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UMI
NICARAGUA'S CURRICULAR TRANSFORMATION FROM SOCIALISM TO DEMOCRACY

DISSERTATION

Presented in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of the Ohio State University

by
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The Ohio State University
1999

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the curricular transformation as it was implemented in Nicaraguan schools by the Sandinista revolutionary government from 1979-1990. The changes in the curriculum were made on the Sandinistas' belief that education would facilitate revolutionary social change. In other words, the Sandinistas used education to transform and create the "new man and new woman" who were going to build a new Nicaraguan society. In the same line, the use of the arts as a means to transmit revolutionary knowledge to the people is pointed out. For this, children's art works illustrate the application of the arts as conveyors of knowledge, which in this case was revolutionary knowledge. Also, an overview of the arts from prehistoric to revolutionary times is outlined due to the importance the arts have had in Nicaraguan society over time, and specially during the Sandinista rule.

Although, the dissertation focus is on elementary education and art education in particular, the study examines the insurrection of the people of Nicaragua in 1979, in order to overthrow Anastasio Somoza Debayle's dictatorial government. The Somoza family had been in power over forty years and three members of this family served as presidents of Nicaragua from 1937 to 1979. In addition, the study discusses the Sandinista revolutionary government implemented after the fall of the Somoza regime because they relate to the changes made in education by the Sandinista Front for National
Liberation (FSLN). New changes in education after the Sandinista defeat in 1990 are explained as well. The new curriculum as it is implemented in schools today is based on democratic values.

The Somoza and the Sandinista regimes, as well as the issues related to education and the arts are contemplated through the French historian Michel Foucault's theory on power and knowledge, or in what Foucault called the power/knowledge relationship.

Additionally, the study provides a general background of the country through a description of the landscape, the people, the socio-economic, and political contexts since they relate to social issues and to the events as they happened in revolutionary Nicaragua.
DEDICATED TO Dr. ARTHUR D. EFLAND
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XIV
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I intend to explore Nicaragua’s curricular transformation through a historical inquiry. It focuses on a decade of “revolutionary education” from 1979 to 1990 under the Sandinista government. Historiography or inquiry, which is the art of writing history, will be the tool to interpret the transformation of the curriculum. This reform toward socialist ideals was designed to educate children within the newly established Nicaraguan society, for a better life, social justice and a new order.

In this study, special attention will be given to social issues that influenced and controlled the curriculum and the arts within it during the period of the Sandinista rule. The research will then unfold the social events that led to this educational reform and to the changes in the arts. How these social changes developed? In this regard, Efland (1990) asks, “what accounts for these transformations? Are they grounded in the social realities of the times in which they occur?” (p. ix). The study of social issues, as Efland explains involves the study of a society’s social structures, “the network of social roles” (p. 4), such as social status, and social power. Therefore, this study will unfold “ideas of reality, by which we mean a general system of beliefs, a kind of consciousness that characterize a particular epoch” (Efland, 1990, p. 5). Accordingly, this research will have
a sociopolitical perspective, since it will explore the “political factors” which influenced the educational system including the arts under the Sandinistas. For example, how did the Sandinistas use their political power over the arts in Nicaragua to communicate their ideology? How was indoctrination through the arts attained? The study will be a quest for the “ideas” that shaped popular education in Nicaragua, and provided the framework for educational change. In this regard Benton (1958) writes, ideas are the weapons of propaganda, and he refers to a USSR member of the Presidium who said in the Red Square ideas have no frontiers, they travel throughout the world without visas and fingerprints (p. 23). At the same time, this investigation will explore procedures, opinions and assumptions involved in the development of the elementary school curriculum in revolutionary Nicaragua.

In the revolutionary context, Michel Foucault’s ideas about the relationship between power and knowledge particularly apply to the curricular transformation that the Nicaraguan schools went through during the Sandinista period. For instance, Foucault’s statement is that the social sciences have served as tools of “power, social control... in what he calls “the complicity of the social sciences in the institution of the radically new modern configuration of power/knowledge (Grumley, 1989, p. 184). Efland’s (1992) assertion in relation to the arts is that power/knowledge issues also apply to art disciplines as well. An example would be how the arts under the Sandinista government served primarily as a tool, for instilling revolutionary knowledge in the people.

Foucault poses a number of questions on “power and knowledge” (Brochier, 1980, p. 51). In this regard, Gordon (1980) writes, Foucault’s study of power is a
"scrutiny of power in terms of knowledge and of knowledge in terms of power" (p. 237). Foucault examines, "forms of knowledge and rationality at the level of their material manifestations as bodies of discourse... (p. 243) through the very delicacy and rigor of its discriminations,"... (p. 244). Foucault thinks power and knowledge is:

integrated with one another, and there is no point in dreaming of a time when knowledge will cease to depend on power: this is just a way of reviving humanism in an utopian guise. It is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power (Brochier, 1980, p. 52).

Foucault goes beyond ruptures, discontinuities, transformations, practices, the language of discourse, and the forces operating behind the concepts of discourse at different levels in meaning. He presents his ideas not as conclusions, but as alternatives by raising questions, and suggesting methods of research. The next paragraphs briefly describe how Foucault's insights might apply to the revolutionary ideas, as they were put into practice in general education and in the arts in Nicaragua.

The "practices obeying certain rules" (Foucault, 1972, p. 138) will be the practices obeying the revolutionary government's rules, that is, the Sandinistas' political rules as they were put into practice in schools, thus, becoming the "effective practices" of power (Foucault, 1980, p. 97). In this way, the curricular transformation, in Foucault's view reveals the strategies and mechanisms of the Sandinista revolutionary power.

Revolutionary statements in Foucault's terms reveal the values, assumptions and the logic upon which ideas and meanings were built reflecting Sandinista propaganda. The statement according to Foucault (1972) is:
a modality that allows it to be something
more than a series of traces, something
more than a succession of marks... something
more than a mere object made by a human being; (p. 107)...

Foucault (1972) describes statements in terms of:

the extent of their repetition in time and space,
the channels by which they are diffused,
the groups in which they circulate;
the general horizon that they outline for men's thought.
[and] the limits that they impose on it; (p. 141)
[the statements say more than themselves] the unsaid, the suppressed,
-that one thing... often said in place of another; that one sentence
[which] may have two meanings... [the] meaning, understood... by everyone,
[and that which] may conceal a second... [purpose] a secret meaning
(pp. 109-110).

In this study, the statements specifically as they were made will be the evidence of
the Sandinistas' intent to implement a socialist education in schools. Illustrating this
point is the statement of the Minister of Education, Carlos Tunnerman (1980), who said
in Paris, when Nicaragua received the UNESCO Award, “the literacy crusade [CNA] was
a political pedagogical project” (p. 235). In other words, people during the crusade were
taught how to read and write, but at the same time they received political indoctrination
also.

Discourse, according to Foucault's (1972) theory, is defined as a body of
anonymous historical rules always determined in time and space of a given period;
discourse he adds, is determined:

for a given social, economic, geographical, or linguistic area,.. (p. 117).  
Discourse, [he affirms], is a group of statements... mapping in a particular discursive practice, the point at which they are
constituted... [defining] the form that they assume,
the relations that they have with each other,
and the domain that they govern... (p. 155).
A discursive formation is described by Foucault (1972-1979) as a:

- a gentle, silent, intimate consciousness [in that it expresses] an obscure set of...
- a space of multiple dissensions; a set of different oppositions (p. 155).
- a group of statements. (p. 210) [and a]
- a fragment of history" (p. 117) [and a]
- strategy (p. 105).

Foucault believes, discursive practice is necessarily interwoven with power relations and social practices, history itself being but a “web” of discursive formations (Henderson & Brown, 1987, p. 1804). In this study, the revolutionary discourses will help to understand the facts behind the Sandinista Revolution.

The events, which in this study involve the transformation of the elementary school’s curriculum, in Foucault’s (1972) thesis, are indicated by the way that they are:

- transcribed into statements...
- recorded, described, explained, elaborated into concepts (p. 167) of different types and levels caught up in...
- historical webs...
- as discontinuities in the form of dispersed events (p. 8) [pointing not only to changes, but defining] precisely what these changes consist of: that is, substitute for [in] an undifferentiated reference to change...
- how the different elements of a system of formation were transformed. (p. 172).

This historical inquiry takes a critical look at the transformation of the curriculum. The actual transformation in the curriculum will be the “rupture” (p. 177) or break from formal to non-formal education that in Foucault’s (1972) view refers to:

- the conceptual transformations...
- [and] new notions [which] open up a whole domain of concepts to be constructed (p. 147) [indicating] the specific differences of [educational] transformations...
- in a system of transformations that constitute change. (p. 173).

The interpretation of the historical events, such as the insurrection of the people of Nicaragua will help to understand the radical changes undergone in the arts, and general
education. The interpretation of educational ideas will make evident, the hidden connections, and underlying patterns in the curriculum and in art education. The interpretation will demonstrate how the transformation of the curriculum was done with the “intent” to politicize schools in Nicaragua during the past decade.

In this quest through the past, an historical account of political issues will be necessary, as well as the establishment of the political context in which these events took place, and the way social changes came about, since these events were determining factors in Nicaragua’s curricular transformation. This information is included in an attempt to answer the question, “what were the causes for the curricular transformation?” Also, an interpretive review of the curriculum content of elementary school including art education between 1979 and 1990 is recorded in an attempt to answer the question, “what were the characteristics of the Sandinista curriculum in general and art education?” Likewise, an overview of the democratic curriculum as it is implemented in Nicaraguan schools today presents the values being taught now as opposed to a decade ago. A suggested art curriculum for elementary school will also be discussed, because in the present, most Nicaraguan elementary schools do not have an art curriculum. As a general background, an overview of art education in Nicaragua covers the prehistoric and colonial periods, up to 1979, the time when the arts began to be used as a means of revolutionary propaganda. The value of prehistoric art was emphasized in schools to instill nationalism in children. The final chapter concludes with implications of the historical changes in art education, and the need to educate children with values that are part of universal beliefs.
such as social, civic and spiritual values. These are values that will prepare children for a better life and greater opportunities for happiness.

Background to the Problem

The next paragraphs provide a general background to Nicaragua’s natural setting where the events took place, including the people who were the actors participating in the events. Socio-economic aspects will also be presented, because social inequality and poverty were key issues in the social reform. Similarly, it introduces the political background since political goals were meant to be achieved via the curricular transformation in Nicaraguan schools during the Sandinista period.

The Landscape

Nicaragua is one of the five countries making up Central America, which is located between the North and the South American continents. Honduras bounds it to the North, Costa Rica to the South, and the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans to the East and West coasts respectively. Figure 1 shows Nicaragua, which is shaped like an irregular trapezoid with an area close to 130,000 square kilometers (Incer, 1970, p. 3) making a total of 81,200 square miles approximately. It is the biggest of the Central American Republics.

Various writers have described Nicaragua’s landscape over time. In colonial times, the ancient chronicler Oviedo y Valdez (1976) described Nicaragua as a land of
high mountains, a grand variety of plants, a diversity of animal life, and rich valleys
flourishing with agriculture. He noted a large variety of plants: fruits such as mamey, the
crimson pitahaya, nispero and the yellow nanzi; corn the bread of the natives, cotton,
beans and cacao. Cacao was prepared as a “chocolate drink,” and the seeds were used as
money in commercial transactions in prehistoric times. There were also herbs with
medicinal properties, and trees like the guayacan which still grow in the country. In a
similar way Oviedo observed a diversity of animal life: deer, armadillos, rabbits and fish
from both the lakes and the sea. Nicaragua is divided into three natural regions: The
Pacific, the Central and the Atlantic regions.

The Pacific Region

In this tropical country, the Pacific region consists of the plains alongside the
Pacific ocean, the lakes and the plateau of the Pueblos. Figure 2 shows an evening, a
sunset, in the bay San Juan del Sur, a beach in the Pacific Coast. Due to its rich soil
conditions, a varied flora enhances the fertile valleys of this region. Majestic trees like
the malinche with orange-red flowers in Winter, and cortes with yellow flowers in
Summer bring to the sight the luxuriant vegetation of the tropics. Incer (1995) observes
there are, large deciduous trees like the giant ceiba, and the guanacaste which grow
between “25 and 30 meters high” (p. 31). In this area lies the Carazo plateau, there, under
the shadow of large trees, amidst a vivid verdure forming a carpet in shades of green, the
rich red coffee grows. Figure 3 presents a young woman collecting coffee beans. During
harvest time, the country people’s entire family, even children, goes to gather coffee in large baskets. The harvest time is like a festivity in the plantations.

Because of the lakes and volcanoes in the Pacific region, Nicaragua is called “land of lakes and volcanoes.” Nicaragua has two lakes: Lake Managua (Xolotlán) and Lake Nicaragua (Cocibolca). Lake Nicaragua has an extension of “8,264 km²,” and Lake Managua an area on “1,040 km²” (Incer, 1970, pp. 220-233). Describing his impressions of a sunset on Lake Nicaragua, Ephraim George Squier (1860), Charge D’ Affairs of the United States of America to the Republics of Central America wrote, the sunset’s light makes the lake “look like liquid gold. . . As the sun sank lower, the hue of the heavens changed to crimson, bringing the palm-trees on the islands in high relief against the sky” (p. 97). And he goes on describing the two volcanoes, Concepción and Maderas, which form an island in the lake, as two giants which in the distance seem dim and blue, and rising above the lake’s waters, “clear and bold against the sky, regular as works of art” (p. 106).

Also, in the Pacific region there exist hot springs, and numerous lagoons formed out of extinct craters. The craters are inverted cones filled with tranquil waters forming paradisiacal lagoons contributing to a distinctive landscape. In this region, the imposing volcanic chain of the Maribios presents a majestic and impressive view, a range of volcanoes stand out covering the surrounding areas with ashes and volcanic rocks. In this area vulnerable to volcanic eruptions, many volcanoes exhibit visible traces of volcanic action. Cerro Negro (Black Hill) “700 meters” high (Incer, 1995, p. 70) is one of the youngest volcanoes in the world. Figure 4 is a view of this volcano, as it spews
incandescent lava from its cone like pyrotechnic fires against a dark sky. The Momotombo volcano, “1,280 meters high” (Incer, 1970, p. 218) is a perfect cone from which emerge occasional puffs of white smoke. Ancient Nicaraguans called Momotombo the “great burning summit.” Figure 5 shows this imposing volcano on the Eastern shore of Lake Managua, in the midst of the pearl-like waters of the lake and an azure firmament thus, making up a magnificent view. Poets eulogized Momotombo; Victor Hugo wrote:

O vieux Momotombo, colosse chauve et nu... (Old Momotombo colossal bold and nude... ) (in Dario, 1961, p. 801).

Ruben Dario’s poem, “Momotombo,” contains these lines:

giant cone bold and nude...
colossus black in the sun,
marvelous majestic.
Old father...
raising in the vast tropical flame
lyric and sovereign...
Father of fire and stone,
I asked you one day your secret
of flames... (Dario, 1961, pp. 801-802).
Spanish translation.

Due to the Pacific region’s rich soil, a majority of the Nicaraguan population has lived since prehistoric times in this area, nearby Lake Managua, and Lake Nicaragua. This is because since ancient times the majority of Nicaraguans have been farmers always looking for fertile soils for agricultural purposes.

The Central Region
The central region is a high triangular plateau, where rugged mountains form a dim blue line in the distant horizon. In Chontales, the ridge of mountains, Amerrisque, forms a natural wall made of volcanic crystals making spectacular view as the early sun’s rays reflect its light in the hills. This is the region of plateaus, mountain ranges, green rivers and hills where cedar, pines and mahogany trees grow. There, in the mountains to the North live a variety of colorful birds among ferns and wild orchids; including the Quetzals, scarlet and blue Macaws, green Toucans, and Parakeets. Figure 6 shows a spot in the mountains; in this oil painting the artist has tried to capture the verdure of the central region in delicate details. In this region, one can see cattle ranches, and lonely horse-riders swathed in a misty veil as the dusk falls in the mountains. Banco Central (1996) research found that in the region of Chontales, green rivers still flecked with gold spring from deep within the mountains. Most of the early mining was done from alluvial deposits. The aborigines who made exquisite ornaments out of this precious metal originally exploited gold. The natives called it, “the sweet of the sun” (Norton Leonard, 1967); in ancient times, perhaps due to its properties, gold was invested with magical powers and supernatural meaning.

The Atlantic Region

In the Atlantic region, in the East Coast, the beautiful tropical forests make up the landscape. There, a continuous rainfall nurtures the lush forest, the home of a rich fauna. This land is a plain descending toward the transparent waters of the Caribbean Sea, with
long deep rivers running among emerald verdure. Figure 7 depicts one of the islands in the Caribbean Sea as a native artist sees it. The Rio San Juan flows from Lake Nicaragua to the Caribbean making this region an enchanted area. This river is called “the door to Nicaragua;” it was the water route into the interior of the country. Its hundred and eighteen miles make a natural border between Nicaragua and Costa Rica. In this humid land, stylized tree ferns with lace like leaves in the shape of a fan are part of the vegetation. Also, among the dense forests, white limestone cliffs stand like towers over the woods (Banco Central, 1996). Terán & Incer Barquero (1964) describe giant trees of columnar trunks, which are thirty, forty and even fifty meters high forming a dense, green canopy against the sky. In this territory, there exists, betun, a type of petroleum grease found toward Puerto Cabezas in the northern area. The Misquitos, one of the Atlantic Coast’s aboriginal people, still use this substance to mark their canoes.

The Cities

In the cities, like in most of Latin American countries, the domes and bell towers of the numerous colonial churches reach toward the blue sky. Beneath the overlapping clay roof-tiles, passageways wind between the adobe houses built with bricks made of grass and mud. In some of these old homes, the width of the walls is one meter. Classic Spanish architecture is evident in the overhanging balconies of most homes; the portals recall the Moresque arches built by the Islamic culture in Spain; and the herbs growing
amidst rugged stone walls cannot hide the colonial tradition embedded in Nicaragua’s culture.

Squier (1860), the archeologist-consul, mentions the old traveler Gage’s description of León, an important city since the nineteenth century, “with fine gardens, with the variety of singing birds and parrots... with gay houses... and [an] ocean near [by]... [and because] of this city... the province of Nicaragua is called Mahomet’s Paradise” (p. 242). Squier (1860) noted the beauty of the towns’ scenery, and in poetic narration describes them. For instance, the ancient village of Nindiri, he calls it, water of the mountains:

Nindiri! How shall I describe thee, beautiful Nindiri, nestling beneath thy fragrant, ever green roof of tropical trees... Thy musical name, given thee long ages ago, nothing of its melody has lost Neenda, water, and Diriá, mountain (p. 190).

Many cities in Nicaragua amidst old trees gracing the landscape still stand with buildings and streets unchanged over the years, as though time had stopped there, such as Nindiri. In Granada, a colonial city, horse drawn carriages still drive people around.

The People

Today, Nicaragua like most Latin American countries has a multiethnic population. Over four million habitants in 1994 are distributed in the fifteen governmental departments and two autonomous regions (Incer, 1995). Nicaragua, is one of the least populated countries in Central America, its population density in 1988 was
only 30.1 people per square kilometer, and in 1990 reached 32.2 (Ministerio de Educación, 1992).

Nicaraguans are the descendants of ancient tribes whose roots could be traced to the Choroteganos, Niquiranos, Caribisis or Nicaraguas, and Chontales who were referred to as “foreigners,” and whom perhaps were of Mayan origin (Terán, & Incer Barquero, 1964). By tradition it is believed these tribes possibly arrived from the North, México. However, in prehistoric times there was trade between the people of the Northern and the Southern continents, therefore, it is possible there were immigrations from the South too. Little is known about these people and how they came to this land. Chroniclers give different dates for their arrival in Nicaragua, and their migrations have been mixed with legends and myths over time. Scholars have provided many different interpretations and meanings to all these mythical accounts over the centuries. For example, indigenous tradition tells that one emigrating group from the North was guided by a prophecy indicating that they should travel South and settle at the edge of a lake where, as a sign they would find an island with two mountains. These people were the first Nahualt who came to live on the shores of Lake Nicaragua after identifying an island with two volcanoes. They named the island formed by two volcanoes Ometepe, or two mountains. There is evidence of these ancient people in the art they created in the form of statues and petroglyphs, and in the symbols they carved on them such as, the image of the wise god-prince Quetzaltcoalt, or the feather serpent, which speaks of their Northern origin. When the Spanish asked ancient Nicaraguans where they came from, their answer was, we came with our god Quetzalcoalt, where the sun sets. They were explaining their emigration
from the North. According to Squier (1860), these Nicaraguans “seem to have been of the true Toltecan stock” (p. 278) from México.

On the East of Nicaragua, on the Atlantic Coast, ancient Nicaraguan tribes lived in the heart of the deep green forests. Today their descendants the Mizquito, the Sumo, and the Rama still inhabit the land. These people still preserve much of their cultural identity, original language, ancestral customs, and traditions. The Sumo are the only ancient community in Nicaragua who still live by hunting and gathering (Incer, 1970). There are 100,000 Mizquitos, 10,000 Sumos and 500 Ramas, conforming 2.7% of the total national population (Incer, 1995). From his research in the Atlantic coast, Smutko’s (1981) studies suggest people from the Isthmus of Rivas, perhaps the Mizquitos, were moved by force to the Atlantic Coast in the tenth century perhaps, due to wars among the natives. Subsequently, there were late immigrations. Romero (1991) relates the first black immigration goes back to the XVI century when European buccaneers arrived to the Atlantic region. Later, also in colonial times the British arrived with their slaves. In the nineteenth century a demand for workers brought people of African origin from the Antilles to this region. Romero (1988) goes on saying that in the second half of the seventeenth century black slaves were brought to Nicaragua as servants to work for the Spanish. These black immigrants mixed with the Atlantic Coast’s natives, originating the Criollos, or Creoles who have remained in this area, and whose total population is only 25,000 inhabitants (Oviedo Plazaola, Guevara Urbina & Blom, 1993). One more black immigration to the Atlantic Coast is constituted by the Garifonas; these people, Mónica
Alumna (personal communication, San Marcos, Carazo, 1998) relates, arrived from the Caribbean in San Vicente, through Honduras and Belice around 1780.

Further, due to recent migrations, one may find many Oriental, Jewish and Arab families, as well as European such as Germans, who have come to live in Nicaragua, perhaps attracted by its natural beauty and its economic potential for example, coffee growing, and gold mining. During the past years, Latin America has become an excellent area for the establishment of productive business, due to the Treaty of Free Commerce (TLC) and Mercosur (Economía Internacional, 1998).

Two cultures the Spanish and the indigenous met with the arrival of the Spanish on the American continent during the fifteen-century. The fusion of the Spanish and the native gave birth to a new race, Mestizo. Today, their descendants, the Mestizos, constitute the majority of the population in Nicaragua. Figure 8 presents a young Mestizo woman whose ancestors are German, Spanish, and native Nicaraguans. According to Oviedo Plazaola, Guevara Urbina, & Blom (1993) they form 96% of the population.

The people of Nicaragua are joyful and hospitable. These are characteristics that make this country special. Cuadra (1993) in El Nicaragüense describes Nicaraguans as hard working and friendly people. Today, because the majority of the population is made up of children and adolescents, Nicaragua is considered a “country of children,” because 48% of the population has not yet reached the age of fifteen (Incer, 1995).
Raymond Pons, (1968), the formerly French Ambassador in Nicaragua, wrote in his book, *Adorable Nicaragua* that, "it is a country whose physical and human aspects are full of charm and seduction from the first contact" (p. 6).

**The Socio-Economic Context**

Nicaragua’s economy is predominantly agricultural. For this, it may be called a country of small farmers. Characteristics of the Nicaraguan economy are, a traditional form of agriculture mostly based on primitive technology; an industry depending on imported goods for production; and a small capacity for the exportation of goods; besides an inadequate interrelation or involvement between agriculture and industry (Medal Mendieta, 1998). Nicaragua’s agriculture is diversified, there were fourteen different types of crops in the 1970’s (Campos Melendez, 1972). Among the agricultural products, Romero (1991) mentions coffee that in the 1950’s comprised 50% of the national exports, and later cotton, which in 1965 represented 45% of exports and becoming the leading exported product in the nation. This allowed Nicaragua to introduce itself to and participate in the world market. Principal exports include cotton, sugar, meat, and coffee (Black & Bevan, 1980). Other export-items include tobacco, and ajonjoli, an oily grain known in English as sesamum. Basic subsistence crops include rice, beans, and corn, as well as bananas. In regard to basic crop cultivation, Romero (1991) notes that for growing beans and corn, some farmers still use the colonial plow and the pre-Columbian hoe. In other words, farmers still use shifting cultivation which is an extensive method of...
land use, also known as the "slash-and-burn" method of cultivation used by the Mayans in prehistoric times. This traditional way of farming is due to the fact that Pacific Nicaragua is part of a larger cultural area, Mesoamérica, which includes central and Southern Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and parts of Honduras, Nicaragua, and Nicoya in Northwestern Costa Rica. Mesoamérica is a cultural area that shares such traits as corn and bean cultivation, as well as ceramic styles (Kirchoff, 1952). This cultural area began about 1500 B.C. at the beginning of agriculture, and continued until the Spanish arrival in 1520 A.D. (Gordon, 1992).

From the economic point of view, before the revolution in 1979, there existed a mixed economy formed by a strong private sector, and the state. During the 1970’s Nicaragua’s economy achieved a high rate of development. The 1980’s were characterized by the total control by the state over all sectors, and especially over the economy where the state had control over the production and distribution of all basic goods. According to the Ministry of Education (1992) in 1985, basic needs were not met for 86% of the rural people and 55% of the people in urban areas. At a national level 30% of the people were living in conditions of poverty; 22.7% in extreme poverty and 16.1% in misery.

During the 1980’s revolutionary Nicaragua became a state of extreme poverty, this was due among other factors to the centralized economy modeled after the Cuban communist system. The system seriously diminished the country’s wealth, and failed despite the efforts of the Sandinista government to succeed.
Also, during the 80’s, the economy of the country suffered a collapse as the exportations were reduced to a quarter of the levels reached during the seventies. investments were paralyzed and inflation reached the highest registered in Latin America (Belli, no date). The inflation rate between 1979 and 1984 was extremely high in relation to the 1950’s and the 1970’s. As an example, in 1980 the economic inflation was at 24.4%, in 1987 1,347.2% and in 1988 it was at its highest of 33,602 %. The inflation according to Medal Mendieta (1986) was also due to the expenditure and mismanagement of the Sandinista government. The rise in salaries however was only 120%, specially aggravating the situation of the lower sector of the population (Romero & Buitrago, 1994). In 1988, the córdoba suffered another depreciation. It went from 70 córdobas in 1986 to 10,000 córdobas to a dollar, being this one of the major nominal devaluation in the economic history of the world (Medal Mendieta, 1988). The acquisitive power of the Nicaraguan currency, the córdoba, was diminished.

Additionally, Nicaragua’s continuous suffering during the 1980’s was due to factors such as the prolonged state of war; natural disasters like hurricane “Joan” and inundation. (Ministerio de Educación, 1992), in addition to the earthquake that happen on December, twenty-four, 1972. On that night, the foundations of Managua suddenly trembled, and the entire city center collapsed under a giant dust cloud raised by the falling walls and roof-tiles of Managua’s houses. All these factors have contributed to making the plight of Nicaraguans critical.

Poverty is the greatest social problem facing Nicaragua. In 1991, 500,000 young people lived in difficult circumstances; 240,000 of them were direct or indirect victims of
the insurrection, and the contra war; 120,000 were the victims of natural catastrophe.
Besides, 114,000 were living in critical poverty; 112,000 were just trying to survive, and
over 6,000 children are working and begging in the streets of Managua (Ministerio de
Educación, 1992). Figure 9 displays two children who help their parents to make a living
from the sea. When the high tide of the Pacific Ocean ebb, they go out to hunt clams
digging out with a machete.

The poverty can also be seen in the illiteracy rate estimated at 40% in the urban
area and 50% in the rural area (Ministerio de Educación, 1992). Only a small percentage
within the rural area finishes primary education making a total of 1,003,359 illiterates. In
the educational sector there is a high index of desertion and repetition, and 150,000
children are left out of school yearly. This is due to poverty, and to the necessary
integration of children at an early age to work in the rural and urban zones, as well as to
the lack of schools, and textbooks (Ministerio de Educación-Centro de Educación para la
Democracia, 1993).

There are also 390,000 disabled people in the country today, due to war and other
reasons. The displaced refugees and returning armed forces account for 600,000 people
existing in critical situation (Bolaños, no date). Another poverty-stricken group is formed
by women with a low income and a high number of dependents especially in the rural
areas, where one third of the homes subsist on the income of single mothers. According to
an UNESCO report, Crisis in Nicaragua, broadcast in 1997, in Managua, this country, is
considered hundred and twenty-seven poorest country out of hundred and seventy-five in
the world. The income per capita in 1992 was estimated at $350 per person.
The effects of poverty are also reflected in the deterioration of the overall health of the people. Due to malnutrition, one in six children still do not have an adequate physical development. Respiratory problems and diarrhea are frequent causes of death among children (Bolaños, no date).

In the economic situation, the external debt left by Somoza was of 1,650 million dollars. At the beginning of the Sandinista government in 1981, the debt ascended to 2,655 million dollars, and it went up to the point that when they left the government in 1990, a sum of 10 thousand million dollars were accounted for as the external debt (Romero & Buitrago, 1994).

The consequences of the Sandinista government are still there, as we see in Nicaragua 240,000 war victims (Ministerio de Educación, 1992). More than 50,000 people dead (Medal Mendieta, 1998), and half million homeless (Woodward, 1985). This was the result of the Sandinista National Directorate’s (DN) decision to have in Nicaragua a revolutionary government at the cost of a permanent state of war.

Another factor affecting a large number of the people is social inequality. Like in all Latin American countries, Nicaraguan society is divided mostly into an upper class and a lower class the latter being the largest. However, a strong middle class is growing rapidly today. Due to this condition, the question of the unequal distribution of capital and land in Nicaraguan society was one of the key issues during the revolutionary government from 1979 to 1990. The agrarian reform did not favor “campesinos” (country people) and peasants, because the Sandinistas did not give them a legal
possession of the land. This was the government’s strategy exercised in order to keep political control over the campesinos.

The Political Context

The political context to be discussed includes the forty years of rule by the Somoza regime, the insurrection and the Sandinista revolutionary government. These events are discussed in chapters four and five, since they were key factors in Nicaragua’s social change. The social change in turn led to the curricular transformation in education and in the arts in 1979.

The following chapter as a general background discusses the structure of Nicaragua’s educational system. Also presents an overview of art education from prehistoric times to 1979, which was the time when the arts began to be used as a means of communication to transmit revolutionary knowledge.
CHAPTER 2

OVERVIEW OF GENERAL AND ART EDUCATION IN NICARAGUA

This overview of art education presents a general background of the teaching of art over time in Nicaragua. It also includes a brief account of the visual arts in prehistoric times, as well as the Spanish influence in the art of the colonial era, since both forms of art expression have been maintained as living traditions in this country. Nicaraguan artists have maintained a "sense of continuity with the past- from pre-Hispanic times and the colonial period" (Sullivan, 1990). Moreover, during the Sandinista period ancient prehistoric art and colonial traditions were used to communicate revolutionary values to people. For instance, one of the goals of the revolutionary government according to the Ministerio de Educación (1980) was to make children aware of their cultural roots. Similarly, colonial artistic expressions like the Guegüense, the first Latin American operetta written in the 17th century in Nicaragua, was interpreted in the schools during the revolutionary period in accordance to Sandinista values. The international influence on education in Nicaragua from colonial times until 1979 and the structure of the educational system are described since art programs in some schools are part of the general curriculum. Throughout Nicaragua's history, different ideologies have determined the values towards the design of the school's curriculum, and thus have influenced this country's educational system, including art education.
Art in Prehistoric Nicaragua

The arts in Nicaragua have played an important role over time as a means by which artists express ideas and values. In fact, ancient cultures used the arts in the socialization process as a means to communicate different values to people. For instance, through the visual arts such as ceramics, painting and sculpture, prehistoric artists expressed their culture's values. Stokstad (1995) points out that even though early societies have been labeled as primitive they were not frozen in time, but developed advanced cultures and a variety of rich traditions. For example, in Nicaragua, ancient potters painted a religious symbolism on ceramics creating in this way a functional and religious art, because ceramic bowls and jars were used in burials. Today, Cuadra (1981) has compared the fine linear designs of this pottery, called Luna, to modern linear designs. In Figure 10 one can see in the small Luna bowl, the stylized designs that speak of the skill of the ancient potter. In rocks, unknown artists carved sculptures such as the one presented in Figure 11. This was discovered along with others in Zapatera's island in Lake Nicaragua that perhaps was a native's sanctuary in ancient times. Today, most of these sculptures can be seen in the convent of San Francisco in the city of Granada. In rock walls, and hard stones they inscribed petroglyphs in low relief, which are like prints left on the rocks. Matilló Vila (1973) points out that these rock carvings, located on the isle of Ometepe in Lake Nicaragua speak of a past culture. Cuadra (1973) comments they are like textbooks in stone, because they portray the symbols of a culture. The precious woods of the tropical forest, yambar, cedar and mahogany were transformed into

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sculptures carved in high and low relief as well. In the same way, ancient artists
developed a language of images, the symbols representing or describing their world,
which they painted in codices. Thus, in paper manuscripts called amatl, or codices was
recorded;

what is said of someone or something. . .
what was put on the paper and painted. . .
the counting of days
the book of dreams
and the book of the years . . .
(León-Portilla, 1961 pp. 54-67)
Spanish translation.

Painting was also expressed in frescos such as the one in Figure 12 where the
ancient artist in a realistic representation was able to show the pain and suffering of the
victims, perhaps prisoners, in a sacred ritual. This mural was created by the Mayans in
the late Classic period in the 800 A.D.

Prehistoric art became very important during the revolutionary period in 1979.
when the Sandinistas used this type of art to instill in children nationalism.

The Colonial Tradition

The change from prehistoric times to the colonial period marks the transformation
of a cultural period. In this transformation Foucault (1979) would ask, what is the
connection between these two periods? What vinculum can be established between the
colonial and prehistoric periods. What is their significance? The change was the rupture
of a culture’s history along with their age-old traditions, customs and art. It was the
discontinuity of ancient traditions which were lost when two different cultures, the native
and the Spanish became one within the colonial tradition.

The Spanish arrival in 1492 introduced the splendor of the Renaissance and Baroque art in Spanish America. At that time, the arts were under the European Renaissance and Baroque influences, thus the art developed in the Spanish colonies reveals the linear, balanced, and unified forms of the Renaissance style. Similarly, the Baroque art expressions reflected the rich and dynamic compositions of angels and saints following the mystics of the Counter-Reformation. The open, tense and expanding compositions of the Baroque were transformed by the simplicity of the native art. Today, this fusion of the two different art expressions are known as Colonial art. This is an art style which was created to glorify God, and to light spiritual values. A Christian history of art was created with the sacred Christian images, thus combining art and religion. In this form of artistic expression, the pre-Hispanic art forms were transformed into Baroque forms overriding the symbols that the natives had used over time. As an example, the native’s ancient gods were changed for Christian images thus, creating a new iconography. Even, the ancient teocallis, the temples of the natives, were replaced by the Christian churches. Some of these were built in a sober style, while others were built with great ornamentation, with the aim to bring the natives under submission to colonial power. Some of these churches were built over the native’s temples with the same stones, thus becoming the teocallis of the Christians. Teocalli in the native language means the place for worship.

As the Spanish missionaries established schools in the “new land,” art was taught in missionary schools following the florid Baroque style in fashion at that time. In order to christianize the natives, in the Spanish colonies, religious ideas were transmitted through such
art expressions as sculpture and painting which expressed in religious themes the Christian values of the epoch. Under the Catholic religious influence, the natives learned European art techniques related to painting, carving and modeling. The native artist in the Spanish colonies learned to intertwine native and Christian symbols in his designs. In Nicaragua, European designs and the local flora and fauna as a reminiscent of a pre-Hispanic past were integrated and carved in facades and interiors of churches, such as the banana-like design in the garlands of the church of La Merced in Granada, and two carved zoomorphic figures which, in the temple of Nindiri, sit on the steps of the main altar as candleholders. One more example is the temple San Juan Bautista de Sutiaba. This church is located in the indigenous “barrio” of Sutiaba, a suburb, in the city of León. Today, this house of worship is known as the wooden temple, because of the artistic floral carvings created by natives in colonial times. There, one can still see the “sun god” carved by aboriginal artists on the ceiling in the central nave of the temple. It is possible that the sun was seen as the giver of life, as it is recorded by León-Portilla (1977) in a Nahualt poem attributed to the prince-poet Tecayehuatzin.

The native artist developed new art forms by exploring the imported European forms which were reproduced within a distinctively Spanish American art of stylistic variations. Figure 13 displays an example, the carved stone doorway, in the city of Granada called the Lyons’ portal. Examples of this type of art can be seen in the colonial churches built all over Latin America. Today, in almost every city and town in Nicaragua, the colonial temples stand as a reminiscence of the colonial tradition. Figure 14 shows the cathedral of León, one of the largest in Latin America, its construction began in 1747 and took approximately hundred years to complete. This majestic cathedral was used as a fortress in colonial times.
The colonial architecture and its ornamentation can still be seen, in the crested ends of the finials of façades pointing to heaven; in columns covered in white stucco, and decorated with garlands of leaves simulating Salomonic columns; oval medallions; artistic carved retables; and rich rusticated columns. The beauty of the foliage carved on columns and altars is expressed in a native poet's words as he refers to the Nahualt world of flowers and vegetation:

- perfumed flowers
- scattered disseminated and descending in garlands of flowers
- like fine rain, narcotic flowers
- [...] cacao flowers and the fragrant poyonaly...

(Gruzinsk and Mermet, 1994, p. 164)

Spanish translation.

For the building of the magnificent colonial art expressions which are seen all over Latin America today, Gruzinsk and Mermet (1994) relate that the natives were often forced to work regularly, and away from their homes in the name of the Spanish empire in order to create a sacred art. Almost "300,000 square meters" of frescos were painted by native artists in the monasteries of Mexico between 1540 and 1580 (p. 24).

Today, in Nicaragua, the colonial tradition is reflected in the work of native artists who continue sculpting in the same manner as their ancestors did, wooden polychrome religious images, all evoking indigenous artistic traditions and techniques, and revealing a distinctive Meztizo art, born out of the encounter of two cultures, the Spanish and the Amerindian. Figure 15 presents a crucifix carved on wood. This colonial image expresses the faith of a people which was born out of suffering and hope. Isaiah 53 words relate to this image:
He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him there is no beauty nor splendor in Him. He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief (Isaias 53, 1983, p. 901)

The Spanish influence, Arellano (1997) tells us, began in Nicaragua under the direction of the Catholic Church. The Bishop Fr. Francisco de Mendavia established the first school for natives in 1542 in León Viejo, an early colonial city in Nicaragua. Forty years later, in 1580, the Jesuits established schools for Spanish children in the city of Granada. In the same city, during the eighteenth century, in the Convent of San Francisco, students learned the art of music, as well as Latin and moral.

In Gamez’s (1975) account, one reads that in the late eighteenth century, still during colonial times, instruction was the privilege of the few, and education was designed to serve the Spanish Sovereigns’ interests.

Following its independence from Spain in 1821, Central America began what Foucault (1979) calls the limits of a process, the delimitation of a field, a discontinuity which is a rupture, a cut and a mutation, and a transformation in a people’s culture. In Nicaragua, culture was transformed under different influences in what might be called the international influence.

The International Influence

International institutions have played an important role in Latin American education through research and financial support. This influence is reflected in Nicaragua’s educational system as well as in the arts. These organizations interested in
the process of development in Latin America have conducted research in education, relating education to social issues and implementing their ideas in the curriculum of Latin American schools. For example, organizations such as OEA and UNESCO have held seminars to improve education in Latin America. In Uruguay, in 1961, Alianza para el Progreso (Alliance for Progress), a program organized under J. F. Kennedy’s Presidency, held a seminar to find ways to elevate the educational level in Latin American countries in 1958. A conference held by Unión Panamericana in 1962, in Chile, was organized in order to improve Latin America’s education. Later on, in 1963, this organization had a congress in Colombia to devise educational plans for the modification of social and economic structures in Latin American countries (Aparicio, 1967).

The Organización y Planeamiento de la Enseñanza Media en Centro America (OCE Plan) maintains that education plays a decisive role in the progress of any nation, suggesting that education must follow national necessities. This plan advocates the structuring of education for greater national development, and the promotion of science and technology in Latin America (Publicaciones de la Secretaria General de la Organización de Estados Centroamericanos, 1969).

Therefore, during the late 60’s and early 70’s, the discipline directing the curriculum in Nicaragua was science. Technology was implemented because it was considered a key factor in the development of a country; as a result of the advancement of science in the curriculum, art became less important in schools.

Likewise, Banco Mundial (1975), (World Bank) proposed a functional and a low cost plan of education, which could help the poor of Latin America to participate more
effectively in the process of development via economic, social, and political activities. This educational program, the World Bank claimed, could be achieved through the expansion of elementary school programs with a minimum of basic education. To implement basic education, this institution suggested: The use of the country’s native language, the use of electronic mediums, the production of its own didactic materials, and the relation of education to work. Other suggestions were, defining educational objectives in terms of minimum necessities for learning, and defining the type of learning according to the needs and resources of the country.

The ideas stated above were the prevalent concepts influencing the educational system in Latin America, including Nicaragua until the late seventies. These organizations did not take into account when making plans the development of art programs for elementary school children in Latin America despite the rich cultural tradition in all Latin American countries. The following paragraphs introduce Nicaragua’s educational system. Although, this thesis only examines the elementary school curriculum, the other systems of education are mentioned to provide a general background of the education in Nicaragua.

**Structure of Nicaragua’s Educational System**

Until 1979 the educational system in Nicaragua was structured in the following manner: There were two clearly defined and autonomous subsystems, that of non-higher education which was directed by the state by means of the Ministry of Education, and that of private and state higher education, established by The National University of
Nicaragua (UNAN) in León, and the Central American University (UCA) in Managua. Arellano (1997) mentions that the national university, in León, became the National University of Nicaragua in 1812 by the Cadiz Courts’ decree under the name of The Royal University of the Immaculate Conception.

In the early 1990's, as a political strategy, the Sandinista regime split the Nicaraguan educational system into four subsystems with separate laws, and coordinated by the National Council of Education (Belli, 1993).

The first subsystem is supported by the Ministry of Education (MED), and consists of preschool, elementary, high school, as well as teacher training and special and adult education.

Preschool is for children from four to six years old, and lasts one year. Elementary school comprises six grades, one through six, for children between seven and twelve years old. High school covers a period of five years, at the end of which the student obtains his or her diploma of high school. In Nicaragua, elementary and high school curricula are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Public Education; therefore, art education programs are developed according to the official curriculum. Elementary and high school children receive art education depending upon the school.

The second subsystem, The National Technological Institute (INATEC), trains the labor force such as technicians and qualified workers.

The third subsystem includes higher education Institutions attending the training of professionals and advanced level technicians. In higher education, students can pursue advanced studies in various disciplines.
The Institute of Culture, the last subsystem, directs the school of visual arts, music and dance and museums, as well as the interpretation and promotion of national culture and traditions. This entity was created as a Ministry of Culture in 1979, and all arts are under its jurisdiction. In a similar way, in Russia, Benton (1958) explains, there was a Ministry of Culture which covered the entire spectrum of the arts, including music, theater, radio, television, film, the popular arts and cultural enlightenment taking place in cultural centers. In Nicaragua the cultural centers were known as the Popular Cultural Centers (CPC) which will be described later in this thesis due to the importance they had in promoting the arts during the revolutionary period.

The National School of Fine Arts, initiated for the visual arts was established in the 1940’s. It is the only school that provides formal education in art in Nicaragua. In the late seventies this art school had a special children’s program that introduced them to painting. Still going on as a department of the Institute of Culture is the institution for training professional artists. This school has a five years program for professional artists. There, students learn to master techniques in drawing, painting and sculpture. By exploring the characteristics and qualities of mediums they discover new forms of artistic expression. During the 1980’s a middle level professional program prepared students to teach art in primary and secondary schools. The program, now canceled, was a basic art education program consisting of a two year study period to prepare instructors to teach also at the Popular Cultural Centers (CPC), or to work for the Ministry of Culture. There were CPC’s in the all-important cities in Nicaragua, and art teachers were needed to indoctrinate and to communicate revolutionary values through art. According to Luis
Morales Alonzo (personal communication, Managua, 1998) the curriculum stressed theory and not studio. In this program, two subjects were added to the regular art curriculum, Public Monumental Art, and Method of Scientific Investigation. The first was seen in the revolutionary murals painted all over Nicaragua. Lippard (1984) defines public art as outdoor art, out of the home and the gallery, and in the public domain.

Also, in 1985, the Italian artist Sergio Micheline established a mural school as a department of the Ministry of Culture with Italian instructors and Leonel Cerrato, a Nicaraguan artist, as director. This school was located in Managua and financed by an Italian solidarity organization, which provided paints, scaffolding and all necessary materials for students. The school lasted only three years due to lack of financial support (Kunzle, 1995). The revolutionary murals created during the 1980’s all over the country show the international influence represented in the murals executed by artists from different countries such as Panamá, Canada or the United States. Kunzle (1995) explains “internationalist painters are not paid;... Their rewards are strictly moral.” In Nicaragua during the revolutionary period, “citizens from twenty foreign countries painted murals, from the West in North America, Latin America, and Western Europe” (pp. 40-41). An example of these murals is shown in Figure 16. The theme is an allegory of the Jewish king David and Goliath. In the mural, David is a young Nicaraguan boy, Luis Alfonso Velázquez, who is facing the National Guard’s brutal force that is Goliath. In Nicaragua, murals became a clever disguise to proclaim Sandinistas’ values.

Art Education over Time in Elementary School
In Nicaragua, the curriculum has been developed under different influences. Thus, art education has emerged according to the ideas and theories valid at different periods of time. Sodi (1983) tells us that in prehistoric times a child's art training would begin early in his life. Seated on the floor, he or she would begin to paint symbols, figures and glyphs. He would learn to register the time and the past. León-Portilla (1977) explains that in ancient times native artists were trained in native Calmecac schools, which were the native educational centers. There, students learned about the black and the red ink and the secrets of painting. León-Portilla goes on saying that the arts were so highly praised that, texts of the ancient Mexicans spoke at great high of painters, feather artists and potters. Also, in Oviedo's accounts (1976) one reads, the natives painted in books made of deer skin figures, roads, mountains, and forests, along with the days of the harvest, the rites, and their laws. History was written in these books, either in pictographic form, that is, object representation, or in ideographic form that is, writing the characters symbolizing an idea. In this way, the ancient artist developed a visual language through his painted books or codices.

In colonial times, art training was very important because of the need within the colonies to build and decorate the Catholic temples. Instruction in the convents, besides reading and writing Spanish included art and crafts, and choir. The Portuguese movie, titled “A Missao” (The Mission), an original story, shows the mission’s art workshop and choir, and the native children playing the violin and singing with exquisite and melodious voices in the borderlands of Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil in the year 1750 (Columbia Pictures, 1986).
By 1800, drawing had become part of the curriculum in some public schools. In 1877, in the school of the city of Rivas, music and drawing were part of the elementary school curriculum (Castillo, 1997), and similarly in 1850 in Granada, an important city of Nicaragua. Also, under the presidency of General José Santos Zelaya, in 1894, a law was passed that in primary schools, drawing, music and manual arts were to be taught for the understanding of the fine and manual arts. In 1882 at the Colegio de Señoritas in Granada, Pestalozzi and Froebel methodology were applied (Arellano, 1997). Efland (1983) described Pestalozzi’s methodology, “as a systematic method of instruction;” (p. 128) as a sequential mode of instruction.

In like manner, early in the century, Método de Enseñanza, (Moncada, no date), a guide for elementary teachers, suggests Froebel’s methodology. Thus, in elementary school, children were taught geometric drawing based on the idea of scientific play, and teachers were encouraged to seek knowledge not in books, but in the observation of nature. In the same manner "moral education" was part of the elementary curriculum. Moncada goes on saying that embroidery, music and drawing are good for girls, while manual training and gardening are significant for the growth of boys.

Education under the Somoza regime covers the years from 1937, the year the first Somoza became president until 1979, when his son, General Somoza Debayle was overthrown by the insurrection of the people of Nicaragua. During the Somozas’ government general education and the arts did not have much support, neither they enjoy the importance that they had during the Sandinista rule.

In the 1940’s, Professor Manuel Cruz (personal communication, Managua, 1991)
said that in some public schools, the art class was combined with embroidery, where girls learned different kinds of stitches. Other schools combined art, singing, and poetry. Further, in those days, in some schools, the art class was called "drawing," perhaps because students did only drawings. Since in elementary grades, in both private and public schools, students copied their favorite themes: a pet from a model, or from a drawing made on the blackboard by the teacher. It was learning by imitation in the mimetic tradition. In this view, instructors provide the model to copy, as well as the procedures and ways of doing it, in accord with the behaviorist theory that "learning is acquired by imitation" (Efland, 1987, p. 2).

Subsequently, in private schools, like the American Nicaraguan school in Managua, in elementary grades, an art specialist taught the art class, and art was part of the general curriculum.

In the 1950's, in private schools like Colegio de la Asunción, an exclusive French school for young ladies, students learned embroidery in the elementary grades. The art class was called painting and it was not included in the general curriculum. Art was an extra curricular activity, where girls made copies from European prints depicting a landscape, or still life that Sister Celia, who was the instructor, acquired in France. Girls were taught accurate representation using different media such as oil, charcoal and pastel, as well as perspective, light and shade. In this class, in the 1950's, art appreciation as a concept was not significant.

During the 1960's, the elementary school drawing book used in the public school system contained the models which students had to copy using graphite and color pencils.
in the same manner as it is done in coloring books.

In the 1970's in private schools, in art classes, students, along with drawing and painting, were also making paper sculpture, collages and holiday art. On the other hand, in the public school system, in elementary grades only some schools provided art instruction, and the homeroom teacher taught the class. Children’s art learning was limited by the teacher’s ability, some would learn music, others, drawing or embroidery depending on the teacher’s specialty, and according to their training. In some public schools only sixth graders received art instruction, while in others art was not taught at all.

In another elementary school, as a student, Luis Silva, remembers (personal communication, San Marcos, Carazo, Nicaragua, 1997) the homeroom teacher would say to the students at any time, or any day, “children, let’s draw today.” This meant, that the art class was not included in the official curriculum, and that it was not regular, but only occasionally taught.

In revolutionary Nicaragua, during the Sandinista government, from 1979 to 1990, the purpose of the arts was manipulated to support the revolution. Large paintings of martyrs and heroes were displayed to glorify the revolution. In schools, children learned to express the national reality by drawing war themes. Then, it was most effectively through the arts that revolutionary values were communicated.

In this respect, Aparicio (1967) notes that each society develops its educational system based on the values, ideas, and beliefs they wish to perpetuate, adding that social control is exercised by the influence of cultural patterns over individual attitudes, since culture is a
structure that can be transmitted from generation to generation. Being culture considered as "the socially transmitted knowledge and behavior shared by some group of people" (Peoples, Bailey, 1994, p. 23). In Nicaragua's educational system, the Sandinistas values, ideas and beliefs were imposed in order to indoctrinate students.

This overview reveals that art education until 1979 was not given the importance that it deserved. Perhaps, one of the main reasons is poverty. Indeed, in this country, most public schools barely have the basic necessities. The board of education's statistics show that 150,000 children are left out of school because of financial problems (Ministerio de Educación-Centro de Educación para la Democracia, 1993). Most of these children will never receive a formal education. Another reason for the lack of support to the arts in elementary grades it is possibly due to the government's belief that the arts are not important. In the elementary school program, arithmetic, reading and writing are the most important subjects. In the few elementary schools in which education in art is provided, the curriculum content is basically drawing, and children mainly copy subject matter. Most of the time, what students learn is simply studio art, where children create two-dimensional and three-dimensional art. Yet, in most elementary grades, theory and practice of art is not provided. In addition, in the public school system, in the elementary grades, great importance is given to the crafts for instance, learning how to make a flowerpot, or things that will have a practical use in their homes. Also, art in the elementary curriculum is stated as, "drawing, painting, or technical education, industrial art, and esthetic education," but never as art appreciation. The concept of art appreciation is known, but it is not used as such in the elementary curriculum. Moreover, it is almost
unknown by children in most elementary schools. The review also illustrates that there is very little art education literature in Nicaragua. Moreover, art education as a subject in teachers’ training is taught like technical or industrial education. It includes carpentry, drawing, embroidery, metal, cooking, crafts, but not art appreciation. Perhaps, because it is more important to teach children how to read and write. Still, in Nicaragua, most children have not been taught that learning about art is more than just making things. In the art class, usually students ask, what are we going to make today? These children think that making things is what the art class is all about. Nicaraguan children need to learn to see and understand the value of art and to develop sensitivity and feeling toward the manifestations of the arts; and that art is more than just making things. Then, understanding art can become an enjoyable experience in children’s lives as it is indicated in Figure 17, in the drawing made by a young girl showing her experience at the circus.

The challenge is to design an art curriculum for elementary grades where children will learn about the meaning in artworks. It will be as Parsons (1989) writes, that artworks "deal with meanings" (p. xi), and in Nicaragua, children can learn to understand and interpret them.

In Nicaragua, there has been a lack of support for art programs in schools except during the Sandinista period, when the arts were needed to advance the revolution. At the present time, the arts, the teaching of art and the rest of the curriculum are in the process of change under a new democratic influence. The following pages discuss the methodology used in this study to examine Nicaragua’s curricular transformation in 1979 as a result of the take over of the country by the Sandinista party.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this historic study is to examine the transformation of the curriculum and particularly the ideas, which originated its change, in other words, the revolutionary ideas that shaped the curriculum in Nicaraguan schools. In a similar way, it introduces an account of the political events relating to curriculum change, since these brought about the transformation of the schools in this country. Thus, in the next chapters, an account of the revolutionary period, a fragment in Nicaraguan history, is presented in narrative manner. This narrative relates the events as recorded by those who were there at the time they occurred.

Michel Foucault's idea of power and knowledge, as it was stated in the introduction, will give insights to interpret the historical records. For instance, the exercise of power as an "effective practice" as Foucault (1980) explains it (p. 97) translates, in this research, to the practices exercised in schools, and their use of the arts as propaganda through the subtle mechanisms and practices of the Sandinistas. Clearly, the study contemplates the strategies and mechanisms of the Sandinista power through its practices. Therefore, schools are examined as sites where revolutionary power implemented revolutionary values. The values that were going to re-shape students' worldview according to political practices. This illustrates the way power, in Foucault's
(1980) view, is "utilized, involuted, transformed, [and] extended by... domination" (p. 99). In this respect, it would be the understanding of the methods, the techniques, and the procedures through which Sandinista power was exercised. The power that allowed them to determine the knowledge that children would acquire in school, since it was the belief that the new system of education was going to create the "new man." This, in Foucault's view, according to Gordon's (1980) analysis, is to investigate the process of the production and the use of power.

The revolutionary ideas of the Sandinistas would be interpreted in Foucault's (1972) view, like:

an uncertain object, (p. 136)... [that] concerns, with all... thought, that whole interplay of representations that flow anonymously between men;... [revealing] the crumbling soil on which they are based. [The ideas would be] the discipline of fluctuating languages... of unrelated themes... [showing] how scientific knowledge is diffused. [and] gives rise to philosophical concepts... [and how these ideas are] formulated [into] scientific or political discourses;... (p. 137) [like] silent births, or distant correspondences, of permanences that persist beneath apparent changes... (p. 138)

In this study, the ideas behind the origins and the goals of the Sandinista power; the ideas that were communicated in the manner of revolutionary discourses are to be defined according to Foucault's theory, "in their specificity;" in order to underline and to define rules of the Sandinistas for discursive practices, and "to show in what way... rules that they put into operation" (p. 139) were designed to instill in children revolutionary values. Finally, the definition of terms is explained within the general content to illustrate and facilitate the reading. Kellner (1993), suggests that terms are "social constructs, arbitrary constructs which serve to mark and call attention to certain
Appendix A presents a list of acronyms which became very popular in Nicaragua during the Sandinista rule.

**Source Materials**

For the study, the historical information was drawn from primary and secondary sources. Additionally, the research records my own experiences as an art teacher during the Sandinista period in Nicaragua.

**Primary Sources**

According to Cates (1985) primary sources are the testimony of "individuals who were present at [the] event [on] which they are reporting" (p. 105). Primary sources in this research provide the evidence that will support the interpretations given in the historiography. This includes, the variety of art expressions produced during the Sandinista period which helped to portray a vivid and accurate account of the issues that were involved in the change from "formal" to "non-formal education." These forms of art consist of: Pictorial records, which in the study consist of drawings made by children. Figure 18 depicts a young student's painting that won first prize in the contest "The Fatherland and the Revolution." Posters used for propaganda as in Figure 19; these "posters of liberation" first appeared around 1980, after the revolution in Nicaragua, and Iran. Murals, the art expressions created on the walls of the cities of Nicaragua portraying revolutionary themes such as Figure 20 that shows a mural attributed to the Felicia Santizo Brigade from Panamá. In this mural children are reading, "Sandino is the Way" and "Children are the Hope of the world." The Felicia Santizo brigade’s themes "were nationalist, Marxist, and anti-imperialist-pro-Palestine, pro-Sandinista" (Kunzle,
Political graffiti, which was created out of the need to say what the media was not allowed to express like, “Vive Christ our King.” This graffiti, or “street art according to Stokstad (1995), artists do it in a distinctive linear design, or in X-ray style, it is “an art open to every body” (p. 1152). It is an art crudely drawn, sometimes in child like manner. Levin (1988) writes, graffiti “has a history of its own [when] teenagers graffitiists... artists vandals [were] using the letters of the alphabet as magical post-literate symbols of primitive power” (pp. 204-205). Another art expression is the religious revolutionary art that was depicted in socialist realism. Figure 21 depicts a vision of heaven painted in the people’s Church, Santa María de Los Angeles in Managua in the “barrio” Riguero. Finally, in artistic photography, children who were the favorites of the revolution, participating in revolutionary tasks. In Figure 22 one can see brigades of the Association of Sandinista Children planting trees in a neighborhood in Managua.

Although special attention is given to the visual arts in this research, the performing arts such as music, dance, and theater are also considered in relation to their role in the revolutionary process. Interpreting Dreyfus & Rabinow (1983) all of these art expressions are, “the meticulous rituals of power, centering on certain cultural practices which [combine] knowledge and power” (p. 184). They were the forms of artistic propaganda that children were taught in schools, and that were also painted in schools such as the mural “The Light of the Revolution” (Figure 23) painted in the Rigoberto López Pérez School in Managua.

Primary sources in this research also include, written documents. These are teachers’ manuals, namely methodological orientations, and textbooks like Los Carlitos 1, 2 and 3 for teaching reading and writing Spanish. They were written between 1979
and 1990 during the revolutionary government. Zavala Cuadra (1985) notes that Los Carlitos were named after Carlos Fonseca Amador, founder of the FSLN, who became the role model that children were to imitate. These documents are very important because they reveal the ideas behind the curricular transformation. Please, see Appendix B for the books that were used in the elementary schools at that time including the Carlitos.

Documents, Cates (1985) writes, may be intentional, that is, written with the intent to record actions, ideas, or events for future readers, or unintentional, that is documents intended only for short-term use and not as permanent records.

Foucault (1972) states, “scholars have asked not only what these documents meant, but also whether they were telling the truth, and by what right they could claim to be doing so, whether they [are] sincere... or authentic”. He adds, documents, are like “the language of a voice”. (p. 6); documents are like a voice, which has been reduced to silence. History within documents try to define series and relations unfolding and bringing into action elements which need to be grouped and related to one another to form totalities (Foucault, 1979).

Another primary source was oral history, recorded as interviews, in order to supply information, which was not written. Other sources of information include official records, such as the ministry of education’s (MED) publications. These are original documents that include policies, and articles on education. These documents encompass the period from 1979 to 1993, and the source is the Ministry of Education. Special attention is given to discourses such as the speeches delivered by revolutionary leaders, an example is the speech delivered in West Germany by the then Minister of Culture, Ernesto Cardenal (1981), who describes the Nicaraguan Revolution in spiritual terms. In
regard to primary and secondary sources. Appendix C presents a bibliography of the French historian and philosopher Michel Foucault. His publications are presented as primary sources, and secondary sources include, the writings of scholars who are concerned with the questions that Foucault raises, as well as their own views.

**Secondary Sources**

Cates (1985) defines secondary sources as the information provided by "individuals who were not present at the event about which they are reporting, but [rather] are reporting" (p. 105) what another person or people told them. Secondary sources are used to identify common beliefs and "interpretations" in relation to the curricular transformation in Nicaragua. Secondary sources, Efland (1992) explains, can include sources of contextual information, e.g., economic history, political history, cultural history.

**Location of Sources**

The sources for this research are located in different libraries. In the U.S.A., in Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University Main Library, the Education, and the Fine Arts Libraries; also the library of the University of Mobile in Mobile, Alabama. Others are, in Nicaragua, the libraries of the Ministry of Education, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA), and University of Mobile Latin American Campus (LABC), in San Marcos. Official institutions providing material include: Centro de Educación para la Democracia; Simen-UNESCO which is an entity supported by the United Nations to advance elementary and high school education in Nicaragua; the Ministry of Education
Library; and the Comisión Nacional de Cooperación con UNESCO Secretaría Permanente (United Nations) all located in Managua. Additional information was recorded from teachers who taught during the Sandinista regime and students as they remember their school years. Julisa Isabel Gadea recalls that, in her school, named San Francisco de Asís, the murals made by students in the classroom, on a kind of bulletin board, displayed poems, songs and drawings supporting the revolution. This is a parochial school in the city of Juigalpa, Chontales, which is partially supported by the government (personal communication, San Marcos, Carazo, Nicaragua, 1997).

Two curricula within the Nicaraguan and American public school systems are discussed. Examples are drawn from the American Nicaraguan School that is partially supported by the U.S. State Department and the American Embassy in Managua, and within the Nicaraguan public school system, elementary school. These schools were chosen because the public school system in Nicaragua followed the Sandinista’s national curriculum, and in the American Nicaraguan School children’s education is based on democratic values.

Evaluation of Sources

In regard to the evaluation of the collected data, two types of criticism are used: External and internal criticism.

External criticism, Cates (1985) writes, “addresses questions about the authenticity of the document, records, or relics” (p. 106). External criticism involves checking sources in relation to the accuracy of the author; asking questions in relation to the originality, or conversely the forgery of documents. According to Van Dalen (1973),
external criticism includes assessing the documents' publication, time, place, authorship, and the language employed by the author, this, in order to determine the evidences that will support the interpretations. External criticism, according to Efland (1992) concerns about who and when and by whom the historical source was written. Internal criticism, Cates (1985) observes, "deals with sources... and seeks then to analyze the source's perceptiveness and reliability" (p. 107). Internal criticism looks for reliability of documents by asking questions such as, is this source reliable? What is its meaning? Internal criticism, Van Dalen (1973) explains, ascertains "the meaning and trustworthiness of the data within the document" (p. 169), further in a historical research he claims, "doubt is the beginning of wisdom" (p. 167).

**Method of Data Collection**

Evidence, which includes the extraction of information from written sources, educational and historical documents must support the study of the past. It involves the organization of the data in order to interpret the political events and the ideology that shaped the curricular transformation in revolutionary Nicaragua.

Additionally, in recording information, and selecting data, Borg & Gall's (1983) suggestions are, a careful and accurate note-taking documentation, and photocopying. Other recommendations posed by Cates (1985) when organizing data are to take into consideration the researcher's biases, assumptions, opinions, and perspective on history. To accomplish this, in this thesis, documents written by Sandinista leaders were examined in order to present the ideas behind the revolutionary education and the arts, and in like manner, the documents written by scholars who supported the revolution.
Also, documents with a different viewpoint have been examined as well. In addition, it is important to identify the researcher's perspective. In this thesis, the researcher's perspective is to give an account of the events as they happened, since the researcher was there at the time they occurred. Also, this study presents evidence that the Sandinistas' goal was to impose their ideas on children via education and the arts. The researcher thinks that when an ideology is imposed upon people, it takes away freedom from them. It is the people's right to decide what they want to believe in.

**Interpretation**

According to Borg & Gall (1983) "history means interpretation" (p. 819). Thus, in terms of interpretation, this research will be from the historical revisionist point of view, while taking into account the political and economic factors that influenced education in Nicaragua from 1979 to 1990. This view, according to Efland (1988), suggests that every generation writes its own account of the past in terms of its own view of reality, and that no historical account can be totally objective and partial, therefore, historical interpretation is an ongoing necessity. Hence, in this research, an interpretive approach explores the ideas in relation to the general curriculum and the art curriculum in particular.

In Foucault's (1972) view, interpretation also points to the notion of discontinuity that helps to discover "the limits of a process, [in this case of the revolutionary process] the point of inflection of a curve, . . . the instant at which a circular causality breaks down" (p. 9) in the continuity of history. . . and "to the establishment of a system of values" (p. 13), which in the research are the Sandinista's values. Thus, the content
analysis of the curriculum will include Sandinistas' values, aims, purposes and intentions, including educational theory, instructional methods and implementation of the curriculum as it was conditioned by political factors.

Similarly, the interpretive analysis will look for what is not contained in the textbooks, what has not been said, and will question in Foucault's (1972) terms:

the already said (p. 131), which is not merely a phrase that has already been spoken, or a text that has already been written, 'but a never said'... the interpretation of 'hearing' of an 'already-said' that is at the same time a 'not-said' (p. 25).

This will be looking at what was implied, but not said in relation to general and art education thus, shedding light on revolutionary knowledge.

To examine revolutionary knowledge, this study examines the educational strategies as they were exercised in schools. Foucault's (1972) views on political knowledge could be applied to the Sandinista revolutionary knowledge, since the FSLN (Sandinista Front for National Liberation) developed its own discursive practices designed and geared toward a social change, and toward the transformation of values in Nicaragua. Foucault suggests looking for:

direction of behavior, struggles, conflicts, decisions, and tactics... the formation and transformations of a body of knowledge... the formation of a discursive practice and a body of revolutionary knowledge that are expressed in behavior and strategies, which give rise to a theory of society (pp. 194-195).

Therefore, in this search through the past, the ideological impact on education and its effects on children are reflected in young student's artworks. The analysis of artworks
in Foucault’s (1972) words will consist of recapturing the whisper of the artist’s intentions:

which are not transcribed into words, but into lines, surfaces, and colours. . . [uncovering] the implicit philosophy that is supposed to form [the artist’s] view of the world; [and the ideas] and opinions of the period [reflected in the artwork] (p. 193).

Briefly, the interpretive inquiry in this historic research presents an example of how a political power, the Sandinista Government, in the last decade used art as propaganda in the form of knowledge. How the educational system changed from formal to “non-formal” education; and how social issues related to class, politics, and economics influenced the curriculum in revolutionary Nicaragua, specifically, the change of the educational process in Nicaraguan schools. Appendix D provides a chronological information of events, mainly political, which originated the curricular transformation in 1979. To interpret the causes for the curricular transformation in Nicaragua in 1979, its educational accomplishments and its limitations, the study encourages understanding of the reasons as to why the formal educational system was turned into a “popular education.” Therefore, an account of the Somoza dynasty, the insurrection and the Sandinista government are presented in chronological manner in an attempt to answer the question, what were the causes, or the origin of the curricular transformation? In this quest for meaning, these accounts provide the political context in which events took place, and how the political background shaped within the revolutionary context the curricular reform. Finally, the interpreted data will be examined, criticized, and evaluated by other scholars.
Limitations

In this dialogue between the past and the present, what are the limitations? In Ayon’s (1977), History of Nicaragua, it is stated that, in order to write a people’s history, one has to unfold from the past, their ideas, aspirations, virtues, and vices.

Not all the questions can be answered, because there are limitations, which are expressed by quoting Gottschalk (1969):

... Only a part of what was observed in the past was remembered by those who observed it; only a part of what was remembered was recorded; only a part of what was recorded has survived... Only a part of what has survived has come to the historians’ attention (p. 45).

Discussing historical research, Van Dalen (1973) explains, “knowledge of the past—the drama of the decisions made and their consequences—may help us make decisions about current problems”. . . (p. 160), and he goes on to say, history provides insights into past actions, successful and unsuccessful, which suggest alternatives for prospective action. . . looking into history involves the collection, examination selection, verification, classification of facts, and their interpretation, so that they can stand crucial examination.

In the following pages, the Somozas’ government in Nicaragua is discussed, since this circumstance was the cause which lead to the insurrection of the people of Nicaragua preceding the curriculum reform in schools.
CHAPTER 4

THE SOMOZA DYNASTY

This chapter discusses the Somoza dynasty and its quest for power. How the Somozas' long transgression of power led to the insurrection of 1979 which in turn prompted the social changes exercised by the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. Following the Somoza's years of dictatorship, the Sandinistas developed a curricular transformation within the Nicaraguan school system in order to create the "new man," and lead the country towards a dictatorial socialism. Furthermore, the corruption of the Somoza government was an issue discussed by students in their classes during the Sandinista government.

The immeasurable ambition and manipulation of power by the Somozas was what allowed the Sandinistas to seize power and create the conditions for Nicaragua's social change. The Somozas did not understand that people's continuous revolts were a quest for a change. They felt secure because of the support they had from the U.S. It was as though the Somozas had become in Foucault's (1983) words, "a disease of power" (p. 209).

Foucault's ideas on power could apply to the Somozas' quest for power over a period of forty years. According to Foucault power is:

... in reality an open, more-or-less coordinated cluster of relations...
Power is not a commodity, a position, a prize, or a plot; it is the operation of the political technologies throughout the social body...
Power plays a directly productive role; it comes from below; it is multidirectional, operating from the top down and also from the bottom up...
Power is a general matrix of force relations at a given time, in a given society
... Power relations... are intentional and nonsubjective. Their intelligibility derives from this intentionality. They are imbued, through and through, with calculation: there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, pp. 184-185-186-187).

... power is neither given, nor exchanged, nor recovered, but rather exercised, and that it only exists in action... [Also] power is what says no power is... that which represses. Power represses nature, the instincts, a class, individuals (Foucault, 1980, pp. 89-90-139).

Beginning in the 1930's, using the power that the presidency allowed them, the Somozas controlled Nicaragua through repression, coups and electoral frauds, and in this manner three members of this family were elected presidents of Nicaragua: Anastasio Somoza García (Tacho), and his two sons, Luis Anastasio Somoza Debayle and Anastasio Somoza Debayle (Tachito) creating in this manner a feudalistic type of government.

At the start of his career, Anastasio Somoza García, the son of a coffee farm owner was not a rich man. First, having failed as a business man, he earned a modest living as a health inspector. Later, he worked as a meter reader at the electrical company, in the city of León. Rizo (1987) comments, that he was a charming person, winning supporters who later proposed him as president for ever, "Somoza for Ever" (p. 198). A U.S. Marine report rated him in terms of military competency as having "practically none." They also described him as "a shrewd politician." All in all, General Somoza was "energetic, clever, not too honest," a "pleasing personality,"... (Millett, 1988, p. 109). In this regard, Matagalpa (1984) comments how Somoza García managed to sell all the goods to Dreyfus, a general store, in Managua. The goods that the U.S. Marines had given to the military before leaving had a value of "$80,000.00" (p. 227). From the beginning of his career Somoza García made no secret of the ambition that was going to guide his political career.
Somoza García’s political career began in 1932 when he managed to get himself appointed as Chief Director of the National Guard (GN). This post became a key factor in determining his political career. General Matthews turned the command of the National Guard over to him on the first of January, 1933 (Millet, 1977) after the Marines returned to the U.S.A., on December thirty-one, 1932 (Matagalpa, 1984). One more factor that favored Somoza García’s political career was the weakness of President Juan Bautista Sacasa whose government according to Romero & Buitrago (1994) was undermined by Somoza García. The resignation of President Sacasa on June six, 1936 (Millett, 1977) allowed Somoza García to stage his presidential election and seize power. He won the presidential elections on December eight, 1936, and began his first presidential term on January first, 1937 (Millett, 1977). Later on, he managed, through a docile congress, to change the constitution, which stated that a president’s term was four years in office. In 1939, the National Assembly voted to allow him to remain in power for a period of eight years until 1947. Later a new constitution authorized him to stay in power until 1956 (Romero, 1991). In this way, Somoza García as president was able to develop and consolidate a structure of power, and to obtain through that power a colossal fortune. His objective was to use power for his own benefit.

In this regard, Dreyfus & Rabinow (1983), interpretation of Foucault’s inquiry on power is expressed:

there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives (p. 187). [The objectives of Somoza García’s government were] to develop forms of domination. . . [and] exploitation. . . the maintenance of privileges, [and] the accumulation of profits,. . . (Foucault, 1983, pp. 212-223).
Millett (1977) describes the strategies developed by Somoza García during his term as president:

the presidency gave Anastasio Somoza García more than power and prestige. In his first three years in office he accumulated a fortune estimated at from $3 to $4 million, a record no previous Nicaraguan President had even approached. Somoza had become wealthy in a variety of ways. Much of this new wealth was invested in acquiring property in Nicaragua. The General also bought up underdeveloped land, then had the government build a road to it or dredge out a new harbor in its vicinity. Using such techniques, he soon became the wealthiest man in Nicaragua’s history. Graft was common in Nicaragua, but Somoza refined and systematized it. Emboldened by the example of their leader, the officers and men of the Guard used their positions, especially in customs, immigration, and police, to enrich themselves. The corruption extended from the Minister of War, . . . to the private on the street . . . (Millett, 1977, pp. 197-198).

Although, Rizo (1987), a deputy of the government who knew him well, observes in his memoirs that many of the abuses attributed to Somoza García were in fact executed by the servile and corrupted army, as well as his close advisers. The same behavior went on during the Sandinista period (1979-1990). At that time the police could stop any car and accuse the driver of any infraction real or imaginary which would be revoked instantly upon reception of a bribe. An example of this happened when one day a policeman stopped a driver. The person tried to prove the police officer that he was driving in a rightful manner. Finally, trying to impress him the driver said, look, I don’t have any marks on my license, and the policeman’s answer was, well you are not “cooperating with the revolution.”

Subsequently, as of the 1940’s there had been a visible unconformity and a constant resistance marked by a series of unsuccessful revolts against Somoza García’s government. This resistance against his political structure in Foucault’s (1983) words, questioned “the status of the individual” (p. 211), that is, his status as president. On September twenty-one, 1956, when he was celebrating his nomination with the Liberal Party for yet another
presidential term at a grand ball in the Casa del Obrero in the city of León, he was assassinated. He was shot by the Nicaraguan poet Rigoberto López Pérez who was killed on the spot on the dance floor. Later on, during the Sandinista government, Rigoberto López Pérez became a martyr and a national hero. In Managua, a school, and the capital's sports arena were renamed after him by the Sandinistas.

Twenty-three years later, in 1979, with the victory of the Nicaraguan people and the downfall of his son, Anastasio Somoza Debayle, the crowd tore down the equestrian statue of the founder of the dynasty, Anastasio Somoza García. Figure 23, shows how the bronze sculpture located in Managua by the National Stadium was dislodged from its pedestal, and people joyfully tore it to pieces. The crowd acted like small children when at a party, one of them, finally gets the trophy.

The Somoza era did not end at that time, because his sons, Luis and Anastasio were to continue running Nicaragua as the family's business for twenty-two more years. They were to follow "those cultural practices... which have been instrumental in forming"... (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 120) their father's political career.

The Prolongation of the Dynasty

Somoza García’s eldest son, Luis Anastasio, an engineer, was selected to take over his father's presidency from 1956 to 1963. Luis tried to liberalize his government and announced that he was going to serve only one term. His candidate and successor Dr. Rene Schick won the elections in 1963.

In 1966 his brother Anastasio Somoza Debayle announced his candidacy for the next presidential term. As the candidate of the National Liberal Party and through manipulation of
the electoral machinery, he was able to win the 1966 elections. Anastasio Jr., a West Point graduate, had been given the command of the National Guard by his father since 1956. It is said that he is the only West Point graduate to receive “an army” for his graduation (Millett, 1988, p. 111). He became president and at the same time continued as Chief Director of the National Guard, like his father Somoza García, combining the two positions in one person. In this way, he became the third Somoza in power. Also, like his father, he had to face continuous resistance from the opposition in the form of persistent and unsuccessful revolts against his government which ended on July seventeen, 1979, when he had to leave Nicaragua, and defeated went to Miami.

It was the immense corruption of Somoza Debayle’s government that made the people of Nicaragua take arms against him. A turning point in the people’s discontent was in 1972 when an earthquake destroyed the capital, the city of Managua, in a matter of seconds. Somoza distributed relief supplies sent by international agencies through offices of his own Liberal Party and the National Guard, siphoning off the supplies intended to help the victims of the earthquake. The manipulation of the humanitarian aid was the climax that moved the people to start an active resistance against his regime throughout the 70’s.

The Somoza family also used the power of the presidency to extend their business activities into new areas, such as banking and construction (Millett, 1988). They also owned an airline and a shipping company (Time, August 6, 1979). Moreover, Somoza Debayle and his associates sold land to the government which was used for new developments to replace the residential areas that the earthquake had destroyed. In this way, they increased their fortunes tremendously. This strong desire for power and wealth brought about a general
dissatisfaction against him. Somoza Debayle’s greed cost him the support of the Nicaraguan businesses elite who accused him of corruption. This accusation benefited the leftist political party, the Sandinista Front for National Liberation, also called “the Front,” which had been engaging in guerrilla warfare against the dictator since the 1960’s.

To remove the dictator, a strategic alliance was made, what Millett (1988, p. 116) calls a “fateful alliance” between the Sandinistas and Somoza Debayle’s opposition, which included business men, intellectuals and the middle class. In this regard, the FSLN National Directorate (DN) informed after their defeat: In the middle of 1978, the FSLN, decide to formulate his political alliance with the group of the twelve; the opposition front; the people’s united movement; and the patriotic front (Informe Politico de la Dirección Nacional, no date). The alliance’s idea was to incite the nation to an insurrection. These groups firmly believed they could control the Sandinistas once Somoza Debayle was gone, and a democratic government would be able to be established.

Soon the National Guard was unable to control the people, and a popular resistance where capitalists, non capitalists, peasants and middle class united began to support the Sandinistas, specially in the barrios where the Sandinistas enjoyed great support.

The resistance of the people to Somoza Debayle was manifested in a series of continuous and failed revolts such as the one on January twenty-two, of 1967. On that day the people marching on the streets of Managua confronted the National Guard calling for a revolt against Somoza Debayle. On that day many people were killed and wounded (Millett, 1977). In a similar way, on September 1978, there were uprisings in the important cities of León, Estelí, Masaya and Chinandega (Christian, 1987). In that same year, in the indigenous barrio
of Monimbó, a suburb in Masaya with 20,000 inhabitants, there was a popular uprising. There, these people demonstrated heroic resistance against the National Guard, thus becoming the people of Monimbó a symbol of the resistance against the tyrant. All these events contributed to the people's aversion to the dictator.

Additionally, the repression exercised by the National Guard followed Somoza Debayle's orders, and used such euphemisms as the "cleanup operation," and the elimination of "suspects," that is, shooting any one who seemed to be a Sandinista sympathizer (Millett, 1988, p. 117), specially young people. Also, there was the indiscriminate bombing of various cities exercised by the National Guard during the insurrection. For this, the National Guard was called "the genocide." The actions taken by Somoza Debayle upon Nicaraguans were practices of power which might be called the "rituals of power" taking place at certain sites (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 110), which in this case were the cities where the civil war was going on. All of these events made people repudiate the tyrant even more.

Foucault's statement that "power makes men mad, and those who govern are blind" (in Brochier, 1980, p. 50) applies to General Somoza Debayle's resistance to leave the presidential post. His desire to remain in power had made the dictator lose sight of what was going on around him.

Besides, the fourth Somoza, Major Guard Anastasio Somoza Portocarrero, Somoza Debayle's son, had created his own army, an elite battalion of infantry, the EBI. It seemed as though he was going to continue the Somoza dynasty. At that time, there was only one thought in the minds of Nicaraguans, Somoza must leave. The people were decided to
support any one who would fight Somoza Debayle; this was a situation which favored the
Marxist-oriented Sandinistas in their fight against the dictator.

On January ten, 1978, another event aroused the fury of the people: Dr. Pedro Joaquín
Chamorro, a courageous journalist was murdered while driving along Trebol street in old
Managua. Chamorro was noted for his eloquent outspoken articles opposing the cruelty of
Somoza and the general political state of the country. The death of the dictator’s adversary
was nonetheless the spark which initiated the fire in the city of Managua. The people went out
into the streets of Managua that day, demanding justice, and the end of the dictatorship. This
set the stage for the civil war. That day, people attacked banks, factories, and trucks, buses
and cars were set on fire. From that time general strikes and riots broke out throughout the
country. However, this political crime remains unsolved. Although officially unsolved,
Chamorro’s death has been attributed to the FSLN (Taboada Terán, 1994).

Furthermore, groups within the Catholic Church began a very active movement
against the dictator. These were grass-roots organizations that joined the Sandinista Front
in the aim to overthrow Somoza such as, the movement of radical Christians. This
alliance, Chow (1992) states, was significant in the Sandinista movement, because it
added a new vitality to the Front. This association, Chow adds, was essential to the
Sandinistas, because of their need for secure homes in which to hide and meet, cars to
transport weapons, as well as the organized support of people in the barrios. Another
advantage was the legitimacy the Sandinistas won in the eyes of Nicaraguans with this
alliance motivated by religious reasons.
However, after the triumph in 1979, the FSLN began a campaign of persecution specially against the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations because they were not in agreement with the implementation of Marxist-Leninist ideas in Nicaragua. Bombs were thrown in Catholic churches, and a campaign to discredit Catholic priests was exercised by the Sandinista government.

The Catholic church was on the side of the people. The Archbishop of Managua, later Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, was a supporter of the Sandinistas all during the 1970's before the insurrection. He was also a critic of Somoza Debayle's corrupted government as it was stated in the Pastoral Letter, "Rulers who Know How to Rule and who are Interested in their People." Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo had directed the negotiations during the National Palace Christmas raid executed by the Sandinistas before the insurrection. Chow (1991) observes Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo had been chosen by the Sandinistas to mediate between them and Somoza many times.

Another event against Somoza Debayle happened in 1976 when Jimmy Carter, a defender of Human Rights, was elected President of the United States. At that time, President Carter began to question Somoza Debayle on his violation of Human Rights. The Carter administration in 1978 gave support to groups opposed to the Nicaraguan dictator (Newsweek, November 8, 1982).

Two more events demonstrated that the Sandinista guerrilla war against Somoza has intensified. A Christmas raid, on December twenty-seven, 1974, executed by the Sandinista unit Juan Jose Quezada reestablished them. Joaquin Cuadra Lacayo, who is now chief of the Nicaraguan army, was one of the leftist guerrillas. The raiders seized the house of the
politician José María Castillo (Chema) while he was giving a party in his home in Managua, honoring the American Ambassador Turner B. Shelton. The Sandinistas took the guests as hostage and the host Castillo was killed. The leftist guerrillas requested the liberation of fourteen imprisoned Sandinistas, the publication of two FSLN communiqués, to raise the National Guard salaries, a flight to Cuba, and $10,000,000. Among the fourteen prisoners were the brothers Daniel and Humberto Ortega Saavedra. Later, the first one became the President of Nicaragua during the Sandinista rule.

Another major event that gave the Sandinistas force and publicity occurred on August twenty-two, 1978. Twenty-five clandestine guerrilla raiders, dressed as national guards, invaded the National Palace in Managua when the National Assembly was in session and they took the deputies hostages. Years later, in a broadcast report in Managua, 1996, Canal 2, Eden Pastora, Commander Zero of the terrorist attack to the National Palace commenting on the assault said, we were in “the kitchen of the tyrant” and captured 2,000 hostages. Most of them were members of the Chamber of Deputies. At that time, fourteen people died. This was true, because there, at the chamber of deputies, the congress was in full session, and it was in the assembly where all the laws designed to support Somoza Debayle were passed. Once in command the Sandinistas stated their conditions. They wanted the releases of political prisoners, among them was Tomás Borge who during the Sandinista regime became the powerful Interior Minister; an airplane from either of the following countries, Venezuela, México, or Panamá to escort them; to broadcast a Sandinista communiqué; and U.S. $10 millions. This was a direct attack to Somoza Debayle. Not having any alternative the dictator negotiated and paid the guerrillas U.S. $500,000. A Venezuelan airplane took them to
Panamá and then went on to Cuba. The Sandinistas with faces hidden with the red and black scarves, waving victory signals with their rifles, left the National Palace and Nicaragua with the released prisoners. People along the streets on route to the airport in Managua were cheering, “commander Zero” and his men, and shouting “down with the Somoza regime.” The people were for the Sandinistas screaming, “Somoza to the Gallows” (Millett, 1988, p. 116). Then, the people of Nicaragua were determined to end the Somozas’ long dictatorial government even if that meant going into a civil war. Early in the revolution Eden Pastora left the FSLN because of the Cuban involvement in the revolutionary process. For this reason, he became a counterrevolutionary.

It was on June 1979, when the final assault through a national insurrection against Somoza Debayle began. Venezuela quit selling petroleum, and the U.S. arms supply to Nicaragua was cut off. Time Magazine reported Cuba, Venezuela, Panamá and Costa Rica were supporting the insurrection (July 16, 1979). Even the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was sending arms supply to the Sandinistas during the insurrection (July 23, 1979).

Anastasio Somoza Debayle’s government was overthrown by the people of Nicaragua, the Sandinistas, international pressure, and the U.S. On July twenty-two, after Somoza’s departure, Ambassador Lawrence Pezzullo said, “our role was to get Somoza out, and we did it.” Additionally, the U.S. had stopped a ship with arms coming from Israel to help Somoza, then, an army without ammunitions could no longer fight (Somoza & Cox, 1980, p. 420). In this way, Somoza was forced to go into exile leaving Nicaragua forever, thus ending one of the oldest dictatorial governments in Latin America. He left his concrete bunker in the fortress
of La Loma, in Managua after complicated negotiations forced him to resign. First, he went to Florida in the United States of America, because his wife Hope Portocarrero was an American citizen. Later, he went to live in Asunción, Paraguay, where President Alfredo Stroessner offered him hospitality. There, on September seventeen of 1980 (Christian 1987, p. 185) in an intersection, in Asunción, a revolutionary command fired straight at his car, and the car along with the bodies were completely destroyed. According to the Sandinistas, this was not a murder, but the mere application of justice. One of the guerrillas who assassinated Somoza Debayle was given a farm as a reward, and lives today in Jinotepe, in Carazo, Nicaragua. In relation to Somoza Debayle’s death, Sofonías Cisneros Leiva when he was in prison in Managua, he was told by commander Lenin Cerna, head of the Sandinista State Security, we can get you anywhere, you saw how we liquidated Somoza (Permanent Commission on Human Rights. 1986). Cisneros Leiva, President of the Nicaraguan Christian Schools at that time was in prison because he opposed to the Sandinista’s new education. Years later, in a television broadcast in Managua, in 1999, Lenin Cerna declared, it was the State Security that planned Somoza Debayle’s execution, it was the extended arm of the people applying justice who killed Somoza.

Somoza Debayle’s death marks the end of an era in Nicaraguan history, the Somoza dynasty. That was a happy day for the Sandinistas. In Managua members of the FSLN went to the streets to celebrate Somoza Debayle’s death. At the Ministry of Culture there were cheers and fireworks. Finally, the “last Marine” was gone (Time, September 25, 1978). Perhaps, a serious pressure to Somoza Debayle requesting his resignation might have allowed a peaceful transition of government and avoided the tragedy of the civil war, but the lack of
negotiations left Nicaragua's fate "to an armed showdown between the Guard and the FSLN, whose patron saint was Fidel Castro" (Millett, 1988, p. 117).

On July, 1979, the victory of the people of Nicaragua ended a regime which had endured for over forty years. Gonzalez (1990), a member of the "Socialist Workers Party in Britain" writes: "it had been a mass, popular revolution... Fifty thousand Nicaraguans died in the struggle to remove Anastasio Somoza Debayle... the masses in insurrection seized... command step by step and the FSLN (Sandinista Front for National Liberation) seized state power at the head of a mass insurrectionary movement" (pp. 10-12-23).

Over forty years the Somozas had developed "strategies of domination... [in an] endlessly repeated play of dominations" (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, pp. 109-110). In Foucault's (1983) words:

... [exercising] power as a mode of action
upon the actions of others,... actions
by the government of men by other men...
a total structure of actions... [structuring]
the possible field of action of others (pp. 220-221).

Which, in this case, were the exercise of actions against the people who opposed them.

The National Guard: Somozas' Instrument to Exercise Power.

It is impossible to describe the Somoza dynasty without mentioning the support it received from the National Guard of Nicaragua. Applying Foucault's (1983) concepts to the National Guard, this entity became the Somozas':

strategy... put into operation to implement
power effectively [and]... to maintain it... [they were] the means employed to attain certain [ends];... they were the mechanisms put into operation... [by the Somozas]... to ensure
its own preservation (pp. 222-224-225).

The National Guard, the one that Somoza García was going to inherit was created as a non-political body, a non partisan constabulary in 1927 under a treaty ratified on December 22 of that year by the government of Nicaragua and the United States (El Centroamericano, no date). Colonel Elias R. Beadle was appointed Director of the National Guard of Nicaragua, with the rank of Brigadier General (Millett, 1977, p. 61). The National Guard, which was trained by U.S. Marines, had “the function of preserving law and order throughout the country, to be organized under the instruction and so far as possible, the direction and command of American officers now in active service and detailed to this duty by the President of the United States” (Millett, 1977, p. 64). A military group, an army, which began with no more than 2.000 men (Matagalpa, 1984, p. 76) which later on, increased to 7.000, (Rizo, 1987, p. 198) and during the insurrection in 1979 to 12.000 men (Time, June 25, 1979). Later on, when the Sandinistas seized power there was a period when the FSLN had more than 100.000 soldiers in Nicaragua (Romero, 1991). The Sandinista popular army (EPS) became the largest armed force in the region. Taboada Terán (1994) comments on this formidable force made up of workers and peasants to defend the revolution, this in a poor country of only 3.5 million people. These government’s forces like the Interior Ministry’s police became in revolutionary rhetoric “Sentinels of Happiness.” At the entrance of the Ministry of the Interior there was a large sign which read, “Sentinels of the People’s Happiness.” By 1987, the security police of this Ministry had a large number of political prisoners in custody (Krauss, 1988). Ironically, by 1982, the Sandinistas were called by the people of Nicaragua, in slang, “piri” short for piricuaco; the sentinels of happiness became the enemies of the people. During the two
dictatorial governments, the Somozas and the Sandinistas, the army had become a
“mechanism of repression” (Foucault, 1980, p. 90).

The National guard was created not for partisan purposes, but to maintain peace throughout the land, and defend constitutional order. This army was converted by Anastasio Somoza Garcia into a personal army, a praetorian army, an instrument to obtain political power, thus becoming the Somozas’ “apparatus of power” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 189). Although, the army was created to maintain peace in the land, the Somozas corrupted this institution by giving the officers control over gambling and other illegal activities. They became in Millett’s (1977), words, “Guardians of the Dynasty.” that is, the foundation of the Somozas’ power. The National Guard became a mechanism of power exercising power “by the threat of arms,” (Foucault, 1983, p. 223) prison, persecution and repression instead of “a form of power innocent of all coercion... (p. 59) [or control] that reduces to silence’” (Fontana & Pasquino, 1984, p. 59-60).

In Nicaragua, repression towards the people was exercised first by the Somoza army and later by the Sandinista Popular Army. A “system of differentiations” could not be established (Foucault, 1983, p. 223) between the Somozas’ army and the armed forces of the Sandinistas, since both institutions were loyal to their respective political parties.

Just, as Somoza Debayle did, in the 1970’s, in the 1980’s, the Sandinistas used the army for their own political benefit. The Sandinistas built an army which made Dr. Emilio Alvarez Montalvan write, “who will defend us from our custodians?” (Serrano Caldera, 1995). The Sandinistas formed an army which in the same manner as Somoza’s National Guard, came to be the patrimony of a political party. Hence, converting the army into a feudal
club, where Sandinista officers were loyal only to the Sandinista Party. Moreover, the Sandinista Party allowed the army to seize private enterprises converting them in patrimony of the army, thus legalizing theft (Navarrete, 1994) and corruption.

On July nineteen, 1979, at the end of the insurrection when the rebel groups seized the capital, Managua, then, the remnants of the Somozas National Guard run away in panic and throwing away their uniforms, trying to find a safe place to hide from the armed guerrillas. Approximately 3,000 guardsmen were locked up in the Modelo Prison at Tipitapa (Time, September 3, 1979) a small city close to Managua, while other officers were running to the nearest embassy seeking protection and asylum. Christian (1987) narrates 6,000 people were in prisons between National Guards and his collaborators and mercenaries. Somoza, before leaving, had placed his high-ranking officers on the retirement list allowing them to seek refuge in the U.S. or elsewhere in Latin America. It had been promised to Somoza during the negotiations between the rebel Junta and U.S. Ambassador William Bowdler that the National Guard was to remain (Somoza & Cox, 1980, p. 330). That the remnants of the 12,000 thousand guards were to be incorporated into a new armed force, and that they would not be imprisoned or executed by the next government (Time, July 23, 1979), but the promise was broken. On June eighteen, 1979, as the victors were entering Managua, and the new government was organized, the National Guard succumbed, abandoned by the leader they had supported for so long. With the disintegration of the National Guard, “one cruel... era in Nicaraguan history had ended, another was about to begin” (Millett, 1988, p. 118). Taboada Terán (1994) relates that perhaps 1,500 ex-National Guards began a resistance to Sandinista
power in the mountains as the Fifteen of September Legion. This resistance later became the Nicaraguan Resistance (RN).

The corruption of the National Guard is an undeniable fact, but it is also true that within that corruption there were honest guards and officers. Just to name a few, Colonel Jorge Granera, Colonel Pedro Nolasco Romero, José Angel Rodriguez, Abelardo Cuadra Delgado, Captain Gilberto Peralta, Captain Esteban McEwan, Colonel José S. Gallardo, General Benjamin Guerra, and many more who did serve their country, and not merely a particular political party.

The Somozas’ ambition and their quest and transgression of power over forty years were the main cause of the people’s discontentment, and the insurrection was the effect of that dissatisfaction. Somoza Debayle spoke of saving Nicaragua from communism; in fact, he was doing that, but at the same time he was using the country for his own benefit. Although, during his government there was prosperity in the country. During the decade of the 1970’s Nicaragua became basic grain supplier in the Central American Isthmus (Campos Melendez, 1972). Until 1979, Taboada Terán (1994) states, Nicaragua was the leading producer of basic crops in Central America and this production were in the hands of small farmers.

The Somoza government was one more event in the history of Nicaragua. Somoza thought of power “as a sort of great absolute,” (Borreil et al, 1980, p. 140), and the people of Nicaragua chose to resist this through an insurrection. The resistance to Somoza was exercised in the form of a guerrilla struggle. It was a struggle against Somozas’s forms “of domination; . . . forms of exploitation . . . forms of submission.”
Foucault, 1983, p. 212). However, the Sandinistas promises of reform and new policies, turned out to be merely new forms of domination.

The next chapter examines the consequences of the Somozas' ambition, the insurrection of the people of Nicaragua, and as a result of this, the Sandinista party coming to power. This political party was responsible for the social transformation that changed Nicaragua's structures including general education and the arts.
CHAPTER 5

THE INSURRECTION AND THE SANDINISTAS

The cause for the curricular transformation in 1979 in Nicaragua was the need of the Sandinistas to reeducate young people with Marxist-Leninists values in order to build a new society to support the revolution. In view that the Sandinistas implemented the values that were going to direct children's education, it is necessary to explain the political context around which education evolved. In schools, Sandino was portrayed as the hero children should imitate. Discussions that related Sandino as the General of Free Men (Selser, 1981) were held in classrooms. The government believed that the war events from the insurrection were rich experiences children would transform into scientific knowledge. How did the Sandinistas gain the power to transform the educational system and the arts within it? How was the insurrection transformed into the revolution which changed the whole nation's structures including education and the arts? Who was Sandino? Who were the Sandinistas? This is the discourse of this chapter.

Augusto César Sandino

It is important to describe Augusto César Sandino, since he was made a symbol of freedom and a national hero during the revolutionary period. The Sandinistas called themselves the “Sandino’s Children” (Matagalpa 1984, p. 198); naming their political party
after him; and assimilating his views on anti-imperialism, national dignity, sovereignty, and commitment to the peasants and workers (Barry, 1991).

Matagalpa (1984) recalls Sandino as a nationalist and a rebel, who fought to defend the Nicaraguan sovereignty from the Yankee intervention in 1912. Sandino did not agree with the peace treaty signed in Tipitapa in 1927, and formed an army of peasants and workers called “the small crazy army” (Selser, 1981), and he became a rebel fighting the powerful Yankees for an independent Nicaragua. However, during the making of the peace treaty signed in Managua six years later, on February second, 1933, Sandino proposed to “divide Nicaragua” pretending to create another state where he would control all the provinces North of Nicaragua (Matagalpa, 1984, pp. 187-205).

One of Sandino’s political strategy was the use of misinformation. He made up stories of battles where thousands of Yankees died, but another was the true reality of the matter. The majority of those who died at war were country people whose deaths were in the hands of Sandinos’ Generals, Pedrón Altamirano and the Honduran Juán Pablo Umanzor. Later on, misinformation was also a strategy used by the Sandinistas who would become his followers.

Sandino’s fighting strategy was the guerrilla warfare. This strategy consisted of surprising the enemy, attacking rapidly then disappearing and most important, never staying in the same place for too long. This allowed them to avoid being spotted. His headquarters were established in the Segovia mountains. one of them was El Chipote, known as a ghost quarter, since he and his troops were always in motion staying in different places. In 1979, the Sandinistas, in order to honor Sandino, named one of their many prisons, El Chipote.

Some young boys belonged to the war troop, Pedrón referred to them as “the Choir of Angels’ Brigade” (Matagalpa, 1984, p. 218). Borge, (1980) explains that the Choir of Angels...
was a specialized unit of combat, they were sweet-violent children with expertise in various military tactics and objects. In Rizo’s (1987) account Sandino called them “the boys” (los muchachos). In a similar way, during the insurrection in 1979, the Sandinistas were also referred to as “the boys.”

In order to support his army, Sandino forced wealthy farmers to help in his war by providing food for his troops, and if they denied this forced request Sandino threatened them with the destruction of their properties.

Matagalpa (1984), further states that with the slogan “Patria and Libertad” (Fatherland and Freedom) a legend was built around Sandino, whom believed that “power is reached through force and bullets” (p. 157). Sandino’s legend was later exploited by the Sandinistas. Sandino’s original slogan they changed to “Free Fatherland or Die.” Also they adopted as their symbol Sandino’s red and black flag, as well as the black scarf which Sandino according to Rizo (1987), had always tied around his neck. For this doing, the insurrection was also known as the “revolution of the scarves” (Time, September 25, 1978).

During his anti-imperialist war, Sandino created an environment of repression and terror as he set fire to the homes of country people some even with the families still inside. On occasions he was also known to resort to the age-old method of assassination by hanging. Matagalpa notes, all this was verified with his seal, designed with his picture cutting a prisoner’s head, and “authenticated with his signature” (p. 207). Rizo (1987) comments, during six years a terrible battle was waged, a fight of raids and ambushes where innocent young North American and Nicaraguan boys died.

Whether right or wrong, Augusto César Sandino fought for a cause he believed in. Sandino’s political murder was executed by Anastasio Somoza García’s orders, on the night
of February twenty-one, 1934. Sandino had led guerrilla troops who murdered in the name of Nicaragua’s national sovereignty. Can such a person be called a hero? His acts, Rizo (1987) comments, were considered the acts of a bandit by most Nicaraguans.

Somoza’s decision to murder a man who had become a hero, and had developed a legend as a nationalist and idealist by making people believe that he was defending the sovereignty of Spanish America was a mistake. More treacherous was the way Somoza García’s orders were carried out, after a settlement had already been signed between Sandino and President Juan Bautista Sacasa. Matagalpa (1984) mentions Sandino was taken prisoner when he was coming from the presidential palace where he had just had dinner with President Sacasa. President Sacasa’s daughter watched as Sandino was taken away and arrested. She notified her father, had he acted, perhaps, Sandino’s death would have been prevented. In Rizo’s (1987) memoirs, Somoza assumed the responsibility for the crime.

Ernesto Cardenal wrote a poem about Sandino’s death as it was described after his assassination when he and two of his officers were put to death in the airfield of Managua:

Four prisoners are digging a hole.
“Who’s dead?” Asked one prisoner.
“Nobody”, said the guard.
“Then what’s the hole for?”
“None of your business”, said the guard,
“Go on digging.”

When the Sandinistas seized power in 1979, archeological excavations were made to find Sandino’s grave, but so many years had passed that no one could remember the site where he had been buried.

In Foucault’s terms, Sandino developed:

a whole cluster of practices and knowledges (Pasquino, 1991, p. 116), practices [with their own brand] of regularities, logic, strategy,
self-evidence and ‘reason’ (Foucault, 1991, p. 75).

[Power was exercised by Sandino as] the action of men upon other men... by the government of men by other men... [thus, exercising]... power as a mode of action upon the actions of others (Foucault, 1983, pp. 218-221).

Sandino’s idea was to reach popular power, and to impose his values. Sandino’s death leads into the Sandinista era where his successors children, the Sandinistas, were to continue his fight for an “independent and sovereign Nicaragua.”

Who were the Sandinistas?

On July, 1961, in Tegucigalpa, on the banks of the Patuca river in Honduras, the Sandinista movement was founded, according to Borge (1980), in the presence of Carlos Fonseca, Silvio Mayorga, Noel Guerrero and Tomás Borge. In poetic narration, Borge recalls the first meetings were under the shadow of birds, “jocotes” (a tropical fruit) and orange trees. They were motivated by the oppressive regime of Somoza Debayle. Then, the Sandinista doctrine, a mixture of Sandino’s nationalism and Marxist-Leninist ideas, was originated. In that epoch, an idea that Sandino was the only road to follow began to take shape among the Sandinistas, and the Ideario Sandinista was written by Fonseca (1979). Likewise, it was Fonseca’s idea to name the movement after Augusto César Sandino (Christian, 1987, p. 34) recognizing the mythic power of Sandino in the Nicaraguan national consciousness.

Borge defined the Sandinista National Front for Liberation’s ideals in a very utopian manner: As the unity of oppressed, workers and countrymen, internationalists, anti-imperialists, the pure and the honest (in Taboada Terán, 1994).
In 1969 the Sandinistas put together their governmental platform or “programme,” what they called their “Historic Program.” The document, reprinted in June of 1981 basically states:

The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) began out of the Nicaraguan people’s necessity to have a vanguard organization who would establish a social system that will wipe out the exploitation and poverty of the Nicaraguan people. The FSLN as a politico-military organization wants to take political power by destroying Somozas’s dictatorial government and to establish a revolutionary government based on worker-peasant alliance and in the convergence of all the patriotic anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic forces of the country, since the present regime is unpopular and illegal. The people of Nicaragua suffer the status of a neo-colony exploited by the Yankee monopolies and the country’s oligarchic groups. The FSLN with great responsibility has decided to confront the dictatorship with arms and prolonged people’s war. Whatever maneuvers Yankee imperialism deploys, the Somoza dictator is condemned to total failure in the face of the rapid advance and development of the people’s forces headed by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (Marcus, 1982, pp.13-14).

In this program, the Sandinistas explained their objectives concerning the new type of government they were going to establish in Nicaragua. They believed socialism was the answer to Nicaragua’s social problems. They offered to create a free, prosperous, and revolutionary homeland which was to have among other benefits, a revolutionary government founded on an agrarian revolution, a revolution in culture and education, honest administration, international solidarity, the establishment of the people’s army (EPS), and martyrs’ veneration, that is, the people who had given their lives for the revolution’s ideals (Marcus, 1982, p. 22). The administrative honesty was soon forgotten as Sandinistas began the expropriations of land, homes and businesses done, in the name of the people, but for their own benefit.
The “Historic Program” using a Foucaultian expression had “silently intended meanings... [and] contents”... [that it concealed] (Burchell, Gordon & Miller, 1991, p. 60). Meanings that were not said, but were evident in their actions when the FSLN seized power.

Since the beginning of the organization’s establishment, the FSLN participated in different socialist organizations in the National University of León, as they began to partake in revolts against Somoza. In 1962, Coronel Santos López who was a part of Sandino’s Choir of Angels was integrated into the FSLN, and other recruits soon followed.

In the quest for supporters, the Sandinistas visited poor neighborhoods, as they carried out clandestine political work talking to people and convincing them of a desperate need for a change, of a need to make a social transformations in which corruption, violence, and exploitation would cease to exist. Once the Sandinistas seized power, all promises were forgotten, and a regime of repression was established by those who had promised as Taboada Terán (1994) mentions, “rivers of milk and honey” (p. 41).

From 1961, Borge (1980) writes, the Sandinistas organized guerrilla units among the proletariat in marginal neighborhoods. At the same time, bank robberies were carried out to collect money for the guerrillas, and strikes were organized to destabilize Somoza Debayle’s government. Country people were instructed in revolutionary techniques, and literacy schools began in the mountains where clandestine groups were formed. In the same manner, young boys and girls were taught to use machine guns, carbine M1, and 45 caliber pistols. By 1969 the Sandinistas’ consign was to organize urban guerrillas all over the country.

The guerrilla warfare was repressed by the National Guard during the 1960’s. On November eight, 1976 Carlos Fonseca Amador founder, principal ideologist and FSLN’s General Secretary was killed by the National Guard (Christian, 1987) (Borge, 1980).
However, Taboada Terán (1994) mentions that Fonseca’s death has been attributed to one of the factions of the FSLN.

During the 1960’s Sandinistas were being trained in Cuba, Costa Rica and North Korea (Millett, 1988), and by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) (Chow, 1992). They also had connections with the radical organization Al Fatah since the 1970’s (Taboada Terán, 1994).

In 1979, the Sandinistas became a political force, as the FSLN National Directorate (ND) was created. Romero (1991) relates it was formed on March seven, 1979 with nine members, three from each of the Sandinistas tendencies; the GPP which believed in a popular prolonged war, FSLN-P Proletariat Marxist-Leninist oriented, and FSLN-T Terceristas who sustained the need for an insurrection. Taboada Terán (1994) observes that the National Directorate was formed along the same lines as the Soviet Politburo exercising absolute power, and it was the most important organ for the FSLN. As the FSLN became a political force supported by the people of Nicaragua, the insurrection movement against Somoza Debayle began to take shape.

The Insurrection

During the first months of 1979 the rebels attacked the South border. It was on June 1979, early Winter in Nicaragua, when the FSLN announced a general strike, which became the final offensive that pushed the country into complete chaos. Figure. 25, shows the guerrillas getting ready to attack. Time Magazine described Managua as paralyzed by the general strike (June 25, 1979). The people, urged by the Sandinistas, had stockpiled food, medical supplies and water. As the final offensive began in Managua, Somoza Debayle’s
National Guard fought the Sandinistas and their allies. Among them were youngsters, urban teenagers, popularly known as “los muchachos,” who were fighting against the National Guard, as the rest of the people behind barricades out of street paving stones and sacks of sand. As Millett (1988) comments, the rebel forces claimed to have only between “3,000 and 5,000” guerrillas (pp. 117-118).

The event that gave international support to the insurrection was the murder in Managua of ABC correspondent, Bill Stewart. The same day, millions of people saw the image of the newspaper man projected on their television screens. He laid on the ground, after he was shot by an unknown soldier on a street in Northeast Managua, at the heart of the fighting when he approached a National Guard post on foot. On that day, Sandinistas gained international support.

The fighting was not only concentrated in Managua, but in various cities at the same time. Newspaper correspondents were taking photographs and sending messages during the war days. In Managua, the Intercontinental Hotel became an international lodge for newspaper men from all over the world covering the civil war in Nicaragua. Somoza Debayle’s days as president were counted. By July five, the rebel troops had encircled Managua, victory was in sight and the capital could be taken at any moment, for towns and cities were in the hands of the rebels.

It was on a calid afternoon on June when the insurrection broke out in Managua. “The boys”, or guerrillas as they were referred to, had their faces covered with red and black scarves in order to avoid identification by anyone. Figure 26 portrays the rebels in a neighborhood of the capital waiting for the enemy, who was Somoza’s National Guard. Mercenaries were conducting killing raids and guerrillas forced themselves into the homes of Nicaraguans where
they killed without remorse. The terror, looting and bombing in Managua forced people to flee from the city.

On July twelve, 1979 the Organization of American States (OAS) in its seventeen meeting in Washington, agreed to replace the Somoza regime (Romero, 1991). By July fourteen, Christian (1987) comments, a five “Junta” member which was going to be the Government of National Reconstruction (JGRN) was formed, while negotiations were made for Somoza’s departure. On July nineteen the rebel troops entered Managua. The insurrection was over at a cost of thousands of deaths and huge material losses. The Red Cross estimates 10,000 people were killed, of those, 90% were noncombatant. People will always remember the thousands of victims left either dead or wounded from this civil bloody war.

On July twenty, 1979, the five members of the Government of National Reconstruction, Alfonso Robelo, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro who were conservatives, and three Sandinistas, Moises Hassan, Daniel Ortega Saavedra and Sergio Ramirez Mercado entered Managua. The Sandinistas decided that the government would respond to the Sandinista National Directorate, as well as the army and the police. The Sandinista Popular Army and the police became supporters of the Sandinista regime, facilitating revolutionary action, the same way the National Guard had supported the Somozas. From then on, the life of Nicaraguans changed, as Sandinista power began to be exercised by the FSLN Directorate. Nicaragua became a state with a centralized government, and Nicaraguan's life became politicized around the “Sandinista Revolution” as the Sandinistas began to call the insurrection of the people of Nicaragua. For Nicaraguans, the next ten years to follow after the insurrection, in Foucault’s terms:

the rhythm of transformation... [would not] follow the smooth, continuist schemas of development which...
After the Insurrection

As the war ended, tired rebel troops in rags and berets entered Managua. The people cried and shouted war is over! celebrating the victory of a popular insurrection among red and black flags. The insurrection that began as a nation wide struggle against Somoza Debayle was transformed by the FSLN into a social class struggle under the name of the Sandinista Popular Revolution. The Sandinistas, Taboada Terán (1994) relates, declared themselves the vanguard of the people, and “the party vanguard which is a “Leninist organizational concept” (p. 46). As the party vanguard of the people, they were going to lead the Sandinista movement. This is the same propaganda that Benton (1958) observed in Russia where the “party” was the vanguard of the working class, and the teaching force directing the new society (p. 28).

Christian (1987) writes, nobody knew what the real function of the nine commanders of the FSLN National Directorate was in the new government. But, they appeared everywhere making statements in regard to the FSLN. Daniel Ortega stated, the FSLN is a political organization and it is going to stay until the “Historic Program” is completed. Tomás Borge, the new Interior Minister said, the Sandinistas are the solution to all of the Nicaragua’s problems. In those days, in Nicaragua almost everyone considered themselves a Sandinista. The revolutionary slogan at that time was, “Nicaraguan History begins with the Sandinista Front” (Cuadra, 1985, p. 32).
The FSLN announced they were going to intervene in the government’s decisions any time they considered it necessary. On August, a month later, Humberto Ortega Saavedra was appointed commander in chief of the army. By the end of 1979, the nine commanders had key positions in the government, and developed a document in relation to the situation and the tasks of the revolution. Migdail (1980) noted, “the atmosphere in Managua was reminiscent of Havana during the early days of Fidel Castro’s revolution’ (March, 1980 p. 38). Confusion was everywhere, and the commanders continued with their propaganda using Marxist-Leninist rhetoric.

As the new regime was becoming more organized, Tomás Borge, one of the founders of the FSLN, became its spokesman. He stated, “we are not interested in the criteria of the Yankee imperialists... [Help is] useful, only if it comes without conditions. Because we accept conditions from no one.” This statement left everyone wondering about the Sandinistas’ intentions (Time, August 6, 1979). Besides, the antagonistic attitude towards North Americans, Sandinistas’ external politics supported the fight against Imperialism in general. This was reflected in the assistance to the guerrilla movement in El Salvador which had training camps and headquarters in Nicaragua. The international left and other Marxists groups in the Soviet orbit were favored also. Nicaragua became for internationalists like the Salvadoran guerrillas, a favorite place to live, and many confiscated homes became the internationalist’s headquarters.

The FSLN was creating its own political organization, Novedades, the former government newspaper became the official FSLN newspaper. It was named Barricada after the barricades put up by the people during the insurrection. The homes of the Somoza Debayle brothers became the headquarters of the Sandinista party, and the Ministry of Culture
respectively. With government money they bought a house for the secretariat of the National FSLN Directorate.

At that time the Sandinistas began the implementation of their policies, which included the imposition of socialist ideas upon Nicaraguans. The state became a centralized one with complete control of the army, the press, education and the economy, as well as banks, foreign trade, and mines. Land was confiscated not only from Somoza and his associates, but also from those who were not in agreement with the Sandinistas’ aims. The concept of “property of the people” (APP) was established, and Sandinista officials began to ride in cars marked “property of the people.” Nicaragua became a country of decrees designed to serve the FSLN. Power was exercised in the same manner as it was done during the Somoza regime. It was the Sandinistas’ turn to exploit Nicaragua and its people, through the use of:

- techniques and tactics of domination (Foucault, 1980, p. 102).
- [The government exercised power] as an instance of repression, violence and coercion, eminently represented in the state with its ‘bodies of armed men’ (Gordon, 1980, pp. 234-235).
- [The Sandinistas’] mechanisms put into operation... [were] designed to ensure its own preservation [establishing the conditions [needed] to transform... or abolish (Foucault, 1983, p. 222-223)
- [the cultural practices of the Nicaraguan society].

**Sandinistas Organizations**

Besides, the Sandinista Popular Army, the police, and the popular militias, the FSLN created net organizations based on Leninists concepts, such as the Sandinista Base Committee (CBS). Taboada Terán (1994) refers to this Base Committee as a fundamental organization for the Front since they were the link to the masses and even to state entities. The Sandinista
Defense Committees (CDS), "the eyes and the ears of the revolution," were as Christian (1987) puts it, "the roots of popular power" (p. 132) conducting permanent vigilance throughout the country. First, CDS were established as Committees of Civil Defense (CDC), base organizations that later became CDS. They were established along the lines of the committees for revolutionary defense (CDR) created by Fidel Castro in the late 1950's in Cuba to exercise revolutionary vigilance among the people. In Foucault's (1980) view, they could be called, "the eye of power" (p. 146), because of the "surveillance" (p. 155), which was exercised in such a way that each individual became everyone else's overseer, exercising this "surveillance" against himself/ herself in a continuous exercise of power (p. 155). The Sandinista government established in Foucault (1980) words:

a network through which... [power] freely circulates... [with] their own trajectory, their own techniques and tactics... and continue to be... utilized, involuted transformed, displaced, extended... by forms of global domination (p. 99).

Mass organizations were another web like organization serving numerous functions of crucial importance in the Sandinista government. Mass organizations, Gonzalez (1990) explains, have been called "instruments of socialist democracy,... [and] organs of popular power" (p. 60). In Nicaragua, they were organized after the 1979 Sandinista victory, and they were led by its vanguard, the Sandinista National Front. Lenin defined masses as the majority of exploited people (Uribes, 1977, p. 126). Mass organizations Armove (1986) comments, are the mechanisms transmitting the political directions proposed by the FSLN. Walker (1991) explains their functions which included revolutionary vigilance, political socialization and the mobilization of the enthusiastic voluntary participation of hundreds of thousands of
Nicaraguans for cultural activities and other programs, such as the student’s “voluntary work” to increase the nation’s economic production. The Sandinista Workers Central (CST), which is a labor union, was affiliated with the Communist Labor International. Muravchik (1986) points out that in their assembly in 1985, the CST declared: “power is in the hands of the workers;” in addition, “a party-to-party accord” was signed between the USSR communist party and the Front (pp. 7-17).

After the victory, peasants were urged to occupy plantations previously owned by wealthy farmers, and to join the peasant-owned agricultural collectives established on the country’s best farm land expropriated from Somoza and his cronies, or to anyone considered unfriendly to the Sandinista party. This was done through mass organizations which became instruments of popular power controlled by the FSLN. The Sandinistas are gone, but the issues concerning the land properties is one of the biggest problems left by them in Nicaragua. The land, they said, is for those who work it. In regard to mass organizations, Gilbert (1985) comments on the views of Nicaraguans who considered these government’s organizations too “powerful...[and] dangerous” (p. 178), because they were aggressively and forcefully seizing urban and rural enterprises. These mobs were known in Nicaragua as “turbas,” whose functions, among others, were to attack and terrorize opponents of the FSLN by destroying their homes and property. For instance, “the turbas” used the slogan “to recover the people’s property” which meant going into a home factory or farm at any time and seizing and grabbing anything they pleased. This made believe slogan, was a cover up for their true intentions. Any one wearing a uniform could search a home or an automobile at any given time. A friend recalls how frightened she was to leave her home, because she feared that on her return, she could find posted on her front door, the yellow paper that would read
confiscated (personal communication, Managua, 1996). Still after the Sandinistas’ defeat, mass organizations continued promoting picket lines and boycotts, sit-ins, and hunger strikes to defend the “popular interests” of the revolutionary government.

All these mass organizations were the Sandinista state apparatus. In Foucault’s (1980) words, it was necessary:

for the revolution to keep going, a revolutionary state apparatus . . . derived from the masses of the people . . .

[They were] mechanisms of power, [which] at a given moment, in a precise conjuncture and by means of a certain number of transformations . . . become . . . politically useful (pp. 10-26-101).

The masses become educated in such a way “that it is the masses which become the dominant class who come to say, . . . what is right or not” . . . (Foucault, 1980, pp. 3-13). In Gonzalez (1990) analysis “the role of the mass organizations was to execute decisions and strategies evolved by the National Directorate of the FSLN” (p. 69). This, not only in government related issues, but in the arts as well.

The Role of Mass Organizations in the Arts

Mass organizations, in Foucault’s words, could be called the mechanics and strategies of the revolution, due to the tasks and functions they exercised to advance the revolution. Johnson (1985) explains that the Sandinista association of cultural workers (ASTC) functioned as an umbrella organization for various professional “guilds” representing such diverse groups as writers, circus artists and photographers. While promoting the interests of workers, the ASTC through study groups, exhibits and direct action, attempted to clarify the role of the professional artist in a revolutionary society. Over 100 ASTC “cultural brigade”
activist artists in Nicaragua, performed month-long exhibitions at the war front, during the 1980’s for entertainment of the soldiers.

The Association of Cultural Workers (ASTC) according to Dore, (1985) depicted in their art, the ideology, theory and aspirations of the revolution. Applying Foucault's views on power to these organizations, they developed strategies in a chain-like network, such as the “Campesino” Movement for Artistic and Theatrical Expression (MECATE) whose rural members were associated with Workers Rural Association (ATC) and the National Union for Farmers and Cattlemen (UNAG).

The Nicaraguan Film Institute (INCINE), was one the many organizations spreading political knowledge through the arts. After the triumph, Imuris (1983) tells, how INCINE was created to develop film-making as a new form of art to serve popular interests within the new culture. Arnove (1986) relates that the working class and peasant leaders weave aesthetics and political indoctrination within the films. In this way, television and radio programs intertwined political advertisement with educational messages. In Nicaragua’s television, political indoctrination became the “commercial,” just as in Russia, where politics are advertised on television (Benton, 1958).

These artistic unions were the cultural practices which in Dreyfus & Rabinow (1983) interpreting Foucault were the cultural practices in our culture. . . “in which power and knowledge cross. . . the cultural practices which have made us what we are” (pp. 120-204), which in this context would be the cultural practices of the revolution.

The Reality within the Victory of July 19th.
The insurrection which ended with the victory of July nineteen, it allowed Sandinistas to exercise transformations in Nicaraguan society. One of these changes began with revenge, as people with different ideologies were taken from their homes and treated like criminals. Expropriations were done "in the name of the people." At this time, owning a home became a luxury. Social issues were raised as people asked each other in a CDS meetings, "Why do you have a home and I don’t." Non Sandinistas became the people whom nobody wanted to be close to this, only because of a different way of thinking. An individual who opposed the Sandinstas' creed automatically became the "enemy of the people" without any rights and or protection. A non-stop persecution by the security police started, perhaps of an entire family. This is why emigration began in Nicaragua, it started out of fear of persecution, hunger and death. Lancaster (1992) tells, these immigrants were between "200 and 400,000" people, the skilled and professionals who took up residence abroad (p. 7).

Christian (1987) narrates more than 600 people disappeared during the first months of the revolution. Common graves were found, and the Minister of the Interior did not give permission to exhume the bodies. Sofonias Cisneros Leiva, President of the Nicaraguan Union of Christian Schools (Unapafacc) in his declaration to the Human Rights Commission, said:

It is not possible that in the twentieth century practices are being followed which humanity has condemned a thousand times and that there are no voices to denounce them, while the commanders of the National Directorate assure the world that no body is tortured or executed here (Permanent Commission on Human Rights, 1993, p. 805).
A culture of silence began: A culture in which the masses are mute, where they do not take part in the transformation of their society, and where the dominant culture or cultures determine the voices of the others. Consequently, different forms of oppression and different forms of resistance develop (Freire, 1985).

In the next lines a child's perceptions of her war experiences as she remembered them, and in her own words:

I remember I was about six or seven years old. I didn’t know exactly what was going on, or why we were hiding. I don’t think I ever did understand, not until I grew older. We my family and I stayed upstairs, our house is two stories high, mostly in the bathroom since it was the safest place against the bullets. My brother and I were not allowed to get out at all we were not allowed to even get near the window, but when we did I remember soldiers passing by, It was not scary or being sad or afraid I think it was a mixture of many different feelings I didn’t understand yet. When the shooting started out in the streets, I remember one day we were hiding under the bed, and we were to stay there until the shooting had stopped well even our dog seemed to understand too, because he stayed under the bed with us as well. After the Sandinistas had taken over the government in hand, the schools changed. My school was an all girl’s school and we had a pretty uniform, after the take over our uniform was taken away and we had to wear a white and blue skirt, now not only in my school but all of the rest eventually changed. Then the school’s curriculum changed, we had to learn the Sandinists ideals. I remember the fear of talking or saying anything against the Sandinist was not allowed, and if someone heard you say any thing and told someone who was a Sandinist, they could harm you, even kill you. We lived with that fear until my mom decided to take us out of the country. I remember mom packed one luggage for my brother her and I, we left very early in the morning that day to the airport, as a matter of fact it was still dark. I didn’t know where I was going or why. Mom, my brother and I were leaving the country, I remember my dad I didn’t specially like the idea of leaving him I would look back and start crying, it hurt me so much to leave, my father alone. I even tried to get out of the plane, mom tried to calm me down, I eventually did of course I don’t remember when though. That image will never be forgotten. I think we first lived in Guatemala for a few months then in Panama for another few months, I liked Panama a lot. We then came back to Nicaragua, it seemed as if a hurricane had gone pass by the city. Buildings were destroyed, the houses had writings on them, the city was dirty and quite sad to see all this.
Most of what happened I've forgotten in a way I'm glad, it was a very hard experience and hope I never have to go through that again.

The Sandinista Decline

As a consequence of the repression, in 1982, a strong resistance began against the Sandinista power, under the Contra, short for counterrevolutionary. They began a war which was supported by the U.S.A. Over 12,000 contras called “Freedom Fighters” were fighting in the North bordering Honduras. It was an army made up of ex-National Guards, natives, small landholders, peasants and specially young people, (Krauss, 1988. p. 128). Young people crossed the border across the jungle to join the resistance, they were escaping from the Sandinista draft established in 1984 (Taboada Terán, 1994). The resistance was a struggle against Sandinista authority, it was:

- against secrecy deformation, and mystifying representation imposed on people.
- [It was a struggle] against forms of domination;
- against forms of exploitation... [and] against forms of subjectivity and submission [and social domination (Foucault, 1983, p. 212).

This resistance was made visible during Pope John Paul II’s visit to Nicaragua. People shouted loudly in the plaza defiantly during the celebration of the Eucharist “The Pope, The Pope” among white and yellow flags of the Vatican, and white scarves symbolizing peace. This was to outset the Sandinistas cry of the “People’s Power, and We Want Peace.” By 1984, in the regions of Chontales and Boaco the people were supporting the “Freedom Fighters.” By 1990, even with the Sandinista propaganda “They Shall not Pass, Forward with the Front and Here no one Surrenders” Sandinista power was decreasing. Almost eight years of continuous war, and international and economic pressure had weakened the Sandinistas to
the point that President Daniel Ortega Saavedra had to accept the Peace Treaty of Esquipulas proposed by the Central American countries. The end came with the 1990 elections and the defeat of the Sandinista power. Here, Michel Foucault's ideas on resistance might apply to the people of Nicaragua:

what enables people there, on the spot, to resist . . .
what is it that sustains them, what gives them their energy,
what is the force at work in their resistance.

Perhaps it was faith, since the people of Nicaragua are very religious, perhaps it was the need to be free, what gave Nicaraguans the energy to stand up and fight for their rights for freedom.

The opposition of Nicaraguans towards the Sandinistas raised issues of power and of an opposing force growing out of the need to overcome the Sandinista totalitarian government. During the process of transformation and in the creation of a new power, conflicting ideologies arose, thus creating resistance. This phenomenon to resist is produced out of the need to transform a reality that people live. Using a Foucaultian language, is what people can do to resist the forces of domination. Thus, the people gain a kind of power through resistance.

The Sandinista revolution thought to create a just and free society. How free, and at what price? By oppressing people's freedom through a manipulation of power? What were the Nicaraguan revolutionary hopes? Was it really the Sandinistas' goal to eradicate poverty and exploitation? To build a just society as they stated in the "Historic Program?" Was it the establishment of an equitable system that would give dignity to people? Their actions while they were in power allows one to place a question mark on their actions. For instance, the
people’s property became the “party members property.” An example is a woman who moved into a home which wasn’t hers, in other words, she stole a home, when asked why she did this? Her answer was, this is my reward for my revolutionary work. Another example is the pillage from February to April of 1990 after their defeat. The Sandinistas then sold everything they found available to party loyalists, from homes, and farms, to cars, computers, antiques and art collections without proper administrative procedure at absurd prices. The Sandinista theft of the nation was called by Nicaraguans “La Piñata,” or the Sandinistas greedy good-by. Piñata is a typical paper figure used for birthday celebrations, from it, all sorts of different candies rain down as children break it with a colorful wooden stick. The exact cost of the Sandinistas looting will never be known. Somozas’ fortune was nothing compared to the immense fortune the Sandinista Commanders amassed while they were in power. Chow (1992) comments, that there was a minimum of US$100 million for each one, compared to the US$50 million of Somoza’s entire fortune. The national and international press covered in detail the piñata scandal which left the Sandinistas political reputation and opportunism uncovered. Chow (1992) comments:

the Sandinista story of rags to riches is one of the most fascinating of the last decades. In barely ten years of government they managed to become the top Nicaraguan bourgeoisie, the group with the greatest economic clout in the country (p. 225).

Before the 1996 elections people were asking, Commander Daniel Ortega, in special television add, in Canal 2, 1996, “where is the money you have stolen from the people of Nicaragua?” But he gave no concrete answer. In addition to that, there was the government’s drug implication. This is seen in the movie “Double Cross.” This film relates the true story of Barry Seal; a compelling fact-based story of an undercover operative of the Drug Enforcement
Agency (DEA). Seal a top-level informant was infiltrated in major drug cartels, and in the information provided by Seal there were names, dates, places, methods, and incriminating photos, and among that information was Nicaragua (Warner Bros, 1992).

The insurrection in Nicaraguan was a multiple class struggle against the Somoza dynasty. The people’s hope was that the ideals of social justice and peace would come through with the 1979 people’s victory. but these dreams did not materialize and as a consequence, dissatisfaction of the people against the Sandinista government began as the revolution did not fulfill people’s yearnings for social justice. Moreover, the euphoria of the 1979’s victory disappeared from the faces of Nicaraguans as parents’ agony began when the draft came and even children were taken to fight a war for a cause which was not the cause of the people, but the cause of a political party whose will was to remain in power, and to establish a Marxist-Leninist form of government in Nicaragua. That is why in the 1990 elections it was impressive to see the people of Nicaragua going to the polls to deposit the vote against the FSLN in the electoral urns in silence, and with strange determination on their faces. In this manner, the Sandinistas were defeated by the people of Nicaragua in the elections of 1990.

Gonzalez (1990) in his analysis of the Sandinistas’ defeat, asks what went wrong? Why this setback? Why the same people, who carried the Sandinistas to power, turn against them in the 1990 elections? Perhaps, the answer is, that the ideals of justice, peace and equality, the ideals that carried them to power, were lost on their way to reality during the eleven years of dictatorial government. The people of Nicaragua supported first the oppression exercised by the Somozas, and later the totalitarian government exercised by the Sandinistas.
In respect to the Sandinista defeat Lancaster (1993) notes:

In power, did the Sandinistas fail to guard against bureaucratism and its ensuing privileges? Did the Sandinista leadership, as years of war and crisis passed, develop a siege mentality and an arrogant style of leadership that increasingly strangle them from...the utopian expectations of the popular classes, and the nature of revolutionary discourse itself, with its ideal of exemplary leadership and shared sacrifices. [While] the political elite...perceived [and enjoyed] special privileges. Was the goal of social justice—through popular participation and a socialist mixed economy—another impossible dream? (pp. 10-289).

The Sandinista Revolution was based on an ideology, and ideologies are beautiful, because they represent dreams, but they are just only ideologies. In Gabel’s definition ideologies are “delirious system which fabricate an illusory dialectic to justify false consciousness by building a pseudohistory that shores it up” (in Broughton 1976, p. 226). According to Wolff (1981), ideology is a “system of beliefs characteristic of a particular class or group” (p. 54) expresses more clearly the term in regard to the FSLN ideology. Ideology could also be a set of abstract principles as they were expressed in the statements made by the Sandinista vanguard during their government.

The seizing of power allowed the Sandinistas to transform the school within a revolutionary context, and in the same manner to educate children within a revolutionary content. The following pages examine the Sandinista education as it was implemented in schools throughout the nation.
CHAPTER 6

THE SANDINISTA'S NEW EDUCATION

In an effort to dominate the country, the Sandinistas implemented a new form of education within the school system. Education became a priority in social reform. The transformation began, as schools became transmitters of the new revolutionary pedagogy, which was based on the Sandinista national reality, and linked to the efforts of the working people. Education was also linked to mass organizations and to the country’s general means of production, mainly in the agricultural sector. Education became a tool for the imposition of values leading towards socialism.

In the II Social Scientific Congress held in Managua, De Castilla (1982) discussed the difference between the old and new system of education in Nicaraguan schools. During the Somoza period, the educational system taught students about the Spanish conquerors, Columbus or Pizarro; by contrast, during the Sandinista period students were taught all about Sandino and the revolution, even before studying about beauty and folklore they began to learn about class struggle and freedom. The classrooms remained the same, school hours were the same, but what really happened in the classrooms was a different phenomenon. Schools implemented the ideological content of the new Sandinista power. The old content had been changed for the ideas of General Sandino, commanders Carlos Fonseca Amador and Leonel Rugama. Nicaraguan students were
given new role models, the heroes and martyrs of the revolution. De Castilla goes on saying, the basis, the values and the ideological content of education had changed too. Competition, individualism, and consumption have been changed to solidarity, sacrifice, fraternity and brotherhood. To implement the new values in the minds of children, revolutionary posters, and the Sandinista red and black flag were placed in each of classroom in all schools both public and private, for students to salute. Also, the word “brother”- used by the guerrilla and by the Sandinista army- was now used in the same manner by children in the schools and by the people throughout the country. Education was the medium to implement revolutionary knowledge, and a “new education” was implemented in Nicaraguan schools.

The New Education

How were the Sandinista’s ideas put together and applied? How were the art programs used to promote the Sandinista ideology?

As soon as the Sandinistas seized power, a new type of education was implemented. The then Minister of Education, Carlos Tunnermann, defined the “new education” as having a popular character and designed to give integral education to Nicaraguan children (Ministerio de Educación, 1980). Therefore, educational goals and objectives were to respond to the values of the revolution. In other words the new education was to follow the revolutionary goals. The new content of schooling, according to Arrien (1980) was based on socio-political concepts and towards a socialist model.
The Ministry of Education commanded "non-formal" education in all schools, this in the belief that teachers, as well as students, would bring to school the experiences obtained from the popular insurrection. Non-formal education was understood as the process by which teachers and students discussed in their classes "the war of liberation," as the insurrection of the people of Nicaragua was called by the Sandinistas. In a similar way, its causes and strategies; and also the leadership of the FSLN as the party vanguard of free Nicaragua. It was through the arts, testimonial music, painting, and poetry that the experiences of the insurrection were discussed and portrayed in schools (Ministerio de Educación, 1980).

As Nicaragua was transformed into a "big school" (Black & Bevan, 1980) formal education was transformed into "non-formal" education. Education was meant to take place not only in schools, but everywhere, for example, at Sandinista Defense Committee meetings, at the factories and through the media. The new role of the school, Black & Bevan (1980) write was to "back up the wider concept of non-formal education" (p.36). All the media of mass communication-television, radio newspapers-were used to educate people in the revolutionary values which were going to create the "new man."

Students were introduced to revolutionary knowledge on a pedagogical basis, and "non-formal" education was established in all schools, in the hopes to introduce students into the Sandinistas values. De Castilla (1982) who declared, formal education is transformed on behalf of the interests of the popular classes now expressed this idea.

Vilas (1986) describes the new education "as a means for emancipating people, and helping them advance [in] their comprehension of the world in order to transform it
One in which the popular classes were the subject of the educational process" (pp. 216-219). Because of this, mass participation was fundamental in the educational reform.

Fels, Good, Tudisco, & Anderson (1987) explain how Early Education had “a social as well as a pedagogical basis” (p. 810) designed to provide students awareness of the social reality, and enable them with abilities to participate in the political, economic, social and ideological issues of the nation.

Joe, (1988) tells us, children were encouraged “to spy on their own parents, as well as on their fellow students” (p. 836). Children attended Sandinistas leader’s speeches to the country. One given by the General Secretary of the FSLN, Daniel Ortega, in the Plaza of the Revolution lead children in such chants as: “Over here, over there, the Yankee is going to die” (p. 837). Ortega made children raise their fists as they waved the red and black Sandinistas’ flag against the sky. In public schools, students sang the Sandinista anthem: “We fight against the Yankee, enemy of humanity.” In reference to the FSLN directorate, children learned to say, “Let the nine command me!” (pp. 835-837). The so-called nine, were the nine commanders who formed the FSLN National Directorate. The “new education,” Joe goes on saying, emerged as a model of scientific socialism to raise consciousness in children’s minds. Lancaster (1993) relates an example of the children’s indoctrination. When a mother asked her child to sing the Nicaraguan anthem, the child automatically began then to sing the Sandinistas’ anthem instead of the Nicaraguan National anthem.

In this context, revolutionary tasks became more important than regular school tasks. Consequently, in this “non-formal” educational system a teacher could be requested to stop a class in order to go listen to a political leader who was disseminating
propaganda about the tasks and aims of the revolution. Figure 27 shows a diploma given to a student for her outstanding political participation. The diploma has the pictures of the Sandinista leaders and martyrs, Carlos Fonseca Amador and General Sandino, the new role models for children. At the bottom is the motto, "Free Fatherland or Die."

This type of education opposes Giroux’s belief that "the business of the school is not propaganda. It is equipping people with . . . knowledge and skills and concepts" . . . (Connell et al, 1982, in Giroux, 1983, p. 114). The indoctrination of youngsters became an important factor in the "new education." For that reason, the revolution gave special attention to children. It is known that small children understand and retain most of what they are taught. Children the government declared, “are the favorites of the Revolution” (Ministerio de Educación, 1980). Figure 28 depicts children, the favorites of the revolution, holding the Sandinista red and black flag. This mural was painted in an exterior wall in Managua, facing the South highway road. The reason why special attention in education was given to children is because they are the future of any country.

In Foucault's (1972) terms, the new Sandinista education can be interpreted as a mechanism of power, which at a given moment and by a series of transformations becomes useful and effective; it is grasping these mechanisms of power and demonstrating its advantages “or political utility that derives from them in a given context for specific reasons,” . . . [and] how these mechanisms come to be effectively incorporated into the social whole (Foucault in Gordon, 1980, p. 101). The next paragraphs outline the characteristics, or what distinguished the new education.

**Characteristics of the New Education**
Some relevant characteristics of the new Sandinista educational system are described in the following paragraphs.

The Visual Arts as Propaganda

A visible characteristic of the FSLN was the sophisticated use of the visual arts on billboards, posters and murals. All these were the means to transmit political messages to advance and support the revolution, to raise revolutionary consciousness and political culture. This was stated in one of the educational objectives, as the integration of culture to educational programs. Tradition became a strategy of the revolutionary process. The concept of tradition refers to the cultural values transmitted from generation to generation, and it is expressed through folklore, and even types of organizations. According to Foucault (1979), the beginning of tradition goes back without interruption in an undefined origin to the beginning of time. Hackett (1988) also illustrates the relation of the arts to educational goals. He relates that in Hungary and the Soviet Union, "there was an ideological goal for each Eastern bloc nation to pass on to its youth the artistic and cultural heritage of that nation and to inculcate it through education" (p. 393). Therefore, in order to instill nationalism in children, the Ministry of Education organized special programs for children where they learned art and crafts, as well as native dances, music and poetry. These activities were the means to teach children their traditional culture (Ministerio de Educación, 1980). Since the school is a key institution to disseminate ideas.

Visual Literacy
The use of visuals was another characteristic featured in popular education. Visuals do convey meanings moreover, visual images are effective verbal-visual communications that can evoke aspects of life. Posters, billboards, and murals are accessible to a variety of people. These art expressions are a popular form of communication since they do not only inform, but they provide ideas as well. A great deal of what we learn, comes to us through visual pathways (Faulkner, Ziegfeld, & Smagula, 1987). The government used visual communication, because they knew it would lead well into the visualization of revolutionary concepts. From pictures children can extract messages, also visuals are easier to remember than words. The Sandinistas' strategy was having children to decode revolutionary values from visuals. Ernesto Cardenal (1980), the then, Minister of Culture, under whose jurisdiction were all the arts, refers to the revolutionary art painted on the walls as poetic art. It has didactic functions in helping "visual literacy." It moved poor people to recognize their new identity. The new art placed stress on people to perform noble tasks, to make sacrifices, and to celebrate the joy of the Revolution.

Therefore, in the walls of Managua, artists painted the history and ideals of the revolution. It was here that the visual arts, like graffiti and murals were transformed into revolutionary art expressions, to glorify the leaders of the state in all its manifestations. Figure 29 depicts a mural, Sandino and Carlos Fonseca, it was painted in the peoples' Church, Santa Maria de los Angeles in Managua. The subject matter of these art expressions narrates stories, which in this one is "the story of the ants." They were discussed as Black & Bevan (1980) point out by school children in their classes.
Mass Participation in Schools

An important characteristic of the new revolutionary education was to serve the masses, and to eradicate the elitist fragmentary and vertical education established in Nicaragua during the Somoza regime. In other words, it was the government’s decision to make education not a privilege, nor an instrument to serve particular interests (Ministerio de Educación, 1980). The school was to serve everyone without discrimination. Mass participation became a visible characteristic in the social reform. A general principle of education maintained that the state was going to encourage mass organizations participation in the educational process (Unapafacc-Upafec). Something which was “not said” (Foucault, 1972, pp. 25-110) in the principle of education, was how education became a tool for the masses’ indoctrination.

The new system of education was linked to popular grassroots organizations as mass organizations were called also. The idea was to integrate them into the educational system in the effort to accommodate the objectives of the revolution, and to formulate an education mirroring the feelings of the majority. Mass participation became so important that the Minister of Education announced it was going to be established in schools. Education relied on the masses for the transformation of the educational system (Ministerio de Educación, 1984).

These grassroots organizations had their own publications, stressing “not only themes specific to their constituencies, but to national themes of economic growth, anti-imperialism, national defense, and popular participation” (Arnove, 1987, p. 784). Black & Bevan (1980) comment that the publication, “Sandinista Power” (p. 37) considered issues of mass organizations which were then discussed and analyzed in schools by
students as part of the curriculum. It had been stated by Lenin that newspapers are the instruments for the masses' education (Mendieta, 1977).

These Sandinista organizations were used to spread propaganda in order to validate Sandinista power. They became channels of political organizations exercising control over the people to advance the Sandinista's political strategies. In this regard, in the "Subject and Power," Foucault (1983) asks:

How does it [power] manifest itself?... by what means is it exercised?... and what happens when individuals exert... power over others? [power is exercised] as a way in which certain actions may structure the field of other possible actions... [as] a mode of action upon actions... as an ensemble of actions which induce others and follow from one another...
(pp. 217-222).

How does power manifests itself? Through what means is it exercised? The Sandinistas built a power structure by establishing a number of mass organizations. Among these were, the Sandinista Defense Committees, and the Cultural Workers Association (ASTC) the latter, stated at the opening of their first collective and retrospective art exhibit in 1982, "we are integrating the art and the literature into the fight for the Revolution." Figure 30 displays a mask with fist high as a revolutionary symbol; it was specially designed by the ASTC for this event. The natives in colonial times used this kind of masks in certain occasions to hide their faces from the Spaniards. The "Campesino" Movement for Artistic and Theatrical Expression (Mecate) was performing a different kind of theater, a popular theater, presenting plays everywhere, in the mountains, in war fronts, and in the streets. These associations, as Arnove (1986)
relates, cultivated political instruction by using techniques and tactics through popular artistic expressions.

Applying Foucault's (1980) terms to the mass organizations, they . . . “function in the form of a chain . . . [and are] employed and exercised through a net-like organization” . . . (p. 98). In education, the Sandinistas used mass organizations as Arnone (1986) puts it, as a multiplier chain to train other people.

Mass Organizations in Schools

There also existed children's associations such as, the “19th. of July Sandinista Youth” (JS-19J), the Sandinista Children’s Association (ANS), and the Mass Organization of High School Students (FES). Arnone (1986) comments on their role in the school’s culture, he notes that the JS-19J and ANS became a “political vanguard organization of the FSLN,” working directly with the FSLN’s political coordinator (p. 101). Children’s associations were established through different educational centers. The associations encouraged children’s participation in political demonstrations, or join the mobs or “turbas,” daunting the opposition. Figure 31 shows children repeating revolutionary slogans as they march in a demonstration. In the hands carrying the FSLN red and black flag, and wearing the hat that is used in the Patriotic Military Service.

Similar ideas are related by Nearing (1926). In Russia, political student organizations were formed, such as the Young Pioneers established in elementary and secondary grades. These students’ organizations, according to Nearing were the sharp shooter of socialist competition in the schools, and they were organized early in the Russian Revolution in 1923. In Czechoslovakia there was the Communist Vanguard for
children nine to fourteen years old (Asociación Nacionalista de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos). All of them had programs designed to mold children in Marxist ideals.

The tie of the public school system to revolutionary organizations in Foucault’s (1980) terms demonstrate the techniques and strategies of power, where at a given time, these mechanisms became “politically useful” in certain contexts (p. 101). Schools in Nicaragua became politically useful as they were integrated into the revolutionary process through mass organizations. These popular organizations had an important role in the curricular transformation, as the schools became agencies of these organizations in the transmission of popular knowledge. A specific revolutionary knowledge, clear and understandable to the masses, this, in order to achieve the government’s end which was to transmit to the youth Sandinistas’ values. The Minister of Education confirmed this goal writing, mass organizations have an important role in the transformation of the educational system (Tunnerman, 1984).

This aspect of the history of schooling in Nicaragua might be looked at, as Foucault suggests, as the study of power by examining “the history of the practice” (Brochier, 1980, p. 37) of the revolution, which in this case would be the connection of the schools to these organizations. This would also mean, investigating power historically, and how mechanisms of power function, since they have their own histories, trajectories, techniques, and tactics (Foucault, 1980). In this regard, schools in Nicaragua are significantly important within the power/knowledge relationship, since they served as sites for the imposition of revolutionary knowledge that was to re-shape students’ worldview within the political culture of the government. Illustrating how power in Foucault’s (1980) view is... “colonized, utilized, involuted, transformed, displaced,
extended by forms of global domination” (p. 99), which in Nicaragua was the exercise of power through its practices, such as the different art expressions which were all geared towards the exaltation of the revolution. In this respect, studying the mechanics of power in the revolutionary context using Foucault’s (1980) views, would be understanding the methods, techniques, and procedures through which Sandinista power circulated and was exercised through the arts. Teaching children revolutionary songs, or having them draw or paint revolutionary themes might be interpreted as revolutionary practices. The mechanisms discussed by Foucault might also apply to the political knowledge students learned in the schools, the specific discursive practices designed and geared to a social change, and towards the transformation of the schools in Nicaragua.

The Politicization of the School

Another characteristic of the new education was the politicization of the school. Bayardo Arce, a member of the National Directorate, and its political coordinator, stated the political character of the Sandinista education. Addressing the Nicaraguan Teachers Association (ANDEN) he affirmed, “education, more than a transmitter of knowledge, is a shaper of consciousness” (in Arnove & Dewees, 1987, p. 788). Arce (1980) continuously repeated that artists’ revolutionary praxis was to exalt revolutionary values, and to develop themes depicting the revolution’s ideological content.

Fernando Cardenal, a Jesuit priest, who directed the Literacy Cruzade stated the politicization of the school,

we do not pretend to teach only how to read, write, and handle basic math; we also have as key goal the consciousness
Therefore, in the general principles of education it was a function of the state, to plan, supervise and evaluate the educational process, to promote the participation of mass organizations in schools and to supervise all schools to assure that political education was taught. Curriculum, texts, and methodology were elaborated in accordance with the needs of the new society in formation (Unapafacc-Upafec). In this way, relating Giroux's (1983) concepts to Nicaraguan schools, they became political sites, ... an epistemological territory in which distinct social parties struggle as to how reality was to be signified, reproduced and resisted” (p. 207).

In the same line, the Program of the Soviet Party stresses the political tasks of the school. Pinkevich (1935) relates Soviet schools were the vehicles for the implementation of the principles of communism, that is, the principles underlying the teachings of Marx and Lenin. In Nicaragua, the schools politically controlled were the medium used to transmit Sandinista ideology.

**Internationalism**

An additional feature of education was internationalism. This concept is explained by Pinkevich (1935) when he writes, “the Soviet school is neither racist nor chauvinistic, the Soviet school is international in character,” (pp. 34-51) which means that it promotes solidarity with people throughout the world. In this content, chauvinistic refers to its classical meaning, an exaggeration of patriotism. In socialist countries there...
were international groups for the youth, ranging between the ages of eight through thirty, such as the Communist Youth International who is formed by international comrades. As a strategy to gain members, international meetings, as well as local and regional festivities are held, and in the same manner, cultural get-togethers were organized. There, nationalism was exploited through the arts, dance, music and the visual arts (Plan de Operaciones del Comunismo Internacional en la América Latina, (no date), just as it was in Nicaragua during the Sandinista period. Carlos Fonseca Amador founder of the FSLN was invited to the VI Congress of the Federation of Democratic Youth (FMJO) in Kiev, and to the VI Festival of Students for Peace and Friendship held in Moscow during the Summer of 1957. Fonseca Amador (1980) relates the experiences of his trip in his book *Un Nicaragüense en Moscu* (A Nicaraguan in Moscow).

**Linking Education to Work**

The ministry of education considered manual and intellectual work highly important in the student’s integral formation. Productive work was a formative element in plans and programs of study. Commander Arce stated, we need our students to learn not only in books, we want them to learn by participating in agricultural tasks in the field, and in the factory (Ministerio de Educación, 1980). In a similar way, Fraser (1965) relates that in China, the press indicated, the young should be directed towards “glorius work in the fields and factories” (p. 50). Thus, school children were incorporated into the work force. As extra curricular activities children worked in the field as it is shown in Figure 22. These activities became very important and were part of the school life. During harvest time, children were forced to go to the government’s farms or to co-
operative to pick coffee or cotton. Otherwise they were told they would not go onto the
next grade level. This was accomplished based on the idea of integration of physical and
intellectual work, for the equilibrium of theory and practice according to scientific
education (Ministerio de Educación, 1984). Fraser (1965) states, the need to relate
education "to manual labor, or productive enterprise, has been one of the more stable,
long-term goals of the communist Party" (p. 283). To accomplish this objective, in
Nicaragua, Escuelas Rurales de Educación Trabajo (Eret), rural schools linking work and
education were established (Tunnerman, 1984). A similar program to Eret for rural
junior high schools grades seven to nine was Ciclo Básico de Producción (CBP)
emphasizing agricultural studies with the academic curriculum (Arnone, 1986).

**Materialistic Orientation**

One more attribute, the materialistic orientation of education, meant presenting to
children information within the materialist scheme of Marxist-Leninist ideas. In this
manner closing children's minds to everything which was not in accordance with
Marxist-Leninist dogmatism. In Nicaraguan schools a systematized dogma had to be
accepted as true without any question.

**Popular Education**

Although the Sandinista style of education was geared to all school levels, there
was also a specific orientation towards adult education. It was known a Basic Popular
Education (EPB). Non-formal education was extended to every one generally between
the ages of four and twenty-four. Even though it was oriented towards adults everyone
could benefit from this educational program. Popular education provided a basic general education that was directed to the masses (Ministerio de Educación, 1984). The content was organized, structured with concrete and well-defined objectives, to prepare students for revolutionary tasks. Popular education Bamdt (1991) writes,

is a process in which people develop awareness of their social situation and strengthen their ability to organize to change it. It integrates research, learning, and organizing by and for popular sectors (p. 18).

Black & Bevan (1980) describe popular education or “non-formal education,” as “building up a revolutionary ideology in all sections of the population” (p. 36).

According to Sandinista ideology, popular education was based on Sandino’s idea of teaching country people to read. The FSLN militants who taught literacy and political consciousness in the 1960’s further developed Sandino’s idea.

Popular education was developed in the 1970’s when the people of Nicaragua were learning from collective action to transform local materials into military weapons for the guerrilla in the effort to overthrow the Somoza dynasty. In popular education, Black & Bevan claim, music blends “traditional popular culture and revolutionary ideas” (p. 39), in this regard, they add, music played an important role in the Nicaraguan insurrection, giving instruction as to how to handle weapons and bombs. The term popular education was also used in Russia in a similar way, where popular education meant education for the working masses (Pinkevich, 1935).

Bamdt (1991) explains that popular education applies a dialectical methodology based on people’s experiences, and links education to work. It takes into consideration
the language and culture of the people, and the prevailing ideology, which in Nicaragua was the Sandinista ideology.

The Sandinistas believed that popular education would create a literate and critical individual. That is, being able to think critically, but in the Sandinista terms. Barndt (1991) explains this quoting the director of Nicaragua's adult basic education: “Knowledge is understanding not only what you see in the surface of things, but going beyond what you see”... (p. 15).

Non-formal education in Nicaragua’s social transformation, Arnove (1986) comments, was to “prepare people with the knowledge skills, values and predisposition to play more active roles in an economy governed by the logic of the majority” (p. 73). Although, this education was considered a political project, Arnove’s assertion is that it was an inspiration to see:

- formerly illiterate peasants teaching their own family and neighbors...
- thirteen year old youths teaching even younger peers...
- grandparent and grandchild studying together at night...
- [and] the artistic outpouring that issues forth from the host of adult education programs...
(p. 68).

At the beginning of the revolution, Arnove adds, it was enlightening to read in Basic Popular Education’s (EPB) billboards and posters during the National Literacy Campaign of 1980:

Every home a classroom,
Every table a school desk,
Every "Nica" [Nicaraguan] a teacher!
(p. 19).
One more strategy used in popular education was poetry workshops. Dore (1985) writes that, the Ministry of Culture encouraged poetry workshops throughout the country, in rural areas, in poor neighborhood, slums in the army, and in the police force. In these workshops, people, children and adults met weekly to read and to write poems, and to discuss the principles of poetry. Cardenal (1981), in allusion to these workshops, comments that there were writers’ workshops where carpenters, and masons were learning the correct techniques for writing good modern verse. In his opinion, their poems were indeed of excellent quality, of a standard previously attained by only a few of the literary elite. “I believe, [he said], Nicaragua is the only country in the world where the police publish poetry” (p. 205). He did not mention in his speech that this was political poetry that was developed around revolutionary themes only. In this manner, a revolutionary poetry to raise revolutionary consciousness evolved.

Another tactic used by the Sandinistas was the massification of popular culture, which is to make this type of art available to everyone. This was done by the reaffirmation of Nicaragua’s creative traditions: indigenous motifs, traditional crafts, religious festivals, folk dance and music, and primitive painting (Johnson, 1985). All of these art expressions might be called the “practices” exercised in popular education. These practices were extra scholar instruction which relates to Lenin’s idea of propaganda and agitation through extra curricular practices (Pozo, 1977).

In this regard, Popular Cultural Centers (CPC) or Culture Houses were also a strategy within popular education. These mechanisms of power were transmitters of revolutionary culture, and in Foucault’s (1980) research this would be, the strategic apparatuses using subtle “techniques and tactics of domination,” techniques of power that
were "politically useful" to the revolution, each in its own "context" (pp. 101-102). The
cultural centers among other functions, provided instruction to amateur artists, children
and adults in the acquisition of knowledge in music, dance, plastic arts, theater, and
poetry. In some CPCs, embroidery and cooking were taught also. These CPC’s or
Houses of Culture were established in almost every main city in Nicaragua. In the
Cultural Centers like "the palaces of culture" in Russia, as Benton (1958, p. 71) writes,
all the cultural events for the community as well as political meetings were held. The
cultural centers’ function involved also, the mobilization of the masses towards culture.
Popular Cultural Centers were recognized cultural and political authority having
representation from the FSLN and mass organisms (Imuris, 1983).

Alfaro (1982) explains what a CPC is in the first seminar on research methods
organized by the Ministry of Culture in 1982:

Popular cultural Centers are the
fundamental instruments of the Ministry
of Culture, and they are transmitters of
theory and practice of the cultural politics
of our Revolution. The CPC promotes, develops,
and orients cultural action, it allows the
people to project himself, and to
become involved and participator in the
political economic and social revolutionary
propaganda for the transformation of Nicaragua
(Spanish translation).

In relation to Popular Cultural Centers, Cardenal (1981) writes, there is a revival
of culture, a cultural renaissance as cultural centers have multiplied everywhere. Our
people have expropriated the culture from which they were excluded before. Kunzle
(1995) notes there were "twenty-eight Centers for Popular Culture" throughout the
country (p. 33). In these centers, special programs for children were organized like
painting and poetry workshops. Also, schools were linked to Popular Cultural Centers, which were the agencies of non-formal education (Arrien, 1980, p. 134). These agencies, in Foucault’s words could be called the mechanics and strategies of the revolution, due to the tasks and functions they exercised in the name of the revolution.

The Arts in Popular Education

Popular education was one of the channels through which the politicization of the school and the arts was achieved. Popular education was the instrument to transmit the new revolutionary ideology. In almost all schools, children dressed in colorful customs and masks, learned about their culture by means of traditional indigenous dances. Arnone (1986) tells us how the arts flourished in Popular Cultural Centers, “music, dance, plastic arts, theater, and poetry” (p.61). This popular education, Arnone adds, communicated “political messages that are not questioned but are called upon” (p. 59). Therefore, this education ended up as a kind “of crude indoctrination which does not raise critical awareness according to which individuals willingly choose courses of action” (p. 68).

Popular culture was transmitted to children through the new education, which was developed around the Sandinista political culture. In popular education, children were not only taught to understand the Sandinistas values, but to stand up for, believe, and defend those beliefs. Popular education emerged outside of the school, from mass organizations that were the politically dominant class in the new state of Nicaragua. The classes that according to De Castilla, (1982) never had access to education, the workers and peasants.
The new education was implemented on the belief of the power of education to change and transform and with the idea of implementing a new political culture via education. It was the Sandinistas' strategy to implement a revolutionary education that was to build the new Nicaraguan society.

Popular organizations exercised the cultural practices, which might be interpreted in Foucault's terms, as the cultural practices of the revolution. These popular practices were the mechanisms of power that in Foucault's (1991) view are:

- the... rational schemas...
- [the] explicit programmes...
- sets of calculated, reasoned prescriptions
- in terms of which institutions [were]
- meant to be reorganized spaces arranged, behaviors regulated...
- [with] hidden meaning (p. 80).

They were the schemas that in Nicaragua regulated the school's art to serve the state.

The next chapter introduces goals, objectives, programs and teaching methods, of the new education and how they were implemented in Nicaragua's elementary schools.
CHAPTER 7

THE SANDINISTA CURRICULUM

The curricular transformation in Nicaragua was designed in 1979 to educate children in the ideology of the revolution and in a system of beliefs based on Marxist-Leninist and Sandinista values. The transformation of the curriculum speaks of a social change and clearly relates to Freedman & Popkewitz's (1988) statement “that the history of curriculum is not merely the history of objects and individuals,” but is connected to social transformations, political issues, and economic interests (p. 387).

A reform to the curriculum is a strategy used in all countries under the Soviet influence to control the educational system. In Albania, the General Inspector of Public Instruction declared, “the duty of our schools is to create a new generation of Marxists-Leninists” (Asociación Nacionalista de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos).

The promotion of the Sandinista ideology through a national curriculum was implemented immediately after the Sandinista party seized the country. Belli (1993) relates, that between 1980 and 1989, the Sandinista regime,

stripped the higher education system of autonomy and converted the educational system into a single system depending totally on a central government. The creation of a centralized structure was the result of the government’s intention to use education as a means to [carry through its beliefs] and dehumanize (p. 1).
The curriculum as the heart of the educational system was used by the Sandinistas to put revolutionary ideas into practice. In a similar way, they used the arts to support revolutionary values. From 1979 to 1990, the Sandinista government used the arts as a tool to communicate its ideology to the people of Nicaragua. The curricular transformation was based on:

- The principles, objectives and strategies of the Sandinista Popular Revolution.
- Goals, objectives and principles of the "New Education."
- The conception of Nicaraguan Popular Education.
- Knowledge of Sandinista theory.


The Inter-institutional Committee of Education defined the curricular transformation as the process of deep and systematic changes introduced according to technical, political and scientific criteria in the conception and transformation of the curriculum. It was based on the student educational profile within the context of the Sandinista ideology, and through the practice of the principles of the revolution, in what Althusser calls "the ideological apparatus of the estate" (in De Castilla, 1982, p. 198).

Issues of power/knowledge occur in relation to the transformation of the curriculum. Foucault's (1972) theory on power and knowledge could apply to the Sandinista curriculum, because the principles, objectives and strategies of the new education "reveal a body of political knowledge" (p. 194). Foucault describes knowledge as:

... that of which one can speak in a discursive practice, and which is specified by that fact. ... Knowledge is also the space in which the subject may take up a position and speak of the subjects with which he deals in his discourse. ...
knowledge is also the field of coordination
and subordination of statements in which concepts
appear, and are defined, applied and transformed. . . ;
lastly, knowledge is defined by the possibilities
of use and appropriation offered by discourse. . . 
There are bodies of knowledge that are independent
of the sciences. . . , but there is no knowledge
without a particular discursive practice; and any
discursive practice may be defined by the knowledge
that it forms (Foucault, 1972, p. 182).
[Also knowledge is,] but power/knowledge, the processes and struggles that
traverse it and of which it is made up, that determines the forms and
possible domains of knowledge (Foucault in Dreyfus &

Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) point to issues of power and knowledge in
regard to the arts. Their statement is based on Foucault's studies of power/knowledge,
where, Foucault draws attention to the ways in that powerful institutions or groups
determine which knowledge, or which version of the truth, is educationally worthy.

From his studies in schools, prisons and hospitals Foucault argues they write:

decells power is exercised independently of any
systematic strategy of class domination,
and there is an intimate relation between
the emergence of disciplined knowledge
and systems of social control made possible
by this knowledge (p. 95).

In this regard, Foucault's argument, Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) explain, is
that the expansion of disciplined knowledge, which is seen as progress towards
enlightenment, might also be seen as ways "of extending social control over certain social
groups" (p. 98). This is done through the use of experts, who make the decisions, as to
"what shall be taught and to whom?" (p. 97). In Nicaragua, "the experts" were the
political advisers who came from countries such as the USSR and Cuba to assist in the
creation of a "free Nicaragua." Although, Foucault's analysis and criticism are directed
towards the social sciences, Efland, Freedman & Stuhr claim that, “issues of power/knowledge emerge in almost all areas of “artistic study” (p. 98). Additionally, they claim that, “issues of power and control “might apply with equal force to art disciplines such as “art history and art criticism” (p. 98). They point out, how art is controlled through politics, and how decisions about the art that is supposedly worthwhile are politically made. Thus, they comment, who has the power to decide why some “artistic developments are more important than others?” (p. 98). Likewise, whose art is “high art?” (p. 97). Their interpretation of power and knowledge related issues in areas of artistic study could apply to the implementation of political knowledge in the general curriculum by the Sandinista government.

What is a Curriculum

Dejnozka and Kapel in the American Educators Encyclopedia (1982) consider that curriculum involves more than just programs of study or series of sequential courses, it also includes all experiences that students have in the school. Other essential conditions regarding the success of school programs include a curriculum suited to the intended audience, clearly defined learning objectives, suitable curriculum content and study materials to fit the needs of the learners in each of the subjects (International Council for Educational Development, 1974).

A curriculum has four basic components as stated by Zais (1976): “(1) aims, goals, and objectives; (2) content; (3) learning activities; and (4) evaluation” (p. 295). Zais makes a distinction between aims, goals and objectives, stating that as concepts they tend to overlap. He refers to aims as “the desired life tasks,” and objectives and goals as
“required school tasks” (p. 307). The Sandinista curriculum also can be looked upon in terms of, goals, content, learning activities, and evaluation like any curriculum. However, the content of those terms was interpreted according to Sandinistas’ belief. This with the idea to the reeducate students in the values that were going to create the “new man” who was going to build in Nicaragua a new society.

The idea of the creation of a new man was already implemented in Russia and later in Cuba. Brock & Lawlor (1985) relate that efforts were made in Cuba to redesign education in an attempt to engender the “new man.” This dream of a man is described as a strong, active man engaged in the class struggle of a contemporary society. The new man, Fraser relates, is one who has both political consciousness and culture, and is capable of “taking up both mental and physical labor” (in Price, 1977, pp. 220-223). To achieve this goal every effort made to reeducate children was not considered enough. For this the government relied on existing institutions, such as the schools to create this dream of a man via the “new education.”

Goals of the New Education

To accomplish the aims of the new education, goals and objectives were established by the Board of Education. The Organización de los Estados Americanos (1983) defines educational goals, as the implicit or explicit goals of an educational system, which sustain the concept of education. The Ministry of Education published and sent to all schools a document called Goals and Objectives of the New Education, which was ratified by the Government of National Reconstruction in 1983. The Parent’s Association of Christian Students and the Union of Parents for Christian Education
(Unapafacc-Upafec) analyzed the document. In the following paragraphs parts of this analysis are discussed.

Using a Foucaultian (1972) language, these goals can be analyzed in terms of a "never-said:"

. . . a voice as silent as a breath,
a writing that is merely the hollow of its own mark.
[Where] it is supposed . . . that everything
that is formulated in discourse was already articulated
in that semi-silence that precedes it,
which continues to run obstinately beneath it,
but which it covers and silences (p. 25).

Goals and objectives might be interpreted in terms of "what was said" and "what was not said" (Foucault, 1972, pp. 25-28) by the revolutionary government.

The goals among others were: Goal one, to form the new man in political, personal and social terms. In political terms it meant an education conceived as an activity emanating exclusively from the state. It was the state that was going to organize, direct, determine the goals, objectives and future of education. The Interior Minister, Tomás Borge in a speech delivered to the Nicaraguan Teachers Association maintained, "it is the state that should direct the educational process" (Envío, 1983, p. 731).

In this respect, the Manual of Soviet Pedagogy states, the ideological instruction of children is political; teaching cannot be apart from the party politics (Asociación Nacionalista de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos). According to this goal the state was the educator, therefore, education became a strategy of a political party, which in this case was the Sandinista party.

To educate for creative and productive work were the second and third goals based on the Marxist materialistic concept of work. These goals related education to
work by the encouragement of production rather than consumption and expenditure. The work done in agricultural or industrial sectors is of great value according to the materialist orientation in Russia (Unapafacc-Upafec), while other types of work such as teaching are considered non productive. The idea of the productive value of work relates to the division of work. It is not stated, but it is implied, that there is "productive and non productive work. Linking work to education, the Ministerio de Educación (1984) stated, give students the opportunity to relate work to the economic and social problems of the country. Also, this goal provided children with an understanding of the dialectical principle, theory and practice (Ministerio de Educación, 1989). Therefore, this idea was integrated to the curriculum as a learning element.

In this regard, Pinkevich (1935) relates how in the former USSR it was very important to link manual work to general instruction. These ideas Torres (1985) explains are based on Marxist thought, that the combination of education with work is one of the many ways to transform a capitalist society.

Goal four was to educate children with the values of the Sandinista Peoples’ Revolution. This meant putting the educational system of a country at the service of a particular party, the Sandinista, which proceeded under the direction of the FSLN Directorate. The values related to this end among others included solidarity with the working masses and links between education and mass organizations, as well as anti-imperialism, while still accepting the USSR imperialism (Unapafacc-Upafec).

The fifth educational goal considered children pursuing the example of the heroes and martyrs, those people who contributed, defined and inspired the country, and the Sandinista Popular Revolution (Unapafacc-Upafec). In revolutionary rhetoric, the new
role models in education were the leaders, and the "martyrs" who had died for the revolution. The FSLN Directorate refers to them as a constellation of martyrs. In almost all cities throughout Nicaragua, on certain streets, there stand monuments honoring revolutionary martyrs giving a silent and eloquent revolutionary discourse. In this regard, Borge (1981) said, culture must portray the new myths created by the dreams of those who died in the revolution.

Since the FSLN was the new dominant power, the goals of education were to respond to the values proclaimed by the revolutionary regime, which were designed according to the Sandinistas' cultural goals. These goals indicate the materialistic concept of education overlooking other forms of instruction, even though it "was not said," it is the "unsaid that is nevertheless said" (Foucault, 1972, pp. 25-110).

Objectives of the New Education

Educational objectives too were leading toward the creation of the "new man." Educational objectives as determined by the Organización de los Estados Americanos (1983) are the proposed changes in the conduct of the student as a consequence of the educational action. They are explicit formulations of the expected changes as to how the student is to modify his or her thoughts, feelings and actions. General objectives were designed to develop in children revolutionary ideals according to Sandinistas' principles. In the introduction of the teacher's manuals, on social studies, among the objectives of the new education were: To introduce students to revolutionary ideas; to make them study and interpret the revolutionary process; and to encourage their participation in
revolutionary tasks on behalf of the Sandinista Revolution (Ministerio de Educación, 1980).

Other general objectives stated in the Document Ends and Objectives of the New Education were: Objective (b): To instill in students the need to defend the fatherland and the revolution, which meant to prepare students to serve and fight for the Sandinista party. Objective (d): To connect learning to the national reality using a scientific methodology. This new learning was related to the Marxist-Leninist dogma. Objective (e): To discover the roots of the native culture, having its promotion and diffusion intimately related to educational programs. For this reason, the importance of cultural activities was an important factor of the pedagogical process. Thus, great emphasis was placed on the richness of Nicaraguan culture (Ministerio de Educación 1980). Objective (f): To use scientific and cultural knowledge to reject all cultural elements, which were not in accord with Marxist-Leninist ideology. Objective (k): To educate students according to the principles and programs of the Nicaraguan Revolution. These objectives indicate that the new education's goal was to transform the Nicaraguan society into a socialist state.

Educational objectives were so important that early in the revolution during a seminar held at Universidad Politécnica de Nicaragua (UPOLI), documents in relation to socialist education were discussed. Gaitan (1978), a Cuban writer trained in Leningrad writes, that objectives constitute the starting point in socialist education, because content, method and organization of the learning process are established within the framework of the objectives. Each subject, he adds, is a fundamental task in education each subject in the curriculum must contribute to the formation of the "new man," and to the needs of the
working class. Alvarez (1979) another Cuban, and a Ph.D. student in the former USSR writes, objectives for each subject must be in accordance with the development, attitudes and convictions of an ideal citizen of a socialist-communist society. Each subject must follow general objectives such as the scientific concept of the world, the values of communism, and the development of scientific thinking. Likewise, extra curricular activities help to achieve general objectives, which along with the Marxist focus on the objectives allow the triumph of the system. The Sandinista government in elementary school, including art programs implemented specific goals and objectives. In this regard, Foucault (1980) writes:

what are these various contrivances of power,
whose operations extend to such differing levels
and sectors of society and are possessed
of such manifold ramifications?
What are their mechanisms, their effects and their relations?
... [Foucault affirms that power]
is neither given, nor exchanged, nor recovered,
but rather exercised, and that it only exists in action...
but is above all a relation of force...
if power is exercised, what sort of exercise
does it involve? What does it consist of?
What is its mechanism?. . . (pp. 88-89).

A mechanism of the Sandinista government was to connect power and knowledge by using “strategies, programmes and technologies” (Gordon, 1980, p. 247) to re-shape students’ worldview.

Goals and objectives were the mechanisms of power used to implement an intentionally politicized system of education in Nicaragua. A whole new system of values was exercised through a controlled educational power, which repressed the student
individuality and freedom. The schools' programs are a good example of the use of these mechanisms of power.

**Elementary School Programs**

The educational transformation of the schools was exercised as programs were changed accordingly to revolutionary aims. Discussing change and transformation Foucault (1972) suggests explaining what precisely transformations consist of, and their difference. He writes:

> How does this differentiation operate?... [in relation to] types of enunciation [of] concepts, strategic choices, ... new rules of [education] on the basis of rules that are already in operation ... the substitution of one discursive formation for another... [in order] to establish the system of transformation that constitute change (pp. 171-172-173).

Transformation also involves, the problems that it raises, the tools that it uses, the concepts that emerge from a transformation...

(p. 15).

The programs, even though they look like any other programs, they were transformed and interpreted in the classroom setting according to Sandinistas' values. Using a Foucaultian (1972) language, these programs were explained in a revolutionary context with specific ideas and intentions in mind, expected and anticipated. For example, in the art class, children could be taught how to make puppets because they are great elements to communicate abstract concepts, like war, or dignity. To illustrate this strategy, a television program for children presented puppets as members of the Sandinista Defense Committee beating a Managua resident over the head with sticks and clubs, just because he was not a Sandinista (Joe, 1988). In most subjects of the
curriculum drawing was used to visualize concepts where children created albums illustrating revolutionary achievements (Ministerio de Educación, 1986). Since art was part of the general curriculum during the Sandinista period, Aesthetics was a required course in elementary program in the public school system (Zavala, 1985).

In regard to the arts Fourth Grade Methodological Orientations (Ministerio de Educación, 1986) gave emphasis to manual work in accordance with the goal of education linking manual and intellectual work. In the same manner, theater can be used to introduce children to see and interpret the social reality of the country. In the art of music, the same Methodological Orientations suggest children to learn popular and testimonial music, such as the “Campesino” Mass, as well as protest songs against oppression and tyranny. Gasperine (1983) tells us, this song movement has its roots in a new Latin American culture involving a revitalized recognition of indigenous cultural forms, which date to prehistoric times. This music speaks of freedom, liberation, dictators, and guerrilla warfare.

To learn the music’s melody, children learned songs, which have war content ideas:

The battalion passes by
The battalion passes by
pin, pin, pon,
I am the soldier
who plays the drum.
(Ministerio de Educación, 1986, p. 446).
Spanish translation.

Or

the poor conducted by its Vanguard
takes Popular Power
workers, destroy
Spanish translation.

In the same way, in Russia the magazine “Soviet Pedagogy” comments on how children learn to make-believe they are soldiers, and learn martial songs. (Asociación Nacionalista de Los Estados Unidos Mexicanos).

All programs, Zavala (1985) relates, had a goal, and that was to make political propaganda to the FSLN. For this, programs were very specific. The unit on biography, in Spanish, recommended fourth graders to read and comment on the most relevant aspects of the life of a revolutionary hero. In “sociodrama,” or role playing, class themes interpreted and discussed by children were: The Revolution Make Children Happy, or The Sandinista Popular Revolution Ended with the Exploitation of the People of Nicaragua (Ministerio de Educación, 1986).

In the elementary science curriculum, a Chemistry objective was to learn about the scientific concept of the world. Topics referring to the natural resources and the exploitation by transnational companies were emphasized too (Ministerio de Educación, 1989). History provided knowledge about the historic reality. Important concepts the students had to learn were “dominant class, intervention, national sovereignty and revolutionary state.” Other definitions were “social class, anti-imperialism and nationalism” (Ministerio de Educación, 1986). All these terms were part of the school knowledge and they were discussed and interpreted in relation to revolutionary objectives. Parallel, Wheelock Roman (1982) stated “science is to serve the revolution” (p. 53).
In addition, children learned mathematics by counting grenades (Central American Historical Institution, 1986). In similar way, in a Soviet mathematics book, children are taught to count by counting soldiers (Asociación Nacionalista de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos).

In Agricultural education emphasis was on production. Children discussed how industries were in the hands of the people as the area property of the people, while before it was in the hands of the rich (Zavala, 1985). True reality was that most of the confiscated land labeled “area property of the people” became the patrimony of the revolutionary elite.

These educational programs introducing students to the new Sandinista ideology were put into practice early during the revolutionary government. With the new programs, children had no choices, instruction was not open, but a closed one. In the transformation of the school according to the Ministry of Education, the structural organization of the curriculum, the programs and the teaching methodology, including texts, all had one specific goal: “To make education a coherent reality with the Revolution” (Arnove, 1986, p. 137).

Foucault’s (1972) ideas might apply to the change in schools programs, he acknowledges:

[what the]... changes consist of:... substitute for... how elements were transformed... [and] what were the specific differences of these transformations... (pp. 172-176).

The change was the transformation of formal education into popular education by transforming programs, texts, and substituting Nicaraguan traditional values such as
respect to the family and to human life, for Marxist-Leninist ones. In Nicaragua, there was the rupture, and discontinuity in Foucault (1972) terms of traditional values in order to implement a new education oriented towards socialism.

**Method of Instruction**

A teaching methodology was also implemented to achieve the revolutionary goals. Method, in a general mode is defined as the medium or a way to follow or to reach an objective; a determined procedure to organize an activity. (Organización de los Estados Americanos, 1983). The methodology in the words of the Minister of Education was popular participation. Concepts were explained by using key situations and projects within a revolutionary context. The methodology was oriented toward revolutionary interests (Ministerio de Educación, 1980).

In popular education, Bamdt (1991) explains, students learn through dialogue, and includes, discussion, questioning and participation, for instance, discussion progress from “description and analysis to collective action.” Using cultural expressions such as drama, music, or drawing, as instructional tools in order to develop people’s inventiveness encourages creativity, Bamdt comments. To give an example, in drawing, students make collective drawings of a region, and in the analysis, Bamdt points out, the students identify characteristics or locations of that region, where important events take place such as the war. In popular education, Black & Bevan (1980) observe, children discuss and analyze the content of revolutionary posters or the “significance of Sandino and the ideas behind the Nicaraguan Revolution” (p. 36). Figure 23 shows a mural that was painted in the Primary and Secondary School Rigoberto López Pérez in Managua.
The mural, "The Light of Revolution" includes the pictures of the revolutionary heroes Sandino, Carlos Fonseca, and Rigoberto López Pérez.

The type of questions teachers develop in the classroom Joe (1988) tells us were:

"Who was one of the allies of imperialism in Chile? Who represented Carlos Fonseca in the Moscow's youth festival? Or what is the relationship between our popular Sandinista revolution and the socialist countries?" (p. 837). A test questionnaire for fifth graders was "What is the difference between the military service in the United States and the Patriotic Military Service of Nicaragua? The correct answer to that question was, the United States military service is used to invade other countries, while the Nicaraguan Patriotic service is to defend the fatherland" (p. 837). De Castilla (1982) said social issues, such as class exploitation by the capitalists are permanent issues in education.

Textbooks and exams were interlaced with examples glorifying the Sandinista party, as well as revolutionary heroes and leaders. An introductory French lesson began by stating, "Sergio Ramirez is great, Humberto Ortega is great." The first was the vice President, and the second Commander-in-chief- of the army of Nicaragua.

Writing exercises Joe goes on saying, were to write letters to the mobilized brothers by the Patriotic Military Service. A letter might read as follows,

. . . receive a fraternal revolutionary greeting. . .  
I am fine; each day I feel more committed to the defense of our revolutionary conquests. . .  
We must remain combative until we achieve the victory of the people under the direction of our organization, the FSLN write soon. . . and remember that we will bury the enemy’s heart up in the mountains.  
A free fatherland or death Long live the FSLN! (p. 837).
Another form of instruction was teaching children songs; Joe (1988) mentions a song that children learned in a lesson in Latin America's awakening:

If Nicaragua sparked the flame  
El Salvador shall continue.  
And all America will follow,  
(p. 837).  
Spanish translation.

This song can be translated as the planned program of the FSLN in Latin America. This program was not attained due to the Sandinistas' defeat in the 1990's elections.

The methods for teaching could also apply to Foucault's concept of strategy, in what he calls "strategies of power" as Gordon (1980) interprets them:

That consists of sets of operations whereby  
a multiplicity of forces, resources, disposition  
and relation of objects are invested and related  
to a dynamic and variable set of objectives.  
Strategy is the exploitation of possibilities [which]  
it itself discerns and creates a resource  
where practices and effects create possibilities  
for operations. . . a strategy of power is the interplay  
between one or more programmes/technologies. . .  
which integrates the production of effects  
with the utilization of those effects (pp. 251-252).

The method of teaching in schools can be considered also, as the educational strategy of the Sandinista National Directorate.

In relation to art instruction, Efland (1990) observes that art is taught according to a society's beliefs. He points out that instructive methods reveal as much of a society as art works do. Reflecting, each pedagogical system each society's values. In Nicaragua during the Sandinista period, school programs reflected the political values of the Sandinista party.
To change the curriculum, the Sandinistas did not ask what should be taught, and to whom. The FSLN National Directorate made the decisions therefore, the new education had a popular content in the service of the people, and against an elitist culture. This, in relation to the arts, meant teaching the visual arts according to revolutionary values, and creating an art that could be easily understood by the masses.

The following chapter discusses art teaching in the private and public schools, and the resistance to Sandinista education.
CHAPTER 8

ART IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

During the Sandinista regime, the arts were used as propaganda to promote revolutionary ideology. "The art's new role" in Efland's (1984) words was not to improve learning, but to support political education. Traditional art expressions therefore, became obsolete. What was the reason for this change in the arts? How did this break in the continuity of Nicaragua's traditional art expressions happen? In this respect, Foucault's ideas might apply to the use of the arts as propaganda and as a mechanism of power to transmit political knowledge. In an interview with Aslessandro Fontana and Pascuale Pasquino (1984) Foucault poses the question, "how is that at certain moments and in certain orders of knowledge, there are these sudden take-offs, these hastening of evolution, these transformations which fail to correspond to the calm, continuist image that is normally accredited?" (p. 54).

Efland (1990) believes, that changes are related to "the existence of various social movements and groups and their interests and aspirations" (p. 7). He writes, the study of social issues involves the study of a society's social structures, "the network of social roles" (p. 4), such as social status and social power. It involves, "ideas of reality, by which we mean a general system of beliefs, a kind of consciousness that characterize a particular epoch" (p. 5).
Foucault also points out to the social sciences, and how they have served as tools of "power, social control, discipline and exclusion" in what he calls "the complicity of the social sciences in the institution of the radically new modern configuration of power/knowledge,. . . the culpability of the social sciences in the process whereby modern society has strengthened its hold over the population and extended the sway of power into all social interactions" (Grumley, 1989, p. 184). This statement relates to the social changes as they occurred in Nicaragua.

Although Foucault's analysis and criticism are directed toward the social sciences, Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) state how through politics art is controlled, and decisions are made about the art that is worthwhile, thus, they ask, who has the power to decide, what kind of art should be taught? Their interpretation of power and knowledge's issues in areas of artistic study might apply to the use of the arts in Nicaragua as propaganda. In Nicaragua, the government decided what type of art was worthwhile, and the kinds of art children were going to learn. Art knowledge was determined by the government, thus, the right art was political art. Hence, the arts politically controlled, became a strategy used to support and to transmit Sandinistas' values. The idea was to portray the country's new "social reality." In this regard, Borge (1981) writes, art, poetry and culture must be a collective expression of our national reality. Accordingly, children in most schools learned the art projected by the revolution, and in this manner, as Giroux (1983) points out, schools became political sites involved in "the construction and control of discourse and meaning" (p. 46). Illustrating this point is Figure 32, it depicts the drawing of a child from Managua and the theme is, "fighting against ignorance we fight
against the counter revolution” (Black & Bevan, 1980). In this drawing, in the child’s imagination, the “counter revolution” portrayed in the form of the stylized frog is destroyed.

Regardless of the government mandate to reeducate children according to the values of the revolution, there were some schools, which resisted the indoctrination. Art instruction reflected two different ideologies, the Sandinista in public schools, and democratic one mirroring traditional values in some private schools. In Nicaragua, in the public school system, art was taught following revolutionary methods, and in some private schools art was taught in a traditional way, as art for art’s sake.

Art in the Public Schools During the Sandinistas

In the public school system, children learn a “new art.” They learn that, art is a “social reality,” therefore, emphasis is on the “national reality.” In the public schools, students were encouraged to draw military planes, camouflage tanks and idealized images of the revolution as it is shown in figure 35. A teacher might begin a lesson by saying, “we are going to learn about trees.” The language used is the same as any other teacher might practice; and as the teacher instructs the class how to draw trees, and describes the variety of precious woods the country has, she might also speak of how the imperialists have taken the wood away with them. The teacher might also discuss the definition of texture, form, line, or shape, and relate these art elements to the trees; the form of the branches, and the colors of the leaves and flowers. Yet, a teacher would go on to explain how transnational companies have exploited the natural resources of the country. The
same idea is described by Hurwitz (1984) when he explains that a Soviet art teacher’s vocabulary may be similar to that of an American teacher, since both talk about creativity, or aesthetics; however, the reading of those terms, as well as their philosophical interpretation are different.

In art, the national reality was interpreted through socialist realism. This term, Struve comments, it is said Stalin coined it. This art style, Struve affirms, depicts the new man “in an ever positive light... [opening] the way to a new formalism of cardboard characters... [justifying] a rigid conservatism and restrain on experiment” (in Price, 1977, p. 232). In Benton’s (1958) words, socialist realism depicts the struggle of the world’s proletariat and the grandeur of socialism. The method of socialist realism was defined by the Minister of Culture of Ukraine, ... as the way by which the artist has the “opportunity to project the developing world”... (p. 63). This type of art depicts the cause of the workers and class conflict; documents bourgeois vices proletarian virtues, and the glories of the Soviet Union (Henderson & Brown, 1987, p. 1827). Socialist realism, is realistic art, and became the basis of Soviet art. The Sandinista government used the arts to project revolutionary knowledge, particularly encouraging socialist realism as the most useful, and as a tactic to develop a new theory of society.

Similar ideas were exercised in the People’s Republic of China, Hackett (1988) relates, socialist realism is seen in revolutionary posters, peasant paintings and operas. Reinforcing the idea how the artistic media can be used to support moral, educational, and political ideals. Price (1977) points out how, in Russia and China, the masses are educated through the arts.
Revolutionary art became part of the schools’ culture; consequently, in Nicaraguan schools a revolutionary art portraying revolutionary values was strategically imposed through political power. Foucault’s (1980) statement, that power “installs itself where it produces its real effects” (p. 97), and becomes “politically useful” (p. 101), might be relevant in this context. In schools, art exhibits were designed to exalt the heroes of the revolution. The cultural material of the school portrayed the symbols of the revolution. Therefore, images of Sandino, martyrs and leaders of the Sandinista vanguard surrounded by flags, and mottoes were displayed in schools. Additionally, posters disclosing political themes as part of the school knowledge like, “Sandino Yesterday, Sandino Today, Sandino Forever,” idea which was taken from Hebrews, 13:8, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrews 13: 8, 1995, p. 936).

This imposition of a new culture in schools through revolutionary practices might be also interpreted in Foucault’s perspective (1980), as the “imposition of a whole system of values disguised as the teaching of... reading and writing covering up the imposition of values... (p. 20) [and as] the formation and transformations of a body of knowledge” (Foucault, 1972, p. 194).

The schools’ art had to reflect revolutionary values to serve “the party.” Party is a concept evolved by Lenin, where members owe strict obedience to the “party” (Hoover 1958). In Nicaragua, through mass organizations the arts and education were directed along party lines. In Communist Russia, it was the party vanguard and not the artist “who orchestrates the emotion and decides what is right and wrong, and even what is ugly and beautiful” (Benton 1958, p. 67).
Indeed, directed by the party, which in Nicaragua was the FSLN, art in schools was implemented through “practice,” which may be interpreted as a “practice of the revolution.” A practice that was exercised through “strategies, programmes and technologies of power” (Gordon, 1980, pp. 246-247) with definite aims and goals. These were the “practices of power... [forming] the concrete, material mechanisms... the transparent masks behind which these mechanisms are hidden” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 203). The main objective in Nicaraguan schools was the student’s indoctrination, and it was through practice that children learned to interpret revolutionary ideology.

In the following pages a child art expression created during the Sandinista regime is reviewed. The drawing show how the revolutionary context influenced the way children expressed their ideas. The analysis is based on Point by Point Microanalysis (PPM) according to Odita (1991).

A Child's Drawing: “Christmas during the War.”

Tito, six years old, drew his idea of a Christmas tree Figure 33. A child’s art expression of a tree adorned with a doll, a butterfly, a flower, an airplane throwing bombs and at the bottom of the tree “a boy perhaps holding an AK-47 rifle. Barb, who sent this drawing to a friend, added to the drawing, “not my idea of Christmas. But to a kid who’s never had a Christmas free from war--well...”

Tito’s drawing is an example of children’s war drawings. The drawing was easily made, and it has the freshness of a child’s view of his environment. He is giving us his
view of the world, of a world that perhaps he does not quite understand yet. Lowenfeld and Britain (1987), tell that “children, particularly, express their ideas, thoughts, and emotions with a [unique] honesty”. . . Within each work of art a youngster portrays feelings, intellectual abilities, physical development, perceptual sensitivities, [and] creative involvement” (p. 470) according to his age. . . [because] “children progress at different paces” (p. 473).

What media did Tito use to express his ideas? To express his ideas, his tools are a page of his school notebook and a pencil. Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987) explain that the elements in the organization of the picture in children’s drawings vary. In Tito’s drawing we can observe the “base line” (p 470) upon which the elements of his environment rest. These are what he sees around, the war, airplanes and the rifle he is carrying. Even though, it is a child’s drawing in terms of composition, the different Christmas decorations add variety to the drawing. The needles of the pine tree make a pattern, and the radial sun balances the composition. A drawing characteristic of children at that age Lowenfeld and Brittain add is that “shapes for things are geometric” (p. 475). Tito draws simple geometric forms. A triangular Christmas tree resting on a curved base line. Vertical parallel lines make the trunk of the tree, and diagonal lines form the branches some of which, are straight, while others are drawn with slight soft curve, thus adding movement to the tree. This, in the child’s language is just evoking the idea of things, which ignores shading and modeling.

Also, in Tito’s drawing there is no color, because he does not have crayons or color pencils to color his drawing. During war time, children cannot have and enjoy
things that are common in normal times, because they become a luxury when there are other things that are more important, like getting the daily food to survive from starvation, or saving one's life.

According to Linderman and Herberholz (1974) children omit details that they did not think of while drawing, and their pictures are not “correct,” in “proportion,” or “realistic” (p. 53), although their drawings reflect a child’s meaningful experiences in a sensitive way, like Tito’s drawing.

Chapman (1978) writes, that children in early elementary years, grades one to three, they like “to express an emotionally important aspect of an experience” (p. 166). This is what Tito has done he represents a tree adorned with the symbols that are familiar to him and the important experiences of his life like Christmas. Also, a characteristic of the child between the ages of four and seven, Lowenfeld and Brittan (1987) add, are his or her first representational attempts. How they project them, “looking at the viewer” (p. 475), which in Tito’s it is reflected in the representation of the sun coming out from an imaginary sky at the top of the drawing.

Children’s concepts of art, like Tito’s are formed, interpreting Wasson, Stuhr, Petrovich-Mwaniki (1990) within their knowledge of art, “as well as the sociocultural context in which art is produced” (p. 234).

Does his drawing have a meaning? His is a simple statement, but he has been able to give a message about the experiences that he is living and again in Foucault’s (1972) language, he depicts the symbols of the period in which he has had to live. That is what he is telling us with his Christmas decorations, the airplane dropping bombs, and the
child with a rifle, that perhaps is his self-portrait. It is interesting that the drawing does not reflect fear, or anguish, although, it does reflect a child's vision of the world he lives in.

In addition, children's works are spontaneous and imaginative in the way they view and project ideas. Children do not create art works as professional artists do. They do not make sketches or outlines in order to organize a drawing. Professional artists portray three-dimensional space in an illusory way, while children present shapes in a two-dimensional form. Artists project distance by using perspective, while for children all objects are in the same plane, little is concealed and the rest remains immediate and accessible, as it is shown in Tito's drawing.

Why children make drawings? Wilson and Wilson (1987) suggest the possibility that they like to tell stories, what they call "visual narratives" (p. 26) as they draw their own reality and "reinvent their world" (p. 33). That is what Tito did, a narration of his idea of Christmas. As Wilson and Wilson (1987) believe this type of drawings are children's spontaneous narratives.

The next paragraphs describe art teaching in a semi-private school where children see the national reality from a different perspective.

The Art Class in the American Nicaraguan School

The Sandinista government connected power and knowledge by using "strategies, technologies and programmes" (Gordon, 1980, p. 247) to re-shape students' worldview, and relied on existing institutions, such as the school to impose its values. But in spite of
their power the Sandinistas met with resistance to implement the new education. Most private schools supported a different ideology. One of these schools was the American Nicaraguan School.

Orr and Reeve (1985) tell the American-Sponsored Overseas Schools (ASOS) serve eighty-eight thousand students of all nationalities and cultures; only 30% of the students are U.S. citizen. There are 163 of these schools in more than ninety countries. One objective in these schools is to teach children the appreciation of art by using the host country’s culture as a base. The idea is that children will benefit by learning about the culture that they are living in, and will learn to appreciate and enjoy the culture of the host country. The American Nicaraguan School wants to teach the value of cultural diversity by stressing the position that different cultures have distinctive identities. In this regard, Wasson, Stuhr, and Petrovich Mwaniki (1990) state that multicultural education is recognizing and respecting sociocultural diversity; understanding and respecting how other people in other sociocultural groups... “view and represent the world” (p. 237); and recognizing “the inherent worth of each member of a sociocultural group” (p. 242). Thus, in the American School, children discover that other people, even though they have different eyes, or skin color, or speak in different languages, feel, think and love like they do. In this way, this multicultural view of education enhance the children's understanding of the diversity of art expressions involving “the culture of diverse groups, as well as the common culture” (Daniel and Daniel, 1979, p. 10).

Until 1979, The American Nicaraguan School, grades K to 12, followed an U.S. curriculum. However, after the triumph of the insurrection, the school had to change the
curriculum in order to survive. Because of this change, students were divided into Nationals and Internationals. This was done because, under Nicaraguan law, the government has the right to educate Nicaraguan children and to establish and enforce educational goals. The International students were American children and children from such countries as China, Japan, Mexico, Germany, Honduras, Norway and Iraq. These children learned what children learn in schools in the United States. The Nationals were Nicaraguan children who studied under the new programs implemented by the Sandinista government.

At the American School this new form of education meant to the children, two letters, “N” and “I,” standing for National and International, placed at the entrance of classrooms, so that officials from the government, who periodically visited the school, would not enter the wrong class. This, transcribed into Apple’s (1983) terms was the form “through which curricula and teaching are controlled” (p. 617). To achieve the educational goals all teachers from the public school system, including those from private schools, had to attend a training workshop (TEPCE) every month where they received educational instructions, and indoctrination. In this way, schools were “redefined,... to enhance both efficiency and control” (Apple, 1983, note, p. 625).

Because labels were placed at the American Nicaraguan School, the children knew that they were either “N” or “I.” Jane Mercer said that “persons have no names and belong to no class until we put them in one... [it depends] upon our interest and the purpose of our classification” (Woolfolk, 1987, p. 453). In Nicaragua, children were
divided not because they were exceptional students, had learning problems, or were handicapped. A different ideology divided them.

In Giroux’s (1983) view, “school cultures may take complex and heterogeneous forms” . . . (p. 63) reflecting different values. Schools, as political sites, include, “the construction and control of discourse, meaning, and subjectivity” (p. 46). Giroux shows the connection between culture and politics by stating that:

In schools as social sites, contradictions and forms of resistance develop (p. 86). . . As social sites, they produce and reproduce ideologies and cultural forms . . . (p. 86), and they contain levels of determination of unique specificity, . . . that do not reflect the wider society but only have a particular relationship to it (p. 102).

In this way, the American School became not only an instructional site, but also a cultural, political and social site, where some students, and some American teachers believed in the Sandinistas values, while others believed in democratic values.

One class at the American Nicaraguan School in which National and International children were not separated was the art class. What did children learn in the art class? In the art class children were taught about the past, about the art made by native Nicaraguans possibly between 4,000 and 3,000 B. C. In Nicaragua, as in most Latin American countries, indigenous customs have been maintained over time as living traditions. For instance, up in the mountains, the clay vessels that women use to carry water still depict the same designs that prehistoric pottery portrays. Hence, in the art class, children learned that a long time ago there was a land, Mesoamerica, where one of the great cultures of the Americas developed. How in this land, the people built temples, created sculptures in basalt stone, painted murals, and developed a hieroglyphic writing.
In the art class, as in ancient times, children were discovering the traditions and cultural values expressed by prehistoric artists in their art. In this manner, children were educated to compare and to relate the art of the past to the present by introducing them to the social, cultural and historical context in which the art is created. Thus, providing them with a deep understanding of ancient Nicaraguan art. This emphasis to native Nicaraguan culture by presenting to children a different reality, from the national reality that they were living was a form of resistance to the Cultural Revolution, and to revolutionary art. In this regard, the Vice-President Sergio Ramirez (1980) statement was, “we could never accept the existence of a culture isolated from the revolutionary process” (p. 835), and he called to build the Nicaraguan Cultural Revolution, based on a popular dimension, which meant a popular culture, anti-imperialist and democratic.

In the art class, “holiday school art” played an important role. This is an art that is part of traditions such as Thanksgiving and Christmas, and included such things as Mother’s day cards, which were created with lots of love and care, as part of the child’s life. These are traditions that American teachers brought along with them from the United States many years ago, and they have become part of the school curriculum, even though it is not specified in there. This kind of art that children made in the art class was another kind of resistance, teaching American traditions against Sandinistas’ values. This, is a kind of art, which could be called “every day art.” It is as Faulkner, Ziegfeld, Smagula (1987) write, creating pictorial images for enjoyment. It is an art designed to please, like the design of the “Kleenex box” (Faulkner and Ziegfeld, 1969, pp. 130-131).
Efland (1987) calls it, "school art style," an art created only in schools, which exists in almost all schools in the world.

Propaganda was the revolution's strategy exercised via political posters, banners, portraits, and murals displayed all over the country. In most schools, children depicted the leaders of the revolution. "Propaganda is of crucial importance for the eventual triumph of the party" said Lenin (in Benton, 1958, p. 24). Car, explains the idea of propaganda "as a powerful instrument for the creation of a new ideology, of new modes of thought, of a new outlook on the world" (in Price, 1977, p. 52). At the American School in the art class there was no political propaganda, neither political posters, nor political banners as a resistance to indoctrination by propaganda.

In the art class, children made flags from all over the world. Each child made the flag of his or her own country, and the flags placed all over the school made the school look like a small United Nations site. In resistance to the Sandinistas, their flag was not made. At that time, the Sandinista flag was placed in every classroom of the American School except the art class. However, one teacher objected to the Sandinista flag in her classroom, stating that it was not the Nicaraguan flag, nor the United States flag, but a political one. The director himself put the flag in the classroom. This resistance expresses Freire's idea that there are different ways of "collective struggle and resistance" (Giroux, p. xii, 1985). In this way, the American school, as Giroux (1983) states, became a site of both "domination and contestation" (p. 63) where mechanisms of the dominant ideology were resisted. Armove (1986) illustrates the importance of political propaganda, when a supervisor was very critical in his report to a teacher's "exhibit of the life of
Sandino, [because] it was confusing, and that it was so important a subject to display poorly” (p. 100).

Officials from the government periodically visited the school in order to supervise classes, and to pick up the exams, which were reviewed by the Ministry of Education. This was done in order to assess students’ “new education,” and to find out if teachers were “teaching the right way.” that is, stressing Sandinistas values, and propaganda.

Once, government officials came in the art class and one of the supervisors said, “I do not see,” the teacher did not let him finish, and said, “Nicaraguan art?” While pointing to the art made by Nicaraguan prehistoric artists. There were no more questions in regard to political propaganda in the classroom.

Benton’s (1958) quote of sir John Maynard could illustrate the use of the arts as propaganda as it happened in Nicaragua:

They have harnessed the writers and artists themselves to their censorship: they have secured an effective monopoly of truth, and filled the market with their own brand of the article, . . . [exercising] the terrifying efficiency of organized propaganda eliminating truth by calculated suppression and misrepresentation, and dining the prescribed formulas into the ears of millions prepared for their reception by universal education. . . (p. 72).

The art class was decorated with children’s artwork, which portrayed their favorite themes. Children were not encouraged to make war drawings, because drawings like paintings are statements. In this case, depicting war themes would support Nicaragua’s civil war and political struggle. Therefore, the class was decorated with Western and non-Western art. Prints of the Impressionists artists, Manet, Monet, as well Expressionist creations of Latin American and North American artists were there to
inspire the children’s artwork. Also, large laminated prints depicting Frank Stella’s geometric shapes were there too as a resistance, instead of the images of the revolutionary heroes, and martyrs of the revolution, like General Sandino.

Studio art was a favorite unit, because children like to make things. Students learned to interpret the creative process by following the artist’s ideas. How he thinks about shapes, composition and focal points, or repeat forms to balance a composition. Through art production students became familiar with materials, for instance, in ceramics they acquired knowledge about the properties of clay, its plasticity and firing behavior. In learning how to make objects, the child experimented with the materials and became aware of its limitations and possibilities. Students were taught different art techniques, as well as the process involved in the creation of the artwork. In this manner, students acquired a rich understanding of the visual arts.

Likewise, art was taught as “art for art’s sake.” This, to resist “socialist realism,” the art supported by the revolution. Contradicting what Ernesto Cardenal, Jesuit priest and Minister of Culture has said, “there is no room for art for the sake of art itself; art has to be subordinated to the love of men, that is to the revolution as does everything else” (in Joe, 1988, p. 835).

In the art class also, “individuality” was encouraged as a resistance to “collective work” which was stressed in the public schools. In art, individuality is what makes individuals and groups different. It is a characteristic, a certain thing that is peculiar to individuals. Individuality shows the specific traits, the distinct features that sets people apart. In art it is like the mark of the artist. Collective work ignores individuality, and
this was stressed by the Minister of Interior Tomas Borge at the second Latin American and Caribbean Theater Conference, “without doubt, the revolution is the greatest piece of art created by humanity, since it is a collective work” (Barricada International Culture, 1983, p. 454).

In addition, there was the idea of making the art classes an enjoyable experience. Just to show children that there were beautiful things to enjoy still, despite the horrors of the war they were living through. For this, there was music in the art class. Children’s music, and as they painted or drew, the music provided the background for the making and understanding of art. For the enjoyment of art, the school’s garden was used as a classroom also. There, students tried to copy the blue sky and the green verdure of the tropics. The natural beauty helped them to forget the destruction caused by the war. In this manner, the art class provided these children enjoyment and understanding of art in the midst of the war. In the art class, learning became an enjoyable experience, and this was expressed in the students’ drawings. Figure 34 shows a child’s shield designed with her favorite themes, the things that made up her world, “Disneyland and a little white bunny.” In this regard, Foucault (1977) claims, Giroux (1983) observes, that “power works so as to be exercised on and by people within different contexts structuring interacting relations of dominance and autonomy” (p. 108).

Giroux’s (1983) analysis of schools as political sites of “both domination and contestation. . . (p. 63) and to the notion that they represent arenas of . . . struggle among differentially empowered cultural and economic groups” (p. 3), where forms of resistance
develop could relate to the resistance that occurred at the American School, and the people of Nicaragua during the Sandinista period.

**Resistance to Sandinistas' Values in Nicaragua**

In Nicaragua, power was exercised as a force upon people. In Foucault’s (1980) view, as presented by Giroux (1983) power is a force which “is not static . . . it is a process that is always in play” (p. 63). It is “an enabling as well as a constraining force” (p. 38). In this play of social forces, forms of resistance develop, and people learn to resist pressures, to “resist, escape, or change . . . the existing social order” (p. 86).

Resistance is a medium for understanding ways people mediate and reply to “structures of domination and constraints” (p. 108). Resistance is created in the midst of conflicting discourses and values relating to specific groups’ interests, which are linked to such issues as “gender, race, and class” (p. 60).

In Nicaragua, many parents resisted the Sandinista government. How did parents do it? They stopped sending children to school. Many children dropped from school because of the draft, because at the age of fifteen children had to go into the army. Parents hid their children in any place they could think of even private schools let young people remain hidden there. Parents resisted the police force when they, usually in the middle of the night, looked for children to take them to the war that was going on. In the “barrio” of Monimbó, a neighborhood, in the city of Masaya, which during the insurrection became a symbol of resistance to the National Guard, parents resisted to the police with stones, machetes, a tool used in agriculture for chopping, and with whatever
they had at hand. However, at other times, they could not resist, as it happened in 1987 in the same city, Masaya, at the Salesian High School. One day, a priest forgot to close the school’s doors and fifteen children were taken to war, and no one saw them ever again. Children at the age of fifteen were not allowed to leave the country; therefore, embassies did not issue visas to young people. However, children were taken out of the country at night and through the jungle; they hid like criminals to save their lives. People did resist; no one denounced a child. Parents sold whatever they had - radios, refrigerators, anything-in order to have money to send their children away from death. Young people did not go to parties, to movies, or play with friends, because it was dangerous. The police might come at any time and take them with them, and as a result, perhaps they would lose their lives.

In this regard, Giroux (1983) points out that resistance, as a theoretical and ideological construct, is an important focal point in the analysis of schooling and societal relations. Resistance, he comments is more than a new interpretation, because it points to the cause of opposing behaviors. He adds:

The notion of resistance points to the need to understand... ways in which people mediate and respond to the interface between their own lived experiences and structure of domination and constraint (p. 108).

To paraphrase Giroux’s (1985) interpretation of Freire’s ideas, in Nicaraguan schools, there was a notion of cultural power formed by the acts of resistance (p. xxi) This phenomenon of resistance was produced out of the need to transform a reality that teachers and students were living in revolutionary Nicaragua. The resistance in Nicaraguan schools was,
... more than [a] response. Resistance [was] a symptom of an incipient alternative agenda, an agenda which, in many cases, [was] not evident to the actors themselves. (Aronowitz and Bologh, 1983, p. xii).

A new curriculum based on democratic values is described in the following pages. It was designed after the Sandinistas' defeat, and it is the curriculum, which is implemented in Nicaraguan schools today.
CHAPTER 9

TOWARDS A DEMOCRATIC CURRICULUM

With the change of government in 1990, the general curriculum in Nicaraguan schools underwent yet another transformation. This time, the curriculum was headed towards democratic values. By focusing on democratic values, the new curricular changes contradicted Sandinista revolutionary education based on socialist values, as was discussed in previous chapters.

In an effort to promote education and peace in Nicaragua, UNESCO held a seminar in Managua in 1990 called University for Peace. During a week, professors, curriculum planners, and schools directors met to plan a new curriculum. Their aim was to design educational programs based on democratic values, in the hope that Nicaragua would soon become a country where children could learn to build peace through dialogue, mutual respect, and reconciliation. The goal of the new curricular plan was to develop a new means of education, which could not be manipulated by single party ideology. In particular, children would not be made to draw or paint war themes, nor would they be restricted to governmentally approved ideas as it is shown in Figure 35 depicting a child’s view of the war. The hope was to develop a curriculum that would be based on human values and not merely on ideology. The proposed curriculum perhaps could reflect the values that in Nicaragua are trying to eradicate and transform an
institutionalized violence for peace. The goal would be to instill ideas of peace in young learners. As the preamble of the constitution of UNESCO states: “since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defense of peace must be constructed” (Harris, 1988, p. 5). To attain such goals, it was important to transform the political culture in schools by instilling democratic values in students.

To design a curriculum based on democratic values, a new program called Education for Democracy was established. Lopez-Selva (no date), a director states that this program was created to develop critical thinking skills in students and to foster democratic culture in schools. The project is supported by a grant from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), with funds from USAID/Nicaragua. The idea for the creation of this program arose when the Minister of Education, Humberto Belli Pereira, and the American Federation of Teachers set up an office in Managua for the development of a democratic curricular framework. Additionally, the center was to promote a nation-wide contest on painting, essay writing, a civics duty project, and song competition among high school students throughout the country. Within the program, a workshop center was specially designed to introduce students to democratic issues such as: “Democratic Leadership.” The program also included a “Student Government Project” to instill citizenship in students, grounded in democratic values, where students could share experiences that would encourage them creatively.

Hence, the curricular transformation of 1990 was understood as a series of significant changes in the educational system. The changes were made possible by implementing educational goals that respond to the needs of the Nicaraguan society. A
revision of educational content from previous years was made in all subjects because they had been a reflection of Sandinistas values, with their centralized and politicized education. All of these transformations meant change from one pedagogical paradigm to another, from socialist ideas to democratic ones.

For this curricular transformation, an educational profile based on democratic values was developed. The profile stated the fundamentals of the educational process, including the following components: the fundamental characteristics of a democratic education; the general objectives of the educational process; and the cultural content of a democratic education. Democracy is understood as a doctrine where the people actively participate in the governmental issues. Democracy is a way of life in which the political structure includes participation of the people in the ideological, political, and economic development of the society (Centro de Educación para la Democracia, 1993).

The educational profile for elementary school children is explained in detail because today the goals of education are based on the values stated in the profile. The profile describes the characteristics that children should have acquired by the time when they finish elementary school (Villalobos, 1992). In the same way, the profile is the element that defines the needs of the curriculum and the goals for learning (Ministerio de Educación-Simen, 1993). The profile is the instrument, which identifies values that will improve the human qualities in children.

An important goal for learning therefore is that children be able to access and transfer knowledge, applying it to different situations. Prawat (1989) explains this as, "the student’s ability to access or utilize information in potentially relevant situations". . .
that is, to have “access to a full range of intellectual resources” and possess the ability to respond within various contexts (pp. 33-34) in a creative and critical manner.

The Educational Profile

The configuration of the educational profile for primary schools was designed according to: Democratic principles and the educational policies of the Ministry of Education in relation to basic curriculum components. It also takes into account the goals of the National Congress on Education “Con Todos y para Todos” (With All and for All), as well as the Policies of the Ministry of Education within the National Government of Reconstruction (Ministerio de Educación, 1990). Most importantly, it was created according to the needs of Nicaraguan children.

The Ministry of Education-Simen coordinated the design of the educational profile. The design was under a Technical Central Commission of the Ministry of Education, a Departmental Commission, and an International Commission from UNESCO. The special UNESCO representative was Mr. F. Villalobos who coordinated the whole project. Participant observation methodology was used in designing the educational profile; that is to say, that all sectors of the society were represented in the project. A total of 6,500 people participated at a national level. Also, an important objective in this project has been to encourage active parental participation, to build trust in the school system. This is a crucial issue in education because during the previous decade the government controlled education. The majority of parents did not have active
participation in their children's education because under the Sandinistas, it was considered the right of the state to make decisions relating to children's education.

The educational profile is also founded in the document “Educación para Todos” (Education for All). This document establishes: That each child has the right to acquire the basic needs for learning in order to develop abilities and creativity, to improve his human condition. In this manner, he will be able to develop the abilities he needs in life to work with dignity and develop a better life and continue learning (UNESCO et al, 1990).

Table 1 shows the formulation of differential profile for elementary education. Figure 36 indicates the methodological process for the design of the profiles.

**Design of Instruments and their Application**

In the design of the profile, three aspects of the individual are taken into consideration: Self knowledge; the ability to perform; and the capability for learning. Additionally, the profile was based on the values that children, both boys and girls, should learn in school, at home, and in the community. The instruments were questionnaires, surveys, and interviews designed to discover the best kind of education for Nicaraguan children. The opinion of students, teachers, parents, community leaders, the business sector, including governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as the private sector were all taken into account. The instruments were applied to eighty-one educational centers, with a total of 2,000 students and 250 teachers (Ministerio de Educación-Simen, 1993). The instruments were randomly distributed among four different groups according to the following categories: An ethnic sample was composed
of 20% of the entire student body in one school; the rural sample was 20% of the total
student population at another school; an urban marginal area, with 10% of the total
students in one school; and a basic sample of 10% in one school in the capital, Managua.
For the application of the instruments, the country was divided into three regions:
Pacific, Central, and Atlantic (Villalobos, 1992).

The Elementary Educational Profile

The profile for primary school was based on four principles: First, the integral
formation of students involving a humanist dimension. Second, education for democracy
and peace, implying an ethical dimension. Third, development, that embodies a
productive dimension. Finally, family education, which has a social dimension. The
humanist aspect relates to the qualities of man; the ethical refers to the practices of good
behavior; the productive relates to a better life; and the social relates to the duties of
people towards the family and society. Cultural and artistic developments were also
considered (Villalobos, 1992).

The four principles were classified into four categories undertaken as the thematic
axis of development, and they are: Personal, socioeconomic, scientific-technological, and
humanistic values. These four conceptual categories are linked to performance and
learning needs and relate to the goals of education (Ministerio de Educación-Centro de
Educación para la Democracia 1993). Variables for each category were defined and
based on personal development, comprehension of man and society, knowledge of the
environment, communication, information, and social values. These variables facilitate
the construction of the instruments designed to collect the information needed to develop
the profile (Villalobos, 1992). Figure 37 shows the regulatory dimensions of the profile
and its connection with the individual. Figure 38 indicates dimensions and categories,
and its connection with the person.

In the design, the student's special conditions were also taken into consideration,
such as area of residence and ethnic background (Ministerio de Educación-Simen, 1993).
In like manner, the social, cultural, and political experiences that children had gone
through in the past decade were also taken into account when developing the profile.
This, as Stuhr, Petrovich-Mwaniki & Wasson (in press) state is, "to recognize and
mobilize the knowledge and experiences they bring to the educational process" (p. 13),
which in Nicaragua were the social changes that transformed the school in 1979, and
consequently, the children's school life.

The national profile based on the general principles and categories introduced,
indicates the integration of fundamental values in the elementary school curriculum. The
Ministry of Education stated the values as follows:

**Integral Formation of Students**

Integral education represents a number of qualities that Nicaraguan children need
to have for their material, moral, spiritual, and vocational formation.

**Category: Personal.**

This category includes the following variables: Integrity, self-esteem, and
control. These are expressed among others in:
P.3 - the acceptance and respect for one’s personal identity and for the ideas and actions of others;

P.5 - the practice of discipline, control, and self-esteem.

**Education for Development**

In the modern world, a child needs to be equipped with knowledge and skills that enable him to participate in the development of the society in which he lives.

**Category: Socioeconomic and Scientific-Technological**

The variables are: Comprehension of man and society; understanding the role of the individual in society; and awareness of social needs. This dimension is stated as:

ES.6 - the encouragement of production and savings;

ES.8 - developing skills for creativity and problem solving.

**Education for the Family**

The development and transformation of a society is related to the unity and growth of the family.

**Category: Sociological**

Variables comprise family, community, and society. They are expressed by:

S.1 - living in harmony within the family, the school, and the community;

S.4 - Developing the unity of the family through love, trust, and understanding.

**Education for Democracy**

The curricular transformation for the democratization of education involves instilling in students fundamental values where peace, dialogue and mutual respect will prevail.
Category: Values.

Variables include: Social, civic, cultural, moral, and spiritual. They are stated as:

Value. 1 - the practice of democracy by respecting Human Rights and the principles of justice, freedom, and peace.

Value. 3 - demonstration of love and respect for God, for life, and for the family, and fellowman.

Value. 4 - manifestation of love and respect for one's country, its laws, and symbols.

Value. 9 - learning to express in creative ways the diversity of the arts (Ministerio de Educación-Simen, 1993).

These goals considered in the design of the general curriculum relate to the “Cardinal Principles of Education,” which states that each child develops “the knowledge, interests, ideals, habits, and powers... toward nobler ends”... Likewise, each child:

... has [the] right to the opportunity
to develop the best that is in him ...
The task of education, as of life, is therefore reinforced by the belief in the potential, and perchance unique, worth of the individual.
to call forth that potential worth
(Department of the Interior, 1928, pp. 1-3-27).

Development of Values: Its Importance

Values are general guides of conduct; they give direction to life and are reflected in human behavior. Each society develops values, that set patterns of behaviour which become that society's fundamental characteristics. Individual identity is developed in
relation to the values of one's culture. In a world where technology is dominant, it is necessary to make the reality around us more humane. This can be achieved through implementation of values in young people, as it will help them in their search for truth.

In this regard, Casassus (1992) suggestions can be applied to the curriculum, for instance: providing education according to cultural characteristics; identifying enduring values that are flexible and adaptable to change; the identification of significant concepts within cultures; recognition that between different cultures there are variations in values, and that these values might not necessarily be coherent among those cultures, but they must be taken into account so that general orientations [in the curriculum] will have meaning and can be realized within the educational system.

The Nicaraguan Ministry of Education considers that values contribute to the integral education of students. As a result, in the curricular design, values should be considered not only as a subject, but also as an element that should be integrated into different subjects' areas. The following paragraphs discuss how the values stated in the general profile can be integrated into the elementary curriculum (Ministerio de Educación-Informe Nacional, 1993).

Integration of Values in the Elementary School Curriculum

In the curricular policies of the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education, a main goal of the new plan is to eliminate political propaganda from schools and to exclude political ideology from educational textbooks and programs. The changes also include respect for academic freedom, which will permit flexibility in developing the programs.
The hope is that the integration of values into the curriculum will make young students aware of these principles, helping them to see how values reflect in relation to family, the school and community. Students will become conscious that they, as human beings, are free and equal, possessing basic human rights, such as the right to have an education and the right to be an active member of society. Further, the values are presented to students as a series of choices because it is important for children to make decisions using their own free will.

A workshop on curricular innovations for a democratic education was held in the Dominican Republic. There it was recommended to integrate values in the curriculum because values are a priority for children’s integral development. Moreover, the school is the place where children can learn about values in a systematic and organized manner (Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos et al, 1993).

In the new curriculum, values are being integrated into the learning process in an interdisciplinary way. Soto & Hernandez (1993) explain the integration of values into a social science program in an interdisciplinary way. The integration is according to areas, and there are three: a) academic knowledge, which can include ideological influences in Nicaraguan political history, b) the ability to perform, which enables a child to identify different political ideologies, c) understanding of ideas, that can translate as being critical and respectful of different political ideologies. To integrate civic values in the elementary curriculum, a textbook about the history of Nicaragua entitled: En Busca de la Democracia (In Search for Democracy) was written by Romero & Buitrago (1994). Figure 39 graphically illustrates the integration of the curriculum.
Also, the formation of human values through art can be attained through artistic expression, since artists can depict the beauty, joy, or tragedies, of human existence. The theme, or the content of the artwork can be interpreted according to particular value or values. Oviedo Plazaola (1993) recommends integration of cultural expressions into the learning experience. Stuhr's (no date) suggestions in regard to Wisconsin Native Americans can be applied to the implementation of values in Nicaraguan schools. She asserts that, the study of traditional native American arts and crafts, should be integrated in the curriculum (p. 17), as well as the significance of the values that they represent.

The new curriculum for the elementary grades should include art as a subject. As stated in previous chapters, most private schools in Nicaragua include art in the general curriculum. While in most public schools, art has not yet been integrated into the curriculum. This is primarily due to economic factors: the result of almost twelve years of a consecutive state of war, in which the schools were partially destroyed. Today the schools lack even essential things like chairs for children to sit on and tables on which to write. The importance of the arts in basic education rests in that it complements the general curriculum by providing cultural literacy, which provides young learners with a balanced education. In the chapter that follows, ideas for an art curriculum for elementary schools children are presented.
CHAPTER 10

A POSTMODERN ART CURRICULUM FOR NICARAGUA’S ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

In this study, the art curriculum could be interpreted in Taba’s (1962) definition of curriculum as “a plan for learning” (p. 9) about art and as the means to provide children with knowledge and understanding of the arts. In the art curriculum, children would be seen as Mattil (1971) describes them,

... Children may be likened to a handful of seeds from many flowers. At first, they may seem more similar than different in many respects. Place these seeds into the earth and nourish them. As they grow and mature their differences become marked. Some remain small and delicate while others are large and brilliant, some bloom early and some late. One thing they may have in common: under good conditions they all bloom and have their own beauty (p. 7).

The art curriculum can provide Nicaraguan children with the opportunity to enjoy arts programs, which will give them “personal fulfillment by means of art.” It will facilitate “understanding of concepts, [and a] notion of discovery and expertise;” this will allow them to understand that “works of art are [a] reconstruction of experience” (Efland, 1989, pp. 198-218). In the past decade, the curriculum was designed to indoctrinate children; therefore, they did not have the opportunity to learn about art in the same way as children from other countries. Today’s art curriculum could be designed within the
new social context in which Nicaraguan children live. One in which students will not be required to depict what a particular political party thinks is good art. One in which children will have the freedom to express their own ideas as children can do as it is seen in the child's drawing "the circus," Figure 17, because "it is through expression that personal growth occurs" (Efland, 1989, p. 205). If a curriculum lets young students express their own vision of art through different aesthetic concepts, children would then learn to understand William Blake's nineteenth century poetic vision of art:

To see the world in a grain of sand,
    Infinity in a wild flower,
To hold the earth in the palm of your hand
    and eternity in an hour (Stites, 1940, p. 683).

What would then be the best way to provide elementary school children in Nicaragua with knowledge and understanding of the arts? What should be the components, goals, and areas of study of the art curriculum? What would be the concepts, skills, or alternatives to be included? What would be the subject matter that would provide young learners knowledge in the arts? The challenge is to design and implement an art curriculum that would provide children with a comprehensive understanding of creative works. This is because, in the past decade, art as well as other subjects in the curriculum were taught only from one point of view, as stated in previous chapters. Subjects were taught this way due to the fact that other art expressions were just simply ignored. Art that did not portray the Sandinistas' values was not regarded as good art. This idea was expressed by Arce (1980): Artists, he said, in order to create works understandable to the masses, must first be geared towards the masses; otherwise,
it will not be considered art. In Nazi Germany, in a similar way, art that did not portray
the government's ideals was considered degenerate and unpatriotic (Stokstad, 1995).

Another goal within the art curriculum would be to introduce students to the
diversity of the arts. According to the National Endowment for the Arts (1988), this
means considering not only one's own culture but also other cultures that have enriched
the world's civilizations, as well. In this regard, Hegel writes, "the goal of art is to aid in
the comprehension of the world ideas" (in Macdonald, 1970, p. 372). In Nicaragua
today, it is important to introduce students to diversity in the arts, because children in the
past decade were only exposed to the art of those cultures related to the Sandinista
Revolution.

For reasons already mentioned, the art curriculum for Nicaragua's elementary
school children should be designed to provide them with knowledge and understanding of
art, as well as with the overall enjoyment the arts can provide. An appropriate form for
developing an art curriculum could be one based on a postmodernist approach, because it
would provide children with the openness of postmodern thought. That is, understanding
the multiplicity of art expressions present in diverse cultures. For Nicaraguan children,
this would be very important, since, in the past, the curriculum was closed to every idea
not reflecting revolutionary values.

The following pages examine Efland, Freedman & Stuhr's (1996) ideas about a
possible postmodern art curriculum. Their proposal deserves attention in view of the
issues that they examine and their relevance to art education. For instance, with the idea
of "progress" in education, previous educational practices have been discarded in the
belief that new ideas will improve teaching and learning. In what follows, the term postmodern is introduced.

The Term Postmodern

The term postmodern, Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) explain has been used since the 1930’s and during the 1970’s, achieved wide circulation though the beginnings of postmodernism have been traced to the early 1960’s. They add, Best and Kellner (1991), point out that “North American cultural theorists introduced the term in the arts,” and Jencks views postmodernism “as the preservation as well as the transformation of modernism.” While, Sánchez Vázquez (1990) refers to postmodernism as an ambiguous concept of a new social reality, associated with a series of propositions, values, and attitudes, existing as part of our own culture. Although an “accepted definition” of the concept has not yet emerged (p. 27), what follows are some descriptive ideas about postmodernism.

Stokstad (1995) explains that there has been no agreement on just what this term means. However, the many approaches to art that have emerged from modernism are designated by the term “postmodernism” (p. 1135). Postmodernism, she adds, rejects the concept of the mainstream, which involves the idea that some art works are more important than others or the belief in a “single dominant line of artistic development” (p. 1109). This is an idea questioned by some scholars as another of the modernists’ “myths” (p. 1110). Post-modernists, Stokstad notes, recognize artistic pluralism or the acceptance of a variety of artistic styles. In addition, post-modernists do not share the
utopian optimism of modernism that survived both World War I and World War II. Rather, postmodernists are uncertain about the future and about the power of art to influence it; that is they have a “loss of confidence in the transformative power of art, [which was] a phenomenon affecting Western art and architecture in the 1960’s and 70’s” (p. 1135). Additionally, “modernists sought to create an ordered artistic universe in reaction to, and perhaps as a form of relief from, the disorder and chaos they saw around them. Post-modernists have taken these chaotic conditions as a point of departure” (p. 1821) to question modern ideas.

Levin (1988) interprets postmodernism as a “return to nature... (p. 6) [the postmodernist] quotes, scavenges, ransacks [and] recycles the past... [Postmodern art] is style-free and free style. Postmodernism worries about human survival and accepts awkwardness and crudity [which is] acceptance of the frailties of human nature” (p. 7). Although Foucault did not address postmodernism, some of his ideas fit into the postmodern theory, and some scholars consider him a postmodernist. When asked about postmodernist ideas, he said, “one should totally and absolutely suspect anything that claims to be a return” (Rabinow, 1984, p. 250). According to Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, specifically all of these ideas point to the postmodern condition.

**The Postmodern Condition**

The postmodern condition, Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) think, is indicated by cultural crises, or a “lack of philosophical cultural consensus” (p. 70. This state, in Gablik’s words is “a crisis in belief” (p. 70), or a loss of faith in the paradigms that are
typical of an epoch. It is also a loss of faith in what Jean Francois Lyotard calls, the belief in the “grand or meta-narratives” (p. 70) that have shaped cultural modernism (p. 91). Another sign pointing to the postmodern scene is the inquiry into “the belief in progress,” or the idea that what is new means progress, which is perhaps, a possible cult of the new. Postmodernists question the advance of science such as nuclear energy, wondering whether the quest for “the new as a value is really progress at all?” (p. 1). In this light, advance in nuclear technology might be considered a limitation of progress, because of a potential destruction by nuclear armaments. In modern culture, the three authors add, the avant-garde’s limitations on “problems of style” (p. 70) and their self-imposed “isolation of the high arts within it” (p. 71) allows modern art to be understood by only a few people. All these issues suggest points of decline for modernism as an art style as well as an era in Western culture, [thus, reflecting] “a postmodern cultural condition” (p. 1). In the same vein, Stone’s (1990) assertion is that the “ideological contradiction” about modern beliefs related to power and change reflect the postmodern condition, as well.

Efland, Freedman & Stuhr consider that issues reflecting the emergency of a postmodern state have implications in the field of art education, in regards to how art should be taught in the postmodern era. Their proposal examines postmodern attributes that could become topics for discussion in art classes. For example, the “pursuit of abstraction to pure form . . . [is considered] as progress in art” (p. 38). Discussions about modern and postmodern concepts and characteristics, in other words, the debate between
modern and postmodern ideas, in Levin's (1988, p. 80) view would enable students to learn to deal with ideas that coexist in the art world.

In what follows, as background to the postmodern curriculum, pedagogical movements that have been the answer to social needs over time are described according to Efland, Freedman & Stuhr. These are educational changes exercised in the hope of giving children a better education and put into practice according to the needs of a "particular time and place" (p. 56). These movements illustrate how education has been transformed over time, in the name of progress.

Views on Art Education over Time

Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) point out the connection between the idea of progress and the teaching of art, which has been expressed in distinct pedagogical changes, each one justified in the name of progress, in other words, regarding change as progress. This is illustrated in previous pedagogical movements in what is called "paradigm shifts in art education" (p. 57), which have been an attempt to answer specific social and cultural conditions at different times. One of these pedagogical changes, they write, was the teaching of art by way of the principles of design, which are based on the formalist doctrine where art becomes a search for pure formal relationships expressed in pure abstraction, clarity, and order. This view was an option to the traditional academic method of instruction. Efland (1990) traces the beginning of this teaching to Arthur Wesley Dow in 1899 whose method was widely accepted, extensively imitated, and then questioned. Dow's idea, according to Efland (1989), was the teaching of art based "on a
set of universal principles of beauty” (p. 4). The principles of design as well as the
elements of art have been used by modernists as a base for art interpretation. A further
pedagogical change is focused on originality, creativity and self-expression. This change
is grounded in the expressionist philosophy based on “creative self-expression” (p. 62).
The movement became a mode of education identified with progressive learning, where
students were exposed to art as a form of self-expression.

In the 1930’s, the theorists continue, during the Great Depression, it was art as it
applies to daily life that children learned. “Art at the service to men living a common
life, art as a means of attaining community goals . . . Leon Winslow states (cited in
Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 1996, p. 63). Art was applied to the home and to the
community reflecting a practical “problem solving approach” and projecting “a concern
for society as a whole” (pp. 62-69). Art was to enhance daily life “in the home [and] in
the community” (p. 64). An additional educational change arose during the Cold War in
the 1950’s, as art learning was oriented towards discipline. Then, Bruner’s idea of
“structure and discipline” (p. 65), as defined by the sciences and established structures of
knowledge, was the new paradigm. In view of Bruner’s idea, artistic inquiry was
structured. Therefore, questions raised by artists, art critics and art historians could be
“models for inquiry” (p. 66) and students would learn by asking similar questions. In this
regard, the structuralist belief is that meaning is constructed “by rule systems based on
relationship and structure“ (Hanney II, 1987, p. 354). Barkan’s (1963) words at the
Midwest College Art Conference were that art education could become a discipline if it
would develop a “distinctive structure,” since it does have a history of ideas and a body
of concepts. At that time, the curriculum reform was based on structure, and art was taught as a discipline with its own structure of knowledge (Efland, 1988).

If today’s pedagogical practices are in need of modification or substitution to improve art education, Efland, Freedman & Stuhr ask, “what should replace them?” (p. 4). They suggest a possible art curriculum based on postmodern ideas but enriched with past experiences attained from different views on the teaching of art, such as those mentioned above. The authors raise the question, is it right to ignore past pedagogical practices in the name of progress? Efland (1989) thinks of these movements as streams, “some movements seem to go together; e.g., they are ‘synchronic’ developments; at other times one movement flows into another; sometimes they are in conflict.” These movements were changes responding to the need to improve education over time. The next paragraphs examine Efland, Freedman & Stuhr’s ideas in relation to the characteristics of a possible postmodern art curriculum that would be another change in the teaching of art.

Characteristics of a Postmodern Art Curriculum

Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) propose a postmodern art curriculum that works “to promote deeper understanding of the social and cultural landscape” (p. 72), as well as, an “interdisciplinary approach” between art and other subjects in the curriculum (p. 118). Additionally, a postmodern curriculum would feature or share “some, most, or all of the characteristics of the postmodern discourse (p. 92). Even though, it does not involve beginning a totally new curriculum or making radical revisions in order to restrain
modernists practices, it could “appropriate content from previous . . . approaches” (p. 110). This could include, “questioning . . . long standing interpretations of ideas by focusing on content selection to highlight points of conflict” (p. 92). One example would be that the idea of progress, such as the advance in science, could be interpreted through different viewpoints. Further, the writers suggest that students could be introduced to issues raised by “philosophers, art historians [and] critics,” as they attempt to interpret and understand art (p. 73). Then, students would learn to address concepts like “appropriation, . . . cultural meaning, . . . interpretation and critique” (p. 50) [about artworks]. Moreover, art history would be learned not as an “evolution of styles” but focusing on “how changes of style and subject matter reflect deeper changes occurring in the artist’s social milieu (p. 95). Students would focus on the interpretation of art history and not on the grand evolutionary narrative. A postmodern art curriculum, they state, might define art as:

a form of cultural production
whose point and purpose is to construct
symbols of shared reality (p. 72).

Content and methods would include among others:

- Recycle content and methods from and pre-modern forms of instruction.
- Explain the effects of power in validating art knowledge.
- Use arguments grounded in deconstruction to show that no point of view is privileged (p. 72).

For an art curriculum, Efland, Freedman & Stuhr identify four postmodern ideas, which are “general characteristics” of postmodernism (p. 91), and these are, little narratives, power/knowledge, the idea of deconstruction, and double-coding. They are
principles equal to general truth, fundamental assumption, or a primary source of material for the curriculum. Some of these characteristics might also apply to the art curriculum for elementary schools in Nicaragua. For instance, an interdisciplinary approach could be used where art would be integrated with other subjects in the curriculum, or children could be made aware of concepts like appropriation, as the artists use it. Even at an early age, children can be exposed to different ideas. Chapman (1978) believes young students can make judgments about styles and qualities of artifacts, thereby developing their perceptual skills. In like manner, they are able to relate art to other subjects, as well as to compare and contrast diverse kinds of art. The following lines examine little narratives as they could apply to an art curriculum.

Little Narratives

Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) suggest that "little narratives," as Lyotard calls them, can be introduced to students. These narratives deal with "several stories," . . .[and emphasize] . . ."different content" (p. 96). As opposed to the grand narrative, which represents "the art of the dominant culture" (p. 96). However, in an art curriculum, master narratives of "mainstream art history" will not be rejected because these narratives will be discussed from different perspectives and not "as an unfolding chronology or evolution of styles" . . .(p. 95). Little narratives representing small groups of cultures, Efland, Freedman & Stuhr contend, would be the stories of diverse "cultures, subcultures . . .and genders" (p. 94), each evolving its own form of "artistic expression" (p. 94) and illustrating that everyone's "cultural story is but one among many" (p. 96). Accordingly,
the curriculum would be dealing with "multiple developments and forms of art" (p. 92). In this way, the art of various social groups would be presented, thus reflecting "cultural diversity" (p. 96), which can also be interpreted as teaching art from different perspectives. The content of an art curriculum developed around little narratives will offer art teachers a variety of choices from various aesthetic viewpoints. This would mean taking into consideration "the struggle for multiple voices" (May, 1989, p. 124), towards an equal distribution of power. Interpreting Swam (1989), it would mean recognizing "equity within diversity" (p. 143) in relation to the arts. Further, a postmodern art curriculum based on little narratives would allow teachers to validate truth according to different cultural values. In the elementary art curriculum, little narratives would tell the story of diverse cultures, not only from a Western perspective but also from other cultures' points of view, such as the Latin American culture whose tradition goes as far back as prehistoric times. The art history of Latin America is rarely mentioned in art history books. Therefore, learning would become one of a "variety of aesthetic orientations," and not only from one "aesthetic" viewpoint (Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, p. 101), which is what Nicaraguan children learned during the Sandinista regime from 1979 to 1990.

**Power/Knowledge Issues**

Another leading concept in a postmodern art curriculum could be Foucault's power/knowledge theory, which he uses to validate his analysis of institutional and discursive practices. In this regard, Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) ask "who has the
power to shape the curriculum?, What shall be taught . . . and to whom? . . . How are these determinations made?, . . . How are these decisions pass on through instruction?” (pp. 97-98). Furthermore, why is it that some art is given “status as high art while other art is not?” (p. 98). Or how do “disciplines of knowledge,” which should be “objective and value-free” (p. 91) seem to favor dominant groups in a society. Examples are to be found in the way art critics add to the value of some artworks. Foucault’s argument is, as Efland, Freedman & Stuhr explain, that there is a close relation “between the emergency of disciplined knowledge and systems of social control made possible by this knowledge . . . which might also be viewed as way of extending social control over certain social groups” (p. 98). In this context, they ask, “who has the power . . . and who benefits . . . that certain artistic developments are more important than others?” (p. 98), and to what extent contempt or the condition of looking down upon “popular art” (p. 98) raises issues of power. The writers comment that there are many examples relating to these issues in which dominant social groups validate knowledge. One is, the arbitrary way in which art councils give “the status of art on one kind of cultural artifact . . . having to do with art politics and the wielding of power” (p. 101). In this regard, Daniel’s (1988) statement implies, “it is evident that art students, researchers and historians are possibly mishandling significant information about the art of less familiar cultures” (p. 129). Efland, Freedman & Stuhr’s assertion is that issues of power/knowledge exist in nearly every “area of artistic study” (p. 98). Issues in architecture, popular culture, and the crafts illustrate this point. Power/knowledge issues are found in “distinctions between the mainstream and the margins, we and they, ourselves and others” (p. 102) they add. In
In this regard, Daniel & Daniel (1990) point out to Cunningham observation that graduate programs are used as tools to exercise "cultural and social control," [and] that no education is neutral" (p. 149).

Another power/knowledge issue relating to art education is language in the construction of reality. In this regard, Foucault (1972) describes words in The Archaeology of Knowledge as, "the wind, an external whisper, a beating of wings that one has difficulty in hearing" (p. 209). Efland, Freedman & Stuhr point to Foucault’s argument that power is not only connected to knowledge, but it is "maintained through the control of social discourse" (p. 102). This is the subtler less obvious way in which discourse creates reality and "by which people live their lives and through which they are controlled" (p. 102). David Carrier’s assertion, the writers said, points out how language can create artistic values, and how art critics create “aesthetic and monetary values,” just by the power of their discourse (p. 103). In this regard, Lesage (1985) writes, “the critic, cannot fix meaning within a permanent mold” (p. 476). Therefore, in formulating art programs, it is important to contemplate the power of language in relation to different meanings. Foucault’s comment on education as presented by Giroux (1983, p. 207) expresses this view:

Every education system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse. . . What is an educational system after all, if not the ritualization of the word; if not a qualification of some fixing roles for speakers; if not the distribution and appropriation of discourse, with all its learning and powers.

May (1989) comments on how power precedes, shapes, and operates through discursive practice on the social reality it creates, as well as how “power [is] embedded in
language and social relation” (p. 127). Language persuades and “meanings are disseminated” (Jagodzinski 1991, p. 66). Discourse can be considered a strategy of power according to Foucault (1979). Discourses and practices are interwoven in the fabrics of technologies of power (Poster, 1989, p. 112). Power/knowledge issues could be developed in the Nicaraguan elementary school curriculum. Young students could learn to discuss ideas such as the belief in the superiority of the art of the avant-garde, or the denial of popular culture as a type of art of lesser category. The avant-garde as Efland, Freedman & Stuhr observe, relates to the idea “that cultural growth is the product of an artistic and intellectual elite” (p. 8); and they point to Clement Greenberg (1961) observation that popular culture is, “an unfit subject for serious study” (p. 10). Hence, power/knowledge issues cannot be ignored in a postmodern curriculum, because awareness of these issues will provide students with a broad understanding of art.

**Deconstruction as a Curriculum Principle**

A third principle in a postmodern art curriculum Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) posit is the idea of deconstruction, which they refer to as “a way of bringing to light the oppositions within cultural forms” (p. 91). Deconstruction, they add, was developed by Jacques Derrida, a French philosopher, as a manner of reading “philosophical texts, ... adopted as a method to analyze literary texts” (p. 104). In a similar way this method is utilized in “the visual arts, art criticism, and architecture” (p. 104). Deconstruction, according to Derrida means, “unraveling or deconstructing prevailing cultural assumptions or myths by revealing them [in order] to contain self-
conflicting messages” (Stokstad 1995, p. 1156). Deconstructionist criticism, Efland, Freedman & Stuhr maintain, is “reader-or viewer oriented-criticism” (p. 112). Then, in this view, the meanings of art works become “socially constructed” by the artist and the audience (p. 106). In this respect, Roland Barthes thinks the meaning of a work of art depends . . . on what the reader understands” (Stokstad p. 1155). Deconstructionist criticism according to Efland, Freedman & Stuhr raises issues of “authorship or originality” (p. 106) because of the process of appropriation or quotation used in “deconstruction as a technique” for instance, in painting or photography. Stokstad (1995) narrates that before “a copy or reproduction was not considered a legitimate work of art,” but it has become a popular technique among postmodern artists. Within the educational content, interpreting Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, “deconstructive reading . . . locate sites of conflict and . . . makes these into focal points for study” (p. 108). Also, in this view, they write, a deconstructive critic strives “to show that no points of view are privileged” (p. 104). The concept of deconstruction in a postmodern curriculum would give students the opportunity to make critical comments as they elucidate artists’ meanings in different contexts and interpretations, which can be interpreted, in John Bergess’s words, as different ways of “seeing.” Students could learn to question myths or social constructs that have been accepted by society over time, illustrating in this way “the fragility of meaning and the relation of truth to power” (cited in Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 1996, pp. 71-28). Furthermore, this concept will allow students to deconstruct and point to or suggest new constructions; also, in Poster’s (1989) words to structure interpretive strategies.
In the Nicaraguan elementary art curriculum, young students can learn, through Derrida's theory of reading to de-construct ideas, questioning and analyzing works of art by questioning already established beliefs that translating Derrida "underlie the supposedly natural structures in modern society" . . . (Hanney II, 1987, p. 361). By re-reading the artwork, students are going to construct new meanings. It would be in Foucault's terms, reading in depth and finding what is intended to leave unsaid, but silent. This is important because of the Sandinistas' strategy of integrating political ideas in the school curriculum by drastically revising textbook content according to revolutionary ideas. For instance, in the Spanish textbook for fifth grade, students became familiar with stories about Sandino pp. 12-14, the military service pp. 36-37, or the biography of a revolutionary p. 119.

**Double-Coding**

A fourth curriculum principle Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) suggest might be double-coding. Jencks, they explain, refers to the term as the idea of adding other codes to that of the modern style, thereby integrating "other meaning into the modern" (p. 108). In postmodern art double-coding results from "a deliberate use of contradiction, irony, metaphor [and] ambiguity" (p. 40), where messages are created by artists through the use of codes. Double-coding has been used as a strategy for communicating on various levels at once" (p. 41) such as the combination of styles, which sometimes produces "conflicting meanings" (p. 42). In the elementary art curriculum, lesson plans could be developed using "doubly-coded cultural forms" (p. 108), where children could learn to
interpret or decode cultural, or more specifically, visual codes. Young students could learn to open up multiple readings, suggesting new ways of thinking and finding "new perspectives...new understandings about how the art work itself is constituted." They could also learn how codes are intertwined and how they act upon each other, forming [new meanings] (Lesage, 1985). Since "a code may refer to anything from a private language to an entire culture" (Henderson & Brown, 1987, p. 1800).

Another issue related to postmodern ideas is multiculturalism, which could also be integrated into the elementary art curriculum in Nicaragua.

**Multiculturalism**

Efland, Freedman & Stuhr (1996) point out the relationship "between multicultural approaches...to postmodern issues" (p. 4). Multicultural education, they write, according to Banks & Banks (1989) is a concept and a process identified as an educational reform movement" (p. 75). However, the initial goal of multicultural education was to improve educational achievement for ethnic students who were disfranchised by the existing educational system. The authors comment on five approaches discussed by Christy Sleeter and Carl Grant. Of those approaches, "multicultural education; and education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist" (p. 78) relate to postmodernism because they "share...characteristics of postmodern discourse (p. 90). Multicultural art education "promotes cultural pluralism and social equity" (p. 81), organizes studies around conflicting issues, and is concerned with diverse socio-cultural groups, examining power/knowledge issues related to gender or race. The
social reconstruction approach takes into consideration the diversity of socio-cultural groups, therefore, “no single world is represented by a meta-narrative as the only truth” (p. 89). In this approach, an art program, “ideally would need cooperative planning among teachers from various subject areas.” Teachers would decide how art, or the cultural production of diverse and complex (and or specific) . . . cultural groups, could contribute to understand . . . the political and economic situations that exist around a particular topic . . . [in this way, instigating] democratic action. Nicaraguan children would benefit by the addition of a multicultural approach to the art curriculum. In the elementary art education curriculum these approaches can encourage postmodern ideas, and as Efland, Freedman & Stuhr assert will help young students become informed citizens “who question authority and the status quo, accept differences, and act in defense of others and the environment” (p. 90). Nicaraguan children need to learn to question the state apparatus, since educational programs during the last decade were designed to teach them to carry out the commands and orders of a single political party, the Sandinista. In addition, by looking into confronting issues and discussing them, children will learn to think critically. By learning about the social milieu in which art is created, they will gain a deeper understanding, rather than just learning a series of facts about art.
CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSION

In this research an attempt has been made to apply the French historian and philosopher Michel Foucault’s theory on power/knowledge to the transformation of the school curriculum during the revolutionary period in Nicaragua, in the context of the Sandinistas’ control over all educational institutions. This study has examined specifically the curricular changes implemented in Nicaraguan schools during the revolutionary period 1979-1990, and in similar way the first two years of post-revolutionary education. The changes in education were due to the Sandinistas’ dream to create a “new man” who was going to build a type of socialist-Sandinista Nicaragua. Many Nicaraguans believed in the Sandinista dream. For them the revolution became a symbol, an ideal, and the way to fulfill a dream and the hopes for a better life. A worker, a baker, once said, “we are building a new society that perhaps we will not enjoy, but our children will.” Tomas Borge (1985) from the FSLN Directorate believed that the new system of education was going to create a “new man.” The socialist dream was further expressed by Sandinista leaders also, when they affirmed, “Our cause is the sacred cause of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Sandino” (Muravchik, 1986, p. 4). This statement made clear the Sandinistas’ belief in socialist values.
The Sandinistas used education to advance the revolution. In particular, the arts under the Sandinista government served primarily as a “programme,” in Foucault’s sense of the term, for instilling the ideals of the revolution into the people. Significantly, schools, i.e. elementary schools, served as important sites for the imposition of revolutionary knowledge. As Foucault (1980) points out, power structures shape knowledge for their own interest through ways of teaching in the schools; in this way, they impose a system of disguised values as in the teaching of literacy. In Nicaragua, in the literacy campaign, especially in the rural areas, people learned reading and writing by the use of key revolutionary sentences such as, “The popular masses made the insurrection” (Black & Bevan, 1980, p. 72), or Sandino is the Way. Also, in the Spanish textbook for fifth grade, students learned: “The revolution makes the advance of science.” In reviewing elementary school textbooks there were around 260 revolutionary cites that students had to learn in different subject areas. For example, in the fourth grade Spanish textbook (Español 4to. Grado, 1989) students were to describe the characteristics of Sandino, and in the same way, in another exercise to interpret his thought. In this way, the schools became in Dreyfus & Rabinow’s 1983 words, sites in which “rituals of power [took] place [centered] on certain cultural practices which [combine] knowledge and power” (pp. 110-184). Additionally, in Foucault’s terms, the Sandinistas exercise of power in schools caused a new revolutionary knowledge transcribed in a new body of information.

The Sandinista regime connected power and knowledge by creating new technologies and strategies for re-shaping worlds views. Examples are rules implemented in the school system, art associations, and mass movements. The Sandinistas relied for
this purpose on existent institutions such as the schools to disperse their ideology and to establish a system of values. Such a concerted attempt to re-shape the students world view according to the dictates of political practice, illustrates how power, in Foucault’s 1980 thesis, “install[s] itself and produces its real effects” (p. 97) in specific sites. An example is the imposition of Sandinista values in Nicaraguan Schools, which became in Foucault’s (1983) words, carefully defined institutions (p. 222) for spreading political knowledge.

Additionally, in this quest for understanding the facts behind the revolutionary process, Foucault’s (1983, p. 223) analysis of power relations can be applied to the exercise of Sandinista power. The Sandinistas claimed that their revolutionary activities were for the benefit of the people. But Foucault offers a systematic method of examining the ways in which the Sandinistas went against their own goals. Foucault (1972) describes his method when he writes:

my aim is to uncover the principles and consequences of an autochthonous transformation... it is intended to question teleologies and totalizations (pp. 15-16). [Archaeology, Foucault adds, tries to define].... practices obeying certain rules (p. 138); [archaeology] defines types of rules for discursive practice (p. 139); it is nothing more than a rewriting,... it is a systematic description of a discourse-object (p. 140). Archaeology, does not imply the search for beginning; It does not relate analysis to geological excavation. It designates the general theme of a description that questions the already-said at the level of its existence; ... (p.131).

In regard to power relations Foucault’s statement is that:

Power relations,... are intentional and nonsubjective. ...[that they] are imbued, through and through, with calculation [that] there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives
Foucault suggests that a certain number of points be established in the analysis on power relations (pp. 223-224). One would be “the types of objectives pursued.” In respect to the schools, the objective was to direct the students toward socialist’s values. It was the change from one paradigm to another. The imposition of socialist values upon Nicaraguans was a concrete mechanism developed by the Sandinistas to control people.

Foucault also points to a “system of differentiations,” which may be determined by “status and privilege,. . . linguistic or cultural differences.” This is seen and understood in the difference between the Sandinista school system and a democratic one.

For analysis in terms of power/knowledge relations, Foucault suggests to look for “the means of bringing power relations into being.” For instance, “by the threat of arms,” which was exemplified in the creation of a formidable army that even included children. Figure 40 shows a picture of a youngster possibly holding an AK 47 rifle. By making children believe that they were real soldiers, dressed in military outfits, and allowing them to carry weapons, was a way of making the kid insensible, poisoning his brain, and making him capable of killing. Another way is by the “effects of the word,” expressed by Sandinista leaders in revolutionary rhetoric, where discourse was used as “a political commodity” (Gordon, 1980, p. 245) to construct the Sandinista social reality. Borge (1985), a Sandinista leader, in his speech given on May first, 1982, in Managua on Workers’ Day, pointed out to the old society, the bourgeoisie, their false principles and propaganda and their exploitation to the laboring class. In similar way, Fraser (1965) relates, how in communist China the government was eradicating the “ideological
influences" of the bourgeoisie (p.150). In the same line, Borge (1982), on July nineteen, 1981, in the second anniversary of the revolution was asking the people gathered in Managua, who are the traitors, the capitalists, and the false prophets? [the bourgeoisie] (p. 135), answer the crowd. Yet, another form to be included in the analysis are “economic disparities,” seen during the Sandinista period in the unequal distribution of property, even basic goods like rice, beans and corn, which are the staple food of Nicaraguans. By “complex means of control,” in Nicaragua, the state controlled the economy of the nation, from farms to banks and stores. By means of control through “surveillance,” which in Nicaragua was exercised via mass organizations, specifically the Committees of Sandinista Defense, (CDS), which became the eyes and ears of the revolution. The CDS were designed following the pattern of the CDR in Cuba. One more point to focus on according to Foucault is “rules” that people had to obey, in this regard Nicaragua became a country of decrees, where rules were created to favor the revolution such as Decree Number 329 effected on March 2, 1980, banning decapitalization of enterprise.

In terms of analysis Foucault (1983) also recommends looking at “forms of institutionalization,” such as carefully defined hierarchical structures. This was very explicit in the established hierarchy of the leaders of the FSLN, who became Commanders of the Revolution in September, 1979, just after the insurrection. Additionally, Foucault discusses the “complex system endowed with multiple apparatus.” This is exemplified in the case of mass organizations exercising power on schools, such as the national teachers association (ANDEN), and the association of cultural worker (ASTC).
"The degrees of rationalization," include strategies developed in the exercise of power upon others. This is seen in Nicaragua in the repression to those who did not support revolutionary goals. The first to resist Sandinista power were the people of the Eastern Market who sell basic goods such as rice, beans, and sugar. When the government decided to control market prices, these people, who were rural and farm workers, rebelled against the Sandinistas. It is ironic that it was the members of the working class who first resisted Sandinista power.

These forms of the exercise of power relations were "elaborated, rationalized, . . . and centralized. . . under the auspices of" [the Sandinista Directorate]. "Power relations in terms of Foucault (1983) are rooted in [a] system of social network" (p 224). They were explicit programs corresponding to diverse practices and strategies (Foucault, 1991, p. 81). In Gordon's (1980) interpretation the study of the exercise of power is the study of forms of knowledge and rationality at the level of their material manifestation. . . [looking into] multiple factors. Foucault’s analysis, Gordon adds, is not to question the reality of the past but to interrogate the rationality of the present (pp. 242-243). In this view, the schools are a "privileged point of observation because" in schools the government’s ideas were manifested as forms of knowledge, which in this case was revolutionary knowledge.

Foucault (1983) mentions one important element, which is “freedom.” Freedom, he thinks, is “at the very heart of the power relationship” (p. 221). This freedom according to Chambers (1983) is a fundamental principle “to any rational activity; . . . freedom means an absence of constraints” (pp. 141-142). Within the educational setting in Nicaragua, freedom means that students have the right to express their own ideas and
feelings. In regard to teaching, freedom gives teachers the right to develop their own programs according to a planned curriculum that will benefit the children, and not the government. In respect to the arts, freedom allows teachers to present the arts to students through different perspectives. Rajchman (1985) interprets Foucault’s philosophy as “the very concrete freedom of writing, thinking, and living in a permanent questioning of... systems of thought” (p. 7).

Foucault (1983) thinks it is important to consider freedom in the exercise of power, he writes:

When one defines the exercise of power as a mode of action upon the actions of others, [and by the] actions “of men by other men—... an important element [is] freedom. Power is exercised only over free subjects, freedom disappears every-where power is exercised, ... At the very heart of the power relationship, and constantly provoking it, are the recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom (pp. 221-222).

Freedom in Foucault’s theory, according to Rajchman (1985), “is the endless questioning of constituted experience” (p. 7). It is a question that “Foucault constantly, if tacitly, poses. Intellectually and politically, it is oriented toward the existence of concrete controversy, conflict, debate, paradox surrounding subjectivity.” In Rajchman’s interpretation, Foucault developed “a philosophy that is the endless question of freedom” (pp. 121-123-124).

Rajchman (1985) states the idea of freedom when he writes:

We are... ‘really’ free because we can identify and change those procedures or forms through which our stories become true, because we can question and modify those systems which make (only)
particular kinds of action possible, . . . (p. 122).

The Sandinista determination to establish a type of socialist government, a mix of Marxism, Leninism, and Sandinism turned Nicaraguans against them. After their defeat in the 1990 elections, a new democratic government was established. What is the difference between Sandinista ideology and democratic ideology? One difference is "freedom," which means, the freedom to choose, the freedom to make decisions, and the freedom to be oneself. Freedom sometimes is not appreciated until it is lost. In Nicaragua, there was a mass insurrection. It was the people's struggle for social justice. It was a battle for which the people fought in hopes of freedom and a better life. Afterward, the hopes for social justice and freedom were lost when the insurrection turned into a mode of repression upon people. The loss of freedom and repression could be interpreted also as "the cultural practices in which power and knowledge cross" (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 120). In Foucault's (1983) expression into a "mode of action more or less . . . calculated, which were destined to act upon the possibilities of action of other people," in other words, "a mode of action upon actions" of others (p. 221).

Within the power and knowledge relationship, the new government has the power to change and transform the educational system. New values for schooling are being put into practice by the Ministry of Education. This power involves the ability to implement educational goals. The power ensures transmission of knowledge that the government considers beneficial to Nicaraguan children. This is the knowledge that is currently being taught in the schools. This change in the educational system, from non-formal back to formal education, can be explained in Foucault's (1983) terms as the result of "the struggle
against the forms of subjection—against the submission of subjectivity... [or what he calls] mechanisms of subjection” (p. 213). This was the struggle of the Nicaraguan people against the Somoza dictatorial regime. It was the struggle against the Sandinista totalitarian government that tried to impose an ideology that takes away freedom from people. The opposition to the Sandinistas was “an opposition against secrecy, deformation, and demystifying representations imposed on people” (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 212).

The curricular changes implemented in schools as a consequence of the social change could also be interpreted in Foucault’s (1972) expression as a discontinuity in Nicaragua’s educational history. Discontinuity, Foucault believes, reveals “the limits of a process... the instant at which a circular causality breaks down” (pp. 7-8). The result of this discontinuity was an anti-authority struggle, which eventually overturned the Sandinistas. This attack was made on the Sandinista government and on the way knowledge circulated and functioned in their regime. The struggle of Nicaraguans for change was a struggle “against forms of subjection... against forms of domination and exploitation” (Foucault, in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 213).

In respect to the arts, with the new government, art can be taught so that the child can learn to enjoy and appreciate the arts. Young students can learn to seek the meanings that an artist is trying to convey and to read, in the artwork, the artist’s view of the world. This allows children to find out that there are diverse art expressions. Children can learn to understand art without being told that “only revolutionary art is good art.” For example, in Foucault’s (1972) view, children can learn that a painting:

... in one of its dimensions, it is
discursive practice that is embodied in
techniques and effects. In this sense, the painting is not a pure vision that must then be transcribed into the materiality of space; nor is it a naked gesture whose silent and eternally empty meaning must be freed from subsequent interpretations. It is shot through-and independently of scientific knowledge “coinassance” and philosophical themes with the positivity of a knowledge “savoir” (p. 194).

“Coinassance” means a particular type of knowledge, or discipline, and “savoir” refers to knowledge in general (Sheridan Smith, 1972).

Foucault (1972) interprets the term, “coinassance” as the relation of the subject to the object and the formal rules that govern it. “Savoir” [he writes], refers to the conditions that are necessary in a particular period for this or that type of object to be given to “conaissance” and for this or that enunciation to be formulated (p. 15). Concerning to the use of the arts as propaganda, and as a tool to convey revolutionary ideology Dore (1985) points out that Nicaragua could be used as a “textbook case” to demonstrate that culture is an expression of the interaction of the socio-politico-economic processes (p. 416). In this respect, the Sandinistas, through the arts, organized a well-orchestrated propaganda machine. Who would believe in their propaganda? Only those people having similar ideals to the Sandinistas. Also people who were visiting the country only for a few days, perhaps on their own, for research, or on an official trip. As guests of the government, such people, without speaking the language, had to rely upon government-appointed interpreters. Moreover, programs did not allow visitors to mingle with the people. A carefully orchestrated spectacle was presented whose players were privileged party members, making people see only what was beneficial to the revolution. In this manner, how was anyone going to see the sad reality the country was living, where even basic needs such as food were lacking. What
the visitors saw was the Sandinista view of reality, as it was presented through the arts. It is important to note that the Sandinista regime gave strong support to all the arts. In that sense it was impressive to see how the arts flourished during that period; how Nicaraguan artists became well known specially in socialist countries. One day, an artist, recalled with tearful eyes the good all days during the Sandinista period.

An art curriculum for elementary school children based on postmodern thought can address questions that will make children aware of the diversity of the arts, and learn to appreciate art through different aesthetic expressions. Children can learn according to Efland, Freedman, and Stuhr (1996), via little narratives “the stories of diverse cultures, each [one] evolving their own forms of linguistic and sometimes artistic expression” (p. 94). Youngsters can learn that “the diversity of cultures results not only from the ease with which societies elaborate or reject possible aspects of existence. It is due even more to a complex interweaving of cultural traits” (Benedict, 1959, p. 37). Also, by applying postmodern inquiry, children can learn to question, in Foucault’s terms, already established beliefs and reflect on them, finding new ways of thinking about controversial issues. It is of great importance that children at an early age learn the importance of the arts, since with this knowledge, they will have a greater understanding and respect for their own and others culture.

The application of Foucault’s views on power and knowledge to the school system shows that the schools became sites for the reproduction of political knowledge. It shows that the revolutionary government exercised power through subtle mechanisms and practices, although never completely, because of the freedom Nicaraguans had to exercise other forms of power to resist Sandinista authority. According to Rajchman
(1985), freedom is found not in our transcendental nature but in our capacities to contest and change... (p. 105).

Perhaps Foucault would not see a great difference between the Sandinista government and the new democratic government. The new government is institutional, uses schools to instill specific values in students, and it is a system that exercises power on its own terms. Although, looking into a system of differenciations, as Foucault (1983) suggests, the new government allows the people “freedom,” and that is the fundamental difference between the two. Freedom is a right that humans value so much that over time people from many different lands have emigrated to far away places just because of freedom. Foucault’s thoughts on history might apply to the events that happened in revolutionary Nicaragua.

But, after all, this was the proper task of a history of thought, . . . to define the conditions in which human beings ‘problematize’ what they are, what they do, and the world in which they live. Michel Foucault, The Uses of Pleasure (in Deleuze, 1988).
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DIPLOMA
DE RECONOCIMIENTO

Al (a) ___________________________

Por su DESTACADA participación en el operativo

"MARTIRES DE QUILALI"

realizado del 15 al 18 de Febrero de 1,988.

PATRIA LIBRE, O MORIR

Figure 27 Diploma of Recognition with pictures of Sandinista Leaders
Figure 2.9. Mural. Revolutionary Heroes, Sandino and Carlos Fonseca. One of a series of murals at the Church of Santa María de Los Ángeles. Managua, Nicaragua. By Sergio Michelini and Mural School (Enapum-das).
Figure. 30 The Mask as a Revolutionary Symbol. Praxis’ Art Exhibit, (1982). Sandinista Association of Cultural Workers (ASTC).
Figure. 31. Children in Political Demonstration. Fotography by Orlando Valenzuela. Editorial Nueva Nicaragua. (1985).
Fighting against ignorance we fight against the counter revolution"—child's drawing from Managua.

Figure 32 A child drawing from Managua. "Fighting the counter revolution." Black & Bevan, (1980).
Figure 34. "Shield." A Child's Drawing. American Nicaraguan School. Managua.
Figure 35. A Child's View of the War. Cesar, 10 years old. Managua, Nicaragua.
### Dimensions and Categories of the Profile and Connection with the Person

**Principles**

- Complete & Integral Formation
- Education for Democracy and Peace
- Education for Development
- Education for the Family

**Dimensions**

- HUMANISM
- ETHICS
- PRODUCTION
- SOCIAL

**Categories**

- Personal Development
- Social and Economic Development
- Cultural and Artistic Development
- Scientific and Technological Development

**Variables**

- Critical thinking
- Self-esteem
- Integrity
- Understanding of Man, Society and the Environment
- Communication Values
- Information

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**Figure 38.** Dimensions and Categories of the Profile and Connection with the Person. Villalobos, S. F. (1992).
Diagram No. 4
Integration of the Curriculum

Figure 40. Child with a rifle. Barcellos, (1982).
APPENDIX A
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMNLAE</td>
<td>Asociación de Mujeres Nicaragüenses Luisa Amanda Espinoza</td>
<td>Nicaraguan Women’s Association “Luisa Amanda Espinoza”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANDEN</td>
<td>Asociación Nacional de Educadores de Nicaragua</td>
<td>National Association of Nicaraguan Educators; FSLN-led teachers union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANS</td>
<td>Asociación de Niños Sandinistas</td>
<td>Sandinista Children’s Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APP</td>
<td>Area Propiedad del Pueblo</td>
<td>Area Property of the People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATC</td>
<td>Asociación de Trabajadores del Campo</td>
<td>Rural Workers Association; FSLN-led Farmworkers’ union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASTC</td>
<td>Asociación Sandinista de Trabajadores Culturales</td>
<td>Sandinista Association of Cultural Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
<td>Comités de Defensa Civil</td>
<td>Committees of Civil Defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDR</td>
<td>Comité Defensa de la Revolución Cubana</td>
<td>Defense Committees of the Cuban Revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDS</td>
<td>Comités de Defensa Sandinista</td>
<td>Sandinista Defense Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CECO</td>
<td>Centros de Cultura Obrera</td>
<td>Labor Cultural Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEP</td>
<td>Colectivos de Educación Popular</td>
<td>Popular Education Collectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNA</td>
<td>Cruzada Nacional de Alfabetización</td>
<td>The National Literacy Cruzade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| CPC  | Centros de Cultura Popular  
      | Popular Cultural Centers |
| CST  | Central Sandinista de Trabajadores.  
      | Sandinista Workers' Central; FSLN-led Federation of Trade Unions |
| EPB  | Educación Popular Básica  
      | Basic Popular Education (Adult) |
| EAC  | Escuela Agropecuaria Campesina  
      | Peasant Agricultural School |
| EBI  | GN Batallón de Infantería  
      | Infantry Basic Training School |
| EPS  | Ejército Popular Sandinista  
      | Sandinista Popular Army |
| ERET | Escuela Rural de Educación-Trabajo  
      | Rural Work-Study School |
| FES  | Organización de Estudiantes de Secundaria  
      | Mass Organization of High School Students. |
| FER  | Frente Estudiantil Revolucionario  
      | Revolutionary Student Front |
| FRONT | Frente Sandinista  
      | Sandinista Front |
| FSLN | Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional  
      | Sandinista National Front for Liberation |
| GN   | Guardia Nacional  
      | Nicaragua's National Guard until 1979 |
| INCINE | Instituto Nicaragüense del Cine  
       | Nicaraguan Film Institute |
| JS-19J | Juventud Sandinista "19 de Julio"  
       | "19 Th of July" Sandinista Youth;-FSLN led youth organization |
| JGRN | Gobierno de Reconstrucción Nacional  
<pre><code>  | Government of National Reconstruction |
</code></pre>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MECATE</td>
<td>Movimiento de Expresión Artística Campesina Statal (State Movement for Peasant Artistic Expression)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MED</td>
<td>Ministerio de Educación (Ministry of Education (Board of Education))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ND</td>
<td>Dirección Nacional (National Directorate; Nine member top leadership body of FSLN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NER</td>
<td>Núcleo Educativo Rural (Nucleus Rural Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAS</td>
<td>Organización de Estados Americanos OEA (Organization of American States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERME</td>
<td>Proyecto de Elaboración y Reproducción de Materiales Educativos (Project for Elaboration and Reproduction of Educational Materials)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROTEVE</td>
<td>Programa de Televisión Educativa (Educational Television Program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRODECO</td>
<td>Departamento de Programas Educativos Comunales (Department for Communal Educational Development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RN</td>
<td>Resistencia Nicaraguense (Nicaraguan Resistance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEPCE</td>
<td>Talleres de Evaluación, Programación y Capacitación Educativa (Workshop for Educational Training, Evaluation, and Programing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>Naciones Unidas (United Nations (Educational Social and Cultural Organization))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEN</td>
<td>Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Nicaraguenses (National Union of Nicaraguan Students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAG</td>
<td>Unión Nacional de Agricultores y Ganaderos (National Union of Farmers and Cattle Ranchers; led by FSLN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agencia para Ayuda Internacional (United States Agency for International Development)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some associations were very important to the revolutionary process that they were led by the FSLN.
APPENDIX B
During the Sandinista period 1979-1990, almost all textbooks used in elementary school were donations of the Democratic Republic of Germany, and the Republic of Cuba. This is illustrated in the following list.

FIRST GRADE


SECOND GRADE


THIRD GRADE


**FOURTH GRADE**


**FIFTH GRADE**


**SIXTH GRADE**


Other textbooks include:
- Español 6th. Grado
- Ciencias Naturales 5to. Grado
- Historia 5to. Grado
- Español 4to. Grado
- Matemática 4to. Grado
- Ciencias Naturales 3er. Grado
- Matemática 3er. Grado

In relation to art there was a teacher’s edition: *Orientaciones Metodológicas Cuarto Grado* (Methodological Orientations Fourth Grade), Ministerio de Educación (1986). These orientations include not only methods for teaching art, but for all the subjects of the curriculum as well.

Source: Ministry of Education’s Library, Managua, Nicaragua.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON MICHEL FOUCALUT

Works are listed in chronological order according to publication

PRIMARY SOURCES


*Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison.* (1975). Paris: Gallimard,


**Essays, Interviews & Articles**


*Conversazione con Michel Foucault.* An interview conducted by P. Caruso. Published in Italian. *La Fiera Letteraria* 39, Sep. 28, 1967.

"Ceci n'est pas une pipe." Translated by Richard Howard. October 1, Spring, 1976, 6-21.


"What is enlightenment?" A translation by Catherine Porter of an unpublished French text. In the Foucault reader, 31-51.


SECONDARY SOURCES
Works on Michel Foucault


Sheridan, A. (1980 Michel Foucault the will to truth. New York: Tavistock Publications.


Deleuze, G. (1988). *Foucault*. Translated by Sean Hand. Minneapolis: University of
Minnesota Press.

New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press.


Cornell University Press.

Ltd.

governmentality with two lectures by and an interview with Michel Foucault.*
Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Albany: State University of New York Press.

The MIT Press.


Melbourne University Press.

& Co.

The following books present works of Michel Foucault in different areas:


Burchell, G., Gordon, C. & Miller, P. (eds.). The Foucault effect: Studies in governmentality with two lectures by and an interview with Michel Foucault.


The internet offers a bibliography of 17 pages on Michel Foucault a total of 268 citations. Http://nakayama.org/polylogos/philosophers/foucault/fbib-b.
CHRONOLOGY OF NICARAGUA'S POLITICAL HISTORY
1927-1990

1927 National Guard of Nicaragua is created.

1933 Anastasio Somoza García named commander in chief of the National Guard.

1934 Augusto Cesar Sandino is assassinated in Managua, on Somoza's orders.

1936 President Juan Bautista Sacasa's government undermined by Somoza Garcia; presidential election won by Anastasio Somoza Garcia.

1950 Somoza Garcia reelected; new constitution promulgated.

1950-1979 economic progress in Nicaragua.

1956 Somoza García assassinated; National Assembly selects his son Luis Anastasio to complete term in office.

Anastasio Somoza Debayle became head of the National Guard.

1957 Luis Somoza Debayle, Somoza García’s son, elected president.

1958 Common market plan developed and treaty signed.

1961 Carlos Fonseca, Tomas Borge, and Silvio Mayorga form the Sandinista Front for National Liberation (FSLN).

Guatemalan and Nicaraguan governments support Launching of Bay of Pig invasion against Cuba. Invasion leaves from Puerto cabezas, Nicaragua.

1963 Central American Defense Council (CONDECA) established by Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras.

1967 Luis Somoza Debayle dies; his brother Anastasio Somoza Debayle elected president on May 1.
1971 Congress dissolves itself; abrogates the constitution and transfers executive power to President Somoza D. pending new constitution.

1972 Earthquake devastates Managua; Somoza D. named chairman of National Emergency Committee and declares martial law.

1974 Somoza Debayle reelected president.

1976 FSLN founder Carlos Fonseca Amador killed in clashes with the National Guard in Zinica, on November 8.

1977 Martial law lifted on September 19.

Late 1977 the group of twelve, intellectual, professional business men came together to oppose Somoza dictatorship.

Major FSLN offensive, FSLN-Terceristas attack National Guard in several towns.

1978 Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, editor of La Prensa, and leading opposition figure, is assassinated in Managua on January 10.

Costa Rica brakes relations with Somoza Debayle's government.

FSLN commando "Rigoberto Lopez Perez" seizes National Palace on August 22. Commander 0 is Eden Pastora.

FSLN-led insurrection takes Masaya, Leon, Chinandega, and Esteli for several days.

Carter administration authorizes support moderate opposition groups in Nicaragua opposed to the dictatorship of General Anastasio Somoza D.

The OAS Inter-American Human Rights Commission arrives in Nicaragua.

President Somoza proposes a plebiscite to resolve political differences between the Nicaraguan government and opposition groups on November 11.

The OAS Commission of Friendly Cooperation and Conciliation submits to the Nicaraguan government a group of guidelines for conducting the plebiscite proposed by President Somoza.

1979 U.S. Intelligence Report on May 2, states Cuba urges assistance for the Sandinistas including arms, training, supplies and havens.
U.S. reduces Embassy staff and AID personnel in Nicaragua.

Leaders of the three factions of the FSLN Sandinista movement meet with Fidel Castro in Cuba on March. (U.S. Intelligence Report, May 2).

Full-scale Sandinista offensive begins on May 29 with invasion from Costa Rica.

FSLN guerrillas topple Somoza and seize power. The FSLN triumphantly enters Managua and installs a revolutionary government.


Defeated, General Anastasio Somoza Debayle is forced to leave Nicaragua on July 17.

Council of State established; Sandinista government announces that worker and peasant representatives will hold majority in the Council.

Agrarian reform and expropriation of somocistas' land announced by Sandinistas.

1980 Nicaragua backing Salvadoran guerrillas.

Somoza Debayle is assassinated in Paraguay by Argentine radicals on September 17.

1980 U.S. suspends economic assistance programs to Nicaragua, and begins CIA support of counterrevolutionaires (FDN).

National Crusade for Literacy and Adult Education launched.

1981 FDN Nicaraguan Democratic force, contras, operating out of Honduras.

“Falcon vista” military maneuvers began with Honduras and U.S.

1982 Some 10,000 Miskitos from the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua flee to Honduras.

Following contra destruction of two bridges in the North, Sandinista government declares a state of emergency.

U.S. Congress approves $24 million in covert aid to the contras.
1983

The Contadora Group, formed by Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, and Panama, declares an avoidance of the outbreak of war between Nicaragua and Honduras to be the initial focus of its negotiating mission; named after Panamanian island where it first met.

First large-scale invasion of contras from Honduran territory.

In the United Nations, Nicaragua denounces U.S. support for the contras.

U.S. Treasury Department announces official policy of opposing all multilateral loans to Nicaragua.

Patriotic Military Service (draft) instituted in Nicaragua.

The contras launch their black September offensive. Contra offensive deepens with heavy fighting in the North and South, eight aerial attacks, and sabotage actions against the ports of Corinto and Sandino.

Pope John Paul II visits Central America highlited by confrontation with Sandinistas in Nicaragua.

Nicaragua expels three U.S. diplomats accused of plotting murder of Sandinista leaders.

Washington closes 6 Nicaraguan consulates in the U.S.

On April, Revolutionary Democratic Alliance (ARDE) contras led by Pastora and Robelo attacks along southern border from bases in Costa Rica.

Nicaraguan Catholic Bishops announce opposition to military conscription.

1984

Contras mining Nicaraguan harbors. Seven ships are damaged by the mines. The international Court of Justice orders the United States to suspend the mining of Nicaraguan ports and support for the contras.

Sandinistas expel ten foreign Roman Catholic priests.

Nicaragua agrees to proposed Contadora peace accord.

Nicaragua holds elections. The FSLN's candidate Daniel Ortega is elected to a six-year term.

Church and Sandinista government split when Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo declares his support for the opposition.
Contra groups FDN, based in Honduras, and ARDE, based in Costa Rica announce plan to fuse.


1986  $100 million contra aid package approved by U.S. Congress.

1987  New constitution signed.

Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua sign the Esquipulas II peace accords.

Sandinista government announces an end to all prior censorship of the media.

1988  Nicaragua announces its disposition to enter into direct talks with the contras

Contra cease-fire signed in Sapoa.

1989  The Costa del Sol Summit of Central American Presidents calls for the elaboration of a plan to disband the contra army. U.S. Congressional Bipartisan Accord results in the approval of $49.75 million in nonlethal aid to keep the contras intact.

In compliance with the Costa del Sol Accords, Nicaragua’s media and electoral laws are modified.

Nicaraguan Opposition Union (UNO) selects La Prensa’s Violeta Chamorro and the Liberal party’s (PLI) Virgilio Godoy to lead the opposition ticket in the 1990 presidential elections.

Representatives from the government and contras meet face-to-face for the first time in more than a year to work out a plan for contra demobilization.

1990  Violeta Chamorro wins February 25 election with nearly 60 percent of vote.

Chamorro inaugurated in April, and FSLN assumes new role as opposition party.
Sources:
Speeches by Sandinista Leaders.
Marcus, B. (1982) Sandinistas Speak