise Blum identifies the Sierra Maestra experience as foundational in the ideological overtones of education in Cuba. See especially chapter 1 in Denise F. Blum, *Cuban Youth and Revolutionary Values.*

[17] Marvin Lerner, "The 1961 National Cuban Literacy Campaign," in *National Literacy Campaigns: Historical and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Robert F. Arnove and Harvey J. Graff (New York: Plenum Press, 1987), 173-196.

[18] See Lillian Guerra's description of the material used in the campaign. Lilian Guerra, *Visions of Power in Cuba,* 165-166. The Communist character of the Revolution was announced by Fidel Castro on April 16th, 1961, in an event commemorating the victims of the air attacks preceding the failed US-sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion.

Learning from Working in the Countryside's New Productive Landscape

Located in the middle of crop fields, the rural boarding schools were seamlessly ingrained in the agricultural plans developed as part of the campaign to bridge the urban-rural divide. The plans, which the government crafted from Havana, were part of a larger system of non-hierarchical networks of towns that the government was building countrywide to counteract the importance of the country's capital. Each network was composed of towns that supported one another with produce, industrial products, and services. The construction of this network implied the replacement of peasant *bohíos* with small new towns grouping rural population to facilitate people's inclusion in the networks.[19] The agricultural plans became widely implemented across the country by 1968 and followed the same strategy. First, the government resurveyed large extensions of land erasing the traces of former land subdivision. Then, it built the infrastructure needed to provide basic services and support farming activities, and opened roads to connect the area to nearby towns. The farmable land was then divided among the government and cooperatives formed by land-owning peasants willing to be part of the plan. [20]

The rural boarding schools embedded in each agricultural plan formed their own network, sharing facilities, transportation, and allowing exchange among students. A blueprint of a citrus crop plan for the province of Camagüey shows the logic behind the agricultural plans and the integration of the boarding schools to them (figure 3.3). In the blueprint, the grid shows the equal distribution of land among the boarding schools, those in construction or already built represented with filled dots and those planned represented with outlined dots. Each school had about 500 hectares (1,235 acres) of land for its students to farm. Given that each school was designed for 500 students, this meant roughly 1 hectare (2.5 acres) of farmable land per student[21]. The regularity of the grid in the blueprint contrasts with the boundaries of the plan (bold line), disclosing a clash between the new centralized management of the rural territory and the old piecemeal land subdivision product of private ownership. The centralized management of the territory also facilitated long-term planning, hence the representation of the not-yet built boarding schools in the blueprint. Networks, agricultural plans and boarding schools constituted a centrally planned and managed system set to boost the country's productivity and allow a more equitable distribution of resources across the territory (if compared to the old regime.)

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[19] Paul Susman, "Spatial Equality in Cuba," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, no. 11 (1987): 218-42.

[20] For an overview of the territorial transformation of the countryside in the first two and a half decades of the Revolution, see, Roberto Segre, *Arquitectura y Urbanismo de la Revolución Cubana* (Havana: Editorial Pueblo y Educación, 1989), 51-59, 137-142.

[21] Max Figueroa, Abel Prieto, and Raúl Gutiérrez, *La Escuela Secundaria Básica en el Campo,* 20.

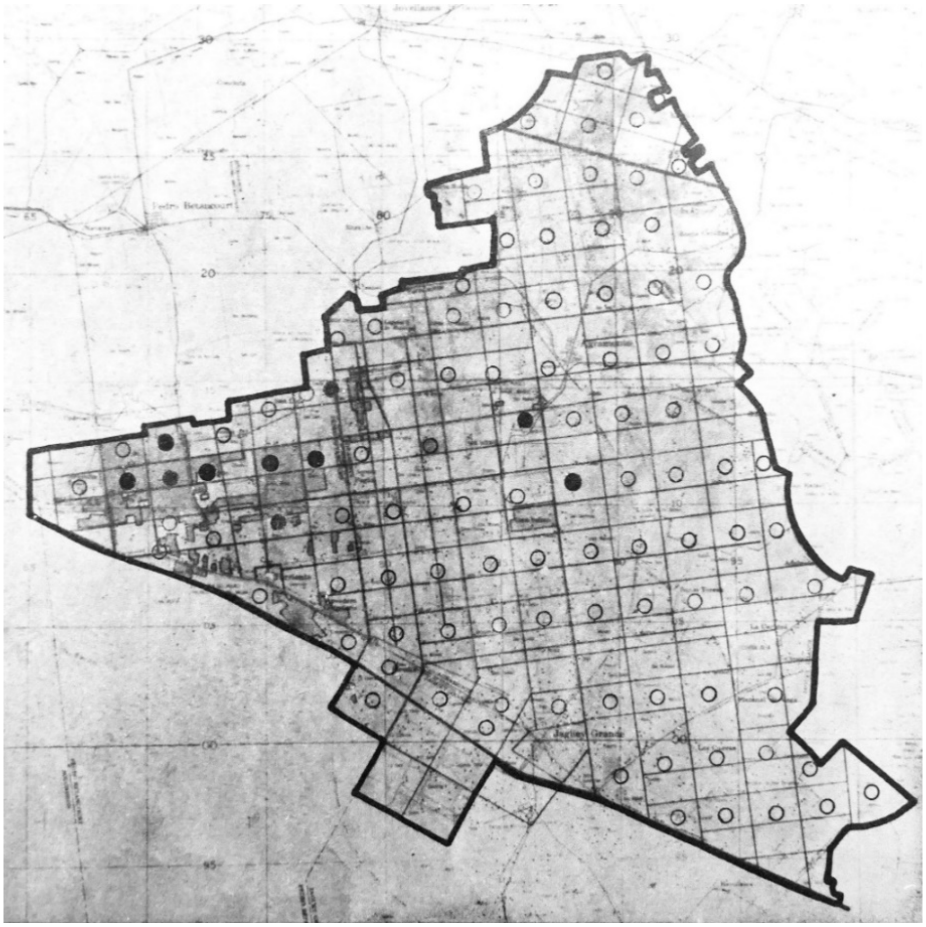

Figure 3.3. Filled dots represent the rural boarding schools in construction in this citrus crop plan in the province of Camagüey. Outlined dots represent the schools projected. Set against the irregular line that marks the plan's boundaries, the regular grid representing the 500 hectares of land allocated to each school discloses the clash between new and old forms of land tenure and territorial planning. Source: DESA, *La Arquitectura Escolar de la Revolución Cubana: Seminario Internacional de Construcciones Escolares* (Havana: Editorial Organismos, 1973), 91.

In the production-centered setting of the rural boarding schools, students spent three hours a day working the land. Yet the convenience of the study-work combination, one of the main tenets of the rural boarding school program, had to be carefully sold to parents before they agreed to enroll their children in the program. One of the strategies that the government used to do so was to embed the method, borrowed from Marxism-Leninism, with locally-produced ideas. In Marxist-Leninist thought the study-work combination was considered essential. Under this view, if social conditions were the outcome of the production means, organizing education around new ways of production should help change social conditions. Approaching the first stage of Communism, Socialism, the Cuban government adhered to the Marxist-Lenininist rationale that supported the study-work combination. Conveniently, the method coincided in shape, although not entirely in intention, with local intellectual José Martí's thoughts on education. Aware of the Latin American economic dependence on agriculture, the 19th-century author advocated for schools where intellectual and manual work were not separated.[22] His ideas were more a claim for an education connected to local realities than a carte-blanche endorsement of the pedagogical role of work. Nonetheless, fusing Marxist-Leninist ideas and Martí's thoughts in a way that blurred the different contexts where they had been produced, the official narrative on the rural boarding school program nationalized the study-work combination making it more appealing to Cubans.[23] This strategy of juxtaposing divergent ideas to produce an apparently coherent narrative is graphically visible in the program's logo (figure 3.4). In the logo, open books represent the leaves of a plant that grows until reaching maturity, subtly implying that the study-work combination is a natural occurrence.

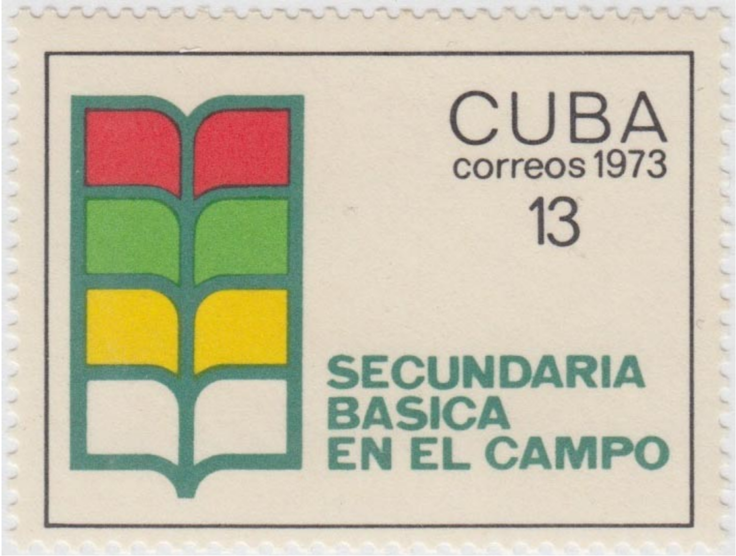

Figure 3.4. Plant and book leaves coalesce in the logo of the rural boarding school program to represent the study-work combination. Source: Postal stamp, Correos de Cuba, 1973, author's personal archive.

Although the official narrative on the rural boarding school program never addressed whether it was based on a previous experience, the program was strikingly similar to the Khrushchev era's Soviet program of boarding schools (*shkoly internaty*) that also exploited the study-work combination. Introduced in 1956 and gradually dismantled after Khrushchev's removal from power, the Soviet program became part of the official plan to connect education and practical work approved by the Supreme Soviet, the Soviet parliament, in 1958. This plan had retooled the approach to education of the United Labor Schools started by Lenin, which operated in Soviet Russia between 1918 and 1937. In Lenin's labor schools, the subjects' content was linked to productive activities and a Labor Education subject taught students basic skills to operate tools, machinery, and perform other manual tasks.[24] Khrushchev's boarding schools not only built on the labor schools' experience, but also extended its scope. They were conceived to have a ten-year curriculum and were set to become the model for children's collective upbringing, deemed necessary for the Soviet Union to reach full Communism. Located predominantly in rural and suburban areas, the Khrushchev's schools had ideally up to 550 students and operated in close coordination with nearby industrial facilities and agricultural production units.[25] Close to this Soviet example, Cuba's rural boarding school program limited each school to 500 pupils, although they had only a three-year curriculum. Unlike the Soviet Union by the time Khrushchev's boarding schools were introduced, Cuba was just in the initial stages of Socialism when its own program started. At this point in time, although in the official rhetoric spread by the Cuban government the predominance of the collective over the individual was central, full collective upbringing was not in the government plans. Nonetheless, based on a curriculum connected to productive work that also included a Labor Education subject, the Cuban rural boarding school program likely drew from the Soviet experience.

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[22] Miguel de Armas Rodríguez, "Raíces Históricas de la Combinación del Estudio con el Trabajo," *Revista Educación*, no. 56 (January-March 1985): 103-107.

[23] Denise Blum also highlights this blending of Marxism-Leninism and José Martí's ideas. Denise Blum, *Cuban Youth and Revolutionary Values,* 10-11.

The Cuban government's confidence in the study-work combination is seen in the use of the method on a permanent basis in scenarios different from the rural boarding school program. Experiments in which elementary schools incorporated agricultural production were tried early in the Revolution and, as part of the ongoing experimentation, in some elementary schools the government used the study-work combination in fields different from agriculture.[26] For instance, in an elementary school opened in 1973 in Alamar, one of the new residential districts that the revolutionary government was building in Havana, third graders and older boys worked two hours every day assembling plastic toys. One article published in *Bohemia* magazine, the oldest and most important variety magazine in the country (still in print), reports on the experience.[27] According to the article, "it is enough to see how these 'little-workers' behave in the workshop to appreciate the moral and pedagogic value of work. […] They try to do more and improve the product's quality, they want to keep working even beyond their two daily hours destined to work." Children's and mothers' words praising the study-work combination were also included in an attempt to appease potential criticism. To dissipate doubts on how work might affect instruction's quality, the article recalled the experience of the rural boarding school program, pointing out that the current academic results in these schools were superior to those of other middle schools in the country.[28] The different iterations of the study-work combination constituted in the end a testing ground of the method, which would endure its ultimate test in the rural boarding school program. In it, economic benefits would join the method's claimed pedagogical attributes.

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[24] For a discussion of the decline of labor education in 1930s Soviet Russia, see Larry E. Holmes, "Magic into Hocus-pocus: The Decline of Labor Education in Soviet Russia's Schools, 1931-1937," *The Russian Review* 51, no. 4 (1992): 545-565.

[25] Effie Ambler, "The Soviet Boarding School," *American Slavic and East European Review* 20, no. 2 (1961): 237-252.

[26] Denise F. Blum, *Cuban Youth and Revolutionary Values,* 55; Fidel Castro, "Discurso Pronunciado en la Clausura del IV Congreso de la Asociación Nacional de Agricultores Pequeños," (speech, ANAP - IV Congress, Havana, Cuba, December 31, 1971), http://www.fidelcastro.cu/es/discursos/discurso-pronunciado-en-la-clausura-del-iv-congreso-de-la-asociacion-nacional-de.

[27] In the first years after the Revolution's triumph *Bohemia* was essential in shaping public opinion in favor of Fidel Castro. Lilian Guerra, *Visions of Power in Cuba: Revolution, Redemption, and Resistance, 1959-1971*, 42-44.

[28] Oscar F. Rego, "La Primera Escuela de Estudio-Trabajo de Alamar," *Bohemia,* May 25, 1973, 6.

Students turned student-workers in the rural boarding schools also worked to help reduce the shortage of rural labor in the countryside and cover the costs of their education. Fidel Castro's optimism in the economic self-sustainability of the costly program is evident in a 1971 speech: "[…] we understand that production in these schools will practically cover their costs and expenditures. If this is the case, ¡ah! then we can build an unlimited number of this type of schools."[29] In another speech delivered later that year, he even ventures to give concrete numbers: "The plan for 1980 was to have about 700 boarding schools completed. We are going to fight to build 1000. Half a million youth —half a million youth!— would be taking part of productive work. And their production would be higher than the value of ten-million tons of sugar. Do you see?"[30] Behind these words lay the Cuban leader's enthusiasm for having apparently devised a way to shape the new Socialist man without incurring in extra costs as well as his ability to portray the present reality as a hint of the brilliant future to come. Still, commitment to widespread education, trust in the study-work combination, and economic benefits did not completely justify the creation of a whole new environment for middle-school students. As I show next, the rural boarding school program was also justified in the revolutionary government's belief in the determinant role that the built environment should play in Cuba's social transformation.

The Built Environment and the Construction of the Socialist Society

The Transforming Attributes of the Built Environment

On March 10, 1959, five months before the government announced the conversion of Camp Columbia —Batista's main military post in Havana— into a school complex, a more informal act sent Cuban people a powerful message on the role of the built environment for the Revolution. Camilo Cienfuegos, one of the three main revolutionary leaders and brother of the architect who later that year would become head of the Ministry of Public Works (later renamed Ministry of Construction), tore down one of the walls of the military complex as a material sign of liberation. Leaving no doubt about the meaning of his act, Cienfuegos stated:

> After a long seven-year wait, the offensive walls built by the tyranny are finally torn down, leaving behind the broken freedom, the violated rights, the humiliated honor. After seven years of mourning and blood, the people,

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[29] Fidel Castro, "Discurso Pronunciado en la Inauguración de la Escuela Secundaria Básica en el Campo 'La Taza de Oro'," (speech, Torriente, Matanzas, Cuba, April 25, 1971), http://www.fidelcastro.cu/es/discursos/discurso-pronunciado-en-la-inauguracion-de-la-escuela-secundaria-basica-en-el-campo-la.

[30] Fidel Castro, "Discurso Pronunciado en la Clausura del IV Congreso de la Asociación Nacional de Agricultores Pequeños."

> represented by the Revolutionary Army, tear down these walls, leftovers of such tyranny, and announces: another military post down.[31]

The moment was originally registered in a photo that circulated widely in the Cuban press. However, a 1972 illustration tells a story that not only captures the moment when the wall is being torn down but also the event's aftermath (figure 3.5). Unlike the original photo, the wall in the illustration has been partially torn down and a sign identifies the military barrack. On the other side of the wall, a school representing the military buildings that the revolutionary government converted into educational facilities over the years is visible, topped with a sign that reads "to be educated is to be free." In this way, the illustration conflates years of revolutionary action into a single shot. Most importantly for this chapter, these years of action are shown through interventions upon the built environment. In the image, the armed struggle to defeat the Batista regime becomes the heavy tool that hits the wall; the wall —to which also a chain has been added— represents, as suggested by Cienfuegos, the triumph of the Revolution; and the school building embodies the Revolution's promise of a brilliant future. Ultimately, what this illustration and the story —which became part of the official narrative of the Revolution— show is the government's understanding of the built environment as a tool to measure and instill social change.

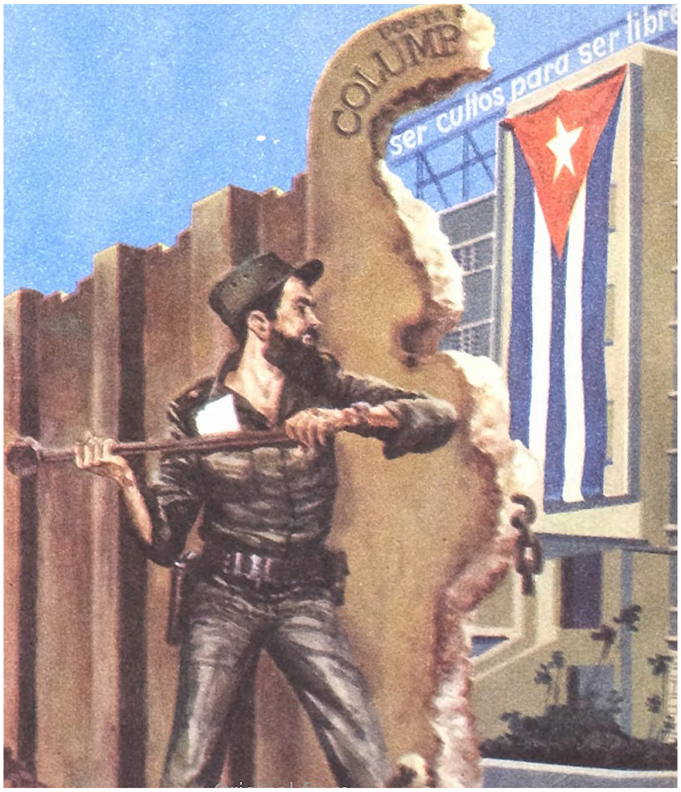
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Figure 3.5. In this illustration of the moment when one of the Revolution leaders tears down a wall of the most important Batista-era's military complex, years of revolutionary action are represented through an intervention upon the built environment. Source: *Educación: Revista Trimestral del Ministerio de Educación* 1, no. 3 (1971): cover.

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[31] B.V.T., "10 de Marzo, 2 y 40 de la Madrugada: ¡Derribada la Ignomiosa Posta 4!," *Bohemia*, March 15, 1959, 83.

An event held in Havana nearly a year after the Revolution seized power provided a concrete case of how the built environment could be used to represent a changing society. The Soviet Exhibition of Science, Technology and Culture opened its doors in Havana on February 6, 1960, after having been on view in Mexico City. It was the Latin American version of an exhibition under the same name held in New York in the summer of 1959 that was part of the Soviet Union's efforts to export a peaceful and modern image of the country to the West. Occupying 9,000 square meters (96,900 square foot), the Cuban iteration of the exhibition was larger than the Mexican counterpart. Between eight hundred thousand and one million people visited the Havana exhibition during the three weeks it lasted, roughly one eight of Cuba's population.[32] For those who could not attend, the local press —by then not controlled by the government— published ample coverage of the event.[33] A major part of the exhibition included working machinery and models of artifacts and buildings aimed to show the Soviet Union's transformation since the 1917 Bolshevik revolution.[34] Part of the exhibited material, such as the model of a stadium and the model of the impressive central building of Moscow University, managed to add physicality to the country's less material achievements in sports and education. Overall, one of the messages of the exhibition was that social transformations had clear material manifestations, many of them in the shape of buildings and other physical interventions in the landscape. Yet, since in the context of Marxist materialism the built environment was an essential component of the infrastructure (or material base) that determines social structures, another message of the exhibition was that interventions in the built environment had been essential in the Soviet Union's social transformation.[35]

By declaring the Communist character of the Revolution in April 1961, the revolutionary government also embraced the ideology's tenets on the built environment. Namely, its rendering of the built environment as a representation of the productive forces shaping society and its understanding of physical interventions as feasible mechanisms to alter these forces. Reports published in the government-controlled press occasionally supported this view by implying cause and effect connections between physical interventions and social transformation. In one article published in 1973 the DESA (Desarrollo de Edificaciones Sociales y Agropecuarias), the Ministry of Construction's division in charge of the construction and maintenance of public infrastructure since 1970, was compared with a gardener that seeded buildings all over Cuba, suggesting the transformative role that the government granted to its physical interventions.[36] In a 1975 article, Teodoro, portrayed as an old man about to retire, allegedly told a reporter that after noticing the "construction fever" taking place in his region, he now wanted to work in construction instead of retiring. Changes in the landscape, the article claimed, had inspired the old man to change his life plans.[37]

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[32] Austin Yost, "Exposiciones Soviéticas: Selling Socialist Modernity in the US's backyard" (Master thesis, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2015), 14, https://doi.org/10.17615/gppg-cy62.

[33] For example, the literary supplement *Lunes de Revolución*, part of the newspaper *Revolución,* devoted a complete issue to the exhibition, and the Revista INRA included a 6-page report on the event in one of its issues. *Lunes de Revolución*, February 8, 1960; Antonio Pequeño, "La Exposición Soviética en La Habana," *INRA Revista Mensual Ilustrada,* February 1960, 24-29.

[34] Austin Yost, "Exposiciones Soviéticas," 26-37; Report on the Work of the Soviet Exhibition in Mexico Year 1959, 1959, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Russian State Archive of the Economy, f. 635, op. 1, d. 392, ll. 1-12, http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/122362, translated for CWIHP by Vanni Pettina.

[35] For an interesting discussion on the use of architecture in the Soviet Union as an ideological tool to induce social change, see Caroline Humphrey, "Ideology in Infrastructure: Architecture and Soviet Imagination," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 11, no. 1 (2005): 39-58.

Backing the transformative attributes that the Revolution gave to the built environment is anthropologist Denise Blum's interpretation of different programs still operating in Cuba's education system. Referring to the programs that require people's mobilization to different areas of the country —some of them dating back to the first years of revolutionary government— Blum explains that these reenact the Sierra Maestra experience in which, as reported by "Che" Guevara, close interaction between peasants and guerrillas led to the individuals' transformation. This experience, known as guerrilla-focus theory, was enabled by the mobilization of the guerrillas (many of them urban middle-class militants) to the countryside.[38] The kind of programs mentioned by Blum, along with the propaganda material establishing connections between physical interventions and social change, subtly put in people's minds the official expectations on the built environment's role in the making of the new society.[39]

Regardless of the actual contribution of the physical interventions to social change, their mere production pushed people to adopt new ways —an early step toward personal and social transformation. In the resurveying of the land to create the agricultural production plans where the rural boarding schools were located, for example, peasants were asked to agree to new forms of land tenure and exploitation. As Fidel Castro mentioned in a 1971 speech, after turning peasants into land owners, the next step had been to persuade them to integrate their land into collective ownership schemes, which required a personal transformation: "When we say that the objective […] will be to erase all traces of social class and private ownership of the production means, this means progress on political matters, especially on [the peasants'] conscience. This has to be achieved with freedom: this process has to be truly voluntary."[40] A different scenario with analog implications was people's participation in the *microbrigadas* (microbrigades). Started in 1970, the microbrigadas are groups of workers that leave their job temporarily to work for the government in construction activities as free labor. Originally created to support housing construction, the role of the microbrigadas was expanded into other building types in the 1980s. As part of a microbrigada, a participant is expected to work more hours per week than his regular workload and his coworkers are expected to work longer and more efficiently to cover up for the tasks he left behind at his workplace.[41] In both the peasants' and microbrigadas' case, participating one way or another in the transformation of the Cuban physical environment meant participating in the transformation of one's own persona. The importance attributed to physical interventions in the making of the Socialist society is also evident in the attention that the government paid to the conception of the rural boarding school program's typical building.

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[36] *Bohemia*, Bohemia Económica, May 11, 1973, 34.

[37] Jaime Sarusky, "La 'Varita Mágica' del Escambray," *Bohemia*, July 18, 1975, 4.

[38] Denise F. Blum, *Cuban Youth and Revolutionary Values,* 21-71, 178-204.

[39] Denise Blum uses the expression "person-in-the-environment approach" to describe the mobilization of people to challenging places around pedagogic activities. Denise F. Blum, *Cuban Youth and Revolutionary Values,* 215.

[40] Fidel Castro, "Discurso Pronunciado en la Clausura del IV Congreso de la Asociación Nacional de Agricultores Pequeños."

The Country's Political and Architectural Vanguard and the Conception of the Boarding School Typical Building

Behind the conception of the rural boarding school program and its typical building was Fidel Castro. The leader's direct involvement in the program during its early years shows the program's relevance for the revolutionary government as well as the central role that the built environment was expected to have in the making of the new society. A hint of Castro's involvement in the program can be seen in the inaugural speech of one of the rural boarding schools where he speaks up his distaste for the color chosen for the building and suggests corrective action: "the orange color predominates here too much. […] we are not going to change it now, of course. We will have to wait. But when it is time for maintenance, we must think on a more harmonious color scheme."[42] Maria Elena Frade, an architect who started working in the rural boarding school program in 1971 and still works for the Ministry of Construction, explains the extent of Castro's participation in the building's design. She recalls the multiple work meetings with Fidel in which he would question every aspect of the typical building and "would even choose the color of the floor tiles."[43] Castro's meticulous overseeing of the program in its first years is also evident in the documentary film *La Nueva Escuela* in which the charismatic leader animatedly discusses with students the selection of the student uniforms.[44] The leader's micromanagement style is ultimately reflected in the state's minute control of all the program's aspects, including all the scales of the program's typical building —what from here on I refer to as total-design approach. This over centralization of decision-making seemed to contradict the whole idea of reducing the importance of Havana, which was one of the goals of the campaign to bridge the rural-urban divide, and disclosed a division of society into powerful rulers, on one hand, and regular citizens, on the other hand.

This division of society was not unexpected. In fact, it was intentional. Since the Revolution's official adoption of Communism in 1961, it was clear that the only way to sustain the new government over time would be through a political system where citizens would be subject to decisions made by their leaders. As explained later by Ernesto "Che" Guevara, this system echoed the guerrillas' experience in the Sierra Maestra, which he saw as a journey analog to the construction of Socialism in Cuba. In the Sierra Maestra, the vanguard, those most advanced ideologically and most willing to sacrifice, opened the road and led the platoon. Analogously, in society, those most advanced ideologically would be the vanguard, and those who "see only by halves, and must be subjected to incentives and pressures of some intensity" would constitute the mass.[45] This two-tier system resembled the Soviet *Nomenklatura* system consolidated under Stalin's rule, which grouped and ranked government officials.[46] Cuba's system, as Guevara stated, would be required until all Cubans had reached the vanguard's level.[47] Only then, the Cuban Communist Party (PCC), the institution grouping the country's vanguard, would become the "party of the masses."[48]

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[41] Kosta Mathéy, "Microbrigadas in Cuba: A Collective Form of Self-Help Housing," *The Netherlands Journal of Housing and Environmental Research* 4, no. 1 (1989): 67-83.

[42] Fidel Castro, "Discurso Pronunciado en la Inauguración de la Escuela Secundaria Básica en el Campo 'La Taza de Oro.'"

[43] Maria Elena Frade, interview by author, Havana, December 8, 2018.

[44] *La Nueva Escuela*, directed by Jorge Fraga (1973; Havana: ICAIC), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z4syxjmJRg0.

Despite the existence of the party, in practice, at least during the life of the rural boarding school program, all important decisions in Cuba were not the outcome of the vanguard's collective debate but of the will of the Revolution leaders headed by Fidel Castro. The re-organization of the PCC begun after its first congress in 1975 and the introduction in 1976 of the organs of People's Power, a system modeled after the Russian Soviets to ensure citizens' participation in decision-making, were supposed to mean less decision power in the hands of the Revolution leaders.[49] However, the organs of People's Power were actually dominated by party members and the party was dominated by its Politburo, which Fidel Castro headed.[50] Moreover, even though meetings to make decisions at the most basic territorial levels were held regularly in these organs, the discussions' limited impact on local reality and the importance of backing the official discourse as a demonstration of loyalty with the Revolution biased the decisions towards the vanguard's preferences.[51] In the end, notwithstanding the political structure created to empower the mass, the will of the vanguard's head, Fidel Castro, kept shaping Cuba until the first years of the twenty-first century.

The total-design approach that the government promoted for the boarding school program seemed to appeal to the architecture team in charge of designing the program's typical building. In a presentation at the First National Congress of Education held in Havana in 1971, the architects interpreted the lack of coherence among buildings, furniture, pedagogic material, and graphic design before the Revolution as a symptom of the "capitalist fractioning of industrial production." They criticized the "lack of coherence between the spatial settings of schools, dwellings, and everyday places" in pre-revolutionary times, stressing how under Socialism having the control of land, industry, and human resources meant the possibility of integrating all the design scales. This integration was seen as a "fundamental factor to shape the *hombre nuevo*."[52] Indeed, according to Maria Elena Frade, the rural boarding schools and their surrounding landscape were the outcome of an interdisciplinary work among the ministries of education, construction, light industry and agriculture, and the National Sports Institute (INDER) and Institute of Internal Demand.[53] This collaborative environment involved the participation of architects, engineers, pedagogues, economists, graphic designers, and sport trainers[54]. Together they delivered the cultivable land, school buildings, furniture, pedagogic material, and even uniforms, pencils, and tableware.

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[45] Ernesto Guevara, "Man and Socialism in Cuba," in John Gerassi, ed., *Venceremos! The Speeches and Writings of Ernesto Ché Guevara* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), 392-293, quoted in Rhoda Rabkin, "Cuban Political Structure: Vanguard Party and the Masses," in *Cuba: Twenty-five Years of Revolution, 1959-1984*, eds. Sandor Halebsky and John M. Kirk (New York: Praeger, 1985), 252.

[46] On the Nomenklatura system in the Soviet Union, see Thimothy H. Rigby, "Staffing USSR Incorporated: The Origins of the Nomenklatura System," *Soviet Studies* 40, no. 4 (1988): 523-537.

[47] Ernesto Guevara, *El Socialismo y el Hombre en Cuba*, 4th ed. (Montevideo: Nativa Libros, 1973), 26.

[48] Ernesto Guevara, *El Socialismo y el Hombre en Cuba*, 26.

[49] According to Richard Gott, between 1972 and 1982 Cuba reorganized its institutions to follow the Soviet model. Some scholars call this period the "institutionalization" of the country. Richard Gott, *Cuba: A New History*, 243-246.

[50] APN, "Los Soviets, Organos del Poder Popular," *Bohemia*, September 10, 1976, 92-93.

[51] See Lillian Guerra's discussion on the public adoption of the official discourse as a marker of loyalty with the Revolution. Lilian Guerra, "The Reel, Real, and Hyper-Real Revolution: Self-Representation and Political Performance in Everyday Life," in *Visions of Power in Cuba: Revolution, Redemption, and Resistance, 1959-1971,* 317-352. Also, see Mona Rosendahl's ethnographic account of a People's Power's meeting at the municipal level in the late 1980s. Mona Rosendahl, *Inside the Revolution: Everyday Life in Socialist Cuba* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 139-145.

An example of the integration of design scales that the government officials promoted is seen in the design of fixtures and furniture for the rural boarding schools. According to an article published in *Bohemia* in 1973, the design required the participation of the Institute of Internal Demand, the Childhood Institute, the National Sports Institute, the ministries of Light Industry, Education, Public Health, and Construction, and the University of Havana. Two years of research were needed to design the artifacts and they influenced the schools' spatial characteristics, the article claims.[55] For example, the design of a compact tower with gas, water and electricity outlets for the laboratories made possible to have a more flexible furniture arrangement, and the design of small furniture for the dormitories allowed the reduction of their size and the reduction of the number of dormitory blocks from two to one in the 1972 architectural scheme (figure 3.6). Another article published the same year described how the uniforms' designers allegedly studied the characteristic of the building and the students' behavior in it to reach conclusions that informed the uniforms' design.[56] That fixtures and furniture have influenced the building's spatial characteristics and that the building has influenced the uniforms are not the only things to notice in the articles. Congruent with the scientific understanding of the world that Marxism-Leninism promoted —and independently of how faithful the articles' claims are—, the articles' celebration of the research-based process of design also shows how design was subject to official expectations on the rational approach to problem-solving that the Revolution cherished.

This rational approach characterized the operation of the young professionals working in the boarding school's architecture team. They were among the first representatives of a new stage of the architectural profession in Cuba, the outcome of fierce debates on the desired balance between technical and artistic knowledge in architectural practice that ultimately prioritized the former —a more rational or "scientific" approach to the profession. The case of the now well-known art schools in Havana is useful to illustrate the rapidly changing professional environment that Cuban architects faced in the sixties. As architectural historian John Loomis explains, even though the Revolution leaders were familiar with the 1961 design for the schools, characterized by the artful use of unique organic shapes, they later joined the rank of critics condemning it when construction was well underway. The schools' initially-praised design, which clearly privileged a more artistic approach to architecture, came to be condemned as individualistic, monumental, and unscientific because of their uniqueness, use of traditional construction techniques, alleged functional problems and non-rational use of resources.[57] The outcome of this tension between two different approaches to architectural practice was that only two of the five schools were completed. These debates on the "right" approach to the profession were finally settled by 1965 when the Ministry of Construction, an institution guided by a technical vision, became the entity around which architectural practice was centralized.[58]

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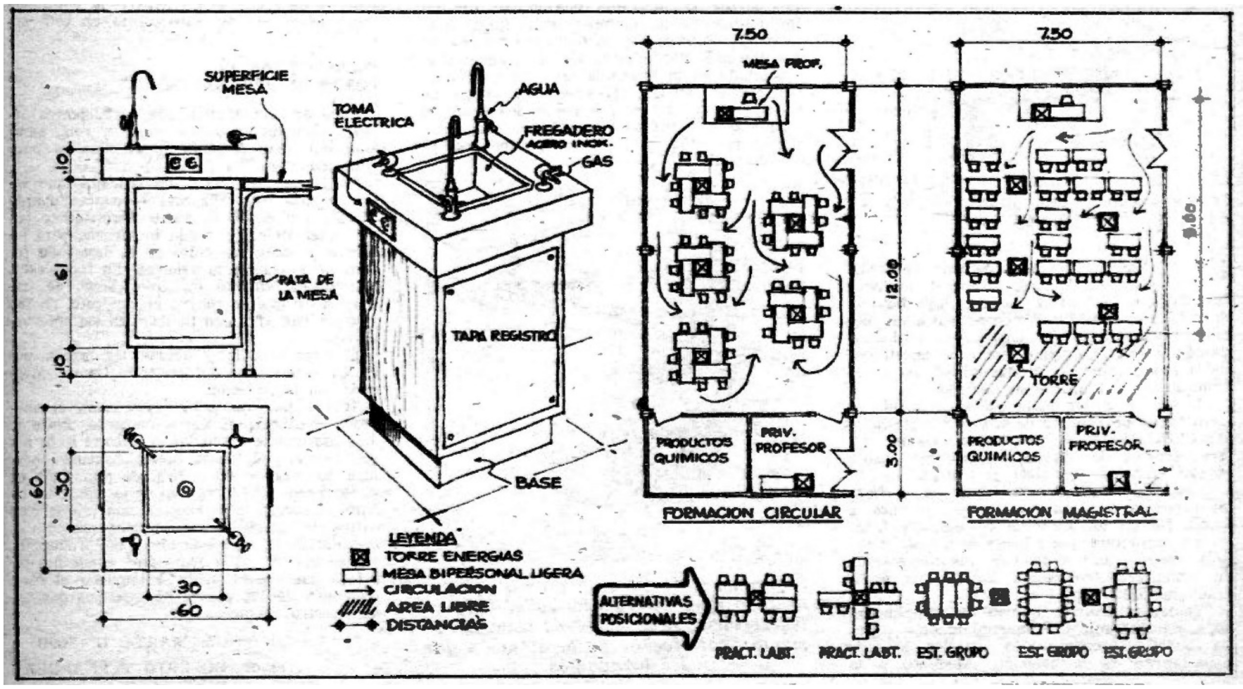
[52] Grupo de Construcciones Escolares, DESA, *La Arquitectura Escolar de la Revolución Cubana* (Havana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1973), 150-155.

[53] Maria Elena Frade, interview by author, Havana, June 18, 2018.

[54] Maria Elena Frade, interview by author, Havana, June 18, 2018.

[55] Alberto Pozo, "Una Investigación de Dos Años," *Bohemia*, May 4, 1973, 14-19.

[56] Maggie Marin, "Elegante, Cómodo y Bello," *Bohemia*, December 21, 1973, 42-43.


SUPERFICIE MESA
TOMA ELECTRICA
AGUA
FREGADERO ACERO INOX.
GAS
PATA DE LA MESA
TAPA REGISTRO
BASE
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LEYENDA
TORRE ENERGIAS
MESA BIPERSONAL LIGERA
CIRCULACION
AREA LIBRE
DISTANCIAS
7.50
MESA PROF.
12.00
3.00
PRODUCTOS QUIMICOS
PRIV. PROFESOR
FORMACION CIRCULAR
7.50
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TORRE
PRODUCTOS QUIMICOS
PRIV. PROFESOR
FORMACION MAGISTRAL
ALTERNATIVAS POSICIONALES
PRACT. LABT.
PRACT. LABT.
EST. GRUPO
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Figure 3.6. This tower with outlets designed for the boarding schools' laboratories allowed more spatial flexibility and was portrayed as the outcome of a research-based design process. Source: *Bohemia*, December 21, 1973, 19.

The 1960s debates on architectural practice in Cuba also included discussions on the architect's role in the Revolution, which the government geared to meet its agenda for the built environment. With wealthy people and large companies leaving the country, the revolutionary government became the main and eventually only commissioner of architectural projects. The massive construction projects that the government was developing as part of its plan to bridge the rural-urban divide increased the demand for architects, which opened unprecedented opportunities for architectural practice. Some architects found in these projects the opportunity to expand their work to regions far from the main cities, which had been the focus of their practice before the Revolution. Architecture students had the chance to put their knowledge into practice early by working as apprentices for the government while still being at the university.[59] For architects like Josefina Rebellón, the leader of the rural boarding school's architecture team, the new projects seemed to fulfill a long-held desire for social change in Cuba. An active participant in anti-Batista struggles while studying at University of Havana, Rebellón saw in her work for the government the possibility to contribute from her profession to the social change she had fought *for.*[60] People like her, activists soon to become professionals, were among the first to personify the idea of the revolutionary architect: someone whose role was to help the government build the Socialist society through their architecture.

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[57] John A. Loomis, *Revolution of Forms: Cuba's Forgotten Art Schools*, updated ed. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2011), 115-116.

[58] John A. Loomis, *Revolution of Forms*, 118.

Amid the debates on architectural practice in the country, the Primer Encuentro Internacional de Profesores y Estudiantes de Arquitectura (First International Meeting of Architecture Professors and Students) celebrated in Havana in September of 1963, anticipated the idea of the revolutionary architect that prevailed. In this event, which ended one day before the opening session of the UIA's 7th international congress (celebrated also in Havana), the final conclusions stressed the social objectives of architectural practice.[61] As reported in *Bohemia*, the committee charged with discussing architectural practice in Cuba concluded that the architect should be a socially-aware actor, focused on working for the majority of people and not just for a few privileged.[62] Although the conclusions never addressed the private practice of architecture in Cuba, the government banned it roughly one month after the UIA's and students' events ended.[63] In this context, the architecture team in charge of the boarding school building had a clear path ahead, which is apparent in its work. For the team, avant-garde architects of the Revolution, the goal of architectural practice in Cuba was to contribute to the country's social transformation, following mainly a rational approach that privileged technical considerations.

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[59] Roberto Segre, "Continuidad y Renovación en la Arquitectura Cubana del Siglo XX (50 Años de República Mediatizada)," in *Arquitectura, Historia y Revolución: Ensayos* (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 1981), 334. For an overview of changes in the architectural profession in Cuban in the first twenty years of the Revolution, see pages 331 to 335 of the same essay. The same author, in a 2013 interview, had a more critical assessment of these changes. See, Yasser Farrés Delgado, Roberto Segre, "Cinco Decenios de Teoría de la Arquitectura en Cuba (1963-2013) y Un Diálogo Intergeneracional: Entrevista a Roberto Segre, *ACE: Architecture, City and Environment = Arquitectura, Ciudad y Entorno* 8, no. 23 (2013): 90-92.

[60] Roberto Segre, "Los 'Años de Fuego' de la Cultura Arquitectónica Cubana (1960-1975)," in *Arquitectura y Urbanismo: Cuba y América Latina desde el Siglo XXI* (Havana: Editorial Arte y Literatura, Havana, 2015), 143; John A. Loomis, *Revolution of Forms*, 12.

[61] Although the Union Internationale des Architectes' 7th congress had been scheduled before the Revolution's triumph, once the Revolution was in power it faced fierce opposition —mainly coming from the US— which threatened its realization. On the UIA congress in Havana, see Miles Glendinning, "The Architect as Cold-War Mediator: The 1963 UIA Congress, Havana," *Docomomo Journal*, no. 37 (2007): 30-35. On the conclusions of the Primer Encuentro Internacional de Profesores y Estudiantes de Arquitectura, see T.C., "I Encuentro Internacional de Profesores y Estudiantes de Arquitectura," *Bohemia*, October 4, 1963, 42-45.

[62] T.C., "I Encuentro Internacional de Profesores y Estudiantes de Arquitectura," 42-45.

[63] John A. Loomis, *Revolution of Forms*, 115.

Technology to Re-shape the Country: Facilitating a Typical Boarding School Experience

The design of the rural boarding school building was considered central to enable a boarding school experience that was not only coherent with Socialist values, but that could also be replicated easily across the country (in the next chapter I focus on life in the boarding school). Attending to these requirements, the design team conceived a building set to be easily adapted to different site conditions without major modifications. A 1969 blueprint shows the four variations planned for the architectural scheme according to the region in Cuba where it was to be built (figure 3.7). In each variation, the blocks are displaced and their orientation change to favor natural ventilation and avoid direct sunlight in the longer facades. Minor variations —not shown in the blueprint— included colors, height of the foundation columns to absorb different topographic conditions, and type and quantity of sport fields surrounding the building. The government's interest in guaranteeing that students attending the same educational program had a similar experience countrywide is apparent in the account of Castro's visit to one of the recently opened elite boarding schools intended for the country's best students. Reporting on the visit, one of the school officials mentioned a remark by Castro in which the leader emphasized the importance of building all the schools of the same type with equivalent characteristics: "he had insisted that the gymnasium's area should not be reduced in the other schools [currently in construction] so there are no differences among them.[64]" Amid a Revolution that aimed to create a classless society —even though it was initially set to be divided into the mass and the vanguard— that the school official had mentioned Castro's remark in her report also suggests that some people saw (and sought) coherence between the Revolution's touted ideals and its practice in the built environment (in the next section I explain how this connection between ideals and built environment was established and spread by the government).

To facilitate that all students across the country enjoyed the same boarding school experience —and coherent with the new stage of architectural practice in Cuba—, the design team relied on a technical solution: The Sistema Girón, the first prefabrication system for institutional architecture developed in Cuba to be massively adopted. Designed hand in hand with the boarding school's architectural scheme, the system was the brainchild of Josefina Rebellón's team of architects working together with a group of engineers led by Anibal Rodríguez Hoffman. It was composed of over two thousand precast concrete pieces designed to be easily assembled, so the construction pace was not affected by the country's shortage of skilled labor.[65] Workers organized in construction brigades used an assembly-line system to put together the prefabricated elements that were delivered from manufacturing plants located strategically in different parts of the country. Each brigade was composed of three groups, each one specialized in a single task: site preparation and foundations, assembling, and finishes and landscaping.[66] Although it was initially expected that each brigade would build one school every eight months, the delivery process ended up being slower than planned. Changes in the state's structure occurred during the so-called institutionalization of the country started in 1972 took the construction of the schools off the hands of the DESA, disrupting the delivery goals.[67] Despite the problems, judging by the 418 rural boarding schools that had been built up until 1980 (more than 40 per year since the program's introduction), the technical approach used in the conception of the typical building seemed to have been paying off.[68]

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[64] Reporte de Visita Efectuada el Día 22 de Diciembre de 1973 a las 5PM por el Comandante en Jefe, 1973, folder AHC-7721, Centro de Información, Oficina del Historiador de La Habana OHH. Elsa Gómez, one of the sub-directors of the Lenin vocational school in Havana, is apparently the person who writes the report.

[65] Maria Elena Frade, interview by author, Havana, June 18, 2018.

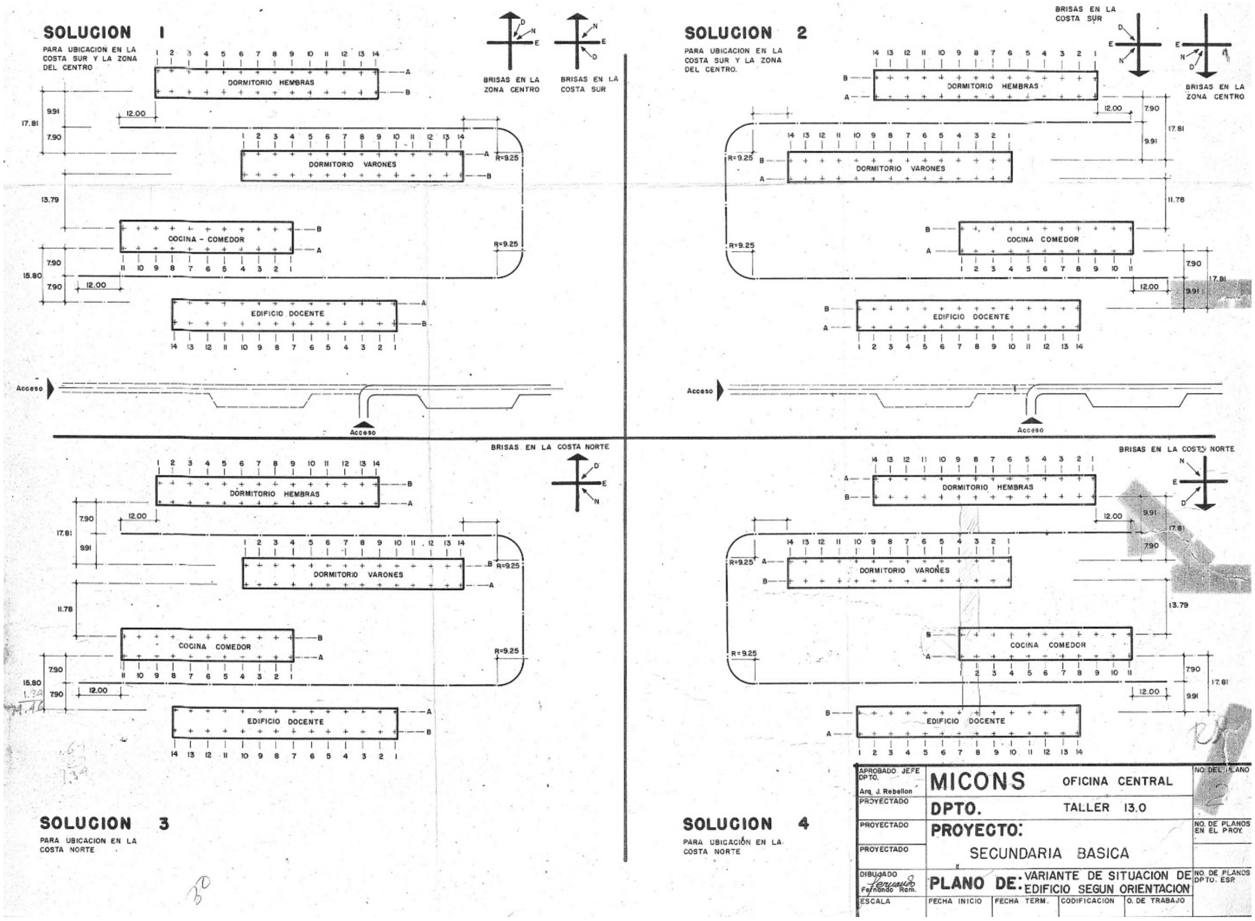
SOLUCION 1
PARA UBICACION EN LA COSTA SUR Y LA ZONA DEL CENTRO
BRISAS EN LA ZONA CENTRO
BRISAS EN LA COSTA SUR
SOLUCION 2
PARA UBICACION EN LA COSTA SUR Y LA ZONA DEL CENTRO.
BRISAS EN LA COSTA SUR
BRISAS EN LA ZONA CENTRO
DORMITORIO HEMBRAS
DORMITORIO VARONES
COCINA - COMEDOR
EDIFICIO DOCENTE
Acceso
BRISAS EN LA COSTA NORTE
SOLUCION 3
PARA UBICACION EN LA COSTA NORTE
SOLUCION 4
PARA UBICACIÓN EN LA COSTA NORTE
APROBADO JEFE DPTO.
Arq. J. Rebellon
PROYECTADO
DIBUJADO
Fernando Rom.
ESCALA
MICONS
OFICINA CENTRAL
DPTO.
TALLER 13.0
PROYECTO:
SECUNDARIA BASICA
PLANO DE: VARIANTE DE SITUACION DE EDIFICIO SEGUN ORIENTACION
FECHA INICIO
FECHA TERM.
CODIFICACION
O. DE TRABAJO
NO. DEL PLANO
NO. DE PLANOS EN EL PROY.
NO. DE PLANOS DPTO. ESP.

Figure 3.7. The ubiquity of the boarding school's typical building is shown in this blueprint that summarizes the main modifications planned to adapt the architectural scheme to different places. Source: Plano de Variante de Situación de Edificio según Orientación, 1969, ACH 4045, folder 1, Centro de Información, Oficina del Historiador de La Habana OHH.

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[66] Rafael Sanchez, "40 Nuevas Secundarias en el Campo para 20 Mil Jóvenes Más," *Bohemia*, September 15, 1972, 38-45.

[67] Maria Elena Frade, interview by author, Havana, September 8, 2018. On the "institutionalization" of the country, see note 49 in this chapter.

[68] Ministerio de Educación, *Resumen del Trabajo Anual del MINED, Año Escolar 1980-1981*, 460.

The Sistema Girón was also the outcome of the government's belief that science and technology should be the forces behind Cuba's transformation. One of the encompassing messages of the 1960 Soviet exhibition in Havana was that the Soviet Union was using these forces to harness nature. This message was appealing to many, among them captain Antonio Núñez Jiménez, a trained geographer and a close Fidel Castro's adviser. He had suggested that Castro bring the Soviet exhibition to Havana after having seen it in New York[69]. Months later, in June 1960, he led the first Cuban official delegation to the USSR. Upon his return to Cuba, Núñez Jiménez manifested publicly his admiration for the huge projects to transform nature that he had seen in the trip, particularly those made to support agriculture. Since 1962, from his position as president of the National Commission of the Cuban Academy of Sciences, he led the development of science and technology in Cuba, mostly intended to support the government's projects to transform Cuba's natural settings.[70] Granting to the "conquering" of nature a central role in the country's development, Núñez Jiménez imagined a Socialist Cuba where its people would be able to "cultivate the bottom of the sea; [...] dominate hurricanes to capture their enormous energy; [...] change and correct the course of rivers; control our variate climate taking energy from the sun to temper it; [and] create clouds to make rain according to agricultural needs."[71] A quote from his geography textbook used for years in Cuban high schools sums up his belief in the central role that human-made landscapes should have in the Revolution's strategy to develop Cuba: "Ultimately, the greatest challenge of man in Communist society is to engage in a bloodless battle to transform nature."[72] Núñez Jiménez' vision, inspired by the Soviet example, is clearly present in the Cuban revolutionary government's strive to advance local technologies, including construction technologies, which could help achieve the ambitious plans to transform the country.

The technical rationale behind the conception of the boarding school typical building is easily recognizable in the building's look. By 1960, architects and architecture students in Cuba routinely used the formal language of the International Style as part of their repertoire, which seemingly influenced the use of basic volumes in the boarding school building.[73] The building's look, however, is more the result of resource-saving decisions and constraints brought by the prefabrication system. A 1969 perspective of the first architectural scheme is useful to explain this point (figure 3.8). As seen in the image, walls are wedged into columns and beams, which is necessary for the walls to stay in place while being assembled, resulting in the visual separation between structural and enclosing elements in the facade. Flat roofs enable the use of the same prefabricated elements employed in the construction of the floor slabs, simplifying the assembling process and saving costs. Ribbon windows oriented to avoid direct sun light and located on both sides of each block guarantee natural ventilation, making the use of (costly) mechanical ventilation systems unnecessary, even in summer. The building's vertical separation from the terrain —reminiscent of some International Style buildings— helps ensure that the school can be assembled in any place regardless of the topography, contributing to saving time and costs. Coherent with the rational approach used to design the building, the boarding school in the drawing rests on a rationalized rural landscape. A carefully landscaped school ground surrounds the school followed by a row of parallel grooves, all products of human intervention. Impossible to intervene in real life, even the sky in the drawing seems to have been tamed by the vertical hatch pattern used to represent it.

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[69] Richard Gott, *Cuba: A New History*, 182.

[70] On Antonio Núñez Jiménez's ideas on the role of physical transformations in the Revolution, see Reinaldo Funes Monzote, "Geotransformación: Geography and Revolution in Cuba from the 1950s to the 1960s," in *The Revolution from Within: Cuba, 1959–1980*, ed. Michael J. Bustamante, and Jennifer L. Lambe (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 117-145.

[71] Núñez Jiménez, *Geografía de Cuba* (Havana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1972). Quoted in Sergio Díaz-Briquets, and Jorge Pérez-López, *Conquering Nature: The Environmental Legacy of Socialism in Cuba* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000), 14-15.

[72] Núñez Jiménez, *Geografía de Cuba,* 15.

[73] On the International Style in Cuba in the 1940s and 1950s, see John A. Loomis, *Revolution of Forms*, 7-10.

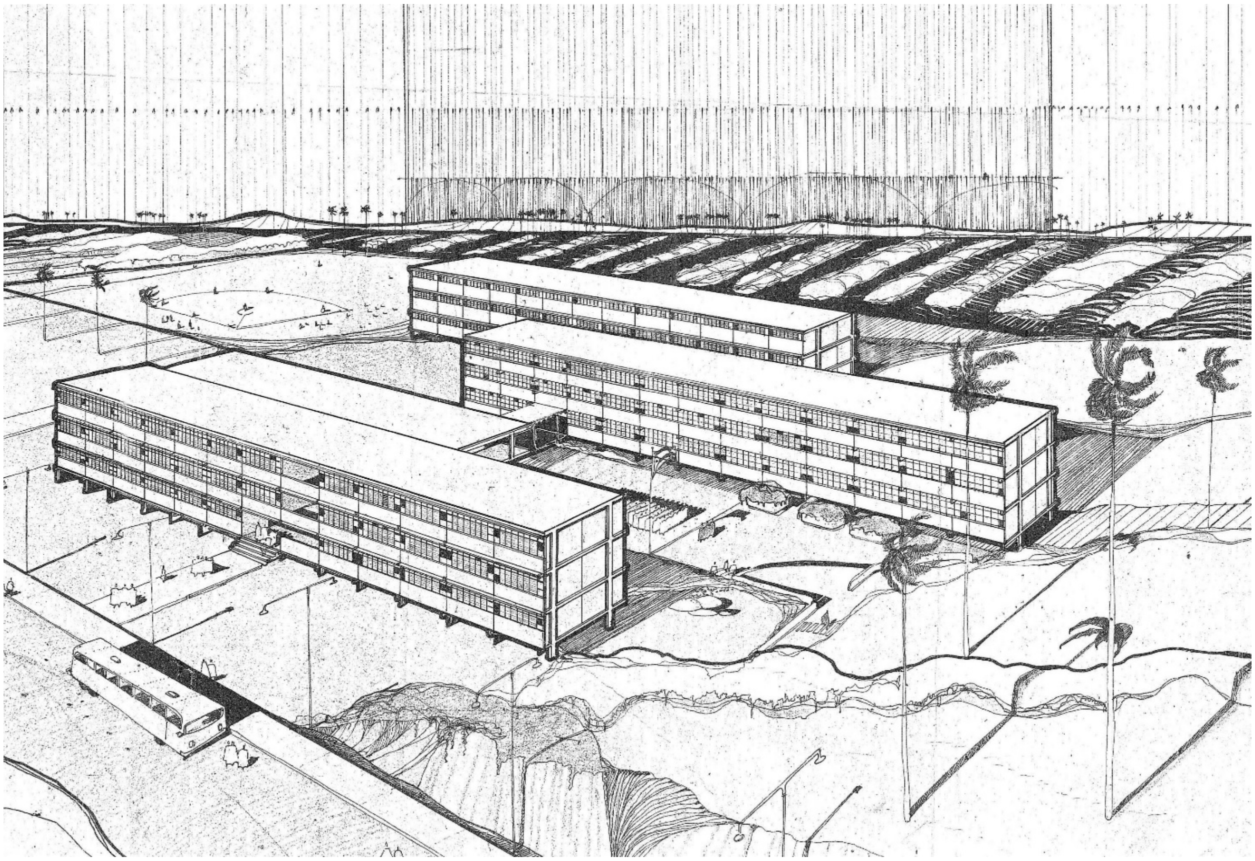

Figure 3.8. In this perspective of the typical building's first architectural scheme, both building and landscape seem to be the product of the same technical approach. Source: Perspectiva de Escuela Secundaria Básica Rural, 1969, ACH 4045, folder 1, Centro de Información, Oficina del Historiador de La Habana OHH.

The peculiar look of the boarding school building —if compared to pre-revolutionary school architecture— expanded the repertoire of prefabricated architecture that the government had started using massively in the early 1960s, particularly for housing. Early in the Revolution, the government created the Centro de Investigaciones Técnicas (Technical Research Center) within the Ministry of Construction (by then called Ministry of Public Works) to develop technologies to support its construction plans.[74] As part of the government's technical explorations, a prefabrication system for low-rise housing originally created in 1926, the Novoa system (later renamed Sandino), was retooled early in the Revolution to build mostly rural housing.[75] Soon, the ambitious housing plan gained momentum with the introduction of three large-panel prefabrication systems: the Soviet Gran Panel system (or I-464), the Cuban Gran Panel IV system, and the Yugoslavian IMS system. The Soviet Gran Panel, modified to work better in the Caribbean environment, was produced in a plant donated by the Soviet Union in response to the Flora hurricane catastrophe that hit Cuba in 1963.[76] Experience with this system and exchange of knowledge on prefabrication between Cuba and countries of the Soviet Bloc contributed to the development of the Cuban Gran Panel IV, introduced in 1964.[77] Massive housing construction in the island would be supported later with the introduction in 1967 of the Yugoslavian IMS, developed in Serbia.[78] With the widespread use of these systems, the country became a ground for technical experimentation in construction, which aligned with the government's expectations on the role of technology in Cuba's transformation.

Although efforts to use prefabrication in institutional architecture —particularly in schools— began parallel to the use of prefabrication in housing, before the introduction of the Sistema Girón these efforts focused mainly on the prefabrication of a limited number of structural elements.[79] As the Sistema Girón began to prove its versatility, the government began to use it in other educational facilities as well as in hospitals, offices and even hotels, augmenting the widespread presence of prefabricated architecture in Cuba. With sets of prefabrication systems delivering buildings all over the country, prefabricated architecture was becoming so common that in one 1971 issue of *Bohemia* the learning section intended for children focused on the term "prefabrication."[80] Still, the recognition of the government-built physical interventions, including prefabricated architecture, would not have been so widespread without the help of the powerful official propaganda apparatus which, as I show next, even suggested proper ways to interpret these interventions.

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[74] According to Hugo Palmarola and Pedro Ignacio Alonso, the center was formed between 1959 and 1960. Hugo Palmarola and Pedro Ignacio Alonso, "Tropical Asemblage: The Soviet Large Panel in Cuba," in *Beyond Imported Magic: Essays on Science, Technology, and Society in Latin America*, ed. Eden Medina, Ivan da Costa Marques, and Christina Holmes (Camdridge: The MIT Press, 2014), 164.

[75] For a brief explanation of the system, see, Juan de las Cuevas Toraya, Gonzalo Sala Santos, and Abelardo Padrón Valdés, *500 Años de Construcciones en Cuba* (Madrid: Chavín, 2001), 319.

[76] On the Soviet I-464 system in Cuba, see Hugo Palmarola and Pedro Ignacio Alonso, *Tropical Assemblage: The Soviet Large Panel in Cuba.* On the I-464 system in Chile, see Pedro Ignacio Alonso and Hugo Palmarola, "A Panel's Tale: The Soviet I-464 System and the Politics of Assemblage," in *Latin American Modern Architectures: Ambiguous Territories,* ed. Patricio del Real and Heen Gyger (New York and London: Routledge, 2013), 167-183.

[77] Juan de las Cuevas Toraya, Gonzalo Sala Santos, and Abelardo Padrón Valdés, *500 Años de Construcciones en Cuba*, 319-320.

[78] Ernesto Pereira Gómez, "Tecnología y Construcción," in *La Arquitectura de la Revolución Cubana 1959-2018: Relatos Históricos Regionales - Tipologías - Sistemas*, ed. Manuel Cuadra (Kassel: Kassel University Press, 2018), 192.

[79] Juan de las Cuevas Toraya, Gonzalo Sala Santos, and Abelardo Padrón Valdés, *500 Años de Construcciones en Cuba*, 337.

[80] "El Prefabricado en la Construcción," Laminario Escolar, *Bohemia*, May 7, 1971, 93, back cover.

A Prescribed Interpretation of the Built Environment

Teaching People how to Read Physical Interventions

To take full advantage of the built environment in the shaping of the new society, the government used propaganda to communicate how people should understand the physical interventions it was building across Cuba. Reports on the Sierra Maestra experience had already anticipated such a strategy. With the involvement of the 26 of July Movement's propaganda team, photos and written accounts on the Sierra published locally and internationally in the late 1950s had shown a de-facto government controlling the mountains, setting rules, and building makeshift classrooms and infirmaries.[81] By showing how the guerrillas' control of and physical interventions upon a concrete territory benefited the area's peasant population, the accounts helped convey the idea of a well-organized and capable movement. This incipient exploitation of narratives associated with the built environment would become more sophisticated after the Revolution's triumph.

Once the Revolution seized power, one of the organisms that consistently started promoting ready-made interpretations for the built environment was the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA). Led by Fidel Castro in its first years, early in the Revolution the INRA became a powerful organism whose functions expanded from land reform to education, health, defense, housing and infrastructure.[82] In the pages of the INRA's magazine, which circulated monthly between January 1960 and March 1962, the built environment was invested with meanings that supported the government's agenda.[83] A case that was recurrent in the magazine pages was that of the *bohío*, the wooden hut typical of rural Cuba. Since the magazine's first issues, the *bohío* was tainted with negative connotations by being used to symbolize the bad living conditions in the countryside before the Revolution. In one 1960 article, for example, a peasant was asked about the new houses that the government was building for him and his neighbors, to which he allegedly answered (in direct reference to the *bohío*): "How do we feel? You figure it out. Before, we lived almost like animals, hungry the whole year and in houses with earthen floors, and now we have permanent jobs and new houses are getting built for us."[84] Later in the article, a caption accompanying a photo of the peasant explained that he was still living in a *bohío* floored with earth and roofed with thatch, but that soon he would move to a hygienic and beautiful house.[85] In another article published in the same issue of the magazine, the contrast between a *bohío* in the fishermen town of Manzanillos and a new dwelling built by the government was enhanced by putting both side by side in an image that occupied most of the page (figure 3.9). Accompanying the *bohío* in the photo, a caption read: "Manzanillos' fishermen have lived until now in miserable *bohíos* with earthen floors and thatch roofs."[86] The reiterative use of adjectives like "miserable" and "unhygienic" to qualify the *bohío* in articles reporting on the transformation of the countryside under the Revolution turned the typical dwelling into a metonym of the unattended and neglected pre-revolutionary countryside. Soon the meaning attributed to the *bohío* became so clear to Cubans that Fidel Castro would routinely use the word without adding any adjective every time he wanted to refer to the abandonment of the countryside before the Revolution.

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[81] On how the Sierra Maestra struggles gained visibility, see Lillian Guerra. *Visions of Power in Cuba*, 15-17, 40.

[82] Richard Gott, *Cuba: A New History*, 171. On Fidel Castro's role at the INRA, see Lillian Guerra, *Visions of Power in Cuba*, 60.

[83] The magazine was renamed *Cuba* in 1962 and circulated until 1968.

[84] "En la Cooperativa de Itabo: ¡Este es un Mundo Nuevo!," *INRA: Revista Mensual Ilustrada,* August 1960, 56.

[85] "En la Cooperativa de Itabo: ¡Este es un Mundo Nuevo!," 57.

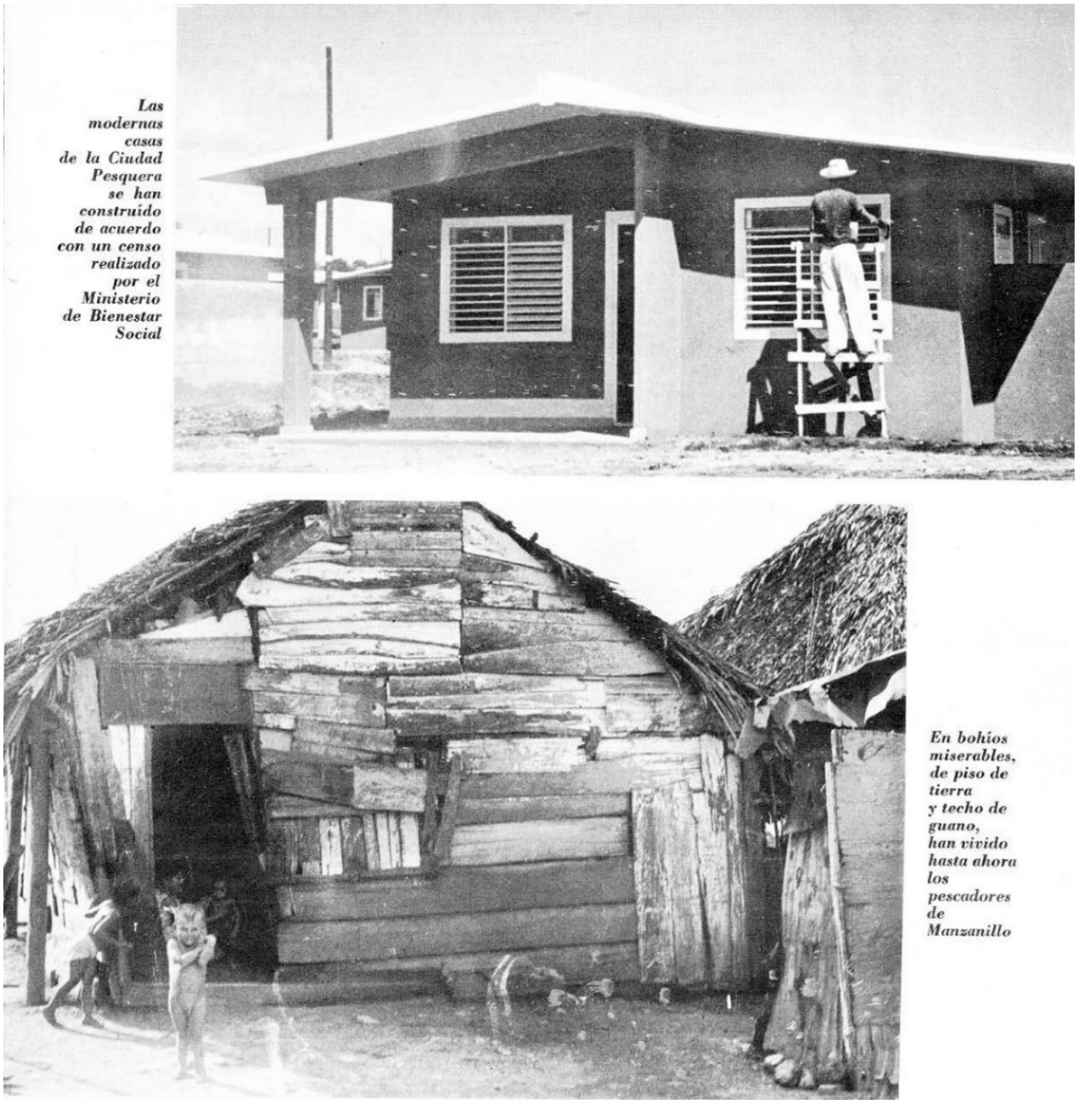
Las modernas casas de la Ciudad Pesquera se han construído de acuerdo con un censo realizado por el Ministerio de Bienestar Social
En bohios miserables, de piso de tierra y techo de guano, han vivido hasta ahora los pescadores de Manzanillo

Figure 3.9. Images like this emphasized associations between *bohío* and countryside abandonment before the Revolution. In this image, a *bohío* and a new house built by the revolutionary government in the countryside are shown side by side. The caption accompanying the photo of the *bohío* (down) reads: "Manzanillos' fishermen have lived until now in miserable *bohíos* with earthen floors and thatch roofs." Source: "La Ciudad Pesquera de Manzanillo," INRA: Revista Mensual Ilustrada, suplemento N.

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[86] "La Ciudad Pesquera de Manzanillo," *INRA: Revista Mensual Ilustrada*, August 1960, suplemento N.

Reports published in different outlets also used the built environment to portray an idealistic version of the country's reality. Articles reporting on the physical interventions usually presented these as samples of a larger process already taking place across the country, regardless of the intervention's size and state of completion. One 1965 article from *Bohemia* on a fishing complex being built in Havana, for example, presented it as part of an unstoppable and extraordinary new reality:

> We Cubans are witnessing a curious phenomenon: what is deemed amazing no longer impresses us. This situation is not hard to explain: There have been six years [of Revolution] living an incredible story full of incredible events. Six years of accomplishments that could match one century of accomplishments in the history of any other country in the Americas.[87]

Although the complex was indeed large and was set to have an important impact on the local fishing industry, the reporter's words made it even more significant by connecting it to claims on Cuba's development in comparison to other countries in the region. Another report from 1968 on the transformation of the small town of Caimanera, located in front of the Guantanamo's US base, framed the town as a natural occurrence in an almost magical revolutionary process. The article presented the town's physical transformation as part of the "intense construction enterprise taking place all over the country", adding that "the Revolution changes almost suddenly the country's physical aspect."[88] The article's closing statement goes beyond and attaches an heroic meaning to the small town: "Free from the vices its despicable neighbors had caused, Caimanera stands laborious, patriotic, unpolluted, and combative, like a triumph's flag against imperialism."[89] By advertising widely the physical interventions and overstating their impact and meaning, the government used the built environment to exaggerate the impact of Socialist rule in Cuba's present and raise expectations on the future —similar to what Socialist Realism in arts and literature did in the Soviet Union since the late 1920s.[90] Additionally, by linking physical change and social transformation, the reports pushed readers to seek in the government-promoted physical interventions signs of the government's alleged achievements in transforming Cuban society.

The Boarding School Typical Building Joins the Government Prescription

The government also used the spatial setting of the rural boarding school program to spread interpretations of the built environment. In the 1970s, some of the ideas that the government spread turned the program's spatial setting into one of the symbols of the countryside transformation. Richly illustrated reports published that decade in *Bohemia* highlighted the connection of the boarding schools with the agricultural plans that were being introduced nationwide. One 1971 article, *Surge entre las Toronjas un Internado de Secundaria* (A Rural Boarding School Emerges Among the Grapefruits), for example, stressed that students of a rural boarding school would help solve labor scarcity in an agricultural plan in the southern Isla de la Juventud (by then known as Isla de Pinos).[91] The government mobilization and settling of students to participate with their work in the agricultural plan portrayed, although subtly, a developing countryside that required the help of external workers to keep up with an outstanding growth pace.

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[87] Dora Alonso, "De Cara al Mar," *Bohemia*, June 11, 1965, 5.

[88] Luis Coronado, "Una Nueva Caimanera se Levanta frente a la Base Naval Yanqui," *Bohemia*, May 24, 1968, 12.

[89] Luis Coronado, "Una Nueva Caimanera se Levanta frente a la Base Naval Yanqui," 113.

[90] Tijana Vujoseviç explores different scenarios in which Socialist Realism operated spatially in Stalin's Soviet Union. Tijana Vujošević, *Modernism and the Making of the Soviet New Man*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017).

Postcards, postal envelopes and stamps that circulated nationally since the beginning of the 1970s included images of the boarding school typical building to reinforce the idea of a transforming countryside. One postal envelope, for example, stressed the role of newly introduced technologies in this transformation and implied that the boarding school building was one of these technologies (figure 3.10). In the illustration, two students plow the land with small tractors in front of the building, which is drafted emphasizing the horizontal lines of its corridors. In the Cuba of the seventies these tractors, dubbed *Piccolinos* for their size and Italian origin, were widely known because the government had introduced them as part of its goal to mechanize the countryside, and publicized them as harbingers of the countryside technological transformation. Paired with the tractors, the boarding school building in the illustration acquires the meaning ascribed to the vehicles and become another of the novel technological artifacts introduced in the Cuban rural landscape.

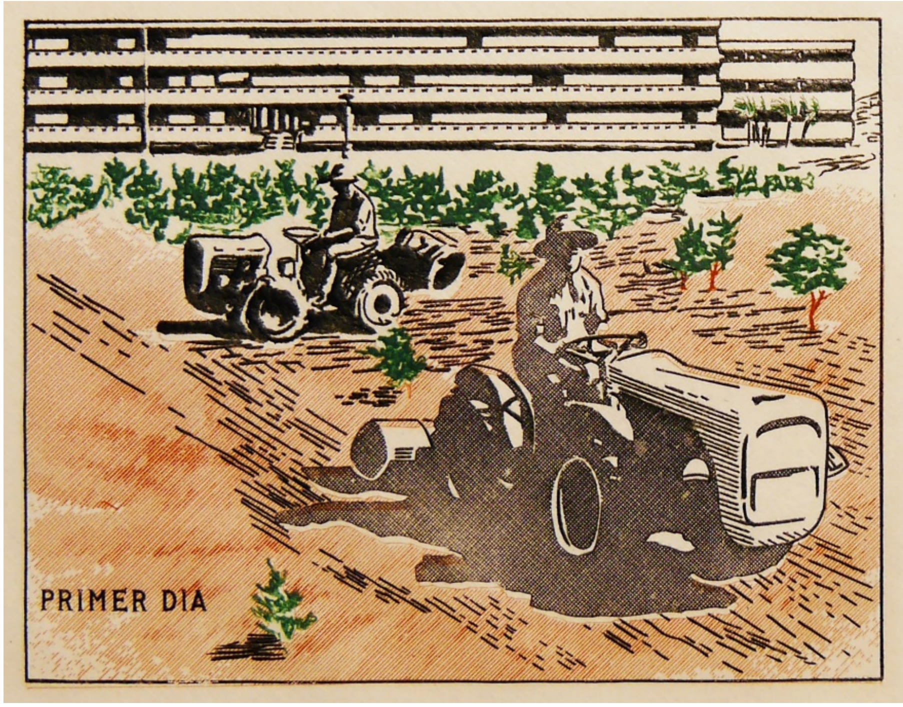

Figure 3.10. In this illustration on a postal envelope the role of technology in the transformation of the countryside is highlighted by putting together two tractors and the prefabricated boarding school building. Source: Postal envelope (detail), Correos de Cuba, 1976, author's personal collection.

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[91] Rafael Sánchez, "Isla de Pinos: Surge entre las Toronjas un Internado de Secundaria," *Bohemia*, June 25, 1971, 54-55.

Other pieces of propaganda used the rural boarding schools to highlight the positive influence that the new countryside could have on people. In 1973, the government-controlled television network aired the TV series *Mi Casa Grande* (My Big Home), addressing life in the rural boarding schools.[92] Shot in one of the schools nearby Havana, everyday life in and around the school building stressed the idea —already embedded in the very nature of the rural boarding school program— that the new countryside was the ideal place to raise the new Socialist subjects. This idea had already been advanced in the lyrics of a popular song launched one year before, in 1972, by composers Silvio Rodríguez and Pablo Milanes. In the *Canción de La Nueva Escuela* (The New School Song), one of the verses describes the rural boarding schools as the upbringing place of a new breed of Cubans:

> Esta es la nueva escuela,
> esta es la nueva casa:
> casa y escuela nuevas
> como cuna de nueva raza.
>
> (This is the new school,
> this is the new home:
> new home and school
> like cradle for the new race.)[93]

Pieces like these, which used the spatial setting of the rural boarding school program, not only circulated interpretations that converged in the idea of an improving countryside, but also helped spread nationwide the image of the program's typical building.

The boarding school building itself became a piece of propaganda to enhance Cuba's role in the international sphere. As reported by *Bohemia* in one 1979 article, the Cuban government had built a prefabrication plant in Tanzania which was used to produce pieces for three rural boarding schools in that country. A fourth school located in the eastern town of Kibiti was in construction under the supervision of an internationalist mission of Cuban builders. As part of this international sharing of know-how, Tanzanian delegates had visited Cuba to learn about the operation of the Cuban rural boarding schools before introducing the model in their own country. Exporting the boarding school typical building, its construction technology, and the rural boarding school model followed the government's idea of setting Cuba as an example for other underdeveloped countries. Regionally, "Che" Guevara believed, Cuba was meant to be at the forefront, "showing Latin American masses the path towards total freedom."[94] Guevara's participation in missions abroad, remarkably his direct involvement in the guerrilla warfare that led to his death in Bolivia, demonstrates the Revolution leaders' conviction that Cuba should have a leading role in the world stage, especially wherever a revolution seemed a feasible option.[95] The construction of boarding schools overseas was complemented with the temporary migration of groups of Latin American and African students to study for free in the rural boarding schools located in Cuba's Isla de la Juventud.[96] Yet this display of altruism via boarding school buildings was not only to be consumed internationally, but also locally. That the government exported the boarding school program along with its associated technologies suggested to Cubans the international endorsement of the Revolution's products, helping enhance popular trust in these. In this way, the international role of a piece of revolutionary material culture joined the interpretative framework that the Cuban government had set up for people to read the built environment in the most convenient way for the Revolution.

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[92] María Victoria Zardoya, "La Habana," in *La Arquitectura de la Revolución Cubana 1959-2018: Relatos Históricos Regionales - Tipologías - Sistemas*, ed. Manuel Cuadra (Kassel: Kassel University Press, 2018), 35.

[93] *Canción de la Nueva Escuela*, by Silvio Rodríguez and Pablo Milanés, 1972, Grupo de Experimentación Sonora ICAIC.

[94] Ernesto Guevara, *El Socialismo y el Hombre en Cuba*, 28.

Conclusion

Before the *bohío* in the documentary film *La Nueva Escuela* is razed by a bulldozer, a scene shows a group of people, including two military members, helping its dwellers move their belongings out. The peasant family living in the *bohío* was set to join other families in one of the new towns built by the government to group rural population. In the scene, with the boarding school building serving as background, a group of students stands by without getting involved in the moving. As if participating in the activity would get them attached to the past, they just observe what seems to represent the old countryside leaving (figure 3.11). By putting together in the same scene the brand new building, the young students, the *bohío*, and the peasants dressed in their customary attire, a link between the qualities of the buildings and the qualities of the persons inhabiting them was established. Under this logic, the new environment of the rural boarding school would bring up a fresh generation of Cubans, egalitarian, well educated, and striving to break up with a dark past. As I have shown in this chapter, the Cuban government established analog associations between built environment and society, and turned the former into a tool to instill social change. Coherent with Marxist-Leninist ideas and informed by the Soviet example, a technological revolution that set technical knowledge to the fore was to be one of the main vehicles to achieve such use of the built environment. The spatial setting of La Escuela en el Campo, the rural boarding school program, embodied these ideas and offered an environment for Socialist upbringing in which, capitalizing on the demand for middle school education and rural labor force, the pedagogical attributes of work were highly idealized.

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[95] In his analysis of the information published between 1982 and 1984 in the Cuban Communist Party's *Granma Weekly Review*, addressed to international readers, Keving Green explains that the articles spread the idea of Cuba as "the model for successful anti-Western, pro-Soviet revolutions around the globe." He also shows that visits of high-rank officials to foreign countries (and vice versa) were emphasized in order to "depict Cuba's alleged importance on the world stage." Kevin Greene, "The World According to Granma," in *The Selling of Fidel Castro: The Media and the Cuban Revolution*, ed. William Ratliff (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1986), 39, 45.

[96] The program offering scholarships for international students to live and study in the Isla de la Juventud started in 1978. Sabine Lehr, "The Children of the Isle of Youth: Impact of a Cuban South-South Education Program on Ghanaian Graduates," (PhD diss., University of Victoria, 2008), 50-56, http://hdl.handle.net/1828/1243.

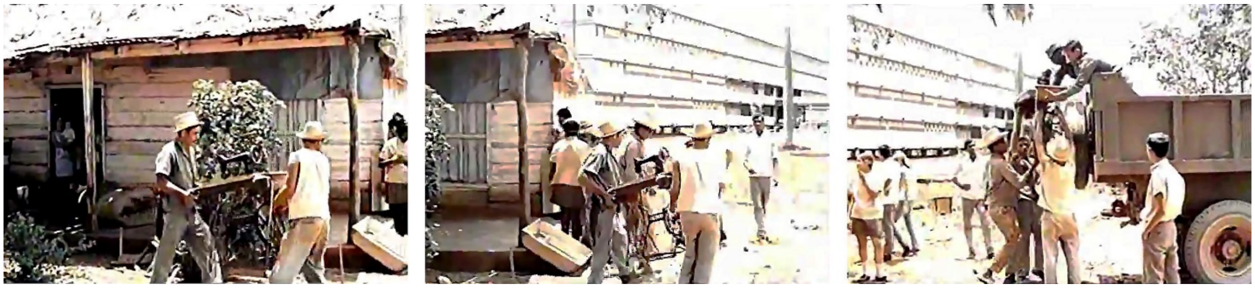

Figure 3.11. Analog to the imagined relationship that the Cuban government established between built environment and society, this scene of the documentary film *La Nueva Escuela* establishes a link between the qualities of the buildings and those of the persons inhabiting them. Source: *La Nueva Escuela*, directed by Jorge Fraga (1973; Havana: ICAIC), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z4syxjmJRg0.

Like the group of youth in the documentary scene, Maria del Carmen, who attended one of the rural boarding schools between 1976 and 1979, was part of a new generation of Socialist Cubans being formed in the countryside. Unlike many of my informants in this dissertation, she found that her experience in the boarding school did not match the edifying life that propaganda material on the program portrayed. However, her mother did. In Maria del Carmen's words, "every time we would talk about the boarding school, she said that it had formed me. Then I would tell her that she was wrong, that she had not been there. That I had studied because I was meant to, because she had worried about my education, but not because the boarding school had formed me as it should have done."[97] Having experienced both pre-revolutionary and revolutionary Cuba, her mother could see the difference between the two periods. Before the Revolution, access to education was only for a privileged few; with the Revolution it was widespread. With no direct experience in a rural boarding school, Maria del Carmen's mother had to battle between her daughters' accounts of life there and what she sought and heard from the information spread by the government. The conflict between the two versions is in part explained by Cuban people's continuous exposure to idealistic accounts of the program and its physical setting. As I have shown, as with many other of the physical interventions built by the government, the built environment with its accompanying narratives told a one-sided version of reality. This version offered people an interpretation of everyday life that celebrated the Revolution and its not-yet achieved accomplishments. Physical interventions and narratives working together constituted a powerful persuasion tool devised to break the social legacy of pre-revolutionary Cuba. While this happened nationwide, a framework originally intended for productive work brought the government narratives to the interior of the rural boarding schools. As I show in the next chapter, this framework was instrumental in turning the boarding schools into tools to shape the Socialist self.

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[97] Maria del Carmen, interview by author, Havana, November 19, 2018.

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CHAPTER 4

Making the Collective:

Domesticating ‘La Emulación’

Introduction

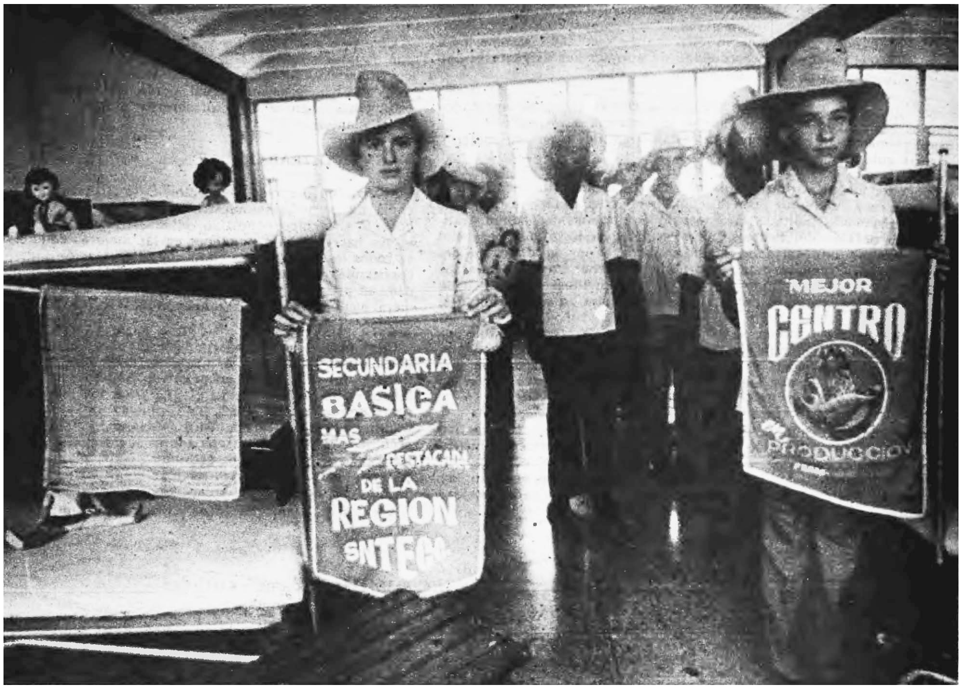

Figure 4.1. Source: Oscar Rego, “Escuela Secundaria Básica en el Campo ‘Máximo Gómez’, un Compromiso con Nuestros Héroes y Mártires,” Bohemia, June 20, 1975, 38.

A half-page image published in *Bohemia* magazine in 1975 sheds light on the extent to which “Socialist Competition,” a conceptual framework to promote production efficiency within Socialist values, penetrated most aspects of daily life in the Cuban rural boarding schools (figure 4.1). Part of an article describing life at one of the boarding schools, the image shows students holding signs that celebrate the school’s achievements: “The most outstanding middle school in the region,” reads the sign on the left, and "The best center in productive work," reads the other sign.[1] Boys and girls are standing in what the dolls on the beds reveal as one of the girls dormitories, contradicting the fact that the dormitories are gender specific, and disclosing that the image is staged. The students' clothes suggest that they are ready to work in the fields surrounding the school, yet the place chosen for the photo was the most representative of the school's domestic life. This fusion of domestic space and productive work is not a coincidence. The practice of "Socialist Competition" —from here on *La Emulación*, as this framework is called in Cuba— put at the same level domestic and productive activities in the boarding schools through the cult of work. In so doing, it organized life within a Socialist logic, and taught the values that were to guide the Cuban *hombre nuevo* (new man), men and women fit to belong to the new Socialist society: loyalty and devotion to the collective, hard work, self-awareness, and ongoing self-improvement.

The road to Communism in Cuba started with the parallel construction of the Socialist state and subject. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Cuban Revolution was a nationalist endeavor that was framed as Socialist two years after seizing power. For a country that by the Revolution's triumph in 1959 was fully ingrained in the capitalist world, turning to Socialism meant re-educating its citizens so they learned new values. As part of the government efforts to form a new subjectivity, the controlled environment of the rural boarding schools was set to constitute a reality parallel to the Cuban everyday life, still influenced by the country's capitalist past. In this parallel reality, Socialism was no longer in construction but already happening. Far from the influence of the family, which Revolutionary leaders considered part of the Cuban polluted past, students were expected to learn the rudiments of Socialist life and bring these lessons back to their homes, to which they returned on weekends and vacation periods.

In this chapter, I trace how *La Emulación* structured daily life and personal relationships in the rural boarding schools, turning each school building into a tool to instill the values of the *hombre nuevo*. Given the centralized management of the Cuban education system and the government's ambition to offer the same experience to students attending any rural boarding school, I use accounts of daily life at different schools to reconstruct the students' everyday experience in a typical rural boarding school. In the first part, I establish how the central role that work acquired in Cuban mothers' lives facilitated that their children attended boarding schools. I also explain how *La Emulación* articulated the Socialist work ethic and carried the values of the *hombre nuevo*. In the second part, I establish the centrality of the student collective in the students' lives, and how the boarding school's spatial setting underscored the collective's importance. In this part, I also address how *La Emulación* transformed the fields around the school building into a battleground for efficiency where students, working as a collective body, learned values that would prepare them for life under Socialism. In the last part, I turn to the dormitories to explain how narratives that the government promoted nationwide permeated the dormitory's daily life. I also show how the dormitory walls defined a territory where students were able to challenge rules, particularly those requiring the public disclosure of what happened inside the dormitory.

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[1] Oscar Rego, "Escuela Secundaria Básica en el Campo 'Máximo Gómez', un Compromiso con Nuestros Héroes y Mártires," *Bohemia*, June 20, 1975, 38.

The students' experience of the rural boarding schools' spatial setting was mediated by government narratives brought to the schools through the practice of *La Emulación*. Together, spatial setting and narratives made the boarding schools domesticity, which placed students in a Socialist era in which all activities were to contribute to the shaping of the self and the advance of Socialism. Yet, despite the government intentions of shaping subjects loyal to their collectives and Socialist values, accounts of daily life at the schools disclose deviations from the official plan that, while acknowledging the formation of strong collectives, reveal that the schools operated to some extent on the students' own terms.

Work Takes a Central Stage in Mothers' and Children's Lives

Working Mothers and Children's Admission to Boarding Schools

Every Sunday during the school year, parents of children attending the rural boarding schools met in public plazas and streets of Cuban towns to say goodbye to their children returning to their schools after having spent the weekend at home. Fleets of locally assembled Soviet buses, the *guaguas Girón*, would take between 45 minutes and 2 hours to reach their destinations. A similar scene would take place every Saturday to welcome the students coming back from the boarding schools to spend the weekend with their families. These displays constituted a public performance of confidence in the government, which had willingly taken the responsibility to raise the 11-to-14 year old teenagers during the weekday while subtly alluring families with the benefits of not having their children at home. For most of the parents saying goodbye, these benefits included saving money that otherwise would be spent buying food for their children, which was necessary to complement the basic rations they got from the government, or buying them extra clothes in lieu of the complimentary clothes children got as part of the boarding school experience.[2] For others, the benefits included the possibility to work without worrying about their children's whereabouts, something that was particularly helpful for working women and aligned with the government's rhetoric supporting gender equality.

The widespread incorporation of women into the workforce started early in the Revolution and was accompanied by services to support their lives as workers. In the 1960s, official campaigns focused on women's education to prepare them for skilled jobs, and in the 1970s, a decade of economic boom, women were expected to join the workforce massively.[3] To support these efforts, the government created the Federación de Mujeres Cubanas - FMC (Cuban Women's Federation) in 1960 and, starting in 1969, introduced mechanisms to facilitate housework, which in Cuba was usually the woman's responsibility.[4] Assisted by the FMC, the government opened daycare facilities, extended store business hours so people could shop after work, distributed home appliances, installed laundry facilities and canteens in workplaces, opened boarding schools, introduced Saturday schooling, and established a system of priority service for working women in grocery stores (*plan jaba*).[5] These strategies were accompanied by the 1975 Family Code, which stipulated that men and women had to participate equally in housekeeping and child care.[6] However, scholars agree that these efforts to promote gender equality were overshadowed by the patriarchal legacy of colonial times and the government's operation as a patriarchal system led by Fidel Castro.[7] For example, even though the FMC (still in operation today) empowered women by coordinating their participation in activities where they had a direct social impact, by advocating for women's equal access to jobs and government positions and by creating educational programs for women, the organization answered directly to the government. Moreover, the FMC could act only within the restricted limits established by the Partido Comunista de Cuba - PCC (Cuban Communist Party), led mostly by men[8]. On the other hand, although according to the Family Code a woman could divorce her husband if he refused to help in domestic chores, the code established no specific sanctions for offenders. Therefore, even if a woman had a full-time job, she was often still expected to take care of housework, which resulted in her having a higher workload than her partner.[9]

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[2] Maritza, interview by author, Havana, November 2, 2018; Caridad, interview by author, Havana, October 3, 2018.

[3] Daliany Jerónimo Kersh, "Women and Work in Cuba during the First Three Decades of the Revolution, 1959-1989," chap. 2 in *Women's Work in Special Period Cuba: Making Ends Meet* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 27-33.

By promoting women's incorporation into the workforce the government prioritized their role as workers over their role as wives and mothers, challenging along the way the idea of family that was common in pre-revolution times. As workers, women's goals were expected to be different from their goals as wives and mothers. Workers were to be revolutionaries through their work in productive activities, and housework was not included among them. Setting the standard of what a revolutionary ought to be, Fidel Castro's image of a man entirely devoted to his country and without family life sent a clear message to people about the revolutionary's priorities.[10] Based on Castro's example, a truly revolutionary person should work tirelessly for the social good, placing society over family. The services the state set to facilitate women's work reinforced this message by offering things usually provided by the family, undermining the family's privileged position in a person's life. As sociologist Lois M. Smith and historian Alfred Padula put it, the government did not want the family to be autonomous and acted to become part of it.[11] The officially promoted family, a collective of hard workers loyal to the Revolution, was meant to replace the old-fashioned family and give up its role as the main agent in children's socialization.

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[4] Lois M. Smith and Alfred Padula, *Sex and Revolution: Women in Socialist Cuba* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). See especially chapters 3 and 8.

[5] Daliany Jerónimo Kersh, *Women's Work in Special Period Cuba: Making Ends Meet.*, 32. On the Plan Jaba, see Lois M. Smith and Alfred Padula, *Sex and Revolution: Women in Socialist Cuba*, 104.

[6] Marisela Fleites-Lear, "Women, Family and the Cuban Revolution," in *Cuban Communism*, 10th Edition, ed. Irving Louis Horowitz and Jaime Suchlicki (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 353. *Ley No. 1289: Código de Familia* (Havana: Ediciones ONBC, 2015), 9-10. See particularly articles 26-28.

[7] For example, see Daliany Jernónimo Kersh, *Women's Work in Special Period Cuba: Making Ends Meet*; Marisela Fleites-Lear, "Women, Family and the Cuban Revolution," 357-360; Lois M. Smith and Alfred Padula, *Sex and Revolution: Women in Socialist Cuba.*

[8] Marisela Fleites-Lear, "Women, Family and the Cuban Revolution."

[9] Marisela Fleites-Lear, "Women, Family and the Cuban Revolution," 351-354.

[10] Marisela Fleites-Lear, "Women, Family and the Cuban Revolution," 354-357.

Elementary and middle boarding schools, service institutions that the government offered to ease housework, gave priority to students coming from problem families or homes where mothers were unable to take care of their children. To be sure, priority was also given to orphan children or students coming from other boarding schools. According to one document from the Ministry of Education, problem families could include those with "political, ideological or social problems that constituted a deforming environment" or those with "grave social problems."[12] No mention was made on who determined whether a family had any of these problems or how the determination was made. Women unable to take care of their children included working women, which suggests that the government acknowledged that despite its efforts women still bore the main responsibility in childcare. Moreover, judging by the form that parents filled out in 1979 for their children to apply to boarding schools (elementary, middle, and high school), the government was even suspicious of women who claimed to have a job. Unlike men, women were asked to indicate their "attitude towards work" and provide periodical updates on this aspect, which had to be endorsed by officials from their workplace.[13] Upon admission to a boarding school, a student was set to enter an environment where —at least in the case of the rural boarding schools— the central role that work had in the public realm was extended to the school life via the practice of *La Emulación*.

Stretching the Role of Work to Shape the Hombre Nuevo

La Emulación, retooled to organize life in the rural boarding schools, was a framework originally intended to set the terms for economic competition in Cuba (also employed in countries of the Soviet Bloc). It rendered work as an essential value for society, stimulating production and articulating relationships.[14] Within this government-promoted framework, still used today although at a lesser extent, a worker that discovered a better labor method that resulted in more efficient processes of production and distribution had the responsibility to share his discovery with society. In this way, new and better ways to do things were expected to be scaled up quickly, benefiting the whole society. Benefits, however, transcended the economic realm. Congruent with the Marxist-Leninist idea that social relations are determined by modes of production, relationships among people were expected to change through the approach to work framed by *La Emulación*, ultimately changing the entire society.[15]

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[11] Lois M. Smith and Alfred Padula, *Sex and Revolution: Women in Socialist Cuba,* 151-152.

[12] Ministerio de Educación, *Sobre el Ingreso a Internados y Seminternados: Documentos Normativos para el Sistema Nacional de Educación* (Havana: Editorial de Libros para la Educación, 1979), 9.

[13] Ministerio de Educación, *Sobre el Ingreso a Internados y Seminternados*, 29-30. See forms.

[14] Semión Guershberg, *La Emulación Socialista: Esencia y Objetivos* (Moscow: Editorial de la Agencia de Prensa Nóvosti, 1973), 13-16.

[15] Luis Salomón Beckford, *La Formación del Hombre Nuevo en Cuba* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1986), 205-207.

As part of *La Emulación*, work centers set production goals, shared results, and celebrated these when goals were met. This process was essential to encourage other workers to emulate (*emular*) successful labor methods. Individuals and groups that achieved remarkable performance received material or moral rewards, or both. Since the beginning of the Revolution the balance between these two had shifted according to the country's economic performance and official discussions on whether material rewards might contradict Socialist values.[16] Still, moral rewards tended to be prioritized. They stressed the idea that work should be a social enterprise and not an obligation.[17] In this vein, boards in workplaces, news reports, and ceremonies to grant "work hero" certificates celebrated exemplary workers publicly.[18] Although *La Emulación* was an ongoing process happening across the country, there were ad hoc versions of it (*emulaciones especiales*) in which efficiency and production within specific time periods —ranging from a few hours to a year— and industries were collectively evaluated. These ad hoc versions were often tied to celebrations such as the Communist Party's or a Cuban hero's anniversary. Workers were expected to improve production to honor the event, charging in this way productivity with symbolism. In the rural boarding schools, *La Emulación* operated only with moral rewards, and framed things such as academic performance or dormitory cleanliness, occasionally linking them to nationwide celebrations. Overall, as practiced in the rural boarding schools, *La Emulación* turned activities into work, and, in so doing, into lessons on Socialist values.

Embedded in the practice and narrative of *La Emulación* were the values of the *hombre nuevo*, a subject willing to prioritize society over individual well-being. This new kind of person was expected to develop a tight connection with his closest group of people, or collective. His role in society, the largest collective, was to be articulated through his participation in smaller collectives. A collective demanded each member's loyalty, which was demonstrated through commitment to prioritize the collective's interests over personal ones, benefiting society in the long run. This required sacrifice, as current and historical heroes celebrated in the government rhetoric had allegedly done. Being an *hombre nuevo* also required living in an ongoing process of self-assessment regarding one's responsibilities to the collective. The collective participated in this process through criticism/self-criticism sessions in which the individual acknowledged failures and committed to improve.[19] In the rural boarding schools, the practice of *La Emulación* articulated the exchange between individual and group. In this way, a student learned hands-on the kind of social relationships that would prevail in the Socialist society, which contributed to shape his new subjectivity. As the 1978 rule book regulating the practice of *La Emulación* in schools stated, the framework's first goal was "to contribute to the students' political and ideological formation, and to the consolidation of daily behavior that highlights honesty, moral purity, and sound revolutionary consciousness."[20] Put in the service of shaping the *hombre nuevo* in the rural boarding schools, *La Emulación* merged the pedagogical attributes inherent to the domestic sphere and those that the Revolution ascribed to work.

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[16] Denise F Blum, "1970-1985: Reconciling Revolutionary Fervor with the Requisites of the Modern State," chap. 3 in *Cuban Youth and Revolutionary Values: Educating the New Socialist Citizen* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 72-92. In this chapter, Blum discusses the shifts between moral and material rewards in the 1970s and early 1980s.

[17] Luis Salomón Beckford, *La Formación del Hombre Nuevo en Cuba*, 208.

[18] For example, these two articles published in *Bohemia* celebrate exemplar workers: "Los Héroes Nacionales del Trabajo," *Bohemia*, August 1 1975, 47; Jesús Abascal, "Héroes del Trabajo: Quién Quiere Emular con Eladio Cabrera?," *Bohemia*, June 14, 1963, 32-33, 79.

[19] For an example of these sessions in the Soviet context, see J. Arch Getty, "Samokritika Rituals in the Stalinist Central Committee, 1933-38," *The Russian Review* 58, no. 1 (1999), 49-70.

Making the Student Collective through Efficient Work

The Open Gallery Corridor, the Plaza, and the Importance of the Student Collective

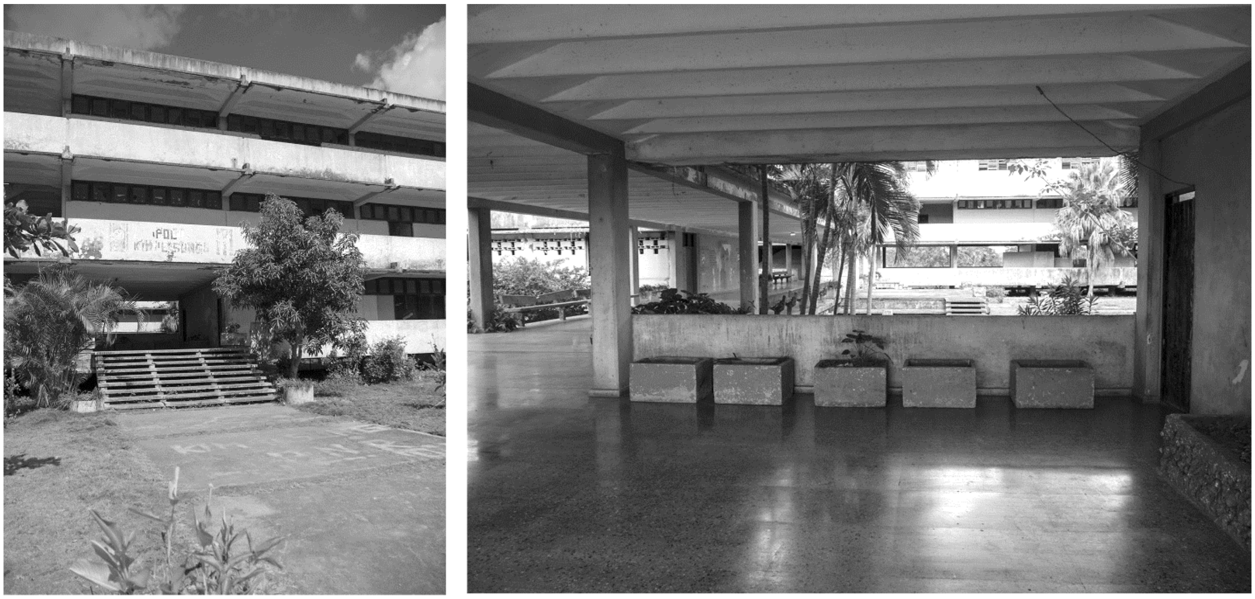

Figure 4.2. This spatial sequence marking the transition from outside to inside underscored the importance of the open gallery corridor and plaza in the typical boarding school building. Source: author, 2018.

Once students got on the Girón bus that would take them to their boarding school after spending the weekend at home, they started seeing themselves as part of a collective larger than the family. The boundaries of the bus defined a temporary collective formed by students coming from the same area and attending the same school, although not necessarily studying in the same grade. This collective dispersed quickly once the bus stopped in front of the boarding school, but also gave way to another collective different in membership: the student collective.[21] All students in a boarding school belonged to this collective although, as I show later, a student was at the same time part of different collectives within the school (production collective, dormitory collective, etc.). In front of the building, a simple but powerful spatial sequence marked the transition between outside and inside, underscoring the importance of the open gallery corridor and plaza, main showcase venues of the student collective. A set of stairs led students to the building's elevated and door-less vestibule from which they had a full view of the plaza flanked on one of its sides by the corridor (figure 4.2). The corridor, two storeyed in some schools, articulated the three blocks of the typical rural boarding school (classrooms, kitchen-dining room, and dormitories). Its function as connector of seemingly disparate activities, its physical openness, and its relationship with the plaza gave it the aura of an urban street (figure 4.3).[22]

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[20] Unión de Jóvenes Comunistas, *Reglamento de la Emulación Estudiantil: Movimiento Juvenil* (Havana: UJC, 1978), 12.

[21] Lisandra, interview by author, Havana, December 1, 2018.

The open gallery corridor and plaza arrangement displayed the importance of the student collective and its operation as a single entity. The 1980 rulebook setting the norms for the country's elementary and secondary schools demonstrates the central role of the collective in the Cuban school system. Consistent with the goal of shaping people eager to put the society's wellbeing before their own, "the school, to achieve its goal of preparing the motherland's future workers, will follow the principle of educating in the collective, through the collective and for the collective."[23] This principle was on display every day in the corridor and plaza arrangement. Every morning at 8AM, the student collective organized in classroom groups and formed in the plaza for the *matutino*. In this fifteen-to-twenty minute meeting, students honored the country's national symbols, heard a curated summary of news from Cuba and the Socialist Bloc, got updates on their progress in *La Emulación* or ad hoc versions of it (*emulaciones especiales*), and heard the goals for the day's activities.[24] Each one of these activities was framed within a larger purpose that could be as specific as honoring a hero or paying tribute to the victims of a war fought on Socialist soil anywhere in the world, or as general as helping boost the country's economy.

After the *matutino*, half of the students went to the classrooms, and the other half to the fields surrounding the school to participate in agricultural production. Once students had lunch, the student collective formed again in the plaza for the *vespertino,* a brief meeting to set the afternoon goals. Dressed in work attire, those who attended classes in the morning now walked together to the agricultural fields, and those who worked in the morning now left to the classrooms block dressed in school uniform.[25] Less structured formations —not necessarily with the whole student collective— took place in the plaza or open gallery corridor before meals, the daily session of individual study in which students did their homework, or any other group activity. These daily meetings and formations to prepare, coordinate and assess, and the movement of students between scheduled activities, depicted an image of order and control that happened almost simultaneously in hundreds of rural boarding schools across the country. They underscored the predominance of groups over individuals by pushing students to act in synchrony with their collectives physically, while in formation and moving from one place to another, and operationally, while following instructions before activities. Save for the evening leisure activities and short breaks in-between classes, where students relaxed freely in the plaza and open gallery corridor, life in these two settings, as described, turned the school into a showcase of controlled collective life.

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[22] Brazilian-Cuban architectural historian Roberto Segre also reads the building's open gallery corridor as street, although his reading seems to be based on how this element was incorporated into larger educational complexes that he refers to as "urban complexes" (*conjuntos urbanos*). Roberto Segre, "La Nueva Escuela Cubana: Germen Estético de la Comunidad Futura," in *Arquitectura, Historia y Revolución: Ensayos* (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 1981), 280-281.

[23] Ministerio de Educación, *Reglamento Escolar para los Centros de Educación General Politécnica y Laboral: Documentos Normativos para el Sistema Nacional de Educación* (Havana: MINED, 1980), 39.

[24] Marcela, interview by author, Havana, June 18, 2018; Caridad, interview by author, Havana, October 3, 2018; Maritza, interview by author, Havana, November 24, 2018; Lisandra, interview by author, Havana, November 9, 2018.

[25] Marcela, interview by author, Havana, June 18, 2018. Lisandra explains that in some rural boarding schools the *vespertino* was not held after lunch but at 5PM to give closure to the day's classroom and agricultural activities. Lisandra, interview by author, Havana, November 9, 2018.

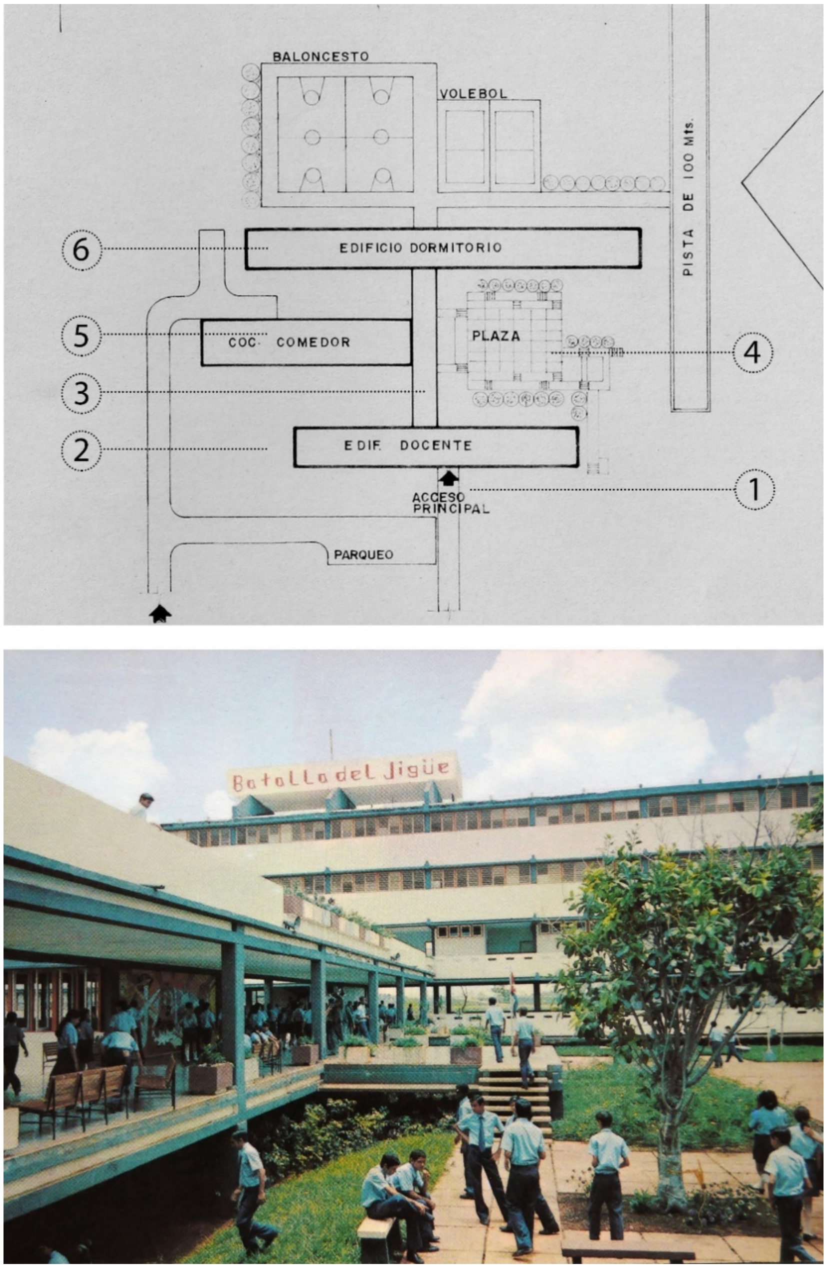

Figure 4.3. Above: Site plan of the typical rural boarding school indicating 1) access; 2) classrooms block; 3) open gallery corridor; 4) plaza; 5) kitchen-dining room; 6) dormitories block. Source: Ministerio de la Construcción, Josefina Rebellón's personal archive. Below: Informal gathering in the main corridor and plaza of the *Batalla del Jigüe* rural boarding school, as shown in a postcard issued by the Cuban government in 1972. The dormitories block is visible in the back. Source: author's personal collection.

The open gallery corridor and plaza arrangement played a crucial role in the students' self-identification as part of the student collective. It was the only setting where all students from different grades and ages could meet physically while forming in the plaza or moving from one place to another. This situation gave the arrangement a condition of singularity that was spatially recreated through the arrangement's formal characteristics and configuration in the architectural scheme. The perpendicular placement of the corridor with respect to the three blocks of the school building, and the plaza's noticeable open space and central position, highlighted visually the arrangement and set it apart from the uniform geometry of the blocks.

Offering a narrative that stressed the importance of both the collective and *La Emulación*, a board located at the entrance vestibule of each rural boarding school welcomed students and visitors. Information on the history of the school and its name —usually honoring a national or international revolutionary event or hero— was complemented with photos of school life, reports on monthly celebrations, and results of *La Emulación*. These results privileged collective achievements over individual achievements. Accordingly, results of agricultural production and dormitory discipline, both assessed as part of *La Emulación*, included only the best production teams (or brigades) and the best dormitories. No individual student was mentioned. Regarding academic performance, the board usually listed only the best classroom groups. However, occasionally the names of students with excellent grades were included.[26] Results were often compared to those of other rural boarding schools in the area, province, and country. In this way, one of the messages that the board transmitted was that individual action was valuable as long as it contributed to collective performance. Another message was that there was an ongoing push for improvement that implied constant measuring and comparison. Overall, standing in front of the school's board and having an oblique view of the corridor and plaza arrangement, a person could have an at-a-glance understanding that the rural boarding school was a Socialist setting.

Striving for Efficiency in the Agricultural Fields

Another characteristic of the corridor and plaza arrangement, its lack of visual and physical limits, hinted at the expected knowledge exchange between students and peasant communities living and working around the school (figure 4.4). Students enrolled in a rural boarding school, on one hand, were expected to abide by the Marxist-Leninist tenet that reality, with productive activities at the core, should be transformed through a rational, "scientific" approach. Accordingly, the Cuban education system promoted the so called "scientific understanding of the world.[27]" Peasants, on the other hand, were portrayed in the government rhetoric as subjects transformed into morally superior beings through their exhausting agricultural work. Both parties were expected to learn from one another in the exchange, in a similar way guerrillas and peasants had allegedly done in the early years of revolutionary struggle in the Sierra Maestra.[28] Although as explained in Castro's speeches, the capitalist past had left Cuba with a backward countryside, peasants still had a role in the new society, even if transitory. Students would learn from the peasants' hard work, and peasants would learn from the ideas and rational outlook that students were learning in the school. In the inaugural speech of 44 rural boarding schools in 1972, Castro made clear that this exchange also included teachers and school directives, adding that the boarding school "has to be not only a learning center and a production center: it has to be an example, it has to radiate political conscience, revolutionary conscience, willingness to strive for quality and duty accomplishment."[29] Although there is no evidence that this knowledge exchange actually happened to the extent that the government planned, it is clear that the blurred boundaries between school building and agricultural fields were to help blur the distinction between students and peasants, pushing forward the shaping of a single class of proletarians.

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[26] On the board, Caridad, interview by author, Havana, October 3, 2018; Maritza, interview by author, Havana, November 2, 2018; Maria del Carmen, interview by author, Havana, November 19, 2018.

[27] Ministerio de Educación, *Reglamento Escolar para los Centros de Educación General Politécnica y Laboral,* 9.

At the core of this exchange between students and peasants was the idea of efficiency, which boys and girls working together practiced in the agricultural fields from Monday to Friday, three hours per day. *La Emulación* pushed students to work efficiently to achieve their daily production quota. This quota was established by the school's production sub-director along with peasants who supported the students' work in the fields[30]. A document from an early experimental rural boarding school shows detailed accounts of what students were able to produce during three weeks of 1969. Items such as number of sowing holes opened and fertilized, number of plants sown, and pounds of produce collected by a group of students were recorded.[31] Reaching the daily quota in the fields meant scoring points towards *La Emulación*. A group of teachers helped students in this endeavor by coordinating their work, aided by an "agricultural guide", the peasant in charge of the field.[32] This person had the "political-moral conditions required to work with students", and had been trained to foster production efficiency[33]. By working the land, students were enacting in the boarding school setting one of the government strategies for the country. In the same way the boarding school as institution was the source of more rational subjects expected to use their new mentality to improve efficiency around the school, education would provide the tools for Cubans to raise the country's economic production.

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[28] See my discussion on this matter in the previous chapter.

[29] "Inauguración de la Escuela XIII Congreso Obrero: 44 Nuevas Secundarias Básicas en el Campo," *Bohemia*, September 29, 1972, 69.

[30] Marcela, interview by author, Havana, June 18, 2018; Caridad, interview by author, Havana, October 3, 2018; Maritza, interview by author, Havana, November 2, 2018.

[31] Raquel Guillén, *La Escuela en el Campo: Plan Santa Amelia* (Havana: Instituto del Libro, 1970), appendix.

[32] As I mentioned in note 9 (previous chapter), in this dissertation I use the term peasant to refer to both *campesinos* and *obreros agrícolas*.

[33] Ministerio de Educación and Ministerio de Agricultura, *El Trabajo Productivo en los Centros Internos de la Educación Media: Documentos Normativos para el Sistema Nacional de Educación* (Havana: Ministerio de Educación, 1982), 13-14.

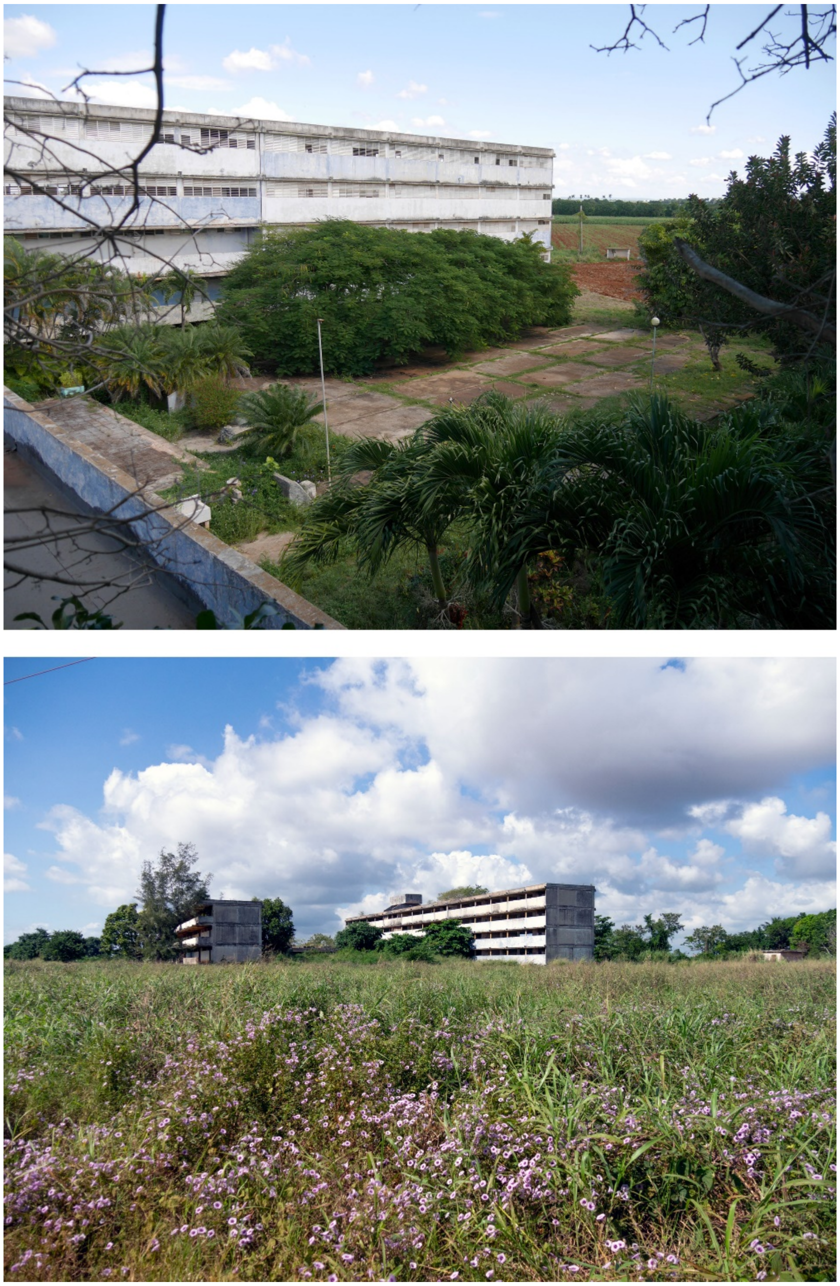
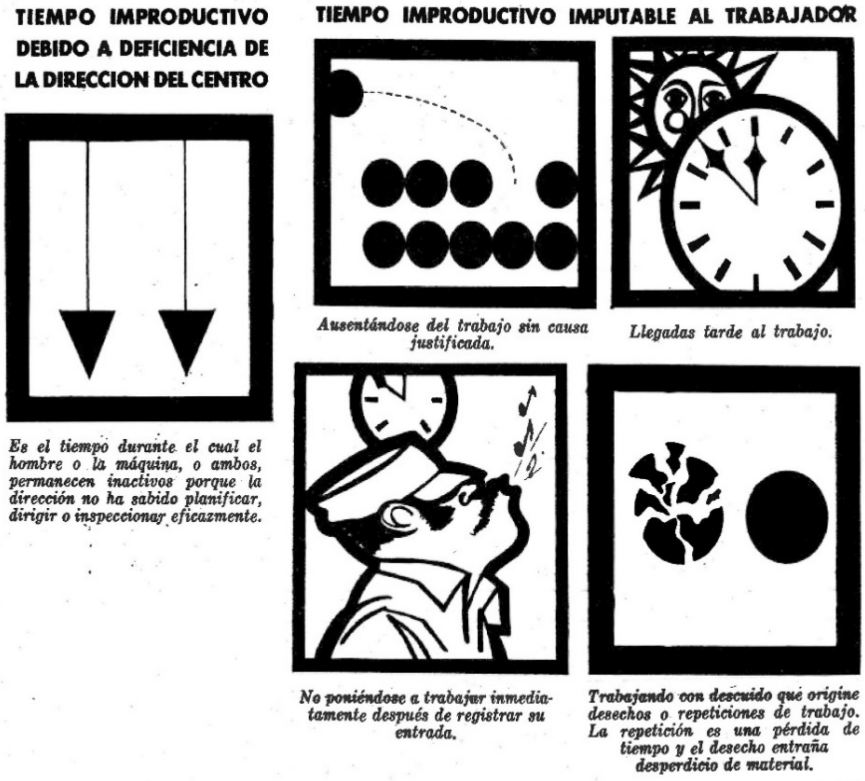


Figure 4.4. The two images illustrate the barrier-less connection between the typical rural boarding school building and its surrounding agricultural fields. Above: Taken from the second floor, this image shows the plaza's floor of a rural boarding school, now vacant, extending into the surrounding countryside. Below: This image of another rural boarding school, also vacant, shows how the agricultural fields become the plaza's fourth limit. The other three limits are the open gallery corridor (not visible in the photo), the classrooms block (left) and the dormitories block (right). Source: author, 2018.

The government extensively promoted a culture of efficiency among Cubans in the government-controlled press. For example, a 1972 article published in *Bohemia* titled "The Key. Great Discovery! Important Discovery! Decisive Discovery!", explained readers what efficiency was and why it was important for the country.[34] Profusely illustrated to catch the reader's attention, one of the images in the article summarizes the main causes of inefficiency in the workplace (figure 4.5). The image is divided into two sections, one showing the causes of inefficiency associated with the production unit's manager, and the other showing the causes associated with the worker. The manager causes inefficiency when "man, machine, or both do not operate because [he] has not known how to plan, lead, or evaluate efficiently." Causes associated with the worker include failing to attend work, showing up late, not starting to work as soon as he gets to the workplace, and working so carelessly that product is wasted or work has to be repeated. In the image's content, man and machine are both production devices. The worker, like a machine, is expected to be regular, reliable, and precise. This idea of the machine-like worker renders Cuban Socialism, at least in part, as an endeavor to redefine people's lives to meet modern standards of production. By putting his individuality to work for the collective and by committing to efficiency, the Cuban *hombre nuevo* would be dependable but replaceable, a "cog in the wheel" of a larger mechanism of workers.[35]



TIEMPO IMPRODUCTIVO DEBIDO A DEFICIENCIA DE LA DIRECCION DEL CENTRO

Es el tiempo durante el cual el hombre o la máquina, o ambos, permanecen inactivos porque la dirección no ha sabido planificar, dirigir o inspeccionar eficazmente.

TIEMPO IMPRODUCTIVO IMPUTABLE AL TRABAJADOR

Ausentándose del trabajo sin causa justificada.

Llegadas tarde al trabajo.

No poniéndose a trabajar inmediatamente después de registrar su entrada.

Trabajando con descuido que origine desechos o repeticiones de trabajo. La repetición es una pérdida de tiempo y el desecho entraña desperdicio de material.

Figure 4.5. Part of an article intended to educate people on the importance of work efficiency, this image shows the main causes of inefficiency in the workplace. Source: Fela Gutierrez and Luis Alonso, "The Key. Great Discovery! Important Discovery! Decisive Discovery!," Bohemia, September 15, 1972, 18-25.

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[34] Fela Gutierrez and Luis Alonso, "The Key. Great Discovery! Important Discovery! Decisive Discovery!," *Bohemia*, September 15, 1972, 18-25.

[35] This expression is taken from the title of Mikhail Heller's book, "Cogs in the Soviet Wheel," which offers a critical account of Soviet Socialism focused on the Soviet Man (*homo sovieticus*). Mikhail Heller, *Cogs in the Soviet Wheel. The Formation of the Soviet Man* (London: Collins Harvill, 1988).

The same article connected production to the larger goal of building the future of Socialism by offering an explanation of why increasing efficiency was important. Although the first reason to increase efficiency was to raise living standards, the article explained that "a good portion" of productivity gains had to be invested in the country's future by developing its industry, agriculture, and education. Surpluses coming from more efficiency were also needed to support "mankind highest conquest: international solidarity." Examples of the latter included Cuba's economic contributions to Vietnam, "how is it that we won't give resources [to Vietnam] if we are even willing to give our own blood [for that country]?", construction of hospitals in Peru, sending medical doctors to Algeria, and sharing fishing knowledge with Chile. The article stressed that "with the world's current situation, with a rapacious and threatening imperialism, more efficiency means to us, primarily, more chances to practice international solidarity."[36] In this context, the students' efforts to do well in *La Emulación* would have an impact beyond the rural boarding school. Working the fields efficiently and collectively, along with the ideas students learned in the school building and through propaganda material, turned individual action into a contribution to the country's future and the mechanism of proletarians around the world. In this way, the continuum boarding school-agricultural fields was expanded through discourse to include the Cuban territory, the Socialist countries, and those nations struggling to become Socialist.

The Building's Surroundings as Socialist Battleground

Militaristic language framed the students' agricultural work, turning the fields around the school building into a battleground where Socialism was the outcome of an ongoing struggle for efficiency. An image from the book *La Educación en Revolución* (The Education in Revolution) published by the Cuban government in 1974 to advertise its advancements in education helps illustrate this point (figure 4.6). In the image, students leave one of the boarding schools to work the land marching in line, carrying their hoes as if they were rifles. Once in the fields, they would organize in small *brigadas* (brigades) based on their classroom group and would follow the guidance of brigade leaders chosen by students themselves to meet their production quota. Although the photo is likely staged, Castro's speeches and articles in the press frequently framed official campaigns and programs using militaristic language.[37] In a speech delivered at the 1978 congress of the Central de Trabajadores de Cuba - CTC (Cuban Workers Union), for example, Castro recalled some of the campaigns that over the years had improved the workers' education level, "the fight against illiteracy" and "the battle for the 9th grade," and even anticipated a future "battle for the 12th grade."[38] The use of militaristic tropes in everyday life had been advocated earlier in the Revolution by "Che" Guevara who, having witnessed people's positive attitude facing the state of military emergency generated by the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, suggested a permanent state of emergency for the country.[39] Accordingly, massive rallies and mobilization of volunteers in Cuba were routinely promoted using a call for battle. The militaristic aura embedded in the boarding school's agricultural work was also a call for planning, coordination, and discipline, required for students to work efficiently in order to reach the daily quota that school officials set for them.

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[36] Fela Gutierrez and Luis Alonso, "The Key. Great Discovery! Important Discovery! Decisive Discovery!," 19.

[37] Examples of articles are: "La Gran Batalla Hidráulica de Oriente," *Bohemia*, July 24, 1964, 12-15, on hydraulic infrastructure. Oscar Rego, "Una Batalla de Todos," *Bohemia*, July 20, 1979, 8-9, on the campaign called the "Battle for the Sixth Grade."

[38] Fidel Castro, "Discurso Pronunciado en la Clausura del XIV Congreso de la Central de Trabajadores de Cuba (CTC)," (speech, CTC XIV Congress, Havana, Cuba, December 2, 1978), http://www.fidelcastro.cu/es/discursos/discurso-pronunciado-en-la-clausura-del-xiv-congreso-de-la-central-de-trabajadores-de-cuba.

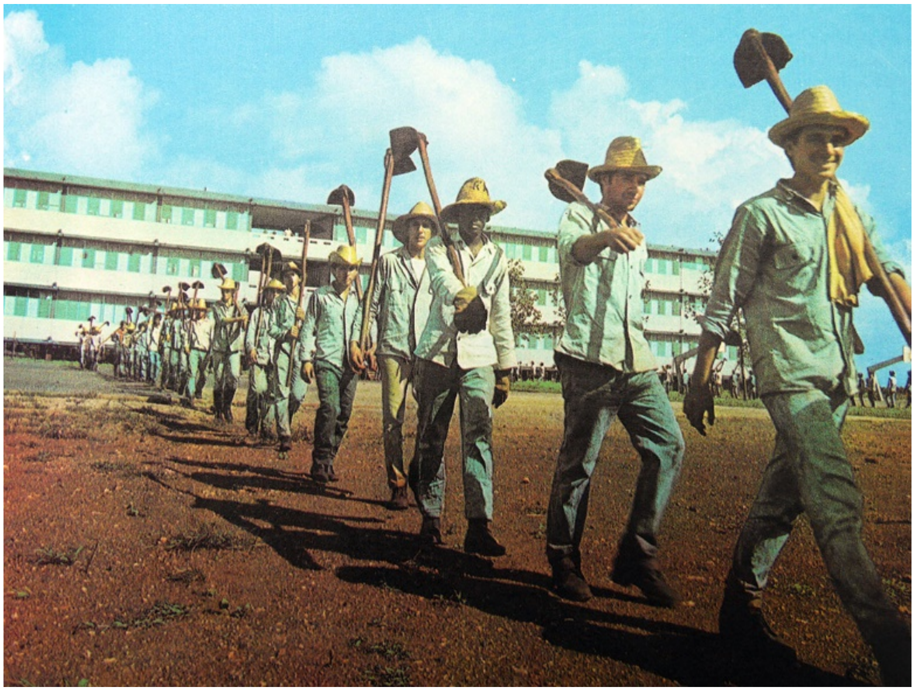

Figure 4.6. Students walk to the agricultural fields in militaristic style in this image included in a book published by the government to advertise the Revolution's advancements in education. Source: Fidel Castro, *La Educación en Revolución* (Havana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1974), 127.

The role of brigade leaders guiding their classmates to reach daily quotas constituted a small-scale rehearsal of how interpersonal relationships in production settings were supposed to operate in the Cuban Socialist society. Brigade leaders, boys or girls, were chosen by the students themselves based on their ability to guide the collectives in the agricultural work.[40] Other activities happening in different places of the school (e.g., sport fields, dormitories, and classrooms) required different skill sets, so other leaders were chosen for these activities.[41] In the fields, a leader not only pushed students to meet production quotas, helping the group improve its position in *La Emulación*, but also worked hand-in-hand with his classmates. His role recreated the Revolution's narrative on the late-1950s guerrilla warfare in the Sierra Maestra —framed as crucial for the Revolution's triumph— in which guerrilla soldiers trusted and followed guerrilla leaders. As explained in the previous chapter, this narrative offered a mythical explanation for the planned division of society into the vanguard, represented by the country's leaders and Communist Party members, and the mass, represented by the rest of society. Accordingly, by following brigade leaders in the agricultural work, students were also practicing the rudiments of daily life under a two-tier Socialist society.

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[39] Yinghong Cheng, *Creating the "New Man": From Enlightenment Ideals to Socialist Realities* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009), 185-186.

[40] Lisandra, interview by author, Havana, November 9, 2018.

[41] Caridad, interview by author, Havana, October 3, 2018; Maritza, interview by author, Havana, November 2, 2018; Lisandra, interview by author, Havana, November 9, 2018; Marcela, interview by author, Havana, June 18, 2018.

Occasionally, a collective's leader was an aspiring member of the Communist Youth, although transgressions of rules in the agricultural fields suggest that leaders' loyalty to their collectives conflicted with their loyalty to the Revolution. The Communist Youth (Unión de Jóvenes Comunistas - UJC) is a political organization for young Cubans that reports directly to the Cuban Communist Party - PCC. Young Cubans aspiring to become future members of the country's vanguard can enroll in the organization since tenth grade. In the rural boarding schools, like in any other middle school, the Communist Youth was represented by its subsidiary organization, the Communist Pioneers (Organización de Pioneros José Martí - OPJM), which supported and guided Communist Youth's aspiring members. Aspiring members were required to be an example of discipline and academic performance. Maritza, who attended a rural boarding school between 1977 and 1980 and was on the road to become a member of the Communist Youth, confirms these expectations: "we were what the rest of the students wanted to be."[42] In her words, she distances herself from other students, suggesting a clear awareness of her privileged position in the collective. Although leaders and Communist Youth's aspiring members were supposed to lead students to operate within the values ascribed to the *hombre nuevo*, this was not always the case. During agricultural work, for example, breaking the rules was not uncommon. Even though it was generally acceptable to eat some of the produce while harvesting it, sometimes students ate more than what the school officers anticipated, or ate even if it was explicitly banned. This was seen as a threat against social property and thus contrary to the values of the *hombre nuevo*. Lisandra, who attended a rural boarding school between 1980 and 1983 remembers that "once we ate so many strawberries —and did not achieve the quota— that we were punished. They [the school officials] asked us to stand in the plaza in front of the whole school (laughs) showing our tongues."[43] For María del Carmen, who attended a rural boarding school between 1976 and 1979, eating produce was a common occurrence. According to her, "I used to eat a lot of strawberries, and the rest of the people did the same. […] who is going to tell these boys not to eat the strawberries, or the oranges? Those were the best moments."[44] Despite the constant presence of students playing the role of the vanguard, complicity and loyalty among students turned the agricultural fields into a venue where Socialism, as practiced, departed from official expectations.

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[42] For the sake of clarity, I do not use here a literal translation from Spanish. The original sentence in Spanish is, "Éramos el espejo en el que se miraban el resto de los estudiantes." Maritza, interview by author, Havana, November 2, 2018.

[43] Lisandra, interview by author, Havana, November 16, 2018.

[44] María del Carmen, interview by author, Havana, November 19, 2018.

The battle for efficiency in the agricultural work required physical fitness, which the sport fields located next to the agricultural fields would help build. Modelled after the Soviet example, a general feature of sports in twentieth-century Socialist countries was sports' enlistment in the construction of Socialism.[45] In Cuba, for example, the practice of sports has had different government-sanctioned goals since the triumph of the Revolution, all contributing to the construction of Socialism. These goals have included unifying people, transmitting the values of the *hombre nuevo*, organizing people's leisure time, and projecting internationally an image of success for Cuban Socialism.[46] In the country's education system, sporting activities in the 1970s and 1980s were framed under the idea of improving physical performance to serve the country. The 1980-81 annual report from the Ministry of Education, for instance, stated that physical education and sports were "part of a pedagogical process aimed to improve students' physical performance, so they are in condition to do all that the society asks them to do."[47] Fit bodies served better society by working more efficiently and, in case of aggression, defending the country. Accordingly, students practiced sports in the rural boarding schools at least twice a week as part of their physical education class.[48] Each rural boarding school had at least a baseball field, a 100-meter running track, and two basketball and two volleyball courts. A few of the schools had additional facilities such as tennis court, high jump and pole vault track, javelin throw zone, hammer throw zone, and 50-meter swimming pool. That the practice of sports in Cuban schools was not an end in itself is evident in Fidel Castro's inaugural speech of a Escuela de Iniciación Deportiva Escolar - EIDE (Sports Initiation School), a type of school where children showing potential for sports got their regular education while focusing on a particular sport. In the speech, Castro implied that even if one practiced a sport professionally, one's contribution to the Revolution was not to be through sports but through work:

> You will not earn a living from sport; you will earn a living from your work! You will be able to go as far as you want in sport but will also be able to go as far as you want as citizens, and as technicians and professionals! The Revolution will develop your sport and physical skills but will also develop your intellectual skills to the fullest, and will prepare you to be useful to the motherland and to the Revolution through work.[49]

The daily battle for efficiency around the school building set the tone for the ongoing battle that citizens, working together as a collective, were expected to endure in order to guarantee the success of the Socialist project in Cuba. In the students' preparation for this national struggle, as I show next, even mundane activities in the school dormitories were rendered essential for the construction of Socialism through the dynamic set by *La Emulación*.

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[45] James Riordan, "Sport and Communism - on the Example of the USSR.," in *Sport, Culture and Ideology*, ed. Jennifer Hargreaves (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), 213-231.

[46] Julie Marie Bunk, "The Politics of Sports in Revolutionary Cuba," *Cuban Studies* 20 (1990): 111-131.

[47] Ministerio de Educación, *Resumen del Trabajo Anual del MINED Año Escolar 1980-81* (Havana: Ministerio de Educación, 1981), 167.

[48] Oscar Rego, "La Educación Física y el Proceso Educativo," *Bohemia*, January 1975, 48-49.

[49] Castro's speech as reproduced in *Bohemia*. "El Deporte es un Derecho, y también un Deber del Pueblo," *Bohemia*, September 9, 1977, 59-60.

Living the Revolution in the Dormitories

Government Narratives and Life in the Dormitories

The dormitory walls defined the most intimate collective a student was part of and inside it the quest for doing well in *La Emulación* kept a certain level of discipline and order. Dormitories were gender specific, and each one had room for about sixty children, mostly from the same grade. Students occupied 30 bunk beds that were organized in sets of 10, which they called cubicles (*cubículos*), with no wall separating each set. School officers ran two checkups every day —one in the morning before the matutino and one at bedtime— to verify that beds were perfectly made, closets were organized, cleaning had been done properly, and, in the first daily checkup, that students were wearing their uniforms according to the rules.[50] Doing things on time by checkup time kept the students geared for efficiency, in line with the efficiency practiced in the agricultural fields. The cleaning of the dormitory and bathroom was assigned each day to students from a different cubicle. Making beds and keeping things organized was done individually.[51] In some boarding schools girls placed dolls on the beds, flowers on the closets, and decorated the wall of the corridor in front of each cubicle to improve the dormitory's appearance and "earn more points" in *La Emulación*.[52] Officers kept records of their findings and often in the matutino announced the day's best and worst dormitory.[53] By extending the operation of *La Emulación* to activities in the dormitory, a framework originally intended for the public realm entered the school's most private space and, conversely, domestic life practices were inscribed in the school's public sphere.

Each dormitory constituted a territory where students stood mostly unsupervised, and where school officers expected that the officially promoted values guaranteed the children's spotless behavior. The Ministry of Education set of rules for boarding schools framed the students' limited autonomy in certain scenarios as "self-management" (autodirección) and it was to contribute "to shape the students' personality."[54] Through self-management strong collectives would be made and, through them, the Cuban *hombre nuevo*. The presence of leaders was essential for the students' limited autonomy to work. In the dormitory, the dormitory chief, a student chosen by students, helped the group succeed in activities that required a checkup by school officers —because they would count towards *La Emulación*. Like in the agricultural fields, collective work to achieve specific goals taught students the basics of the interaction between the vanguard and the mass and among members of the mass. The dormitory chief, often supported by cubicle chiefs also chosen by students, was the dormitory's highest authority and school officers held him accountable for any problem inside his jurisdiction.[55] One of his main functions was to make sure that students were ready on time for school activities and prepared the dormitory for the daily checkups. Besides what was assessed in these checkups (mainly cleanliness and order), no official standards were set for other activities in the dormitory. In lieu of these, students often followed standards brought from home, particularly if these aligned with the values present in other officially sanctioned standards. Some of the standards related to personal care and hygiene, for example, were set by students themselves following classmates' customs that aligned with the values embedded in official rules such as wearing the school uniform properly and keeping the dormitory and bathroom clean. Peer pressure was paramount in this process. According to Yunier, who attended a rural boarding school between 1981 and 1984,

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[50] Lisandra, interview by author, Havana, November 9, 2018; Marcela, interview by author, Havana, June 18, 2018; Caridad, interview by author, Havana, October 3, 2018.

[51] Maritza, interview by author, Havana, November 2, 2018; Lisandra, interview by author, Havana, November 9, 2018; Marcela, interview by author, Havana, June 18, 2018.

[52] Both Maritza and Marcela talk about the dolls and flowers. Maritza mentions the wall's decoration. Maritza, interview by author, Havana, November 24, 2018; Marcela, interview by author, Havana, June 18, 2018.

[53] Maritza, interview by author, Havana, November 2, 2018.

[54] Ministerio de Educación, *Reglamento Escolar para los Centros de Educación General Politécnica y Laboral,* 40.

> In the daily dynamic people induced others to do or to avoid doing certain things. So, if you wanted to fit, you had to choose between doing what others did or stand out. And if you stood out badly, people would say, for example, 'you are a pig! look at this pig that doesn't brush his teeth!'[56]

The dormitory chief intervened only when things risked the collective's performance in *La Emulación*. Official checkups on the collectives' performance and their limited autonomy framed as self-management set in motion inside the dormitories a process of mutual shaping similar to that expected to occur in the larger society.

Unlike what happened in the dormitories, in other areas of the boarding school students were subject to closer supervision. In the dining room, for example, school officers were present at mealtimes to control discipline and help organize access, which was done on a first-come first-serve basis as tables became available. Since the room could accommodate roughly one third of the school's 500 students, diners were asked to eat promptly in order to free tables for other people. Short meals and the fact that students were only allowed in the dining room at mealtimes left little time for rule-breaking. School officers also made sure that students helped in the dining room operation. Girls and boys organized in shifts and working together served tables, cleaned, and did dishes after meals, all which was taken into account in *La Emulación*. Closer supervision in places different from the dormitories set the latter aside as exceptional places where students, as I show later, used their limited autonomy to contest a few rules.

The government's use of the built environment as a sign of social change at the national level (see previous chapter) was also apparent in the dormitories, although in a slightly different way. In the daily checkups, school officers used the place's physical appearance as one of the criteria to assess the collective's discipline. Cleanliness and tidiness in the dormitory were seen as indicators of the students' behavior, and students were well aware of this. When asked whether students were allowed to personalize their closets by putting posters, stickers or mementos, two students who lived in rural boarding schools in the early seventies, a period of "revolutionary effervescence", promptly suggested a direct connection between the closets' appearance and the students' discipline:[57]

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[55] Marcela, interview by author, Havana, June 18, 2018.

[56] Lisandra and Yunier, interview by author, Havana, November 16, 2018.

> María del Carmen: I was very strict in that, but the girls [muchachitas] stuck things to their closets. In the beginning that was banned… As I told you, when we started, everything was done following the rules. They checked that your bed was well organized, well made, that your closet was organized, but as the discipline was going down, all that begun to crack.[58]
>
> Caridad: We didn't do that! […] you had to take care of the building! You had to take care of the building. If you stuck something [to the walls or closet] it then had to be removed with a [cleaning] product and it's not the same. There was also uniformity. You had to take care of the basic means, which comprised all that was inside the school.[59]

Exterior appearances could also be read as signs of allegiance to the Revolution, as implied in a few of Fidel Castro's speeches. In a 1978 speech, for example, Castro reminded a group of children that some of the things they had to do "perfectly" to reciprocate what the Revolution had given them were "to stand when required, and to greet when expected […]. And to know how to look good, how to dress, and how to use the uniform and its insignia."[60] More than a display of paternalism, Castro's words set the students' appearance as an identifier of loyal revolutionaries. Interestingly, as if stressing the importance of exterior appearances, the boarding school typical building —whose design Castro personally oversaw (see previous chapter)— includes a barber shop and hair salon on the second floor of the dormitories block.

Despite the official rhetoric, there were often gaps between appearances and content. María del Carmen, who admits not having liked her time in the rural boarding school, sheds light on these gaps by addressing the quest for order and cleanliness in the dormitory. In her boarding school, cleanliness and tidiness in the dormitory were the first criteria to decide which groups left the school first every weekend: "From the distance I see that it [cleaning and organizing] was done just to achieve the goal of leaving early. That's what we were interested in. That's why we cleaned the dormitory. I mean, we didn't realize that the school was our home."[61] In the context of Marxism-Leninism, gaps like these are not failures but natural occurrences in the process of transforming society. In a similar way physical interventions at the country level were expected to promote social change, making exterior appearances —physical and discursive— conform with the government's expectations should end up transforming the subject. Under this view, keeping the dormitory clean was an instrument to both assess change and induce change, which at some point was to help bridge the gap between appearances and content.

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[57] Marcela uses the expression "revolutionary effervescence" (*efervescencia revolucionaria*) to refer to people's high hopes for both the Revolution and rural boarding school program in the early seventies. Marcela, interview by author, Havana, June 18, 2018.

[58] María del Carmen, interview by author, Havana, November 19, 2018.

[59] Caridad, interview by author, Havana, November 30, 2018.

[60] Later in the speech, Castro criticizes that students often do not wear their uniform properly. Fidel Castro, "Discurso Pronunciado en el Acto Central con Motivo del Día de los Niños," (speech, Campamento José Martí, Tarará, July 16, 1978), http://www.fidelcastro.cu/es/discursos/discurso-pronunciado-en-el-acto-central-con-motivo-del-dia-de-los-ninos-celebrado-en-el-0.

[61] María del Carmen, interview by author, Havana, November 19, 2018.

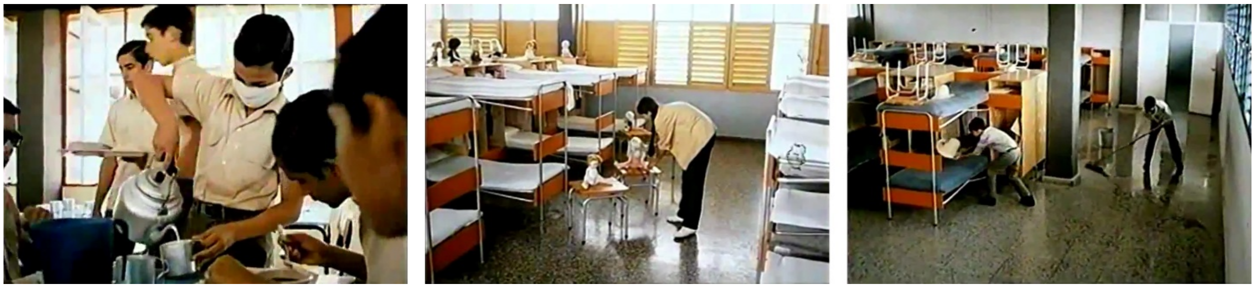

Figure 4.7. Boys' and girls' participation in domestic chores was framed under government narratives spread in the school through the practice of *La Emulación*. Source: *La Nueva Escuela*, directed by Jorge Fraga (1973; Havana: ICAIC).

Domestic chores in the dormitory were connected via *La Emulación* to the larger narrative of the Revolution. Practiced as part of *La Emulación*, domestic chores became training in hard work, collectivism, efficiency, and commitment to constant assessment and improvement; critical tenets around which life under Socialism was organized. In the 1973 documentary film *La Nueva Escuela* (mentioned in the previous chapter), two boys offer an interpretation of the importance of doing domestic chores in the boarding school, while images of students serving food and cleaning the dormitories are shown (figure 4.7). According to one of the students, this kind of work is done

> for the student's formation, because if tomorrow his mom is sick… or if he is married and his wife is sick or has a job, and he has to do the domestic chores, having learned to do so in the school —to clean and all that— will make doing chores at home easier for him and [he] will also have love for work.[62]

When the narrator asks the boys' opinion about people who think domestic chores are for women, the same student answers that "they have a lack of mentality, because the revolutionary government has facilitated women's work outside home, and they have to understand that domestic chores should be shared between man and woman."[63] These words, even if staged, are useful to explain the connection between domestic chores and the values promoted by the Revolution. That men and women were expected to do the same activities in school and society, more than supporting the Revolution's strive for gender equality, supports the idea that every person must contribute to the collective's well-being, be it in the dormitory, home or society. That doing domestic chores was seen as a lesson of love for work, is coherent with the attitude toward work Socialist citizens were required to have. Finally, that the student has made the connection between domestic chores and issues outside the school environment suggests his awareness of how basic activities performed in the boarding school were framed as a contribution to a larger cause. Even if the student was just repeating the discourse he was supposed to believe, he is disclosing the existence of widespread narratives based on the Revolution's ideals and brought to the boarding school through the practice of *La Emulación*. In this way, domestic chores became part of the ideological continuum that tied the school's basic activities to the project of building the Socialist society.

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[62] *La Nueva Escuela*, directed by Jorge Fraga (1973; Havana: ICAIC), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z4syxjmJRg0.

[63] *La Nueva Escuela,* directed by Jorge Fraga.

Contesting the Publicity of Private Life

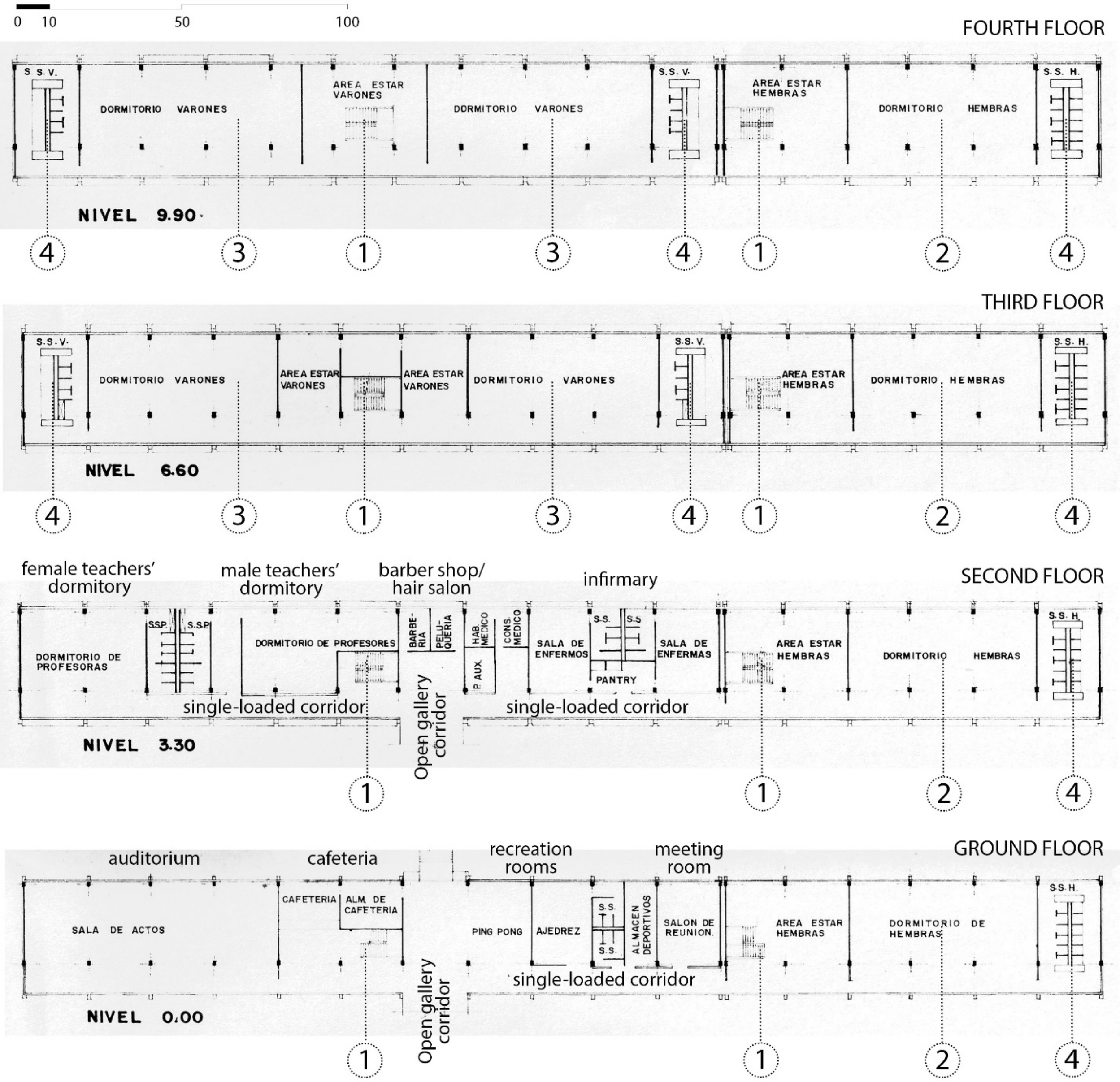
0 10 50 100
FOURTH FLOOR
S.S.V.
DORMITORIO VARONES
AREA ESTAR VARONES
DORMITORIO VARONES
S.S.V.
AREA ESTAR HEMBRAS
DORMITORIO HEMBRAS
S.S.H.
NIVEL 9.90
4 3 1 3 4 1 2 4
THIRD FLOOR
S.S.V.
DORMITORIO VARONES
AREA ESTAR VARONES
AREA ESTAR VARONES
DORMITORIO VARONES
S.S.V.
AREA ESTAR HEMBRAS
DORMITORIO HEMBRAS
S.S.H.
NIVEL 6.60
4 3 1 3 4 1 2 4
female teachers' dormitory
male teachers' dormitory
barber shop/ hair salon
infirmary
SECOND FLOOR
DORMITORIO DE PROFESORAS
SSP. S.SP.
DORMITORIO DE PROFESORES
BARBE-RIA
PELU-QUERIA
HAB. MEDICO
P. AUX.
CONS. MEDICO
SALA DE ENFERMOS
S.S. S.S
PANTRY
SALA DE ENFERMAS
AREA ESTAR HEMBRAS
DORMITORIO HEMBRAS
S.S.H.
single-loaded corridor
Open gallery corridor
single-loaded corridor
NIVEL 3.30
1 1 2 4
auditorium
cafeteria
recreation rooms
meeting room
GROUND FLOOR
SALA DE ACTOS
CAFETERIA
ALM. DE CAFETERIA
PING PONG
AJEDREZ
S.S.
S.S.
ALMACEN DEPORTIVOS
SALON DE REUNION.
AREA ESTAR HEMBRAS
DORMITORIO DE HEMBRAS
S.S.H.
single-loaded corridor
Open gallery corridor
NIVEL 0.00
1 1 2 4

Figure 4.8. Floor plans of the dormitories block indicating 1) stairs; 2) girls' dormitories; 3) boys' dormitories; 4) dormitory's bathroom. Source: Ministerio de la Construcción, Josefina Rebellón's personal archive.

One of the systems set to guarantee that discipline in the dormitories was kept implied the students' compulsory participation in a process of mutual surveillance that started outside the dormitory walls. A basic rule for the dormitories was that students were not allowed to enter the opposite gender's dormitory. A simple spatial mechanism turned the entire school collective into enforcers of that rule. The block holding the dormitories was located at the end of the open gallery corridor. The boys' dormitories occupied the third and fourth floor and could be accessed only from the third floor (figure 4.8). The girls' dormitories were distributed in four levels, from ground to fourth floor, and could be accessed only from the ground and second floors. Each set of dormitories had its own stair, and the on-duty male teachers' dormitory on the second floor wrapped the stair leading to the boys' dormitories to exercise some control. Running on the ground and second floor along one of the block's large facades, single-loaded corridors exposed to communal scrutiny the walkable connections between the boys' and girls' dormitories. A student wanting to break the rule that forbade access to the opposite gender's dormitory would be exposed to the sight of people using the different communal areas on the block's ground and second floors. These areas included an auditorium, a small cafeteria, two recreation rooms, a meeting room, the circulation leading to the on-duty teachers' dormitories, hair salon, barber shop, and infirmary. The corridors leading to the dormitories were also visible from the school's open gallery corridor, the dining room, and the classrooms block, which helped persuade potential trespassers to not break the basic rule.

Mutual surveillance inside the dormitory was encouraged through periodical sessions held in the classrooms in which students openly discussed their problems, including those taking place in the dormitory. These sessions of criticism/self-criticism (*crítica y autocrítica*) were usually held once a month and were led by the dormitory collective's class teacher —often in presence of other teachers. According to Lisandra, the sessions focused on academic matters as well as on "personal matters, because the idea was to get an integral student. A student that was not apathetic, that participated in activities, that was enthusiastic, that was committed to keeping the dormitory clean, that shared and was not cheap. Everything was checked." When the session started,

> One had to stand up. Hey, so-and-so, what do you think of your behavior in this period? (laughs) Then you had to stand up and say, for example, well… I have done all my homework. Then there was another student that could say, yes, but you were kicked out of class the other day.[64]

Encouraging students to point out other students' problems meant that issues already solved in the dormitory might get mentioned in the more public venue of the criticism/self-criticism session. Lisandra recalls that during a session "a gossipy person could say, for example, that so-and-so is being bullied [in the dormitory]." Immediately after her comment, and acting as if correcting a mistake, she replaces the expression "gossipy person" with "critical person."[65] Lisandra's language slip-up suggests a tacit agreement among students sharing the dormitory to not disclose outside the dormitory what happened there. Yunier, present in the same conversation, adds that even if a problem was disclosed outside, the students involved "remained anonymous."[66]

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[64] Lisandra, interview by author, Havana, November 9, 2018.

[65] Lisandra and Yunier, interview by author, Havana, November 16, 2018.

Among the things that students kept within the dormitory walls were violations to rules related to gender dynamics. Lisandra and Yunier recalled how ninth-grade boys occasionally visited the ninth-grade girl's dormitories to spend the night with their loved ones. Bypassing the spatial mechanism set to discourage students from getting in the opposite gender's dormitories, boys used the horizontal brise-soleil surfaces protecting the windows as walkways.[67] The fact that it was the boys who visited the girls and not vice-versa rendered the encounters as male heroic acts in which the hero got the princess, undermining the official rhetoric that promoted gender equality. Another thing that students hid from school officers also conflicted with the government plans towards gender equality. Each gender group was supposed to do its own laundry and, accordingly, each dormitory bathroom had its own laundry area to hand wash and dry clothes. However, it was not uncommon that a girl volunteered to do a boy's laundry.[68] According to Yunier,

> Almost always one looked for a girl, a female friend, to wash one's shirt. It was a matter of… of laziness… There was the stereotype that women had better skills to do laundry than men. Also, you wanted to say, hey look! I have a girl who does my laundry! In this way you set the difference with [other boys]. You were able to say that you had a girlfriend or a female friend. You could say, hey, so and so washes my shirt. Then, this [a girl washing a boy's shirt] gave you a sort of manliness status in the group.[69]

For Lisandra, girls also gained certain status by washing a boy's shirt, although she makes sure to clarify that this was not her case: "once in a while I had a friend that asked me to wash his shirt and I did it, but I would tell him 'don't get used to it!'."[70] To be sure, the cultural inertia perpetuating gender differences was also naively present in one detail of the dormitories' architecture. The presence of individual shower stalls in the girls' bathroom and communal shower in the boys' bathroom reveals a gender biased treatment of nudity in which it was acceptable for boys to see each other's naked bodies while this was not acceptable in the girls' case. The students' withholding of their own transgressions inside the dormitory challenged the transparency and accountability promoted in the criticism/self-criticism sessions. Personal bonds that dormitory life forged, and cultural inertia in the case of the government-promoted gender roles, seemed to have been strong enough to defy the potential consequences of not following rules.

Failing to disclose information in the criticism/self-criticism sessions could have a toll in a student's future. These sessions were not only opportunities to correct individual behavior and attitudes, but also part of the criteria that the collective's class teacher considered for the student's political-moral evaluation. The results of this evaluation became an integral part of the student's file and was crucial to decide his access to pre-university (high school) education and the quality of the school he would attend.[71] A student having a good political-moral evaluation, for example, had more chances to enroll later on in one of the country's vocational schools, elite schools reserved for the best. A document from the Ministry of Education showing the results of the 1978-79 political-moral evaluation nationwide for ninth-grade students shows the importance of the evaluation and that things such as "attitudes against the Revolution" or "personal behavior that contradicts social norms" were penalized.[72] Students wanting to join the Communist Youth had to be extra careful with their behavior since the political-moral evaluation had an important weight when considered for the organization. Still, regardless of their loyalty to the Revolution, Communist Youth's aspiring members subscribed to the dormitory collective's implicit rule of not disclosing some of the things that happened there. In this way, contrary to the official plans, not all aspects of domestic life could be assessed and therefore have an impact in the students' future, which to a certain degree protected private life from public exposure.

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[66] Lisandra and Yunier, interview by author, Havana, November 16, 2018.

[67] Lisandra and Yunier, interview by author, Havana, November 16, 2018.

[68] Maritza, interview by author, Havana, November 2, 2018.

[69] Yunier, interview by author, Havana, November 16, 2018.

[70] Lisandra, interview by author, Havana, November 16, 2018.

Mutual surveillance and the disclosing of information in criticism/self-criticism session were widespread mechanisms in the Socialist world. In Cuba, the revolutionary government introduced in 1960 the *Comités de Defensa de la Revolución* - CDRs (Committees for the Defense of the Revolution), a system of population surveillance still in operation. Unlike the system that was common in Socialist Bloc countries, in which state agents or paid informants were the main snoops, the CDRs rely mostly on information provided voluntarily and for free by civilians.[73] In the 1970s and 1980s, the CDRs were present in every city block and rural community of the country. Committee members or *cederistas* —almost seventy five percent of the adult Cuban population in 1977— kept records of neighbor families and their relatives, group gatherings at homes, material belongings, visitors, and even traced the origin of rumors when they contradicted official information. Although in these years *cederistas* participated in activities such as night policing, street cleaning, voluntary work and vaccination campaigns, their main role was to protect the Revolution by identifying deviants.[74] Similar to the moral-political evaluation in the rural boarding schools, reports from the CDRs could impact people's chances of getting a job or being accepted in a university.[75] Moreover, participating actively in a CDR was a sign of allegiance to the Revolution.[76] Criticism/self-criticism sessions, on the other hand, were based on similar sessions practiced routinely in Communist parties to hold officials accountable. Yet, as one analysis of mid-1930s criticism/self-criticism sessions in the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee explains, rather than having a practical purpose, the sessions were rituals where individuals ratified their allegiance to the party, its leaders, and the world order set by them.[77] Although there is no publicly available information on how the criticism/self-criticism sessions work in the Cuban Communist Party - PCC, or in which instances they are used, their practice is openly promoted.

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[71] Ministerio de Educación, *Reglamento Escolar para los Centros de Educación General Politécnica y Laboral,* 37.

[72] Ministerio de Educación, Resumen del Trabajo Anual del MINED Año Escolar 1978-79 (Havana: Ministerio de Educación, 1979), appendix 10.

[73] Josep M. Colomer, "Watching Neighbors: The Cuban Model of Social Control," *Cuban Studies* 31 (2000), 119-121.

[74] On the number of CDRs members, see Josep M. Colomer, "Watching Neighbors," 133-135. On the CDRs functions and the information collected by *cederistas*, see Josep M. Colomer, "Watching Neighbors," 122-125; Lillian Guerra, *Visions of Power in Cuba: Revolution, Redemption, and Resistance, 1959-1971* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 207-215.

[75] Lillian Guerra, *Visions of Power in Cuba*, 208.

[76] Josep M. Colomer, "Watching Neighbors," 125.

Regardless of how effective the mechanisms of mutual surveillance in a rural boarding school were, they triggered tensions between the public and private realms that complicated the boundary between both. As government narratives spread nationwide penetrated the school's most intimate space, school officials expected that information coming from the dormitories reached the school's more public venues, and eventually impacted the students' lives in the public realm. However, by refraining from disclosing certain information in the criticism/self-criticism sessions, students turned the public-private boundary into a barrier that was less permeable than what school officials expected. The dormitories' physical isolation and self-management system helped create an environment that, notwithstanding the daily checkups and criticism/self-criticism sessions, students read as separate from the rest of the boarding school. Put in another way, the physical limits of the dormitory constituted a conceptual limit between "others" —school officials and students from other dormitories— and "we" —students from the same dormitory— that, paradoxically, ended up helping fulfill the official plans of making strong collectives.

Conclusion

Government narratives that entered the rural boarding schools, articulated through the practice of *La Emulación*, imposed an interpretative and operational framework that mediated the students' experience of the spatial setting. The boarding schools' domesticity, defined by narratives and space, set a reality parallel to but different from that of the rest of the country in which a small-scale version of full Socialism took place. It was a trial of the country's future inserted in the "imperfect" present that, even in the 1970s and 1980s, the government still struggled to guard against what it saw as pollution from the country's capitalist past. Analyzing people's participation in collective activities in Cuba in the late 1960s (e.g., voluntary work and assemblies), Lillian Guerra sees these activities as hyper-realities. While participating in these activities, people performed according to the government's expectations and adjusted their interpretation of reality to fit the Revolution's "grand narrative," which portrayed Cuba's reality in an idealistic way.[78] Unlike Guerra's hyper-realities, which were short-lived because they depended on the duration of the activities, the parallel reality of the rural boarding schools was permanent. It was a step ahead form Guerra's hyper-realities. Students lived most of the year in this reality, far from non-official worldviews and subject to the government-controlled domesticity, which kept them protected from external noise that might alter their Socialist experience.

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[77] J. Arch Getty, "Samokritika Rituals in the Stalinist Central Committee, 1933-38," 49-70.

[78] Lillian Guerra, *Visions of Power in Cuba.* See particularly introduction and chapter 10.

Placed amid the agricultural fields where students worked the land, school building and fields merged seamlessly into a single setting in which the strive for efficiency set the pace of daily life. As I have shown, *La Emulación* kept the strive for efficiency in the children's minds and established a connection between productive work and the school's domestic life. In this way, life in the rural boarding schools centered around the cult of work, offering students a glimpse of what to expect in their adult lives under Socialism. *La Emulación* also linked other aspects of daily life in the schools to the larger society. The presence of leaders, and their role helping the school collectives reach their goals, pushed students to accept as natural the division into vanguard and mass set for the country. The inclusion of ordinary activities —such as domestic chores— in *La Emulación*, and the narratives associated with the practice of *La Emulación*, set these activities as essential in the shaping of the *hombre nuevo* and the construction of Cuban Socialism. Yet, by linking productive and non-productive activities, and domestic activities and society-making, *La Emulación* contested the traditional Western separation between the public and private realms, set as an ideal in Cuba's pre-revolutionary society.

In no other place of the rural boarding school was this transgression of boundaries more visible than in the dormitories. On the one hand, *La Emulación* brought to the dormitories narratives associated with efficiency in the public realm. On the other hand, through its push for accountability and self-improvement, the practice of *La Emulación* required the public disclosure of private life in the criticism/self-criticism sessions. Although in these sessions students fought back by hiding information that might put at risk their coexistence in the dormitories, they nonetheless had to perform according to official expectations. By choosing to disclose only select information about their dormitory life, students complied with both the boarding school rules and the student-made rules for the dormitories. In this way, they learned a dynamic —which was also evident in other situations such as when students ate the produce in the agricultural fields— in which students balanced their compliance with the two most important entities in their boarding school experience: the institution (representing the Revolution) and the dormitory collective.

In the process of balancing the demands of the school and dormitory collective, students learned what Denise Blum calls *doble conciencia* (double consciousness). In her study of the Cuban education system, Blum describes how "a contradictory economic and political reality" pushes Cubans to have a doble conciencia which operates based on a *doble moral* (double standard) that allows people to succeed in situations that require different values.[79] One of the chapters of the study focuses on the program La Escuela al Campo, predecessor of the rural boarding school program and still in operation (see previous chapter). Using participant observation during the three weeks that the program lasted in the late 1990s, Blum identified how students living in the countryside as part of the program engaged in conversations and acts that were at odds with the values that the program promoted. Based on her findings, she concluded that the program contributed to the students' learning of doble conciencia.[80] Although it is difficult to assess the impact of the rural boarding school program in the shaping of the students' subjectivities, if one follows Blum's assertion, one may speculate that after living three years in one of the rural boarding schools, a student might have had enough training to operate smoothly under potentially contradictory circumstances, fulfilling somehow his basic duties with both the Revolution and his closest collectives (friends, family, etc.).

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[79] Denise F. Blum, *Cuban Youth and Revolutionary Values: Educating the New Socialist Citizen,* 202. For a better understanding of *doble conciencia*, see chapters 7 and Conclusion. In a similar vein, Stephen Kotkin, writing on the industrial town of Magnitogorsk in Stalin's Russia, describes how people lived under a "split existence," adjusting their behavior (and words) to respond to both the actual lived reality and the rhetorical reality created by the government. Stephen Kotkin, "Speaking Bolshevik," chap. 5 in *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995).

The rural boarding school program, La Escuela en el Campo, never ended officially. With the increasing demand for pre-university education (high school), and the government's faith in the study-work combination in the countryside, many of the buildings of the rural boarding school program were adapted to work as pre-university boarding schools (Institutos Preuniversitarios en el Campo - IPUEC).[81] However, the number of these never matched the number of rural middle boarding schools because pre-university education was just one among many options students had upon finishing middle school education. The program's fate was sealed in the 1990s. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba entered in 1991 what the government called the Período Especial en Tiempos de Paz (Special Period in Peacetime) due to the lack of goods and resources coming from the Soviet bloc and the impossibility of exporting sugar at premium prices. Unable to provide solutions to guarantee the country's normal operation, the government, used to issue guidelines from Havana, now asked from ideas from all over the country to face the crisis. Compiled in the book *Con Nuestros Propios Esfuerzos* (With our own efforts) are the ordinary Cubans' proved ideas on how to cook cheap meals, manufacture their own machines from scraps, use animals to replace motor vehicles, prepare their own medications, and use alternative fuels to save electricity.[82] The annual reports the Ministry of Education sent to the National Assembly of People's Power in 1992 and 1993 also reflect the country's state of scarcity. Limited resources were creating a "very tense situation" in the rural boarding schools, and the lack of gas and electricity had pushed the government to recommend the use of wood as fuel in the schools' kitchens.[83] The centralized management of the education system —and of the country— had curtailed the initiative of the schools' directors and now the government was asking for their help to deal with the problems. Amid the crisis, silently, the buildings were gradually closed or adapted to other uses such as housing, correctional facilities, and research institutes. A few of them were dismantled by local residents and left in ruins. Most of them remain idle, only inhabited by a guard (figure 4.9). Their rural location, ideal for the purposes of the boarding school program, makes them expensive to keep and hence onerous for any use that does not benefit directly from close contact to the countryside.

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[80] Denise F. Blum, "Cuba's School to the Countryside Program," chap. 7 in *Cuban Youth and Revolutionary Values: Educating the New Socialist Citizen*, 188-204.

[81] Maria Elena Frade, one of the designers of the rural middle boarding school program's typical building, mentions that many buildings previously used for the middle boarding schools were modified internally to be used as pre-university boarding schools. María Elena Frade, interview by author, Havana, June 18 2018.

[82] Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias, *Con Nuestros Propios Esfuerzos: Algunas Experiencias para Enfrentar el Período Especial en Tiempos de Paz* (Havana: Editorial Verde Olivo, 1992).

[83] Ministerio de Educación. *Resumen del Trabajo Anual del MINED Año Escolar 1991-1992* (Havana: Ministerio de Educación, 1992), 20-21. Ministerio de Educación, *Resumen del Trabajo Anual Año Escolar 1992-1993* (Havana: Ministerio de Educación, 1993), 19-21.

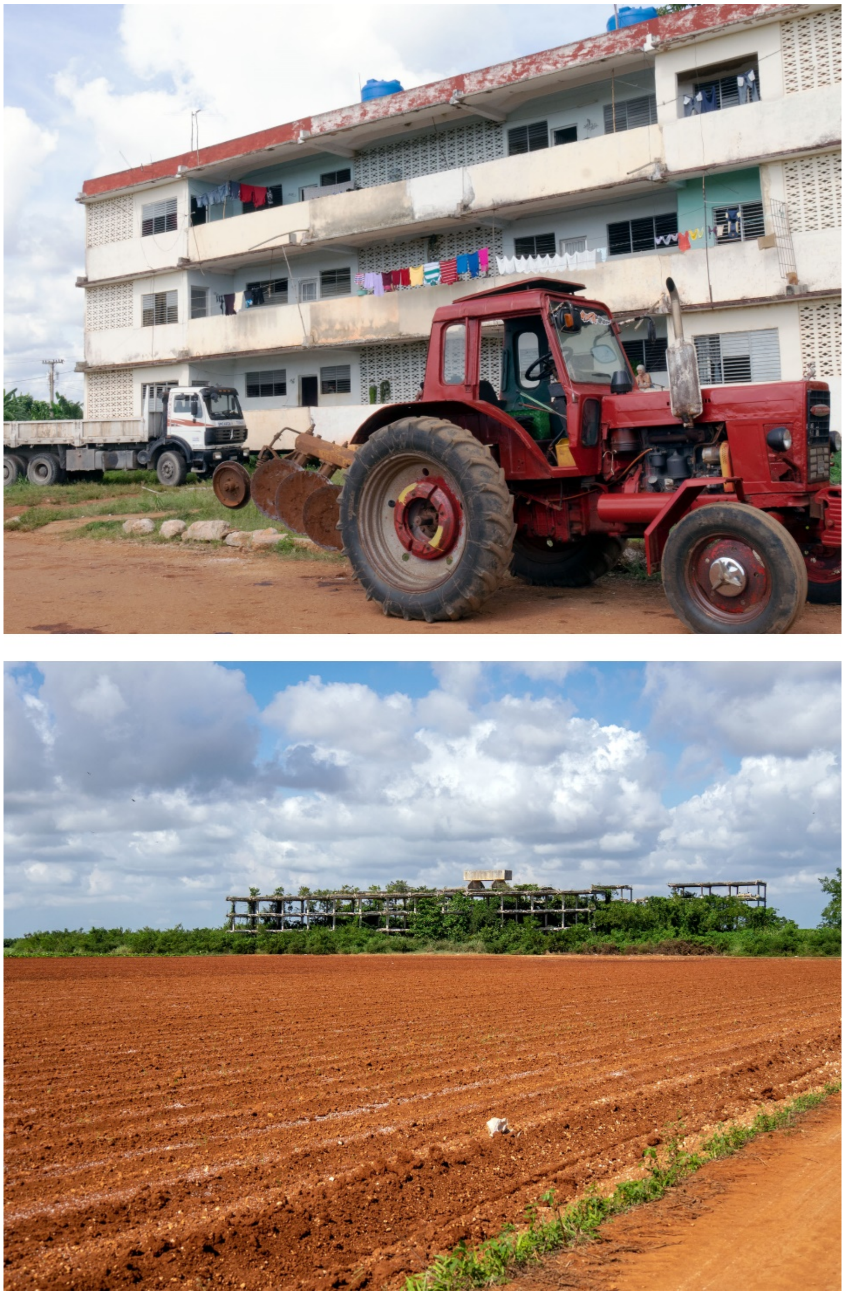

Figure 4.9. The two images show the disparate fate of two rural boarding school buildings in the province of Artemisa, west of Havana. The building above was turned into homes for farmers; the building below lies in ruins. Source: author, 2018.

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CONCLUSION

Disrupting Domesticities

The kitchen of my childhood home was a territory where I did not belong. From early in the morning until late in the afternoon, my mom, aunts, and the occasional help —all women— cooked, had meals and coffee, attended to visitors, took care of clothes, and hanged out. The kitchen had a life of its own and was by far the most used space of the home. The room was large enough to accommodate comfortably six or seven people. It was well lit and ventilated. Along with the apartment it was part of, the kitchen had been designed following my mother's needs and desires. Although I was not banned from using the kitchen, if I spent too much time there, my mom would subtly let me know that it was a female space and that I should not spend much time there. A couple of times, she even said it explicitly. When I moved to a different town to start college, I did not know how to cook despite the crash cooking course that my mom gave me before I left home. For five years, I mostly ate at restaurants, and out of cans and the ready-to-heat meals my mom sent me from her kitchen in my hometown. Years later, when I had the chance to design my own home (which, thankfully, was never built), the kitchen I planned for it was small, poorly ventilated, darkish, and, against current design trends, separated from the dining room. I did not see myself spending much time there, so I did not care much about its spatial qualities. On occasions, I even considered not having a kitchen at all. The kitchen of my childhood home and the narratives (implicit and explicit) associated with it had informed my understanding of it and all that happened in it as non-essential for my adult life. My mom had successfully instilled in me some of her expectations regarding domestic space and behavior. Although she surely did not expect to raise a child who would consider living in a kitchen-less home, she likely wanted to raise one who would become a husband whose wife cooked for him. In this dissertation, I focused on the interplay between narratives and domestic space to show how two powerful entities mobilized domesticity to instill certain behaviors. The Capuchins and the Cuban government, as I have shown, had goals that were by far more sophisticated and far-reaching than my mom's. The boarding school domesticities they planned were expected to change entire societies, and did so to some extent.

Even if the violence inherent to the disruption of existing social models might suggest otherwise, the campaigns discussed in this dissertation were soft power strategies. As the representative of a popular revolution, the Cuban government could not risk losing people's support, so the promise of better education in state-of-the-art facilities, food, clothes, and health care, all widely publicized through the state's propaganda apparatus, was a gentle approach to persuade families to send their children to the rural boarding schools. In Colombia, a small number of missionaries operating in a territory controlled mainly by its indigenous population pushed the Capuchin mission to avoid confrontations with the Wayúus. Unlike contemporary Canadian and American Indian boarding schools, the Colombian government did not force families to send their children to Nazaret's. Instead, food, clothes, and money helped entice parents to do so. In both cases, the soft approach extended to the boarding schools' domesticities. The ongoing repetition of mundane and apparently innocuous activities, and the rationale presented to children about these, were the most efficient tools to achieve the schools' goals. These activities were part of state-sponsored domesticities that defied the boundaries between government power and citizens' private lives. Even if the Capuchins' and Cuban government's soft power did not turn all boarding school students into Christian Colombians and Socialist Cubans, it was at least effective in introducing changes that affected people's lives. Marriage practices promoted by the Capuchins created a new social hierarchy that disrupted the Wayúus' traditional social organization and use of the territory. The Cuban government's massive sending of adolescents to study and work in a reinvented countryside framed it as the ideal place to turn children into adults, an idea that many Cubans still believe in.

The ambitious goals of the campaigns in Colombia and Cuba demanded that boarding school domesticities were supported by what happened outside the schools' walls. These domesticities were seamless extensions of the physical and rhetorical landscapes operating at the territorial level, as I have argued throughout my chapters. Immersed in these landscapes, students perceived life in the boarding schools as part of familiar realities instead of intrusive elements. The boarding school for Wayúus in one corner of Colombia most people have never heard of, and the hundreds of rural boarding schools across Cuba, were also connected to transnational networks of ideas. Without understanding how Wayúu children were linked to the Catholic world managed from Rome, and how Cuban children were part of the global proletarian landscape, it would not have been possible to read the boarding schools' domesticities. Scholarly accounts of domesticity limiting their scope to the private sphere are missing a crucial side of it. The private sphere is a canvas on which widespread frameworks operating in the public sphere are materialized through quotidian activities that either reinforce or subvert these frameworks. Put another way, the processes of assimilation and socialization that took place in the Colombian and Cuban boarding schools constituted a domestication of ideas operating in the public sphere, so students incorporated these into their own mindsets.

The Capuchin mission's and Cuban government's campaigns were modernizing endeavors to uplift populations according to particular visions of social progress. Both entities justified their campaigns using the built environment to signal situations that were allegedly the result of flawed social models. The Capuchins interpreted traditional patterns of occupation and use of La Guajira territory as proof of what they considered the Wayúu society's uncivilized and morally deficient state. The Cuban revolutionary government underscored disparities between the physical conditions of the countryside and cities, particularly Havana, to depict a harmful social system that devalued the importance of rural populations. The built environment was the diagnostic tool to assess existing conditions, but also provided solutions from the territorial scale to the intimate scope of architecture of the boarding schools. New school buildings embodied the progress that the Capuchins and the Cuban government claimed to promote, not because the structures followed particular styles, but because, as official narratives explained, they stood in opposition to the "backward" Wayúu huts and Cuban *bohíos*. Congruent with the buildings' architecture, the domesticities of the boarding schools advanced agendas of progress by standing in opposition to ways of life that students brought from their homes.

Ideas exalted in Catholicism and Socialism were noticeably embedded in the architecture of the boarding schools. In Nazaret, gender and gender relationships played such a central role in the school's architecture that, despite the scarce resources and the extra costs involved, the boarding school building operated as two different schools –one per gender group— conjoined by a chapel. This focus on gender and gender relationships, as I showed, echoed the Catholic doctrine's framing of the heteronormative family as the foundation of society. Although in the Cuban rural boarding schools a particular vision of gender and gender relationships was also embedded in the schools' architecture, labor took center stage. The schools' location amid agricultural fields and the lack of physical and visual barriers between school buildings and fields stressed the rural boarding school program's reliance on the study-work combination. Consistent with Socialist tenets, the architecture and domestic narratives of these boarding schools attempted to shape voluntaristic citizen-workers for a developing proletarian society.

The design and construction of the boarding schools reflect the nature of the entities behind them, and the power mechanisms within these entities. Complex diplomatic negotiations between the Vatican and Colombia to define the terms under which Catholic missions would operate entailed cumbersome bureaucratic formalities, often interrupted by political rivalry, which the Capuchins had to follow to get the government funds promised in these negotiations. Parallel to this process, directives coming from Propaganda Fide (the Catholic Church entity coordinating worldwide missions), the representative of the Capuchin missions in Colombia, and the Capuchin order in Valencia had to be addressed by the missionaries on the ground to the best of their abilities. This complex assemblage of negotiations, rivalries, bureaucracy, loyalties, and compliance that operated at an international scale, at the sluggish pace allowed by written correspondence, made long-term planning difficult for the missionaries in La Guajira and resulted in the piecemeal construction of the boarding school. The lack of information about the building, which I had to deal with in preparing this manuscript, is another consequence of this process. In contrast, a more direct connection between intentions and execution marked the production of the Cuban rural boarding schools. That Fidel Castro met with the team of architects designing the program's typical building to discuss the floor colors, or with boarding school students to discuss the design of the uniforms, represents the micro-management style of a leader who wanted to shape people's lives to the utmost detail. Thousands of people working for the government ensured that Castro's will was followed as closely as possible. The hundreds of identical schools completed suggest that this management style, which was also practiced by authoritarian leaders of numerous Soviet Bloc nations, worked out for the boarding school program. The production of the program's typical building, thoughtfully designed from the site scale to the furniture scale, offers a cross-section, not fully explored in this dissertation, of how the 1970s Cuban revolutionary government turned idealistic goals into actions.

Although the Capuchins and Cuban government carefully set up the rules governing life in the boardings schools, these were always unfinished products. Correspondence between missionaries and recommendations written down in the school registries every time La Guajira's Apostolic Vicar visited the school shows ongoing rule adjustments to adapt the boarding school domesticity to changing conditions. Economic problems, adverse political conditions, new guidelines issued by the church hierarchs, and the students' agency required the active modification of rules in a way that goes beyond what my chapters suggest. Despite the lack of available information on the daily operation of the Cuban rural boarding schools, accounts from my interviewees show minor variations in the rules between schools located in different regions. The "scientific" planning of the program's typical boarding school building, which included the formulation of rules to govern it, left room for improvement. Although controlled by a central entity reluctant to see its guidelines modified, rule differences suggest adaptations to better deal with local conditions and address the students' subverting of existing rules. Over time, and with the emerging economic problems that Cuba faced in the late 1980s, more rule changes were required to save resources and keep the schools open. Even if the institutional nature of boarding schools suggests otherwise, domesticity demands the ongoing adaptation of narratives (including those disguised as rules) and spatial settings for these schools to achieve their goals.

The transnational flow of ideas that gave birth to the domesticities studied here has been, in a sense, replaced by the transnational flow of children whose wealthy parents want them to learn cosmopolitan ways. American and British boarding schools are popular destinations for Asian children, and, along with Swiss boarding schools, are also popular among Russian families. This voluntary (at least for parents) assimilation process aims to produce the elites of a globalized world. Local students in these boarding schools also benefit from the influx of international students, advertised as contributing to a globalized worldview. In the domesticities of these boarding schools, the narratives children are exposed to are no longer restricted to those coming from the institutions controlling the spatial setting. Ideas that circulate online join others spread by school officers, attenuating singular cultures of domesticity, unlike the largely one-sided narratives that circulated in the Colombian and Cuban boarding schools. Still, the repetition of quotidian tasks and the children's urge to fit push them to adopt the cosmopolitan boarding schools' "official" domesticities as their own. After a few years, some children end up calling these schools their home. Boarding schools are primarily domestic spaces, and, as I have shown in this manuscript, their daily life —their domesticity— owes as much to the spatial setting as it owes to the narratives making space work in a particular way.

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Part I

Chapters 1 and 2

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Part II

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