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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

Department of Modern Languages

**Constructing a Nation:
Evaluating the Discursive Creation of National Community under the FSLN
Government in Nicaragua (1979-1990)**

by

Lisa Marie Carroll-Davis

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

March 2012

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

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CONSTRUCTING A NATION: EVALUATING THE DISCURSIVE CREATION OF
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This thesis aims to examine the ways in which national identity can be discursively created within a state. I consider the case of Nicaragua in the 1980s and investigate how the government of the Sandinista Front for National Liberation (FSLN) established a conception of the national in the country through official discourse. Despite various studies into the political situation of Nicaragua during this time period, little research has been done in the role of language in constructing a sense of national identification in the country, and this thesis is a contribution to addressing that gap in the research, following the examples of Ruth Wodak et al. (1999) and Nicolina Montesano Montessori (2009).

I challenge the dominant Eurocentric theories on national identity as to their relevance in a Latin American context. Particularly, Anderson (2006), Smith (1991), Gellner (1983) and Hobsbawm (1990) are shown to each have partial applicability to studies of the region, but ultimately are not sufficient in themselves to fully address the unique circumstances seen in Latin America. I propose that two other elements must be included as contributing elements to national identity formation: radical Marxism and liberation theology.

In analysing the data, I adopt a critically oriented discourse analysis approach as I research the strategies employed in a government led redefinition of the nation. Applying the discourse-historical approach (Wodak et al. 1999), I probe the data for particular structures aimed at creating hegemony over the discursive terrain. Through a comparison of three separate corpora composed of government publications, opposition publications and ethnographic interviews, I consider the questions of how the FSLN discursively created a sense of national community and whether and how that discourse was adopted by non-governmental actors. In answering these questions, the discourses are situated in the specific cultural, political and historical milieu of post-revolutionary Nicaragua.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Lisa Marie Carroll-Davis

declare that the thesis entitled

Constructing a Nation: Evaluating the Discursive Creation of National Community
under the FSLN Government in Nicaragua (1979-1990)

and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me
as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

- this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at
this University;
- where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other
qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
- where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly
attributed;
- where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the
exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
- I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
- where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made
clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
- none of this work has been published before submission;

Signed:

Date:..... 28 February, 2012

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List of Abbreviations

AMNLAE – Asociación de Mujeres Nicaraguenses Luisa Amanda Espinoza
ANUDE – Asamblea Nicaragüense de Unidad Democrática
APRA – Alianza Popular Revolucionaria de América
ARDE – Alianza Revolucionaria Democrática
ASTC – Asociación Sandinista de Trabajadores de la Cultura
ATC – Asociación de Trabajadores del Campo
BOS – Bloque Opositor del Sur
CDS – Comités de Defensa Sandinista
CEBs – Comunidades Eclesiales de Base
CELAM – Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano
Comintern – Communist International
DN – Dirección Nacional
EDSNN – Ejército Defensor de la Soberanía Nacional de Nicaragua
ENIGRAC – Empresa Nicaragüense de Grabaciones Artísticas y Culturales
EPS – Ejército Popular Sandinista
FDN – Fuerza Democrática Nicaragüense
FRS – Frente Revolucionario Sandino
FSLN – Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional
GN – Guardia Nacional
GPP – Guerra Popular Prolongada
MDN – Movimiento Democrático Nicaragüense
PCN – Partido Conservador de Nicaragua
PSN – Partido Socialista Nicaragüense
SMP – Servicio Militar Patriótico
TI – Tendencia Insurreccional
TP – Tendencia Proletaria
UNO – Unión Nacional Opositora

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Chapter 1: The Discursive Creation of National Community in Nicaragua

1.1 Post-Colonial Nationalism

In this thesis, I examine the creation of national community through the use of political discourse. The particular case I study is Nicaragua during the 1980s, where the revolutionary Sandinista National Liberation Front (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional - FSLN) government was vying with opposition groups to establish discursive hegemony and to instil in the populace a sense of national unity. One element of this research is to propose a re-thinking of national identity theory as it applies to Latin America, specifically Nicaragua. I employ a discourse-historical approach in analysing FSLN government and opposition documents, and retrospective interviews. The intention is to gain an understanding of how the concept of the 'national' was discursively produced, treated and contested in Nicaragua under the first FSLN government, and more generally, how that applies to and informs our understanding of national identity creation in Latin America.

National identity formation in Latin America has been a centuries long process, beginning with independence in the 1800s and continuing as the new nation-states developed. Latin Americanist Nicola Miller observes that 'the former American colonies of Spain and Portugal have usually been regarded as incomplete nations at best' and that 'Latin American countries have been engaged in a process of nation-state formation since independence' (Miller 2006: 201, 202). Though gaining independence from Spain in 1821, Nicaragua did not become a fully independent country until 1838 when the United Provinces of Central America dissolved into their own constituent parts. In terms of national identification, this gradual path becoming a nation-state presented some challenges. As Lucciano Baracco explains, 'no one had fought for its nationhood, and even after 1838 few saw Nicaragua in terms of a nation' (2005: 31). In this way, the creation of a national identity was also lengthy process in Nicaragua, continuing into the latter half of the twentieth century. As such, neither Nicaragua nor the majority of Latin American states can be seen to have consolidated a dominant national identity early in their existence as independent countries. Though national identification is a continually evolving concept in any nation, it has been in constant flux in Latin America due to the nature of the various countries history of colonialism, postcolonialism and

neocolonialism. Studying how nationalism is fomented in a Latin American nation presents some difficulty for scholars. Miller indicates that for theories of national identity, 'the real difficulty posed by Latin America is not that it is wholly different from the implied norm but that everything *partly* applies. The conventional identifiers of nationalism are all present, but in complicated ways' (emphasis in the original, Miller 2006: 203). With a few exceptions, the predominant European theorists do not on the whole address Latin America, as the region's experience does not fit with European experiences (ibid: 203). Though Latin American countries have not been colonies for nearly two centuries, they are still often seen as postcolonial, due to the continued legacy of colonial domination and the effects of neocolonialism. Ania Loomba provides a helpful explanation of the coexistence of postcolonialism and neocolonialism: 'A country may be both postcolonial (in the sense of being formally independent) and neo-colonial (in the sense of remaining economically and/or culturally dependent) at the same time' (Loomba 2002: 7). With European theories being based largely on the national experiences of the colonisers rather than the colonised, there are gaps in the applicability of those theories Latin American countries. For example, Anthony Smith's (1996: 584) emphasis on the myth of the founding fathers as integral to the creation of nationalism does not correlate directly with the situation in a country such as Nicaragua, where the founding fathers were the colonisers, who dispossessed the native indigenous population. This led the Sandinistas in the 1970s to look to indigenous rebels against the colonisers for a foundational myth, rather than the Spanish (Fonseca 1984). Therefore, while partially applicable, such theories cannot adequately accommodate the Latin American region. Even Benedict Anderson's (2006) theory, which postulates that nationalism was born in the Latin American experience, does not sufficiently address the unique situation in those nations. For Anderson the *creole pioneers*, as he terms the descendants of Spanish colonists, originated the idea of a nation in their fight for independence from Spain. Yet as Latin American scholars (Lomnitz 2001, Itzigsohn & vom Hau 2006, Chasteen & Castro-Klaren 2003) have pointed out, there were significant flaws in this premise. Jose Itzigsohn and Mattias vom Hau highlight the fact that the ideas of sovereignty and citizenship the *creole pioneers* drew upon in their bid for independence originated in Western Europe (2006: 194). John Chasteen also states that Latin American 'nations remained more aspiration than fact for many decades after gaining independence between 1810 and

1825', challenging Anderson's claim that there was a national consciousness in those nations prior to independence (Chasteen 2003: xviii). However, though his understanding of national identity in Latin America maybe highly contested, Anderson's idea of imagined communities is still acknowledged as a useful conceptual tool for understanding the functioning of national identification (Chasteen 2003: x).

Anderson and other European theorists have also drawn criticism from postcolonial theorists. In particular, Partha Chatterjee (1993) argues that Anderson denies a space for non-European forms of nationalism. Chatterjee indicates that rather than viewing national identity as having multiple and even contradictory expressions, 'Anderson seals up his theme with a sociological determinism' and presents fixed models of national identity that all nations must inevitably follow (Chatterjee 1993: 21). For Chatterjee, this determinism ignores the fact that Third World nationalisms are necessarily influenced by their own historical experiences. For the non-European world, those experiences are largely colonial, leading Chatterjee to contend that 'the assertion of national identity was, therefore, a form of the struggle against colonial exploitation' (ibid: 18). The emphasis on contestation and power struggles as the legacy of colonial domination does certainly have resonance with the Latin American situation. However, though postcolonial theories of national identity take issue with the Euro-centric theories, Latin Americanists also are skeptical of the applicability of the postcolonial orientation due to its focus on newly independent nations in Asia and Africa, post-World War Two.

As I mentioned above, Latin American countries can be considered neocolonial, with significant external influence from countries like the United States. This situation makes the region's continued experience markedly different from that of Asian and African countries due to the fact that, as Mary Louise Pratt explains, 'by focusing specifically on the colonial, postcolonial studies elide the intricately related phenomenon of neocolonialism, which is of course central to the historical experience of the Americas' (Pratt 2008: 462). Similar to Chatterjee's critique of Anderson's overly deterministic models of nationalism, postcolonial theories have at times appeared too constrained to incorporate Latin American nations. Miller comments that though postcolonial theories have helped '...reconceptualise nationalism and national identity in more flexible ways... Latin Americanists tend to

be chary both of the concept of post-colonialism itself, identifying a universalising impulse in it, and of its application to Latin America' (Miller 2006: 203). However, of particular importance for studies of national identity, and particular for my study of The Nicaraguan experience, Chatterjee emphasises the role of discourse and the question of power relations in the creation of nationalism (Chatterjee 1993: 11). It is in this context, the role of discourse in creating national identity in which I situate this thesis. Additionally, I examine the theories of Anderson, Smith and others in chapter two, highlighting the areas in which they are applicable to the Latin American and Nicaraguan situation and pointing out where they fall short. I also explore other possible theoretical avenues that can help in analysing nationalism in a Latin American country.

1.2 Research Objectives

My research particularly focuses on the use of political discourse in the creation of national community under the Sandinista government in the 1980s. To explore this topic, I look at the discursive contestation between the government and the opposition as it provides fertile ground for examining the strategies employed in attempting to win the hearts and minds of the Nicaraguan people. To analyse this situation, I question traditional theories of national identity (eg Anderson 2006, Gellner 1983, Smith, A. 1991, Hobsbawm 1990) regarding their suitability for a Latin American, and specifically Nicaraguan, context, and indicate areas which must be considered in reconceptualising nationalism in the region. Using the discourse-historical approach (Wodak et al. 1999), I intend to show, through the analysis of government and opposition publications and ethnographic interviews, that Sandinista discourse was directed at instilling a sense of national community in the population in support of their reconstruction of the nation. The questions raised in looking at national identity creation in Nicaragua lead me to postulate the following research questions:

- Do prevailing theories of national identity apply to and function in a non-European, and specifically Nicaraguan, context; if so, how, and if not, in what ways not?

- How did the FSLN government discursively create a new sense of national community in Nicaragua?
- How was the terrain of the ‘national community’ contested discursively between the FSLN and the opposition?
- What are the citizenry’s perceptions, in retrospect, of the government’s and opposition’s efforts to gain support for their respective positions?

In answering these questions, my research aims to (1) ground research into national identity formation in a Latin American context on elements integral to the societal and political contexts; (2) identify and analyse the central components of the FSLN discourse employed to create a national community; (3) examine the extent to which the FSLN discourse was contested by the opposition, and what the nature of that contestation was; and (4) identify potentially salient discursive elements for national identity formation in a Latin American political context. It is my contention that answering these questions will contribute to a better understanding of the past and also current Nicaraguan political situation, and also present new avenues for a critical engagement with discourses on national identity formation in Latin America.

I begin my exploration of the topic in **chapter two** by problematising the predominant theories on national identity in light of the regional and state-specific situations in Latin America and Nicaragua. The chapter then moves to two additional areas that I suggest should be taken into account in theorising nationalism in Nicaragua: non-orthodox Marxism and liberation theology. In **chapter three**, I present the socio-political context surrounding the 1979 revolution in Nicaragua and the subsequent FSLN government. It is essential to understand the circumstances in the country at the time in order to situate and analyse the discourse produced under those contextual constraints. From there, in **chapter four**, the discussion moves to the methods used to analyse the data collected for this study. I explain my choice to use the discourse historical approach (Wodak et al. 1999) and the limitations of this approach for my research. Additionally, I introduce the interviews I conducted for this research and discuss my use of two computer programmes in my analysis. Chapters five and six represent the crux of my research, as I offer the findings of my data analysis. **Chapter five** deals with the discursive creation of community, through the use of the Revolution as a rhetorical tool to draw the people together in a

common purpose, and through the construction of unity and in-group cohesion via linguistic devices such as inclusive pronouns. **Chapter six** builds on the findings in chapter five, as I explain the creation of the concept of the ‘nation’ within the discourse. This occurs by means of the metaphor of rebirth in the nation and by educating the population into the concept of the ‘new man’ in the ‘new society’. In the concluding chapter, **chapter seven**, I return to my research questions and propose some answers based on the analysis and discussion presented throughout the thesis. I then discuss the viability of particular discursive devices in creating national identity, and in contesting identities. Additionally, I consider the limitations of discourse analysis in examining political actions. Lastly, the chapter explores the implications of this thesis for future research on national identity in Nicaragua and Latin America.

1.3 Scholarly Work on Nicaragua

There has been considerable work to date focusing on Nicaragua during the 1980s. Political analysts have examined the military confrontations between the governing FSLN and the opposition fighters backed by the United States (Smith, H. 1993, Walker 2003). Other studies have dealt with the ideological orientation of the FSLN, teasing out the extent of its Marxist orientation or its commitment to democracy (Girardi 1986, Hodges 1986, Vanden & Prevost 1993). There has also been significant interest in the economic and social policies implemented by the Sandinistas (Vilas 1986, Walker 1991). Other works have focused on specific linguistic traits evidenced in Nicaragua at the time (Lipski 1997) or the development of nationalism in Nicaragua (Baracco 2005). These studies provide a wealth of knowledge and a broad forum for debate on the merits and shortcomings of the Sandinista Revolution. However, there is a two-fold component absent from this field of discussion: the analysis of the creation of a new national consciousness and the discourse employed by the Sandinistas. The Nicaraguan identity promulgated by the Sandinistas was an integral part of their goal of remaking the nation, and largely informed what that nation would ultimately look like. As such, it occupied a significant part of their domestic agenda and the associated discourse cannot be overlooked. It is essential to scholarship on the Sandinista era to understand the

content of the national identity being promoted by the new government, and the processes through which that identity was being introduced.

The strength of Hazel Smith's (1993) work lies in the breadth of topics covered, each treated with sufficient depth to facilitate a broad understanding. She provides a sound historical progression of the development of the FSLN from its founding through the 1990 elections. Within this, she succinctly outlines the party's theoretical orientations, tracing the incorporation of Sandino within the new Sandinismo envisioned by founding member Carlos Fonseca (ibid: 137), a topic that has been the sole focus of numerous other works (Nolan 1984, Hodges 1986, Gilbert 1988, Booth 1985). Smith then goes on to describe the various policies and programmes implemented by the Sandinista government, including discussions on state-building after the Revolution and educational reforms (ibid: 150ff, 189ff).

In a similar vein to Smith's work, though decidedly more focused on the political and economic policies of the Sandinista government, are contributions by Carlos Vilas (1986), Thomas Walker (1991) and Harry Vanden and Gary Prevost (1993). Vanden and Prevost devote the majority of their discussion to a thorough examination of the various governmental structures that evolved under the FSLN leadership. Of particular interest are their chapters on the mass based organisations and the effects of the 1984 elections on governmental structure (cf chapters 3 & 4). Additionally, Vanden and Prevost look at the Sandinistas' electoral defeat in 1990 and the factors behind the loss, including the economic stress placed on the country by the prolonged *contra* war (cf chapter 7).

In the edited volume by Walker (1991), the diverse groups involved in the revolution also receive attention. However, the strength of this volume is the variety of authors, each with a specific expertise in their given area, such as Michael Dodson's contribution on religion in the revolution (p. 167ff). Walker states that 'a team of scholars, each focusing on a discrete, manageable subject within his or her area of expertise, ought to be able to produce the type of comprehensive, yet accurate and well-documented, volume that is so often lacking in the study of revolutions' (ibid: ix). His edition effectively accomplishes this goal, providing an in depth treatment of a range of topics. Several of the most significant areas of government policy under the FSLN are analysed, including social programs, agrarian reform and economic policy (cf chapters. 9, 11, 12). Walker also includes a section on the counterrevolution and the US's involvement. This collection is highly

beneficial in providing background information vital to understanding the context and functioning of the FSLN during and after the revolution. The works by Walker, Vanden and Prevost and Smith, among others (cf. Black 1983, Close 1988, Walker & Wade 2011) are fundamental in gaining an understanding of the Nicaraguan revolution and the subsequent FSLN government and provide a scholarly context for my research.

However, none of these studies present a dedicated examination of nationalism during the 1980s or a focused discourse analysis of Sandinista discourse. Several additional works do look at the FSLN's ideological roots, providing the groundwork necessary to begin to understand the Sandinistas' discourse and position on nationalism. For, as Teun van Dijk (2006:120-1) indicates, ideologies are 'foundational beliefs that underlie the shared social representations of specific kinds of social groups. These representations are in turn the basis of discourse and other social practices'. In this regard, ideology is key in understanding the discourse that it produces.

Giulio Girardi's *Sandinismo, Marxismo, Cristianismo en la Nueva Nicaragua* (1986) provides a thorough tracking of the development of Sandinista political thought from Sandino through the initial policies and actions of the FSLN government. Significantly for my research, Girardi cites the confluence of Sandinism, Marxism and Christianity as driving and developmental forces within the FSLN and the revolution. Written in support of and to explain the revolution and Christianity's place within it, the author gives a valuable accounting of Sandinista ideology. Whilst this work provides support for the theoretical perspective and analyses I elaborate in the following chapters, as a piece of propaganda literature it does not represent a critical assessment of the FSLN ideology. Though valuable as a participant-commentary on the Sandinista project, the volume additionally lacks any major discussion of the three main elements', Sandinism, Marxism and Christianity, role in creating a national identity.

Donald Hodges similarly traces the development of the FSLN ideology in *Intellectual Foundations of the Nicaraguan Revolution* (1986). Focusing more on the party itself than Girardi, Hodges begins his analysis with a substantial study of Sandino and his movement as an inspiration for the later FSLN. He also discusses the three distinct strands of political philosophy within the FSLN and how these three tendencies were reconciled within the party (cf chapter 7). Hodges work also

differs from Girardi's in the more critical stance he affords the analysis, as can be seen in his statement that, '... there is a temptation to exaggerate these differences (between the Nicaraguan and Cuban revolutions)... The strategy of popular insurrection was not unique to the Nicaraguan experience; only its particular application by the FSLN was original' (ibid: 255).

To date, John Lipski (1997) has presented the only linguistic study focused on Nicaragua under the Sandinistas. Whilst it was instrumental in piquing my own interest in the linguistic situation of Nicaragua, it did so specifically for what it did not say. Lipski focused almost entirely on the use of radio broadcasts by the Sandinistas and the contras. Unfortunately, and perhaps due to space constraints as it was a chapter in an edited volume, too much space is dedicated to politically situating the study in the time period, leaving little room for the linguistic discussion. The eight linguistic features Lipski highlights (ibid: 72-75) include the use of Revolution as synonymous with Sandinista, which receives substantial discussion in chapter five of this thesis. My work picks up from this initial, and indeed one-off, work and intends to elaborate an in-depth study of the means by which the Sandinistas went about discursively creating their political project of national community.

Even with these significant works which focus on Nicaragua, scholarship published in the last decade on Nicaragua under the Sandinistas is unfortunately scant. One of these few works is Walker and Wade's fifth edition of *Nicaragua: Living in the Shadow of the Eagle* (2011), which tracks the political history of the nation from the colonial period to the present, with a strong emphasis on the Sandinista government and the party, including the period after the electoral defeat in 1990. Additionally, David Close, Salvador Martí i Puig and Shelly McConnell (2012) have recently published an edited volume entitled *The Sandinistas and Nicaragua since 1979* which examines the political situation in Nicaragua from the revolution to the present day. Their work covers topics such as the trajectory of the FSLN as a party, the changing scene of opposition politics in the country, and recent concerns about the reliability and security of the electoral system in the nation (cf chapters 2, 3 and 6 respectively).

Another recent publication is Luciano Baracco's monograph *Nicaragua: The Imagining of a Nation, from Nineteenth Century Liberals to Twentieth Century Sandinista* (2005). Baracco's is one of a handful of studies decidedly focused on

nationalism in Sandinista Nicaragua. Whilst the author explains the evolution of a national identity within the country, and particularly during the Sandinista period of governance, he fails to acknowledge the inadequacy of leading Eurocentric theories on nationalism for Nicaragua. After tracing developments in a national consciousness after national independence from Spain, Baracco is correct in highlighting the emphasis on education and history in creating a sense of national identity during the 1980s. However, the analysis is not expanded beyond those two elements, which are also those identified by Anderson's (2006) theory on national identity that Baracco applies to his study. Of particular value, the author focuses on the indigenous groups of the Atlantic coast in Nicaragua. In my research, I have chosen not to examine the unique development and content of an ethnic national identity that occurred on the Atlantic coast, due to the fact that the state constructed nationalism of the FSLN, the focus of my analysis, presents national identity as a homogenous, singular community. In this regard, Baracco provides a valuable analysis of the variety of responses to the state-sponsored nationalism that can be found on the Atlantic coast.

Though the Sandinista government of the 1980s is recognised as having promoted a nationalist programme, as seen in some of the works discussed above, the majority of the scholarly works on the era have not focused directly on this aspect of the revolution. This seems counterintuitive when considering the discursive dimension of a state led effort at fostering national identity. It is specifically in this confluence between nationalism and discourse in Sandinista Nicaragua where I situate my research for this thesis. Following on from successful studies of the discursive creation of national identity by Wodak et al. (1999, 2009), Dolón and Todolí (2008) and Leith and Soule (2011), I present an analysis of Sandinista official discourse and the construction of national community during the 1980s. Looking at nationalism in Nicaragua under the FSLN forced me to rethink the dominant national identity theories presented by Benedict Anderson (2006), Anthony Smith (1991; 2006), Gellner (1983) and Hobsbawm (1990) and their applicability in my study. In chapter two, I present the general premises of their theories and examine their respective applicability in the Nicaraguan situation. Despite their ultimate shortcomings in understanding Latin American national identity, I contend that each theorist provides some relevant aspects when considering the creation of a sense of national community under the Sandinista government. For example, Anderson's

(2006: 58-9) discussion of the creole pioneers and imagined communities has a general applicability to national identity in Latin America. As will be seen, Smith's (2006) emphasis on foundational myths of ancestry, particularly those of the 'founding fathers' of a nation, is salient in the analysis of the corpora presented in chapter six. Gellner's (1983) theory on industrialisation relates to the economic development of Latin America and dependency mentioned in chapter two, whereas Hobsbawm's (1990) nationalism from below is especially relevant in light of the mass movement behind the Revolution which brought the FSLN to power. However, whilst there are elements from each theorist that are applicable specifically to the Nicaraguan situation, I present in chapter two a critique of the shortcomings of these theories for the Latin American context and suggest a reorientation of national identity theory for the region to include a consideration of radical Marxism and liberation theology.

1.4 Hegemony and Discursive Struggle

As I am interested in the FSLN's attempt to construct national community in Nicaragua, and in the opposition's and citizenry's reactions to that construction, my work necessarily entails the concept of hegemony. Originating with Antonio Gramsci in the 1930s, and debated by scholars ever since, hegemony entails the concept of governance through consent rather than coercion (Gramsci 2007). Significantly, consent suggests that those who are subordinated are active members in a political society, rather than passive subjects devoid of political power. The masses possess the power of granting or denying a government legitimacy. The extent to which this legitimacy is gained determines a government's ability to maintain power outside of coercive means. Granting legitimacy occurs chiefly by accepting a particular ideology. Joseph Femia (1981: 37) describes this situation as 'some kind of acceptance – not necessarily explicit – of the socio-political order or of certain vital aspects of that order'. Ideologies, in this sense, are more than just particular worldviews, they are, as Normal Fairclough and Ruth Wodak explain, 'particular ways of representing and constructing society which reproduce unequal relations of power' (Fairclough & Wodak 1997: 275). From this perspective, hegemony arises from a situation where one ideology is accepted as the socio-

political order Femia references, creating the situation of domination and unequal power relations Fairclough and Wodak indicate.

Femia explains that for Gramsci, 'hegemony embodied a hypothesis that within a stable social order, there must be a substratum of agreement so powerful that it can counteract the division and disruptive forces arising from conflicting interests' (Femia 1981 39). The acceptance of a dominant ideology necessitates the exclusion of alternative ideologies, thereby granting the power of consent to the ruling group. In this manner, groups seeking to establish and maintain dominance within a society must garner widespread support for their ideology, granting it sufficient weight within the public realm to restrict the emergence of counter-hegemonic ideologies. Femia identifies three types of hegemony that reflect varying levels of popular acceptance. The situation which would represent the strongest level of consent is what he terms 'integral hegemony'. This is a situation where 'society would exhibit a substantial degree of "moral and intellectual unity", issuing in an "organic" (to use the Gramscian idiom) relationship between rulers and ruled' (ibid: 46). Integral hegemony occurs in situations where the interests of the masses are addressed by the rulers, and where there is no significant opposition, due to the majority of the population assenting to the dominant ideology. 'Decadent hegemony', on the other hand, represents a situation where the 'needs inclinations and mentality of the masses are not truly in harmony with the dominant ideas' (ibid: 47). Although, as Femia contends, there is societal integration, it is not stable and is subject to dissent in this situation. Lastly, he identifies 'minimal hegemony', which describes a situation where there is consensus among the powerholders in society, but it is one which excludes the masses. This type of hegemony ignores the concerns of those outside of the dominant classes, and rule is maintained 'through *transformismo*, the practice of incorporating the leaders... of potentially hostile groups into the elite network' (ibid: 47). These last two types of hegemony present circumstances which allow counter-hegemonic groups to emerge, as the popular will is not reflected or considered by the ruling class.

Significantly, hegemonic work is often visible in discursive contestation. The efforts to present a particular ideological perspective as the only acceptable option can be seen in the way certain political, cultural, social and economic policies are discussed. Additionally, the manner of discussing these areas of popular interest comes to be 'naturalised' (Fairclough 1989: 92), that is, accepted as the common

sense view of the world, when widespread acceptance of an ideology occurs. Paul Ives (2004) argues that the dominant ideologies inhibit opposing groups from solidifying their own ideologies, due to the influence of the common sense ideas on their own ideological formation. He states that:

subaltern groups lack a coherent philosophy or world-view from which to understand and interpret the world. One could say, they lack their own language. Rather, they work within a “common sense” that is a fragmentary result of the sedimentation of ideas and beliefs elaborated by various traditional intellectuals’ (Ives 2004: 78).

The influence of the dominant ideology, then, is evident in the opposing viewpoints as it provides the conceptual and discursive structures within which the alternative ideologies are constructed and communicated. That is not to say that the subaltern ideologies are the same as the hegemonic ideology. Rather, the alternative ideologies are not always articulated in a language, or discourse, that is different to that of the hegemonic discourse. Ives goes on to state that since subaltern groups ‘often do not have effective intellectuals of their own, they are subordinated and adopt conceptions which are not their own but borrowed from the hegemonic social group’ (ibid:79). In this way, the discursive contestation for hegemony for a particular ideology is conditioned by the dominant ideology and its discursive manifestation. Gramsci posits that ‘in language there is contained a specific conception of the world’ (quoted in Ives 2004: 82). Ives explains that for Gramsci language was integral to hegemony.

Paralleling Gramsci’s contention that language communicates a worldview, discourse conveys ideology as it is both socially constituted and socially constitutive (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 6). It is constituted as it arises from a group’s own particular semantic patterns of interaction; it is socially constitutive since discourse ‘sustains and reproduces the status quo, and in that sense it contributes to transforming it’ (Fairclough & Wodak 1997: 258). Paul Chilton explains that it is ‘the use of a... discourse, especially in a repeatable, institutionalised form, that governs the way people think’ (2004: 26). The constitutive nature of discourse is what allows language to present and reproduce an ideology within a society, and permits a particular group to gain hegemony. As the ideology is reproduced and accepted by the masses, opposition to it decreases. In this way, hegemony is central to my examination of the FSLN’s construction of national community and the discursive

contestation that occurred between the FSLN and the opposition groups in Nicaragua as each group vied to gain popular support for their ideological position.

1.5 Data Sources and Analysis Rationale

In answering the research question of how did the FSLN government discursively create a new sense of national community in Nicaragua, and to what extent was this instilled in the population, I analyse three related corpora: FSLN documents, opposition documents, and retrospective interviews. These provide a basis for addressing the associated research questions of whether the official discourse was used in opposition materials, how the terrain of the ‘national’ was contested discursively between the FSLN and the opposition, and what the citizenry’s current perceptions of the government’s efforts in this direction are.

The rationale behind examining both the government and opposition materials is to allow for a triangulation of the FSLN data. By analysing both corpora, I am able to examine the contestation that was occurring between the two groups in their efforts to gain hegemony for their respective narrative of national transformation. The criteria for the selection of the publications included in the corpora were their chronological dating and presentation as books, pamphlets or articles. All of the documents were originally published between 1980 and 1989, though some are found in compilations published at a later date. The FSLN corpus comprises fifteen documents. Included among this group are speeches commemorating various anniversaries of the Revolution, propaganda pamphlets and articles from government publications on topics such as education, leadership changes and reflections on the state of the country. The opposition corpus contains fifteen collections of documents with contributions from different opposition groups, including the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (Movimiento Democrático Nicaragüense – MDN), the Democratic Revolutionary Alliance (Alianza Revolucionaria Democrática – ARDE), and Opposition Block of the South (Bloque Opositor del Sur – BOS). The documents include articles from the groups' official journal publications, transcripts of interviews and a collection of editorials from the newspaper *La Prensa*. In addition to the corpora of published materials, I also look at ethnographic interviews I conducted in July 2010. The interview corpus is made up of thirteen ethnographic interviews, each of roughly an hour in length. The focus

of the interviews is retrospective, and asked the participants to reflect on the political situation in the 1980s as well as the current political environment. A variety of viewpoints is expressed, ranging from former members of the Sandinista Army (EPS) and literacy crusade workers, to individuals whose relatives worked for Somoza, to youth opposition sympathisers.

The three corpora are limited in certain ways however. Constraining the FSLN and opposition corpora to only published documents dictates that the data are relatively polished texts. Excluding actual recordings of speeches, press conferences or television and radio broadcasts eliminates the spontaneous aspect of oral production which can occasionally result in statements contrary to a group's official stance on a topic. This limitation, however, does ensure that the texts with which I am working have been on the whole approved of by the leadership of the respective parties. Another limitation is the specific time period I have chosen to examine. By electing to conduct a close examination of documents from the 1980s rather than a more broad examination of texts from prior to and after the FSLN government, it is not possible to conduct a diachronic study of how either Sandinista discourse on nationalism or Nicaraguan discourse in general have changed in different political climates.

Additionally, the process of choosing which documents to include implies an inherent constraint to the corpus. Whilst I have included several texts, I limited the inclusion criteria not only by time period and document type but also by topic. In order to look for areas of comparison and contrast among the corpora, I chose documents which composed a similar range of topics or themes. Specific to the opposition corpus, I represent the opposition as a unified block of thought, much like the FSLN. This is not necessarily the case as there were many disparate groups acting independently of one another and at times against one another. However, as the majority of groups I examine at various points joined in political and operational alliances with others, I have chosen to deal with their documents as a unified whole. This is also a practical matter as my research project does not have the scope to deal thoroughly with each individual group as independent actors in their interactions with the discursive terrain in Nicaragua in the 1980s.

The interview corpus is also limited, though in different ways. The respondents all came from one initial point of contact. Whilst she endeavoured to introduce me to a politically and experientially diverse group of respondents, that

group is necessarily limited to her acquaintances. Unfortunately, potential contacts with officials from the FSLN government in the 1980s did not materialise into actualised interviews, excluding a voice that could have spoken to the intentionality of the Sandinista discourse. Additionally, the interviews are geographically limited as my contact was based in Managua. Another constraint on the interview corpus is its retrospective nature. In dealing with recollections of past political circumstances, there is the possibility that subsequent political developments, such as elections and new governments, have influenced current perceptions of the past. However, these interviews are still a valid commentary on the discourse of nationalism in Nicaragua in the 1980s. The respondents commented on the perceived intentionality of the discourse from both sides, and their responses suggest a discourse's success or failure at gaining lasting hegemony either through its longevity, and thus continued current use by the interviewees, or its short-lived nature and absence of use.

1.6 Aims and Limitations of the Thesis

The aim of my analysis is to highlight salient discursive devices used to establish national community in Nicaragua in the 1980s. Bringing the tools found in the FSLN discourse to light allows me to compare and contrast their use with that of the opposition groups and the interviewees. From this comparison, points of contestation for discursive hegemony become evident. Some of the linguistic elements that emerge in my analysis are personification, reification, collocation and the use of inclusive pronouns, among various argumentation strategies. From this analysis, I hope to better understand the character of the national community that the FSLN was creating. That understanding coupled with the knowledge of the various devices used to implement it will provide a basis for understanding or exploring other similar nationalist movements in Latin America.

As with the corpora, the analysis itself has certain specific boundaries. The most significant limitation is that it deals only with Nicaragua, and is not a comparative study. Whilst a comparison with other countries' engagements with nationalism would undoubtedly provide interesting insights, the depth of analysis undertaken through the range of documents in this thesis precludes the inclusion of other national creations. I am particularly concerned with the Nicaraguan situation as it stems from a revolutionary period in which there was significant popular

participation, as well as being a limited time period in which to emphasise a changed national identity in the face of external aggression. Another aspect to bear in mind is that I was unable to interview any government officials for this study. Without that data, any understanding of the intentionality of the discourse can be only partial. Along with the limits of the data itself, the discourse historical approach does not particularly emphasise intention, since its discursive structures are often unconsciously reproduced by members of an in-group. Regarding the theoretical considerations proposed in chapter two, it is not the aim of this thesis to elaborate a new theory for Latin American nationalism. Rather, it is my intention to question the applicability of other theories on national identity formation in light of the peculiarities of Nicaragua specifically, and Latin America in general, based on common historical and political conditions in the region.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Considerations

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I outline three areas integral to a consideration of the creation of national community in the context of post-colonial national identity in Latin America: national identity theory, Latin American non-orthodox Marxism, and liberation theology. In discussing national identity, I explore theories from Benedict Anderson (2006), Anthony Smith (1991), Ernest Gellner (1983) and Eric Hobsbawm (1990) to look for ways they can inform an analysis of non-Western national identity. Perspectives from non-Eurocentric authors will also be brought to bear on the discussion. Evaluations of national identity theories by Nicola Miller (1999), John Chasteen (2003) and Claudio Lomnitz (2001) provide a Spanish American perspective, whilst Partha Chatterjee's (1993) and Dawa Norbu's (1992) studies supply a post-colonial perspective on national identity. The three elements examined in this chapter are specifically related to the creation of Nicaraguan national community and reflect general trends in Latin America more broadly; however, in Nicaragua, they came to predominate in the formation of the national ethos during the Sandinista regime.

Following on from the discussion of national identity, I consider the development of locally informed Marxist theories. The evolution of communism in the region from Soviet orthodoxy to radical guerrilla movements provides a linear description of an increase in national concerns for Latin American Marxists. These appear in the writings of Jorge Abelardo Ramos (1970) and José Carlos Mariátegui (2006), and indicate a desire to do away with the neo-colonialism of Soviet Communism. An emphasis on creating community among revolutionaries and the peasantry emerges as a significant theme, reflecting the influences of Mariátegui, Fidel Castro (Liss 1994) and Ernesto Guevara (Guevara 2000, Löwy 2007) on the theory.

The last aspect of creating national community I address in this chapter is liberation theology. Again, local concerns prevail upon a predominantly international set of beliefs, Roman Catholicism. Doctrinal positions issued at the Second Vatican Council and the Medellín conference laid the foundation for the emergence of liberation theology. Regional concerns about oppression and injustice led to the

creation of theological standpoints which emphasise local concerns over global ones. Numerous references are brought to bear, including works by Gustavo Gutiérrez (1970, 1996), Leonardo Boff (1986, 1990) and Michael Dodson (1986). Ecclesiastic base communities, one of the outgrowths of this movement, illustrate the emphasis on community and national action in the name of liberation from economic and political oppression.

The prevailing theories of national identity have been formulated based on the examination of Western-European nations. These theories, whether promoting an ethnic nation or a political one, typically locate nationalism's beginnings in the eighteenth century. Western expansion and imperialism exerted pressure on people-groups to begin an exploration of self-definition. For Anderson (2006), this identity formation manifested itself as individuals began to feel a sense of solidarity with their unknown countrymen, a function of the growing print-trade and the rise of vernaculars. Gellner (1983) posits that industrialisation was the catalyst to nationalism, bringing the population together as citizens working together toward the continued prosperity of their nation. These theories, along with others (cf. Hobsbawm 1990, Smith 1991), provide insight into the creation of European nations over the last few centuries. Some even provide insight into current nationalist developments, such as Anthony Smith (1991, 1996) who cites ethnic ties as the foundation for nationalism. However, I argue that these theories do not provide a sufficient explanation for the development of national identity in a non-Western context.

The Eurocentric perception of nationalist development is circumscribed by the worldview of industrialised, democratic and secularised societies. However, as I discuss below, the same circumstances cannot be ascribed to all nations in their formation. Early European theorists believed that nationalism outside of the European context did not warrant a different assessment than that which was applied to their own continent (Hobsbawm 1990: 151). Nonetheless, societal and historical aspects other than those found in the mainstream, Western experience, emerge as significant components in the creation of identity within a people group. Considering the variety of factors involved in the creation of the national sentiment, national identity, as it is predominantly depicted, presents only one element in the development of a national consciousness in non-Western nations. Interaction based on deep fraternal ties to both the national and the local spheres, which I have termed

national community, is a concept better suited to exploring non-Western, and even post-colonial, nationalisms.

National community incorporates the local with the national, allowing small-group ties to inform the expansion of larger ties. Cassinelli (1969: 26) views national identity as ‘dependent upon the types of sub-communities of which it is composed, rather than their being dependent upon it’. Separate groupings then are not marginalised and erased as nationalism is created, but they instead function in tandem to create a network of interrelations of solidarity. In the context of some Latin American nations, national identity in the twentieth century evolved with the emergence of localised Marxist ideas and the development of liberation theology.

2.2 National Identity in Latin America

In examining several dominant strands in national identity theory, it becomes apparent that the prevailing concepts regarding national identity are not sufficient for the Latin American context. The Western, Eurocentric perspectives are based on nations that were the imperial powers, the colonisers, whilst Latin American nations were the colonised. Neither do theories emerging from Africa and Asia wholly apply. Though post-colonial in their orientation, the socio-cultural and historical milieu in which the Asian and African theories emerged is widely divergent from that of Latin America. For, as Nicola Miller (1999: 12) states, ‘in general, the nations of Spanish America fit uneasily, if at all, into existing typologies of nationalism’. Whilst these typologies provide a necessary backdrop for conceptualising a theory of national identity that more specifically relates to Latin American nations, they must be adapted and perhaps disregarded in certain aspects to achieve a more adequate approach.

2.2.1 Anderson and Imagined Community

One such foundational concept for beginning to address national identity is Anderson’s idea of imagined communities. A nation, in Anderson’s estimation, ‘is an imagined political community’ (Anderson 2006: 6) owing to the fact that in most nations, the citizenry will never know each member personally, and yet will still maintain a sense of unity with the stranger who is their countryman. This feeling of

unity is based on the perception of shared cultural, territorial or religious roots. Rather than a purely political entity, the nation emerges in the consciousness as a community of members because, despite any disparities between members, ‘the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship’ (ibid: 7). The essence of an imagined community emerges from the cultural roots of its members, which Anderson locates in the religious and dynastic legacies in a nation. Religion established a community of believers who had a sacred text relatable only via a sacred language, for example Latin in Roman Catholicism (Anderson 2006: 15). Religion hierarchically stratified the society and provided a common worldview.

As explorers spread out from Western Europe and came into contact with other civilisations which held different beliefs to their own, an identity grew up around their own religion. A sense of community with others who held the same beliefs developed as in-groups and out-groups were defined according to worldview (ibid: 17). As Latin declined in influence in the face of growing vernaculars, fragmentation of the religious community increased. Regional languages delimited in- and out-groups, and the identity which had been embedded in Roman Catholicism instead found a basis in regional markers (ibid: 19). Additionally for Anderson, the emergence of the print trade allowed the vernaculars to become consolidated as signifiers of one’s belonging to a specific community. Anderson indicates three influences of print-language on the imagining of a community: unifying the means of discussion with more legitimacy than merely spoken vernaculars; creating an appearance of historicity attached to the vernacular through its fixedness in writing; and establishing a ‘language-of-power’ with roots outside of the dynastic realm (ibid: 44-45). However, understanding how most Western European nations originated cannot fully explain the situation in post-colonial ones. Such nations have been given an artificial base, that of the colonial power, from which they must negotiate a new and independent identity.

Latin American countries did not exist as fixed territorial and governmental units prior to their conquest. The maintenance of these externally imposed administrative demarcations after liberation from Spanish control finds an explanation in Anderson’s discussion of the creole pioneers, those whose origin lies in the imperialist nation but whose life and allegiance are in the new land. The meaning of *nación* during the colonial era in Latin America highlighted the difference between creoles and peninsulares based on their belonging to a particular

region or province (Lomnitz 2001: 333-4). Much like a Catalan or a Basque belonged to a different *nación*, so did the colonist. There was additionally a pan-imperial identity that came from belonging not to a *nación* but to a *patria*. During colonial times, the *patria* represented a land of many *naciones* both at home and abroad (ibid: 334). The individuals who developed and administered the territories for Spain were restricted in their upward mobility, being viewed in the later stages of the Empire as belonging in the colonies rather than in the fatherland. As Anderson explains, it is this relegation by accident of birth to a constrained sphere of life, along with the reality of intermarriage and the emergence of *mestizos*, which allowed the colonists to begin to identify more with the colonial territory than with the homeland (Anderson 2006: 58-59).

During the seventeenth century, economic competition with Spain forced a reorganization of the relationships between the colony and the fatherland. This entailed an increased definition of administrative borders, which heightened the sense of distinction from other colonies. An additional factor in the strengthening of the nation was the might of the British Navy and its threat to Spain's interests in the Americas. In order for Spain to protect its overseas territories, it became necessary for each colonial unit to have a semi-self-sufficient fiscal administration and an army (Lomnitz 2001: 347). The definition and separation of the various administrative territories served to strengthen the Empire against foreign aggression, but also laid the foundation for the colonies' independence. However, Anderson's contention that these creole pioneers were the creators of nationalism is far from clear. Claudio Lomnitz argues that Anderson's 'Creole elite was a regional elite, not a national bourgeoisie' and thus could not 'articulate the national space' (Lomnitz 2001: 30). The military and the Church were the necessary institutions for constructing national consciousness. He additionally argues that 'nationalism combines the use of transnationally generated formulas... with a politics that is inextricably local', and that the creole elite used formulas imported from abroad in their nationalist movements (ibid: 351). Chasteen (2003) also finds fault with Anderson's contention, stating that 'once the Spanish and Portuguese had been purged, nativist agitation focused on finer distinctions, now differentiating "us" from "them" among the native born,' and that as a result 'imagined communities did not last long beyond the wars' for independence (2003: xvi). Chasteen also takes issue with Anderson's assertion that imagined communities existed prior to those wars. For Chasteen, such a

perspective is ‘entirely at variance with the consensus of Latin Americanist historians and critics’ (ibid: xviii). Such scholars maintain that nations in Latin America ‘remained more aspiration than fact for many decades after gaining independence’ and ‘that contrary to the situation in Europe, “states preceded nations” in Latin America’ (ibid: xviii). In this light, Anderson’s argument for the origins of national identity in Latin America is suspect. Nonetheless, Chasteen does find Anderson’s concept of imagined communities a useful theoretical concept for studying national identity (ibid: xxi). Both Lomnitz’s and Chasteen’s critiques of the Anderson’s theory of nationalism originating in Latin America indicate that context-specific cultural, economic and historical conditions must inform any examination of national identity in the region, particularly as it does not truly conform to the Eurocentric criteria for nationhood which so influenced Anderson.

Another significant pillar in Anderson’s argument is that the newspapers in the administrative territories focused on local issues pertinent to the economic and social lives of those living in the area, creating a locally imagined community of readers (Anderson 2006: 62). Through a crystallization of the sense of being not only *Americans* as opposed to *Spanish*, but also of being *Mexican*, *Peruvian*, or *Nicaraguan*, this new national self-consciousness allowed nation-building projects to begin at the end of the eighteenth-century in Latin America. However, Sarah Radcliffe and Sallie Westwood (1996) contend that the print-trade did not hold the same importance in Latin America as it did in Europe. Citing the high level of illiteracy in the Latin American colonies, Radcliffe and Westwood counter Anderson’s emphasis on print media with an emphasis on the ‘oral transmission of narratives and iconography’ (Radcliffe & Westwood 1996: 12). Similarly William Rowe and Vivian Schelling (1991) argue that one weakness in Anderson’s argument is the lack of consideration of the role played by popular culture in the creation and propagation of a national identity (ibid: 25). These comments indicate that both the print trade among the literate upper class and the oral and cultural traditions among the masses served to disseminate national identification among the population, creating an imagined community in the administrative territories. Chasteen also takes issue with Anderson’s emphasis on the print trade, though in a different manner than that mentioned above. For Chasteen, the major shortcoming of Anderson’s argument is the lack of evidence supporting his claims. He states that ‘only a tiny handful of the kind of newspapers (Anderson) describes existed in Spanish America before

Independence’, and as such, his claim ‘rests on no specific evidence whatsoever’ (Chasteen 2003: xx).

It is important to note here a significant difference between the role of language as a national identifier in European nationalisms versus Latin American ones. Whereas in Europe, different languages are held up as essential elements in demarcating one nation’s identity from another, almost all Latin American countries have Spanish as their official national language (Mar-Molinero 2000: 38). Undoubtedly, there are indigenous languages which are referred to in discussing ethnic nationalisms, such as with the Miskitu people on Nicaragua’s Atlantic coast (Baracco: 2004). However, the state mandated national languages do not act as a *de facto* indication of national separation and identification of the countries of Latin America. The emphasis Anderson places on language cannot be directly applied to nationalisms outside of Europe, such as in Latin America, where the same linguistic tensions are not necessarily manifest.

Another critique of Anderson stems from the work of Partha Chatterjee. In his influential publication *Nationalist thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (1993), Chatterjee finds fault with Anderson’s theorisation for largely different reasons than do Lomintz and Chasteen. Focusing on Indian nationalism, Chatterjee criticises Anderson for his overly prescriptive modular assessment of nationalism. Anderson (2006) presents three models of nationalism, the Latin American, the European and the Russian model, which inform all other subsequent nationalisms. Chatterjee finds this prescriptive nature of nationalism overly Eurocentric, and insists that Anderson finds in ‘third-world nationalisms a profoundly “modular” character. They are invariably shaped according to contours outlined by given historical models’ (Chatterjee 1993: 21). The determinism Chatterjee sees in Anderson’s account ignores the unique formation of nationalism in a colonial or postcolonial settings. Central to the nature of colonial and postcolonial nationalisms, according to Chatterjee, is the discursive power struggle over a European conception of knowledge. He posits that the predominant theories of national identity are rooted in post-Enlightenment Europe, which presents ‘a framework of knowledge which proclaims its own universality; its validity, it pronounces, is independent of cultures’ (ibid: 11). Therefore, the Eurocentric models of national identity cannot properly explain the phenomenon in non-European countries, and ‘thus nationalist thinking is necessarily a struggle with an entire body

of systematic knowledge' (ibid:40). For Chatterjee, Anderson's theories are rooted in not only political colonialism, but also discursive colonialism, which denies a unique space for the creation of non-European nations. Though Anderson's concept of imagined communities is a useful theoretical tool for discussing national identity, his theory of the origin of national identity in Latin America is not a sufficient description of the experiences of various nations' in the region.

2.2.2 Smith and Ethnic Nationalism

For Anthony Smith, national identity depends on more than Anderson's imagined bonds. It includes ethnic, cultural and political ties are essential in the creation of national identity for Smith (1991). For him, the fundamental features of a national identity centre on five aspects: a historic territory or homeland, common myths, a common public culture, common legal rights for all, and a common economy (ibid: 14). In Latin America, the common public culture, legal rights and economy are all present, owing to Spanish administration and the imposition of Catholicism in the territories. Therefore, the basis of a stable community with a defined political base was already established.

The elements needed to round out Smith's view of nationalism revolve around aspects that could engender common association among all the members of the society. For him, ethnic ties are part of an imagined community, relying not merely on physical traits, such as blood lines, but on historic, shared memories and the sense of a common past. Particularly, he indicates myths of the founding fathers as functional tools in fostering national identification, as they provide an example for present generations of how to best serve and build the nation (Smith 1996: 584). The the political foundations of the imagined communities in Latin America were created by descendents of colonists and a few *mestizos* in the nineteenth century, rather than by the indigenous population which had been weakened through disease, oppression and slavery. Additionally, focusing on the founding fathers as a basis for creating a separate nation would have been a call to continued colonialism in Latin America.¹ In this way, Smith's contention about the importance of the primordial character of

¹ See Juan Valdez (2011) *Tracing Dominican Identity: The Writings of Pedro Henríquez Ureña* for a discussion of the maintenance of a Spanish national identity in the Dominican Republic.

nationalism based on ethnicity does not always fit directly in the state led national identities found in Latin America.

Smith's typology of nationalisms separates them into territorial or ethnic varieties. Territorial ones, which are found in postcolonial nations before their independence, are focused on expelling foreign rulers. After independence is gained the focus shifts toward uniting different ethnic units to 'create a new "territorial nation" out of the old colonial state' (Smith 1991: 82). Related to this type of nationalism Smith notes that in post-colonial states, there are two methods to creating a nation. One method is the dominant ethnic group establishing a nationalism based on its own historic cultural and political community. The second is where a 'supra-ethnic "political culture" for the new political community' is created with no reference to any dominant ethnic group (ibid: 110-112).

The situation in Latin America, as opposed to that of Asia and Africa from which Smith draws his examples, does not, however, neatly fit into either category. The dominant *ethnie*, it could be argued, was the Spanish colonisers who settled the land and either integrated their indigenous neighbours into their culture, or excluded them from it. Yet, the distinction perceived by the *creoles* and *peninsulares* between a *Spaniard* and an *American* calls into question the 'spanishness' of the creole as an *ethnie*. Latin American nations, then, appear more similar to Smith's second method of building a territorial nation. However, the political and cultural structures implemented in the construction of the new nation were direct descendents from the colonial power. Spanish remained the only official language in most nations and Catholicism was still the state religion. Though Anderson is correct in observing that the Latin American communities 'developed... early conceptions of their nation-ness – *well before most of Europe*' (Anderson 2006: 50 italics in original), Smith also is correct in stating that the colonial 'nation that is (usually still) being forged has been defined, in its boundaries and character, by the colonial state' (Smith 1991: 106). Whilst there was a degree of self-consciousness in the colonial states, they were also inescapably shaped by the coloniser.

An idea of community emanated from the territories, representing a nationalism forged from the boundaries imposed by Spain, which did include the indigenous as members of the nation. Anderson quotes San Martín's statement from 1821 that 'in the future the aborigines shall not be called Indians or natives; they are children and citizens of Peru and they shall be known as Peruvians' (Anderson 2006:

49-50). However, the inclusion of indigenous roots in the consideration of the national identity did not come to fruition until the early twentieth century with the prevalence of *indigenismo*. *Indigenismo* represents the relation of non-indigenous political actors to the indigenous communities and roots in their shared country which aims to ‘advance notions of common belonging and coexistence’ (Tarica 2008: xi). As Estelle Tarica explains, *indigenismo* as a discourse of the non-indigenous about the indigenous began in the sixteenth century and continues to today (ibid: xi). Though not all of the newly formed nations esteemed the indigenous populations in their borders, some indigenous roots began to enter into the national consciousness as part of the distinction from Spain and Europe as a whole. In Nicaragua, the Atlantic coast indigenous groups were ignored, whilst those on the Pacific coast were nearly completely decimated through disease and oppression. Nonetheless, as evidence of Smith’s observation that the post-colonial nations are still in the process of creation, a century after Nicaragua’s official independence from Spain, nationalist movements made an appeal to the common roots of all Nicaraguans and their common spirit linked to their indigenous past (Fonseca 1984). Thomas Turino (2003) indicates that the same process was occurring throughout Latin America in the twentieth century. He notes that various composite cultures and ethnic groups began to be incorporated into the concept of the nation, often through what he terms the ‘folklorization of indigenous and African-American traditions’ or populist movements (ibid: 169-170). Miller highlights a similar change, where the main difference between nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was the turn toward including the masses in the national community (Miller 1999: 34). The perception of nationalism became one of cultural nationalism, rather than merely a political one. This move resulted in the inclusion of an ethnic component in nationalism, Turino’s folklorization, which had not featured in the identity before (Turino 2003: 138). Such a shift in Latin America shows that the ethnic ties fundamental to Smith’s conception of national identity, a common historic territory and common myths or histories, can be co-opted from subaltern political actors by Anderson’s *creoles* to create a truly imagined community, where unity is based on a myth of common ethnic roots.

The turn toward imagining an inclusive past for the national community emphasises the necessity of history. Will Fowler (2006: 5) argues that ‘national identity depends on historiography – and historiography is a constructed

interpretation of the past, heavily influenced by the needs and concerns of the present'. During the 1900s, the needs of the nation were changing in Latin America, and efforts at increased economic production required a redefinition of the nation. The new national definition was one that envisioned the available workforce as part of the community rather than merely occupants of the same territory with no fraternal connection to one another. Turino (2003: 170) also argues that a state emphasis on capitalist development which had been absent the previous century precipitated the change in the understanding of national belonging. Industrialisation and its impact on the formation of nationalism form the core of Gellner's theory of the development of national identity.

2.2.3 Gellner and Industrialised Nationalism

Gellner's argument centres on the concept that in nationalism, the 'political and the national unit should be congruent' (Gellner 1983: 1). In his estimation, this occurs through a society's industrial and economic advancement, moving a people from an agrarian construct to an industrial one. Abandoning the fixity found in agrarian roles, such as a trade being passed from generation to generation, provides for mobility and malleability among the members of a society (ibid: 24). Industrialisation ushers in a more egalitarian society where citizens mix freely and stratification is no longer between neighbouring communities, but between levels of access to power (ibid: ch. 3). These social, and perhaps economic, barriers are less rigid than previous ones, and with the right training, access to any level is possible. Still, entrance into the society built on the fluidity and movement of labourers is predicated on the possession of a collective knowledge base.

In order for individuals to enter into the benefits of an industrial society, they needed to accept and adapt to the culture required for mutual communication and understanding (ibid: 35ff). Individual, localising ties are to be eschewed as one needs to be willing to leave local areas for different advancement opportunities. For the entrant into this society, an attachment to a local culture which is neither part of nor compatible with the new high, mass culture is an inhibition to one's own productivity and prosperity. In a society and era where perpetual growth is taken as a given truth, it is not feasible to neglect those opportunities when they arise in the name of local ties.

Nationalism, for Gellner, replaces small community ties after industrialism has broken them down. Society is no longer constructed of numerous, small centres of cultural, ethnic and linguistic similarity, but is rather a mass society of a shared, high culture bounded by a political, territorial demarcation. To Gellner, this unity is a 'total and ultimate political community' which is 'linked both to the state and the cultural boundary' (ibid: 63). In this situation, the role of the state takes on an aspect different from that of the monarchies and empires that dominated the agrarian age. The state, having fostered a mass high culture and a homogenous and fluid community, finds itself in the position of protecting and maintaining that culture to ensure the territory's and the citizens' continual economic growth (ibid: 110). When new states and their respective nationalisms enter into the industrial world fully, Gellner is right to indicate that the state must act not only as a protector of a culture, but also of an 'initially fragile economy' (ibid: 112). It is in this respect that Gellner's theory of nationalism based on industrialism is most usefully applied to the Latin American situation in the twentieth century.

Gellner states that 'in those cases where a modern nation is born of what had previously been a mere stratum – peasant only or urban specialist only – the state's concerns with making its ethnic group into a balanced nation and with developing its economy, become one and the same task' (Gellner 1983: 112). This is applicable to the Latin American context of the early twentieth century, as the nations of the region were only beginning to move from semi-feudal societies to industrialised ones, with most inhabitants being offered entrance through newly formed state literacy and education programmes. Formerly disenfranchised members of the state were needed to propel the industrialisation of the country forward. The economic movement coincides with cultural movements aimed at incorporating the indigenous past into the national identity of the state as a whole, with all citizens inheriting the native past. As Turino (2003:169-70) has highlighted, indigenous and African roots were combined in the national self-conception through the folklorisation of their traditions. This claim to protect and support a folk culture is also referenced on several occasions by Gellner. To him, the main failing of nationalism is its claim to support a supposed peasant culture, 'while in fact helping to build up an anonymous mass society' (Gellner 1983: 124). In this respect, nationalism in Latin America fits in with Gellner's conception, in particular when examined in the twentieth century. The need to support a national political economy, combined with the need to

promote national unity, resulted in the inclusion and appropriation of a formerly ignored folk culture into the mass high culture and society, alongside a reification of an indigenous past.

However, Gellner's emphasis on Western nations, much like Anderson and Smith, prevents non-industrialised, modern nations and their nationalism from entering into his theory. A major weakness of Gellner's theory, in regards to the Latin American context, is its complete dependence on Western modernisation. Chatterjee argues that Gellner, like Anderson, is too deterministic in his theorising on nationalism. For Chatterjee, Gellner's assertion that the precise doctrines of nationalist thinkers did not merit analysis belies Gellner's prescriptive tendency, as in Gellner's theory 'there was little scope for genuine doctrinal innovation' as 'the necessary philosophizing had already been done' (Chatterjee 1993: 5). Aspects of industrialisation leading to nationalism are evident in recent Latin American history, but that does not preclude the existence of a form of nationalism before the increase in industry and capitalism. Specifically in Nicaragua, the economy cannot be said to have been fully industrialised prior to the FSLN's rise to power and consequent emphasis on national identity, as the nation still depended largely on agro-exports.

Gellner does highlight an important aspect ignored by those who focus solely on the ethnic roots of the phenomenon. By examining the philosophical and social roles that economic and industrial expansion played within a state, nationalism emerges as more than merely kinship ties. Rather, the imagined quality proposed by Anderson is all the more clear when viewed as part of a nation-building project centred on the elites' belief in continued progress and improvement both inside and outside state borders.

2.2.4 Hobsbawm and Nationalism from Below

Approaching the topic of national identity from a decidedly more Marxist perspective, Hobsbawm takes issue with Gellner's theory of nationalism as 'modernization from above' (Hobsbawm 1990: 11). Hobsbawm instead endeavours to include an assessment of the creation of nationalism from the bottom up, from the popular, mass-societal level. Important in the treatment of nationalism from below is the recognition that one's national identification does not erase all other social identifications (ibid: 11). Belonging to a nation is not the sole societal role an

individual occupies at any one time. The kinship relations and community ties, which Gellner argues are replaced by the communion of a shared high culture in a mobile society, do in fact persist in the face of an expanded community of relations. A state-produced idea of national identification is in no way the only representation of the identity of a nation's citizens at the local level. Hobsbawm indicates that, in the time of the American and French revolutions, the 'nation-people as seen from below' (ibid: 20) was viewed as the subordination of individual interests to the common-good, rather than any ethnic call to unity.

Hobsbawm indicates three conditions in the liberal period for the classification of a nation. The first was a connection with a current state; the second was an established vernacular for national administration and literature; the third was evidence of an ability to conquer and expand (Hobsbawm 1990: 37-8). These three criteria can be adapted to classify the Latin American colonies as nations post-independence. As the inheritors of the Spanish legacy in the area, by the time of independence, most Latin American countries were well established administrative districts functioning as quasi-independent states, attending to their own concerns. The Spanish language was also firmly in place as the language of governance, through the regional administration and the Catholic Church, providing a common vernacular. As colonies, the Latin American states do not at first glance appear to fulfil the criterion of conquest. Yet the colonists themselves could, as the inheritors of the Spanish conquest, be seen as the ones who originally conquered the land and continued to enforce that conquest through managing the indigenous population.

The beginnings of nationalism, which Hobsbawm calls proto-nationalism, envision two types of bonds. There are 'supra-local forms of popular identification' (ibid: 46) which extend beyond small communities, providing a community link for the whole nation. The other bond is that which is exhibited in political connections and vocabularies which are assimilated into the discourse of the masses (ibid: 47). Norman Fairclough's (1989: 92) concept of naturalisation is reflected in this situation, where a particular discourse becomes the sole means by which a concept is discussed and framed. This forms part of the mass society's common-sense construct. Ruth Wodak (1989: 137ff) highlights a similar situation with the development and eventual acceptance of jargon into a nation's discourse.

Addressing the widespread insistence that linguistic unity is a foundational pillar and impetus to nationalism, Hobsbawm contends that such an argument is

merely reflective of ‘the ideological constructions of nationalist intellectuals’, following in the tradition of Herder (Hobsbawm 1990: 57). Linguistic barriers are merely a literary device in this view, since languages traditionally did not identify the boundaries of national groupings. Hobsbawm argues that Anderson’s insistence on the development of the print trade as an integral part of nation formation is a more apt explanation for the role language has played in the origin of nations and nationalism (ibid: 59-62).

Religion is also examined as a possible birthplace for nationalism. Whilst it is certainly a constituent part, it is not sufficient on its own, in Hobsbawm’s estimation, to foster and establish nationalism. World religions, he contends, are too universal to be the impetus behind a specific nationalism, and tribal religions are too small to apply to a large enough body of people to support a nation (ibid: 68). Aside from religion itself, there are elements that hold religious devotion which can in themselves inspire nationalism when used as a rallying point for the people. Holy icons provide a common point of devotion and affiliation for the society, fomenting collective sentiment and can ‘give a palpable reality to an otherwise imaginary community’ (ibid: 71). The importance of certain religious icons as rallying points in Latin America is evident in examples such as the Virgin of Guadalupe in Mexico. Additionally, religious imagery taken from the shared cultural idiom of Christianity, in particular that of Roman Catholicism, can be observed in political discourse across the region.

Hobsbawm’s emphasis on the practical uses of elements drawn from religion in the creation of national identity brings into focus a significant failing of these Eurocentric theories of national identity. Religion is assumed to be of little importance in modern nationalism by most theorists focusing on the European example. For Gellner (1983: 135), it is one of the local ties that is disposed of as a citizen integrates into the nation-state and its apparatus. Anderson too sees religion as an element of a by-gone time, fundamental in establishing the foundations of community, but not surviving in the modern imagined community (Anderson 2006: 140). However, as Barry Rubin (1995) reminds us, the notion that the Third World nations would follow in the European trend of secularisation is mistaken. For Rubin, this is due to the fact that modern ideas and philosophies were often imported to the Third World, and were ‘viewed as being out of tune with the prevailing culture’ (Rubin 1995: 21). The fact that religion maintains a significant position of influence

in non-European nations is not, then, a mark of a lack of national consciousness. Often it is quite the opposite.

Smith (1996: 586) argues that religion can enhance or create nationalism through beliefs such as myths of ethnic election. Religious identity and national identity reach a confluence, enhancing one another. The individuality afforded to the citizen-believers in this situation allows them to create a tightly formed in-group, irrevocably linked to the nation-state. Moreover, beyond such totalising myths, many developing countries still experience the influence of religion in the creation of national identity with world religions.

Norbu (1992: 78) comments that 'a pure world religion neither directly nor substantially constitutes a national identity, it only provides the logical framework within which national tradition is formed'. Similarly to Hobsbawm's indications of how secular nationalism can draw from the resources of religion, a local religiously informed national identity draws on the larger foundation of the world religion from which it emanates. Adopting local cultural traditions and historiography, a local variant of a world religion is more familiar, according to Norbu, and therefore more likely to define a nation's identity, becoming a source of national pride (ibid: 78). Norbu mistakenly notes that Roman Catholicism is one of the dominant world religions, along with Islam, which has not succumbed to a localising of belief (ibid: 77). She contends that their highly centralised hierarchy 'does not give any scope for interpretation and translation of their original revelation texts' (ibid: 77). As will be discussed in section 2.4, the emergence of liberation theology represents a local manifestation of Roman Catholicism, implicitly calling for a culturally and socially relevant application of the Catholic faith in Latin America.

Of particular relevance to the discussion on Latin America are Hobsbawm's comments on the nature of Communist and socialist movements in relation to national identity. Highlighting the tension between the socialist call for internationalism and the workers' loyalty to the nation, Hobsbawm argues that nationalism and socialism are not incompatible, and in fact are not even truly separable. For him, the Communist International's debates on the national question are evidence of the tension within socialist society between the ideal of a non-nationalist country and a nationalist citizenry (Hobsbawm 1990: 124). This is partially due to the fact that calls to nationalism and to socialism were made in large part to the same sector of the state, the workers who form the backbone of the

industrial society. Additionally, the anti-imperialist rhetoric in socialist discourse made socialism attractive to newly independent former colonies. As Hobsbawm states, ‘national liberation had become a slogan of the left’ (ibid: 149-150), promoting the national over the international. In this context, the new state, whilst embracing socialist or Communist ideals and theories, clamoured for a national identity of its own after years of existing as an extension of another nation’s borders. Nationalism found a basis in the Communist International’s discourse, whereby newer nation-states could justify their efforts to create a national identity and engender the support and loyalty of the citizens, whilst attempting to forge a socialist state. The following section explores how a Marxist orientation can be applied to local² circumstances to aid in the manifestation of national community.

2.3 Radical Marxism in Latin America

As discussed above, communism and socialism had a broad appeal in post-colonial nations due to their emphasis on anti-imperialism. In the clamour for independence after World War II, newly decolonised nations laid hold of the left’s fight against imperialism. For Hobsbawm, this consonance in purpose is the likely impetus behind several nations declaring themselves, in some form, socialist (Hobsbawm 1990: 149-150). In Latin America particularly, the fight for national liberation had a deeply historical element. The historical narrative beginning with the indigenous fighting against the conquistadors, through the colonists’ struggle for independence from Spain, to the modern battle against the encroaching dominance of the United States lent a strong pillar of support for calls for national liberation. Shared cultural and societal struggles allowed the ideological stance on liberation to become emotionally charged. Alongside the mythologised liberation struggle, capitalist development in Latin America continued to lag behind that of Europe and the United States. The semi-feudal nature of development in the region invited questions about the path of national development in Latin America (Hodges 1974: 27-8). These questions led Latin American intellectuals to consider alternatives to Western European and American capitalism, such as Marxism and socialism.

² To avoid confusion with discussions of *the national* in national identity theory, I use the word *local* to refer to that which is specific to individual nation-states, rather than a more narrow meaning of the word referring to the community level within a nation.

Another component of the circumstances in Latin America was the fact that many of the influential leaders in the call for liberation studied and lived in Europe during a period of growing Marxist foment in intellectual circles. Both Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre and José Carlos Mariátegui, Peruvian intellectuals and political leaders in the 1920s and 1930s, worked with Communist groups in France and Italy (Angotti 1986: 36; Klaiber 1971: 611). The desire for national liberation, a perceived semi-feudal state of capitalism and the European experiences of the intelligentsia, presented a fertile opening for the propagation of Marxist philosophy in Latin America.

There were also cultural resonances that provided an added level of intrigue and engagement with Marxist ideas. Widespread Judeo-Christian values, through the dominance of the Roman Catholic Church, laid a basis for the concept of equality shared by those open to Marxism. Though not overtly compatible, the latent egalitarian mores of Christian teachings in the society created an ideological space where Marxism could enter and function for the benefit of the masses. An additional cultural resource that was drawn upon in certain areas was an indigenous tradition of communitarian living. Mariátegui identified the Andean *ayllu* as the prototype of agrarian reform in a socialist Peru. Mariátegui described the *ayllu* as an example of an agricultural collective where a cooperative of families shared the land they worked (Mariátegui 2006: 54), describing the kin-based unit in socialist terms in order to use it as an example of socialist organisation. This represented an agrarian form of communism, which Mariátegui wanted to encourage across the country. Therefore, under certain interpretations, the indigenous culture provided inroads for adopting Marxist ideas. This movement also coincides with the increased importance placed on the masses in the name of national identity seen above. The folklorisation and the elevation of the peasant began to emerge at the same time that Marxism and socialism were gaining influence. The varied cultural and historical circumstances provided a receptive audience throughout Latin America for the acceptance of Marxist ideals.

The increase of Marxist thought in Latin America led to the establishment of Communist parties throughout the region. Accompanied by the push for national liberation, many activists embraced the Communist International's (Comintern) doctrine and the Soviet form of communism, alongside the support that came from membership in a global organisation. The Comintern's stance of unity across the

various constituent nations and its internationalist theme required doctrinal unity. Strong Soviet control over the Comintern ensured that Marxist-Leninist, and later Stalinist, philosophies dominated the Communist parties in individual nations. Additionally, the intellectual triumph of Marxist-Leninist thought in adapting and interpreting Marx's ideas to a concrete reality led to its acceptance as a complete philosophy, without the need for further development. Jorge Abelardo Ramos, an Argentine intellectual and political activist, advances this view in his book *El Marxismo en los Países Coloniales* (1970). Ramos accuses the Communist parties of accepting a Eurocentric version of Marx as a finished product without moulding it to fit the Latin American context (ibid: 5-6). In discussing Mariátegui's contribution to Marxist thought, Harry Vanden raises the point that the complete adoption of 'this classical Eurocentric Marxist view would, however militate strongly against original analyses *in situ* (from *within* the Latin American contextual reality)' (Vanden 1986:100, italics in the original). Vanden's estimation is validated by the numerous regional movements which were blacklisted by the Comintern for not following the party line. Examples range from Haya de la Torre's APRA (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria de América) and Mariátegui's writings, to Augusto Sandino's movement for national liberation in Nicaragua. Attempts to find a local application of Marx's ideas were marginalised from the Communist mainstream.

Tight Soviet control over the members of the Comintern dominated the revolutionary Marxist strand of political action in Latin America for the first half of the twentieth century. Marxist intellectuals in the region accepted the strict, top-down direction as part of the inherent internationalism of communism. Finding support and identity through membership in an orthodox party, the members of these parties abided by the dictates of the Comintern (Tismaneanu 1988: 85). The orthodox theory of the 1930s held that revolution had to occur in Europe before it could occur in the Third World. This was due to the lack of capitalist development in those countries which prevented the existence of a sizeable proletariat to carry out the revolution (Hodges 1974: 45). Marx's own writings did not provide a basis for any theory of revolution in underdeveloped countries. The practical reality of such countries entering into the communist struggle was not dealt with until Lenin realised the impact of economic imperialism on those areas (Klaiber 1971: 612). As such, Lenin's theory dominated the early period of Communist development in the underdeveloped world, including Latin America.

During the two World Wars, Stalin pushed the Comintern parties to adopt a popular front strategy, where the parties were to join with other political entities that could aid in instigating a Communist revolution. This move opened up the Latin American parties to a broader section of the populace (Tismaneanu 1988: 86). Though inviting more people to join ranks with the local Communists, this policy also prompted an increased crackdown on reformist elements within the parties. According to Tismaneanu, the predominant feature of Latin American Communist parties was their unerring submission to the hierarchical structure of Soviet Communism; he states that the effect of ‘... this rigid internal structure was a stupendous lack of political initiative, and a boundless servility toward Moscow, as well as a clear inability to articulate a coherent and consistent long-term strategy’ (ibid: 89). Thus, when movements began clamouring for armed insurrection to advance the socialist and revolutionary cause, they were condemned by the local Communists for going against Soviet dictates. In 1955 Khrushchev, promoting a more peaceful image for international Communism, issued the Moscow General Declaration stating that revolutionaries were to follow a peaceful transition to socialism, through legal channels, and that armed struggle was to be an effort of last resort, ending hopes for any Latin American revolutions (ibid: 88, Hodges 1974: 48). Loyalty to the Soviet line came to be seen as yet another form of imperialism, particularly as revolutionary movements began looking for a local answer to the political and economic dominance of the traditional ruling parties and the USA.

Highlighting a danger of accepting Soviet Marxism as an ultimate philosophy, Vanden states that such acceptance ‘would only help perpetuate Latin American cultural dependency in a new – albeit far more subtle – way’ (1986: 100). Latin American intellectuals found themselves in a new situation of imperialist domination, even as they attempted to foster anti-imperialist nationalism in the region. Ramos blames this subordination to another foreign power on ‘dependent, colonial thinking’ (Ramos, 1970: 12)³. The new imperialism, an intellectual and political one, stemmed as much from abroad as it did from home. Opposition to a local interpretation and application of Marxism came from the local Communist parties which expelled reformist members. These local parties united with non-communist parties against Marxist movements deemed to be out of step with the

³ All translations are mine, unless otherwise stated

Soviet line. Ramos blames the immobility of Latin American revolutionary thinking for stunting the revolutionary movement (ibid: 12). For him, this represented another form of colonialism. Mariátegui was similarly concerned that the Marxist thought of his era was merely an echo of the Soviet line (Vanden 1986: 111). Ramos, however, goes further and takes the offensive against such thinking. He states that ‘in this case we are colonialists because we have also assumed the revolutionary doctrines under a form of dependency’ (Ramos 1970: 5). Ramos continues, ‘... we must say that Marxism as a theory and practice of liberation must be liberated in turn and the emancipators must emancipate themselves’ (ibid: 5).

From these examples it is evident that the idea of national liberation and anti-imperialism which spurred many people to join the Communist parties was left aside in favour of the struggle for Soviet dominance, in the name of international Communism. Many revolutionaries who were searching for radical change began to conceive of a path to national liberation that was not achievable under a Soviet or European form of Marxism. Intellectuals and revolutionary activists recognised the need for a Marxist interpretation that accounted for the unique situation of their respective countries and broke with colonialism and imperialism of all kinds. A sense of community emerged, with decisions and strategy based on the local citizens’ needs and desires, rather than mandates from abroad.

2.3.1 The Emergence of Radical Marxist Groups in Latin America

The growing discontent among many revolutionary-minded activists in Latin America coalesced into organised opposition to both right-wing militaristic governments and rigid orthodox Communist parties. Though such groups struggled against the Communist parties, they did not reject Marxism out of hand. Many began to see the need to interpret Marx’s writings in a way that reflected the historical and social conditions present in their own countries. Ramos expressed this sentiment stating that it was ‘necessary... to reconquer Marxism for Latin Americans’ (Ramos 1970: 6). Beginning after the end of World War II, there was an intellectual awakening to the paucity of original Marxist thinking in the region. Aided by the Sino-Soviet split, evidence that communism could function independently of the USSR, revolutionaries began re-evaluating their local situation.

Approaching Marx's writings afresh, Latin American theorists began to discover that Marx did not intend his theories to become rigid dogma, but rather that they be interpreted according to a country's situation (Liss 1984: 275). In 1959, Fidel Castro succeeded in claiming the first successful revolutionary, socialist uprising in Latin America. That the Cuban success came from a group of idealistic yet practical revolutionaries, rather than from the established Communist party, was significant. Latin American intellectuals had begun to question the validity of Marxism, seeing it as nothing more than a European philosophy that could not be applied locally. Liss explains that this malaise among former Marxist devotees was counteracted by the Cuban revolution, 'forc[ing] many of them to re-examine the applicability of scientific socialism to their region, to dig deeper into the vast store of Marxist literature and theory for ideas...' (ibid: 278). After several decades of subjugation to the Soviet line, Latin Americans were recapturing the emphasis on local interpretations of Marx promoted by Haya de la Torre and Mariátegui. As Vanden (1986:100) points out, the impact of Mariátegui's thought and writings did not significantly take root until the 1950s, during the intellectual renaissance surrounding Marx in South America.

One of the elements to emerge from a local view of Marxism was the fact that the situation in most Latin American countries did not favour the European style of socialist development. Beyond acknowledging that the Soviet plan for socialist development constrained local development, it became apparent that following prescribed stages of capitalist development would not present the opportunity for change in Latin America for many decades. Many students, urban workers and intellectual theorists were not willing to wait whilst the majority of their countries' citizens suffered. Dependency theory postulates that the developed countries became so through the exploitation of other countries, and that their continued development rests on the continued underdevelopment of the others (McGovern & Franck 1989: 274-5). This theory added legitimacy to the new Marxists and their desire for economic liberation. Alongside dependency theory there was the emerging consideration of the continued impact of the Spanish American colonial past on present development.

Beyond having numerous primary materials, such as gold, silver, coffee and sugar, exported from the colonies by the Spanish, the legacy of the Spanish 'disdain for manual work' was perpetuated among the aristocracy (ibid: 277). Land

ownership was limited to a small proportion of the population, a situation which, to a lesser degree, continues to the current day. As a result, the post-colonial countries maintained an export economy, where little was produced in the nations themselves aside from primary materials and crops, forcing the countries to import finished products at a higher cost. According to Ronald Chilcote and Joel Edelstein (1986: 30-1) the result was ‘the creation of a two-class society with a narrow oligarchy at the top’ which set up a ‘cycle of dependence that has still not been broken’. For the new Marxist thinkers, the strategies employed by the orthodox Communist parties were not aimed at breaking this cycle. Increasingly, economic dependence was seen as the most insidious form of imperialism. Latin America’s unique circumstances of being former colonial nations which had enjoyed political freedom for more than a century led these theorists to realise that they did not need liberation in the same way as other post-colonial nations, rather they needed liberation from economic dependence (Liss 1984: 279-80). Recognising that a successful socialist revolution required understanding of the historical situation of Latin America rather than that of Europe led the new Marxist thinkers to reassess other dominant trends in Communist thought. In particular, they re-examined the role of the peasant masses in the revolution.

2.3.2 Incorporation of the Masses

As will be discussed in chapter three, the concept of national identity during the mid-twentieth century Latin America began to turn toward inclusion of the masses. Cultural nationalism gained ground where before there had been merely a political idea of nationhood. As Miller states, ‘nationalism throughout the region acquired an ethnic component which had hitherto been largely absent’ (Miller 1999: 138). Reflecting this shift in national identity, Marxist revolutionaries began to recognise the necessity of incorporating the peasant population in their fight. This new left, the Marxist revolutionary movements emerging after the Cuban revolution, represented an amalgam of various movements, including youths, Christian groups, military dissidents and peasants (Hodges 1974: 143-4). Similar to Hobsbawm’s description of the overlap of communist anti-imperialism with nationalist sentiments in Third World countries, this new approach to Marxism also incorporated nationalism, specifically the mass nationalism indicated by Turino and Miller. Liss

explains that the new left found intellectuals combining the thoughts of Castro, Guevara, Lenin, Trotsky, Mao and Gramsci ‘...with aspects of nationalism, indianism, existentialism, and even Christian theology to work towards effecting what Ortega y Gasset called “the revolt of the masses” – bringing the common person to political and social power’ (Liss 1984: 38). In this strategy, we see a distinct departure from Soviet theory, which had denied any legitimate revolutionary role for the peasant.

Orthodox parties focused on the proletariat as the source of the revolutionary impetus. Luis Aguilar (1968:18-9) cites this sole emphasis on the industrial proletariat as one of the main causes behind the limited political success of Communist parties in Latin America where the overwhelming majority of the population were rural peasants. Denying the peasantry a role in the revolutionary process reflects the influence of Stalinist ideology in the Communist parties throughout the region. Though Lenin supported the peasantry as a beneficial ally to the proletariat, Stalin’s scepticism about the revolutionary commitment of the peasants was integrated into the Comintern’s doctrine, which prevented a turn to the rural masses in Latin American Communist parties (Harris 1978: 7, Vanden 1982: 78). Not all Latin American Marxists, though, held this view. Mariátegui saw the Peruvian peasantry, in particular the indigenous population, as representing the key to implementing a socialist society. He seized on the resentment felt towards the landowners as the means of fomenting a revolutionary consciousness in the rural masses (Angotti 1986: 43-4). Unsurprisingly, the Comintern directed the Peruvian Communist party to remove Mariátegui from leadership given his divergent views (Vanden 1982: 84). However, three decades later, during the explosion of new and radical Marxist thought seeking to formulate theories specific to each region’s, and country’s, situation, Mariátegui’s writings emerged to show the way forward (Mariátegui 2006). The concept of a theory tailored to a country’s own needs rapidly gained ground after the success of Fidel Castro and Ernesto Guevara’s approach in Cuba.

Castro and Guevara found support for their revolution whilst regrouping in the countryside after a massive defeat by Batista. There they discovered sympathy among the rural population which had suffered for generations under the economic and political status quo. Out of this realisation, Guevara chastised ‘those who maintain dogmatically that the struggle of the masses is centred in city movements,

entirely forgetting the immense participation of the country people in the life of all the underdeveloped parts of America' (Guevara 1969: 16). Recognising the need to involve the largest and most disenfranchised segment of the population in the struggle for revolutionary success engendered a new sense of community. The Cuban success, through the appeal to local community, proved the value of such a strategy, leading to the idea of rural guerrilla warfare being incorporated into the emerging Marxist theory (Vanden 1982: 87). Combining urban and rural struggles represented the acknowledgement of a common grievance against the national government. It also fostered unity between large sectors of the population in protest against the same upper oligarchy which Chilcote and Edelstein (1986: 30-1) identify as the legacy of the colonial heritage. Involving the masses provided legitimacy for a revolution. It was not just a small, elite vanguard fighting on behalf of the oppressed. Instead, the vanguard was fighting with them and training them to also become part of the revolutionary elite. Castro's turn toward the rural peasant created '...a revolutionary spirit that was the antithesis of the Soviet Union's bureaucratic and more repressive communism' (Liss 1994: 56).

2.3.3 The Example of the Cuban Revolution

Though Castro and Guevara viewed the peasants as needing the guerrillas to enlighten them about a revolutionary consciousness, the Cuban revolution nonetheless represented a large advance in fostering a sense of national community through Marxist ideals. To the leaders of this revolution, the guerrillas were intermediaries between a rural life and a revolutionary one. Whilst the vanguard of guerrillas anticipated support from the peasant, in the form of supplies as well as recruits, Castro and Guevara believed that the guerrillas would primarily be the ones fighting for and securing the revolution (Vanden 1982: 86). Their view indicated concern for the peasantry, a desire to serve them and their interests when they, seemingly, were not able to do so themselves. Even though there was room for advancement toward full incorporation of the peasantry into the revolutionary movement as equals, the Cuban example represented an important step forward in creating a Marxist party which relied on community rather than elitism. Guevara indicated that originally there was hesitation on the part of the urban-oriented guerrillas toward the inclusion of rural peasants, and that that hesitation went both

ways. The guerrillas, forced into the countryside by defeats in the city, grew to appreciate and respect the peasants as the concrete reality of the goals of the revolution (Guevara 2000: 31). For them, the banner of agrarian reform was not merely a means of uniting the peasant to the cause, but also a representation of the true purpose of the revolution, the economic liberation of all the citizens.

Castro differed greatly from the orthodox Communist leaders in his desire to foster a greater sense of national identity among the citizens after the revolution. To a certain extent, the nationalism stemmed from the Cuban victory over the imperialist United States and its interests as represented in the deposed President Batista. Here again, Hobsbawm's discussion of how the anti-imperialist call of Marxist-Leninist thought, in the midst of a push for internationalism, can be taken up as a call to nationalism in countries where it has been absent. Additionally, in the Cuban revolution, many sectors of the society which had been attempting to create a sense of national identity before the revolution, joined Castro's fight and were incorporated into the nation building process after the revolution. Castro capitalised on their involvement, promoting *Cubanidad* (Cubanness) among the population (Liss 1994: 63). National pride was a natural consequence of the Marxist concept of defeating imperialism, where the Cuban nation was depicted as being free from domination for the first time in their history. Castro particularly focused on engendering a sense of national unity, as he felt it would strengthen the citizens' loyalty to the nation and revolution (ibid: 64). Cuban nationalism, then, was intended to lead to a deeper commitment to the socialist ideals of the revolution, thereby allowing a stronger Cuba to support socialism in other nations.

An additional element which helped in the creation of national community produced through the Cuban revolution was Guevara's concept of the new man. He believed that as a process of revolutionary consciousness, people would be transformed, as their thinking would change as a result of throwing off the dominant, bourgeois, social orientation. This new man exemplified what Marx identified in his *Theses on Feuerbach* as socialized humanity, 'the transcending of that division... between the "man" and the "citizen", the individual and the community' (Löwy 2007: 19). The appeal of community oriented individuals committed to the socialist project in Cuba supplanted that of a more Soviet style of organization in the early years of post-revolutionary Cuba (Liss 1994: 65). Guevara's new man was one whose character embraced a responsibility to the revolution and countrymen. He was

a man ‘... bound to others by a relationship of real solidarity, of concrete universal brotherhood’ (Löwy 2007: 19). With the emphasis on the commitment to one’s fellow compatriots in the name of the revolution, it is possible to see the importance that the concept of community had for those engaged in the new style of Marxist uprising. Carlos Fonseca, co-founder of the FSLN, included Guevara’s new man in crafting the ideology of the Sandinistas. He saw the revolutionary as one who sought to ‘make every man a brother’ (quoted in Zimmermann 2000: 193), as did Sandino, Marx and Guevara. Guevara came to symbolically embody the man he wanted to create. For Fonseca, Guevara and Sandino were on a level field in their status as examples of this ideal. The application of this concept in Nicaragua diverged from Guevara’s, however, as the Sandinistas applied the concept to both men and women, bridging a gender divide to welcome all potential revolutionaries. The perpetuation beyond the Cuban example of this new man as an outgrowth of his or her revolutionary consciousness further promoted the idea of a national community created through a Marxist organisation of the people.

Whilst it is evident that many positive trends emerged from the Cuban revolution which sparked efforts to create community through a more locally applicable form of Marxism, caveats also emerged about employing these trends as a set theory. Cuban success resulted largely from the specific situation in Cuba. Ramos states that ‘... the adoption of models, outlines, or formulas, which were useful for Mao, Fidel Castro or Lenin, because they invented them for their own peculiar fighting conditions, when applied to Latin America has turned out to be catastrophic, in some cases suicide, and in the best of situations erroneous’ (Ramos 1970: 21). His critique is not intended to undermine the advances in Marxist thought made by Castro and Guevara. Rather, Ramos is pointing out the temptation to fall back into the pattern of adopting a theory as complete and perfected, rather than adapting it to a particular set of circumstances. Marta Harnecker attributes the failure of transplanting one country’s successful strategy in another to the varied historical situation in each country. Given the variety of conditions, she believes that it is not possible to have one universal theory for the implementation of Marxist ideals (referenced in Harris 1992: 17). It is necessary to allow the individuality of each nation’s struggle to dictate the terms of the revolution.

Castro and Guevara had not fully mastered peasant involvement. They still saw the guerrillas as enlightening and saving the peasants, not working hand-in-hand

with them. The FSLN learnt from the Cuban experience and went further in including the peasants as equals in the revolutionary struggle (Vanden 1982: 93). The national community is a guiding factor in determining the direction of any revolutionary struggle, as one cannot ignore national situations whilst hoping to implement a theory forged in a foreign country. As Ramos instructs, ‘a true revolutionary, and much more so if he claims to be Marxist, must choose between gold and dross, it is certain, but he ought to know how to discard the dross and retain the gold, but up to today exactly the opposite has been occurring’ (Ramos 1970: 31). National community in this manner extended into the political realm of the Marxist movements. As I explain in the following section, a similar situation arose in the religious sector with the development of liberation theology and its involvement with the masses in Latin America.

2.4 The Church and National Community in Latin America

As I mentioned in section 2.2.4, the role of religion is in forming national community an often overlooked element. The prevailing Eurocentric perspective is one of increasing secularisation where religion no longer plays a significant role (Gellner 1983, Anderson 2006). The perspectives from the non-Western world, which I examined, present a situation where religion still impacts the development of national identity, as discussed by Rubin (1995), Smith (1996), and Norbu (1992). However, as I discussed in section 2.2.4 above, Norbu’s contention (1992: 77) that Roman Catholicism’s status as a hierarchically organised, world religion did not permit it to become nationalised is, in my estimation, inaccurate. She argues that the strict hierarchical structure of the Roman Catholicism prevents the Church from undergoing ‘nationalization’ and the related ‘emergence of national culture heroes, the creation of sacred national literature and the establishment of national “churches”’ (ibid: 77). Though this was the case from colonial times and into the beginning of the twentieth century in Latin America, we find that Catholicism, the dominant religion in most countries in the region, did in fact play a significant role in the development of national community in the second half of the twentieth century. In this section, I approach the development of liberation theology and the impact it had on the formation of national community in Latin America.

The presence of the Catholic Church in Latin America stems from the Spanish conquest of the continent. Part of the conquest's legitimacy was derived from the perceived need to evangelise and civilise the indigenous inhabitants of the continent. Through constructing missions for the indigenous and building numerous cathedrals and chapels for the colonisers, Catholicism established a strong presence in the continent. Illustrating Norbu's assertion that Catholicism is a hierarchical world religion resistant to co-opting for nationalist causes, the Church in Latin America maintained a decidedly European orientation. Leonardo Boff, a prominent liberationist theologian from Brazil, states that 'the Church reproduced models and structures imported from Europe. Very little creativity was allowed the faith that, lived and tested in our milieu, could have expressed itself naturally and with greater liberty having peculiarly Latin American characteristics' (Boff 1990: 160).

The traditional, hierarchical organisation, thus, prevented Catholicism from being adapted to fit local needs. The structure of the Church also ensured that Catholicism in Latin America would remain subordinate to Rome. Many of the regional clergy continued to be educated in Europe, including liberationist figures, such as Boff, Gustavo Gutiérrez, and Juan Luis Segundo. Additionally, in some areas, shortages of local priests meant that dioceses were staffed by European clergy (Dodson & O'Shaughnessy 1990: 73), perpetuating the influence of European theology on Latin American theological development.

Obedience to Rome, a pillar of the Catholic faith, required the Latin American clergy to place ecclesiastic consonance with the Vatican above the concerns of the particular context in which they ministered. A group of Brazilian priests, in an open letter to their bishops in 1967, condemned the bishops for 'always waiting for decisions from the top – from the authorities in Rome – rather than taking it upon themselves to lead the Brazilian Church in its forward march with an assured sense of autonomy' (Brazilian Clergy 1974: 135). This charge sheds light on the local Church's desire for freedom from Rome in order to address on-the-ground issues in a culturally appropriate way. In this example, the clergy appear to be expressing a desire for an identity separate from Rome. Parallels can be drawn between this desire and the similar emotions and claims for independence made under the auspices of national identity and national liberation. The desire for a level of independence from Rome and Europe, in order to address the issues priests were facing in their own parishes, marked the beginnings of liberation theology.

2.4.1 Vatican II and the Roots of Liberation Theology

Beyond representing a continued European presence, the Catholic Church in Latin America suffered from its connections with oppressive political regimes and dominant economic interests. The Church installed itself in urban areas serving those whom Anderson terms *creoles*, who constituted the upper social and economic strata after independence. Through the twentieth century, the case remained much the same, with the majority of priests serving in urban parishes. Most of the financial support for the dioceses came from these urban churches, and schools and other Catholic organisations logically grew up around them. In contrast, many rural parishes only held services on a monthly or even less frequent basis, depending on their priest's schedule for circulating among them (Boff 1986: 3).

Fernando Castillo saw the Church's decision to support the government and the wealthy as a continuation of colonialism. He states that 'there exists a continuity between the identification of the traditional, colonial and neo-colonial Church with traditional oligarchies, and the identification of this conservative Church with the new oligarchies in the capitalism of underdevelopment' (Castillo 1986: 33). Similarly, Brazilian priests warned that the Church would be silenced by its dependence on the rich and the powerful, which prevented it from criticising the status quo. They claimed that the Church was too dependent on donations from the wealthy and concessions from the government (Brazilian Clergy 1974: 129). This situation led them to a position where clergymen could not criticise the government for fear of losing vital monetary and political support. Without such support, there was concern that the Church could not continue functioning at the same level. In this situation, one would find Catholic officials making concessions in their ministry to ensure the continued influence of the Church in the nation. Juan Luis Segundo described this posture as defensively oriented and charged that churches in such a situation '... can only be kept in being by political and economic alliances that are especially noticeable in Latin America, where such relations are quite visible' (Segundo 1990: 35).

The political and economic preferences in the Church led to a situation where the priests who dealt with the poor and oppressed were frustrated with their inability to serve their parishioners adequately. Hugo Latorre Cabal cites Salvador Freixedo's

work *Mi Iglesia Duerme* (Latorre Cabal 1969: 86), summing up the situation in the Catholic Church in Latin America. Freixedo likens the Church's advancement to walking down a path. Over the centuries, the Church moved down a wide path, ignorant of the path's narrowing. There was then no exit from the exceedingly narrow trail on which the Church found itself and the only way to change directions, Freixedo explains, is to stop and reverse direction, which very few in the Church were doing (ibid: 86). In this, we see a call for change in the Catholic Church, particularly at the local level in Latin America. Similar to the push for a more locally oriented Marxist theory, priests and other religious⁴ advanced a call for the Church to approach the region's problems from a decidedly Latin American perspective. The movement for liberation theology emerged from the appeal for local action with an emphasis on ending structural oppression.

The roots of liberation theology lie in a reaction to the changing social situation after World War II. Much like the changes seen in Marxist thought, the post-war period accentuated the need for a regional emphasis within the church. The increase in industrialisation in Latin America exacerbated the existing economic disparity between classes. Poverty increased whilst the powerful made more money (Löwy 1996: 40-1). The social pressures of a new global situation led to increased pressure on the Church hierarchy to reconsider the Church's structure in Latin America. Several new branches of thought formed in theological groups in Europe, impacting Rome as well as Latin American theologians studying abroad in Europe. The orientation of these groups emphasised the present, physical world, and showed an increased concern for the social welfare of the people (ibid: 40). Recognising the importance of these new streams of thought, Pope John XXIII decided to re-examine the Church's position in a modern society that had been permanently changed by two world wars and the start of the Cold War. With this purpose in mind, he convened the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II, 1962-1965).

This council, which involved bishops from across the world, was aimed at addressing how to bring the Catholic Church into modernity whilst still maintaining its mission. In addition to acknowledging the benefit of delivering Mass in the local vernacular, Vatican II represented an opening of the church to the present world (Dodson & O'Shaughnessy 1990: 88, Berryman 1987: 15-17). Focusing on life in

⁴ *Religious* is used here as the accepted term within the Catholic discourse to refer to members of religious orders.

the world marked a distinct turning from the traditional emphasis on the coming Kingdom of God in Heaven. One of the consequences of this new orientation was a softening of the hierarchical boundaries in the Church. The new, more flexible boundaries promoted a new sense of community where bishops, priests and lay people could exist as equals (Foroohar 1986: 39). A second impact of the new orientation stemmed from the inclusion of bishops from underdeveloped countries in the Council proceedings. Coupled with the new emphasis on the temporal world, the incorporation of developing countries' concerns opened a platform for dialogue on the Church's stance on poverty.

Vatican II allowed bishops in underdeveloped countries to openly address poverty and injustice. The Council document *Gaudium et Spes* (1965) provided a means of framing discussions on economic disparity and political injustices. Whilst supporting the benefits of capitalist development, the document condemns the negative repercussions of unchecked development (ibid). The members of the Vatican Council identified the growing gap between the poor and the rich as the result of abusive development. Part of the situation the Council condemned was the political injustice that emanated from and reinforced the economic disparity between different groups (Dodson & O'Shaughnessy 1990: 89).

Though Vatican II acknowledged and decried the oppression that existed in parts of the world, it did not formulate any specific framework for the Church's role in addressing it. Without guidelines on how to rectify the injustices, bishops proceeded to address the issue in their own dioceses independently of Rome. Manzar Foroohar likens the apparent freedom to approach the problem of injustice to 'a green light for social involvement' (Foroohar 1986: 39). Together with a desire for local answers to their parishioners' problems, the green light to engage socially in their regions allowed the bishops and priests in Latin America to develop a regionally specific interpretation of Vatican II.

Two years after Vatican II, Pope Paul VI issued the encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (1967), clarifying and advancing several of the key resolutions in the Council documents. The tension between development and underdevelopment in the world is evident throughout the encyclical. Paul VI confronts the extremes of both sides of the issue, cautioning equally against unbridled development and vehement opposition to it. Two paragraphs in particular illustrate this tension. No. 30 warns those in a position of economic and political power that the people under their

influence will be drawn to rebellion if they are deprived and oppressed. In no. 31 Paul VI goes on to caution against violent paths to revolution, which he sees as only causing further deprivations and injustices (ibid). These two paragraphs held particular interest for Latin American bishops. They represented a legitimisation of their fight against oppression in their nations. As Foroohar (1986: 39) points out, many bishops and priests attempting to implement the Vatican II principles in their dioceses faced repression from government and the military officials in their countries who opposed empowering the poor.

For these clergymen, *Populorum Progressio* provided a justification to fight back against the political forces which had impoverished their flocks. Paragraph 31 contained a disclaimer in the caution against revolution, stating that revolutionary violence is not a valid option ‘... except where there is manifest, longstanding tyranny which would do great damage to fundamental personal rights and dangerous harm to the common good of the country’ (*Populorum Progressio* 1967). For many in Latin America, this exception specifically applied to them. The tendency toward a strong concentration of power in the highest levels of society had institutionalised poverty and injustice. Land distribution in Nicaragua is illustrative of this point, where in 1979 two percent of the population owned 46.6 percent of the productive land, whilst the bottom 43 percent of Nicaraguans owned plots of land that barely serviced one family (Jerez 1984: 9).

2.4.2 The Preferential Option for the Poor and the Growth of Liberation Theology

With an emphasis on combating injustice by providing local structures for the church in Latin America, bishops met in Medellín, Colombia for the Latin American Episcopal Conference (Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano – CELAM) in 1968. For Guilio Girardi (1989: 90), the conference ‘raised the possibility of breaking away from Eurocentrism and reinterpreting the Gospel out of those countries that were still culturally and theologically colonized’. This rereading of the Gospel was enacted through the involvement of all levels of the clergy in the conference. The meeting at Medellín also employed an inductive approach, using the reality of the plight in the region to determine how to effectively apply their theology to the problem (ibid: 92). Out of this combined effort, the conference deemed institutionalised violence a

structural 'situation of sin' (Gutiérrez 1970: 251-2) and identified the need for liberation from the dependence created by this sin. Also emerging from Medellín was the concept of a preferential option for the poor, which became a catchphrase for the movement. The phrase indicated the decision on the part of some sections of the church in Latin America to shift the entrenched ecclesiastical focus on the rich to those poor in their dioceses and parishes. For those at Medellín, that shift reflected the gospel message and indeed the entirety of the scriptures, which they believed stressed the need to care for the poor (Gutiérrez 1996: 51). As part of this preferential option, many clergymen and other religious began to move from their urban locations to live with their impoverished parishioners. They reasoned that one could not make an option for the poor whilst he or she still lived in the comfort of the rich. This move was similar to the call of several Latin American Marxists, such as Mariátegui (2006) and Guevara (Vanden 1982), to live among the peasants so as to understand their needs and be accepted into their communities, and represented a move toward local concerns.

Furthermore, the Latin American bishops and clergy at Medellín condemned the perpetual state of colonialism that had been established in their countries. Whilst the territories in Latin America were not still colonies, but independent countries, Ania Loomba's argument brings into focus this continued colonialism, as she explains that 'a country may be both postcolonial (in the sense of being formally independent) and neo-colonial (in the sense of remaining economically and/or culturally dependent) at the same time' (Loomba 2002: 7). The economic structures which continued to send the majority of the national capital to foreign countries were seen as robbing those who were already poor. This was seen as internal colonialism, where their political leaders allowed the flight of capital for their own personal benefit (Dodson & O'Shaughnessy 1990: 93). This gave an added dimension of national focus to the movement. References to liberation from the status quo dominated the various discussions on the church's role in affecting the change advocated by Vatican II and *Populorum Progressio*. The Catholic Church's membership in the privileged institutions was to be no more. Deciding to side with the poor, bishops and clergymen began restructuring the church in Latin America. Though this theological movement toward a more socially oriented Christianity had begun prior to Medellín, the conference gave support to the local priests who had been struggling against the Church hierarchy and government suppression. The

supportive atmosphere allowed for the advancement of a branch of theological thinking that had previously remained at the fringes. Liberation theology grew as a movement, gaining legitimacy among the leadership of the church in several Latin American countries.

Engaging the problem of structural poverty and injustice in their region, the Latin American religious embraced the preferential option for the poor as the realisation of grassroots work which had been slowly spreading in the region. Liberation theology, a name stemming from a 1973 essay by Gustavo Gutiérrez (Gutiérrez 1973), represented the coalescing of various religious grassroots movements under a banner of legitimacy drawn from the documents issued by Vatican II, Pope Paul VI and Medellín. The new approach to theology entailed a turning to the poor through action rather than words, to empower them to struggle for their own freedom from domination and oppression; however, this did not include an awareness of the indigenous needs as separate from other peasant needs. The emphasis on action was what Gutiérrez referred to as praxis, which in liberation theology represents the conviction to live out the Gospel mandates through labouring for the poor. Gutiérrez describes it as ‘putting into practice the great commandment of love’ (1996: 267). Theology, for liberationists, follows from this practice. Similar to the approach at Medellín, liberation theologians use their experiences at the grassroots level, working and living with the poor, as the basis for their theological developments. Boff describes liberation theology as a ‘reflection of, and a reflection on, a previous praxis’ (Löwy 1996: 32). Thus, action and interaction with the poor was the primary factor in determining and directing theology. Liberation theology is the interpretation of faith which comes from the poor themselves.

2.4.3 Liberating the Poor

For liberationists, the poor are not a group in need of salvation and shepherding, dependent on the priests to guide and direct their liberation. The poor are the centre of the faith that the priests and other religious proclaim, and therefore represent an integral part of living the Christian life. They are seen as the ones who must choose to liberate themselves (Gutiérrez 1996: 146). It is not an abandonment of the poor to their own devices, but rather a recognition of the need for the oppressed to join as equals and leaders in the struggle against their oppressors.

Representing a different perspective from what we have seen in Latin American Marxists like Castro and Guevara, liberationists considered those in need of liberation from their unjust circumstances to be capable of and co-responsible for their own liberation, rather than needing to be led in that direction by others more enlightened than them. As I discussed earlier, Castro and others perceived the peasants as following the guerrilla vanguard, and as being incapable of successfully directing their own liberation. This difference highlights a stronger focus on community and solidarity with the masses on the part of the liberationists than that of the revolutionary Marxists.

The concept of joining the poor's struggle finds its basis in community. The impetus behind liberationist grassroots workers integrating themselves in the actions of impoverished areas lies in their Christian belief in the brotherhood of believers. They find in Jesus' teaching on the Good Samaritan, where one's neighbour is described as anyone in need, an unavoidable call to solidarity with the poor. Thus for the liberationists, the poor in their countries were their neighbours, and to 'put into practice the great command of love' (Gutiérrez 1996: 267) they were required to struggle with them as brothers. Gutiérrez expresses the communitarian aspect of their faith in the following passage:

The Christian community, the *ecclesia*, is made up of those who take up that messianic practice of Jesus and use it to create fraternal social relationships – and thereby accept the gift of being children of the Father. Messianic practice is the proclamation of the kingdom of God in the transformation of the historical conditions of the poor. It is the word of life, backed up by the liberating deed. (Gutiérrez 1996: 106)

This passage shows the unity between community, forging 'fraternal social relationships', and action, the 'liberating deed'. Liberation theology required a deeper sense of community than that which the Church in Latin America had previously known. This also provides another perspective on Anderson's sense of fraternal bonds with one's countrymen; the connection to unknown members of the community is based on a transcendent religious example rather than imagined bonds. Rather than presenting an economically fragmented institution which provided for the wealthy and the poor differently, liberation theology and its proponents emphasised a unified church where the wealthy joined the poor in their situation, working hand-in-hand to change it. The most prominent outgrowth of the focus on

the poor and joining in their quest for liberation was the Ecclesiastic Base Communities (Comunidades Eclesiales de Base - CEBs), which promoted studying the Bible with an emphasis on its impact on their daily lives (Dodson 1986, Foroohar 1986, Löwy 1996).

The base communities were begun after the Medellín meeting as an avenue for addressing the lack of priests available to minister to the rural and poor parishes. These meetings began in the 1960s in Brazil, expanding out to other countries, and were significantly influenced by the educationalist Paulo Freire's idea of consciousness raising which he had applied in educational settings (Foroohar 1986: 42). As mentioned above, a priest would often rotate between such churches giving mass on a monthly basis. CEBs were developed as a means of enabling the people to continue worshipping and studying the Bible in the meantime. Lay people were instructed to be catechists, called Delegates of the Word, so that they could lead worship meetings in their community (Dodson 1986: 39). Base communities represented a step forward in the organisation of the church. Lay members were given the freedom to hold services without the presence of an official member of the hierarchy. However, the groups still belonged to the diocese and maintained contact with the priests and other religious brothers or sisters (Löwy 1996: 49). The CEBs were an authorised beginning of grassroots churches where those traditionally neglected by the church were encouraged to examine the Bible message as it intersected with the world in which they lived. Meetings included looking for biblical solutions to the members' practical problems, discussing what certain scriptures meant to them, and working together as a group to determine which actions they should pursue (Boff 1985: 125-6). A spirit of community action was being fostered at the same time as many of the marginalised in society began to feel empowered through grass-roots politics.

Additionally, when priests would visit, the services would involve the priest asking the people to share their opinions on the scripture and how it applied to their life (Dodson 1986: 39). For many, this was the first time an individual in a position of authority acknowledged that their opinions had value, legitimising their thoughts and further empowering the individual, in the spirit of Freire's model of consciousness raising. Individuals were gradually encouraged to assess their circumstances, and later their society, in light of biblical teachings, and to determine what Jesus called them to do to change those circumstances in their community and

nation (Boff 1985: 127). This process illustrates the efforts to implement the Vatican II and Medellín perspective that the unjust structures in society must be identified and changed. The political orientation of the base communities coincided with the push for more mass participation in revolutionary uprisings which also fostered a sense of community, empowerment and political consciousness. In this light, politicisation among the members of the CEBs is inevitable. Löwy recalls Max Weber's claim that an increase in the congregational aspect of religion led to an increase in political awareness, influencing the lower-class members of the congregation (Löwy 1996: 49). Community support among the base communities, and the political environment surrounding them at the time, came together to awaken the poor to the struggle for their liberation. People were becoming aware of their roles as active members of the nation.

By empowering the people to act and become politically involved in the struggle for liberation, liberation theology, via the CEBs, further created solidarity among the Christian community. Recognising through the meetings that individual problems are community problems opened an avenue for mutual understanding and compassion. The poor entered into the liberation struggle as activists in many instances, fulfilling the desire of those priests and religious, who saw the church's role as social and moral rather than political, to politicise the lay people. Ideally, various levels of the Church were involved in that process, fostering solidarity amongst them. Equality was paramount in the base communities, where there was no hierarchy or division among the members (Boff 1985: 128). Through consciously turning to the poor and empowering them, the members of the religious community proved that the Church cared about the disenfranchised. By bringing the Church to the people, the fraternal social bonds Gutiérrez refers to are strengthened and made visible. Joining in the struggle to effect change, liberationists and base community members alike fostered a new sense of community in their regions that also extended to other CEBs and to those struggling to right the nation's path.

Jürgen Moltmann (1990a: 196) stated that liberation theology 'wants to be an indigenous theology that frees itself from the European tradition ... in order to give its full attention to the unmistakable experiences and tasks of Latin America'. Considering that this comment comes from a critique of liberation theology, it is surprising how well it coincides with what liberation theology says about itself. As I have shown, liberationists desired to break with the traditions imported from abroad

through colonialism, dependency and hierarchy and to be more locally focused. By taking this position, they made similar breaks to those made by the Marxist intellectuals breaking with Marxist theory in the middle of the twentieth century. There is a significant amount of overlap in the influence Latin American radical Marxism and liberation theology have had in the region. Part of this overlap is due to liberationists employing aspects of Marxist theory in their theology, as I shall demonstrate.

Gutiérrez promotes using Marxist analysis to explore the historical structures of oppression that exist in various countries throughout the region. He believes that the critical approach to society afforded by socialist analysis is invaluable in understanding how to work to reverse the plight of the poor. However, he has stressed on numerous occasions the necessity of maintaining a distinction between employing a Marxist analysis and accepting Marxist ideology (Gutiérrez 1996: 45, 1988: 8). The atheistic nature of orthodox Marxism makes any explicit adoption of Marxism a logically untenable position, even for a liberationist. Girardi remarks that the unique nature of local Marxisms and Christianities, for he believes there are many forms of each, does allow for ‘a convergence... between revolutionary Christianity and revolutionary Marxism’ (Girardi 1989: 56). Adding to this convergence is the legitimacy liberationists gave to the revolutionary Marxist groups. By employing Marxist analysis, the liberation theologians indicated to those in the base communities that Marxism and Christianity were compatible, regardless of the nuances of application stressed by the theologians. Pedro Arrupe, however, contends that when it comes to practice, the application of Marxist analysis rarely remains merely methodological (Arrupe 1990: 308).

The overlap between the two areas also exists in the target audience for the revolutionary approaches to both ideologies. Liberation theology and radical Marxism share an emphasis on the peasantry. Though the focus for Marxists is specifically the rural peasantry, the locus of attention for both groups involves the poor and disenfranchised. Liberation theology and radical Marxism take up the fight against injustice against the poor, bringing a unity in purpose, if not in ideology (Löwy 1996: 69). Liberating the oppressed and establishing a more just society connects the two movements. Arrupe, though leery of including Marxist analysis in discussions of liberation theology, acknowledges that ‘Christians readily and rightly sympathize with the aim and ideal of liberating humankind from domination and

oppression' (Arrupe 1990: 311). The intersection between the two creates the possibility for deeper loyalties in achieving their mutual aim. In this respect, Löwy believes that there is more than a tactical unity between the two groups. He refers to the sympathetic relationship between Latin American Marxism and liberation theology as an 'organic unity' (Löwy 1996: 79). This unity was nourished in the CEBs where the poor began incorporating the revolutionary ideals of Marxism with their faith. The consciousness raising sought by those involved in liberation theology corresponded with the development of the revolutionary consciousness extolled by the guerrilla revolutionaries.

Base communities, a call for liberation and justice, and the desire to develop a theology suited to addressing local problems allowed liberation theologians to engage an oppressed population in a more meaningful manner than the Church previously had. The conscious choice to go to the poor, to live among them as equals, expressed a deep desire for solidarity. Combining this solidarity with biblical teachings led to the development of a stronger sense of Christian community among the poor. The introduction of revolutionary ideals to this orientation fostered a new concept of responsibility among the poor masses for directing the path of their nation. The shift in religious identification from being solely centred in the Church and the teachings and decisions of the hierarchy to being located in the community via the CEBs significantly altered the conception of agency in issues of the national for those involved. The individuals were empowered and considered themselves responsible for acting for the benefit of their community and their nation. The idea of a locally relevant interpretation of the Bible, rather than the distant interpretation imposed by an external authority in Rome, resonated with those living in situations of structural inequality. As such, the teachings of liberation theology, alongside its concept of the preferential option for the poor, was taken as a mandate for political action to place one's nation on a biblical path, particularly on issues concerning social justice.

2.5 Summary

National community in Latin America is a complex tapestry of interwoven elements. The development of a national identity has been shown to be contrary to that of Western, developed nations. Interrelations between colonialism, post-

colonialism, and dependency impose unique constraints on the creation of a national self-consciousness. The integration of Latin American radical Marxism and liberation theology add to the unique construction of the idea of the national in the region. The local emphasis of both liberation theology and radical Marxism aid in developing national consciousness. Different local problems and concrete historical situations in different countries result in an increased individuality in each country's fight for liberation.

National community emerges as a combination of political and socio-cultural tensions, as in Nicaragua where Girardi (1989: 104) indicates that 'struggles for national identity and Christian identity... merge at a deep level'. Similarly in Cuba, Guevara's new man resonated with the Christian concept of emulating Jesus. Both concepts indicate the desire to transform society into one which entailed a fraternal bond. The brotherhood sought by liberationists and Marxist groups joined culturally based political and religious concerns in the fight for national liberation from neo-colonialist and neo-imperialist oppression. The continued legacy in many countries of fighting against foreign interference and domination has left its mark on the creation of national identity, and also on the development of political and religious movements which focus on the local rather than the universal or international. As such, it is necessary to bear in mind the three aspects I have presented in this chapter when considering the creation of national community in Nicaragua.

Chapter 3: The Socio-political Context of Sandinista Discourse

3.1 The Emergence and Development of Sandinismo

The discourse-historical approach stresses the importance of examining the historical context surrounding the discourse in question. Situating a discourse in the social, political and cultural context allows one to take into account historical antecedents that have influenced the creation of the discourse whilst also being influenced *by* the discourse (Howard-Malverde 1997: 4). Dale Spender (1998: 164), in her discussion on the discursive aspects of naming, explains that the ideological perspectives of a group are ‘the product of the prefigured patterns of language and thought’, also indicating the importance of examining and understanding the historical milieu of a given discourse.

In this chapter on the Nicaraguan situation, I briefly consider the country's colonial legacy, the figure of Sandino and the Somoza dynasty before entering into a discussion of the historical development of the FSLN. I then focus on the Sandinista ideology and its governmental restructuring. Following this is a consideration of internal and external opposition to the Sandinistas, as the opposition had a significant impact on Sandinista policy and ideological hegemony. The chapter finishes with a post-mortem of the party after its electoral defeat in 1990 in order to re-examine the divisions which I address in my discussion of Sandinista ideology, as these divisions plagued the party from its inception and became more apparent once it was out of power.

Throwing off the yoke of colonialism and neo-colonialism became a call to unity for many revolutionary groups in underdeveloped nations after World War II. In Nicaragua, Carlos Fonseca, a founding member of the FSLN, recast the nation's history, creating a metanarrative of a patrimony of rebellion against foreign oppressors. He enumerated one example per year of the people's fight for liberation, starting with the USA's Monroe Doctrine in 1823 through to the beginning of Sandino's fight in 1926 (Zimmermann 2000: 151). The indigenous rebellion against the Spanish colonists provided the basis for this patrimony of rebellion which continued to manifest itself in ‘the country's tradition of popular rebellion’ (Fonseca 1984: 64). This inherited tradition occupied a central point in Fonseca's ideologising of Sandino and Sandinista thought, which had applications beyond the explanation

of a historic impetus behind the Sandinistas' guerrilla war. It also provided ammunition for attacking and discrediting rival opposition groups who were too passive, 'betray[ing] the Nicaraguan people's inherently rebellious, anti-imperialist identity... as a product of the US marine occupation... that had established Somocismo' (Baracco 2005: 64). Overt attempts at creating a national high culture also emerged from this orientation, illustrating both Gellner's emphasis on creating a universal high culture and Anderson's focus on literacy as integral elements of national identity formation. It is this perceived spirit of national rebelliousness that allowed the Sandinistas to capitalise on the masses' frustration and disdain for the Somozas. From such a basis, the Sandinistas built their movement with broad support. However, divisions emerged both externally with the Church, a source of significant grassroots support, and internally with three ideological tendencies emerging in the FSLN.

My presentation of the Nicaraguan context as it relates to the Sandinistas is not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, I focus on key elements influencing the creation of a sense of national community. Throughout this chapter, the theoretical aspects I elaborated in the previous chapter are brought to bear on the historical, cultural, social and political aspects presented, integrating the theoretical and contextual considerations. This incorporation forms the background of the analysis of the discursive construction of national community in subsequent chapters.

3.2 Nicaragua before the Modern 'Sandinistas'

Bearing in mind the discussion of the development of national identity discussed in chapter two, it is important to briefly consider the historical situation of Nicaragua both before and after independence from Spain in order to better understand why the Sandinista call for national independence in the 1970s still resonated with the citizenry. An examination of the development of Nicaragua as a political entity reveals parallels between the period of Spanish rule (1536-1821) and the post-colonial period (1821-present). Cultural and societal traditions are perpetuated, often in different forms, but resulting in the same outcome. As discussed in the previous chapter, McGovern (1989: 277) points to the colonial legacy of exploiting the land and peasants to sustain a largely agroexport economy. Resulting from this economic structure, land ownership was concentrated in the

hands of relatively few families. Chilcote and Edelstein (1986: 30-1) explain that this system also established ‘an essentially two-class society with a narrow oligarchy at the top’.

As a natural consequence, the first to benefit from this were the Spanish colonisers, whilst the first to be abused were the indigenous. Beyond the mass extermination of the native inhabitants through plague, slave labour and execution, the indigenous population had their land taken from them, either outright or through discriminatory Spanish laws. Whilst in 1591 the Spanish Crown decreed that anyone, Indian and Spanish alike, could purchase untitled lands, only the colonists had the financial means to do so (Smith 1993: 59). Land was also expropriated by colonists for the purpose of cultivating it, displacing yet more indigenous people and forcing them into slave labour. The foundation of what Chilcote and Edelstein and McGovern describe emerges here. The Spanish colonisers, in their pursuit for wealth for themselves and the Crown, began a process of exploitation of both the indigenous communities and their land which would outlast Spanish rule in the area.

This structure persisted well after Nicaragua gained independence in 1821. Even as the government in the country moved increasingly toward a democratic system, the two-tiered societal division remained, setting the stage for a later Marxist inspired revolution. The only tangible difference in the pattern was the inclusion of *mestizo* peasants among those who were denied access to their own land.¹ Additionally, new imperialist powers emerged on the scene. The United States and Britain both stepped into the void left by Spain’s departure. Conflicts between the two often arose, and both foreign powers involved themselves in the local politics when it benefitted their own interests in the area. The USA eventually gained dominance, and even were invited to intervene in the country’s politics to aid a particular group. One such invitation precipitated the situation which allowed Augusto Cesar Sandino to become a national hero.

In 1912 the US Marines came to Nicaragua to support the Conservative government, which the US had helped install and through which it enjoyed a privileged economic relationship, in a struggle against those who would see the Conservatives removed from power and the US along with them (Smith 1993: 84).

¹ See Jeffry Gould’s (1990) *To Lead as Equals: Rural Protest and Political Consciousness in Chinandega, Nicaragua, 1912-1979* for a discussion of the class and ethnic dimensions of the politics of land distribution in Nicaragua.

The Marines' presence was almost uninterrupted from this time until 1933. Sandino was the illegitimate son of a wealthy landowner and an indigenous woman. He lived with his mother, suffering deprivation and hardship, until she left for Granada, and Sandino moved in with his father (Navarro-Génie 2002: 4-6), with whom he lived for the rest of his childhood. For Sandino, witnessing the Marine presence in his country from a young age led him to develop a strong sense of anti-imperialism, wanting to see his nation freed from outside control and manipulation. Sandino returned from a period of exile and ideological formation in Mexico with a perspective that incorporated his anti-imperialist stance with a mix of anarcho-syndicalism and communism and radical spiritualism, influenced by Ricardo Flores Magón's vision for 'social revolution based on economic equality, political liberty, and universal love' (Vanden & Prevost 1996: 26). Whilst Sandino was not promoting a new social form of Catholicism, his politics were not based solely on Marxist principles, but incorporated a spiritual element integral to capturing the support of the Nicaraguan rural masses. As I discussed in chapter two of the intersection of liberation theology and Latin American Marxist movements, this provided an example for the Sandinistas in the latter half of the century to similarly incorporate elements of liberation theology in their revolution.

Sandino formed an army in Nicaragua intent on forcing the US's departure and removing the Conservatives from power, in support of the Liberals. After refusing to sign a peace agreement supported by all of the Liberal generals, for it guaranteed the presidency to the Liberal leader Moncada at the next election, Sandino's army continued the struggle against the Marines on its own (Smith 1993: 92). As a result of this pact and Sandino's refusal to sign, the United States created and trained a local non-partisan army called the National Guard (Guardia Nacional - GN). One of the purposes behind creating the Guard was to 'Nicaraguanize... the war against Sandino' (Walker 2003: 23). Baracco (2005) attributes Sandino's successful motivation of the peasant population in the Las Segovias region to join his struggle, to his decision to present the struggle as one of class retribution. In this way 'nationalism legitimized the Segovian peasantry's settling of old scores against their traditional class enemies' (ibid: 44). The Marines remained in Nicaragua, alongside the nascent GN, to put an end to Sandino's Defending Army of Nicaragua's National Sovereignty (Ejército Defensor de la Soberanía Nacional de Nicaragua - EDSNN). However, by employing guerrilla tactics and fighting mainly in the mountains, the

EDSNN continued to gain territory and win battles against the Marines until their eventual withdrawal as part of a peace agreement with Sandino (Smith 1993: 96). The peace agreement, negotiated with the new president Juan Sacasa in 1932, resulted in the disarmament of Sandino's men and a commitment from Sacasa to move toward more transparent and democratic governance (Baracco 2005: 46-47).

The GN, under the control of Anastasio 'Tacho' Somoza García, however, continued to pursue the former members of the EDSNN, despite Sacasa granting them amnesty. The political consequence of establishing the GN as a non-partisan army was that it was left with no oversight and no control beyond that of Somoza himself. Sacasa became concerned over the free hand left to Somoza and his men and unsuccessfully attempted to exert a modicum of control over them (Smith 1993: 99). Seeking to continue the peace process and the strengthening of a new democratic tradition, Sandino frequently met with Sacasa. After one such meeting on 21 February, 1934, however, Sandino was assassinated by the National Guard (Hodges 1986:151). Somoza's singular control of the GN allowed him to weather Sandino's assassination politically unscathed. Additionally, Sandino's death strengthened Somoza's control over the government as there was now no alternative armed entity in the country capable of opposing him. This allowed Somoza to stage a coup two years later, beginning the Somozas' dynastic rule, a new era of American influence in Nicaragua, and ushering in the birth of the FSLN.

3.3 Imperialism Again: The Somoza Dynasty

The cycle of imperialist intervention and agroexport economic dependency began again in 1936 and continued until 1979 under the guidance of the Somozas. After overthrowing Sacasa in 1936, Anastasio 'Tacho' Somoza was inaugurated as president. His position as the head of the National Guard and head of state gave him sole control over the majority of government functions. Once president, Somoza placed the railroads, postal and telegraph services and border control under Guard control, which also functioned as the national police force and justice system (Crawley 1979: 96). In addition to controlling the national realm, Somoza sought to insert himself in the international arena as a staunch supporter of the USA.

Beyond political support, the US provided Somoza with the funds to continue developing the country as he chose. In 1939, President Roosevelt invited Somoza to

the White House, reinforcing his image as 'the Americans' chosen man' (Crawley 1979: 99) and paving the way for new loans from the US for development. In order to ensure continued American support, Somoza engineered several constitutional changes that allowed him to legally remain in power, lifting limits on the terms of office, repealing restrictions on family members holding consecutive terms, and extending term limits to circumvent elections (Close 1988: 23). When he finally bowed to US pressure not to stand in elections for a third consecutive term, he backed an aging loyal supporter, intending to place a puppet-president in power. Through intimidation and manipulation on the part of the Guard, Somoza's man Enoc Argüello won the elections in 1947. However, Somoza was again forced to resort to strong-arm tactics when Argüello embarked on a reformist agenda intent on ousting Somoza from power. Less than a month after taking office, Argüello was forced into exile when Somoza and his National Guard staged a coup and installed his uncle Victor Román y Reyes as president (ibid: 24). Despite experiencing pressure from the American government over his dictatorial actions, Somoza was able to continue gaining American support by allying himself closely with the US political agenda. The most useful means he found to this end was presenting Nicaragua as a staunchly anti-communist nation and a firm American ally in Latin America. His stance on communism not only brought increased financial and military aid, but also provided a ready-made defence against the growing dissident and student movement.

One group of dissidents exiled in El Salvador envisioned overthrowing the government, though without any concrete plans. However, on 21 September, 1956, Rigoberto López Pérez, a member of that group, took action by shooting and fatally wounding Somoza (Smith 1993: 112). López Pérez's immediate execution made him an instant martyr for the cause of ending the dictatorship. After Somoza's death the Nicaraguan congress appointed his eldest son Luis to finish out the presidential term. Luis in turn appointed his younger brother, Anastasio 'Tachito', as the head of the National Guard, preventing the possibility of a challenge to the Somozas' power base. Following his father's example, Luis claimed that Somoza's assassination was part of a Communist plot and had the National Guard arrest or assassinate any dissidents regardless of whether their connection to any Communist group could be proven (Close 1988: 25).

Again, the spectre of a Communist threat allowed Luis to assert himself as America's best ally in the region, an allegiance displayed by offering Nicaraguan soil as a staging ground for the Bay of Pigs invasion (Smith 1993: 115). Luis also implemented changes to provide a democratic veneer to the dynasty, whilst manoeuvring his family into a behind-the-scenes position in the country's power structure (Close 1988: 26, Crawley 1979: 125). However, this did not stave off rebel action against the regime. Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, part of the Conservative party exiled in Costa Rica, led an invasion into Nicaragua on 31 May, 1959. Though they were swiftly defeated by Tachito's GN, their fight was the first of many over the next two decades. The increase in conflicts was accompanied by an increase in the GN's violence towards the dissenting populace with Tachito claiming victory over 26 attempted revolts by 1961 (Close 1988: 26).

3.4 Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional and the Nicaraguan Revolution

Emerging out of the student movements and the broader struggle against the Somozas, the FSLN drew inspiration both from Sandino and the Cuban revolution. It incorporated elements of national liberation, class struggle and liberation theology in its attempts to gain mass-based support similar to that which Castro and Guevara cultivated in Cuba. Founded in the early 1960s by Carlos Fonseca, Tomás Borge and Silvio Mayorga, the FSLN worked among student groups and the peasants to foment dissent and gain support. Initially, the group engaged in poorly armed and ill-organised skirmishes with the National Guard. However, beginning in the mid 1960s, a more structured approach was undertaken to prepare new members for armed struggle. Simultaneously, Sandinista ideology became more coherent and more central to their identity (Smith 1993: 117-118). Their ideology, which is discussed further in section 3.4.3, drew on the ideas of national liberation expressed by Sandino combined with Marxist theory.² The FSLN issued its manifesto in 1969, promising a more equitable society through the implementation of agrarian reform, guaranteed civil rights for all, the dissolution of the GN and a government which would be truly representative of the people (ibid: 121).

² For an in depth analysis of FSLN ideology see Donald Hodges (1986) *Intellectual Foundations of the Nicaraguan Revolution*. David Nolan's (1984) *FSLN: The Ideology of the Sandinistas and the Nicaraguan Revolution* provides an accessible entrée into the topic.

The FSLN initially drew members from the Nicaraguan Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Nicaragüense - PSN), many of whom had grown dissatisfied with its lack of active opposition to the Somoza regime, as had the FSLN founders. The PSN followed the party line of orthodox communism, which emphasised waiting for the development of traditional, objective conditions for revolution rather than taking advantage of various subjective conditions, such as the people's will to rebel (Hodges 1986:178). As discussed in the previous chapter, orthodox communist parties were often abandoned, particularly in the wake of the Cuban Revolution, because of their insistence on waiting for the development of a proletariat to carry out the revolution. In Nicaragua, this meant tolerating the Somocista era, in the hope that enough funds would trickle down to create the proletariat out of the masses of rural and urban peasants. Rather than waiting for a proletariat, Fonseca saw the possibility for active opposition and armed insurrection with the support of the peasant masses, following the examples of both Sandino and Castro (Baracco 2005: 62).

3.4.1 Church, State and Insurrection

After demonstrations during the 1967 elections, in which Tachito won the presidency, the youngest Somoza had Pedro Joaquín Chamorro imprisoned with other political dissidents for inciting unrest and misinformation (Crawley 1979: 141). The Red Cross intervened along with the Archbishop of Managua, Alejandro González, to call for their release. In a turn away from its traditional support of the government, the Church began to soften toward the situation of the masses, led in most instances by priests and lay people influenced by liberation theology. Ernesto Cardenal, a priest and poet, is one of the most famous proponents of the new orientation, and he soon became a leading member of the FSLN. The support from many in the base communities strengthened the FSLN not only with manpower, but also with a network of safe houses and communications throughout the country.

Liberation theology opened a door for extensive Christian involvement in the revolution in Nicaragua. Whereas the traditional teachings of the Church instructed the peasant masses to uphold the status quo as part of their Christian duty, radical priests and lay people encountered communities primed to accept the teachings stemming from Medellín. The persistent structural inequality which permeated

Nicaraguan society provided fertile ground for discussions of equality and liberation, and the preferential option for the poor. Though the Church hierarchy continued to characterise the FSLN as atheist, many at the grassroots level came in contact with Sandinista members who proved that characterisation to be false. The base communities filled a void in the social and political landscape in Nicaragua since popular organising was severely restricted under the Somozas. Base communities were permitted as religious meetings, even though they soon also functioned as general neighbourhood organisation groups (Harnecker 1987: 11). These groups made logical allies for the FSLN as they began approaching the religious community. Though some support for the Sandinistas existed among these groups in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the major turning point came after the Managua earthquake in 1972. The government's abuses took centre stage as aid monies were diverted to private bank accounts and food and health supplies were hoarded by the GN and only sparingly distributed to those in need (Gilbert 1988: 134). In the aftermath, several of the moderates in the Church hierarchy sided with the FSLN, opposing the government and the overt corruption of the Somozas and the GN. This cooperation, however, did not last.

Though many of the peasant members of the base communities continued to support the FSLN once it began to govern, the Church rapidly distanced itself from the group. The FSLN issued a statement in 1980 reaffirming the freedom of religion for all Nicaraguans, a belief they had maintained since 1969. However, the bishops, led by Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo, who was staunchly opposed to the FSLN throughout the revolution and their time in government, replied by stating that the Sandinistas were a threat to democracy and that their Marxist beliefs would lead them soon to eliminate all religion. The Church leadership appeared to side with the opposition parties, particularly the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (Fuerza Democrática Nicaragüense - FDN), which carried out many of the US sanctioned *contra* attacks (Gilbert 1988: 141). Having learnt from the Cuban example the possible pitfalls of excluding religion from a Latin American revolution, the Sandinistas accepted and even incorporated religion in their fight to remake the nation. However, they faced the struggle of many members being torn between the mandates of their religion and their political convictions in the midst of organising the members to action.

Initially focused on armed resistance, the FSLN retreated to a more measured posture vis-à-vis military engagement after a major defeat at Pancasán in 1967. Though most of the combatants were killed by the GN, the defeat represented a political victory by bringing the FSLN and its goals to the attention of the Nicaraguan populace (Smith 1993: 118). Using this new notoriety, the group spent the following few years consolidating its base, training militants and recruiting more supporters to their side. They emerged from this period better organised and ready to engage the National Guard and Somoza. On one occasion, the Sandinistas broke in to a Christmas party attended by several high ranking Somoza supporters and took the party-goers hostage. The rebels demanded fourteen prisoners' release, one million dollars in ransom, the publication and broadcast of their decrees and safe passage to Cuba after the hostages were freed (ibid: 122). Though all of this was granted, it was followed by stronger repression and military aggression aimed at all forms of opposition.

3.4.2 Ideological Divisions, Unifications and Revolutionary Triumph

In 1971, the Sandinistas restarted guerrilla activities in the mountains in the north of the country, and also began organising worker demonstrations and other grassroots protests. This time of disparate spheres of action led to divisions within the group's leadership. In 1975, the FSLN split into three different movements, each with a different focus (Walker 2003: 40, Close & Martí i Puig 2012:3-4). These three tendencies were: the Prolonged People's War (Guerra Popular Prolongada - GPP), the Proletarian Tendency (Tendencia Proletaria - TP), and the Insurrectionary Tendency (Tendencia Insurreccional - TI). Humberto Ortega Saavedra (1980: 61-65), a founder of the third group, maintained that the specific areas of focus that different FSLN leaders oversaw naturally led to the development of the different tendencies within the leadership. Infrequent communications due to the clandestine nature of the insurrection further complicated a unified approach. The GPP was led by Tomás Borge and continued to follow the *foco* theory of fighting guerrilla wars in the mountains with the goal of establishing a base of resistance and provoking spontaneous revolts. The TP, headed by Jaime Wheelock, was intent on building up mass organisations in the urban centres. The TI emerged out of the GPP intent on breaking with all of the models the FSLN had previously been following (García

2007: 198). Having been the third group to emerge from the split, the TI also became known as the Third Force (Terceristas). It was led by Daniel and Humberto Ortega and sought urban and rural insurrections through alliances with all anti-Somoza groups. The Sandinistas emphasised later that the divisions were over tactics and not ideology, arguing that none of them sought to establish themselves as the dominant group (Wheelock cited in Monroy García 1997: 202).

Though the three groups pursued different paths, they were able to reconcile in 1978 and work together in forming a revolutionary government. The National Directorate (Dirección Nacional - DN), the main ruling body in the Sandinista government, was established in 1979 and was composed of nine members, three coming from each of the tendencies. Humberto Ortega (1980: 65) characterised the reunification of the three groups as a reintegration of the disparate branches of the FSLN. However, this unity was not always as harmonious as the DN wished it to appear. The divisions persisted throughout the regime's tenure with each tendency staffing its offices with its own members (Gilbert 1988: 47). Dora Maria Téllez, Sandinista Minister of Health, referred to the DN as '... a federation, the round table of the three parliamentary kingdoms of the Sandinista movement' (cited in Hoyt 1997: 158). However tenuous this unity was in practice, it was representative of the party's core belief in the unification of the Nicaraguan people as a whole.

Emanating from the Terceristas, alliances were sought with other groups opposed to Somoza. Víctor Tirado López, one of the founders of the Terceristas, commented later that they realised that '... Marxism-Leninism did not help us much. We were better served by the alliances with which we created a social movement' (quoted in García 2007: 198). Specifically Tirado López references the Group of Twelve which lent significant broad-based support to the FSLN project. Composed of twelve influential Nicaraguans ranging from businessmen to clergy, the Group openly backed the FSLN as an integral part of resolving the national crisis (Pastor 2002: 48). Though the Group appeared independent, several links with the FSLN would later emerge. One such link was visible with Fernando Cardenal, brother to the then FSLN member Ernesto Cardenal. Both later took up posts in the FSLN government. Regardless of any hidden connections, the Group of Twelve represented an ideological willingness on the part of the Terceristas to ally themselves with members of the bourgeoisie who supported their aims of freeing Nicaraguans from outside interference and internal dictatorship. Concessions to the

bourgeoisie continued even after the Sandinistas came to power, a fact that the party members claimed showed their intention to forge true national unity. Carlos Vilas (1986: 175) characterises the unique integration of a mass movement and a bourgeois sector of society as one of the 'basic principles' of Sandinista national unity '... bringing together contradictory interests to overcome the two most urgent contradictions: economic reconstruction... and sovereign self-determination...'.

Beyond the Group of Twelve's support, the FSLN benefitted from the missteps of Somoza and the GN in the final years of revolutionary action. Principally, the GN's assassination of the editor of the main opposition newspaper *La Prensa*, Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, on 10 January, 1978 served as a catalyst for mass action against the government. As Salvador Martí i Puig (2012: 24) indicates, Chamorro's assassination particularly animated the economic elite who had up until then had been immune from repression or violence when criticising the government. Less than two weeks later, the private sector and the majority of labour unions together organised a general strike on 22 January, in which nearly eighty-five percent of businesses were closed (Foroohar 1989: 176). The strike continued and led to other open demonstrations against the government. These protests were in turn met with increased repression and violence from the National Guard. This produced a cycle where the increased repression led to increasing numbers of people demonstrating against the government, which in turn was met with violence from the GN. In response the demonstrators began retaliating, turning a largely peaceful movement against the government into an armed insurrection.

That cycle provided a space within the more traditional political field for the Sandinistas to gain legitimacy as political actors and to emerge as leaders in the growing crisis. Indeed, as attempted negotiations mediated by the USA between the Somoza government and the various established political groups, including the Conservative party and representatives of the Catholic Church, broke down, many of the disillusioned opposition groups united with the FSLN as the only remaining viable option to remove Somoza from power (Foroohar 1989: 196). The struggle intensified in June, 1979 when the FSLN called for an open ended general strike to begin on 4 June. In the week following, armed uprisings occurred in several major cities linked to the GN regional barracks. The coordinated offensive, organised by the FSLN, blocked the transportation routes for the National Guard's troops and

supplies, immobilising them whilst also forcing them to engage in protracted skirmishes (Nolan 1984: 98).

The majority of the month of June also saw the revolutionary fighting come to Managua, as the FSLN militants and others not officially linked to the FSLN formed militias, engaged the GN, and took control of several sections of the city, including the road to the airport. Though the militias were not able to maintain control, and indeed retreated to Masaya at the end of June, the other major cities were effectively controlled by the FSLN and its supporters, thus isolating Managua and Somoza from the rest of the country (Nolan 1984: 100). On 16 July, the last major garrison of the GN surrendered, which, along with pressure from the United States, precipitated Somoza's resignation the following day. The FSLN remained the only organised armed force in the country, and with the backing of those who fought alongside them in the last months of the revolution, they entered Managua on 19 July and claimed control of the government and the country.

3.4.3 The Mosaic of Sandinista Thought

One of the factors that allowed the FSLN to incorporate the bourgeoisie into the revolutionary process was the Sandinistas' unorthodox ideology. Donald Hodges (1986: 195) describes *Sandinismo* as '... an amalgam of Marxist theory and Sandino's revolutionary legacy under the auspices of the new Marxism'.³ Through Fonseca's historiography of Sandino (Fonseca 1984), which I discussed at the beginning of this chapter, casting the national hero as a champion of radical communist ideals, the FSLN married nationalist characteristics to their own conception of Marxist theory. Though drawing significantly on the political philosophy of Marx and Lenin, the FSLN leaders emphasised the movement's originality, through its non-aligned stance and response to the needs of the country (Monroy García 1997: 149). Giaconda Belli, Nicaraguan poet and member of the FSLN in the 1970s and 80s, explains that for all of their study of Marxist-Leninism and the Cuban model, the Sandinistas' 'dream was to do something different. An original socialism, Nicaraguan, free' (cited in Pérez-Baltodano 2003: 585). The

³ For a thorough examination of Sandinista ideology, see Donald Hodges (1986) *Intellectual Foundations of the Nicaraguan Revolution* and David Nolan (1984) *FSLN: The Ideology of the Sandinistas and the Nicaraguan Revolution*.

prevailing ideology, then, was one which emphasised national unity based on anti-imperialism and national sovereignty. Both of these aims were orientated primarily against the United States due to its role in the country's history. As discussed in the previous chapter, one of the emergent characteristics of the radical communism in Latin America was the desire for it to reflect the national needs. The Sandinista ideology was adapted to the country's specific situation. The Sandinistas established a collective leadership, emphasised the importance of a mixed economy, and allowed for ideological diversity, as evidenced in the three tendencies (Hodges 1986: 185).

The absence of a totalising party-line benefited the Sandinistas, allowing them the flexibility to adapt their theory and eventual governance as needed. Vanden labels the Sandinista ideology a 'philosophy' since '... there was very little "officialism" in Nicaragua under the Sandinistas' (cited in Prevost 1991: 104). One form of adapting was that of allowing the bourgeoisie a position within the government and the economy. Departing from orthodox Leninist dictates that the bourgeoisie ought to be excluded from all areas of the government, the FSLN incorporated several prominent business men and women into the government, through the Group of Twelve, and the Council of State, where they were given a position as a minority opinion. Additionally, the mixed economy allowed many of the bourgeois class to maintain their property and businesses, provided they complied with the government's economic policies (Vilas 1986: 150, 158). The flexibility of Sandinista thought was also key in the reunification of the three tendencies and their co-participation in the National Directorate.

Though disputes among the three groups inevitably occurred, the DN presented a united front to Nicaraguans and international observers, reinforcing Humberto Ortega's claim that none of the three attempted to gain supremacy. For Pérez-Baltodano (2003: 590) this was the consequence of the 'revolutionary activism of the FSLN degenerate[ing] into pragmatism and, later, into an attitude of resignation in the face of the national reality...'. Unsurprisingly, the lack of a singular voice guiding the revolutionary group after gaining power compromised their initial programme. Tirado-López blamed the dominant socialist agenda of the GPP for derailing the FSLN's larger focus on a non-aligned government with a mixed economy in the service of national unity (García 2007: 199). The national reality that faced the Sandinistas during their government stemmed from several areas, two of the most important being the challenge to create a new national

character that incorporated all Nicaraguans, and the fight against internal and external opposition to the revolution.

3.4.4 National Unity through Cultural Identity

One of the main goals of the FSLN was to create national unity in a country divided for centuries by a Conservative – Liberal rivalry and later cowed into submission by a US backed dynasty. The Sandinista leadership acknowledged that unity would be difficult given the vast differences in the culture and socio-economic status of the various groups and classes. Stemming from the focus on mass participation in the revolution, the FSLN created a space for the same participation within its government. Popular organisations, such as the Association of Rural Workers (Asociación de Trabajadores del Campo - ATC), were allocated seats in the Sandinista Assembly, the government's legislative body. These groups were intended to present the views of their members and influence policy. Base committees held meetings locally to discuss policy issues, with the consensus ideas being filtered and further discussed through the zonal and regional committees before reaching the Assembly. The FSLN recognised the independent nature of the popular organisations before and immediately after the revolution and granted them significant autonomy in their actions, allowing them to strike and demonstrate against the government. However, as the groups became more ingrained in the Sandinista government structure, some of that autonomy was lost, particularly as opposition political parties became the voice of dissent in society (Serra 1991: 62-3). In addition to the political participation of the masses, the cultural project aimed at providing all Nicaraguans with a common national culture in which to participate.

Gellner (1983: 110) argues that part of creating a national identity lies in creating a universal high culture into which all members of a society can be incorporated. As an integral aspect of the Sandinista push for national unity, they produced policies on the arts and culture, aimed at fostering an original, and at times indigenous, expression of Nicaraguan artistic culture. This ran to counter to the importation and imitation of US and European styles fostered under the Somozas (Martin 1989: 125). However, rather than promoting a high culture, the FSLN promoted a popular culture. Beginning in the 1960s, Ernesto Cardenal, Minister of

Culture for the FSLN after the Revolution, established an artistic community on the island of Solentíname. Those on the island studied liberation theology and were encouraged to express themselves artistically. Cardenal, a poet, guided the literary movement on the island, whilst painter Roger Perez de la Rocha assisted the community members in developing a naïve, or not classically trained, style of painting (Martin 1989: 125). Cardenal, in an interview with Philip Zwerling and Connie Martin (Zwerling & Martin 1985: 43), states that the most important aspect of the cultural revolution was ‘... building a culture that is open and accessible to the masses – in dance, music, theatre, publications, libraries, movies’.

A necessary element in diffusing a common culture is literacy, which is also one of Anderson’s criteria for the development of a national identity. In Nicaragua, for nine months in 1980, the government carried out a nation-wide literacy crusade. For Carlos Tünnermann, Minister of Education for the FSLN, the literacy crusade ‘... was an immense act of love’, which displayed the compatibility of Christianity and Sandinista philosophy (Zwerling & Martin 1985: 70). Cardenal also referenced the literacy crusade, explaining that though Nicaragua had a literary tradition, very few had access to it (ibid: 43). Efforts to foster the growth of the popular culture included government subsidies to various artisans. The Ministry of Culture under the FSLN began providing art schooling tuition free to interested students (Heyck 1990: 230). The Ministry of Culture also established Popular Culture Centres in nine different regions, including three on the Atlantic coast to promote indigenous art and culture. Additionally, the Ministry collaborated with the Sandinista Association for Cultural Workers (Asociación Sandinista de Trabajadores de la Cultura - ASTC) union to organise national and international exhibits (Martin 1989: 126-7).

Popular music also found support under the new regime. Protest songs had played a role in the fight against Somoza, being broadcast from clandestine radio stations. These songs from groups like Pancasán instructed the masses in the use of various weapons and guerrilla strategy and introduced them to Sandinista philosophy. The Ministry of Culture created a department of music which encouraged the continuation of grassroots musical production. The Ministry achieved this by creating the Nicaraguan Company for Artistic and Cultural Recording (Empresa Nicaragüense de Grabaciones Artísticas y Culturales - ENIGRAC), which produced and released music from grassroots groups (Pring-Mill 1987: 180). The various cultural programs illustrate the Sandinistas’ desire to

actively promote and create avenues for a cultural expression in which all citizens could participate. The presentation of a homogenised popular culture, in turn, linked citizens to one another rather than separating them according to local customs and cultures. Gellner's (1983:110) contention that the government becomes the protector of the culture is borne out in this situation. However, rather than creating a new high culture, the Ministry of Culture promoted a popular culture built on the artistic contributions of the masses, reflecting the FSLN's focus on the urban and rural peasant and working class's interests. The efforts to foster a common national culture were aimed at creating national unity by introducing the citizens to the cultural production of various individuals and groups from diverse areas within their own country, particularly in the face of internal and external opposition to the revolution.

3.5 Opposition: Home and Abroad

A major factor influencing the FSLN's governance was opposition the party faced from inside and outside of the country. In the initial transition from Somoza to the Sandinista government, there was little overt dissent. Most members of the bourgeoisie were uncertain of which direction the FSLN would take, and were at least partially heartened by the inclusion of Alfonso Robelo and Violetta Chamorro, two prominent business figures, in the five-member ruling junta, which also included Daniel Ortega as a representative of the DN, and two other prominent Sandinistas, Sergio Ramírez and Moisés Hassan. However, within months of the change-over, tensions emerged and organised opposition began to appear. The resignation of both Robelo and Chamorro within the first year hastened the end of the Sandinistas' honeymoon with the upper-class. Robelo joined Eden Pastora, a former FSLN militant and commander, to create Democratic Revolutionary Alliance (Alianza Revolucionaria Democrática - ARDE) as a democratic alternative to the Sandinistas (Castillo Rivas 1993: 57).

ARDE claimed to represent the original revolutionary project in Nicaragua, and not the communist one they attributed to the Sandinistas (Castillo Rivas 1993: 57). The group operated out of the south, maintaining headquarters in Costa Rica. Pastora was considered an integral part of the group's leadership since he presented a nationalistic face as a former *comandante* of the Sandinistas (Kornbluh 1991: 332).

The group's platform was similar to the FSLN's, differing mainly in the fact that they favoured a pluralistic political system, which they claimed the FSLN had eschewed. ARDE was founded on the ideals of non-alignment, national sovereignty, agrarian reform, and an independent military which did not serve any political faction (Castillo Rivas 1993: 59). The group focused their efforts on gaining international recognition and internal support in Nicaragua in order to force the Sandinistas out of power. However, ARDE issued an ultimatum stating that if the Sandinistas did not show signs of change in the revolutionary process, ARDE would initiate a war against them (ibid: 69). This declaration caused tension between the more peaceful elements of the group and Pastora and his followers, particularly as Pastora was inclined to cooperate with the more militant FDN. ARDE eventually folded into a new collective of opposition groups in the south of Nicaragua called the Opposition Block of the South (Bloque Opositor del Sur - BOS), which aimed to compete with the National Opposition Union (Unión Nacional Opositora – UNO) for prominence among those opposed to the FSLN whilst maintaining its distance from the at times toxic US support. BOS presented a non-militaristic platform in support of democratic socialism that aimed to occupy a space in the centre of the political spectrum in Nicaragua (ibid: 172).

Operating out of the north and in Honduras, the FDN was a more militaristic operation than ARDE. Receiving the bulk of the US financing and CIA support for counterrevolutionary operations, the FDN was responsible for most of the *contra* attacks in Nicaragua (Brody 1985: 135; Kornbluh 1991: 326, 332). Pastora commented that the Sandinista troops were 'stupefied when they realised that all of the *contras* were *campesinos*' (García 2007: 30). The *contras* were largely portrayed by the FSLN as former members of Somoza's National Guard. Opposition groups like the FDN and ARDE issued numerous statements emphasising the peasant composition of the *contra* fighters in an attempt to demonstrate the widespread opposition in Nicaragua to the FSLN. Michael Schroeder (2002) explains that the attested *campesino* support for the *contras* is the legacy of cultural and societal norms in rural areas. The rural peasants remained sceptical of government involvement in their affairs and resented the Sandinistas' interfering policies. Their distrust of government intervention combined with the traditional anti-communist teachings of the Catholic Church to foster deep antipathy toward the FSLN (ibid: 46). This provided a fertile ground for FDN recruiting. However, a study by the US

Arms Control and Foreign Policy Caucus found that ‘while the “foot-soldiers” of the FDN Army are largely peasants, the army is organized and commanded by former National Guardsmen’ (Brody 1985: 132). Additionally, the antipathy caused on the Atlantic coast by the FSLN’s policies in dealing with the Miskito people likewise fomented opposition and dissent. Charles Hale (1996) explains that the FSLN failed to understand the unique cultural, political and economic needs of the Miskito people, leading them to continue the state of internal neo-colonialism. This occurred through their policies which attempted to apply the same economic and social structures from the Pacific coast *mestizo* region to the indigenous communities on the Atlantic coast. The FSLN’s management of the opposition fighting occurring in that region resulted in the deployment of the Sandinista military to the area, who ‘enacted new security measures: curfews, restrictions on travel outside the community, and jail for anyone suspected of aiding the contras’ (Hale 1996: 147). These measures, like the perception of FSLN’s interference in rural areas in other parts of the country, led to resistance among the Miskito people.

As an opposition group, the FDN was accused of committing numerous human rights violations during their war against the FSLN (Castillo Rivas 1993: 133-4). Their association with the US posed problems of legitimacy within the country and internationally, as they were seen as puppets of external intervention, rather than an organic national opposition group. The US sought to create another group with less overt ties to the contras and the US to gain national and international legitimacy. The US National Security Council engaged former FDN leader Adolfo Calero, former ARDE leader Alfonso Robelo, and Arturo Cruz, former FSLN Ambassador to the US, to create UNO in 1985 (Kornbluh 1991: 334). As the United State’s preferred opposition group, UNO was intended to present a rehabilitated image of US-favoured resistance (Castillo Rivas 1993: 161). UNO gained prominence for its refusal to engage in armed resistance. Additionally, UNO named Violeta Chamorro as its 1990 presidential candidate. Chamorro lent credibility to the party as a prominent member of society who was also Pedro Joaquín Chamorro’s widow, and a former member of the ruling junta. Chamorro won the presidential elections on the UNO ticket in 1990 (Martí i Puig 2012: 30).

3.6 Electoral Defeat, Reorganisation, and Re-election

Whilst UNO's victory represented the culmination of several opposition groups' efforts to remove the Sandinistas from power, the FSLN defeat signified a pivotal moment for the revolutionary party. The unity previously displayed by the National Directorate and other party members dissolved after the elections. Tirado López opined that UNO '... triumphed with the Sandinista Front's 1979 programme' (García 2007: 204) and that if the FSLN had followed through with that programme they would still have been in power. A significant part of this programme was the implementation of a political structure that consolidated the governmental structures and strengthening the democratic mechanisms of governance. In the first few years after the defeat, the FSLN began reorganising itself, instituting more democratic mechanisms for influencing party decisions. Holding its first National Congress in 1991, FSLN members voted in a new National Directorate, changing the main power holders for the first time since 1979. The party also began to accept members who were not the traditional 'militants' that made up the party pre-1990 (Wright 1995: 34). Daniel Ortega was appointed the General Secretary of the party. The position of individual members was strengthened when a proposal to forbid party members from publicly criticising official party decisions was defeated (Hoyt 1997: 151).

Sharp divisions also appeared two years later with groups declaring their support for individual party leaders. One group, labelled *Danielistas* for their support of Daniel Ortega, called themselves the Forum of the Democratic Sandinista Left and espoused more traditional Sandinista views. Another group, rallying around Sergio Ramirez and thus labelled *Sergistas*, called for renovation in the party, issuing a statement entitled 'A *Sandinismo* that Returns to the Majorities' (ibid: 151-2). Yet another group was formed, calling itself 'Outside the Currents', which was led by Henry Ruiz (Wright 1995: 36). The existence of these divergent groups begs the question of whether the reconciliation of the three tendencies in the late 1970s was actually successful. It also is a reminder of the strength of the cultural tradition of *caudillismo*, where people submit to the rule of a 'strong man'. Whilst this situation was vigorously avoided during the Sandinista's time in power, with the establishment of the National Directorate, Gilbert (1988: 47) has argued that the FSLN was 'ruled by a college of *caudillos*', in the form of the National Directorate.

Daniel Ortega maintained control over the traditional FSLN which operated as a party of opposition from 1990 to 2006. During this time Nicaragua elected three conservative presidential administrations headed by Chamorro, Arnaldo Alemán in 1996 and Enrique Bolaños in 2001. The main parties, after ONU's victory in 1990, were the Partido Liberal Constitucionalista (PLC), led by Alemán with the support of the majority of those who formed ONU, and the FSLN. Under the Chamorro administration, the government largely focused on establishing more traditional democratic institutions and transitioning the economy from a statist model to a neoliberal one (Close & Puig 2012: 8). Alemán used his position as Mayor of Managua, where he advocated for the poor and provided needed public services, to launch his presidential bid. His time in office was marked with rampant corruption, though through political maneuvers he was granted immunity from any charges. His successor, Bolaños, overturned that immunity and saw Alemán convicted of stealing \$97.6 million from the Nicaraguan treasury and sentenced to twenty years in prison (Coburn & Cruz 2012: 111). Contrary to Alemán's focus on the people, Bolaños focused on the Nicaraguan state's economic and political needs and was thus known as the president who 'never did a favor for anyone' (ibid: 111). Of these three, Alemán had the most lasting impact on Nicaraguan politics in the post-revolutionary era. Setting the stage for the future elaboration of political power in Nicaragua, Aleman famously entered into a political pact with Daniel Ortega in 2000. The pact consisted of enacting legislation and constitutional amendments to strengthen the office of the President and also to ensure that the opposing party, either the PLC or FSLN depending on who held the presidency, would occupy a significant number of public sector posts (Close 2012: 59). The net result of this pact was the exclusion of other parties by the PLC and FSLN from positions of power.

With Aleman in prison, the PLC split, with one group supporting Eduardo Montealegre, a banker, and the other supporting Aleman's preferred candidate Jose Rizo. This caused the anti-Sandinista vote to be divided as well. The Sandinistas supporters also saw a split, with Ortega heading the FSLN ticket, and the Movimiento Renovador Sandinista (MRS) supporting Herty Lewites until he suffered a heart attack and died, leaving Edmundo Jarquin as the party's choice. The divisions among the leading parties led to similar divisions in the voting percentages, which resulted in 38 percent of the vote being enough to give Ortega the presidency (Coburn & Cruz 2012: 112). The Sandinistas were back in power after sixteen years

in opposition, with Ortega firmly at the helm. One significant element in Ortega's victory was his reconciliation with Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo. He secured Obando y Bravo's backing by pushing the passage of legislation criminalising all forms of abortion (Perez Baltodano 2012: 81). This rapprochement with the Catholic Church's hierarchy gave Ortega added legitimacy and the respectability that comes with the Archbishop's approval.

After assuming the presidency, Ortega had Aleman's conviction overturned, further strengthening the pact between the two dominant parties. The return of the Sandinistas to power has been marked by some significant differences to their governance in the 1980s. Principally, the consolidation of power in the person of Ortega is a notable departure from the more diffuse control of power seen in the National Directorate. He placed loyal supporters in positions of power in the cabinet, including his wife Rosario Murillo, taking care to choose individuals with little public exposure and influence (Martí i Puig 2012: 39). Though emphasising social programmes, such as the antipoverty programmes *Hambre Cero* and *Desempleo Cero*, Ortega's government had to take care not to revert to the Sandinista project of the 1980s. Particularly with his low public support at the time of his election, he did not have the electoral mandate to enact wholesale change at the national level. Ortega maintained a balance between the neoliberal policies of his three predecessors and the social policies called for by his supporters (Anderson & Dodd 2009: 157). He did, however, plot a different course from the leaders before him in the country's international relations. Though avoiding direct confrontation with the United States, Ortega has been openly critical of the country in international forums. Ortega also forged stronger alliances with Hugo Chavez, who has provided significant financial support to Nicaragua (Coburn & Cruz 2012: 115).

There are obvious similarities between the policies of the Sandinista government of the 1980s and the Ortega years from 2006 onwards, in particular the broader social programs and leftist international political alliances. Likewise, Ortega has had to distance himself from certain traditional FSLN policies at time due to a lack of electoral support. Ortega has since been reelected in 2011 for a consecutive term with 63 percent of the vote, but only after the Supreme Court found that the constitutional ban on consecutive terms violated his constitutional right to participate in the political process (McConnell 2012: 150). Daniel Ortega's return to the presidency is an important political development to bear in mind during the

discussion of the interview data in chapters five and six. The FSLN's reentry into national leadership will undoubtedly have had an impact on the interview participants' perspectives on the party and its policies in the 1980s. Though it is not the focus of this thesis to compare the current Sandinista discourse with that of the 1980s, this current influence must be kept in mind when considering my analysis of the interviewees' recollections.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter, I have outlined the major influences on the creation of the Sandinistas as well as the underpinnings of the Nicaraguan Revolution. Through the discussion of the events, a picture emerges of Nicaragua as a country embroiled in internal and external conflict. The conflict was one that had begun centuries before, and continued through the Sandinistas' time in government. A desire for national liberation and an end to sectarian politics began fomenting in a segment of the population. Sandino had been the first to champion this cause, foreshadowing the combination of characteristics that would result in revolution decades later. The FSLN was born out of a combination of national frustration at the machinations of the power-holders in league with foreign powers, and the political conviction that Sandino held the key to national liberation when examined through the lens of non-orthodox communism. Though they enjoyed the support of a significant proportion of the nation, the Sandinistas faced opposition and found themselves as part of a new polarisation in their nation, those supportive of the FSLN and those allied against it.

The circumstances surrounding the development of the FSLN inevitably shaped its original discursive representation to the people. However, it is this original base, in conjunction with the external pressures, which created the Sandinista discourse during their time in power. The various tensions against which the FSLN leadership was pushing likely shaded and coloured their conception of Nicaragua as a nation rooted in national community. Based on the contextual aspects presented above, the subsequent chapters will endeavour to uncover the nature of this community and to what extent the Sandinistas communicated this vision discursively to the Nicaraguan people, and how that vision was contested by the opposition.

Chapter 4: Methodological and Analytical Considerations

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a consideration of the methods that I employ in analysing the data collected for this project. I begin by exploring the possible methodological avenues open to me in a critically oriented discourse analysis.¹ Specifically, the psycho-social and the social conflict approaches are described, though both are ultimately discounted in their applicability to my research. The chapter then moves on to detailing the discourse-historical approach and the reasons why it is appropriate for this study. I then present an explanation of the various elements of analysis involved and how they specifically are evidenced in my corpora. The chapter is rounded out with a discussion of the ethnographic interviewing methods I drew on in my interviews in Nicaragua and a discussion of the composition of the corpora I have created. The intention of this chapter is to provide a methodological lens through which to understand the results of my analysis which constitute chapters five and six.

Given my focus on examining the construction of national community, a critically oriented discourse analysis is a well suited approach. With the Sandinista government in the 1980s striving for ideological hegemony, the discursive terrain was in a state of contestation with no group gaining a definitive victory for their ideological orientation. Sandinista ideology, whilst dominant due to the FSLN's control of the government, had yet to gain the taken-for-granted acceptance in society which would preclude significant opposition. Discourse is an essential component in creating a hegemonic view of the national within the territorial confines of a country (cf. Fairclough 1989, Wodak et al. 1999). A fundamental aspect in a critically oriented discourse analysis is the uncovering of power relations which construct hegemony for various ideological elements. For Norman Fairclough, power is exerted on a population when a dominant discourse emerges and becomes incorporated into the everyday interactions of the people. He terms this

¹ Rather than adopting the term Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) for my approach, I refer to a critically oriented discourse analysis. This is to avoid the debate caused by the label CDA and its implied political stance (cf Michael Toolan (1997) and Henry Widdowson (2004)). Instead, I position myself as viewing the data and its analysis from a critical perspective, informed by the work of discourse analysts, CDA practitioners chief among them.

naturalisation (Fairclough 1989: 92). In this naturalised state, discourse is no longer marked, but rather exists as part of the common-sense functioning in a society. Gramsci discussed common sense as a 'complex and disjointed amalgam influenced by all previous philosophical currents' (Adamson 1980: 150). The previous philosophical currents maintained in the common sense are tied to the interests of the ruling classes and rarely addresses the concerns of the popular masses. Adamson argues that it is 'necessary for a subaltern class challenging an incumbent hegemony to attempt to build a new common sense by attacking the assumptions embedded in existing language' (ibid: 151). Texts need not be overtly ideological in this situation, as the reader who has internalised the dominant discourse brings those 'ideologies to the interpretation of the texts' (ibid: 85). National community can be seen in this light as arising out of specific discourses gaining prominence in the national arena.

The Marxist discourse, which emphasises national liberation, along with the liberation theology discourse also calling for liberation create a discursive space for a national identity built on the tension between colonialism and post-colonialism. These three discourses act in concert to call the population to rally around the concept of the national that the discourse represents, creating community through ideological formations. As indicated by Michael Billig (1995: 7), one's national identity is not an entity which resides merely in that individual's mind; it is a communal identification with numerous others whom one will never meet, similar to Anderson's imagined community. Paul Chilton highlights this group power saying it is '...the use of a... discourse, especially in a repeatable, institutionalised form, that governs the way people think...' (2004: 26). Nationalist feelings, viewed from this perspective, are not purely emotional constructs. They are reactions to the embedded discourse constructing a group's conception of its own national community. This group patterning function allows me to probe the way discursive structures constrain and direct the production of national community.

4.2 Discourse Analysis and Discourse

Within a critically oriented approach to discourse lies the assumption that power imbalances are encoded in language and can be brought to light through analysis of the discourse. In the search for these imbalances, there are several wide-ranging approaches to exploring the use of language in reinforcing and constituting

existing power structures in numerous areas of social life. As part of the research on the various issues related to the expression of power, a parallel theme of the linguistic expression of ideology also comes under consideration. The methods used to explore how the social and linguistic elements combine within a text to form a discourse do not constitute a rigidly established methodology. In order to deconstruct a discourse, aspects of sociology, political science, and psychology, among others, are used in conjunction with linguistic analysis. Teun van Dijk argues that the complexity of the social problems addressed by critical approaches to discourse requires a multidisciplinary approach that lacks barriers between theories and methods in order to tailor the approach to the specific research question and material (van Dijk 1993: 252). Although there are various approaches to examining discourse critically, the particular situation seen in the creation of national community in Nicaragua discounts the applicability of some of these approaches for this thesis. Two such prominent perspectives, which provide a valuable conceptual background even though they are not specifically applied in my research, are the psycho-social and social conflict approaches.

4.2.1 Psycho-Social Approach

Van Dijk and Paul Chilton, both proponents of the psycho-social approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), have applied their methods to an exploration of political texts for discourses of power and discrimination. Research under this framework seeks to unearth the means through which dominant discourses are embedded within institutional and societal texts. Similar to other CDA studies, emphasis is placed on the historical, political, social and cultural contexts surrounding the discourse under inspection (van Dijk 1989: 202). Unique to their approach, however, is the emphasis which is placed on understanding cognitive elements involved in creating hegemony through the use of a dominant discourse.

Van Dijk (1996: 85) posits that the discourses used in unequal power relations can ‘influence the structures of text and talk and that, as a result, the knowledge, attitudes, norms, values and ideologies of recipients are – more or less – indirectly affected in the interest of the dominant group’. In so doing, the dominated are impacted at the level of their thoughts, requiring an analysis to take into account the methods and means through which cognition is affected, indicating the

importance of hegemony I discussed in chapter one. For van Dijk (1993: 257), this prompts a need to look at the social groups surrounding individuals to examine and understand the means by which social cognitions are formulated and reformulated. One difficulty with this approach is a lack of understanding of how the cognitive or psychological functions are actually influenced by various discourses. Research in the semi-parallel field of cognitive linguistics intends to offer some insight into this relationship, particularly by scholars like Chilton (2004). Attempting to explain the link between the mental, social and discursive components, van Dijk has developed 'a conceptual triangle that connects society, discourse and social cognition' (1995: 17). Through this triangle, the macro level and micro level components, such as the political context and the lexical choice respectively, are connected with the social cognitions of a group. The reproductions of discourses of dominance, such as those of racism or sexism, represent both historical and current manifestations of thoughts persistent within a group's cognitive patterns. Van Dijk labels continually reproduced cognitive patterns as mental models. These models emerge in 'specific discursive structures, such as thematic structures, headlines, rhetorical figures, semantic strategies and so on' (1996: 85).

Throughout his work, Chilton presents a more explanatory incorporation of cognitive linguistics within CDA than does van Dijk. Whilst individuals are considered to have the freedom in their cognition to relate critically with their linguistic surroundings and are not merely automatons responding to internalised assumptions, Chilton (2004: 29, 51) argues that political discourse capitalises on existing mental models in the attempt to achieve a group's goal. For example, metaphors, often seen in political discourse, can be explained cognitively. Rather than being a purely linguistic device, the metaphor is an integral component in the mental processing of information, connecting the current topic to others already understood and internalised (ibid: 51). Analysing the way that information is cognitively processed, van Dijk and Chilton offer a means of understanding the ways in which discourses influence how groups share and process knowledge and ideas, permitting the repetition and perpetuation of certain dominant discourses.

Whilst both van Dijk and Chilton examine discourse in order to understand how manipulative discourses impact dominated groups, the chief emphasis on cognition detracts from the usefulness of this approach for my purposes. The historical nature of the Sandinista discourse makes accessing the cognitive processes

involved in establishing a hegemonic discourse more difficult than when dealing with current discursive situations.

4.2.2 Fairclough's Approach

Though recognising that cognition plays a role in interpreting discourses, Norman Fairclough focuses on the interplay of discourse with the social surroundings in which it is located. As discourse is 'the whole process of social interaction' (Henderson 2005: 14), Fairclough looks primarily at socio-cultural practice through and within language, especially as it relates to masking imbalances of power. Fairclough is critical of approaches that focus solely on the cognitive aspect of discourse. He believes that such approaches fail to 'capture the interplay between cognition and interaction' (Fairclough 1995: 7). For him, a text, spoken or written, cannot be understood in isolation (Phillips & Jorgensen 2002: 70). To this end, he employs a three pronged analysis to discourse, looking at text production, distribution, and consumption (Fairclough 1995: 9, 1989: 98). Each dimension is analysed separately before the three areas are approached as a whole to look for power imbalances. Each level undergoes a different analysis, which Fairclough terms description, interpretation, and explanation (cf Fairclough 1989: chapters 5 & 6). Description involves examining the linguistic make-up of a text for elements of discursively encoded power, largely employing a Hallidayan systemic functional grammatical analysis in looking for, for example, uses of passives or nominalizations. The interpretive stages look at intertextual items, incorporating elements from texts other than the one under examination as a means of presenting a discourse, as well as the context in which the text is located. Presuppositions and semantic relations are emphasised in this level of analysis (ibid: 143, 152). The third level of Fairclough's analysis, explanation, focuses on the social effects of discourses as well as the social effects on discourses. Elements constituting common-sense, the 'taken for granted' knowledge of social practice (Fairclough 1995: 76), as well as those involved in practicing power are revealed through a combination of the first two levels of analysis in the practice of the third. The

process of explanation is one of synthesis, looking at the whole of the findings in the description and the interpretation of the text.²

Additionally, in his view, it is not only what one finds in a discourse that is significant, but also what one does not find. What is not said can be equally as important, if not more so, in revealing the nature of a discourse by showing what the author either chose to conceal or did not view as important (Fairclough 1995: 5). Whilst Fairclough provides many important theoretical concepts for critical approaches to discourse, including his concept of naturalisation mentioned earlier, I have not chosen to apply his approach as my main methodological framework, as the three dimensions are not easily ascertained in the Sandinista context. Though consumption is represented by the interviews I conducted, determining the readership of the numerous FSLN pamphlets, as well as those of the various opposition groups, is difficult to pinpoint given the historical nature of my work. However, as stated above, Fairclough's notion of naturalisation is integral in analysing the creation of discursive hegemony, as is his awareness of nominalisation and absence in a text. I apply these concepts in conjunction with the discourse historical approach in my analysis of the Sandinista discourse.

A more applicable perspective for my work is Wodak's discourse historical approach (DHA) which looks at the specific socio-cultural and historical situation in which a discourse emerged. With its emphasis on the interplay between various sociological levels of interaction and the diachronic change and influence of the specific historical context, this approach provides me with a framework which allows for an in-depth examination of the elements involved in the creation of national community. Before entering into an explanation of the DHA and how I employ it in my analysis, it is important to define how the word *discourse* will be used throughout the paper.

4.2.3 Discourse: A Definition

Discourse has taken on a myriad of meanings in recent years due to increased interest in discourse studies. For some, such as those involved in discursive social

² For a discussion of how discourse operates in practice, see Lillis Chouliarki & Norman Fairclough's 1999. *Discourse in Late Modernity: Rethinking Critical Discourse Analysis*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

psychology, all social phenomena are discursive (Hammersley 2003: 757). On the other end of the spectrum, discourse is simply the use of language in communication (Mills 1997: 5). One aspect of discourse on which most scholars agree is that it is social, implying interaction between people or groups. Diane Macdonell argues that ‘the statement made, the words used and the meanings of the words used, depends on where and against what the statement is made’ (1986: 1). In other words, a text (spoken or written) cannot be understood purely as its constitutive parts (the words or sentences). Rather what is important for understanding a given text is how words and sentences reflect and constitute the socio-historical contexts in which they were drafted.

Fairclough views discourse in this light, seeing it as ‘language as social practice determined by social structures’ (1989: 17). Most researchers who employ a critical discourse analysis perspective view discourse as being both socially constitutive and socially constituted (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 6). The interconnection between discourses and events, for Foucault, establishes the rules by which future events and discourses can occur and interact. Intertwined in unconscious ideas about reality, discourses and events have the freedom to continue ‘their coexistence, their succession, their mutual functioning, their reciprocal determination, and their independent or correlative transformation’ in society (Foucault 1972: 32). Thus, it is imperative to include the contextual information of a text when analysing a discourse. A text is a concrete realisation of a discourse, whether it is spoken or written. For Reisigl and Wodak (2009: 89), discourse incorporates the above elements, and also is ‘a cluster of context-dependent semiotic practices that are situated within specific fields of social action...’. Drawing from these related definitions, I have defined discourse as the pattern of semantic representations in spoken, written or visual text, socially developed within a specific group to simultaneously convey and create the collective ideology and purposes of its members.

4.3 The Discourse-Historical Approach

Originally developed to look at anti-Semitic language in public discourse in Austria, the DHA has since been used to analyse discourses on racism and, importantly for the focus of the present work, national identity (Wodak & Meyer

2009: 18). As discussed above, national identity is a social construct, based on the shared conceptions of the members of the nation-state. It is the social as well as civic construction of national identity, reproduced from the dominant discourse by the citizenry, which allows the DHA practitioner to evaluate how different ideologies are encoded in political language. In particular, the DHA's focus on political actors and the argumentation strategies they employ led me to choose this approach for my research. This is due to the fact that my initial analysis of the FSLN and opposition corpora evidenced several of the argumentation strategies discussed by Wodak et al. (1999). Particularly, the emphasis on creating national unity and identity resonated with the framework elaborated by Wodak et al.. However, as I discuss in section 4.4, there are certain aspects of the discourse which do not fit within the framework, which has led me to elaborate further strategies to adequately analyse and examine the corpora. The DHA, like those discussed above, also presupposes taking a critical stance, which for Reisigl and Wodak (2009: 87-88) entails contextualising the data in its social milieu, maintaining a constant position of self-reflection on the part of the researcher and applying the results of the research. Application may take different forms, including presenting the analysis at conferences or in articles, educating others about the findings, and informing those impacted by the research of the findings to empower them and aid in their equal participation on the discursive terrain.

Central to this approach is the principle of triangulation, which implies using a broad range of analytical tools in analysing the data and also using data from a variety of sources. Wodak stresses the use of triangulation in order to analyse the specific discourse in a manner that suits its unique creation. Triangulation is based on context and looks at 'the immediate, language or text internal co-text, the intertextual... relationship between utterances, texts, genres, and discourses, the extralinguistic social/sociological variables... of a specific "context of situation"', and 'the broader socio-political and historical contexts' (Wodak 2001: 67). It also allows for the application of a variety of methodological tools in the analysis of the discourse. Triangulation in my analysis occurs through the analysis of a diverse selection of both government and opposition publications and interviews with Nicaraguan citizens.

The data analysis in the DHA is three dimensional, encompassing the areas of topics, strategies and the linguistic realisation of the discourse (Wodak et al. 1999:

157). Topics represent macro-themes that cut across the different contributors to the discourse. In the case of this thesis, the topics include the Revolution, unity, freedom and the new Nicaragua. Strategies convey conceptual frameworks for representing the topics. The linguistic dimension is the actual manifestation of the topics and strategies in specific texts. All three dimensions co-occur and must be analysed concurrently. Some salient strategies which have emerged in my analysis of the Sandinista and opposition discourses in Nicaragua are autonomisation, cohesivation, dissimilation, and delegitimisation, which, according to Wodak et al.'s model, fall under the suprastrategies of construction, transformation, dismantling and perpetuation (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 18, Wodak et al. 1999: 157). A brief explanation of the strategies highlighted by Wodak et al. demonstrates the necessary interplay between the three dimensions.

For Wodak et al., 'construction strategies' are those which create a sense of unity or solidarity, highlighting the overlap with the macro-topic of unity. Strategically, unity or solidarity is manifested by emphasising similarity within the nation and 'positive political continuity' (Wodak et al. 1999: 37). The linguistic dimension in this strategy presents itself in inclusive personal pronouns and through metaphors of unity. My analysis of the FSLN documents indicates that the Sandinista emphasis on national unity displays certain of Wodak et al.'s construction strategies, particularly cohesivation, which is the emphasis on unifying, and autonomisation, which is an argument for national autonomy (ibid: 38). One of the most salient aspects of this is the in-group that the FSLN discourse creates through the use of the possessive pronoun *our*. The discourse also reveals the use of the metaphor of vitalisation in relation to the revolution as a reified entity.

Alterations to a national identity already embedded in a society, with the aim of changing that identity into a different, preconceived one, represent strategies of 'transformation' (Wodak et al. 1999: 33). One of the topics often advanced under this strategy is a desire for national autonomy to replace a perceived international dependence, a significant theme I found in the Sandinista discourse. An additional aspect of the discourse reflecting this strategy is the emphasis on the 'model national character' of the 'founding fathers', (ibid: 41) which also echoes Smith's (1991) emphasis on the myth of the founding fathers in creating a national identity. Transforming the national character is something the FSLN believed was mandated by the nation via the popular support in ending the Somoza dynasty. In the FSLN

corpus, change is legitimated through the use of normative deontic modals and differentiation via black and white comparisons. Transformation strategies also highlight the difference between the past and present, and the need to alter the present national character. This past/present discontinuity emerged in my analysis as an integral aspect of the Sandinista discourse, which aims to show the FSLN as changing and advancing the national community beyond the negative Somoza dominated past.

A ‘dismantling strategy’ is similar to that of transformation in the emphasis on change, but differs in that it offers no specific alternative, which in my analysis is evident in the opposition materials (Wodak et al 1999: 33). Employing derogatory metaphors and comparisons and also using lexical units that indicate negative singularity allow one to discredit an opponent and his or her view of the nation. I observe this strategy in passages in the opposition discourse through the use of pejorative attributions and derogatory metaphors to discredit the FSLN.

‘Perpetuation’ is the opposite of ‘transformation’ or ‘destruction’ and calls for the continuation of the current political direction. Positive self-representation and an assumption of ‘positive political continuity’ (Wodak et al 1999: 39) are common themes found by Wodak et al. However, in my analysis, perpetuation also occurs in negative situations, such as when the opposition likens the FSLN to a continuation of totalitarian Somocista rule. Linguistic elements that indicate this position are comparisons and analogies that present the current situation as a positive, or negative, one. Modals, for instance *must* and *should*, give impetus to the proposed need for continuity (ibid: 40). Resistance to political change is exhibited through the construction of threats and calls to defend the nation.

Within these strategies, Wodak et al. conceive of diverse topoi, which advance the various arguments presented within each strategy. A topos is the elaboration of a particular argument and which guides the argument toward a specific conclusion or claim. As formal argumentation schemes which have been standardised, topoi ‘can become integral parts of strategic plans and serve to obtain a specific effect’ (Wodak et al 1999: 35). The topoi can function with a variety of strategies and are not specifically linked to any single one. For example, the topos of threat can serve to advance arguments under any of the strategies discussed above. In the FSLN corpus, the topos of threat in conjunction with the strategy of autonomisation is seen in Sandinista warnings against imperialism, whereas the

opposition discourse employs it to warn that the FSLN is establishing a new Somocismo. Marking the various topoi used in constructing an argument-conclusion scheme allows discourse-specific patterns of argumentation to be uncovered, aiding in analysing discursive manifestations of different topics. Specifically for my analysis of the FSLN and opposition corpora, the topoi of history, authority, threat, consequence, comparison and definition emerge as most frequent and are found connected to a variety of the strategies discussed above.

Argumentation Strategies in Nicaraguan Discourse	Associated Sub-Strategies	Associated Topoi
<i>Construction</i>	Autonomisation Vitalisation Cohesivation	History Purity Origin Threat Comparison Definition Authority
<i>Transformation</i>	Model National Character Vitalisation Discontinuation	Consequence History Sugarcoated World Threat Authority
<i>Dismantling</i>	Dissimilation Discrediting Opponents Discontinuation	Comparison <i>Ad-hominem</i> Defamation Threat Betrayal
<i>Perpetuation</i>	Positive Political Continuity	Comparison Definition

Table 1 Argumentation Strategies and Topoi Evidenced in the FSLN and Opposition Corpora

Analysing the interplay of the three dimensions allows patterns in the discourse on the national character or ideology to become evident. These strategies, and the topics they express, are often combined in a variety of ways in a single text to convey a specific national conception. In this way, the DHA makes it possible for the discourse to be broken down into its constituent elements, enabling an analysis of

the ways various groups or individuals employ the different strategies, and how they treat the topics found in the discourse. Given the importance of context to the DHA, it is necessary to continually move from the method to the data and back again, allowing the methodology to evolve as the data is analysed. This, combined with triangulation, aims to protect against either over or under analysing the data, and to decrease the impact of researcher bias.

As described by Phillips and Hardy (2002: 32), identity production is studied by looking at the ‘process through which identities are constructed in the interplay of different social actors, employing different discursive strategies and resources to establish a definition of identity coherent with particular interests and goals’. Identity formation, in this manner, holds particular weight for the analysis I carry out in this thesis. It is a significant component for creating a totalising sense of the national community into which people can be socialised. It is also integral in establishing in-group and out-group dichotomies in which the dominant view of community can be argued for, against other divergent views.

The importance of political actors, as a particular type of social actor, in creating a hegemonic, totalising view of the national community stems largely from their access to public media and other forums for disseminating their views. Thus, for this study, I analyse the political actors of both the government and the opposition parties, investigating the strategies each employs in establishing their own group’s views and ideology, and also in constructing a picture of the other groups. However, despite analysing the ways in which these individual actors contribute to their organisation’s discourse, I cannot ascribe to them any intentionality to do so as I have not had the opportunity to interview the actors regarding their awareness of their discursive actions. In addition, other stakeholders that factor into the analysis are the non-political actors who were targeted by the discursive efforts of the political groups. These actors include, among others, peasants, and rural and urban working class individuals.

4.4 Limitations to the DHA and Additional Analytical Tools

Whilst I find the DHA the most applicable approach to my analysis of the FSLN and opposition discourses, there are some shortcomings that do arise from its use. The stated combinations of strategies and topoi Wodak et al. elaborated for the

Austrian case do not always accurately reflect the patterns and structures I have found in my corpora. For example, when examining the FSLN documents, the concept of unity is construed as a logical result of the nation's history of rebellion and of the Sandinistas' leadership, and is also a result of external aggression. These constitute the topos of consequence in Wodak et al.'s presentation of strategies and associated topoi. Consequence is a topos associated only with transformation strategies according to their explanation, for example with the sub-strategy of dissimilation, a concept of differentiation which emphasises a temporal difference between the present and the future. (Wodak et al. 1999: 40-41). However, my analysis shows that consequence also occurs in situations where the strategy of construction is present. Particularly, as I discuss in more detail in chapter five, the topos of consequence as it relates to the theme of unity occurs with the strategy of cohesivation, which is a construction strategy which 'emphasi(ses) unifying common features' (Wodak et al. 1999: 38). The people's rebellious nature, which connects them to one another, resulted in the Revolution and the national victory over Somoza, illustrating the use of consequence with constructive strategies.

Additionally, I have had to include topoi that do not appear in Wodak et al.'s work, as my analysis of the FSLN and opposition corpora have revealed argumentation strategies absent from their discussion. Specifically, I have included the strategy of scaling up, which is a variation on the topos of numbers that presents numerical evidence as support for an argument. Scaling up indicates the increase in power or number to lend support to an argument, which occurs in the FSLN corpus when discussing the locus of power within the nation. In the opposition documents also display arguments that are not adequately explained by the topoi described by Wodak et al., which I have described as the topoi of betrayal, purity and origin. The topos of betrayal refers to betraying the ideology of national figures or the national history or tradition. Purity and origin function together to present a set of political or ideological beliefs as being true to their original intent, and originating from a historical national figure. Significantly, strategies and topoi cannot be applied monolithically when analysing my data, and must be adjusted or amended depending on what the data reveal, evidencing the importance that Wodak et al. highlight of allowing the method to evolve as the data are analysed.

Similarly, the contestation of the FSLN and opposition discourses evidences the use of similar terms or phrases but with different connotations. There is not a

sufficient theoretical tool with which to analyse this overlapping use in the DHA. Therefore, I have included Voloshinov's concept of multiaccentuality in order to analyse the situations where the discourses use similar terms. Multiaccentuality, in Voloshinov's terms, is the possibility for a sign to carry more than one meaning depending on the ideological context in which the sign occurs (Voloshinov 1986: 23-24). For him, the particular ideological interests of the classes that constitute a society cast different understandings on shared signs. Voloshinov explains that 'various different classes will use one and the same language. As a result, differently oriented accents intersect in every ideological sign. Sign becomes an arena of class struggle' (Voloshinov 1986: 23). Contestation, then, is evident in the multiple meanings attached to terms shared by groups with competing ideologies. Stuart Hall labels this polysemy, and argues that the importance of this process is 'the way in which different social interests or forces might conduct an ideological struggle to disarticulate a signifier from one preferred or dominant meaning-system, and rearticulate it within another, different chain of connotations' (Hall 1982: 80). Voloshinov similarly indicates that 'the ruling class strives to impart a supraclass, eternal character to the ideological sign, to extinguish or drive inward the struggle between social value judgements... to make the sign uniaccentual' (Voloshinov 1986: 23). Both Hall and Voloshinov are referring to the discursive hegemony that occurs when one articulation of a sign becomes the dominant, unquestioned one, which mirrors Fairclough's concept of naturalisation. However, the ability of a sign to carry multiple meanings allows it to become the site of contestation, as the dominant meaning is questioned and subverted by alternate meanings. Multiaccentuality can be seen, for example in the opposition's definition of the revolution as moment in history leading to a democratic opening in the nation, which countered the FSLN's definition of the term as an ongoing social transformation.

Additionally, the contestation between the discourses vying for hegemony led me to consider the narratives that the FSLN and opposition present through their discourse. Including the narratives that drive the discourse allows me to examine the broader picture each group presented as they attempted to garner support for their vision for the nation. In so doing, concepts such as nodal points and empty signifiers augment the analysis of the discourse, which allow me to conduct a deeper analysis than would be possible if I were to examine only the strategies and topoi presented by Wodak et al. (1999). Both the FSLN and the opposition construct an overarching

vision of the nation they wish to establish in the discursive, political and societal space created by the victory over Somoza. The concept of hegemony is integral in this analysis as it is each group's aim to gain the people's support for their respective narrative. Discussing the narratives provides an expanded structure of the discourse each group employed and aids my understanding the aims of the discourse, particularly in the absence of interviews or data that speak to intentionality in the discourse.

Narratives, according to Molly Patterson and Kristen Renwick Monroe (1998), are important in a society as they create a cohesive sense of purpose amongst the people. By constructing the common-sense understandings of the national story and trajectory, these narratives can become sites of contestation. Patterson and Renwick Monroe contend that:

‘If narratives provide a way of understanding the world and locating oneself within the broader culture, then a movement that seeks to alter the structure of society also seeks to challenge the understanding of people within that society and, necessarily, the narratives that underpin those understandings’ (Patterson & Renwick Monroe 1998: 321).

The counter-hegemonic discourse of subaltern groups conveys an alternative narrative that vies with the dominant one. Opposition groups in the political sphere necessarily present a national vision that differs from that of the dominant power-holders. In the Nicaraguan situation, the FSLN presented a narrative of national social transformation based on their platform of elevating the peasant masses to the level of power-holders in society. The opposition groups countered this narrative with their own narrative of national transformation that focused on the primacy of democracy. Bob Jessop argues that ‘(i)n periods of major social restructuring there is an intersection of diverse economic, political and socio-cultural narratives that seek to give meaning to current problems by construing them in terms of past failures and future possibilities’ (Jessop 2004: 167). Jessop's contention applies to the Nicaraguan situation in the 1980s, since the contestation between the FSLN and opposition narratives occurred in the aftermath of undoing the political and social structure of the Somoza era, which left a space in need of filling. The FSLN, as the governing party, occupied the dominant position and attempted to promote their national vision as the vision the people had fought for in the Revolution. The opposition challenges that vision and counters that the people had fought the Somoza

dynasty in order to establish democracy, rather than to change the social structure of the nation. These two narratives each entail particular understandings of the Nicaraguan past, present and future, which I discuss in more detail in chapter five.

Pablo Vila (2005: 18), in examining border identities on the US-Mexico border, considers narrative to construct identification by combining various occurrences into a coherent story. He posits that

the diverse discursive formations that try to win the battle for conquering the common sense of a particular setting enter the process of identification through the narrative plot of the character being constructed. In this regard, the narrative plot not only “filters” the interpellations that a particular discursive formation promotes,... but also “filters” the discursive formation itself (Vila 2005: 18).

Narrative, in this understanding, organises not only the ideological content of the discourse, but also its structure. Discourse and narrative are interconnected, with narrative providing the overarching vision that the discourse communicates. Vila goes on to argue that the discursive structure is organised via the nodal points that the narrative ‘quilts’ together (ibid: 19). In my analysis, I find both nodal points and empty signifiers to play a role in the discursive formation of national community in Nicaragua.

Drawing on Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s work with discourse theory, I also incorporate the concepts of nodal points and empty signifiers in order to augment my analysis of the corpora. These concepts allow me to examine not only the structure, such as strategies and topoi, but also the organisation of the discourse and the contestation that occurs between competing discourses. Nodal points serve as centres of discursive organisation by establishing the meaning of a discourse around one particular meaning. Laclau and Mouffe explain that discourses are intended to ‘dominate the field of discursivity, to arrest the flow of differences, to construct a centre’ (Laclau & Mouffe 2001: 112). These centres are the nodal points, which are ‘master signifier(s)’ that ‘assum(e) a “universal” structuring function within a certain discursive field’ (ibid: xi). Within the FSLN discourse, the Revolution acts as a nodal point, organising the concepts of the people, unity and party. Similarly, the opposition discourse positions democracy as a nodal point, drawing together the themes of the Revolution, the people and unity. In both chapter five and chapter six, I consider the role of the nodal points in the discourse and their relation to each group’s narrative on the nation.

Empty signifiers also aid my analysis of the discourse. These are defined by Laclau as a ‘signifier without a signified’, though he explains that this simple definition is not sufficient (Laclau 1996: 36). The signifiers represent an area where a group believes that there is a ‘lack’ of meaning in a given term. The Sandinistas present *unity* as an area where there was no actual meaning since unification among the people was absent. These signifiers are then filled with a meaning which represents the narrative of a particular group. Laclau explains that ‘various political forces can compete in their efforts to present their particular objectives as those which carry out the filling of that lack. To hegemonize something is exactly to carry out this filling function’ (Laclau 1996: 44). Therefore, the narrative, which, according to Jessop (2004), presents solutions to present problems, construes those problems as failings of the past order and proposes to rectify the failings through their own political project. In the Sandinista discourse, the empty signifier *unity* is ‘filled’ with the meaning of the consensus and solidarity of the citizens around the FSLN’s political platform and project of transformation. Empty signifiers function in tandem with polysemy, as a lack can be filled with different meanings depending on the purposes of the groups filling it. Unity, therefore is an empty signifier for both the FSLN and opposition discourses, with each filling it with their own meaning, exhibiting the multiaccentuality of the term, which I discuss further in chapter five.

Though the strategies and topoi Wodak et al. (1999) present provide an analytical framework for examining discourses of national identity, other analytical tools must be brought to bear in order to examine aspects of the discourse which that framework does not address. As the DHA, and critical studies of discourse in general, encourage the incorporation of various methodological tools that are relevant to a specific discourse, the DHA and the additional aspects I incorporate in my analysis can function together. Adapting the strategies and topoi to the corpora I analyse allows me to tailor the DHA to my particular set of data. Likewise, the inclusion of multiaccentuality, narrative, nodal points and empty signifiers as analytical instruments and categories helps to address areas of the discourse that would not be adequately analysed using Wodak et al.’s strategies and topoi alone. Additionally, this expanded analysis provides a further means for examining and understanding the contestation that occurred between the discourses, and their efforts at creating hegemony for each group’s national vision. These tools are similarly

useful when I consider the interview corpus, as the examination of the narratives sheds light on the efforts to construct hegemony, and the people's reaction to them.

4.5 Ethnographic Styled Interviews

Though my work does not represent an ethnographic study, I have chosen to conduct my interviews in an ethnographic style. Ethnographic interviewing involves an intentionally participatory framework. This approach is complementary to the DHA through the intentional sharing of power in the process of the interview. Both the interviewer and the interviewee participate on equal footing, with the interviewer explaining the purpose and format of the interview. Those who agree to be interviewed are empowered in the process by controlling what their contributions are, for example by declining to discuss a certain topic, or by directing the conversation to a topic of their choosing (Flick 2009: 169-170). Ethnographic interviews assume that the interviewer is as active in constructing meaning in an interview as is the person being interviewed (Heyl 2007: 370; Kvale 1996 cf chapter 2). The researcher's intention to learn from or to understand the participant and his or her contribution to the interview already pre-conditions the context of the interview, setting it up as an information exchange, even when it is carried out in a very conversational or relaxed manner. A self-reflective perspective, similar to that advocated by the DHA, is required when carrying out this type of interview and analysing the data that emerges from the process. Similarly, the broader context of the interview must be acknowledged and considered in this approach. Beyond the interviewer and participants creating the context of an interview situation, the social and cultural background of the participants impacts their contributions (Poland & Pederson 1998: 307). This type of interview is germane to my study due to its theoretical and methodological emphasis on contextualisation. Ethnographic interviews allow those acted on by the power holders to provide evidence themselves of the impact that the competition over the discursive terrain can have.

The interviews I conducted took place in Nicaragua in July 2010 during Daniel Ortega's first presidency since his 1990 electoral defeat. The pact between Ortega and Alemán and Ortega's pardoning of Alemán, which I discussed in chapter three, served to undermine some of the interviewees' trust in Ortega and the political system as a whole. As the interviews took place in 2010, Ortega's plans to run for

reelection in 2011, contrary to the constitutional prohibition against consecutive terms, was also a concern for some of the people interviewed. However, many individuals that I spoke with, in addition to the interviewees, indicated that regardless of any concerns about the legality of Ortega's candidacy, they did not feel that there was a viable option other than Ortega as all the candidates were 'pactados', that is, bound by backroom deals similar to the Ortega-Alemán pact. As such, the perceived successes or failures of the Ortega administration at the time may have had an impact on the interview participants' recollections of Sandinista actions in the past. The discourse of the new Sandinista government may also have impacted the recollections of the discourse in the 1980s. Andrés Pérez Baltodano notes that in the 2001 elections the FSLN employed 'a mystical discourse' and that a letter issued by Ortega and his running mate Agustín Jarquín 'was practically a prayer' (2012: 76). Ortega continued this increased religious discourse in the 2006 elections, which may have reflected his reconciliation with Archbishop Obando y Bravo. In a significant departure from the discourse of the 1980s, Pérez Baltodano indicates that in the 2006 elections Ortega never 'spoke of class struggle or even social conflict', rather he campaigned on an appeal to reconciliation and love (ibid: 82). Unsurprisingly, given the message of reconciliation, Ortega mentions unity among the people and within Latin America no fewer than twenty times in his inauguration speech in 2007 (Ortega 2007). Additionally, reflecting themes similar to those found in the discourse of the 1980s, Ortega and his wife Rosario Murillo referred to a free Nicaragua eight times in the inauguration speech (Ortega 2007). The overlaps and changes found in the discourse from the 1980s and the 2000s, when Ortega regained power, may have influenced the interviewees' responses. Whilst a comprehensive analysis of current Sandinista discourse is not within the purview of my research for this thesis, it is necessary to bear this potential influence in mind when considering strength of the interviews' as a commentary on the discourse on the 1980s.

Additionally, the range of interviews I was able to conduct was hampered by a concern over government reprisals. Some potential participants, members of an opposition group originally formed during the 1980s, decided against engaging in the interviews for fear of a government crackdown on their organisation if their participation were discovered. This resulted in all thirteen interviews coming through

one main contact, who was also an interviewee. This contact, Soledad³, introduced me to individuals who were interested in my work and in sharing their story. Though I was concerned about the range of viewpoints I would encounter given the limitation of having only one gate-keeper, she intentionally sought out acquaintances and ‘friends of friends’ who could provide me with a perspective that was different from her own and from that of her close circle of friends and family. I was very fortunate to have had such a conscientious assistant in realising these interviews, and my analysis has benefitted greatly from her efforts.

All of the interviews took place in Managua or its immediate outskirts. This was partially due to the location of Soledad’s contacts, and also due to safety concerns about travel in the country. At the time I was there, not even my Nicaraguan hosts would take a taxi unless they personally knew the driver, and even then they would make sure to travel in pairs. The state of the economy was such that kidnapping individuals for ransom had become a fairly common practice. Indeed, even Soledad’s housekeeper laughed when she heard I had originally planned to travel alone by bus to other parts of the country, indicating I would have been fortunate to return home from such a trip. Therefore, my interviews are not necessarily representative of viewpoints outside of the capital. The interviews were conducted in various locations, including the school where Soledad worked, people’s homes, and on one occasion on the street corner. There were the expected interruptions from children, animals and in the case of the outdoor interview a torrential downpour caused us to take a break to seek cover.

Those who did participate come from a range of socioeconomic and political backgrounds.⁴ There were teachers and administrators from Soledad’s school, manual labourers such as janitors and drivers, and some pensioners. The political viewpoints were just as varied. María, for example, was a staunch opponent of the FSLN and fled the country after two years of FSLN government and remained exiled in the USA until Violeta Chamorro was elected in 1990; she claimed that the country was better under Somoza than the FSLN. Carlos, on the other hand, voluntarily enlisted in the Sandinista People’s Army (Ejército Popular Sandinista – EPS) and remains a committed supporter of the FSLN and Daniel Ortega. The rest of the

³ I have assigned each individual a pseudonym in order to respect their privacy and also as an added protection against any unwanted attention that could stem from the dissemination of my work.

⁴ See Appendix B for a list of profiles of each participant.

participants range between these two extremes. Several of the respondents participated in the Literacy Crusade in 1980, including Soledad, Rosa and Sofía. Sofía later participated in student demonstrations against the government whilst at university. Ignacio served his time in the army when he was drafted into the Patriotic Military Service (Servicio Militar Patriotico – SMP), and Miguel was a conscientious objector who was pardoned from military service to run a medical clinic due to his religious belief in pacifism.

The interviews were relatively unstructured and progressed according to the individuals' recollections. As I had initially analysed the FSLN and opposition corpora prior to travelling to Nicaragua, my questions were informed by the patterns and emphases brought out by that analysis. Though I did not provide the interviewees with the documents that constituted my corpora, I did explain the structure and intent of my research. I began the interviews by asking each to tell me what their experience was like from the defeat of Somoza onwards. From there, depending on the person's own story, I asked follow up questions based on their comments. Towards the end of each interview, unless a comment of theirs brought it up earlier in the conversation, I asked each respondent the same five questions:

- What was your experience like in the 1980s?
- What was education like in the 1980s?
- What do you think of the phrases 'unidad nacional', 'soberanía nacional', and 'liberación nacional'?
- What differences do you see between the 1980s and the present?
- What did they think of Sandino?

An additional question I began asking after the first couple of interviews, when the topic came up unprompted, was what did they want other people to know about Nicaragua. Each interview lasted from forty-five minutes to an hour, though it varied from individual to individual depending on the depth of detail in recounting their thoughts and experiences.

Taken together, the interviews provide a variety of perspectives on the revolution and the Sandinistas' and opposition's actions. Despite the differences in perspective, the recollections and commentaries exhibit significant overlaps when discussing the topics listed above. These interviews are also analysed using the DHA and are used to triangulate the findings of the analysis of the Sandinista and opposition data. Additionally, they serve as a salient counterpoint to the government

and opposition discourses, offering a window into the citizenry's reception or rejection of each.

4.6 Data Sources and Analytical Programmes

As mentioned, the analysis focuses on two corpora in addition to the interviews, consisting of documents published during Sandinista government in the 1980s.⁵ In choosing the documents to analyse for both corpora, I first conducted a broad reading of publications available at the Bodleian Library in Oxford, the Benson Collection at the University of Texas at Austin, the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. and the Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centroamérica in Managua. With over 200 documents, I was able to discern certain themes, such as the *pueblo* and the Revolution as a reified entity, which became evident as important across the majority of the texts I read. To further limit the corpora, I then selected publications that were both representative of those themes and also a range of publication years. The FSLN corpus contains fifteen publications which date from 1980 to 1989. The documents' authors all held some position within the government and, with the exception of Sergio Ramírez who was Daniel Ortega's vice-president, all were Comandantes of the Revolution. The publications cover topics such as the qualities of a Sandinista, the achievements of the Revolution, education, unity and defence. Several documents are transcriptions of speeches delivered by members of the National Directorate in varied settings. Others are articles published in government newspapers like *Poder Sandinista* or in independent Latin American journals, like *Nueva Sociedad*. There are also collections of speech transcriptions that cover a variety of topics, such as *Hacia una Política Cultural* (Zamora & Valle-Castillo 1984).

The opposition corpus is also made up of fifteen publications and includes documents from a variety of opposition groups, originally published in the 1980s. Among the parties included are the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (Movimiento Democrático Nicaragüense – MDN), the Opposition Block of the South (BOS), the Revolutionary Democratic Alliance (ARDE), Nicaraguan Assembly of Democratic Unity (Asamblea Nicaragüense de Unidad Democrática - ANUDE), and the

⁵ See Appendix A for a table of the contents of each corpus.

Nicaraguan Conservative Party (Partido Conservador de Nicaragua – PCN). Several of the documents are articles from opposition published journals. The BOS contribution is an elaboration of their party manifesto. Also included are a special report and a collection of editorials from the opposition leaning Nicaraguan newspaper *La Prensa*. These documents cover a similar breadth of topics as the FSLN corpus, but additionally include critiques of the Sandinista government and its policies.

In order to organise my analysis, I have chosen to use the computer programs Atlas.ti and WordSmith. Atlas.ti allows for the thematic coding of material in order to assist in a qualitative analysis. Using this programme, I was able to organise the documents for each corpus and examine discrete themes covered within each document, allowing me to explore conceptual patterns across a text, a corpus, and all of the corpora. WordSmith is a programme for corpus analysis which I have used to isolate specific lexical or grammatical elements from the corpus in order to examine the individual instances in more detail. Largely through the concordancing feature of the programme, I chose words or structures that appeared salient given the coding and analysis carried out with Atlas.ti, enabling me to both double-check and deepen my analysis. Combining the two programmes allowed me to conduct a fine-grained, qualitatively oriented, discourse analysis across a relatively broad number of texts. Through this analysis, the various strategies present in each corpus emerged, allowing me to compare the strategies found in the corpora with those highlighted by Wodak et al. (1999), and prompting me to provide alternate means of describing the discursive patterns where the DHA was not sufficient.

My analysis of the corpora created for this thesis aims to explore the discourse that the Sandinistas employed to construct a national community, and also explore the contestation that occurred between the FSLN and opposition discourses. The subsequent chapters present the results of this analysis and discuss the Sandinistas and the opposition's attempts to gain hegemony, as well as consider the methods employed in crafting a sense of national community.

Chapter 5: Creating Unity from Revolution

5.1 Introduction

Prior to discussing the results of my analysis, it is helpful to recall the research questions posed in chapter one:

- Do prevailing theories of national identity apply to and function in a non-European, and specifically Nicaraguan, context; if so, how, and if not, in what ways not?
- How did the FSLN government discursively create a new sense of national community in Nicaragua?
- How was the terrain of the ‘national community’ contested discursively by the FSLN and the opposition?
- What are the citizenry’s perceptions, in retrospect, of the government’s and opposition’s efforts to gain support for their respective positions?

Having addressed the first question in chapter two, I look to the remaining questions in chapters five and six, where I shall show that my analysis has uncovered several salient themes and linguistic elements that indicate the manner in which national community was discursively constructed. The three aspects integral in considering national community laid out in chapter two emerge intertwined and enmeshed in the Sandinista discourse, and to a lesser degree in that of the opposition groups.

Concepts of the national flow together with the religious and Marxist currents.

Though not always overt, the three function in tandem in the discourse to present a view of the nation as a community centred around the Revolution. Chapters five and six draw out these nuanced connections that indicate how the FSLN craft a narrative that enables the creation of community that is determinedly national

The national terrain referred to in the research questions extends beyond a purely lexical understanding of the word ‘national’ and reaches into other discursive elements. Particularly, a semantic expansion of the Revolution¹ moves this

¹ In chapters 5 and 6, I capitalise the Revolution, as it is written this way in the majority of the FSLN documents. This reflects the Sandinista use and conception of the Revolution not only as a term, but also as a name for their movement and its existence as an independent entity.

ideological sign beyond the concept of political change, into the terrain of communitarian living and national consciousness. In the present chapter and chapter six, I examine the way various elements constructing community and nation function independently and in unison to communicate the thematic aspects of both the FSLN and the opposition discourses.

In this chapter, I look at how the FSLN and opposition's competing narratives each treat the construction of community through the themes of the 'Revolution' and 'unity', whilst in chapter six I analyse the ways in which those competing narratives create a concept of the national. Throughout both chapters, I examine the constituent topics, looking not only at their related thematic aspects in the discourse, but also at the various discursive strategies and linguistic features that construct them. Frequently, the strategies overlap. Metaphors are used to construct aspects in each of the themes, for example as articulated through the personification of the Revolution. Construction and transformation strategies, as defined by Wodak et al. (1999:38-41), are also widely drawn on in creating a new concept of national community. The topoi of authority and threat also find frequent application, whilst other topoi, including history, purity, and consequence (ibid: 36-42) appear alongside them.

In addition to argumentation strategies, there are several linguistic features that are present in these areas. For instance, collocation is a salient device found in the Sandinistas' semantic construction of the Revolution, leading to a lasting connection between that term and the FSLN. Additionally, this linguistic tool appears in the discussion of unity where the people are collocationally established as belonging to the Sandinistas. Syntactically, subject position is important not only in assigning the Revolution authority, but also in its vivification. Possessives and the use of the pronoun 'we' and its corresponding verbal form figure largely in the creation of unity throughout the discourse.

In the present chapter, I establish the concept of community which frames the national connection seen in chapter six. From the platform of unity, the FSLN was able to engage in promoting its narrative of national reconstruction and re-creation. The concept of community also lays the foundation for the development of the *Nueva Sociedad* and the *Nuevo Hombre* in the discursive realm. Community is established from a semi-grassroots perspective with the FSLN as part of the people and as their Vanguard. Likewise, the Revolution was part of the people, as the

people were the ones who created and perpetuated it. From this bottom up approach, unity in the FSLN corpus is constructed around the Revolution as the culmination of the nation's collaborative efforts. It also functions as a reified construct that calls the people to continued collaboration and solidarity to defend and rebuild the nation. Conversely, the national elements seen in chapter six are promulgated from a more top-down perspective, with the FSLN as the leadership in the government implementing the requirements of the Revolution.

Connections between these two chapters are made as I reference what will be addressed in coming sections, and also what has been established in previous ones. Key to the discussion of both chapters is the triangulation of the data from the 1980s with the interviews from 2010. In each chapter, I re-examine the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the FSLN and opposition discourses in light of the interview data.

My analysis considers the competing narratives presented by the FSLN and the opposition regarding the nature of the Revolution and the national trajectory. From that basis, I then discuss the discursive elements that convey the dominant narratives, and other sub-narratives that emerge within them. First addressing the Sandinista discourse, section 5.2.2 details the perspective on the Revolution as a reified discursive entity, which expresses authority through personification. In section 5.2.3 my discussion moves to the concept of unity. Beginning with the FSLN as the Vanguard of unity, I present the Sandinista narrative of unity as a consequence of their version of Nicaragua's rebellious history and the FSLN's leadership in the face of external aggression, where unity is shown to act as an empty signifier within the discourse. From there I consider the linguistic elements creating in-group and out-group construction. Of particular salience is the use of the first person plural pronoun and possessive, as well as the concept of who the people are as represented by *el pueblo*.

The chapter then moves on to the contestation of the FSLN's dominant narrative from the perspective of the opposition discourse. In section 5.3 I recall the discussion of the competing narratives outlined in 5.2.1, allowing me to analyse the counter-hegemonic aspects evident in the opposition discourse as they attempt to establish their narrative. The aspect of polysemy emerges as a salient point in the opposition discourse, with the Revolution being reappropriated and repurposed within their narrative. Unity is also shown to be an empty signifier, with the

opposition discourse portraying this as a lack within the nation under the FSLN government.

In section 5.4, the discussion turns to the interviews. My analysis shows that whilst there is no singular narrative presented by the interviewees, the participants' comments help to inform an understanding of the FSLN's and opposition's attempts to gain hegemony. The interviews also provide insight in to where the efforts to foster hegemony may have been fruitful or missed the mark with the populace. Significantly, the daily concerns of the people are shown to be absent from either political group's discourse, resulting in discontent between the people and the political actors.

5.2 Narratives on Revolution

Emerging after forty years of dynastic rule, both the FSLN and the opposition discourses operate within narratives of national transformation. Each group situates the Revolution as the starting point for this transformation. The FSLN narrative centres on re-creating a nation from the grassroots level, attending to the social and economic aspirations of the workers and peasants. The opposition narrative focuses on the need to establish strong democratic principles among the people, creating a fully participative system where all sectors are included and represented. The FSLN views the Revolution as a process that is unbounded by time; the opposition, conversely, considers the Revolution to be a finite action in a limited period of time. These two dimensions rest on the respective narratives of Nicaraguan history. The Sandinistas construct a mythologised view of the humble Nicaraguan as rebellious, and themselves as the culmination of that rebellion (cf chapter three). For the opposition, Nicaragua's political history is a legacy of *caudillos* and corruption which must be overturned in favour of liberal democracy.

The Sandinista metanarrative of national transformation establishes a view of the Nicaraguan past as steeped in rebellion against imperialist forces, led by the founding fathers of both the nation and the revolutionary movement. The present is depicted as the period of the Revolution working with the people through individual sacrifice and national unity to lay the ground work and initiate national transformation. The narrative future is found in the culmination of the transformation having created a new Nicaragua populated and supported by the new men, free from imperialist intervention.

The FSLN narrative contrasts with that of the opposition, even though both present a metanarrative of national transformation. For the opposition, the past consists of *caudillos* perpetuating an undemocratic style of government, exemplified by the government under the Somozas. The present is depicted as a moment of political opening in which the Revolution has provided the possibility for democracy and political pluralism to flourish in the nation. Additionally, the present is marked by a lack of freedom under the Sandinistas. The future is not one of social transformation, as expressed in the FSLN narrative, but rather one of political transformation, where an established democratic tradition allows for widespread political participation, with a variety of political parties vying for power. Though the two metanarratives are thematically similar, both calling for transformation, though the substance and degree of transformation are markedly different, leading to discursive contestation between the two for hegemony, gaining popular support.

Narratives of National Transformation	FSLN	Opposition
Past	Rebellious nature of the Nicaraguans Founding Fathers Imperialist Aggression	Caudillos Undemocratic government Frustrated ambitions for democracy
Present	Revolutionary process Sacrifice Unity Continued imperialist aggression	Political transformation Democratic opening Lack of democratic freedom under FSLN Moral degradation under FSLN
Future	Societal transformation New Nicaragua New man and new society End of imperialist aggression	Political Transformation Increased political participation Political pluralism Maintenance of traditional cultural norms

Table 2 Narratives of National Transformation

5.2.1 Semantic Construction of the Revolution

For the FSLN, the Revolution is both a starting point and an ongoing process in refashioning Nicaragua into a more egalitarian society, creating a country made of the *Hombres Nuevos* within the *Nueva Sociedad*. As I discussed in chapter three, the Revolution was largely initiated and orchestrated by the FSLN. Their position as the ‘Vanguard’ of the Revolution, a term they frequently used to refer to themselves, lent them authority during the uprising but also included them as part of the people. With the vast majority of people rallying around the FSLN in the pivotal post-insurrection period, the Sandinistas viewed the support as evidence of the people backing their vision for the nation. This section presents the ways in which the discourse reveals the Sandinista narrative view of the Revolution as a process of continual change and progress.

The Revolution was not just the initial, physical act of ridding the country of Somoza, but it was also a call to ameliorate the social ills of the majority of the people, the workers and peasants. Comandante Bayardo Arce, vice-coordinator for the National Directorate (DN), expresses this position in his 1980 article for the Latin American journal *Nueva Sociedad*, in which he called for unity in order to protect and further the Revolution. He states that, ‘si nosotros tratáramos de ordenar con alguna lógica la explicación histórica de nuestra Revolución, tendríamos que comenzar anotando que la historia de nuestra Revolución nace en el hambre, en la desocupación, en la explotación, en la opresión que históricamente había sufrido el pueblo nicaragüense’ (Arce 1980b: 15).²

The FSLN’s conception of the Revolution and its role in changing the nation provided a mandate for more than a change of government; it called for wholesale societal transformation. As discussed in more detail in 6.2.3, the concept of the *Hombre Nuevo*, taken from Sandino and Guevara and adapted by the FSLN, carried the idea of self-sacrificial citizenship and devotion to the Revolution and fellow revolutionaries, for the renovation of society. The *Nueva Sociedad* that would stem from a nation of these new men would be egalitarian, communal and just. From this ideological position, it follows that the Revolution, which gained such widespread

² ‘If we try to give some logical order to the historical explanation of our Revolution, we would have to begin by noting that the history of our Revolution was born out of hunger, out of unemployment, out of exploitation, out of oppression that the Nicaraguan people have historically suffered’

support among the people, was the ultimate authority. Importantly, the centrality of the Revolution to the national project implies the centrality of the FSLN to the nation as well, as the party was its catalyst and Vanguard. This notion of dual-centrality serves as a salient element in the discourse. It provides a basis for the FSLN to not only establish their own authority, but also allows the Sandinistas to be cast as subservient to the Revolution.

Looking at the Sandinista discourse, the narrative of transformation largely relies on semantically constructing the Revolution as a nodal point. Laclau and Mouffe explain that revolution can act as a nodal point for leftist entities, as revolution implies ‘the institution of a point of concentration of power from which society could be “rationally” reorganised’ (Laclau & Mouffe 2001: 177). Beyond the basic definition of the Revolution as an act, or even as a process, the Revolution is expanded to include ideas of authority, requirement and belonging. The concept of the Revolution as a continual process is also part of this semantic expansion, where the term becomes synonymous with FSLN practices and policies. As a nodal point, the Revolution takes in the discursive concepts of the party, unity and the people in a chain of significance. In this section, I explore the ways the *Revolution* is discursively constructed and elaborated. One of the most fundamental aspects of this can be seen in the semantic linking between the lexical units *Revolution* and *Sandinista*.

The phrases *La Revolución (Popular) Sandinista* and *La Vanguardia de la Revolución* convey the connection of the FSLN to the Revolution. The repetitive juxtaposition of *Revolución* with *Sandinista* reinforces the concept that the Revolution is part and parcel of the party. *La Vanguardia* is another term found in the discourse to refer to the Sandinistas’ position as participant-leaders in the Revolution, and as such I have opted to retain this term in the English with that understanding in mind. Similar to the Sandinista Revolution, the repetition of Vanguard of the Revolution builds a link between the FSLN and the Revolution. The following extract comes from Daniel Ortega’s address to the nation on the 10th anniversary of the Revolution. In it, we can see the use of the *Revolución Sandinista* and *Vanguardia*:

En estos días estamos conmemorando el Décimo Aniversario de la Revolución Popular Sandinista, un hecho histórico indiscutible, vanguardizado por el Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional, un hecho en donde el Frente convocó a toda la

nación a participar en el derrocamiento de la dictadura somocista... (Ortega 1989: 14)³

Rather than celebrating the anniversary of a generic revolution, Ortega employs the phrase ‘the Popular Sandinista Revolution’. In place of conceding the Revolution wholly to the people, it appears as the domain of the FSLN. Whilst the people are alluded to by means of the term ‘popular’, they are present only alongside the Sandinistas. The FSLN’s centrality to the Revolution is emphasised in the second line, where Ortega indicates the integral role of the FSLN as the Vanguard of the movement, bringing everyone together in the Revolution. It also implies that without the FSLN, there would not have been a Revolution, a common theme in the FSLN discourse. Similarly, Ernesto Cardenal, Jesuit priest and the Minister of Culture under the FSLN, in his comments to a congress on disarmament and peace at Harvard University in 1982 states that ‘en el caso de la opresión de Nicaragua, la Revolución Sandinista tuvo que recurrir a la violencia: era la única opción y con ella destruimos la violencia somocista y obtuvimos la libertad y la paz’ (Cardenal 1982a: 4).⁴ In this instance, *popular* is dropped and the successful defeat of Somoza is attributed wholly to the Sandinista Revolution.

The phrase is also seen in Arce’s description of the Revolution as the culmination of the nation’s strife and the only outcome that could end their struggles. He posits that ‘podríamos decir que la Revolución Popular Sandinista nace de la necesidad, del anhelo y de la decisión de acabar con ese cuadro social y económico a grosso modo descrito’ (Arce 1980b: 17).⁵ The Revolution he describes as ‘ours’ in the extract seen above is defined here as the Sandinista Revolution.

The collocation of *Revolución* and *Sandinista*, which can be found on more than 30 occasions in the FSLN corpus, allows the term *Revolution* to carry the semantic residue of the adjective when it appears on its own. The other adjectives labelling the Revolution in the FSLN corpus are *nicaragüense*, and *nacional*, which together occur only six times. The paucity of other labelling adjectives is particularly

³ These days we are commemorating the Tenth Anniversary of the Sandinista Popular Revolution, an indisputable historical act, of which the Sandinista Front for National Liberation was the vanguard, an act where the Front called the whole nation to participate in the overthrow of the Somocist dictatorship...

⁴ In the case of Nicaragua’s oppression, the Sandinista Revolution had to resort to violence: it was the only option and with it we destroyed the somocist violence and obtained liberty and peace

⁵ We could say that the Sandinista Popular Revolution is born of necessity, of desire, and of the decision to finish with that social and economic picture roughly described

striking as the Revolution typically occupies a subject position in the sentence, an element of the discourse presented below. With markedly few labels assigned to the Revolution other than Sandinista, the dominant frame is that of the Sandinista Revolution.

The FSLN as a party is further amalgamated into the Revolution through what I have termed ‘scaling up’. This is a form of the topos of numbers (Reisigl & Wodak 2009: 117), where the reference to individuals or situations increases, for example in size or power. Semantic connections are established between the different lexical elements due to their relative position and referential similarity. These connections, once established, allow for synecdoche or metonymy to be employed so that one element, either a lesser or greater element on the scale, can carry the connotation of the others. Scaling up can be seen in the DN proclamation in 1986 commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the FSLN’s founding. It states that Sandinista unity was a ‘detonante imprescindible para la explosión popular que demolería finalmente el 19 de julio los cimientos de la dominación imperialista y la explotación capitalista e instauraría, desde entonces y para siempre, el poder popular, el poder sandinista, el poder revolucionario’ (DN 1986: 19).⁶ The increase in the scale of power from popular, to Sandinista, to revolutionary is not merely a rhetorical device to draw attention to the various levels of power that the FSLN incorporates in the national concept; it semantically links the popular nature of the Revolution with the Sandinistas, and at the same time links the Sandinistas with the Revolution. This scaling up topos is used verbatim again three years later by Daniel Ortega (1989: 7) as he railed against the UNO during his speech on the tenth anniversary of the Revolution. The incorporation of the people and the party into the Revolution, as a constitutive element, is evident in this phrasing. This incorporation is indicative of the Revolution acting as a nodal point in the FSLN narrative on national transformation. The Sandinista discourse also shows evidence of personifying the Revolution, establishing it as a reified entity within the Nicaraguan political and social realms, creating a basis for revolutionary authority within the narrative.

⁶ ‘indispensable detonation for the popular explosion that would finally demolish on 19 July the foundations of imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation and would install, for now and forever, the popular power, the sandinista power, the revolutionary power.’

5.2.2 Revolutionary Personification and Reification

For the Sandinistas, personification of the Revolution distances the party from the Revolution's actions which results in a twofold benefit for the Sandinistas; the Revolution becomes reified as independent authority, and the FSLN is distanced from the exercise of that authority. Wodak et al. refer to personification of inanimate political bodies as vitalisation (1999: 39), which is a construction strategy that permits an actor to be distanced from the action. The government discourse achieves this through a variety of linguistic devices. One such device is the nominalisation of the Revolution, witnessed through its frequent capitalisation in the corpus, where it acts as a proper noun. A similar effect on the term occurs by referring to it as 'the Revolution' rather than our Revolution, which has a semantic effect on the word. This holds true even though the possessive adjective is used less in Spanish in general than in English, since, as we have seen above, there was no specific labelling of the Revolution other than as Sandinista. The lack of a specific reference for the Revolution, allows 'la Revolución' to be understood as *the only* Revolution.

Beyond adding authoritative weight to the word, these devices enable it to function as a rallying point around which the national community can be created, further evidencing the Revolution's position as a nodal point within the Sandinista narrative. The Sandinistas contended that the Revolution occurred in order to bring about a wholesale change in the Nicaraguan community. The vivification of the Revolution allowed it to be sacralised (Menz 1989: 237), being seen as a deity, commanding action and adoration from the people, whilst also requiring the people to sacrifice and devote their lives to it (as discussed in 6.2.3). This serves to strengthen the narrative of national transformation with the Revolution as a nodal point directing that transformation. In the following extract, from the FSLN's Department of Propaganda's publication on how to appropriately direct propaganda at the working classes, the Revolution appears as an independent force requiring action from the people: 'La agitación, por su parte, debe movilizar a las masas, en forma precisa, ágil, combativa, a la acción, en cumplimiento de las tareas fundamentales que nos plantea diariamente la Revolución' (FSLN 1980: 22).⁷ Rather than the Sandinista party presenting tasks for the people, the Revolution is construed

⁷ 'Agitation, for its part, should mobilise the masses, in a precise, agile and combative manner, to action, in completing the fundamental tasks that the Revolution daily sets out for us.'

as acting of its own accord, without any apparent human involvement. The object pronoun ‘us’ reinforces this orientation toward the Revolution as a dominant, sentient actor; it equally distances the Sandinistas, as authors, and the people, as the audience, from the locus of power and command. In a similar vein, Comandante Humberto Ortega, in a response at a press conference held by the DN following Robelo’s departure from the ruling junta, comments that ‘la Revolución no está dispuesta a aceptar un falso concepto de libertad, en donde se ataque conciente e inconcientemente este Proceso de Reconstrucción Nacional’ (DN 1980: 5).⁸ It is interesting that, whilst the leaders of the government are discussing the ramifications of Robelo’s departure, Humberto Ortega indicates that the Revolution will not tolerate a false idea of freedom, rather than the DN itself not tolerating such criticism. Again, the Revolution is presented as acting independently of the FSLN and its leadership to dictate the terms of the new revolutionary Nicaragua. These comments illustrate that, in the Sandinista metanarrative, the people were not devoting themselves to a party, but rather, through its personification, to the higher ideal of the Revolution for which they all had fought, and around which they had all rallied. This further constructs the Revolution as a nodal point, integrating the people and the party into the reified entity. The vitalisation of the Revolution is a powerful discursive strategy, which takes various forms and reinforces revolutionary authority in transforming the nation, as I discuss in the following three subsections.

5.2.2.1 Grammatical Personification: Subject Position within a Sentence

The Revolution is often located in the subject position of a sentence, semantically replacing the Sandinistas, or the people themselves depending on the context, as actors. From that position it functions as a sentient entity, acting independently of the Sandinistas. The FSLN leadership use this device when emphasising the positive action of establishing recreation centres in their pamphlet *Plan de Lucha*, which outlined the party platform ahead of the national elections: ‘la Revolución ha emprendido el programa de construcción de centros recreativos populares, garantizando el derecho del pueblo al sano esparcimiento’ (FSLN 1984:

⁸ ‘the Revolution is not willing to accept a false concept of freedom, where this Process of National Reconstruction is consciously and unconsciously attacked.’

11).⁹ Interestingly, in this extract, the Sandinistas did not directly take credit for their actions. They deferred the positive press of what had been done for the people to the Revolution itself. Whilst the motivations for this are unknown, the direct conceptual linkage of the Sandinistas with the Revolution, created in part through the collocation *Revolución Sandinista*, ensures that the party still receives credit for these centres. However, the message conveyed is that the Revolution is working for the people. This allows for a reciprocal field to be established where the Revolution, an entity created by the people under the leadership of the Sandinistas, now functions for the people, but also makes requirements of the people for its continued functioning. The commitment of the people to the Revolution and its tasks is reinforced by this personification. It is no longer a completed action in which everyone participated, but rather is now a being capable of making requirements of the people. Comandante Borge draws a direct line between the Revolution and those revolutionaries who created and continue the Revolution, illustrating the reciprocal relationship. In an address to the Sandinista Assembly, he states that: ‘La revolución seguirá viviendo en tanto que los revolucionarios le den vida y estén dispuestos a dar la vida por la revolución’ (Borge 1984: 8).¹⁰ Not only is the Revolution personified, it is directly given life by the sacrifice of those who are willing to die for it. The Revolution is again elevated beyond mere personification to a position of sacralisation. This usage is less marked than it would be in a more secular society. However, in Nicaraguan culture there exists a discursive position for religious language. This strategy is employed more fully than in this one example and is discussed in more detail in chapter six.

5.2.2.2 Grammatical Personification: Personal ‘a’

A less frequent, but more marked, instance of personification occurs through the use of the personal ‘a’, a grammatical feature in Spanish which indicates that the object of a verb is a sentient being rather than an inanimate object. In then President Ortega’s speech to the people at the Carlos Fonseca Plaza on the tenth anniversary of

⁹ ‘the Revolution has undertaken the construction programme of the popular recreation centres, guaranteeing the people’s right to healthy recreation/leisure activity’

¹⁰ ‘The revolution will continue living as long as the revolutionaries give it life and are willing to give their life for the revolution.’

the revolutionary victory, there are two examples of the personal ‘a’, which occur in the context of delegitimising the opposition and its stance toward the Revolution. In one instance Ortega states, ‘Esa es la pelea que ellos tienen, por eso es que están molestos, por eso no quieren a la Revolución...’ (Ortega 1989: 8).¹¹ The ‘a’ before ‘la Revolución’ indicates that the Revolution is being considered as a sentient entity. As the verb *querer* can mean want or love, personifying the Revolution via the ‘a’ allows the phrase to carry both of these sentiments. This augments the strength of Ortega’s attempt to delegitimize the opposition by claiming that they neither want nor love the Revolution. The second example in his speech finds both the Revolution and the people’s power being personified, as he asserts that the opposition fighters penetrating Nicaragua from the North ‘no pueden derrotar a la Revolución, cierto que no pueden derrotar al poder popular’¹² (ibid: 11). The Revolution and the popular power are both personified, appearing alongside a topos of threat, where a group is intending to defeat them. In this context, the personification causes the threat to be amplified as it is not a threat against an inanimate object, but rather against something elevated to a human status. Additionally, the conflation of the Revolution with the people’s power reinforces the connection between the Revolution and the people. The danger then is directed toward all the people, not just the Revolution, strengthening the topos of threat.

The same strategy is also found in a speech from the DN, which is possibly tied to its presence in Ortega’s speech. This 25th anniversary speech was given by Daniel Ortega on behalf of the DN. It is unclear whether Ortega was responsible for the authorship of either of these speeches, however it appears that this grammatical form was a common way of speaking about the Revolution, either for Ortega or for the DN in general. The DN speech likewise conveys a threat to the Revolution, claiming that the North American leaders were attempting to isolate the Revolution: ‘despliegan múltiples esfuerzos para aislar a la Revolución Popular Sandinista’ (DN 1986: 40).¹³ The Revolution’s place in the sentence as a personified entity subtly changes the nature of the threat, making it personal rather than abstract. This indicates the FSLN’s orientation toward presenting the Revolution as a vivified

¹¹ ‘This is the fight that they have, this is why they are bothered, this is why they do not love/desire the Revolution...’

¹² ‘cannot defeat the Revolution, and certainly cannot defeat the popular power’

¹³ ‘deploying multiple forces in order to isolate [a] the Sandinista Popular Revolution’

entity, which in turn allowed for more direct connections to be created between the Revolution and the people, as is the case with the emotionalising and anthropomorphising of the Revolution (Wodak et al. 1999: 39).

5.2.2.3 Metaphorical Personification: Emotionalisation and Anthropomorphism

More overt personification is evident in the FSLN discourse with emotions and physical attributes and actions being ascribed to the Revolution. This created a space for an increased personal connection between the people, as receivers of the discourse, and the Revolution. In his tenth anniversary speech, Ortega claimed that the Revolution does not fear ideological battle, and then extols the noble characteristics of the Revolution:

La Revolución no le tiene temor a la lucha ideológica, la Revolución no le tiene temor a la lucha política, la Revolución es poseedora de la verdad, es poseedora de la justicia, está con el cambio histórico, entonces la Revolución es irreversible, aun cuando existan voces contrarias al proceso revolucionario (Ortega 1989: 11).¹⁴

The direct personification of the Revolution serves to establish its character, attributing virtuous emotions to it. Those emotions can then be translated to the description of those who belong to the Revolution, and required of those incorporated into it. Another significant attribute of the Revolution present in this extract is that it is the possessor of truth and justice. Setting it in this light lends moral weight to its dictates and requirements, again elevating it beyond merely a party platform to the level of a moral authority.

The personified Revolution incorporates the FSLN as a major constitutive element. In a broadsheet publication from the DN, the Revolution is portrayed as bolstering the difficult work of rebuilding the nation after the insurrection. The leadership states that, ‘tomando en cuenta... que hay que reconstruir nuestro país y que todas las fuerzas que lo deseen hacer consecuentemente, tienen todas las garantías, todo el apoyo de la Revolución’ (DN 1980: 6).¹⁵ Ascribing to the Revolution the capacity to care for those working to support it discursively

¹⁴ ‘The Revolution does not fear the ideological fight, the Revolution does not fear the political fight, the Revolution is a possessor of truth, is a possessor of justice, it is in favour of the historic change, therefore the Revolution is irreversible, even when there exist voices contrary to the Revolutionary process’

¹⁵ ‘taking into account... that it is necessary to rebuild our country and that all the forces that desire to do it consequently have all the guarantees, all the support of the Revolution’

accomplishes two tasks. Firstly, the task of rebuilding the nation is presented as something the people desire to do as a consequence of the Revolution. The requirement is construed as a desire rather than an obligation, which is done in the service of the Revolution. Secondly, the Revolution, in supporting the nation's efforts, is established as a caretaker and protector of the people. There is a reciprocal relationship indicated in this sentence where the people work to further the Revolution, and are in turn cared for by it, incorporating the people in the FSLN's policies and actions without a direct obligation for action or support. It also indirectly draws on the cultural trope of the *caudillo*, with the Revolution fulfilling the caretaker role, directing its subjects in the activities and attitudes necessary for their own protection and advancement. Through personification, the Revolution is reified as a sentient entity acting for the benefit of the people by working to transform the nation.

One of the goals of the revolutionary government was to incorporate the people more fully into the revolutionary process. To this end the changes to the education system were intended to 'desarroll[ar] las convicciones sobre la participación organizada del pueblo en la gestación social y en las tareas de la Revolución como práctica de la democracia popular' (Ministerio de Educación 1983).¹⁶ Similar to the instances seen above, the tasks of the Revolution exist apart from any stated governmental or party impetus. Working to further the ends of the reified Revolution divorces responsibility from any one group for the demands required in this process. In this way, agency is obscured, as the personification allows the Revolution to become the agent (Wodak et al. 1999: 35). The FSLN, then, distances itself from the exercise of governmental power, and from the imposition of requirements on the people.

Drawing on the collocational force of the lexicalised unit 'Sandinista Revolution', the FSLN is understood as the party of the Revolution. However, the discursive elevation of the Revolution to the role of caretaker and authority distances the party from its operation. The tasks necessary to the revolutionary process are legitimised through the topos of authority (Wodak et al. 1999: 37), since the Revolution is the authority over all members of society, including the Sandinistas themselves. As a result the party at times features as merely a mouthpiece for the

¹⁶ 'develop the convictions about the organised participation of the people in the social development and in the tasks of the Revolution as a practice of popular democracy'

great OZ behind the curtain. This provides the possibility of mitigation and distancing the party from difficulties encountered in the process of societal transformation. Moreover, the Sandinistas are included in this manner as subjects of the Revolution along with the people. In the narrative of national transformation, the Revolution plays a central role, given that the tasks of the Revolution are intended to lead to popular participation, where the people are the actors in the political process. This again reinforces the reciprocal role of the people acting in concert with the Revolution in return for the benefits it provides them. Thus, the people and the FSLN are equally reinforced in the union created through service to the Revolution. Positioning the FSLN as similarly constrained by the Revolution and enlisted in its service allows the Revolution to possess a quasi-grassroots element. The FSLN in this regard is co-labouring with the people as devotees of the Revolution. The discursive distancing afforded through the personification of the Revolution permits this positioning and also opens the discursive space for the Vanguard to be the equals of the people.

The role of the FSLN as an integral element of the Revolution and as its servant is a significant strategy in their discourse. In an intervention during a special session of the Sandinista Assembly, Borge uses the metaphor of the FSLN as the backbone of the Revolution. That metaphor conveys the concept that not only is the FSLN the major structural element of the Revolution, it is also a commanding entity within it, recalling the phrase ‘The Vanguard of the Revolution’:

La institucionalización del proceso demanda avanzar con energía renovada en el desarrollo y consolidación del Partido de los revolucionarios nicaragüenses, el Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional, catalejo y microscopio que es columna vertebral de la Revolución, centinela de la Pureza revolucionaria, garantía de firmeza estratégica’ (Borge 1984: 7).¹⁷

The party is the main structural body part in the anatomy of the Revolution. It is important to note that the party is not presented as the entire body, but as one integral part of it. The metaphor of the Revolution as a person provides a space for the people to be incorporated into the Revolutionary body as other parts alongside the FSLN, drawing them into the embodiment of the anthropomorphised entity. In

¹⁷ ‘The institutionalisation of the (Revolutionary) project demands that we advance with renewed energy the in the development and consolidation of the Party of the Nicaraguan Revolutionaries, the Sandinista Front of National Liberation, the catalyst and microscope that is the spinal column of the Revolution, the sentinel of revolutionary Purity, the guarantee of strategic strength.’

this we can also see echoes of the Christian metaphor of members of the church filling the role of various body parts according to each member's own talents, with Jesus as the head (Moltmann 1990b: 284). Though it is not specifically referenced, one can assume that the largely Christian audience was familiar with this common metaphor and perhaps would draw parallels between the two, integrating the religious discourse into the discourse on the Revolution.

As with the reciprocal nature of the caretaker metaphor, the intimate connection between the people and the Revolution is reinforced. The paradoxical nature of the revolutionary entity is revealed, where the people are the Revolution, but the Revolution is also an independent actor that they serve. This discursive strategy creates a strong sense of connection between the people and the Revolution, and by extension the Sandinistas. Thus, unity can be constructed around a deified entity that they also are part of, echoing the biblical metaphor of the people as the body of God. The authority gained in this manner allows the Revolution to require certain actions on the part of the people to fulfil the original intent of the overthrow of Somoza as a transformational process, in line with the Sandinista narrative.

5.2.3 Revolutionary Unity

Within the FSLN narrative, unity functions as an empty signifier, where the unity of the people is portrayed as having been lacking under Somoza and other governments. The FSLN, then, sought to fill this lack with their revolutionary project. As an empty signifier, unity is an open concept that allows different groups to cast their own meaning upon it in joining the cause. This was visible during the uprising against Somoza, where many ideologically disparate groups joined the Sandinistas in the Revolution. The position of the Sandinistas as the Vanguard of the Revolution is integral to the unification of the nation around the revolutionary concept. Drawing on my analysis in section 5.2.2, it is evident that within its own discourse, the FSLN occupied a central role in organising the people and orchestrating the Revolution. Establishing a personified Revolution as a rallying point for the people allowed the discourse to draw the people into the revolutionary body and into one national unit. Given the diversity of the groups that banded together in the overthrow of Somoza, the FSLN sought to create a unified whole out of the nation in order to secure the party's legitimacy to govern. Incorporating the

peasant masses, which the party claimed as its focal point, in the wider functioning of the national unit, was a significant departure from the politics of the previous four decades under the Somozas, when the *campesinos* and urban peasants were marginalised and exploited, effectively disenfranchising them from the nation (cf Gould 1990). The FSLN's attempts to create an inclusive national entity also reflect Smith's argument for a supra-ethnic political culture, with the political community functioning as the epicentre of national identification (Smith 1991: 110-2). Efforts at unity also reflect the work of Marxist groups in Latin America to unite disparate groups. As discussed in 2.3.2, the new direction for these movements after the Cuban revolution was to incorporate those who felt estranged from the nation by what they saw as oppressive capitalist governments into the revolutionary groups' movements against those governments (Hodges 1974: 143-4). Castro's inclusion of these groups in the *Cubanidad* is reflected in the Sandinista creation of a national in-group. Liss's observation that Castro's focus on creating national unity was intended to strengthen loyalty to the nation and the Revolution (Liss 1994: 63) can also be applied to the FSLN's project after the Revolutionary triumph. Unity as an empty signifier was defined by the FSLN as the support for national transformation, achieved through the Revolution. Thus, the ways the Sandinistas constructed unity around the Revolution is a reflection of the wider efforts of integrating the people in the party's ideological project for the nation.

This section explores the ways in which unity was conceptually manifested in the discourse at the semantic, lexical and grammatical levels. The linguistic elements illustrate the theoretical aspects explored in chapter two. Hobsbawm's contention that nationalism rests on discursive bonds within a populace (1990: 47) emphasises the importance of discursive elements in understanding how national community is propagated throughout a country. Considering unity in light of Fairclough's notion of naturalisation suggests the salience of the theme in the discourse; the linguistic aspects in the Sandinista corpus which create unity become the common-sense manner of discussing participation in the national entity. As I discuss in section 5.4 below, the interviews suggest that for the participants, the FSLN's discourse on unity experienced widespread acceptance, and was promoted in the public sphere. This acceptance reflects the meaning of unity becoming fixed as support for the FSLN's project of national transformation, and indicates an area where the party appears to have gained some measure of hegemony. Additionally, unity as an empty signifier

highlighting a previous lack conceptually links the FSLN narrative perspective of the past with that of the present and future; the past of imperialist influenced rule favouring only certain sectors is transformed through the Revolutionary process in the present, resulting in a new nation of unified new men. I begin this section with a brief discussion of the FSLN as the Vanguard in uniting the people. From this basis the discussion then moves to the use of unity as a strategy for the continued implementation of the national project required by the reified Revolution. This is viewed through its use in the discursive strategy of ‘consequence’ (Wodak et al. 1999: 38), where the unity of the nation is seen as a consequence of history, aggression and leadership. I then illustrate how specific linguistic elements create the unity the Sandinista discourse promotes as an inevitable outcome of the country’s history. I accomplish this through an examination of how the first person plural forms were used to bring the people together into the conception of the national community, with in-group and out-group construction figuring largely in that discussion.

5.2.3.1 FSLN as Vanguard of Unity

The FSLN’s leadership in uniting the nation is expressly stated in the corpus. As the ‘Vanguard of the Revolution’, the successes of the Revolution can be readily ascribed to the party. What in other circumstances could be perceived as self-aggrandisement, the deep semantic connection between the Revolution and the party provides a reasoned platform for the FSLN’s claims to ownership for some of the Revolution’s greatest achievements. In the following passage from the article ‘Unidad para Proteger la Revolución’ (1980a), Comandante Bayardo Arce outlines the party’s intentionality in creating unity in the country:

... tarea fundamental del Frente Sandinista fue desplegar todos los esfuerzos posibles para alcanzar una amplia unidad nacional en la cual los obreros, los campesinos, los trabajadores todos de nuestro país, los empresarios patriotas, pudiéramos unirnos en contra de ese enemigo principal e inmediato que era la dictadura,... Y logramos, a través de nuestro trabajo político, de nuestra programática, de nuestra persistencia, de la sangre de nuestros héroes, del sacrificio de nuestros campesinos asesinados por miles, del sacrificio de nuestros obreros...

enseñar que el camino que le quedaba a los nicaragüenses era el camino de la unidad nacional. (Arce 1980b: 19)¹⁸

Arce depicts the FSLN as not only the leader in uniting the people, but as the originator of that unity. He describes it as ‘the fundamental task’ of the party, elevating the purpose of unity above even the actual defeat of the dictator. Equally important in this passage, Arce attributes the success of the FSLN not only to the party’s ‘political work, our organisation, [and] our persistence’, but also to the sacrifice on the part of the people. This creates an intriguing situation where the people are complicit and active in laying the ground work for the FSLN to show them the need for national unity. The picture presented here is of the FSLN acting in conjunction with the Nicaraguan people’s natural tendency toward action to make it clear that the entire nation needed to unite under the FSLN’s leadership and direction in order to achieve their liberation.

Taking the party’s role in unifying the country further, Luis Carrión, a member of the DN, claimed the only possibility for uniting the people was around the FSLN as a Vanguard. In a speech given in January of 1981, he stated that there had been multiple attempts to unite the people in the twenty years prior to the Revolution. However, these efforts failed because they did not have the support of the people and the working masses (Carrión 1981: 7-8). He goes on to assert that, ‘... la Unidad unánime del pueblo, sólo fue posible alrededor del Frente Sandinista, porque el FSLN era reconocido unánimemente como la Vanguardia del pueblo’ (ibid: 8).¹⁹ For Carrión, the role of the FSLN as the Vanguard was a sufficient precursor for unity. The FSLN in this example is not the Vanguard of the Revolution, but the Vanguard of the people. The position of the Sandinistas goes beyond operational leadership of the Revolution to take on the authority of representing the people in unanimous unity. From this position, Carrión establishes the in-group and out-group of the Revolution and clarifies who the ‘people’ are.

¹⁸ ‘... the fundamental task of the Sandinista Front was to make all possible efforts in order to achieve a broad national unity in which labourers, peasants, the workers of our country, patriotic businessmen, all of us could unite against the principle and immediate enemy that was the dictatorship,... And we achieved this, through our political work, our organisation, our persistence, the blood of our heroes, the sacrifice of the thousands of our assassinated peasants, the sacrifice of our labourers... to teach that the path that remained for us Nicaraguans was the path of National Unity.’

¹⁹ ‘... the unanimous Unity of the people, was only possible around the Sandinista Front, because the FSLN recognised unanimously as the Vanguard of the people.’

Just prior to establishing the FSLN as the only possible unifying force in Nicaragua, Carrión references members who left the National Council on grounds that the FSLN is not complying with the national reconstruction efforts. He declares that these people who ‘no creen en la unidad del Frente Sandinista... esta gente nunca ha estado dentro de la Unidad, no porque nosotros, el pueblo, y los sandinistas los hayamos marginado, sino porque ellos jamás han estado de acuerdo con el proyecto de la Revolución Popular Sandinista’ (ibid: 7).²⁰ He depicts critics of the Sandinistas’ policies as not believing in the unity constructed under the FSLN. For Carrión, this is evidence that they do not belong to the unity of the people, and never have, because they do not support the Revolution. His statement provides a glimpse of the contestation between the Sandinista and opposition narratives that was occurring at the time. The opposing attempts to fill unity as an empty signifier and fix its meaning are alluded to here, with Carrión stating that those who criticise the Sandinistas’ position on unity are clearly outside of that unity because of their opposition to the national transformation project. His statement makes obvious the meaning the FSLN are trying to fix within this specific empty signifier.

There are two significant discursive strategies present in Carrión’s comment. Firstly, the in-group is constructed as those who agree with the Revolution and support the FSLN’s role in leading it. This group is not solely Sandinista members or sympathisers; rather, the in-group includes the *pueblo* as well. In this example, ‘we’ is broken down into its constituent parts, the *pueblo* and the Sandinistas, to make it explicit who are members of the unity. The *pueblo* takes on an expanded meaning beyond the traditional one of ‘the people’. The people, for the FSLN, consist of those who support the Revolution and the Sandinistas’ position as its Vanguard. As such, the in-group is sharply delineated, yet remains remarkably open. Membership in the Sandinista party, something which required military service on their behalf, was not the measure of inclusion in their view of the nation. Rather, supporting the concept of the Revolution that they put forth, and accepting the party as the Vanguard were the criteria for inclusion in the group. This is another reflection of the efforts of Marxist oriented groups in Latin America after the Cuban revolution to incorporate the masses more fully in their movements (Vanden 1982: 93). This in-group out-

²⁰ ‘do not believe in the unity of the Sandinista Front... these people have never been in the Unity, not because we, the people, and the Sandinistas have marginalized them, but because they have not ever agreed with the project of the Sandinista Popular Revolution.’

group construction is what Howarth (2006) refers to as equivalential identities within a logic of equivalence. The social space is discursively divided into two antagonistic groups, allowing identification with one group to create immediate opposition to the other group (Howarth 2006:113)

The second strategy is closely linked to the first in that those who disagree, like those who left the Council, are not only excluded from the Sandinistas, but are also excluded from the *pueblo*, and thereby from the nation. In the Carrión passage, they are explicitly excluded from the national unity because of their failure to agree with the Revolutionary project. In the FSLN corpus, this dual construction of the in- and out-groups carries the notion that to be part of the nation, one had to be supportive of the Sandinistas. Opposition to the party meant opposition to the Revolution and the people, who were the co-heirs to the Revolution with the Sandinistas. In his memoirs of his time with the FSLN and later as a counterrevolutionary, Arturo Cruz Jr. (1989) discusses the difficulty of being a Nicaraguan who supported the Revolution whilst criticising the Sandinistas. Cruz states that only after Eden Pastora's statement in 1982 that the DN had strayed from the 'promises of the original revolution' could he 'believe that one could be a dissident without being a Somocista or a National Guardsman... [and] decided that [he] could be critical of the Sandinistas but faithful to Nicaragua' (Cruz 1989: 136-7). This suggests that the discursive strategy of construing the opposition as outside of the national unity, outside of the *pueblo*, was largely successful. The FSLN discourse on unity occupied a dominant position within the national discursive terrain and established the concept of unity as the people acting in concert with the Sandinistas as the Vanguard as the accepted meaning. The Sandinistas gained hegemony for their narrative in this instance as it was largely accepted by the people, and which was contradicted by an antagonistic counter-hegemonic discourse from the opposition, as I discuss in section 5.4. This also reflects the national community having been built around the national in-group of the Sandinistas and those who support them, with dissent representing a mark of otherness. For the FSLN, this dovetails with their use of unity as a strategy to convey the need to rally around the Sandinistas in order to continue on the path laid out by the *pueblo*'s Revolution. This draws largely on the narrative that the Revolution was the inevitable outcome of the people's history, with the Sandinistas as their Vanguard.

5.2.3.2 Unity as a Strategy

Overt calls to unify feature in several of the documents included in the corpus. The title of one document, *Unidad para proteger la Revolución nicaragüense* (Arce 1980b), indicates one motivation behind the unity.²¹ The unification of the people around the Sandinistas in defeating the dictatorship was tenuous and based largely on the desire to be rid of Somoza, rather than on a unified political vision for the country. Following the triumph on 19 July, the unity of purpose disappeared. In order for the FSLN to justify their ascendance to power, they had to present themselves as the leaders of the revolutionary process, which they accomplished through their construction of the Revolution's importance and their position within it. Perhaps more importantly, their political platform emphasised national unity in order to implement a form of socialism. The anti-imperialism and national sovereignty advanced by the Sandinistas had at its foundation the idea that the nation and the people's connection to one another within the country was integral in combating aggression from the USA. This is embodied through the concept of the *Hombre Nuevo* and his willingness to sacrifice for his compatriots. The populace had to be united around the Sandinistas and their vision in order to implement the *Nueva Sociedad* (see 6.2.3 for more discussion on this point).

The FSLN discourse constructs unity as the logical result of the history as presented in their narrative, as well as resulting from the Vanguard's leadership and from external aggression. This reflects what Wodak et al. (1999: 40-41) term the topos of consequence, though it is employed differently in the FSLN corpus from Wodak et al.'s explanation. For Wodak et al., the topos of consequence functions within the strategy of transformation, with dissimilation, a concept of differentiation which emphasises a temporal difference between the present and the future. Whilst the use of this topos in the Sandinista discourse does occur in the general setting of differentiating temporal realities, the reference is between the past, where there was no unity, and the present where there is. The construction of unity in the FSLN corpus relies largely on constructive strategies. In that setting, the topos of consequence occurs alongside the strategy of cohesivation to construct unity. In DHA terms, cohesivation and the topos of consequence are seen in the filling of

²¹ Unity to protect the Nicaraguan Revolution

unity and linking it with the Sandinista narrative on the past. In the FSLN discourse, unity appears as a consequence of the three general areas of history, aggression, and leadership.

5.2.3.2.1 Unity as a Consequence of History

The view of the founding fathers and Sandino as the originators of the revolutionary movement leading to the present unity presents a situation where unity can be seen as a consequence of history. My discussion of Smith (1991, 1996) in chapter two highlighted the importance the concept of founding fathers has for the construction of national identity. Though the founding fathers of Nicaragua as a state would appear to be the Spanish colonisers who created its borders and established its government, the Sandinista narrative constructs what Wodak et al. (1999: 31) describe as a ‘common political past’. The historical narrative constructs a perception of the people’s unity as stemming from relatively small groups carrying out limited uprisings, indicating the grassroots nature of unity, stemming organically from the people themselves. Even Sandino, the model for Sandinistas, did not enjoy the level of cohesion among the population as a whole during his struggle for national liberation that the FSLN did in the fight against Somoza. However, the discourse appeals to the legacy and inevitability of the past revolutionaries in constructing the ‘reality’ that the Nicaraguan people were experiencing. Rather than looking to the Spanish colonisers as the founding fathers, the FSLN discourse creates conceptual precursors out of the various historical political actors who rebelled against any of the governments in the territory, from the first indigenous uprisings to Sandino (Fonseca 1984). The political foundation laid by these actors serves as a basis for unity to be presented as an inevitable consequence of their legacy, and forms the basis of the FSLN narrative of the past. In his pamphlet *La Historia Nicaragüense*, Arce acknowledges the predecessors as having brought about the present state of unity that the Nicaraguan people were experiencing, stating that, ‘esa realidad fue la que determine a nuestros precursores, a los primeros revolucionarios de nuestro país, a agruparse y a buscar juntos el camino que le permitiera a nuestro pueblo encontrar un nuevo horizonte, una nueva realidad para todos los

nicaragüenses' (Arce 1980a: 5).²² The unity of the people was modelled by the historical precursors of the Revolution through their own determination to come together. The unity the FSLN corpus references among their predecessors does not resemble the situation that the Nicaraguan people experienced during and immediately after the Revolution.

Though less direct in his reference to unity, Humberto Ortega similarly expresses the people's coming together as a consequence of history in his book detailing the last fifty years of Sandinista fighting. In explaining the origin and development of the Revolution, Ortega describes Sandino's original struggle as the stage that 'constituye por tanto, el arranque y pilar central de la guerra revolucionaria actual de nuestro pueblo, que ha venido siguiendo, de manera general, una marcha históricamente ascendente a pesar de lo difícil y complejo camino recorrido' (H. Ortega 1980: 76).²³ In this extract, Sandino's historical fight is depicted as constituting the foundation of the people's Revolution, which was following in the historical path laid out for it. Though not harking back to the beginnings of the rebellious past explained by Fonseca, Ortega presents the Revolution, specifically belonging to the people in this instance, as an historical effect of Sandino's efforts. Unity constructed as a consequence of history relies on the strength of the Sandinista narrative's interpretation of the smaller, less effective rebellions as similar in substance, if not in scope, to the defeat of Somoza, and the coming together of the people. In this construction, the topos of history as a teacher is visible, as the rebellious past has taught the FSLN and the Nicaraguan people how to realise the Revolution (Wodak et al. 1999:36). It is presented as a national patrimony which the people, under the leadership of the Sandinistas as descendants of Sandino, have finally accessed.

²² 'that is the reality that determined our precursors, the first revolutionaries of our country, to group together and to together look for the path that would permit our people to find a new horizon, a new reality for all Nicaraguans.'

²³ 'constitutes, therefore, the start and central pillar of our people's present revolutionary war, which has been following, in a general manner, a historically ascending course in spite of the difficult and complex road travelled'

5.2.3.2.2 Unity as a Consequence of Aggression

Unity based on historical rebellion against unjust rulers coincides with the depiction of unity as a consequence of the fight against Somoza. This consequence is perhaps a more natural discursive element, as the joint action in the fight against the dictatorship was visible to all. However, as discussed above, this unity was not necessarily lasting. Thus, the FSLN discourse constitutes a point of origin for the people's unity, not only historically, but also in the present. When considered alongside the actual collective action on a national scale, unity gains legitimacy outside of the Sandinistas and their actions leading to and perpetuating it. The harmony of various groups functioning in unison against a dictator has echoes the Sandinista historical narrative. The people's current situation appears as a reflection of their founding fathers' actions and the current unity can also be seen as belonging to their ancestors, rather than merely to the Sandinistas as the Vanguard of the current Revolution. This allows a degree of ownership of the unity to be conferred on the people, which reinforces the connectedness they feel to one another, and also to the concept of unification itself, evidencing the strategy of cohesivation (Wodak et al. 1999: 38). In the extract from Arce's article *Unidad para proteger la Revolución nicaragüense* cited earlier, the FSLN occupies the role of catalyst for the Revolution. In writing about the path leading to unity, Arce notes that the people are united across all spectrums to combat the dictator:

...tarea fundamental del Frente Sandinista fue desplegar todos los esfuerzos posibles para alcanzar una amplia unidad nacional en la cual los obreros, los campesinos, los trabajadores todos de nuestro país, los empresarios patriotas, pudiéramos unirnos en contra de ese enemigo principal e inmediato que era la dictadura,... (Arce 1980b: 19).²⁴

The uniting factor Arce cites is the opposition to the 'principal enemy... the dictatorship'. Somoza provided a prominent 'other' against which the in-group could be created, where everyone who opposed Somoza could be included.

It is interesting to note that in this passage the labouring sectors of the population are referred to without any modifiers, whereas the businessmen are

²⁴ 'a fundamental task of the Sandinista Front was to make every effort possible to achieve a broad national unity in which the labourers, the peasants, the workers of our whole country, the patriotic businessmen, where we could all unite against that principal and immediate enemy which was the dictatorship'

modified by the adjectival noun 'patriots'. The juxtaposition of these groups with and without modifiers indicates the discursive position of the Sandinistas towards the masses. Since there is no statement of the masses' patriotism, but there is for the businessmen, the audience is presented with the assumption that the working classes and the peasants are by nature patriotic through the comparison. The collocation of patriotic businessmen, conversely, depicts those who did join in the unity as an exception, or contrast, to the general character of businessmen in their lack of patriotism. This subtle distinction between different sectors of the population is key in the Sandinistas' exaltation of the masses and demonisation of bourgeois businessmen in the service of imperialism.

Unity not only emanated from a united front against a common enemy, but it also was a means of protecting the Revolution, and the nation, from new enemies. Víctor Tirado López employs this strategy in his assertion that '[El Sandinismo] es la ideología de la gran unidad nacional contra la intervención para ganarle la batalla al imperialismo en la producción y en la defensa militar' (Tirado López 1986: 254).²⁵ National unity is necessary to confront imperialism and 'win the battle' against it. The metaphor of fighting a battle against imperialism draws on the topos of history by echoing the battle against Somoza. Additionally, the topos of threat that Tirado López employs in this passage emphasises the need to unify in order to protect national freedom. These passages reflect Wodak et al.'s cohesivation, which is manifested in 'appeals for pulling together and solidarity' (Wodak et al. 1999: 38). In the statement above, the topos of threat is present in a situation where unity is required to confront a common enemy, whilst the topos of history serves to remind the people of their solidarity in having already faced such an enemy.

In Borge's speech to the National Assembly in 1984, the strategy of unity in the face of external aggression is presented as also causing and reinforcing the unity of the Nicaraguans. He states that 'la defensa de nuestra patria, acosada por morteros y calumnias, atacada por asesinos y mentirosos, ha fortalecido también la unidad de los revolucionarios nicaragüenses' (Borge 1984: 6).²⁶ The topos of threat again acts as an explanation for the coming together of the people. The general message of

²⁵ 'Sandinism is the ideology of great national unity against intervention, in order to with the battle against imperialism in production and military defence.'

²⁶ 'the defence of our homeland, harassed by mortars and slander, attacked by assassins and liars, has also strengthened the unity of the revolutionary Nicaraguans.'

these extracts is that the defence of the Revolution and the nation is achieved through unity.

5.2.3.2.3 Unity as a Consequence of Leadership

The last element of ‘unity as a consequence’ is that of the consequence of leadership. The leadership that led to the unification of the people is another aspect of the characterisation of the FSLN as the Vanguard of the people and the Revolution. As has been shown, the FSLN was the impetus behind the Revolution and the unification of the people in the fight. They were, therefore, directly responsible for the unity due to their efforts at mass-mobilisation. Additionally, their claims to legitimacy in governing stem from the fact that the people rallied around them and their leadership in the Revolution. The discourse reflects this position, as the Sandinistas and the DN are portrayed as the reason for the unity of the people and its enduring success.

One reference to the FSLN leading in this regard is found in Borge’s speech on democracy and popular power made to the Sandinista Assembly where he proclaims that the DN is the force behind the unity. He indicates that the unity is destined to grow because of the work the DN does:

La unidad está destinada a crecer, porque nuestra incuestionable Dirección Nacional, máxima conducción política de carácter colectivo de la Revolución Sandinista, trabaja y trabajará siempre aplicando y desarrollando cada día, sin desmayos, el conjunto de fundamentales principios que han inspirado e inspirarán nuestra lucha, y que son como el aire que respiramos (Borge 1984: 6).²⁷

His depiction of the DN connects the unity of the people with the collective character of the Revolution. The source of the unity is the outgrowth of the qualities of the Revolution. The DN is the central actor in their narrative, translating the Sandinista vision into a national reality. Earlier in this passage, Borge refers to the unity of the Sandinistas as a consequence of the maturity of directors of the Revolution of which he is one, which reinforces the position of the DN as integral to the formation of unity in the country. He states that: ‘La unidad de los sandinistas

²⁷ ‘The unity is destined to grow because our unquestionable National Directorate, maximum political leadership in the collective character of the Sandinista Revolution, is working and will always work, applying and developing each day, tirelessly, the body of fundamental principles that have inspired and will inspire our fight, and that are like the air we breathe’

fue el resultado de una necesidad histórica, pero también fue una consecuencia de la madurez política de los dirigentes de esta revolución' (ibid: 6).²⁸

More generally than the Sandinista leadership's role in creating unity, the party itself is credited as being the only group with the authority to unite the people. In the Carrión extract noted in section 5.2.3.1, the Sandinistas are depicted as the only party around which unity could have been created. He stated that, '... la Unidad unánime del pueblo, sólo fue posible alrededor del Frente Sandinista, porque el FSLN era reconocido unánimemente como la Vanguardia del pueblo' (Carrión 1981: 8).²⁹ One can see how the topos of history and authority function together to underpin the validity of the Sandinistas' call to unify. Taken from a passage that describes why other attempts at unification failed in the twenty years before the Revolution, pointing to the historical narrative recalls the exceptional success of the FSLN in spurring collective action and mass uprisings. The repetition of 'unanimous' in the passage reinforces the idea of unchallenged authority, with all the people supporting the FSLN as the Vanguard. The topos of authority in that statement both reaffirms the party's claim to authority, and indirectly delegitimises any effort by others to claim authority themselves. Another salient feature is the repetition of *pueblo*, which incorporates the people in the unanimous unity and recognition of the FSLN's position. To deny the unity they created or to question their authority would, again, position that individual outside of the people, thereby stripping them of membership in the national community.

The idea of national unity as one of the core characteristics of the party can also be seen in the following extracts. Drawing on Sandino's beliefs, Comandante Tirado López attributes the idea of national unity to the folk hero and presents it as a requirement for the people: 'todos debemos estar bajo una sola ideología revolucionaria, interpretando y transformando la sociedad en la patria de Sandino, con sus principios de soberanía, independencia y unidad nacional' (1986: 253).³⁰ The DN promotes the concept of national unity as one of the central tenets of the party, stating that 'porque amamos la paz, hemos venido construyendo una nueva sociedad

²⁸ 'The unity of the Sandinistas was the result of a historical necessity, but also was the consequence of the political maturity of the leaders of this revolution.'

²⁹ '... the unanimous Unity of the people, was only possible around the Sandinista Front, because the FSLN recognised unanimously as the Vanguard of the people.'

³⁰ 'We all ought to be under one revolutionary ideology, interpreting and transforming the society into the homeland of Sandino, with his principles of sovereignty, independence and national unity.'

basada en el pluralismo político, la economía mixta y el no alineamiento, promoviendo una amplia y flexible política de unidad nacional' (DN 1986: 38).³¹ In both of these statements, one can see how the discourse draws on the party's platform of national unity and national liberation. In so doing, the party claims responsibility for the unity they have worked to promote. Additionally, the continued delineation of national unity as a core feature of Sandinismo reinforces the connection between the unity that occurred during the Revolution under the FSLN's leadership and the current call for unity of the people around its governmental leadership, again indicating how the FSLN attempted to fix the meaning of unity as an empty signifier. This conceptually links the two periods of unity, and allows for a connection between unity as a consequence of aggression and unity as a consequence of the Vanguard's leadership. Additionally, invoking Sandino links the unity which the FSLN calls for around their government to the idea of unity as a national patrimony with the FSLN as the Vanguard of that patrimony. Therefore, unity as a consequence of history, aggression and leadership function in tandem with the concept of the Sandinistas as a Vanguard to create a narrative where the Sandinistas are leading the *pueblo* in their fulfilment of the national destiny to overcome the legacy of imperialist domination. Within this narrative, my analysis indicates that there are several linguistic structures which function to emphasise the unification of the people, particularly through in-group and out-group construction.

5.2.4 'Nuestro Pueblo' and In-Group Construction

Filling the empty signifier of unity is further accomplished through the discursive construction of the in-group and out-group. Grammatically, this is carried out through using first person plural forms of verbs and possessives in order to 'verbally annex' the people (Wodak et al. 1999: 45). The distinctions built through establishing in-groups and out-groups carry particular weight in discussions of identity and inter-group unity, as was the case with the FSLN uniting disparate groups of people. According to Stephen Riggins (1997: 8), inclusive and exclusive pronouns, like 'we', and 'they', or the possessives 'our' and 'their', are particularly salient in establishing group boundaries. In this section I explore the use of the

³¹ 'because we love peace, we have been constructing a new society based on political pluralism, mixed economy and non-alignment promoting a broad and flexible policy of national unity'

possessive ‘our’ in establishing a concept of unity in the Sandinista discourse. The inclusive possessive pronoun adds weight to the in-group creation of *pueblo* by explicitly linking the term to the Revolution and the Sandinistas. Unsurprisingly, in the in-group and out-group construction in the FSLN corpus, construction strategies emerge, particularly through assimilation and unification, whilst perpetuation strategies, such as political continuity, are also seen (Wodak et al. 1999: 37-40). These two strategies overlap in the area of assimilation where both serve to emphasise the similarity of the people in an effort to instil a sense of solidarity within the citizenry.

At the very basic level of choice, the use of the possessive adjective rather than a definite or indefinite article indicates a discursive strategy of inclusion and assimilation. Thematically this includes the people in the actions of the Revolution and the FSLN, and also constructs the common character and suffering of the people. The possessive is an emphatic construct, marked as opposed to the unmarked use of a definite article, and as such draws attention to the inclusiveness of the object of possession. This is particularly salient in Spanish, as the possessive is used less frequently than in English when the possessor is known (Stockwell, Bowen & Martin 1965: 72). Therefore, discussing ‘our people’ when it is known that the speaker is referring to the Nicaraguan citizens, who inherently belong to the national in-group, represents an even more marked structure than it would in English, due to the possessive’s use in place of the definite article.

Addressed further in 5.2.5, the *pueblo* is in itself an important element in the FSLN discourse, and represents another empty signifier within the discourse. *Pueblo* is similar to unity, in that it represents a corporate whole, and can be filled with a particular meaning. In the Sandinista narrative, the *pueblo* likewise fills the lack of solidarity. Echoing the meaning the FSLN gave to unity, the *pueblo* is constructed to represent the totality of those who belong to the FSLN and their narrative of national transformation through support of the revolutionary project. Unity as an empty signifier, attempts to fill a space of political action, whereas *pueblo* fills a space of group identification. The *pueblo* in the Sandinista narrative is the totality of all who support the Sandinistas, the representation of the nation as a whole. Speaking of the *pueblo*, rather than the nation, the *patria* or the citizens, evokes kinship and community ties in place of political ones. Whilst the Sandinista discourse does reference the nation, the country, and the *patria*, the more frequent reference is to *el*

pueblo. It is the most common content word in the corpus, occurring 308 times, and is more prevalent even than Frente (264 occurrences) or Sandinista (244 occurrences), which reveals its central role in the discourse. Also, the use of *pueblo* instead of *gente* is indicative of the discursive intent in the FSLN documents. The term *pueblo* in Spanish conveys the idea of a group of people forming a community, with the additional connotation of representing the common people. *Gente* more generally signifies a plurality of people, without any specific connotation of unity. Given the Sandinista focus on being the representatives of the masses, *pueblo* with its connotation of the humble community united as one, has more resonance with the FSLN position than *gente*, a term found only fourteen times in the corpus.

A particularly notable use of *pueblo* in terms of unity is as the object of collective possession. The phrase *nuestro pueblo* speaks to the incorporation of the people into the revolutionary project. The Sandinistas are portrayed as being spurred on by the need to serve and protect their *pueblo* and include it in the Revolution. Depicting the *pueblo* as theirs yet again links the people to the Revolution, effectively appropriating them from the old regime. In a pamphlet discussing the need for, and style of, propaganda to be directed towards the people, the FSLN indicates that, ‘el objetivo de todo nuestro trabajo de propaganda es la formación y desarrollo de sólidas convicciones político-revolucionarias en todo nuestro pueblo, y que serán más sólidas en la medida en que sean interiorizadas por cada hombre’ (FSLN 1980: 18).³² Here, one can see that even in semi-internal discussions, the people are ‘ours’ and that the principal goal is the integration of revolutionary aims within the mind of each person in order to achieve hegemony for their narrative position. Uniting the *pueblo* concretely with the Revolution, as a nodal point, and the FSLN, as leaders of the Revolution, appears to have been an area of intentional effort.

The possessive forms also allowed the Sandinistas to ground themselves within the people as part of the people, as the following extract from the DN letter illustrates: ‘La Campaña de Alfabetización, por ejemplo, representa un esfuerzo muy importante de nuestro Gobierno de Reconstrucción Nacional y es un programa que

³² ‘the objective of all our propaganda work is the formation and development of solid political-revolutionary convictions in the entirety of our people, and that [the convictions] will be more solid in so far as they are internalized by each man.

estaba comprometido con nuestro pueblo' (DN 1980: 4).³³ The government has an expressed need to benefit 'our people'. In this passage, the government is also 'ours', along with the people, which represents a more unified, internal possessive. Rather than presenting a group outside the object expressing their possession of it, it is an addressee-inclusive possessive (Wodak et al. 1999: 45), where 'our government' and 'our people' are terms of solidarity rather than ownership.

Inclusion in the *pueblo* was expressed beyond the first few years of the FSLN government, which indicates that it was a continued area of focus in their discourse. A statement from Tirado López's 1986 speech illustrates this: 'Estamos y seguiremos triunfando; nos alienta la moral combativa de nuestro pueblo y el recuerdo inmortal de nuestros héroes y mártires' (Tirado López 1986: 255).³⁴ Just prior to this passage, Tirado López declares that the working classes are united with the forces of the Revolution, and are ready to confront any aggression against them. The use of 'we', then, does not refer to the Sandinistas only, but is an inclusive 'we' that, in light of the reference to *nuestro pueblo*, unites all the people together as one entity. 'Our *pueblo*' serves as another discursive tool for uniting the Sandinistas and the Revolution with the rest of the citizenry supportive of the revolutionary project, whilst excluding those who oppose that project.

5.2.5 Pueblo, Exclusion and Out-Group Construction

Pueblo also figures in the construction of unity separately from the possessive, particularly when it is collocationally linked with *nicaragüense* in the discourse. These two terms are paired 45 times to create a collocational unit that carries the concept of the in-group as constructed by the Sandinista discourse. The *pueblo nicaragüense*, however, does not necessarily include all Nicaraguans. Membership in the Sandinista concept of the *pueblo* was predicated on support of the Revolution and the FSLN, as I discussed in 5.2.3.1. In an open letter issued in 1980, the DN exhibits this strategy, when it states, 'Contamos con el pueblo nicaragüense, que ha cerrado filas alrededor de su gobierno revolucionario y de su vanguardia

³³ 'The Literacy Crusade, for example, represents a very important effort for our Government of National Reconstruction and is a programme that was promised to our people.'

³⁴ 'We are, and will continue, triumphing; we are encouraged by the spirited morale of our people and the immortal memory of our heroes and martyrs.'

política, el FSLN' (DN 1980:1).³⁵ The preconceived concept of who constitutes the *pueblo nicaragüense* is redefined here. It is not the entirety of the population, or even the group conceptualised as the humble masses. Rather, the Nicaraguan people are defined as those who support the revolutionary government and the FSLN. This is an expression of implicit exclusion, similar to the one seen in the Carrión text. The term *pueblo* no longer applies to a broad and generic population, but rather specifies which citizens can claim membership in that group.

The same DN publication further limits who belongs to the Nicaraguan population, though in the following instance in a manner that functions separately from the term *pueblo*: 'Nosotros ratificamos que..., siempre y cuando estén en función de apoyar, aportar, ayudar a construir el Proceso de Reconstrucción Nacional, que todos los nicaragüenses estamos abocados en que se cumpla' (DN 1980: 5).³⁶ In the passage, the term Nicaraguan is expanded beyond any semantic constraints imposed on it through the connotations of *pueblo*. 'All of the Nicaraguans' are involved and supporting the revolutionary process. This statement immediately places opposition forces, and even the average individual who disagrees with the government's actions, conceptually outside of the nation; they are not Nicaraguans. Thus, dissention becomes grounds for the discursive stripping of citizenship, again reinforcing the ideological composition of the national in-group.

Excluding those who are not supporting the Revolution and the FSLN accomplishes one of the strategies mentioned earlier, the assimilation of the members of a group. In-group sameness in this context implies a consonance of political perspective and a unity in applying that perspective via various policies and programmes. Without requiring that all Nicaraguans become members of the FSLN, the Sandinista discourse effectively engages them in that position by excluding those who do not support the party from the conceptual formation of 'the people', or more broadly of the Nicaraguans. This gives a different perspective on Borge's claim, during his remarks to the National Assembly on 17 July, 1984, that, 'De todas las conquistas de la revolución, la más importante, la más sagrada, consiste en que por primera vez en la historia, Nicaragua es Nicaragua y los nicaragüenses somos

³⁵ 'We rely on the Nicaraguan people, who have closed ranks around their revolutionary government, and their political vanguard, the FSLN.'

³⁶ 'We confirm that, always and when they are function to support, contribute to, help to build the Process of National Reconstruction, that all we Nicaraguans are dedicated to its completion.'

nicaragüenses' (Borge 1984: 7).³⁷ Given the assimilation strategy of the FSLN discourse in the construction of the in-group of the nation, one must view the Nicaraguans whom he references as only those who support the Revolution and the Sandinistas, thus limiting even the revolutionary triumphs to the in-group, and excluding all others from them. These comments and the use of the *pueblo* also achieve homogenisation of the in-group.

As I mentioned in chapter one, the Sandinista discourse, whilst expressing appreciation for the indigenous groups on the Atlantic coast, did not provide a separate identity or discursive space for them outside of the dominant west coast conception of what it was to be Nicaraguan. The FSLN stated in its *Plan de Lucha* (1984: 8), that in regards to the Atlantic coast's indigenous groups, the party promised to 'preservar y estimular la conservación de sus lenguas, tradiciones culturales y costumbres incorporándoles al patrimonio cultural de la nación'.³⁸ In the sentence just prior to this statement, the FSLN declares that it is defending the territorial integrity of the country by incorporating more fully the Atlantic coast into nation as a whole: 'El Frente Sandinista se compromete a continuar defendiendo la integridad territorial de Nicaragua, incorporando cada vez más a la Costa Atlántica' (ibid: 8).³⁹ The subsequent promise reinforces the value of the indigenous groups' cultural and religious beliefs as part of the Nicaraguan identity, recalling the Sandinistas' narrative of Nicaragua's rebellious past begun by the indigenous revolts against the Spanish. Here, the Atlantic coast is not presented as unique and separate from the rest of the nation; rather the various indigenous groups are incorporated into the 'national patrimony', and also into the *pueblo*. This sentiment is echoed in the DN's statement two years later that 'con el proyecto de autonomía de la Costa Atlántica, vamos a dar un paso decisivo para unir de manera definitiva, en una sola unidad nacional, el Atlántico con el Pacífico' (DN 1986: 45).⁴⁰ Ironically, granting autonomy to the Atlantic coast is conveyed as a means of increasing national unity. However, the intention of this move is explained by the DN as definitively creating

³⁷ 'Of all the achievements of the revolution, the most important, the most sacred, is that for the first time in history, Nicaragua is Nicaragua, and we Nicaraguans are Nicaraguans.'

³⁸ 'preserve and stimulate the conservation of their languages and customs, incorporating them into the cultural patrimony of the nation'

³⁹ 'The Sandinista Front promises to continue defending the territorial integrity of Nicaragua, incorporating more and more the Atlantic Coast'

⁴⁰ 'with the Atlantic Coast autonomy project, we are taking a decisive step to definitively unify, in one national unit, the Atlantic with the Pacific.'

one single national unit. Through these statements, it is evident that the state-led discourse on national identity was one that fostered homogeneity within the in-group.

The FSLN's attitude toward the Atlantic coast could be seen to fall somewhere between Joseph Femia's (1981) two categories of decadent hegemony and minimal hegemony. The integral hegemony the Sandinista government attempted to foster in the Pacific region of the country was not sought with the same intensity on the Atlantic coast (Hale 1996: 35). Femia describes decadent hegemony as indicative of widespread integration that does not fully harmonise the concerns of the masses with those of the dominant group; minimal hegemony is a situation where there is unity only among the elites members of society, and the popular masses are excluded from the life of the State (Femia 1981: 47). The tension between these two positions in the FSLN's interactions with the Atlantic coast is visible in the initial efforts of the Sandinista government to bring the MISURATA leaders into the Sandinista power structure, and later the disbanding of that group labelling it a counterrevolutionary organisation. Charles Hale rightly explains that the FSLN 'espoused assimilationist premises, even while seeking to advance revolutionary ends and condemning the "hateful discrimination" against Atlantic coast ethnic groups' (Hale 1996: 92). As we have seen in chapter three, the Sandinista narrative of a rebellious past that Fonseca wove incorporated indigenous rebellion with Mestizo resistance, presenting the two as being of a kind. Eliding the two concepts of indigenous and Mestizo allowed the FSLN discourse to homogenise the nation and its needs under the revolutionary project, leading to a situation of internal colonialisation, amidst the FSLN's anti-colonial, anti-imperialist discourse. Hale notes this elision, stating that Humberto Ortega, in his pamphlet *50 Años de Lucha Sandinista*, omitted the Miskitu or other indigenous groups and thereby 'equated them with Mestizos, who have a strong Nicaraguan national identity, albeit with Indian roots' (Hale 1996: 93).

The homogenisation expressed in the comments above, and evident in the lack of reference to indigenous-specific aspects of the revolutionary project in the FSLN corpus, permitted the singular focus of the revolutionary project for national transformation in the Sandinista narrative. The lack of unity between the Atlantic and Pacific coast was indicative of the lack of national cohesion that the FSLN wanted to combat through its appeal to unity. For them, fixing the meaning of unity

included incorporating the Atlantic coast into the rest of the nation as an equally participating member in the revolutionary project. This sentiment is expressly stated in the DN's comments above that the autonomy project was intended to unite the nation in a definitive manner as a single national entity. The contradictory nature of this statement, granting autonomy as a unifying action, is explained by Hale as stemming from a dichotomy inherent in the Sandinista understanding of the Atlantic coast. It was an understanding that equated the Revolution with civilisation and the Miskitu people and their culture with 'backwardness' (Hale 1996: 114).

However, Hale also indicates that the move toward autonomy for the Atlantic coast indicated a change in the revolutionary project. Rather than a wholly homogenised unit, typified by the FSLN's statement above in 1984 that the indigenous cultures and languages were to be incorporated into the national patrimony, the revolutionary project turned toward 'an emphasis on ethnic pride and political power within a multiethnic Nicaraguan national identity' (Hale 1996: 114). This was typified by a statement made by Borge, cited by Hale, where the Comandante states that the FSLN had misunderstood the demands of the Atlantic coast. Whereas ethnic demands were initially considered antisandinista because they were viewed by the FSLN as counter to the unified national identity, Borge states that the government came to realise that 'ethnic diversity is among the moving forces of the Revolution', not just class (Borge, cited in Hale 1996: 111). This reflects an attempt to achieve integral hegemony in the entire country, by including the concerns of the Atlantic coast's indigenous groups in the government's discourse and policy. However, rather than reformulating the narrative of national transformation to have different meanings for different areas, Borge's statement expands the traditional narrative of the national struggle against imperialist forces to include ethnic concerns as well. This allowed the unity sought by the Sandinistas to remain whole, even in granting autonomy to the Atlantic coast. Beyond solidifying the national in-group, the FSLN discourse also established the out-group, which included internal dissenters as well as opposition militants.

5.3 The Opposition: Contesting the Revolution and Transformation

The opposition's narrative is also one of national transformation, but, as I introduced it in section 5.2, it emphasises a different type of change. Rather than

wholesale societal transformation, the opposition's emphasis is on a change in the political tradition of the nation. With their historical narrative reminding the people of the nation's legacy of caudillos, the Revolution is construed as presenting a democratic opening to the country. The opposition narrative also views the Revolution as a starting point, but it is at the same time a finished event. For those groups, the Revolution was a collaborative act carried out by all the sectors of the country. Ending the Somoza dynasty presented an opening for immediate, participatory, liberal democracy to begin with everyone on an equal political footing. There was a need for transformation, but it was a political one, not a social one. For the opposition groups, their present time period is marked by the FSLN's obstruction of democracy and the associated limitation of civic and political freedom.

As subaltern groups who were not the power holders, the opposition exhibits a discourse that was overtly contestational. The discourse was counter-hegemonic, attempting to undermine the dominance of the FSLN discourse which held the more privileged position of official power via governmental control. Additionally, as the architects of the overthrow of Somoza, the Sandinistas had the benefit of representing the popular will and, at least initially, enjoying a situation of integral hegemony. The opposition narrative is largely conveyed through discursively discrediting or dismantling the FSLN narrative. For Peter Ives, the use of an existing 'common sense' indicates that the subaltern groups 'lack their own language' for communicating their narrative (Ives 2004: 78). Philosophical conceptions are then "'borrowed" from the hegemonic social group' (ibid: 79). In the opposition discourse, the borrowing can be understood as polysemy, where the subaltern group appropriates a term from the dominant discourse, imbuing it contextually with an alternate meaning. Polysemy, or multiaccentuality in Voloshinov's (1986) terms, can also be seen as an attempt to fill an empty signifier with divergent meaning from the dominant one. D. P. Gaonkar states that 'language itself furnishes the last line of defense against the historically grounded attempt at linguistic closure. ... Polysemy is [then] an ally of the oppressed' (Gaonkar 1993, cited in Jasinski 2001: 441). In presenting their own narrative of national transformation, the opposition engages the polysemic possibility inherent in empty signifiers in order to redirect the popular understanding of terms like the Revolution, the *pueblo*, and even Sandinista, as I discuss in my analysis below.

5.3.1 The Centrality of Democracy in the Opposition Discourse

Whereas the FSLN discourse was oriented around the Revolution as a nodal point, the opposition discourse is ordered by the nodal point of democracy. Democracy represents the fundamental aim of the Revolution and is the means of achieving national transformation in Nicaragua in this perspective. As a nodal point, democracy links together the Revolution, unity, and the *pueblo* in a chain of equivalence. Robelo, a prominent businessman and an original member of the Sandinista ruling junta, indicates the centrality of democracy to the opposition discourse in an article in the MDN (Movimiento Democrático Nicaragüense) broadsheet *Rescate* entitled ‘Revolución y Democracia en Nicaragua’ (Robelo Callejas 1985a: 6). He states that:

‘El pueblo nicaragüense y la oposición cívica y beligerante están incuestionablemente convencidas de llegar a la unidad antitotalitaria como la mejor y más rápida vía para lograr la democracia en Nicaragua y construir una sólida paz en Centroamérica. Sin embargo, en un proceso tan complejo, es natural que existan divergencias en cuanto a las estrategias a seguir y respecto a los proyectos políticos que subyacen detrás de cada colectividad opositora’ (ibid: 6).⁴¹

This passage distinctly describes the importance of democracy to the national project outlined by the opposition. For Robelo, democracy is the national end for which those allied against totalitarianism are fighting. Equally, the narrative of a present situation of totalitarian oppression is evident in the allusion to the FSLN government through the phrase ‘antitotalitarian unity’, which implies that the government is totalitarian. The extract also indicates that Robelo viewed the opposition group as a single political force, though with divergent political perspectives, reflecting the focus on political plurality within the opposition narrative. Differences in policies and perspectives are to be expected in Robelo’s estimation, and are natural within a democratic society. This contrasts with the FSLN’s discourse on unity, seen above, which included only those who support the Sandinista revolutionary project and assumed ideological consonance.

⁴¹ ‘The Nicaraguan people and the civic and belligerent opposition are unquestionably convinced to arrive at an antitotalitarian unity as the best and fastest way to achieve democracy in Nicaragua, and to build a solid peace in Central America. Without a doubt, in such a complex process, it is natural for divergences to exist regarding the strategies to follow and in respect of the political projects that are behind each opposition group’

In the FRS's (Frente Revolucionario Sandino) official response to the publication of the FSLN's *Fines y Objetivos de la Nueva Educación en Nicaragua* (MED 1983), the party comments that 'el progreso de los pueblos y el mejoramiento de la calidad de la vida, sólo son posibles en una sociedad donde prevalece la libertad, la democracia y el respeto a los derechos humanos' (FRS 1983: 10).⁴² Again, democracy emerges as a central component for societal improvement and progress, alongside the associated concepts of freedom and human rights. Perhaps the most complete presentation in the corpus of the opposition narrative and the position of democracy as a nodal point in the discourse is found in the BOS (Bloque Opositor del Sur) manifesto's explanation of the purpose behind the party's formation:

Nace como respuesta a la necesidad de aglutinar a los disidentes de la Revolución nicaragüense que fueron traicionados por el FSLN al imponer el totalitarismo. El BOS es la alternativa democrática del proceso revolucionario nicaragüense, es la Revolución en su concepto original.

El triunfo de la Revolución nicaragüense en julio de 1979 fue un triunfo político, apuntalado por la lucha militar librada heroicamente por el pueblo nicaragüense. Vital para derrotar a la dictadura somocista fue el consenso nacional e internacional; se pusieron de acuerdo los de adentro y la comunidad internacional en la OEA. El drama nicaragüense continúa. Los esfuerzos hechos por la comunidad internacional orientada a conseguir en nuestro país un proceso de democratización han fracasado, debido a que el FSLN ha desviado el proyecto original de la Revolución, imprimiéndole un carácter totalitario.

La tragedia y el dolor que por décadas ha sufrido el pueblo nicaragüense en la búsqueda de la libertad, la democracia, la justicia social y la igualdad de oportunidades para todos los ciudadanos y sus organizaciones, constituyeron la motivación fundamental que nos llevaron a asumir la responsabilidad histórica de constituir el BLOQUE OPOSITOR DEL SUR (BOS 1985?: 7-8, emphasis in the original).⁴³

⁴² 'The progress of the people and improvement in their quality of life are only possible in a society where liberty, democracy, and respect for human rights prevails'

⁴³ 'Born as a response to the need to unite the dissidents of the Nicaraguan Revolution who were betrayed by the FSLN's imposition of totalitarianism. The BOS is the Nicaraguan revolutionary process's democratic alternative, it is the Revolution in its original concept. The triumph of the Nicaraguan Revolution in July, 1979 was a political triumph, underpinned by the military fight heroically fought by the Nicaraguan people. Vital to the defeat of the Somocist dictatorship was the national and international consensus; those inside (the country) and the international community in the OAS came to an agreement. The Nicaraguan drama continues. The efforts, made by the

For the BOS, the Revolution was originally intended by the people to be a democratic process, reflecting the opposition position of the Revolution being a finished event that opened the door to national political transformation. The BOS describes the Revolution as ‘a political triumph’ brought about by the people. Conspicuously absent from this assessment is the FSLN’s role as the Vanguard of the people. The historical narrative of a nation led by dictators and lacking a democratic tradition is evident in the references to Somoza and the FSLN.

The present situation finds the ‘process of democratization’ having been derailed by the FSLN, leading to a totalitarianism never envisioned by the Revolution. The statement that ‘the Nicaraguan drama continues’ links the negative past of undemocratic governance with the current Sandinista government, reinforcing the opposition’s contention that democracy has yet to take root, and will not do so under the FSLN. The BOS further this point by linking the decades of suffering ‘in search of freedom, democracy, social justice, and equal opportunities’ with the present period as the cause for the BOS’s formation. Throughout the passage, the narrative of national transformation is laid out by the BOS as being a democratic transformation. The historical struggles, and the current ones, are portrayed as having occurred in order to instil a democratic system in the country, where the people have equal opportunities. The narrative is necessarily contestational, as the opposition is not in power and therefore had to counter the dominant narrative of the Sandinistas. In promoting their own vision of national transformation, the opposition undermines the FSLN’s narrative through several discursive strategies, including delegitimising the FSLN’s portrayal of the Revolution.

5.3.2 The Opposition and the Revolution

The opposition discourse does not exhibit the same strategy of personification observed in the FSLN corpus. The opposition's view of the

international community orientated at achieving in our country a process of democratization, have failed, due to the fact that the FSLN has altered the course of the original project of the Revolution, stamping it with a totalitarian character. The tragedy and the pain that the Nicaraguan people have suffered for decades in their search for freedom, democracy, social justice and equal opportunities for all citizens and their organisations constituted the fundamental motivation that brought us to assume the historic responsibility of establishing the OPPOSITION BLOCK OF THE SOUTH.’

Revolution as a finite, concluded political action rather than as a continuing movement provides a possible explanation for the absence of this strategy. There was no intention for the Revolution to continue or extend beyond the actual overthrow of Somoza. This stance is exhibited in the following extract from the FRS document *Un Pueblo en Lucha por su Libertad*: ‘A casi cuatro años de la Revolución, el continuado deterioro del país en lo político, económico y social se acentúa cada vez más, alejándonos irreversiblemente del equilibrio inicial que nos permitió el triunfo’ (FRS 1983: 1).⁴⁴ Here, the finished nature of the Revolution is evident, as the nation is four years out from the stated revolutionary triumph. In the opposition discourse, the Revolution is a significant political event and defining moment in Nicaraguan history, as well as a starting point for the democratic transition they considered necessary for the country. It does not extend beyond this to the level of a sentient entity acting to advance the nation, as it does in the Sandinista discourse.

Significantly, there are fewer instances of the word Revolution in the opposition corpus (67) than in the FSLN corpus (212), which in itself indicates a less prominent role for the term in the opposition discourse. However, the opposition does not engage in a wholesale denial of the Revolution. To do so would have alienated a large number of Nicaraguans, as well as indirectly giving the appearance of having aligned itself with the deposed Somoza regime. Rather, the opposition discourse reveals an apparent redefinition of the Revolution. Rather than maintaining the FSLN’s connotation of societal transformation, the Revolution is situated as leading to democracy, but having been derailed by the Sandinistas. The BOS (Bloque Opositor del Sur) party manifesto passage seen above states that the efforts of the people in concert with international actors to ‘conseguir en nuestro país un proceso de democratización han fracasado, debido a que el FSLN ha desviado el proyecto original de la Revolución, imprimiéndole un carácter totalitario...’ (BOS 1985?: 7-8).⁴⁵ For this group, a union of several opposition groups on the southern front, the original purpose of the Revolution was the opening of a democratic process in the nation, not wholesale societal transformation. The project referred to

⁴⁴ ‘Almost four years after the Revolution, the continued deterioration of the country in regards to political, economic and social aspects is accentuated more and more, distancing us irreversibly from the initial balance that the triumph permitted us’

⁴⁵ ‘achieve in our country a process of democratisation have failed, due to the fact that the FSLN has altering the Revolution’s original Project, giving it a totalitarian character.’

here is only a political one. In this statement the Revolution is also separated from the Sandinistas by alleging that the FSLN had not been faithful to the original plan of the people in bringing about the Revolution. The opposition corpus portrays the Sandinistas as usurpers or traitors of the Revolution, discrediting them through pejorative attributions. Delegitimisation in this setting exhibits Wodak et al.'s dismantling strategy through the strategy of negative presentation (1999: 42). The BOS connect the FSLN to totalitarianism, casting doubt on the government's commitment to democracy.

The Revolution also is reinterpreted in this context. The multiaccentuality of the word is apparent, as the Revolution remains a significant event and concept for the opposition, but it represents a markedly different concept from the one intended by the FSLN. The openness of the term allows the BOS to reorient it as a completed democratic action. Significantly, the BOS does not present this as a new understanding of the term, but as the original meaning, indicating that the FSLN's use of the term is false. The redefinition of the Revolution reflects Ives' contention that subalterns 'borrow' the language of the dominant 'common sense' when mounting a counter-hegemonic discourse (Ives 2004: 79).

The term 'Revolución Sandinista' also appears in the context of delegitimising the FSLN, as can be seen in the following extract, from Robelo's article cited above: 'En todo caso, las evidencias del horror que viven los nicaragüenses bajo la supuesta revolución sandinista ya empiezan a ser entendidas por un público más amplio' (Robelo Callejas 1985a: 6).⁴⁶ Here the Revolution is cast into doubt as the 'supposed' Sandinista Revolution, and is the protagonist of abuses against the people. The discourse directly casts doubt on the Revolution, questioning it as being the Sandinista Revolution, which indicates that in its present incarnation it is not the same as the one the people fought to bring about, reiterating the BOS manifesto position.

The phrase Sandinista Revolution also occurs in a situation where the FSLN is accused of sabotaging or betraying the original plans of Sandino. Eden Pastora, a former Sandinista militant and heroic figure of the insurrection, exhibits the strategy of acknowledging the Revolution's importance whilst directly challenging its connection to the FSLN government. He is quoted in the ARDE broadsheet article

⁴⁶ "In any case, the evidence of the horror that Nicaraguans live under the supposed sandinista revolution are already beginning to be understood by the wider public"

detailing Pastora's speech in Los Angeles, California, as claiming that 'Nunca seré aliado de las fuerzas comunistas que traicionaron la auténtica Revolución Sandinista en mi país...' (ARDE 1983: 1).⁴⁷ The reference to the 'authentic Sandinista Revolution' displays an important feature of the polysemy seen in the opposition discourse; the FSLN are removed from the opposition conception of the Revolution. Discursively, such a statement casts doubt on the dominant connotation of the collocation 'Sandinista Revolution'. Pastora's description of the Revolution as authentic suggests that the dominant understanding is a false one, allowing the redefinition of the 'true' Revolution. The topos of purity legitimates the opposition's perspective of the Revolution, stemming from the principles of Sandino as a folk hero and forerunner of national liberation, and delegitimizes the perspective seen in the FSLN discourse, a strategy that I discuss further in chapter six.

Rather than the 'Sandinista Revolution' the opposition documents refer to the 'Nicaraguan Revolution'. This indicates a divergence in the identities associated with the Revolution. Referring to it as the 'Nicaraguan Revolution' casts the semantic net wider, including all of the country in the action, even those opposed to the Sandinistas. Looking again to the BOS manifesto, the following extract shows the connection between the Nicaraguan Revolution and the people: 'El triunfo de la Revolución nicaragüense en julio de 1979 fue un triunfo político, apuntalado por la lucha militar librada heroicamente por el pueblo nicaragüense' (BOS 1985?: 7).⁴⁸ As well as reinforcing the idea that the Revolution was a political opening, the heroic Nicaraguan people are the ones who brought about the Nicaraguan Revolution, contrary to the FSLN discourse on the Vanguard of the Revolution as noted above. The power and impetus, in this case, is transferred to the people.

These extracts show the contestation that was actively occurring between the Sandinista and opposition discourse. The FSLN discursively established the Revolution as being Sandinista, which is made evident by the opposition's attempts to discredit the FSLN's claim to ownership of the action. The opposition contests the FSLN's discourse by ascribing a different understanding to the term Revolution,

⁴⁷ 'I will never be aligned with the communist forces that betrayed the authentic Sandinista Revolution in my country...'

⁴⁸ 'The triumph of the Nicaraguan Revolution in July 1979 was a political triumph, backed by the military fight heroically fought by the Nicaraguan people'.

reinforcing their narrative whilst positioning the Revolution as a component of democracy.

The opposition characterising FSLN policies as a betrayal of the Revolution plays a significant role in the opposition discourse. The topoi of origin and purity, each a form of the topos of definition, function with the topos of betrayal as part of a dismantling strategy within the opposition discourse. My analysis of the opposition corpus led me to elaborate Wodak et al.'s topos of definition (Wodak et al. 1999: 39) further into topoi of origin and purity, as they represent a key aspect of the opposition's attempts to delegitimise the FSLN. These two argumentation strategies are used to challenge and discredit the Sandinistas, with the topos of origin presenting claims about who originated certain political principles, whereas the topos of purity refers to claims of dedication to the original intent of those principles. Specifically, Sandino is held up as the founder of the revolutionary movement with the people as those who brought about its success, whilst his principles and those for which the people participated in the Revolution, are those which must be adhered to without deviation. It is worth noting again that the Revolution itself is not typically discredited. Instead the Revolution appears as something that has been hijacked by the FSLN, against the will of the people. Thus, as seen in the statements from the BOS, the original project of the Revolution has been defiled by the FSLN, and this adulteration of revolutionary purpose is a result of a betrayal turning it into a totalitarian project.

Explicit references to the disloyalty to the original intent of the Revolution are present in the opposition corpus, where the Revolution is linked with democracy, and the people have therefore been betrayed by the totalitarian government imposed by the Sandinistas. The FRS, in comments about the FSLN document outlining the purpose and goal of the new education, states that the concept of the *Hombre Nuevo* 'ha sido deformado por el colectivo de la traición,... No hay que olvidar que su vida y sobre todo su lucha siempre estuvieron inspiradas dentro de una irrefutable pureza revolucionaria y democrática que fue traicionada en todos los sentidos' (FRS 1983: 10).⁴⁹ Betrayal, in this instance, is conveyed through the referential strategy of calling the DN the collective of treason, and also through the direct allegation of a

⁴⁹ 'has been deformed by the collective of treason,... One should not forget that the [lives of the heroes and martyrs] and above all their fight were always inspired by an irrefutable revolutionary and democratic purity which was betrayed in every sense.'

complete undermining of the revolutionary ideals. The topos of purity can be seen through the Revolution's association with democratic values as an aspect of the movement's commitment to the original ideals of the Revolution.

The opposition establish themselves as the true followers of Sandino, allowing them to engage the discursive space that the Sandinistas created by aligning themselves, and Sandino by implication, with the Revolution. This is a situation where the opposition discourse worked within the discourse of the FSLN in order to compete for hegemony in the discursive terrain. The FRS constructs the link between themselves and Sandino when they identify a document released by ARDE as opening a political space to save the true Sandino:

El documento de ARDE, leído por el Comandante Edén Pastora Gómez, abre espacio político y llama a la reflexión seria y revolucionaria, para el rescate democrático de la revolución nicaragüense.

Pretende hasta donde es posible, sin renunciar a principios, como dice el documento, ayudar a abrir espacio político interno y externo, para verdaderamente consolidar la Revolución, rescatando al verdadero Sandino, para que como un muro popular, impida ese espantoso regreso al pasado (FRS 1983: 3).⁵⁰

We can see the polysemic use of the Revolution again in this passage through the collocation 'revolución nicaragüense', and the indication that it needs a democratic rescuing. The Revolution, as it relates to the opposition narrative, is Nicaraguan, rather than Sandinista, and democratic, rather than dictatorial. The 'espantoso' return to the past referenced at the end of the extract alluded to the concern that the nation under FSLN leadership was returning to the dictatorial style of governance experienced under the Somoza dynasty, once again conveying the narrative of a dictatorial past continuing into the present. That assertion undermines the FSLN's leadership and implies a betrayal of the revolutionary principles, as viewed by the opposition. Additionally, the claim that the true Sandino must be rescued suggests that the government is not upholding the values and principles of the national hero, and that the image of Sandino is being used in a flawed way by the Sandinistas. The simile likening the opposition's unity to a 'popular wall' is also a salient element in

⁵⁰ 'The ARDE document, read Comandante Edén Pastora Gómez, opens a political space and calls for serious and revolutionary reflection, for the democratic rescue of the Nicaraguan revolution. It attempts as far as it is possible, without renouncing its principles, as the document says, to help to open an internal and external political space, in order to truly consolidate the Revolution, rescuing the true Sandino, so that like a popular wall, it impedes that appalling return to the past.'

this passage. It discursively creates an image of the people uniting as a physical barrier to the FSLN returning the nation to a state of governmental oppression. The passage connects the people and ARDE in the ‘popular wall’, implying that ARDE enjoys the support of the masses, whilst simultaneously indicating that the masses do not support the FSLN’s political project.

Earlier in this publication, the FSLN, along with opposition groups composed of former members of the National Guard, are described as antisandinistas (FRS 1983: 3), combining both the Sandinistas and the GN in the claim of delegitimation. Such a grouping also implies that ARDE represents the true followers of Sandino, again exhibiting the topos of purity. Entering into the government’s discourse and engaging it on its own terms allows the opposition discourse to benefit from the ideas which had already gained hegemony, such as the importance of the Revolution, as described by Ives (2004: 79). Likewise, engaging the dominant discourse head on allowed the opposition to, at least partially, undermine it and carve out a space of its own by exploiting the multiaccentuality of certain terms. Particularly, as I explained above, the Revolution was redefined as a democratic movement, rather than a social transformation. The term was also linked to the people as a whole, rather than to any one political group. Sandino can similarly be considered an empty signifier in their discourse, given that he is recontextualised and redefined as a founding father of democracy in the nation, an aspect of the discourse which I discuss further in chapter six. The polysemic use of these terms allows the opposition narrative to retain them in their own discourse, and also provides a manner of entering into the dominant discursive terrain by accessing the hegemonic discourse. Democracy as a nodal point is also borne out by the redefinition of the Revolution as having been intended to lead to a lasting democratic transformation in the nation. Each of these aspects helps to establish the narrative of national democratic transformation in the opposition discourse.

5.3.3 Opposition References to Unity

Similarly to the FSLN corpus, unity acts as an empty signifier in the opposition discourse. Both corpora indicate that unity is lacking in the nation, but for the opposition, the lack is symptomatic of the FSLN’s governance, and not merely a consequence of the dictatorial past. The FSLN and the opposition each call for a

broad-based national unity, however, for the opposition the FSLN's calls to unify are insufficient as they exclude those opposed to the FSLN's revolutionary project. Specifically, the opposition tie the term unity to democratic governance and political pluralism. Whilst the logic of difference seen with an empty signifier allows disparate groups to identify with the term by filling it according to their own ideologies, the FSLN's discursive attempts to fill the term with its revolutionary project prohibited the opposition groups from identifying with it. Rather, those groups attempt to redefine unity similarly to Revolution, by reconstructing it as an organic situation evolving out of the people's struggle against Somoza. The opposition's call for a democratic transformation also incorporates the idea of being anti-Sandinista, objecting to the perceived dictatorial nature of the government. With this meaning, unity refers to the opposition groups joining together in their efforts to wrest power from the FSLN, and also to the people having united against Somoza in the past and also against the Sandinista government in the present.

Whilst a simple word count is not a sufficient tool for a deep analysis, it can provide a picture of different groups' discursive emphases. Excluding country names, such as *Estados Unidos* and *Unión Soviética*, in the FSLN corpus 'unity' and its various lemmas occur 142 times, whereas the opposition corpus contains 44 such references. Though the word count of the FSLN corpus is roughly one third larger than the opposition corpus, the disparity in the instances of unity is greater than its ratio to the corpora's word count. The lack of references to unity in the opposition corpus indicates a different discursive emphasis. Democracy and its analogue of political pluralism are the dominant thematic aspects in their narrative of national transformation, which does not emphasise ideological unity to the degree that the FSLN narrative of social transformation brought about by the revolutionary project does. This section examines the way unity is used in the opposition discourse, and considers the contestation between the discourses evidenced by references to the opposition discourse in the FSLN documents.

5.3.3.1 Unity in Opposition

In the opposition corpus, unity most often refers to the various movements uniting against the Sandinistas. Two of the main groups, ANUDE (Asamblea Nicaragüense de Unidad Democrática) and UNO (Unión Nacional Opositora), have

unity as part of their name. The occasions which do reference the unity of the Nicaraguan people run counter the dominant Sandinista discourse on the topic. Humberto Belli (1985?), in a pamphlet entitled *Unidad o Caos* issued by *La Prensa* detailing the political failures of the FSLN and Nicaragua's subsequent national crisis, mentions the unity that the fight against Somoza brought, describing the DN as 'goza[ndo] de auténtica admiración en casi todos los sectores del país'.⁵¹ However he goes on to state that by 1981 the situation had changed, and that 'la unidad nacional que había llevado al triunfo contra Somoza está desquebrajada, los que ayer luchaban juntos hoy se hostilizan recíprocamente y casi se consideran enemigos' (Belli 1985?: 3).⁵² Belli construes unity as existing in the near past, during the overthrow of Somoza. He additionally acknowledges that the DN enjoyed a period of hegemony after the victory owing to the widespread support for and unification around the FSLN during the revolutionary uprising. However, in his estimation, that solidarity had been destroyed by the subsequent years of Sandinista governance. Those who fought together now are fighting each other, referencing the opposition groups such as the MDN and other political parties that allied themselves with the FSLN during the Revolution, but afterwards found themselves marginalised and their political ideas not represented in the government.

Belli goes on to describe where the rupture occurred, explaining that after the revolutionary triumph the FSLN had 'dos opciones fundamentales: una ruta de moderación, sustentada en una amplia unidad nacional,... o una ruta de radicalización hacia la izquierda, tipo Cuba, que, dadas las circunstancias internas y externas era muy probable que condujera al caos o a graves problemas' (ibid:3).⁵³ Belli indicates that it is unclear which path the FSLN had chosen, but states that the opposition was insistent that it was the latter. For the opposition, the original, organic unity was discarded by the FSLN in favour of advancing their national revolutionary programme, according to Belli. Similar to the redefinition of Revolution, the opposition redefine unity as having existed within a moment of true democratic pluralism during the uprising against Somoza. Again, polysemy emerges

⁵¹ 'enjoy[ing] the authentic admiration in almost all sectors of the country'

⁵² 'the national unity that led to the triumph against Somoza is torn apart, those who yesterday were fighting together today are harassing each other and almost consider each other enemies.'

⁵³ 'two fundamental options: a route of moderation sustained by broad national unity... or a route of radicalisation toward the left, like Cuba, that given the internal and external circumstances was very likely to lead to chaos or serious problems.'

as a powerful tool for the opposition discourse, where they are able to enter into the hegemony of the Sandinista narrative to redirect certain core aspects of the discourse in their favour.

The BOS directly takes aim at the Sandinista claim of unity within the nation. Its political manifesto declares one of its main principles to be national unity. Employing the term used in the FSLN discourse can be considered a discursive appropriation of the term, disengaging it from the dominant discourse and recontextualising it within the subordinated discourse: ‘Unidad Nacional. La familia nicaragüense está más desunida que nunca, en desbandada ante la insufrible situación nacional; la unión de toda la Nación es una de las obligaciones del BOS’ (BOS 1985?: 24).⁵⁴ The BOS in this instance presents a situation that contradicts the FSLN’s position on unity and claims that position for itself. Referring to the people as the Nicaraguan family creates a sense of integral connection beyond political identification. As I highlighted above in my discussion of the motivations leading to the BOS’s formation, the contention that the democratic transition was being thwarted by the Sandinista government can be seen in this extract. The BOS alludes to the failures of the FSLN in the phrase ‘the insufferable national situation’ delegitimising it, and by extension its discourse of national unity. Additionally, the phrase ‘the union of the whole Nation’ indicates that the opposition groups define unity as including all sectors, not just those who are in ideological alignment with their position. We see in this statement the primacy of pluralistic democracy as a nodal point organising the opposition discourse. The multiaccentuality of unity is also apparent in the recontextualisation of the term. As it is situated in the BOS document, unity takes on the meaning of pluralistic solidarity in support of democracy. Delegitimising the Sandinista government by referring to the ‘insufferable national situation’ in which the people are ‘more disunited than ever’, locates the term ‘unity’ in a situation of contestation. This allows the term to be redefined by the contextual implications of the BOS document, calling for the failing policies of the FSLN to be replaced with a true democratic process.

In the Robelo passage in the MDN journal *Rescate* seen above, we saw that his comments also link unity with democracy: ‘El pueblo nicaragüense y la oposición cívica y beligerante están incuestionablemente convencidas de llegar a la unidad

⁵⁴ National Unity. The Nicaraguan family is more divided than ever, in disorder in the face of the insufferable national situation; the union of the entire nation is one of BOS’s obligations.’

antitotalitaria como la mejor y más rápida vía para lograr la democracia en Nicaragua' (Robelo Callejas 1985a: 6).⁵⁵ Modifying unity as 'anti-totalitarian', Robelo echoes the BOS extract in implying that unification under the Sandinistas is limited, whereas with the opposition it is all-encompassing. However unity is not necessarily an end in itself, as Robelo cites it as the quickest means to establishing democracy in the country, evidencing the use of democracy as a nodal point around which the discourse is organised. Included in this union alongside, though separate from, the opposition is the *pueblo*, suggesting an awareness that the opposition parties had not yet achieved universal support.

The opposition discredits a central pillar of the FSLN platform, national unity, by contesting the definition of that term. They redefine unity to include all Nicaraguan regardless of party affiliation, and establish it as integral for achieving democracy, indicative of the polysemous nature of the term in the corpora. In dismantling aspects of the FSLN's discourse, the opposition present a counter-hegemonic discourse that reinforces their narrative of national political transformation.

5.3.3.2 The Opposition and In-Group Creation

Whereas with the FSLN corpus, my analysis reveals the use of the possessive 'our' in creating an in-group that annexed the people, the opposition corpus uses 'we' constructs to refer to what they are doing on behalf of the Nicaraguans. The RN portrays itself as fighting for the people, claiming that, 'luchamos por la reconciliación de la familia nicaragüense y por la reconstrucción física y moral de nuestra patria' (RN 1987?: 2).⁵⁶ The audience exclusive 'we' separates the opposition group from the people in its actions, but the opposition is then included with the people as members of the country. Similarly, the FRS describe their armed resistance as acting on behalf of the people saying that '... a balazos vamos a reconquistar la seguridad de un porvenir digno de nuestro pueblo' (FRS 1983:2).⁵⁷

⁵⁵ 'The Nicaraguan people and the civic and belligerent opposition are unquestionably convinced to arrive at an anti-totalitarian unity as the best and quickest path in order to achieve democracy in Nicaragua.'

⁵⁶ 'we are fighting for the reconciliation of the Nicaraguan family and for the moral and physical reconstruction of the nation'

⁵⁷ 'with bullets we are going to regain the security of a decent future for our people'

The use of the addressee-exclusive ‘we’ in this instance refers not to the people, but to the FRS and its actions (Wodak et al. 1999: 45). Fighting for ‘our people’ justifies its actions, which in turn connects it to the people.

As I explained above, the FSLN corpus evidences the logic of equivalence in creating the in-group, establishing the *pueblo* as those who agree with the Sandinistas’ revolutionary project, and excluding those who do not. Conversely, the logic of difference prevails in the opposition corpus, which Howarth (2006: 113-4) describes as downplaying differences in order to achieve cohesion between disparate groups. Rather than being antagonistic, ‘identities are “merely different” from one another’ (ibid: 114). In this manner, the opposition creates an in-group that is more open than that of the FSLN, which reflects their discourse on unity. Rather than the *pueblo* being the central referential element of the in-group, the opposition most often refer to the Nicaraguans as those who are acting in concert. This reinforces the narrative of political plurality functioning within a democratic Nicaragua, where disparate groups function together through the political process.

The opposition’s use of ‘the Nicaraguans’ with a first person plural verb form establishes the in-group as the whole country, rather than members of a particular party or sympathisers with a particular movement. This results in the opposition discourse including the people as a whole in the concerns or actions of the opposition, displaying the strategy of cohesivation (Wodak et al. 1999: 38). The following two extracts indicate the opposition’s use of the inclusive verb form in this way:

‘Los nicaragüenses comenzamos a preguntarnos por qué habíamos luchado’ (RN 1987?: 2).⁵⁸

‘Los nicaragüenses estamos hartos de intervenciones. No debemos permitir que nuestro suelo patrio vuelva a ser mancillado por invasores de cualquier país’ (BOS 1985?: 25).⁵⁹

In both cases, the phrase ‘We Nicaraguans’ creates an in-group and presents a united front in questioning the present condition of the nation. The RN expresses doubt about the purpose of the Revolution as a common question among the population. The BOS describes the people’s state of mind, using the collective sentiment to

⁵⁸ ‘We Nicaraguans are beginning to wonder why we fought’

⁵⁹ ‘We Nicaraguans are tired of interventions. We should not allow our native land to be besmirched again by invaders from whatever country.’

exhort them to refuse intervention from any country, echoing their contention that under the Sandinistas the USSR and Cuba had become the imperial forces. Both statements point to the unanimity of all the citizens, regardless of political affiliation, in the negative perception of the results of the revolutionary project.

Rather than the collocation *nuestro pueblo* seen in the FSLN corpus, the opposition refers to *el pueblo nicaragüense*. The people in this phrase are not designated as our people, as the possessive is dropped in favour of the definite article. In this manner, the opposition groups do not discursively annex the people for any one party, exhibiting the logic of difference linking numerous groups under the nodal point of democracy. Simultaneously, the *pueblo* is redefined by the modifier Nicaraguan, where the dominant FSLN definition of the people as those who belong to the FSLN and their project is rejected in favour of a more inclusive conception of the people. Again, the opposition documents exhibit the polysemous nature of the discursive element by ascribing a different understanding to one of the key terms of the Sandinista discourse underpinning the narrative of national transformation.

In a statement outlining the party's goals for the nation, the RN refers to the *pueblo nicaragüense* as having been made fun of by the FSLN: 'La insurrección popular que con el decidido concurso de todos los sectores de la sociedad nicaragüense, logró el derrocamiento de la dictadura anterior, fue traicionada por una minoría, el partido armado del Frente Sandinista se burló del pueblo nicaragüense' (RN 1987: 4).⁶⁰ The Revolution, alluded to by the reference to 'the popular insurrection', is again depicted as having been betrayed by the FSLN. The RN refer to the FSLN as a minority, which indicates that the party does not represent the people. The Sandinistas are accused of insulting the people, presumably by failing to establish the democratic aims of the popular Revolution. The openness of the in-group is evident in both the collocation *pueblo nicaragüense*, and description of the Revolution as resulting from the collaborative actions of 'all sectors of the Nicaraguan society'. In his article entitled 'Sandinismo no Quiere la Paz' (Urroz 1988: 1), Roberto Urroz, President of the MDN, explains that the RN refused proposed peace plans because they do not represent the Nicaraguan people's desires.

⁶⁰ 'The popular insurrection which with the decisive combination of all the sectors of the Nicaraguan society achieved the defeat of the previous dictatorship was betrayed by a minority, the armed Sandinista Front party made fun of the Nicaraguan people.'

He states that, ‘En el caso específico de Nicaragua, la Resistencia Nicaragüense (RN) aceptó el reto de respaldar el plan de Esquipulas II, a pesar de no haber sido consultada y no llenar dicho plan todas las aspiraciones del pueblo Nicaragüense’ (Urroz 1988: 1).⁶¹ Here, the RN is acting for the benefit of the Nicaraguan people, who are not being fully represented in the peace process. Similarly, in an interview with the prominent opposition editorialist José Castillo Osejo, Adolfo Calero Portocarrero, the political secretary of the PCN, states that his party will use money they might receive from the USA for the benefit of the Nicaraguan people: ‘Estoy seguro que el Partido Conservador los invertiría en algo benéfico para el pueblo nicaragüense...’ (Calero Portocarrero 198?: 10).⁶² Both of these statements indicate the extension of unity beyond the party, with the various opposition parties operating with the Nicaraguan people in mind. The people are not claimed as part of any one group, rather they are the larger group to which each opposition group belongs, and for whose benefit they work. The opposition discourse semantically expands the unity of the people to include all Nicaraguans regardless of party affiliation, exemplifying their narrative of political transformation based establishing democracy and political pluralism in the country.

5.3.3.3 FSLN References to Opposition Arguments

In a situation where the battle for discursive hegemony is overtly manifested, the FSLN corpus contains references to the opposition’s discourse on unity. In the same passage where he explains the role of the FSLN as the only group to create unity, Carrión also mentions the opposition’s claims against that unity. He states that though other groups, such as the PCN, could not achieve unity, due to their traitorous nature, those groups are ‘los que ahora dicen el Frente Sandinista es el que ha roto la unidad’ (Carrión 1981: 8).⁶³ Confronting head on the criticisms of Sandinista unity, Carrión undermines the discourse emanating from the opposition groups that depicts the FSLN as having betrayed the people’s original unity after the Revolution. He

⁶¹ ‘In the specific case of Nicaragua, the Nicaraguan Resistance accepted the challenge to support the Esquipulas II plan despite not having been consulted and despite the fact that the plan does not meet all the aspirations of the Nicaraguan people’

⁶² ‘I am certain that the Conservative Party will invest them in something beneficial for the Nicaraguan people...’

⁶³ ‘those who now say that the Sandinista Front is the one that has broken the unity’

gives a picture of the opposition as failing to foster unity themselves, and then criticising the FSLN when they finally achieved it.

A similar reference can be found in the DN's reaction to Robelo's renunciation of the Revolution and FSLN. In response to a question about whether Robelo's renunciation had affected national unity, Comandante Wheelock responds that 'nosotros vemos de que aquí se ha querido dar una imagen de que se ha producido una fractura en la unidad nacional' (DN 1980: 2).⁶⁴ The DN member alleges that Robelo intended to create the illusion of a break in the unity. Wheelock goes on to claim that this attempt was futile since Robelo and his supporters had never been part of the unity and thus could not possibly break that unity by leaving it. The FSLN's attempt to fix the meaning of unity as including those who support their revolutionary project is evident in this comment. That meaning is then used to refute the opposition's accusations that the FSLN had fractured true national unity through their policies and practices. The contestation over the concept of unity illustrates the polysemy of the term, as it was used by both camps with divergent meanings. Additionally, the use of similar discursive elements reflects Ives' contention that counter-hegemonic groups often have to enter the discursive terrain through the dominant group's 'language' (Ives 2004: 78). The opposition's allegations in both examples that the unity was broken were recast by the FSLN as a means of delegitimising the claims and the efforts to redefine unity. By directly addressing the subversive discourse, the FSLN attempted to reassert its discursive hegemony on the topic.

These extracts show the contestation occurring within the discursive realm to gain hegemony in the country. The FSLN, as the party that gained power after the Revolution with the people's support, originally experienced what Femia calls integral hegemony (Femia 1981: 46). The party's goals and the goals of the populace were largely consonant. However, as the opposition's discourse evidences, the consensus was subject to dispute. The opposition employed some of the same discursive elements and signifiers as the FSLN, but attaching markedly different significations to them. The counter-hegemonic nature of the opposition discourse is directed by their narrative of national political transformation, oriented around the nodal point of democracy.

⁶⁴ 'we see here that he wanted to give the impression that the national unity has been fractured'

5.4 Interview Perspectives on the Revolution

Given that the interviews come from a variety of individuals, each recounting their own recollections of the 1980s, it is not surprising that there is no overarching narrative common to that corpus. Likewise, the personal experiences of the participants indicate that their perspectives do not directly correlate with those of either the FSLN or the opposition. However, patterns do emerge across the interviews, particularly regarding considerations of the Revolution as an action and as a discursive element, and of the unification of the people. There is no particular collocation with Revolution that appears in the interview corpus. Though the term Sandinista Revolution does occur on a few occasions, it is not a dominant construction. Revolution most often occurs without a modifier. Whilst this could represent evidence of the Revolution as a reified entity, as in the Sandinista corpus, the use of the term does not support that conclusion. More similar to the opposition idea of the Revolution as finite and finished action, the term typically refers to the actual fighting and overthrow of Somoza rather than to an entity lasting beyond 1979. Perhaps predictably, the representations of the Revolution appear to fall along political lines, with those supportive of the Sandinistas more closely approximating the FSLN's discursive style, and those less supportive approximating that of the opposition.

The interviews on the whole focus on personal concerns during the 1980s. The differences in focus between the interviews and the other two corpora suggest that neither the FSLN nor the opposition were able to achieve lasting integral hegemony since neither narrative centred on the daily struggles that the populace experienced. With the FSLN's focus on societal transformation, and the opposition's focus on political transformation, the participants' concerns about food, education, and the ongoing military conflict were not directly addressed by either group. In this way, whilst discussions about the Revolution and unity largely fall along party lines, the interviewees' contributions present a different perspective on the dominant themes in the FSLN and opposition discourses and their contest for hegemony.

During our interview in her home, I asked Soledad her opinion of the terms *liberación nacional*, *unidad nacional* and *soberanía nacional*. She replied that:

Esos fueron términos buenos durante el principio de la revolución sandinista. Todos creíamos en esto. Todos creíamos en que en realidad había que pelear por Nicaragua, porque de que esté un abuelo, un padre, un hijo, y los nietos en el poder gobernando todo, no es bueno. Hablamos de los extremos que son malos. Entonces, si fueron frases que disfrazó mucho por mucho tiempo la intencionalidad de los sandinistas al final, la intencionalidad de Daniel, pienso yo porque todavía siempre yo creo que hay buenos sandinistas, hay gente que de corazón luchó y estaba empeñada en hacer realidad lo que pensaba Sandino.⁶⁵

The Sandinista Revolution that Soledad refers to above is the uprising against the Somoza dynasty, with everyone acting in unison to wrest power from one family. Additionally, she indicates that the populace in Managua was largely unified, and accepting of the Sandinista vision as presented in its discourse at the beginning of the Revolution. This supports my contention that the FSLN initially experienced integral hegemony, but subsequently lost that hegemony in the ensuing years in government. However, Soledad also points out that by the end of the 1980s that hegemony had deteriorated, when the phrases indicating solidarity and freedom came to be seen as reflecting Daniel Ortega's plans, rather than the popular will. Significantly, the Revolution in Soledad's comments is the act of overthrowing Somoza, rather than the reified Revolution seen in the FSLN discourse.

Another reference to the act of revolution can be seen in Elena's interview, which I conducted in her office at the school where she worked as a secretary. She began her discussion of what things were like after the Sandinistas took power, saying:

Después del triunfo de la revolución de 1979 y a medio año para el 80, pues todo era bonito, era bonito porque ... mucha unidad, el gobierno ofreció mucha ayuda a las personas que vienen sin casa, sin alimento. Estaba como fiesta de alegría pues. Pero, pero bien, son cosas también negativas. Las cositas negativas entre ellas para comenzar con la educación. Punto es que nos metieron nosotros como estudiantes la historia de por ejemplo de Rusia y su revolución, este, el conflicto entre palestinos y judíos, verdad... Nos metieron la historia así, de cuba y cosas así. Nos metieron muchas de política en la escuela y creo que no estaban como niños y como jóvenes

⁶⁵ 'Those were good terms during the beginning of the Sandinista revolution. We all believed in this. We all believed that in reality you had to fight for Nicaragua, because having a grandfather, father, son and grandsons governing everything is not good. We're speaking of the extremes that are the bad things. So, yes, they were phrases that disguised for a while the intentionality of the Sandinistas, in the end Daniel's intentionality, I think so, because I still believe that there are good Sandinistas, there are people who fought from the heart and were committed to making Sandino's thoughts a reality.'

preparados para eso. Pienso que era un tema para adultos. Y no era para confundir la mente de los niños'⁶⁶

The Revolution in Elena's comments is also a dated and completed occurrence; it is the Revolution of 1979. Both Soledad and Elena's statements reflect a conception of the Revolution as a finished activity bound by time, rather than a transcendent personified entity, reflecting the opposition narrative. Elena also comments, here, on the unity she observed and experienced at the beginning of the FSLN's time in government. Similar to Soledad, she indicates that the period was a positive time for the majority of the people, likening it to a party atmosphere.

Whilst recalling how she experienced the FSLN government in her own life as a high school student during the 1980s, Lucinda notes that whenever someone wanted to use the library or visit a museum, it was necessary to listen to a talk about the Revolution before entering. Her recollections directly reference the FSLN's discursive project where the government's efforts to promote their conception of the Revolution appeared obvious to her:

Otra cosa que recuerdo también era cuando iba uno al museo. Siempre en todos los lugares de que tenían que ver con el gobierno, siempre ellos enfocaban la revolución, la revolución, la revolución. La concientización de lo que se está haciendo, de lo que se está viviendo, ... siempre con creando un ambiente de que ahora estamos mejor de lo del gobierno anterior, Somoza, la Guardia, el imperialismo, y todo eso... se dio mucho.⁶⁷

Intentional efforts were made to gain support for the party's narrative on the Revolution as a process of national transformation. Lucinda likens it to the consciousness raising associated with liberation theology. The promotion of the Sandinista narrative appeared to be an overt effort in her estimation. Though

⁶⁶ 'After the Triumph of the revolution in 1979 and a half year into 1980, well, everything was beautiful, everything was beautiful because... a lot of unity. The government offered a lot of help to people who came without a house, without food. It was like a party of happiness. But, but well, they are also negative things. The little negative things, among them, to begin there is education. The point is that they taught us as students in the history, for example, of Russia and its revolution, the conflict between Palestinians and Jews, right? They taught us history like that, about Cuba and things like that. They taught us a lot about politics in school and I believe that as children and young people they were not prepared for that. I think it was a theme for adults.'

⁶⁷ 'Another thing I remember also was when one went to the museum. Always, everywhere that was associated with the government, they always focused on the revolution, the revolution, the revolution. The consciousness raising about what is being done, about what is being lived... always creating an atmosphere that now we are better than the previous government, Somoza, the Guard, imperialism, and all this... they did that a lot.'

Lucinda neither supports nor condemns the FSLN's discursive efforts, she does not reflect their idea of a reified Revolution in her comments.

Sofía, a sympathiser of youth opposition movements during the 1980s, also commented on the FSLN discourse on the Revolution. As she is currently an educator and was a university student in the 1980s, I asked her what education was like under the Sandinistas. In response, she discussed her participation in the Literacy Crusade and what she saw as efforts toward ideological formation that she believed went hand in hand with the literacy teaching. In Reference to the instruction on the Revolution, she says:

Salimos miles de miles de miles de estudiantes para las montañas, con ideales, con sueños de enseñar a los campesinos, los que no sabían leer, que habían estado tanto tiempo en el oscurantismo. Sin embargo, después yo vi que sí usaron a los estudiantes. ¿Por qué? Porque además de enseñar a leer, el plan era politizar, sembrar una ideología. Entonces, enseñábamos a leer con cartillas que decían “la Revolución es muy importante. La Revolución es el pueblo. Carlos Fonseca siempre vivirá en nuestros corazones.” Y claro ya pues te da cuenta de que una forma u otra lo que están haciendo es usándote para manipular la situación.⁶⁸

Here, Sofía views the connection the FSLN was attempting to establish between the Revolution and the people as a conscious act. As I discussed in section 5.2 above, the people were linked to the Revolution as belonging to it and being co-labourers with the FSLN in furthering the revolutionary project. The Revolution as a nodal point in the Sandinista discourse was obvious to Sofía and appeared to her to be a manipulation of the people for the benefit of the party. There is a lack of hegemony evidenced in her comments, where rather than supporting the project, and the Literacy Crusade's use to further the revolutionary transformation, she denounces the discursive efforts made to promote the Sandinista narrative of transformation.

The two former members of the Sandinista Army both refer to the Revolution more often than any other participants; Ignacio referred to it on eighteen occasions, and Carlos six. These two interviewees in particular discuss the Revolution as more

⁶⁸ ‘We left, thousands and thousands of students, for the mountains, with ideals, with dreams of teaching the campesinos, those who did not know how to read, who had been in the dark for so long. Nevertheless, afterwards I saw that yes they used the students. Why? Because in addition to teaching people to read, the plan was to politicise, to plant an ideology. So, we would teach with primers that said “the Revolution is very important. The Revolution is the people. Carlos Fonseca will live forever in our hearts.” And, clearly, you already realise that, in one way or another, what they were doing was using you to manipulate the situation.’

than a completed action. This is possibly due to their military service, as they would have been immersed in the official Sandinista discourse during that time. Also, these two men are currently the most sympathetic to the Sandinista party, adding to the likelihood that they would reproduce the FSLN discourse. Ignacio states that:

Increíble en época de la revolución, que fueron prácticamente 10 años estamos hablando de la revolución más joven en la historia, estamos hablando de la última revolución del siglo XX, a lo mejor, de la última revolución de la historia, no se por cuánto tiempo. En época de la revolución, Nicaragua alcanzó los mejores niveles en educación, salud, y deportes... La revolución estaba un proyecto socialista que venía a beneficiar a la mayoría de la población, que era la población pobre. Y por otro lado venía a perjudicar a la clase burócrata, a los pudientes del país, ¿verdad? Porque la revolución confiscó muchas propiedades y le dio tierra, casa, a gente que nunca soñaba con tener su propia propiedad. Y eso le sucedió a mi madre, eso le sucedió a mucha gente de mi familia que a través de la revolución tuvieron oportunidad de estudio, de salir fuera del país a estudiar, oportunidad de obtener su casa. Entonces hubo como una reivindicación de los derechos usurpados al pueblo.⁶⁹

For Ignacio, the Revolution is not contained to a year, but is part of an epoch.

Ignacio felt it necessary to explain the importance of the Revolution as an exceptional one. The repetition of the term four times in one sentence reinforces its weight. Ignacio, similarly to the Sandinista use of the term, refers to the Revolution as an anthropomorphised entity. In referring to the local state intelligence groups, the Sandinista Defence Committees (Comités de Defensa Sandinista – CDS), he talks about the Revolution as an entity, stating that:

No existía una oposición desarrollada. Porque el gobierno sandinista tenía un sistema de control totalitario, a tal extremo de que estaba controlado cada metro cuadrado de una manzana por la revolución. Existía lo que se llamaban los CDS. Los CDS estaban ubicados en cada barrio. Y el CDS es el que vigilaba a ud. e

⁶⁹ ‘Incredible in that epoch of the revolution, which was practically 10 years, we are talking about the youngest revolution in history, we are talking about the last revolution of the twentieth century, perhaps the last revolution in history, I do not know for how long. In the epoch of the revolution, Nicaragua reached the best levels in education, health and sports. The revolution was a socialist project that came to benefit the majority of the population, which was the poor population. And on the other side, it came to persecute the bureaucratic class, the wealthy in the country, right? Because the Revolution confiscated a lot of property and gave land, houses, to people who never dreamed of having their own property. And this happened to my mother, this happened to many people in my family who, through the Revolution, had the opportunity to study, to leave the country to study, to get a house. So, it was like a vindication of the rights that had been usurped from the people.’

informaba a la revolución si ud. estaba actuando bien o mal en contra de la revolución.⁷⁰

The personified treatment of the Revolution with the personal ‘a’, reflects the similar use by the FSLN seen in section 5.2.2. In Ignacio’s comments, he discusses the Revolution as a process, transforming the possibilities available to the *pueblo*. However, there is also some criticism visible in his statement above where he characterises the Sandinista government as having totalitarian control over every inch of the country, indicating that his support was not without some critical reflection on the FSLN’s actions.

Carlos’ use of the word Revolution likewise displays a similarity with the FSLN discourse. In the extract below, the Revolution can be seen as a transformative project, in line with the FSLN narrative. Whilst describing his experience in the army, Carlos explains that when he left the army, he felt a responsibility to obtain an education, describing it as the other part of the Revolution: ‘Cuando llega el 86, ya bueno, me salgo; tengo que estudiar. Me puse a estudiar en el 86-87-88 y creo que 89 yo ya estaba pensando que ya estuvimos allí, pero tenemos que buscar también la otra parte de Revolución, buscar cómo estudiar’.⁷¹ In subsequent comments, the threat of the Revolution’s failure emerges as a justification for the Patriotic Military Service (Servicio Militar Patriótico - SMP), which was a mandatory draft of young men into the army in the mid-1980s. Carlos describes the situation where volunteers and draftees served together in the army:

Pero algunos iban (a la montaña) por ir, porque era una obligación del gobierno, porque lo puso el Frente y nosotros íbamos por convicción. Pero te quiero aclarar una cosa y que quede bien, es que yo me fui voluntario y la gente, la mayoría fue voluntaria, algunos que se fueron por ir, porque los obligaban, por ellos, por cuando estaban en la montaña ellos se acobardan y se quedaban con el fusil y mataban a 3-4 de nosotros y te hacían llorar. Pasaba eso ya con el SMP, Servicio Militar Patriótico. La gente dice Servicio Militar Obligatorio, le decía, pero había que hacerlo y la Revolución no se podía perder.⁷²

⁷⁰ ‘There did not exist an organised opposition. Because the Sandinista government had a system of totalitarian control, to such an extent that every square meter of a hectare was controlled by the revolution. There were what was called the CDS. The CDS were located in each neighbourhood. And the CDS was the one that would keep an eye on you and inform the revolution if you were acting positively or negatively toward the revolution.’

⁷¹ ‘to also look for the other part of the Revolution, to look for a way to study.’

⁷² ‘But some went to the mountain for the sake of going, because it was a government obligation, because the Front put them there and we went for conviction. But I want to clarify something, and to

The threat of external aggression against Nicaragua, and for him particularly against the Revolution, meant obligatory service was necessary and warranted. In both of these comments, the Revolution appears to be process that extended beyond the initial insurrection. It also possesses the authoritative characteristics attributed to it by the FSLN discourse. For Ignacio, it provided opportunities for his mother and others that they would not have had otherwise. Whilst for Carlos, the Revolution provided educational benefits, yet it also required sacrifice on the part of the people in order to ensure the Revolution's success.

The interviewees' statements exhibit certain similarities to both the FSLN and opposition discourses. However, none of the participants referred to the Revolution as frequently as either the FSLN or opposition documents, indicating that it did not maintain a similar level of importance in their recollections. Additionally, the lack of references to the Revolution could perhaps be due to the decreased presence of the term in contemporary political discourse. Though Ortega was again president when I conducted my interviews, even the official government speeches have less reference to the Revolution than the Sandinista corpus from the 1980s. This is possibly due to the temporal distance from the act of revolution in 1979, but also reflects a change in the current discourse away from the Revolution as a nodal point for the narrative of national transformation. Nonetheless, the contestation over the ideological definition of the Revolution, and its polysemous nature, is reflected in the participants' accounts.

5.4.1 Interview perspectives on Unity

The interviews also provide insight into the discourse on unity, particularly regarding the term *pueblo*. Bearing in mind the exclusive idea of the *pueblo* created by the FSLN discourse, varied perspectives are presented on what this group is and how it is constructed. Significantly, the participants used the term *gente* more often (245 occurrences) than *pueblo* (115 occurrences), with the exception of the two oldest participants, Inés and Sergio, who used *pueblo* more than the remaining

make it very clear, it is that I went voluntarily and the people, the majority went voluntarily, some went to go, because they were obligated. For them, when they were in the mountain they became frightened and stayed with their gun and killed three or four of us, and they make you cry. This happened with the SMP, the Patriotic Military Service. The people say Obligatory Military Service, they would say, but it had to be done, and the Revolution could not be lost'

interviewees, and more often than *gente*. Contrary to what we saw above, where the interviews mirrored the current Sandinista party's decreased use of Revolution, *pueblo* remains a frequent term in Ortega's speeches, and those of his government (Ortega 2007c; Ortega 2008b). The interviewees in their discussions do not reflect either the discourse of the 1980s or that of the late 2000s. Neither term in the interview corpus occurs with any particular modifier, with the participants speaking about *el pueblo* or *la gente* as stand-alone terms.

Inés, currently a school administrator, was working and attending university during the 1980s. She directly addresses the Sandinistas' concept of the *pueblo* in her interview I conducted at her office. Whilst explaining to me the rationing and the food lines everyone had to stand in, she recalls the excesses of the FSLN and their *Diplotienda*, where foreign diplomats, and party officials could obtain high quality food and hygiene products. This was a sharp contradiction to what she viewed as the Sandinista policy of standing with the people. She recalls that:

Yo observaba, los que eran del grupo Sandinista, ellos tenían una tienda especial donde habían todos los productos que ellos querían, y ellos sí podían tener acceso a esos productos y el pueblo no. Entonces eso, a mi también, yo que fui a alfabetizar joven, yo apoyaba mucho a los sandinistas porque creía en su programa, pero cuando miré esas cosas que ellos estaban haciendo, que ellos sí podían tenerlo, pero el pueblo no. Entonces miré que esa filosofía de que para el pueblo sí todo, para el pueblo todo era nada más una política un poco no tan, como siempre, no tan verdadera.⁷³

For her, the centrality of the *pueblo* in the FSLN's ideology was cast into suspicion by the unequal access to consumer goods. The idea that everything was done for the people alone was contradicted by certain party actions. Inés states that she initially supported the Sandinistas and their vision, bolstered by her time working on the literacy crusade. However, her support waned when she saw that whilst the *pueblo* suffered, the FSLN members did not go wanting. She cites the *Diplotienda*, as most informants did, as a major example of the Sandinistas' neglect of the people. There,

⁷³ 'I observed, those who were from the Sandinista group, they had a special store where there were all the products they wanted, and they, yes, could have access to those products, and the people, no. So that, for me too, I, who went to alphabetise the young people, I supported the Sandinista a lot because I believed in their programme, but when I looked at those things that they were doing, that they, yes, could have those things, put the people no. Then I saw that that philosophy that everything is for the people, for the people it was all nothing more than a policy that was, as always, not very true.'

the party members could buy a variety of goods not accessible to the rest of the population, who were living off inferior products available only with ration cards. For Inés, the FSLN discourse on the *pueblo* did not coincide with the party's actions towards the people in the years after the insurrection and the literacy crusade.

Lucinda also comments on the discourse whilst discussing the contemporary political situation. I asked her to discuss what the opposition was like currently, which prompted her to describe her perspective of the current political climate as a whole. In this portion of her interview, she commented that she believes that the FSLN only wants to create division between the people based on economic status. She states that:

[Los Sandinistas] quieren hacer la división. Este, como no tiene posibilidades y es pobre es pueblo. Este como tiene más posibilidades y puede surgir, no es pueblo. Entonces esa división es lo que el gobierno está haciendo cuando levanta el pueblo en contra del pueblo, es lo que por ejemplo no me gusta, que están haciendo esas divisiones. De que el pobre es él que sufre y él que necesita y él que tiene que ser apoyado. Y que él que tiene mejores posibilidades ya no es, creo ni como nicaragüense lo quieren ver.⁷⁴

Her comment touches on two aspects of the FSLN discourse discussed above. The creation of the *pueblo* as an in-group, entailing out-group construction, is evident from the claim that certain groups are considered part of the people, whilst others are not. Interestingly, she immediately cites the effect of this in-group/out-group creation, noting that it causes division between the people. Lucinda's own wording in stating this is telling. She opts to express it as the *pueblo* fighting against the *pueblo*, indicating that, for her, the *pueblo* is a single unit comprising all the citizens. The second aspect of the FSLN discourse visible in Lucinda's comments is the conceptual exclusion of people from the nation if they are not part of the *pueblo*. This is visible when she says that she does not believe the government wants to consider them as Nicaraguans. Her commentary on the contemporary discourse of the government reflects the Sandinista discourse of the 1980s suggesting that strategies employed during the first Sandinista government are still in use. Their

⁷⁴ '[The Sandinistas] want to create division. This person who does not have possibilities and is poor is the people. This person who has more possibilities and can raise themselves up is not part of the people. So, that division is what the government is making when it raises the people up against each other, is what, for example, I don't like, that they are creating these divisions. That the poor is the one who suffers and the one in need, and the one that has to be supported. And the one who has better possibilities is not, I do not believe they even want to see him as Nicaraguan.'

longevity suggests that these inclusion and exclusion strategies remain integral elements of the FSLN discourse; the Sandinistas can be seen to continue to promote a logic of equivalence, setting the *pueblo* in antagonism to those who are not part of that in-group.

Similarly, Sofía, responding to my asking her to speak about her experiences once the military action against the opposition began, describes why she began to oppose the government and draws attention to the overt construction of out-groups. She explains that after returning from the literacy crusade, a slogan was circulated stating ‘él que no brinca es contra’⁷⁵, referring those who did not participate in the closing celebrations for the crusade. For Sofia this was troubling, since she saw her participation as a personal choice. She decided that if not celebrating made her a *contra*, then so be it. Her depiction of the beginning of her doubts about the Revolution highlights the exclusion strategy employed by the FSLN at the time. Those who did not support the Sandinistas in this case were constructed as *contras*, which has resonances of the construction of the opposition as *contras* and outside of the *pueblo*. Inclusion and exclusion strategies appear to be a marked element of the Sandinista discourse as they are recognised and commented on by interviewees. However, the political orientation of these informants, particularly Sofía as an opposition sympathiser, may also have heightened their awareness of the FSLN discourse, since they may have been among those excluded.

The in-group construction which centred on the *pueblo* flows into the discourse on unity as well. The respondents’ discussions of unity are much more varied than on the *pueblo* or the Revolution, with multiple perspectives present within the individual interviews. On the whole, each participant referred to the unity within the country right after the triumph over Somoza positively, often attributing it to the Sandinistas. This can be seen in Inés’s interview where she says that:

En un momento, todos los pueblos, yo podía ver eso, casi todo el pueblo de Nicaragua ansiaba ya no tener una dictadura somocista en el país. Y todo el pueblo estaba unánime casi apoyando el Frente Sandinista, verdad? Porque el programa del gobierno era algo precioso, pues que todo el mundo pensaba que iba a ser lo mejor para el pueblo de Nicaragua. Pero después de unos cuatro, cinco, seis años, fue

⁷⁵ ‘anyone who does not celebrate is a contra’

cuando ya empezó el descontento en el pueblo, porque las promesas que había hecho el gobierno no se estaban cumpliendo.⁷⁶

Elena also echoes the sense of unity after the triumph. She began her interview with the recollection that ‘Después del triunfo de la revolución de 1979 y a medio año para el 80, pues todo era bonito, era bonito porque, mucha unidad. El gobierno ofreció mucha ayuda a las personas que vivían sin casa, sin alimento. Estaba como fiesta de alegría, pues’.⁷⁷ These two statements, along with those of the other interviewees, confirm the sentiment of unification in the first year of the FSLN government stemming from the collective efforts in defeating the dictatorship. However, as discussed in section 5.2.3, maintaining this sense of unity was not assured for the FSLN. Indeed, the interviewees’ explain that the unification of the people faltered as the decade continued. As we saw in Inés’s comment above, she asserts that after ‘unos cuatro, cinco, seis años, fue cuando ya empezó el descontento en el pueblo, porque las promesas que había hecho el gobierno no se estaban cumpliendo’.⁷⁸ For her, the loss of unity resulted from the broken promises of the government. The expectations of the people that she and Elena mentioned above appeared to go unfulfilled, which led to the fracture of the support the people had shown for the Revolution.

Sofía also credits the Sandinistas with working towards implementing true unity in the country, though she expresses the view that the Sandinista leaders deviated from the original plans of the Revolution In response to my question about how the FSLN implemented the revolutionary project at the beginning of the interview, she replied:

Como te dije al inicio, el inicio fue un proyecto de unidad, de nación, pero como a los dos, tres años se cambió el plan original de, de trabajo, lo que era el plan por la revolución. Y comenzaron a tener unas actitudes raras. Se luchó contra la desigualdad y se comenzó a ver que también con el gobierno de los sandinistas,

⁷⁶ In a given moment, all the people, I could see this, almost all the Nicaraguan people yearned to no longer have the Somoza dictatorship in the country. And all the people were almost unanimous in supporting the Sandinista Front, right? Because the government’s programme was precious, well, everyone thought it was going to be the best thing for the Nicaraguan people. But after some four, five, six years, it was when the discontent of the people began, because the promises that the government had made were not being fulfilled.’

⁷⁷ ‘after the triumph of the Revolution in 1979, and halfway through 1980, well, everything was beautiful, it was beautiful because, ... there was a lot of unity. The government offered a lot of help to the people who did not have housing or food’

⁷⁸ ‘four, five, six years was when the discontent of the people began, because the promises the government had made were not being fulfilled.’

había desigualdad. Comenzó a surgir una clase de los líderes políticos que comenzaron a querer manejar y controlarlo todo. Y eso trajo crisis en primer lugar económica y después crisis política porque la gente no quería sentirse reprimida. Ya habíamos luchado contra una represión. Yo estaba muy jovencita, tenía tal vez unos catorce años, pero como estudiante, me involucré. Y la gente empezó a ver de que las cosas no eran como ellos las habían pintado. Uno pensaba revolución igualdad para todos, derechos para todos, pero sí comenzaron a ver divisiones entre ellos mismos. Y ellos se equivocaron. La economía se cayó porque por supuesto eran jóvenes inexpertos queriendo hacer cosas que no estaban preparados para eso.⁷⁹

The similarities to the opposition discourse are visible in this passage. Though she credits the FSLN for their project of national unity, she claims that the project was abandoned after the first few years. Sofía also contends that the FSLN government was becoming repressive, echoing the opposition narrative on the past and present state of the government and nation. The Revolution of the people, as Sofía saw it, was left behind as the government moved ahead with its revolutionary project. Her comments show similar argumentation strategies to those that the opposition corpus displayed, specifically the topoi of origin, purity and betrayal.

Esteban, a moderate voice in the interviews who was a low-level government functionary under the Somozas, is sympathetic toward the Sandinistas but critical of the party's missteps. In his interview conducted at his home, he responds to my question about his perception of the terms *unidad nacional*, *soberanía nacional* and *liberación nacional* by lauding the Sandinistas for their record on human rights and for the lack of repression on the part of the police force. He then goes on to state that the unity, though beneficial, is sought for the benefit of the party:

La policía, no era una policía represiva como la de Somoza, sino que era una policía amiga de la gente, del pueblo, hasta la fecha, al momento la policía que tiene allí, uno platica a uno sin temor y los mira, mientras que la policía de la dictadura de Somoza daba terror cuando uno le miraba, pues. Entonces, en eso pues, hasta la

⁷⁹ 'Like I told you at the beginning, the beginning was a project of unity, of nation, but after around two or three years the original working plan changed, what was the plan for the revolution. And they began to have weird attitudes. We fought against inequality and began to see that with the Sandinista government as well there was inequality. A class of political leaders began to emerge and they began to want to direct and control everything. And this brought a crisis, in the first place economic and after a political crisis because the people did not want to feel repressed. We had already fought against repression. I was very young, I was about fourteen, but as a student I got involved. And the people began to see that things were not as they had been painted. One thought revolution meant equality for all, rights for all, but they began to see divisions between themselves. And they made a mistake. The economy fell because, of course, they were young, inexperienced, wanting to do things they were not prepared for.'

fecha ellos han demostrado, pues, de buscar la unidad, pues, la unidad de todo el pueblo. Pero eso de la unidad de todo el pueblo es para beneficio del partido. Entonces no es de llamar a una gran concertación de todos los partidos, de toda la gente, todo el pueblo, y con hacer unos acuerdos, hacer una concertación de unos acuerdos de que vaya eso en progreso y desarrollo del país. Eso no ha habido porque aquí los partidos, todos van contra todos, todos se tiran contra todos. Entonces entre la misma familia nicaragüense, estamos divididos. Entonces en virtud de buscar, de pensar para desarrollo mejorar nuestra situación económica, más bien se mantienen tirándose entre ellos mismos. Y eso no es unidad. No ha habido unidad.⁸⁰

Scepticism appears in his view of the party's efforts to unite the people. Rather than benefiting the people and the nation, Esteban views the push for unity as a means for the party to maintain support. His comments also bear out my evaluation in section 5.2.3 that the Sandinistas needed to create a perception of unity in order to maintain support for the implementation of their vision of the nation. However, Esteban does not praise the opposition either. Instead, he views the disunity in the country as symptomatic of the perpetual state of opposition and competition between political parties. This sentiment of continual political conflict appears to undermine the periods of unification that the people have enjoyed in the past.

Regarding the dissolution of the unity of the people, an interesting observation emerges from the interviews. Even among those who indicated that there had been unity at the beginning of the FSLN government, there was a retrospective denial of unity having existed at all. Again in response to my question on the terms *unidad nacional*, *soberanía nacional* and *liberación nacional*, Elena states that:

Si hubiese acá esa unidad nacional en el país no habría tanta división, no habría tantos problemas entre partidos políticos. La soberanía es cuando uno se sabe elegir con libertad en un país entonces, somos soberano, ¿de qué? ¿Soberanos de administrar el país, de gobernar el país, de declarar una opinión, de no ser

⁸⁰ 'The police weren't a repressive police force like under Somoza, but a police force that was the friend of the people, until today, at the moment the police that we have here, one can speak to them without fear and look at them, while the police in Somoza's dictatorship terrified you when you would look at them. So, in this, well, up to today they have demonstrated, well, how to look for unity, so, the unity of the whole people. But all that about the unity of all the people is for the benefit of the party. So it is not a call for a great coordination of all the parties, of all the people, and with making agreements, coming to a consensus on some agreements that will move forward progress and development in the country. That has not been the case because here the parties, everyone goes against everyone else, they hurl themselves at one another. So, in the same Nicaraguan family, we are divided. So, by virtue of looking, of thinking about development, to better our economic situation, instead they keep on throwing themselves at one another. And this is not unity. There has not been unity.'

susurrados? Yo entiendo eso. Y la unidad nacional es cuando los apoyamos independientemente de que partido seamos. Y por lo general, el nicaragüense aun ha sufrido tantos problemas por división por partidos políticos, la naturaleza del nicaragüense es de son individuos unidos, son como personas no pactados al partido. Nosotros somos personas que ayudan al vecino que tiene problemas. Si hay una persona que está maltratado por otra en la calle, nosotros vamos a ayudarlo, y cosas así. Entonces sería la unidad de las pequeñas cosas, y de las pequeñitas cosas que se ven, yo pienso que podría hacer grandes cosas entre el gobierno, ¿verdad? Pero pues no, se centran allí en la política, y si sos sandinista te echan la mano, y si no, no morirte de hambre.⁸¹

She refers to the current division as evidence for questioning whether unity ever had existed in the country. However, in her estimation, the unity proposed by the Sandinistas is solely politically motivated and does not extending beyond respective party members. This is similar to Esteban's contention that unity was emphasised for the benefit of the party and his retrospective denial of the existence of unity. The impact of the current state of discord and political division within the country on the people's perceptions of the past is readily seen in these statements. Elena, for example, cites the effects of the Pact between Alemán and Ortega as evidence that the parties are concerned about themselves and not the people. For Elena and Esteban, whatever unity existed in the past under the Sandinistas has been overshadowed by the present disunity.

Unsurprisingly, those individuals who strongly opposed the FSLN do not regard the post-insurrection period as unified in any meaningful way. María is the most ardent opponent to the Sandinistas I interviewed. Already established in her teaching career, and with a young family of her own when Somoza was overthrown, she and her family went into exile in the USA a few years after the Sandinistas took control of the government. When asked her opinion of the phrase *unidad nacional*,

⁸¹ 'If there had been here that national unity, in this country, there would not be so much division, there would not be so many problems between the political parties. Sovereignty is when one knows he can choose with freedom in the country, so, we are sovereign, over what? Sovereign to administer the country, to govern the country, to declare an opinion, to not be shushed? I understand that. And national unity is when we support them independently of what party we belong to. And in general, Nicaraguans have suffered so many problems because of division by political parties, the nature of Nicaraguans is that they are united individuals, they are people who are not beholden to the party through agreements. We are people that help our neighbour that has problems. If there is a person who is being mistreated by another in the street, we are going to help him, and things like that. So, it would be unity in the little things, and from the tiny little things it is visible, I think, that big things could be done in government, right? But, well, no, they concentrate on politics, and if you are a Sandinista, they give you a hand, and if not, you can die of hunger.'

María went beyond the others in her denial of there being any unity in the nation.

She argued that:

El país está auténticamente dividido, en dos grandes fuerzas. En dos grandes fuerzas, que estas fuerzas son activadas y dirigidas por el deseo de y el ansia del poder. En este país no ha habido unidad, no existe el nacionalismo. Lo que existe es la lucha por sus propios intereses, y por eso aquí nosotros no logramos surgir de mayor del escombros porque seguimos en la misma. Son dos poderes que están luchando contra sí, y al mismo tiempo pactan entre sí y engañan al pueblo, engañan al pueblo con su soberanía, con su lucha por el pobre, por el profesional, por el otro lado. Es todo una mentira.⁸²

Here, she denies the existence of unity at any point in the country with an attack on the nature of the Nicaraguans, depicting them as self-interested and incapable of unity. The influence of the current political situation in Nicaragua is visible here as she also refers to the Pact and the fact that there are two major parties working both with and against each other. The lack of unity, according to María, is directly linked to the lack of nationalism, reflecting her contention that Nicaraguans are self-interested and incapable of unity, and therefore incapable of national pride and support. Hers is an extreme position within the interviews, and is not reflected elsewhere. Yet her comments indicate that unity was not necessarily a significant theme for all of the participants.

Daniel, a chauffeur for a businessman during the 1980s who is highly critical of the FSLN, states, in response to my question about his perception of the phrase ‘unidad nacional’, that the Sandinistas ‘iban hablando de unidad, pero no creo que se vea. Que se ve esa unidad, como se vio en los noventa, cuando Doña Violeta, cuando se les derrotó’.⁸³ Though he acknowledges the Sandinista discourse on unity existed, he argues that the unity itself was not achieved until Violeta Chamorro won the 1990 elections with significant support. Instead of remembering the coming together of the people to defeat Somoza, Daniel instead recalls the electoral unity of the people

⁸² ‘The country is authentically divided, in two large powers. In two big forces, and these forces are activated and directed by the desire and yearning for power. In this country there has not been unity; nationalism does not exist. What does exist is the fight for one’s own interests, and because of this here we do not manage to emerge wiser from the rubble because we continue in the same path. They are two powers that are fighting against themselves and at the same time they make deals with each other and deceive the people with their sovereignty, with their fight for the poor, for the professional, on the other hand. It is all a lie.’

⁸³ ‘[The Sandinistas] were talking about unity, but I do not believe you could see it. You could see this unity, like was seen in the Nineties, when Miss Violeta beat them.’

in voting against the FSLN. His conception of unity reveals the polysemy of the sign, as it is recontextualised to represent the Chamorro administration's actions, rather than those of the FSLN.

The participants' comments indicate that whilst the FSLN discourse on unity did exist, it did not necessarily dominate the discursive terrain among the population. Contestation remained over what unity was and who had brokered and maintained that unity. Outside pressures, from the war against the contras to the USA's economic blockade resulting in privations, acted as a tempering element against the hegemony of the Sandinista discourse. These pressures prevented the Sandinistas from being able to fully implement their political programme in the nation. As Inés suggests, the unity broke down when the government's promises went unfulfilled. Neither is the opposition's view of broad-based unity leading to democracy directly reflected in the corpus. The disjunction between the discourse and the reality in the country, exemplified through ration cards, the *Diplotienda* and the SMP, prevented any group from gaining dominance in the popular realm. The importance of pressing daily concerns prevented a situation of integral hegemony, and suggest that the FSLN created a situation of decadent hegemony, where the 'needs... of the masses are not truly in harmony with the dominant ideas' (Femia 1981: 47). Given that the counter-hegemonic discourse of the opposition did not address the needs of the masses either, the contestation over the discursive terrain, and the attempts to establish each group's narrative as the dominant one, largely missed the mark with the target audience, the general populace.

5.5 Summary

Throughout this chapter, my analysis of the corpora has made evident the contestation that existed between the FSLN and opposition, where dominant discourses and counter-discourses act alongside and against one another. The FSLN's construction of the Revolution as a personified entity emerged as a nodal point in the party's attempts to gain hegemony for their narrative of national social transformation. The Revolution was established as the pillar around which the Sandinistas could justify their call for unity, whilst also organising the discourse of the Sandinistas as the Vanguard, and the tasks of the revolutionary project, lending

each moral force. Establishing it as an active entity rather than a completed object also set it against the opposition's construction, and legitimated calls for its defence.

Of particular importance in this chapter have been the themes of inclusion and exclusion. Both discourses were shown to actively engage in in-group creation. The FSLN discourse establishes the *pueblo* as an integral part of the party claiming it as their own and establishes the community around the Revolution. In this respect, discursively stripping the opponents' citizenship as a strategy for creating in-group solidarity and out-group difference allowed the party to present the national unit as homogenous and wholly unified, despite internal dissension and cultural oppression, like that experienced on the Atlantic coast. The opposition countered this by attempting to reappropriate the people from the Sandinistas and conferring citizenship on all members through the collocation *pueblo nicaragüense*, evidencing the salience of polysemy in the corpora.

My analysis also shows that the opposition organised their discourse around democracy as a nodal point, drawing together the concepts of the Revolution and unification. The narrative of national political transformation entailed the construction of the Revolution in the opposition discourse as an action, rather than an entity, which the people carried out with the intention of establishing a democratic tradition within the country. Similarly, the opposition narrative of transformation includes the concept of political pluralism, which was evident in their treatment of unity in the corpus. The logic of difference is visible in their construction of unity and the people, where differences were downplayed to allow for cross-party unity around the goal of democracy.

The interview data bring to the fore the citizens' concerns during the 1980s. Though individual political tendencies helped to explain the participants' discussions of Revolution and unity, the absence of the daily concerns of the populace from either discourse was shown to have hampered efforts at gaining popular support. Additionally, current political circumstances have also influenced their representations of the time period, a possibility anticipated in chapter four. However, the interview data aids in triangulating the discourse of the period. Particularly the references to the overt discursive efforts on the part of the Sandinistas are salient in confirming the party's attempt to garner support for their narrative, whilst the interview data exposed the failure of the discourse to be accepted fully by the population, suggesting a lack of hegemony in certain areas.

In chapter six, my analysis of the texts reveals that these aspects of establishing the competing narratives of national transformation are of paramount importance in each corpora's treatment of the concept of nation. Without constructing the *pueblo's* support for the Revolution as a process and the FSLN as its representative, the party's policies for reshaping the nation would not have had a basis from which to begin. The integral concepts of the *Nueva Sociedad* and the *Nuevo Hombre* will be shown in the next chapter to rely on and reinforce this basis of community. Likewise, the opposition's centrality of democracy continues to organise the discourse on the national past, present and future. Christianity also emerges as a nodal point around which the opposition organise their discourse, particularly regarding national identity and the Sandinistas' presumed Marxist orientation.

Chapter 6: A New Nicaragua Demands a New Man and a New Society

6.1 Introduction: A New Community for a New Nation

My analysis of the community focused aspects of the competing narratives in the last chapter sets the scene for analysing the contestation over the notion of nation in this chapter. The conception of the Revolution as a reified entity provided the FSLN a platform from which to require action from the people. A unified populace, defined as FSLN supporters, also strengthened the efforts to socially and culturally redefine the nation. Rebuilding the country was a common desire among the population after it was devastated by the 1972 earthquake and later the revolutionary struggle. The FSLN discursively engaged the people in that reconstruction whilst linking it to their narrative of national social transformation. In *El Patriotismo, Base de la Unidad Nacional*, Carrión directly connects unity and national concerns: ‘Recibimos un país devastado, con su economía destruida y además amenazada por varios enemigos. La Unidad es para reconstruir el país, para defenderlo contra las agresiones de los somocistas y las agresiones imperialistas’ (1981: 14).¹ Carrión ties unity to rebuilding the nation, with the external threats adding importance to the collaborative efforts. From the basis of collective unity in the FSLN discourse, the demands of the Revolution drew validity from the ‘one of us’ angle. Whereas the Revolution acts as a nodal point for incorporating the people into the revolutionary project, the concept of nation, exemplified through the phrase the ‘new Nicaragua’, serves as a nodal point, organising the topics of the founding fathers, the new man, sacrifice, and Nicaraguan identity in the FSLN discourse. These topics further develop the narrative of national social transformation, positioning the nation as the site of that transformation. The nation is the focal point of the change promised by the Revolution, drawing together the people and party in the acts necessary to accomplish the revolutionary vision.

The opposition narrative position revolves around the nodal points of freedom and the country’s Christian character in establishing their conception of the

¹ ‘We received a devastated country, with its economy destroyed and furthermore threatened by various enemies. The Unity is in order to rebuild the country, to defend it against Somocist aggression and imperialist aggression.’

nation. Along with democracy organising the discourse on the Revolution and unity, these two additional nodal points direct the discourse toward the narrative of political transformation, emphasising the people's Christian character and the need for true freedom in order to counter the Marxist orientation of the FSLN. Freedom operates alongside democracy in the opposition discourse to draw together the themes of the founding fathers and anti-imperialism, whereas the Christian character integrates the areas of anti-Marxism and national identification.

In fostering the concept of the national, several key discursive strategies align with the narrative of national re-creation. I look first at the FSLN's concept of national rebirth which can be characterised as autonomisation according to Wodak et al., referring to the importance placed on national autonomy (Wodak et al. 1999: 37-8). The discourse presented victory over Somoza as a victory over US imperialism, signalling the rebirth of the nation as finally independent from colonial powers. Alongside the re-creation of the new Nicaragua, I consider the appeal to the founding fathers' model national character to shape the new nation (ibid: 39), which is the focal point for the discourse on the 'new man' and the 'new society'.

My analysis then turns to the Sandinista discourse on the *Hombre Nuevo* and the *Nueva Sociedad*. The strategy of promoting the 'model national character' as exhibited by the 'founding fathers' is seen in the positive attributions of the new man, where the 'new education' features as a main discursive source in the formation of this man. One of the most salient qualities I find exhibited by the model new citizen is sacrifice. I then show how the new man was to be the basis for the new society, which was the culmination of the project of national transformation presented in the narrative.

From there I move to the opposition discourse, which emphasises freedom as the main concern of the nation after the Revolution. In their focus on freedom, the opposition also engages in the strategy of the founding fathers, constructing a narrative past. The topos of betrayal again emerges in the contention that the FSLN has betrayed the founding fathers', namely Sandino's, fight for freedom, and incorporating the opposition's discourse on anti-imperialism. My analysis moves from freedom to the importance the opposition discourse places on the nation's Christian character. The opposition also contests the Sandinista view of the ideal citizen by elaborating the national characteristics of their vision of a true Nicaraguan, organised around Christian belief. The opposition discourse again evidences

polysemous redefinitions of key FSLN terms, such as anti-imperialism and ‘new Nicaragua’, to represent their vision for the nation. Likewise, the counter-hegemonic nature of the discourse remains salient in presenting their narrative as the alternative to the FSLN’s revolutionary project.

Finally, I consider the interview data’s contribution to understanding the contestation over the discursive re-creation of the nation. Whilst the idea of the new man does not figure largely in the interview data, I show that the interview participants do stress the positive qualities of the Nicaraguan people, including their self-sacrifice for the benefit of their neighbours. Education, in particular the literacy crusade, is applauded for bringing the people together, despite criticism of the politicised nature of the literacy materials. Similar to what my analysis showed in chapter five, though certain aspects, particularly the FSLN’s focus on a national character and the opposition’s emphasis on freedom, resounded with the people, individual concerns were not always addressed by either discourse, which prevented a naturalisation of the discourse and hampered efforts at gaining hegemony.

6.2 A New Nicaragua

The Sandinista documents present a view of the nation that hinges on their historical narrative of external intervention and internal rebellion. As I discussed in chapters three and five, the FSLN created a narrative that presented Nicaragua as having been usurped by imperialist powers, namely the United States, and therefore considered it a historically dependent state rather than an independent country. The rebellion against imperialism found its greatest expression in Sandino and his fight against US occupation forces. Though the last Marines left Nicaragua in 1933, four decades later the FSLN, as Sandino’s heirs, continued the fight for national liberation against an economic and political power that they claimed occupied their country through the ruling elite. The nation, therefore, needed liberating, not only from the Somozas, but also from the capitalist-imperialist domination that, according to the FSLN, had controlled the country since its independence from Spain. The Sandinistas’ narrative of national social transformation included liberation from imperialist forces as an integral element to achieving the revolutionary programme. The social and political changes the Sandinistas advocated and enshrined in policy were intended to achieve this end. Positioning the Revolution as a process of social

change is intimately tied to their vision of the nation and the citizens' position within it. The nation was the overarching site of transformation, being made into a more genuinely Nicaraguan entity, which entailed establishing its independence and sovereignty as well as its identity. In this way, nation acts as a nodal point, organising the topics of independence, the founding fathers and national identity. Discursively, the nation embodies the narrative of transformation through its rebirth, being reformed into the new Nicaragua.

6.2.1 Rebirth of a Nation

A statement by Carrión, in his pamphlet *El Patriotismo Base de la Unidad Nacional* (1981), indicates that the emphasis on national independence was present from the beginning of the Sandinista government: 'Pueden quitarnos el crédito, las cuotas de explotación, muchas cosas, pero no podrían quitarnos la soberanía, la libertad, la dignidad de este pueblo y nuestros principios revolucionarios. [...] Tenemos que prepararnos cada día, porque la defensa es la garantía de la supervivencia de esta Revolución' (Carrión 1981: 18).² Though the nation is not explicitly mentioned, it can be inferred through the reference to the sovereignty of the *pueblo*, which we saw was constructed by the FSLN as the representation of the in-group of the nation. The emphasis placed on the sovereignty and freedom of the people is strengthened by the juxtaposition of those terms with the implied threat of losing that freedom. Whilst the USA is implied in the cancellation of credit that had been previously granted to Nicaragua, there is no direct allegation of an attack on the nation's sovereignty. However, the reference to the loss of credit establishes a link between negative actions taken against the country and threats to national independence. Connecting the two heightens the level of the threat whilst bolstering the call to defend the country's sovereignty. The strategy of autonomisation, which Wodak et al. describe as the emphasis on national independence (Wodak et al. 1999: 38) allows an opening for the topos of threat, which is an argument for action to prevent or counter a perceived threat, to enter into the discourse, as it adds importance to the calls for independence. The possibility of losing autonomy

² 'They can take away our credit, our operational quotas, many things, but they could not take away from us the sovereignty, freedom and dignity of this people and our revolutionary principles. We have to prepare ourselves each day, because defence is the guarantee of this Revolution's survival

increases the importance of that autonomy and of protecting it. This strategy is directly connected to the anti-imperialist aspects of the FSLN's narrative, where economic imperialism was equated with militaristic imperialism, which was fundamental the portrayal of Nicaragua emergence as an independent nation after the Revolution. By emphasising economic imperialism, the FSLN discourse also drew on the Marxist discourse available to them, allowing it to position the USA as a capitalist aggressor against the humble Nicaraguan workers. This recourse to Marxist discourse reflects the influence of radical Marxism on the FSLN's creation of national community, recalling Hobsbawm's contention that the anti-imperialist discourse was one of the elements which attracted nascent nationalist movements to socialism (Hobsbawm 1990: 149-50).

In 1983, which the government declared the 'Year of the Fight for Peace and Sovereignty', the new Nicaragua began to emerge as a salient theme in the discourse. The document *Fines y Objetivos de la Nueva Educación* (Ministerio de Educación [MED] 1983) situates the new Nicaragua in the context of preparing the people, namely students, for their role in the social transformations for recreating the nation. Here, the role of the nation as a nodal point is visible in the discourse, tying the people to the narrative of transformation. Carlos Tunnermann, the Minister of Education at the time, mentions in the prologue that the task of the new education is the 'formation of the new Man of the New Nicaragua' (ibid). Under the general objectives of this education, the fifth objective listed is, '[d]esarrollar la conciencia de la participación en la defensa ineludible de la Patria y la Revolución para fortalecer la independencia, autodeterminación, soberanía, e identidad nacionales' (MED 1983).³ The goal of promoting the mind-set of the *Hombre Nuevo* in the people connects directly with the defence of the homeland and the Revolution. Defending the country simultaneously strengthens national sovereignty and national identity by indicating an external 'other' against which the nation had to fight for self-preservation. The emphasis on the last area highlights the Sandinista interest in the Nicaraguan identity. Discussed more in detail in section 6.2.4, the FSLN promoted an identity of the country, and its citizens, that centred on the model national character of the founding fathers, the Sandinista martyrs, and the

³ 'to develop the conscience of participation in the unyielding defence of the Homeland and the Revolution in order to strengthen the national independence, self-determination, sovereignty and identity.'

characteristics of the *Hombre Nuevo*. Creating a new nation was bound up in the construction of a new society and a new citizen.

The FSLN documents portray a narrative of rebirth and genesis for the country. Drawing on the topos of definition (Wodak et al. 1999: 37), the idea of rebirth allowed the Sandinista discourse to redefine the Nicaraguan nation, and position it within the narrative of national transformation as part of the revolutionary process. The most emphatic and direct exposition on the creation of the new Nicaragua in the FSLN corpus comes from Borge's *La Democracia del Poder Popular* (1984), which details his comments during a session of the Sandinista Assembly. Over several pages, he outlines the new Nicaragua stemming from the Revolution, with one passage stating that:

De todas las conquistas de la revolución, la más importante, la más sagrada, consiste en que por primera vez en la historia, Nicaragua es Nicaragua y los nicaragüenses somos nicaragüenses. ... Ahora Nicaragua está cumpliendo cinco años de edad. Nicaragua por fin existe y porque existe es que hemos realizado la alfabetización y resucitado la cultura. Existe libertad de creación porque existe Nicaragua. Nicaragua por fin existe y porque existe es que somos y seremos implacables con quienes quieren que vuelva a ser humillada colonia, eco de voz ajena, sombra de otro cuerpo (Borge 1984: 7)⁴

This excerpt highlights several key aspects of the discourse on the new Nicaragua. One such aspect is the influence of religion on the discourse, seen in his reference to the conquest as a sacred one. Such a portrayal reflects the emphasis in liberation theology on political liberation from situations of oppressive dominance as a form of spiritual liberation and triumph. Most striking in his statement, however, is the claim that Nicaragua exists as an independent nation for the first time in history. Five years after the Revolution, Borge claims that Nicaragua is five years old, crediting the Revolution with birthing the nation. The basis for such a claim is Borge's contention that Nicaragua, until the Revolution, had been a colony. His warning that there are people who 'want [Nicaragua] to return to being a humiliated colony' reflect the topos of threat with the strategy of autonomisation in his efforts to discredit an

⁴ 'Of all the revolution's conquests, the most important, the most sacred, is that for the first time in history, Nicaragua is Nicaragua and we Nicaraguans are Nicaraguans. [...] Now Nicaragua is turning five years old. Nicaragua finally exists and because it exists we have carried out the literacy crusade and revived our culture. Creative freedom exists because Nicaragua exists. Nicaragua finally exists and because it exists we are and will be implacable with those who want us to return to being a humiliated colony, an echo of someone else's voice, shade of another body.'

unnamed opponent. The reference to those who want to return to the old ways implies the somocistas and capitalists displaced by the Revolution, recalling my discussion of the means in which the FSLN discourse construed opponents as Somoza sympathisers, outsiders and imperialists.

The threat construed in Comandante Borge's comments is one of losing the independence gained in the Revolution. Thus, for Borge, Nicaragua under Somoza was merely a colony of the United States. Ortega echoes this view that Nicaragua was a colony until 1979, despite its independence from Spain more than 150 years before. In his speech on the tenth anniversary of the Revolution, he indicates that since independence, the nation had remained a colony under US imperialism, with the Revolutionary triumph leading to '[d]iez años de no a 158 años de dominación neocolonialista, imperialista, 10 años de no al pasado' (Ortega 1989: 6).⁵ The neo-colonialism and imperialism Ortega rejects indicates the lack of national sovereignty that the FSLN perceived in the country prior to the overthrow of Somoza.

The dominant strategy in the Sandinistas' construction of the new Nicaragua is autonomisation. The nation is referred alongside the concepts of independence, freedom and sovereignty, reinforcing the idea of the nation's rebirth as an autonomous country. Importantly, this allows for the use of the topos of threat, as seen in the extracts above. I indicated in the last chapter that defending the Revolution was one of the primary motivations for the unity the FSLN promoted. The idea of a newly independent nation equally necessitated defence and protection. In a speech commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the FSLN's founding, the DN declared that the Revolution had abolished,

'para siempre la dominación imperialista en Nicaragua recuperando la soberanía, la integridad nacional y la autodeterminación; derechos que hemos defendido con firmeza y que seguimos y seguiremos defendiendo con el espíritu indolegable de Sandino, Rigoberto y Carlos' (1986: 33).⁶

In this passage, Nicaragua, newly freed from imperialist domination as a result of the Revolution, must still defend itself and its freedom from imperialist aggression. With the military engagement with the armed opposition groups occupying a large part of

⁵ 'ten years of no, to 158 years of neo-colonial, imperialist domination, 10 years of no to the past'

⁶ 'forever the imperialist domination in Nicaragua, recuperating its sovereignty, its national integrity and self-determination; rights which we have defended with resoluteness and which we continue and will continue defending with the indomitable spirit of Sandino, Rigoberto and Carlos'

the citizens' and government's attention and finances, defending the nation from a clear threat to its newfound sovereignty is a logical exhortation to the people. The nation and the Revolution function in tandem as nodal points organising the tasks of the people, which are directed at protecting the Revolution in order to transform the nation. The call to defend the nation draws on the spirit of three Sandinista icons, discursively connecting the people to their predecessors, exemplifying the strategy of using the founding fathers as examples of the model national character, which I address below.

Defending the nation is synonymous with defending the Revolution in the FSLN documents. Seen in both the Borge and Tunnermann passages above, the Revolution occupies a key role in liberating Nicaragua and also in re-creating the nation. The Revolution at times becomes conflated with national autonomy, where the Revolution's survival is synonymous with the survival the nation's sovereignty. Borge comments on this interchangeability directly, saying, '[m]ientras la revolución exista no será negociable la soberanía nacional,... Los únicos que podríamos llegar a destruir esta revolución, es decir, los únicos que podríamos permitir que Nicaragua nuevamente dejara de existir,... somos nosotros, los revolucionarios mismos' (Borge 1984: 8).⁷ Evidencing the metonymy of Nicaragua and the Revolution, Borge's statement directly links the Revolution to the nation, whilst simultaneously emphasising the newness of Nicaragua. Not only is the Revolution synonymous with the nation, 'this revolution... that is to say Nicaragua', but the abolition of the Revolution would be equivalent to Nicaragua ceasing to exist. The implication is that Nicaragua only came into existence with the triumph of the Revolution. This perspective functions in tandem with the reification of the Revolution as an authoritative entity seen in the last chapter. The Sandinista narratives on the past, present and future connect through this conflation. The past of imperialist intervention has been overcome by the Revolution, leading to the present situation of a newly freed nation. That nation is the subject of revolutionary transformation, and must be protected so that the revolutionary project can achieve the future nation composed of new men in a new society.

⁷ 'whilst the revolution exists, national sovereignty will not be negotiable, ... The only ones who can allow the destruction of this revolution to occur, that is to say, the only ones who can permit Nicaragua to cease to exist again, ... are us, the revolutionaries ourselves'

The concept of a new Nicaragua is a marker of the transformation central to the Sandinista narrative. In the party manifesto issued prior to the 1984 elections, the FSLN credits the Revolution with enabling the populace to participate in free elections for the first time in history (FSLN 1984: 2). They draw on the new Nicaragua as a motivation to vote for the FSLN in the upcoming elections, saying, ‘este mismo pueblo ratificará el 4 de Noviembre de 1984, su voto por la Revolución que hace todos los días en las fábricas, en los sindicatos, en las cooperativas, en los barrios, en los talleres, en las aulas de clase, en la Construcción de la nueva Nicaragua’ (ibid: 3).⁸ The FSLN discourse connects the actions taken by the reified Revolution with the creation of a new Nicaragua, indicating what Wodak et al. (1999: 41) refer to as the ‘topos of a sugar-coated world’, the positive portrayal of the consequences of an action. Constructing the new nation, then, is equivalent to the changes and actions propagated daily in classrooms, factories, neighbourhoods and workshops across the country. The new Nicaragua represents the rebirth of the nation as well as the transformation of that nation into the embodiment of the Sandinista revolutionary project. As I initially indicated in this section, the nation, constructed as the new Nicaragua, serves to connect the themes of the founding fathers and the new man, and orders the discourse to reflect the Sandinista narrative of national social transformation.

6.2.2 The Founding Fathers of the New Nicaragua

The strategy of drawing on the founding fathers’ character lends legitimacy to the Sandinista narrative of national transformation by establishing the new Nicaragua as a legacy and not merely a new creation by the party. As I discussed in chapter two, Smith (1991: 14, 1996: 584) has highlighted the importance of the myths of the founding fathers in the creation of national identity. In the Nicaraguan situation this is seen in the narrative of a rebellious past that Fonseca constructed, seen in chapter three. The FSLN discourse likewise enshrines Sandino and Fonseca as progenitors of the Revolution. This has parallels with the tendency within Marxism to elevate ideological leaders to a status above the average political leader,

⁸ ‘this same people will ratify, on 4 November, 1984, its vote for the Revolution which it makes every day in the factories, in the trade unions, in the cooperatives, in the neighbourhoods, in the workshops, in the classrooms, in the construction of the New Nicaragua’

seen in examples such as Marx himself, Lenin, and Guevara. Christianity also depends heavily on its founding fathers for ideological consistency and as inspirations for particular actions or behaviours, similar to Marxist and national icons. Thus, the Sandinista recourse to the founding fathers of the nation and the party reflects a tendency common among nationalist, Marxist and religious groups. The discourse draws on these elements in its use of the founding fathers as examples to be emulated in service to the nation.

Addressing the Great Assembly on National Unity in 1986 on the topic of survival and national unity, Víctor Tirado López (1986: 251) states that on this, the 25th anniversary of FSLN's founding, '[I]o que estamos celebrando en el aniversario de los principios de la Revolución Popular Sandinista: la identidad nacional y la autodeterminación, es decir la lucha de Sandino por continuar y profundizar la teoría de liberación nacional'.⁹ Tirado López, here, reminds the assembly that Nicaragua's liberation from imperialist domination was a direct legacy of Sandino. The concept of national liberation, enshrined in the party's name and ideology, represents part of the rebellious patrimony passed down from Sandino to Fonseca. In Tirado López's comments, Sandino's concept of national liberation entails not only national self-determination, but also national identity. This passage makes it clear that the FSLN narrative considered the founding fathers, such as Sandino, as a base line against which the people's actions could be judged and after whom they should model their identity.

Revolutionary legitimacy stemmed from Sandino's fight against the US Marines. Fonseca transferred that legitimacy over to the fight against Somoza and to the FSLN vision for restructuring the nation. The basis for the new Nicaragua came not only from the Revolution, but also from its reinterpretation of Sandino's original goals. Borge typifies the support the FSLN drew from the mythologised view of Sandino in heralding the re-creation of Nicaragua:

‘Cinco años que realizan en esta tierra los sueños del continuador de Sandino, del pensador limpio y sabio, del estratega que nos enseñó a sumar voluntades para la

⁹ ‘what we are celebrating on the anniversary of the beginnings of the Sandinista Popular Revolution: national identity and self-determination, that is to say, Sandino's fight to continue and deepen the theory of national liberation’

transformación revolucionaria de nuestra realidad nacional: nuestro fundador, nuestro jefe, nuestro hermano Carlos Fonseca' (Borge 1984: 5).¹⁰

The Revolution represented the culmination of the efforts of the two most important founding fathers in the Sandinista narrative, Sandino and Fonseca. Fonseca, as the continuation of Sandino, laid out the goals for the FSLN and the Revolution, which indicated a transformation through the rebirth of the nation, free from imperialist forces. Employing the strategy of the founding fathers in tandem with the topos of history allows the desire to transform the national reality to be directly grounded in Sandino, via Fonseca. In so doing, the impetus for a new Nicaragua is attributed to historical figures, drawing the discourse on the founding fathers into the discourse on the nation. Both the reified Revolution and the founding fathers are responsible for the nation's creation. Additionally, implying that the revolutionary project of transformation is derived from historical actions and actors lends the narrative credibility that extends beyond the current iteration of Sandinistas.

Returning to a passage from the DN (1986: 33) in section 6.2.1 above, we can see how the strategy of founding fathers is articulated in conjunction with the creation of the liberated nation:

para siempre la dominación imperialista en Nicaragua recuperando la soberanía, la integridad nacional y la autodeterminación; derechos que hemos defendido con firmeza y que seguimos y seguiremos defendiendo con el espíritu indoblegable de Sandino, Rigoberto y Carlos (1986: 33).¹¹

In addition to construing national identity as stemming from the defeat of imperialist domination, the DN emphasises that this situation is not indeed new. Rather, the fight for national freedom is a historical one which was embodied by the national heroes who form part of the country's rebellious patrimony. Paradoxically, then, the new Nicaragua is not completely new; it is an ideal which was held by the forefathers of the Revolution, and is only newly being established under the FSLN government. The DN statement echoes a sentiment expressed five years earlier by Carrión. He stated that '[n]ecesitamos sacrificio de los empresarios, que en el pasado obtuvieron siempre las ventajas y hoy están en la obligación de compartir con el

¹⁰ 'Five years that realised in this land the dreams of the one who carried on Sandino's legacy, the clear and wise thinker, the strategist who taught us to join together wills for the revolutionary transformation of our national reality: our founder, our leader, our brother, Carlos Fonseca'

¹¹ 'forever the imperialist domination in Nicaragua, recuperating its sovereignty, its national integrity and self-determination; rights which we have defended with resoluteness and which we continue and will continue defending with the indomitable spirit of Sandino, Rigoberto and Carlos'

pueblo y con los trabajadores el esfuerzo de reconstruir la Nicaragua Nueva' (Carrión 1981: 14).¹² The phrase 'rebuilding the new Nicaragua' is contradictory outside of the narrative of a historical legacy established by the FSLN's founding fathers. As Carrión's statement is the only instance of this phrase in the corpus, it is not possible to claim that his comment was an intentional foreshadowing of treating the new Nicaragua as an old concept. However, the juxtaposition of the two contradictory elements can be understood in the context of viewing the new Nicaragua as a construct rooted in the past.

Laying the groundwork for the new Nicaragua in the founding fathers has implications beyond accepting Nicaragua as a new nation. The new Nicaragua is the beginning of, and indeed the aim of, the new society built by the new man. Basing this new nation on the legacy of the revolutionary heroes creates a discursive space in which to the FSLN appeals to the model national character embodied by these figures. Tirado López bases his call to unity on Sandino's example stating that:

'todos debemos estar bajo una sola ideología revolucionaria, interpretando y transformando la sociedad en la patria de Sandino, con sus principios de soberanía, independencia y unidad nacional; [...] una ideología que surge desde lo más profundo de nuestra historia y del pensamiento de nuestros héroes y mártires' (1986: 253-4).¹³

For him, uniting under the Sandinista revolutionary project would transform society into the one envisioned by Sandino. Tirado López indicates that the party's ideology was not created *ex nihilo*, but derives from their history and from their heroes and martyrs. In this statement, the fundamental link between the historical figures of the Revolution and the creation of the new Society in the newly independent nation is made overtly clear, reinforcing my analysis that the nation acts as a nodal point in the discourse. The narrative of national social transformation emerges in Tirado López's comments; the FSLN anticipates a future nation that is based on the revolutionary project envisioned by Sandino and initiated by the Revolution. To

¹² 'we need sacrifice from the businessmen, who in the past received all the advantages and today are obligated to share with the people and the workers the effort of reconstructing the New Nicaragua'

¹³ 'we all should be under one revolutionary ideology, interpreting and transforming society into Sandino's homeland, with his principles of sovereignty, independence and national unity; [...] and ideology which emerges from the deepest depths of our national history and the thought of our heroes and martyrs'

achieve this, the new man, introduced by Sandino, must compose the new society which forms the transformed nation.

6.2.3 The New Man and the New Society

The Sandinista narrative of national social transformation did not only refer to the social composition of the power-holders in the revolutionary society; it extended to the reformation of the individual into the ideal citizen-participant in the transformed nation. The new Nicaragua was intended to be formed on the basis of a new, socially aware, ideologically consonant *pueblo*. Establishing the *pueblo* as those who supported the revolutionary project, the Sandinista discourse was able to attach membership in the *pueblo* to the characteristics they considered necessary for the full realisation of national transformation through the Revolution. This connection both defined the Nicaraguan identity under the Revolution, and personalised the requirements for the Revolution's success.

The collocational force of the FSLN's use of the word 'new' gave weight to the concept of a new Nicaragua. With phrases such as the 'new democracy', the 'new Nicaragua', the 'new man', and the 'new society', the term 'new' came to symbolise the Sandinista project; any of these phrases could occur without any overt party reference and still carry the FSLN's conception of the term, as they had accrued ideological value through their usage. Along with its collocational force, the use of 'new' indicates a strategy of transformation. Transformation as expressed in the term 'new' conveys positive self-presentation of the Sandinistas and also discontinuation of the Sandinista national project from the Somoza dominated past (Wodak et al. 1999: 40). There is an implied comparison between the old Nicaragua under Somoza and the new Nicaragua under the Sandinistas, which reflects positively on the Sandinistas. In this comparison, there also exists the discontinuation between how things were in the past, how they are now and how they will be in the future, corresponding to the Sandinista narrative. The emphasis on transition through the use of 'new' is exhibited in the FSLN's commentary on the intention of their propaganda, in the pamphlet *Propaganda de la Producción* (FSLN 1980). 'El objetivo principal de nuestra propaganda es el de desarrollar una nueva conciencia social que corresponda cada vez más a la nueva sociedad que estamos

edificando' (FSLN 1980: 13).¹⁴ The progressive intent is evident in this extract. The goal was to cultivate a new social conscience that supported the new society. The transformational nature of the 'new' in both instances is enhanced by coupling the word with the present progressive tense, which conveys the building of the new society as an ongoing action.

The comparison between the present and the past is also present in the DN's speech on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the FSLN. Praising the advances made in basic social services, the DN asserts that, '[l]a salud y la educación se multiplicaron en la atención al pueblo, bajo una nueva filosofía que combate la comercialización de dichos servicios' (DN 1986: 25).¹⁵ Whilst not directly mentioning Somoza or his policies, the DN compares their new approach to social services with that of the past through the implication that commercialising public services had been a concern. The statement obliquely references the privatisation of services under Somoza, and sets the Sandinista policies in contrast to that practice. In this way, the FSLN discourse casts the new actions in a positive light through the strategy of discontinuation (Wodak et al. 1999: 38), drawing attention to the difference between the past and the present.

The use of 'new' occurred to such an extent that even the concept of the new man, which has an established precedent across the variety of Christian discourses, was effectively incorporated into the Sandinista discourse, indicating a situation of polysemy. The ideological connotation of the collocation *hombre nuevo* in the Sandinista discourse was such that there was no need to define of the FSLN's new man separately from its use in the Christian tradition. Rather than erasing any trace of the religious connotation of the term, the FSLN discourse benefits from it. It draws on the cultural capital contained in the phrase's use in Christian dialogue, where it refers to the conversion experience and the subsequent modelling of Christ in a person's actions and thought. The spiritual formation referred to in FSLN's efforts to foster the creation of the new man gains legitimacy from the latent connection with the Christian term, indicating a semantic transference of the meaning of the ideolocial sign Christian discourse to the expanded meaning in the

¹⁴ 'The principle objective of our propaganda is that of developing a new social conscience which increasingly corresponds with the new society we are building'

¹⁵ 'Health and education were multiplied in the public's attention, under a new philosophy which combated the commercialisation of said services'

FSLN's discourse. However, the *hombre Nuevo* in the Sandinista discourse extends beyond the Christian use of the term to include the founding fathers' example and the tasks of the Revolution. In this, the influence of religion and the compatibility of liberation theology with the Revolution come to the fore, as the Sandinista discourse redefines the phrase to reflect their own narrative.

Moreover, the notion of the nation in the narrative of transformation entailed the concept of a new society, and this society was to be brought about by the new men. Discursively, the new man embodies what Wodak et al. refer to as the model national character (1999: 39). Not only is this character promoted through references to the qualities of the founding fathers, but it is also largely based on Sandino's (by way of Guevara) mythic new man. This individual represented all the qualities of a true revolutionary and was fully committed to the goals of the Revolution. Central among this person's values was a commitment to the nation and to his or her fellow revolutionaries before him or herself.

Shortly after assuming power, the FSLN directly commented on the characteristics that a Sandinista member should display. They issued a pamphlet in 1980 entitled *Qué es un Sandinista?*, which detailed three of the leaders' – Carlos Fonseca, Oscar Turicos and Ricardo Morales Aviles – perspectives on what it meant to be a Sandinista. The qualities of a Sandinista largely revolved around placing the Revolution, the nation and fellow revolutionaries before oneself. An extract from the prologue of that document illustrates the centrality of self-sacrifice to the Sandinista identity: 'El Sandinista es el ser humano más noble, más desprendido y más sacrificado,[...] su generosidad no tiene límites, y por encima de sus intereses como individuo, se encuentran los intereses colectivos representados por la vanguardia' (Nuñez 1980: 5).¹⁶ The characteristics of a Sandinista revolve around the national collective, with sacrifice and generosity as evidence that one is committed to the revolutionary project. In particular, the collective interests are modeled for the people by the Vanguard, allowing the party to communicate what the populace's priorities ought to be in regard to the revolutionary project. Nuñez's description of a Sandinista also exhibits positively connotated attributions (Wodak et al. 1999: 36).

¹⁶ 'The Sandinista is the most noble, generous, self-sacrificing human-being, [...] his generosity has no limits, and above his interests as an individual are found the collective interests represented by the vanugard'

For Nuñez, these express the core principles behind the new men who would construct the new society, chief among them being self-sacrifice.

The virtue of sacrifice was attributed to those who supported the Revolution and were thereby included in the national in-group. Sacrifice was also a requirement of the people as a constituent aspect of national transformation. In his article ‘Unidad para Proteger la Revolución’, Arce (1980b: 19) described the revolutionary unity as proceeding from ‘nuestro trabajo político, de nuestra programática, de nuestra persistencia, de la sangre de nuestros héroes, del sacrificio de nuestros campesinos asesinados por miles, del sacrificio de nuestros obreros golpeados’.¹⁷ Sacrifice, in this setting, is a characteristic of the masses and the heroes. The strategy of perpetuation through the model national character emerges (Wodak et al. 1999: 39) here as both stemming from the people themselves, and from the founding fathers, the heroes and martyrs that made the Revolution possible. Perpetuating the characteristics displayed by the founding fathers allowed the FSLN to call for the same expression of values in other areas. Carrión similarly refers to the extension of the model characteristics to the people, in his comments that, ‘en este esfuerzo [de reconstrucción nacional] todos nos tenemos que sacrificar. Hay que sacrificar, en primer lugar, los intereses individuales, los intereses de grupo, en beneficio de los sagrados intereses de la Patria’ (Carrión 1981: 14).¹⁸ Sacrifice is expressed as a requirement, with the modal repeated twice in two different forms. The statements ‘we all have to sacrifice’ and ‘it is necessary to sacrifice’ represent normative-deontic expressions and convey the necessity of the action. The construction of a new society as a consequence of the populace’s sacrifice indicates the topos of consequence (Wodak et al. 1999: 41). Carrión calls on the people to place the country above themselves, a value displayed during the overthrow of Somoza. The character of the heroes and martyrs exerts itself through the requirement on the people to imitate those who sacrificed for them. The ultimate sacrifice of one’s life acts as a motivation to sacrifice in other areas for the good of the nation. Sacrifice ties in the religious discourse as well. Not only are there indirect links to Christian discourse on Christ’s sacrifice for humanity, but the references to martyrs, a

¹⁷ ‘our political work, from our programme, from our persistence, from the blood of our heroes, from the sacrifice of thousands of our peasants, assassinated by the thousands, from the sacrifice of our beaten workers’

¹⁸ ‘in this effort of national reconstruction, we all have to sacrifice. It is necessary to sacrifice, in the first place, individual interests, group interests, to the benefit of the sacred interests of the homeland’

common label in FSLN discourse, recalls those who died for their faith and the Church in the past. Carrión also directly connects sacrifice to sacred interests, recalling the spiritual connotations of the term and tying the discourse on the new man's responsibility in the new society to the Church's exhortation to sacrifice as an imitation of Christ's sacrifice for the world, lending it added legitimacy with a religious population.

The *Plan de Lucha del FSLN* (1984) also contributes to the discourse of the model national character. In the document, the FSLN promises to continue fighting to protect the 'derecho del pueblo a construir esta nueva sociedad,... por la que lucharon y murieron más de 200 mil nicaragüenses desde el siglo pasado. Esta es la Patria que soñaron nuestros héroes y mártires. En definitiva esta es la Patria por la que entregaron la vida Zeledón, Sandino, Rigoberto y Carlos Fonseca' (FSLN 1984: 15).¹⁹ Significantly, this statement establishes a direct link between the martyrs' sacrifice and the creation of the new society. Not only are the martyrs invoked, but the founding fathers of FSLN historiography are also held up as having sacrificed their lives for the creation of the new society. Thus, to sacrifice one's life or even one's time to further the revolutionary creation of the new Nicaragua was to emulate the national heroes and the thousands of average citizens who made the Revolution possible. The current sacrifices for national transformation are in this way bound to the Nicaragua's narrative past as presented by the FSLN. The strategy of perpetuation exhibited in the appeal to the model national character and the founding fathers provided the demand for sacrifice with legitimacy and distance the FSLN from the request. It was not the government merely making demands of the people, but the Vanguard asking for nothing more than what Nicaraguans by virtue of their national character have always provided throughout history. The subtle subtext intimates that to sacrifice is Nicaraguan, and to deny the country that sacrifice is not Nicaraguan, a sentiment that dovetails with the in-group out-group creation I discussed in chapter five. Sacrifice, as a dominant trait in the new man, is one of the characteristics that constructs the national identity of the new nation. The transformation of the people into the new men is an integral aspect of the FSLN's

¹⁹ 'the right of the people to build this new society,... for which more than 200 thousand Nicaraguans since the last century fought and died. This is the homeland that our heroes and martyrs dreamt of. Definitively, this is the homeland for which Zeledón, Sandino, Rigoberto and Carlos Fonseca traded their lives'

narrative of national social transformation, as they represent the future composition of the nation. Additionally, the new man acting for the benefit and service of the new nation subsumes the new man under the nation as a nodal point in the discourse. In order to promote the characteristics and actions of this idealised future citizen, the *pueblo* had to be educated about what it meant to be the *Hombre Nuevo*.

6.2.4 Educating the New Man for the New Society

After forming the government, the FSLN focused on education as one of their main goals. Chief among these efforts was the literacy crusade, which incorporated all of the teachers and students in secondary school for half a year in literacy brigades to go to urban and rural areas to engage in literacy education for children and adults. As a result, the illiteracy rate dropped from 50% to near 13% (Hanemann 2005: 1). Though largely praised, the programme was attacked by some as purely ideological in function, indoctrinating those too poorly educated to know the difference. However, most Nicaraguans involved in the crusade viewed it as a positive experience of community building, as confirmed by the interviews in section 6.4. Whilst the content of the literacy materials indicate an ideological stance, the crusade itself highlights the emphasis the government placed on education. After the crusade, the FSLN began implementing its ‘new education’. Here, again, we find the collocational influence of ‘new’ situating the educational changes within the larger goal of national re-creation, linking the discourse on the new education to the broader discourse on the nation, further evidencing the nation’s role as a nodal point.

From the outset, this vision was directly communicated to the people. Borge, in his 1980 address to a class of carpentry students at a rehabilitation centre, referred to the transformations affected by the Revolution. He stressed that there would be more changes in the future to improve that particular school building and its educational system:

Ya se han producido algunos cambios aquí, pero han pasado muy pocos meses y seguramente se van a producir nuevos cambios en el futuro, tendientes a mejorar las instalaciones físicas de este lugar y el sistema pedagógico; tendientes a convertir la

disciplina de rehabilitación en una disciplina de transformación revolucionaria, de creación del hombre nuevo (Borge 1980: 7).²⁰

Even in the specific context of improving the services at a rehabilitative education centre, the narrative of transformation is evident. The changes to the centre were particularly aimed at creating the new man. In this passage, the new man is synonymous with revolutionary transformation, with the prepositional phrases positioned as interchangeable modifiers of the noun ‘discipline’. The progress of the Revolution and the creation of the new man occupy the same semantic space and become associated as one concept. That concept evokes the strategy of emphasising the national model character expressed through parallelism (Wodak et al. 1999: 38). The national model character finds a more complete description in the discourse on the new man. The new man also serves as a link between the nodal points Revolution and nation, with the formation of the ‘new man’, in service of the nation, being synonymous with revolutionary transformation.

The FSLN discourse tied the new education to the new Nicaragua through the concept of social transformation, which reflects an exposition of the Sandinista narrative. The FSLN’s goal for the new education is evident in the statement, in their pamphlet *Plan de Lucha*, that, '[f]ormaremos a un hombre nuevo, integral, en una nueva educación científica y humanitaria' (FSLN 1984: 10).²¹ It is interesting to note that, in this particular instance, the FSLN does not use the definite article when referring to the new man, but rather the indefinite one. Whereas the references to the new man seen so far have presented a nominalised version that include the definite article and capitalise both words, here it is less specific. The sense conveyed in this extract is a more general reshaping of the citizens, rather than their transformation into a specific type of super-citizen. Regardless of this subtle difference, the intention of the education is evident; it is meant to rear a new person, based on a humanitarian and scientific education. The intended transformation of the individuals that compose the *pueblo* is communicated through this educational goal. The integral changes to the citizens of the new nation entailed in the new education dictated the type of person and the type of society that were welcome in Nicaragua.

²⁰ ‘Some changes have already been produced here, but very few months have passed, and surely there are going to be more changes in the future, aimed at improving the physical installations of this place and the pedagogical system; aimed at converting the discipline of rehabilitation into a discipline of revolutionary transformation, of the creation of the new man’

²¹ ‘we will bring up a new, integral man, in a new scientific and humanitarian education’

The pamphlet *Fines y objetivos de la nueva educación* (1983) elaborates the role of education in creating the new man. The main end is described as:

Formar plena e integralmente la personalidad del Hombre Nuevo, permanentemente en la construcción, apto para promover y contribuir al proceso de transformación que edifica día a día la Nueva Sociedad. Este Hombre Nuevo nicaragüense que viene construyéndose desde el inicio del proceso de liberación de nuestro pueblo, se forma a partir de nuestra realidad, el trabajo creador y de las circunstancias históricas que vivimos. La educación deberá desarrollar las capacidades intelectuales, físicas, morales, estéticas y espirituales de este Hombre Nuevo.²²

(MED 1983)

The stated aim of the new education was to mould students into the idealized example of the model national character as embodied by Sandino's mythic new man. This man or woman²³ was intended to establish the new society. An important aspect of the formation of this new citizen was the attention paid to all facets of his or her development, not merely intellectual, but physical, moral, spiritual and aesthetic. Aesthetic development is linked to the increased emphasis on the arts and music under the FSLN government, intended to increase the 'Nicaraguaness' of cultural production in the country. The spiritual development acknowledged the importance of religious issues in the country and significantly incorporated them in the national model citizen, enshrining them in the official ideology. Each of these areas represents aspects of the model national character that the FSLN looked to promote and emphasise within the new Nicaragua.

The cultural development of Nicaragua occupied such a place of importance for the FSLN that one of the first ministries set up after the Revolution was the Ministry of Culture. Daisy Zamora, Vice-Minister of Culture in 1982, describes the Revolution as the 'most important cultural product in Nicaragua', and claims that the 'revolutionary triumph [was] a cultural triumph' (Zamora 1982: 7). Such an

²² 'To fully and integrally shape the personality of the New Man, permanently in the construction, apt to promote and contribute to the process of transformation that the New Society is building day by day. This New Nicaraguan Man, who has been being created since the beginning of the process of liberating our people, is formed from our reality, the creative work and the historical circumstance that we have lived. The education will have to develop the intellectual, physical, moral, aesthetic and spiritual capacities of this New Man'

²³ The FSLN included women in this concept even though the traditional male reference in the phrase indicates that the inclusion may not have been complete. For a discussion of the role of women in the Revolution, their struggle for equality and the Sandinista policies affecting women, see Maxine Molyneux's (1993) 'Women's Role in the Nicaraguan Revolutionary Process: The Early Years' *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 9.2. pp.127-147, and Margaret Randall's (1994) *Sandinista's Daughters Revisited: Feminism in Nicaragua*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press.

emphasis on culture is to be expected in transitional post-revolutionary periods, according to Peter Ross (1990: 110), who contends that ‘cultural artefacts... can be powerful elements in the formation of the new citizen and in the extirpation of the old order’. For the Sandinistas, the desire to create a new citizen is obvious in their discussions of the new man, as are their efforts at dismantling the old order of the Somozas. To this end, the emphasis on the masses was extended to the cultural realm by attempting to redefine popular culture. Cardenal credits the FSLN government in the 1980s with making culture in Nicaragua the ‘patrimony of all the people’ (Martin 1989: 128). Thus, the Revolution was not merely a political and social project, but a cultural one as well, an emphasis that helped frame the discussion of the new man.

Zamora goes on to state that ‘la cultura... considerará como suyas todas las manifestaciones del hombre y se propondrá la creación de un nuevo tipo de hombre’ (1982: 7).²⁴ The link between the cultural project and the re-creation of society via the new man is evident in the statement that the emphasis of the project is the creation of a new type of man. Sergio Ramírez elaborates on this point in a speech at the inauguration of a new cultural award in Havana where he states that:

no podemos hablar de la Revolución sino como una tarea del futuro, y los nuevos valores populares que promueve, la nueva concepción de sociedad, los fundamentos ideológicos de la nueva Cultura, tendrán también que ser forjados... en medio de la contradicción entre el nuevo y el viejo orden (Ramírez Mercado 1982: 152).²⁵

Ramírez links both the new man and the new society directly to the cultural development of the people under the Revolution. Connecting the popular culture to the national project reflects Ross’s contention that culture is a powerful tool in establishing hegemony for a new political power, as the interests and needs of the masses are taken up by the government. The Sandinista approach presents the opposite of Gellner’s creation of a common high culture (Gellner 1983: 36-7). The culture is indeed common, but rather than a high culture, accessible and appealing only to a small sector of the society, it is a popular culture that comes from the people at the grassroots level and appeals to the masses, as Rowe and Schelling (1991) argue.

²⁴ ‘culture... will consider as its own all the manifestations of man and will promote the creation of a new type of man... A humanistic conception’

²⁵ ‘we cannot talk about the Revolution, except as a future task, and the new popular values that it promotes, the new conception of society, the ideological foundations of the new Culture, will also have to be forged... in the midst of the contradiction between the new and old order’

In a speech at the World Conference on Cultural Policies in Mexico, Cardenal addressed the role of culture in the new Nicaragua. The goal of cultural democracy, according to Cardenal, is the creation of the new man. He explains that ‘el hombre Nuevo son los niños. No existirá un hombre Nuevo sin niños nuevos.... [E]l hombre Nuevo no será un individuo sino una colectividad. El yo cambiado por el nosotros’ (Cardenal 1982: 271).²⁶ Cardenal connects the cultural, social and political projects with education in his assertion that the children are to be the new men in the Revolution. The purpose of the new education is the formation of the children in such a mould, including the emphasis on the collective mentality of people brought up under the new education. From this perspective, the exposition of the qualities of the new man in *Fines y objetivos de la nueva educación* takes on a more directed and complex purpose.

The pamphlet laid out an extensive list of the political and social qualities expected in the new man. The qualities were divided into two groups, one political and the other social, indicating the dual aim of the educational formation. Politically, the new man exhibited patriotism, solidarity and a commitment to the interests of the working and peasant classes, with an emphasis on national unity, sovereignty and social progress (MED 1983). Emphasising social progress links the new man with the new society, in line with the narrative positioning the Revolution as a process leading to national transformation. The list also contains an allusion to the sacrificial nature of the new man, as he is described as committed to the interests of the masses.

Socially, the list of qualities is even longer than the political one. Along with the characteristics of honesty, sincerity and respectfulness, qualities often valued in western societies, there are virtues more specifically related to the ideals of the FSLN in the new Nicaragua. The new man is one who possesses ‘elevados principios morales, cívicos y espirituales’ and ‘que comprenda que el interés individual debe coincidir con el interés social y nacional, que desarrolle un alto espíritu de sacrificio, abnegación para defender la patria y la Revolución’ (MED 1983).²⁷ The centrality of the nation as a nodal point in the discourse on social transformation in the *pueblo* is again visible through the emphasis on the individual

²⁶ ‘the New man is the children. There will not exist a New man without new children’ ‘the New man will not be an individual, but a collectivity. The I changed for the we’

²⁷ ‘elevated moral, civic and spiritual principles’ ‘who understands that individual interest ought to coincide with social and national interest, who develops a heightened spirit of sacrifice, self-denial in order to defend the homeland and the Revolution’

directing their intentions and actions toward the interests of the nation in this passage. Sacrifice in this instance not only requires individual interests to be subjugated to the national and social interests, but the individual interests are expected to be the same as the collective ones. That connotation of sacrifice goes beyond putting others first, to suggest that the individual and the national group are to be one, both politically and socially. Sacrifice and self-denial are linked to the defence of the nation and the Revolution, indicating the implied topos of threat against the nation, adding importance through the threat of an aggressive 'other'. Additionally, we can see the prominence of the 'moral, civic and spiritual' aspects of the new man, which Hazel Smith (1993: 138) describes as a combination of the sacrificial nature of revolutionary Christians and Sandino's idealism. This marks a significant departure from Guevara's new man, where the spiritual was only emphasised in relation to labour concerns (Löwy 2007: 19). The difference reflects the unique relationship between the Sandinistas and religious groups. Indeed, Hodges (1986: 261) credits Ernesto Cardenal with directly tying the new man to Jesus Christ in the public eye through posters at Christmas time in 1980 which 'celebrated the new man, picturing the Christ child in a manger with the Virgin Mary protected by Sandinista armed guards'. Thus, not only was the new man the representation of Marx's socialised humanity and Guevara's citizens connected to one another through brotherly love (Löwy 2007: 19), he was also the new creation that embodied the sacrificial work of Jesus, whilst working for true freedom from oppression as envisioned by liberation theologians. Sacrifice understood as a spiritual element lent further weight to the requirements on the individual members of the *pueblo* to bring about the transformation of the nation.

The strategy of the model national character of the founding fathers also functions in educating the new man. Another expressly stated objective of the education programme is:

'Formar al Hombre Nuevo en el pensamiento y el ejemplo de los Heroes y Mártires, y de todas aquellas figuras que a lo largo de la historia de nuestras luchas de liberacion han ido construyendo, definiendo e inspirando la personalidad y esencia de nuestra Patria y de nuestra Revolución Popular Sandinista.' (MED 1983).²⁸

²⁸ 'To train up the New Man in the thought and example of the Heroes and Martyrs, and all those figures who throughout the history of our fights for liberation who have been steadily constructing,

This passage reflects the efforts to connect the new man and his characteristics to the past heroes of the Revolution and the model national character. Not only do the forefathers provide an example of how current citizens ought to act, but their characteristics are portrayed as integral in the creation of the Nicaraguan identity. The founding fathers are credited with defining and inspiring the ‘personality and essence’ of the nation and the Revolution, directly exhibiting a topos of definition (Wodak et al. 1999: 39), which links the characteristics of the new man to those of the founding fathers, and in turn to the new Nicaragua and the new society.

The new society that the new man was intended to construct was a nebulous term used to describe a variety of governmental measures put in place by the Sandinista government. These measures were created to further the revolutionary process and represented the progress of the Revolution in transforming the new Nicaragua. The view of the Revolution representing more than a political change supported the efforts at ideological formation and social education. Ideological formation, an obvious element in the creation of the new man is intrinsically connected to the construction of the new society. Tirado López (1986: 251-2) expresses this when he explains that the Revolution is about more than just political and economic efforts, but also ideological ones, because ‘es importante que sepan hacer uso de la ideología para transformar la realidad y seguir adelante en la construcción de esta nueva sociedad’.²⁹ Ideological formation, then, occupied a central role in establishing the new society. As such, the ideological efforts of the new education system to create new men were integral in providing the foundation on which the new Nicaragua could be built. For the Sandinistas, building a new Nicaraguan society rested on abolishing the historical legacy of dependency and domination attributed to the Somoza dynasty. The reference to historical oppression exists as a foil against which the idealised *patria de Sandino* can be elaborated and promulgated.

In their 1980 pamphlet describing how to appropriately use propaganda to promote Sandinista ideology in the workforce, the FSLN explains that ‘[n]o vamos a construir una nueva sociedad por un rótulo o un afiche, la construiremos trabajando

defining and inspiring the personality and essence of our Homeland and our Sandinista Popular Revolution’

²⁹ ‘it is important that they know how to use ideology to transform reality and continue in the construction of this new society’

para destruir la herencia estructural de miseria y explotación con la que nos estamos enfrentando' (FSLN 1980: 14).³⁰ In this passage, the Sandinista leadership acknowledge that slogans and posters promoting the new society are not a sufficient basis for its creation. They indicate that they must dismantle the negative structural system of political, economic and social action in the nation in order to create the new society. The topos of comparison in this extract sets the new Nicaragua under Sandinista rule in a positive light, contrasted against a negative representation of the past. Coming from a pamphlet on the effective use of propaganda, it stands to reason that the FSLN recognised discourse as an integral element in changing societal structures and thereby integral in gaining hegemony. Their discounting of signs as a means of building the new society is a direct example of an intentional crafting of party discourse on the topic. In this light, they discursively destroy the old order, whilst simultaneously creating the new one on its ashes. As Ross contends, culture, or in this case education, is a powerful tool in overturning the old regime whilst installing a new one.

The Sandinista narrative is evident in the theme of national transformation occurring through the destruction of old patterns and their replacement with new ones. In an interview with the members of the DN, after Robelo left the original junta, Comandante Jaime Wheelock argues that any shortcomings Robelo found in the Revolution and the FSLN government are to be expected since 'aquí ha habido una guerra donde todo el orden anterior quedó derrumbado y ha venido construyéndose un nuevo orden, en el que no todos los factores han podido ser manejados por el nuevo sistema naciente' (DN 1980: 6).³¹ The old and new orders are set against each other through the topos of a black and white comparison (Wodak et al. 1999: 42). The difficulty of installing the new society is explained as a consequence of the process of dismantling the old system and rebuilding it into something new. Undoing the old system also indicates the strategy of construction via comparison, (Wodak et al. 1999: 38). Whilst the passage does not describe the nature of the previous order, the use of the continuous form 'constructing' suggests a change and implicitly contrasts what they are building with what had been before.

³⁰ 'we are not going to build a new society through a sign or a poster, we will build it working to destroy the structural inheritance of misery and exploitation which we are facing'

³¹ 'here there has been a war where the whole old order was demolished and a new order has been being built, in which not all the factors have been able to be managed by the nascent system'

The DN documents display this strategy six years later when, in 1986, they state that ‘Porque amamos la paz, hemos venido construyendo una nueva sociedad basada en el pluralismo político, la economía mixta y el no alineamiento, promoviendo una amplia y flexible política de unidad nacional’ (DN 1986: 38).³² The new system Wheelock described as replacing the old in 1980 finds its expression in the variety of political positions introduced by the FSLN in this passage. Though not directly mentioning the Somoza dominated past, the DN passage draws an implied comparison with the past through the use of the continuous form ‘constructing’ in conjunction with the new society. The transformation from the old to the new is expressed as an ongoing process, in line with the Sandinista narrative of the present, where the nation is still being transformed.

The FSLN discursively positions the nation as the site of revolutionary transformation, drawing together the discourses on the new man and the new society. Within these discourses, we have seen several salient strategies. Particularly evident is the strategy of model national character combined with the strategy of the founding fathers. As I have shown, the heroes and martyrs of the Revolution and the national folk heroes, established as founding fathers of the Sandinista movement, were depicted as examples of the model national character and provided a definition for the new man. This represented an appeal for continuity with the legacy of those individuals in the creation of the new society. Among the themes put forward by the discourse on the nation were collective concern and individual sacrifice. These two areas function together with the model national character to elicit support for the policies and actions of the government in transforming the nation. They also aid in establishing a sense of community among those being called to help implement the revolutionary vision for the country, connecting the nodal points of Revolution and nation, in the discourse. An additional strategy emerged in the black and white contrast between the old Somoza regime with the new Sandinista vision for the nation. This served to highlight the positive attributes of the new society that the people were being called to construct. Together with the concept of unity as integral for the revolutionary process, the creation of the new man and the new society indicate how the individual members of the *pueblo* are to be incorporated into the new nation, conveying the national community that the narrative aimed to construct.

³² ‘Because we love peace, we have been building a new society based on political pluralism, mixed economy and non-alignment, promoting a broad and flexible politics of national unity’

By attempting to draw the citizens into the revolutionary project, and by elevating the sacrifices that entailed to a spiritual level, such as the rationing of food mentioned in section 5.4, the Sandinista documents exhibit an effort to shape the popular understanding of the government's project. Successfully defining their policies as aspects of the new Nicaragua in the popular sphere would have allowed the Sandinistas to achieve, and perhaps maintain, integral hegemony. The opposition discursively contested the FSLN's presentation of the new nation, arguing that the Sandinistas desired to fundamentally alter the traditional Nicaraguan society. The opposition discourse makes this point largely through the use of black and white comparisons and the topoi purity and betrayal in presenting their narrative's emphasis on democracy and the nation's Christian character.

6.3 The Opposition and a Free Nicaragua

The opposition likewise refers to national concerns when advancing its own narrative of transformation. As their narrative focuses on national political transformation, the discourse does not centre on creating a new nation built on new citizens. Rather freedom and Christianity organise the discourse. Freedom draws together the themes of anti-imperialism and the legacy of Sandino as a founding father, whereas the emphasis on Christianity in the country pulls together the discursive strands of model national character and anti-Marxism. Democracy remains a salient theme, contrasting with the Marxism perceived in the FSLN government.

In the opposition discourse, the renovation of the nation appears as a consequence of establishing freedom and democracy in the country. The MDN agrees with the Sandinistas about the need to create a new Nicaragua. However, they argue that the FSLN have not met the criteria necessary to do so. The group states in its broadsheet that, '[n]os parece fundamental para construir la nueva Nicaragua que se dé en nuestro país una auténtica libertad sindical; sin opresiones, sin manipulaciones, donde los obreros como clase, defiendan sus intereses, defiendan la

marcha de esta Revolución' (MDN 1985: 5).³³ To create a new Nicaragua, the MDN argues that there needs to be freedom for the unions and workers. Appealing to the FSLN's target audience, this extract indicates that the workers' interests are not addressed by the government, delegitimising the FSLN's claim both to represent the working class. Rather than arguing against the Sandinista concept of a new Nicaragua, the MDN employs the same term, capitalising on the connotations already discursively assigned to it whilst subtly shifting the understood meaning, exhibiting the term's multiaccentuality. For the opposition, the new Nicaragua is a place that allows workers to make their own decisions in their associations, rather than being dictated to by the government, as the passage suggests with its reference to existing manipulation and oppression. In this context, the new Nicaragua is redefined as a democratic nation free from government domination in the economic and political realms.

The RN also refer to constructing a new Nicaragua when discussing the members of their military ranks. The following statement, from the RN publication *Comandos*, aligns the new Nicaragua with their goal of morally rebuilding the nation:

Son hombres lanzados a una guerra civil, que combaten el ateísmo y el trato humillante que ha convertido a nuestras mujeres, niños y ancianos en simples objetos de su llamada "Revolución". Su tradición campesina es síntesis de sus principios morales y las creencias religiosas para dar recio contenido a su formación castrense. Esas mismas cualidades repercutirán de manera definitiva en la reconstrucción moral de la nueva Nicaragua (RN 1987?: 12).³⁴

The military training the militia members receive is bolstered by their own moral foundations, which in turn will translate over to the nation once the FSLN is defeated. The RN refer to building the new Nicaragua as 'moral reconstruction', indicating that the nation, under the FSLN, has lost its moral grounding. Therefore, there is a need to reclaim the moral path of the nation from the Sandinistas and re-establish it along the traditional lines displayed by the militants. The RN support this

³³ 'it seems to us that in order to build the new Nicaragua it is fundamental that there be in our country an authentic freedom for the unions; without oppression, without manipulation, where the workers as a class defend their interests, defend the course of this Revolution'

³⁴ 'They are men launched in a civil war, who combat atheism and the humiliating treatment that has converted our women, children and elderly in simple objects of their so-called "Revolution". Their peasant tradition is a synthesis of their moral principles and religious beliefs to give a robust content to their military formation. Those same qualities reverberate in a definitive manner in the moral reconstruction of the New Nicaragua'

with their prior assertion that the militants fight is against atheism and the treatment of the vulnerable members of society as mere ‘objects of the so-called “Revolution”’. This is a direct attack against the FSLN’s attempts to discursively construct a *pueblo* which is dedicated to the Revolution’s tasks. Again, the new Nicaragua experiences a polysemous redefinition, where the nation is not only a recreated form of the nation freed from a dictatorial past, but also represents a moral turn from the supposed atheism of the current government. We can see in these two extracts the opposition’s narrative on the present, where the FSLN is accused of destroying the nation’s political ambitions and social foundations.

6.3.1 Freedom and the Founding Fathers

In the opposition narrative, democracy goes hand in hand with freedom in national transformation. For, without freedom, the democratic tradition they want to establish in the country is impossible. Freedom is particularly potent as it allows the opposition to link the Somoza past and the FSLN dominated present. The future transformation that the opposition presents is one where democratic freedom allows the people to determine the nation’s political direction. Azucena Ferrey, one of the directors of the RN expressed this sentiment in an interview with the journal *Resistencia*.

No podemos seguir dentro de un círculo vicioso de rebelión y tiranía que nos lleve a iniciar un nuevo proceso de guerra civil. [...] Por eso es importante que el pueblo de Nicaragua esté consciente que el papel de la Resistencia es abrir el camino para que se produzcan las condiciones en las que el pueblo nicaragüense pueda decidir su propio destino en un ambiente de libertad y democracia (Ferrey 1987: 12).³⁵

Ferrey indicates that the nation must arrive at a point where opposing parties can function within the political realm without leading to a continual state of civil war. The purpose of the RN, in her estimation, is to create a situation where the people can determine the path of the nation, which is only possible in the context of a free and democratic nation. The importance that the opposition documents place on political pluralism in the transformation of the nation can be seen in this passage.

³⁵ ‘We cannot continue in a vicious circle of rebellion and tyranny that brings us to begin a new process of civil war. [...] For this reason it is important that the Nicaraguan people be conscious of the fact that the roll of the Resistance is to open the way so that the conditions are produced in which the Nicaraguan people can decided their own destiny in an atmosphere of freedom and democracy.’

Ferrey's intentions for the RN are to allow the people to decide their own future, which does not necessarily ensure that the RN will be power holders in the future. The importance for the party is instead placed on establishing an 'environment of freedom and democracy'.

The BOS also connect freedom and democracy in their manifesto when commenting on the reasons for the party's formation. They state that their fight for Nicaragua's freedom is based on the following principles:

Que la Revolución nicaragüense y sus promesas de libertad y democracia han sido traicionadas por la élite militar del FSLN, desviándola hacia un modelo político totalitario y de sometimiento.

Que la soberanía nacional y la gesta revolucionaria de todo el pueblo nicaragüense han sido usurpadas por el régimen de Managua y entregadas a los intereses expansionistas del imperialismo soviético.

Que el logro de la paz social cimentada en la verdad, la justicia y la libertad sólo puede ser obra del esfuerzo conjunto de todos los que aspiramos a una Nicaragua democrática (BOS 1985?: 14-15).³⁶

Several important aspects of the opposition narrative are evident in this passage.

Firstly, as I discussed in chapter five, the FSLN are again shown to have betrayed the original intent of the Revolution. The BOS state that the promises of the Revolution were freedom and democracy, which have been 'diverted towards a totalitarian political model'. This phrase is particularly telling as the Sandinista project is not referred to as a social one but a political one. The purpose of the Revolution, as seen by the BOS, was political transformation leading to democracy in the nation, and the political will of the people was ignored by the FSLN government.

Secondly, the betrayal of the Revolution and national sovereignty has occurred for the benefit of foreign powers, perpetuating the tradition of interventionism and imperialism in the nation. The anti-imperialist discourse, associated with national freedom, indicates a situation of polysemy. The BOS in this instance indicate imperialism stemming from the USSR, counter to the FSLN's use of the term to refer to the intervention of the United States. As I discuss below, the

³⁶ 'That the Nicaraguan Revolution and its promises of freedom and democracy have been betrayed by the military elite of the FSLN, diverting it towards a politico-totalitarian model and of submission. That the national sovereignty and the revolutionary expense of all the Nicaraguan people have been usurped by the regime from Managua and surrendered to the expansionist interests of Soviet imperialism.

That the achievement of social piece based on truth, justice and freedom alone can be the work of the joint efforts of all of us who aspire to a democratic Nicaragua.'

opposition take advantage of the polysemous nature of the term ‘anti-imperialism’ to redefine it to signify Soviet and Cuban influence in the nation. Lastly, this extract highlights the centrality of freedom and democracy in the transformation of the nation. Collective action on the part of those who desire a democratic Nicaragua is presented as the only possibility to achieve lasting peace in the country. Significantly, that peace is based on justice, freedom and truth, indicating the future characteristics of the new Nicaragua of the opposition, as the consequence of democracy. The importance of freedom in conjunction with model national character and anti-imperialism, frequently in a situation of betrayal, emerges from the opposition corpus as an important strategy in constructing the opposition’s counter-hegemonic discourse.

6.3.1.1 National Character, Imperialism and Betrayal

The opposition situate Sandino as a founding father of the democratic movement, with an emphasis on his policy of national sovereignty as a key marker of his political character. As I discussed in chapter five, the opposition accuse the FSLN of betraying the true spirit of Sandino. Sandino is redefined within the opposition discourse as the father of the democratic movement, which contrasts with his portrayal in the Sandinista discourse. The multiaccentuality of Sandino as a discursive element allows the opposition to reorient the understanding of the national figure. This enables the opposition to argue that the true spirit of Sandino has been betrayed by the FSLN and their policies. Hodges (1986: 292) contends that there were two strands of Sandinista thought in Nicaragua: one which was intellectual and systematic, supporting the FSLN’s vision, and the other which was popular and folkloric, recalling Sandino as a peasant leader. Hodges states that ‘the conviction that Sandino’s democratic and populist program has been “betrayed” by the revolutionary government provides sustenance to the Nicaraguan *contras*’ (ibid: 292).

The role of the founding fathers, Sandino among them, in laying the foundation for the people’s movement to foster freedom in the country is particularly visible in an article by the famed Nicaraguan poet and political activist Pablo Antonio Cuadra. In the RN publication *Resistencia*, Cuadra creates a historical legacy of national sovereignty, stemming from the first indigenous settlers in the territory, which continues to the present to include Sandino and Darío. National

sovereignty is constructed from two types of hero, the warrior and the cultural icon (Cuadra 1987: 3). Cuadra opposes the vision of national sovereignty promoted by the FSLN. Rather he portrays the FSLN as violating the historical patrimony of fighting for and respecting national sovereignty within the nation. He claims that:

es un signo de ignorancia el de los sandinistas cuando pretenden defender la soberanía nicaragüense, matando al mismo tiempo la libertad de expresión. Atentan contra la definición misma de nuestra nacionalidad nicaragüense que vuela con dos alas: el ala de la soberanía cultural (que abre Darío ...) y el ala de la soberanía política (que abren las resistencias indias contra el conquistador,... o los Estradas o los Sandinos) (Cuadra 1987: 4).³⁷

The historic tradition of national sovereignty finds its basis in the cultural and political legacy of past Nicaraguans in this passage. Darío is held up as the quintessential cultural icon, embodying independence in that realm, whilst the indigenous people's resistance to the Spanish along with Sandino's fight against the USA typify the tradition of political independence. For Cuadra, these two aspects of the Nicaraguan heritage combine to create the Nicaraguan nationality. The accusation of ignorance levelled against the Sandinistas delegitimises the FSLN's own historical narrative that portrays the same founding figures as agents of rebellion leading to a social revolution. The delegitimation then extends to the entirety of Nicaragua's national identity, as Cuadra contends that the two-pronged approach to national sovereignty is being threatened by the very individuals who purport to defend it. That dismantling strategy (Wodak et al. 1999: 42) enables Cuadra to reorient the narrative on Nicaraguan history and the founding fathers, allowing him to claim that the FSLN is undermining and destroying the very legacy they created. The appropriation of a dominant discourse, or 'language' according to Ives (2004: 78), by subaltern groups attempting to present a counter-hegemonic discourse is evident in Cuadra's comments. His recasting of the narrative past allows the opposition to benefit from the hegemonic work done by the FSLN to gain support for the role and legacy of the founding fathers in the Revolution and beyond whilst discrediting the Sandinistas at the same time. The betrayal of history and the

³⁷ It is a sign of the ignorance of the Sandinistas when they try to defend Nicaraguan sovereignty, whilst killing at the same time the freedom of expression. They are threatening the very definition of our Nicaraguan nationality which flies with two wings: the wing of cultural sovereignty (which Darío opened...) and the wing of political sovereignty (which the indian resistance against the conquistador and the Estradas or Sandinos opened)

founding fathers, discussed above, provides contextual markers that allow the concept of Sandino and others that redefine what they represent, evidencing the polysemic potential of the concept.

Similarly, the FRS (Frente Revolucionario Sandino) contends that Sandino's beliefs, true sandinismo, were not adhered to by the FSLN. In the pamphlet *Un Pueblo en Lucha* the party states that: 'La esencia del sandinismo la constituye la soberanía nacional y esta soberanía reside en el pueblo, [...] En Nicaragua el pueblo es ajeno al ejercicio de la soberanía, pues ésta es absurda posesión de los nueve comandantes del FSLN' (FRS 1983: 1-2).³⁸ Though less direct in indicating the FSLN's betrayal of Sandino's legacy, national sovereignty appears to be intrinsic to the founding father's ideology. By extension, the DN prevents the people from exercising this freedom, thereby betraying the intention of Sandino and the Revolution he inspired. Both the FRS and Cuadra passages rely on the social capital of Sandino and his vision of a sovereign Nicaragua. The appeal to the folk hero among the population and his use as a rallying point during the revolutionary uprising positioned Sandino as a glorified founding father who must be interpreted correctly in order to arrive at the proper direction for the country. This has resonances with the religious imagery and discourse evident throughout both corpora. The mystification and deification of Sandino allowed him to act as a multiaccetual figure, with conflicting groups claiming him as their inspiration whilst deriding their opponents. Sandino is recontextualised in the opposition discourse to provide historical support for their own ideological project, thus attempting to appropriate Sandino, as an ideological sign, from the FSLN.

In a similar fashion, the BOS, in the passage seen above, declares that the Sandinista leadership betrayed the principles of the Revolution, claiming that 'la soberanía nacional y la gesta revolucionaria de todo el pueblo nicaragüense han sido usurpadas por el régimen de Managua y entregadas a los intereses expansionistas del imperialismo soviético' (BOS 1985?: 14).³⁹ Both the themes of national sovereignty and anti-imperialism are visible in this statement, exhibiting the strategy of autonomisation and the topos of threat (Wodak et al. 1999: 38). Whilst imperialism

³⁸ 'The essence of Sandinismo constitutes national sovereignty, and this sovereignty resides in the people [...] In Nicaragua the people are not involved with the exercise of sovereignty, this is an absurd possession of the nine FSLN commandants'

³⁹ 'the national sovereignty and the heroic revolutionary deeds of all the Nicaraguan people have been usurped by the regime in Managua and given over to the expansionist interests of Soviet imperialism'

is represented in this passage by the Soviet Union, the actor of the sentence is the FSLN leadership, with the Soviet Union a passive object receiving the sovereignty and the revolutionary efforts that are proffered.

The RN publication *Comandos* also engages the anti-imperialist theme, criticising the FSLN for allowing other nations to occupy the role held by the USA under Somoza. In the editorial entitled ‘¿Por Qué Luchamos?’, the RN states that

‘[I]uchamos por una patria libre de invasores cubano-soviéticos que insultan nuestra soberanía y ensangrientan con mano extranjera nuestra tierra. Luchamos porque nuestros jóvenes no sean exterminados por la furia soviética. Luchamos para erradicar un gobierno detestado por el pueblo. Luchamos por el respeto a la vida por la libertad de culto por las libertades públicas por que en Nicaragua haya libertad de expresión y resplandezcan los derechos de los trabajadores del campo y la ciudad. Luchamos para obtener reivindicaciones sociales que permitan libertad con justicia social. Luchamos por la reconciliación de la familia nicaragüense y por la reconstrucción física y moral de nuestra patria’ (RN 1987?: 2).⁴⁰

Whilst there is no mention of the Sandinista leadership’s role in the ‘invasion’, the reference to the ‘detested government’ situates the foreign interference as a direct consequence of FSLN governance. The RN expresses its anti-imperialist perspective through the appeal to freeing the country from foreign influence. Here, the freedom for which the RN is fighting is not only from external forces, but from internal ones which have prevented the exercise of civil liberties. Autonomisation can be seen in the identification of national sovereignty as an integral national value. Freedom, as the overarching aim of the RN’s fight, signifies more than independence from foreign intervention; it is also the result of democratic principles, such as free speech and freedom of assembly. The nation, in this passage, must be freed from a government that does not respect the people’s demands for democracy and freedom. The opposition’s narrative is evident in the discourse on freedom as a reflection of the founding fathers’ national character and as the counterpoint to the new Cuban-Soviet imperialism.

⁴⁰ ‘we fight for a country free of Cuban-Soviet invaders who insult our national sovereignty and with a foreign hand bloody our land We fight so that our young people are not exterminated by Soviet fury. We fight to eradicate a government detested by the people. We fight for the respect of life, for the freedom of association, for the public liberties, so that in Nicaragua there may be freedom of expression and so that the rights of the workers in the countryside and in the city may shine. We fight in order to obtain the social demands that allow freedom with social justice. We fight for the reconciliation of the Nicaraguan family and for the physical and moral reconstruction of our homeland’

In a speech commemorating the battle of San Jacinto in Nicaragua, Robelo Callejas refers to the national heroes who had fought for Nicaragua's freedom in the past and indirectly references Soviet imperialism by suggesting the people are in danger of being enslaved. He comments that:

‘Hoy hace 129 años, un puñado de heroicos nicaragüenses, llenos de amor patrio, protagonizaron uno de los más gloriosos hechos de armas, poniendo de manifiesto la ineludible voluntad de nunca ser esclavos de nadie... Sangre generosa que es testimonio inmortal de nuestra decisión de ser libres y de recordar a las generaciones futuras; a nosotros, ahora en 1985; nuestro compromiso de mantener limpia, libre y ondeando a los cuatro vientos la bandera azul y blanco, símbolo sagrado de nuestra patria’. (Robelo Callejas 1985b: 2)⁴¹

The threat of becoming slaves again under the FSLN, due to Soviet and Cuban imperialism, is referred to in this passage. The threat transcends individual concerns to address national ones, where the traditional blue and white Nicaraguan flag is threatened, and in need of protection to remain clean, free and waving. Even today the competing flags indicate political allegiances. Those opposed to the current Sandinista government fly the Nicaraguan flag at their homes on days of national celebration, whilst those who support the FSLN fly the red and black Sandinista flag. Some of the interview participants indicated that flying the blue and white Nicaraguan flag can invite danger. Indeed, whilst I was in Nicaragua in 2010 for the 19 July celebrations of the Revolution, several cars flying the Nicaraguan flag were pelted with stones and had their windows broken. Billig's (1995: 39-40) concept of 'banal nationalism' comes to bear on this topic as flags are a latent, or banal, symbol of a nation and reinforce or invoke nationalist responses in the citizenry. The significance of the flag is pronounced in the Nicaraguan context as they are symbols of the different narratives of the nation vying for hegemony in the people's minds. Robelo's comments also draw on the topos of history, specifically the founding fathers and the associated model national character, to describe what Nicaraguans are like and do. Those who fought to expel the filibusterer William Walker in 1856 displayed heroism and patriotism, characteristics representative of all Nicaraguans, whose sacrifice is expressed as 'our decision', rather than 'their decision'.

⁴¹ 'Today marks 129 years since a handful of heroic Nicaraguans, full of love for their Fatherland, took part in one of the most glorious armed acts, highlighting the unwavering will to never be slaves of anyone again... Generous blood which is the immortal testimony of our decision to be free and to remind future generations; for us now in 1985, our promise to keep the blue and white flag clean, free and waving in the four winds, the sacred symbol of our Fatherland'

Associating those in the present with the virtues of past national heroes links them to the current commitment to defend the nation, represented by the image of the flag.

As I have shown in this section, the opposition discourse exhibits similar themes and strategies to those found FSLN discourse. The extracts above demonstrate the opposition's attempt to counter Sandinistas narrative of national historical rebellion displayed by the founding fathers, with their counter-hegemonic narrative of national character leading to freedom and democratic principles. Likewise, the personage of Sandino underwent a polysemic (Hall 1982: 80) redefinition in the opposition corpus, where the historical icon became the progenitor of the opposition's conception of national freedom. In this manner, the founding fathers are shown to have been betrayed by the FSLN. The opposition discourse contends that the Sandinistas' reforms deny the freedom for which the martyrs and heroes fought. Though different in substance, the national identity seen in the new man in the Sandinista corpus, finds an alternative expression in the opposition documents, where Christian character forms the basis of national definition and contrasts with the FSLN's Marxism.

6.3.2 The Opposition's Christian Questioning of the New Man

The importance of religion to the Nicaraguan identity is a theme that runs through both the opposition and FSLN corpora. This is not surprising given the fact that the FSLN was to varying extents supported by the Church and grassroots Christian groups during the revolutionary uprising. With the traditionally Rightist territory having been partially ceded to the Sandinistas, the opposition groups attempt to reclaim religion as their terrain after the Revolution. Though the Revolution had drawn legitimacy from Christian groups' participation, the increasingly Marxist orientation that the opposition groups viewed in the Sandinista government necessitated the forceful withdrawal of that religious support. Drawing on the traditional discourse of Marxism as the enemy of Christianity, the opposition discourse on Nicaraguan identity indicates Christianity as an important characteristic in that identity's formation. Set up as a foundational characteristic, the Christian character provides a basis for countering Sandinista Marxism in the opposition documents. Christianity, in this manner, acts as a nodal point drawing together the discourses on Marxism and national identification.

Claiming that the FSLN is dismantling Christian values, the FRS argues, in an article responding to the FSLN's new educational plans, that the goal of creating the new man in the mould of the heroes and martyrs has deformed the memory of those who sacrificed for the Revolution by using it to further the goals of the totalitarian Sandinista government (FRS 1983: 10). They go on to state:

‘No hay que olvidar que su vida y sobre todo su lucha siempre estuvieron inspiradas dentro de una irrefutable pureza revolucionaria y democrática que fue traicionada en todos los sentidos. Su pensamiento y ejemplo se ha convertido en mera teoría pues en la práctica estalinista de los nueve se contradicen cualquiera de los conceptos de nuestros héroes y mártires, que se pretenden plasmar en el proyecto educativo estructurado por ellos. Hay que señalar con determinación que nuestro pueblo es eminentemente cristiano y que en base a ese modelo se construyen sociedades con una visión más amplia de la vida social, política y económica. Nuestros héroes y mártires imitaron a CRISTO, no pretendieron suplantarlos’. (FRS 1983:10, emphasis in the original)⁴²

The importance of the Christian faith to the opposition's definition of what it is to be Nicaraguan can be seen in two different instances in this passage. Firstly the people Nicaraguan people are directly identified as Christian, which provides the basis of society. For the FRS, the Christian nature of the people is responsible for building a more open and inclusive society, particularly regarding politics and the economy. In making the connection between increased social cohesion and participation and the Christian tradition, the FRS link democracy and Christianity. Secondly, the FRS contends that the example of the heroes and martyrs was actually the example of Christ, as they ‘imitated Christ’ rather than trying to supplant him and his influence in the nation. Here the model character of the nation is linked not only with those who gave their lives in the Revolution, but also with Christ. The comparison indicates that the sacrificial nature of those individuals was not a reflection of the revolutionary new man, but rather a reflection of traditional Christian values embodied by Jesus Christ. The sacrificial character of the new man discussed above is here ascribed to the Christian character of the people, indicating an attempt to

⁴² ‘it must not be forgotten that their life and above all their fight were always inspired within an irrefutable revolutionary and democratic purity which was betrayed in every sense. Their thought and example have been converted into mere theory, as in the Stalinist practice of the nine they contradict each of our heroes’ and martyrs’ concepts, which they try to express in the educational project they have structured. It must be pointed out with determination that our people are eminently Christian and that it is on the basis of that model that societies with a broader vision of social, political and economic life are built. Our heroes and martyrs imitated CHRIST, not try to supplant him’

reassert the Christian nature of the phrase ‘new man’. Additionally, in this passage the FRS indicates that the FSLN has misused the memory of the heroes and martyrs to promote a Stalinist programme, drawing a distinction between the Christian heroes and the Marxist Sandinistas, which I discuss in more detail below.

The FRS statement that the people are eminently Christian displays how the Christian roots of the Nicaraguan people are held up as a significant element of their identity. This identity is also expressed by the BOS. In stating the party’s position on freedom of religious assembly, they insist that ‘la presencia de Dios en nuestra Patria es fundamental para el fortalecimiento de la identidad nicaragüense’ (BOS 1985?: 23).⁴³ The direct connection between religion and strengthening the Nicaraguan identity indicates the role of Christianity plays in the opposition discourse. It is not merely a matter of individual choice; it is one of the foundational aspects of what makes one a Nicaraguan.

In their statement of the party’s principles, the Resistencia Nicaragüense provides a list of Nicaraguan characteristics as the basis for their anti-Marxist position. They declare that, ‘El pueblo nicaragüense, apegado indisolublemente a sus valores nacionales: religión, familia, libertad y propiedad privada, rechazó el proyecto marxista-leninista que pretendió imponerle por la fuerza el sandinismo desde que tomó el poder’ (RN 1987a: 4).⁴⁴ Alongside the political ideals of private property and freedom, the RN includes religion and family as among the most important national values. In this extract, as with the FRS passage above, the religious aspect of the Nicaraguan identity is juxtaposed with the Marxist nature of the Sandinistas. For the RN, the traditional social aspects of the nation, Christianity and the structure of the family unit, which was pressurised by the military draft, were threatened by the FSLN’s apparently Marxist ideology.

In the RN passage above which praises the campesino militants for their morals, the RN states that, ‘Su tradición campesina es síntesis de sus principios morales y las creencias religiosas para dar recio contenido a su formación castrense. Esas mismas cualidades repercutirán de manera definitiva en la reconstrucción moral

⁴³ ‘the presence of God in our Homeland is fundamental for the strengthening of the Nicaraguan identity’

⁴⁴ ‘The Nicaraguan people, devoted unwaveringly to their national values: religion, family, freedom, and private property, reject the Marxist-Leninist project that Sandinismo hoped to impose on them by force since taking power.’

de la nueva Nicaragua' (RN 1987?: 12).⁴⁵ The militants, which the RN describe as fighting against 'atheism and the humiliating treatment' of women and children, draw on their religious beliefs in their military training. These qualities are then translated to the mission of rebuilding the nation. Again, the religious nature of the citizens is a fundamental aspect of the national identity. Their Christian character is set in opposition to the Marxist-Leninist Sandinista project, via black and white comparisons between the opposition and the FSLN views of the nation's identity. In the opposition narrative, Christianity acts as a fundamental pillar of the Nicaraguan national identity. This definition presupposes the traditional antagonism between orthodox Marxism and orthodox Christianity, and provides the opposition discourse with a preestablished platform from which to morally object to the FSLN's narrative of national social transformation. At the same time, the opposition furthers its own narrative by connecting traditional national values, in particular Christianity, with democracy.

The diametric opposition of Christianity and communism emerges as a discursive device, reflecting the dismantling strategy which Wodak et al. describe as discrediting the opponents' identity (1999: 42). Dismantling in the opposition corpus is seen through the black and white portrayal of the FSLN as 'bad' Communists, and the opposition as 'good' Christians. That line of argumentation in the opposition discourse either ignores or denies the participation of Christians in the Sandinista party and government, as well as the political stance promoted by liberation theology. Instead, the discourse draws on the historical alliance between the political Right and the traditional orthodox Catholic Church in Latin America.

The opposition documents extend this established black and white distinction to directly challenge the FSLN discourse on the new man and the new society. In a refutation of the Ministry of Education's stated aims, the FRS claims that the new man's only function under a Sandinista government is to aid in the creation of a totalitarian society, arguing that:

[e]n última instancia, lo que se pretende es que los fines no tengan otro significado, que el de servir como armas, para construir una sociedad totalitaria donde el "hombre nuevo" sepa qué y cómo deberá trabajar y crear, y para quiénes. Por tanto, no conciben a la cultura como patrimonio universal, sino que la distinguen en

⁴⁵ 'Their peasant tradition is a synthesis of their moral principles and religious beliefs [...] Those same qualities reverberate in a definitive manner in the moral reconstruction of the new Nicaragua'

función de cada clase, fomentando en cada una de ellas, hasta su propia moral' (FRS 1983: 8).⁴⁶

The chief role of the new citizen is economic production, in this estimation. For the FRS, the new society is a totalitarian one, devoid of freedom and liberties. Together the new man and the new society are evidence of the government's democratic failure. Furthermore, the cultural patrimony promoted by the FSLN is derided as mere class construction as a part of a communist transformation of the nation. The FRS furthers the point, charging the FSLN with creating its own moral standard. This is significant as the FSLN's new moral orientation is, for them, additional evidence of the Sandinistas undermining of the country's traditional Christian values.

The concept of the new man is also challenged in a direct comparison with a traditional Sandinista image. A discussion of the *campesinos* as the foundation of the resistance in the RN journal *Commandos* (1987?: 4-5) includes a photograph of a baby in the arms of a male opposition militant (figure B). The article begins with the statement that, 'Este niño en brazos del combatiente no es el "Hombre Nuevo" de la propaganda sandinista. Es solo un nicaragüense tierno' (RN 1987?: 4).⁴⁷ The statement refutes the discourse of a new man through delegitimisation, decrying the new man as propaganda, by suggesting that a baby is neither more nor less than a baby. More significantly, the photo shown is a contrast with the iconic Sandinista image of a female Sandinista militant with her baby in her arms (figure A).

⁴⁶ 'in the last instance, what is expected is that the goals have no other meaning than to serve as weapons to build a totalitarian society where the "new man" knows what and how he will have to work and create and for whom. Therefore, they do not conceive of the culture as a universal patrimony but rather they distinguish it in the function of each class, fomenting in each one its own moral'

⁴⁷ 'This child in the combatant's arms is the "new man" of the Sandinista propaganda. He is only a tender Nicaraguan'



Figure A: Valenciana, Orlando.
Miliciana de Waswalito
AMNLAE poster: 1985.
Nicaragua Debe Sobrevivir.⁴⁸

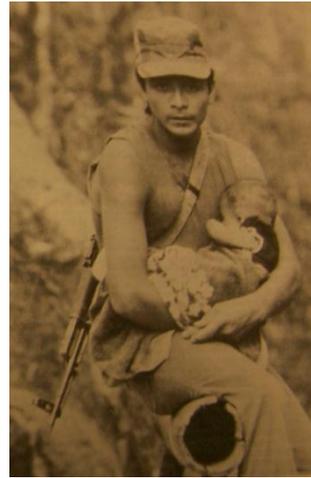


Figure B: Resistencia Nicaragüense 1987? p5.

In the FSLN publications the image visually expressed the commitment and qualities of Sandinista militants, as mere humans and humble *campesinos* who were also committed to creating a better nation for their children. The RN casts the baby and his father as ideal examples of Nicaraguan citizens as well, but couched in the terms of Christian discourse. It states that the father is:

seguro de encontrar muy pronto la “Tierra Prometida” que Dios en sueños la ha mostrado. ... [el] destino [de este niño] será el Paraíso nicaragüense, libre de víboras y alacranes. Su padre ha recuperado la historia, como Hércules moderno, ha enfrentado al Monstruo de 9 Cabezas, con el valor de David y la astucia de Saúl ha desafiado al acero soviético y lo está derrotando. La Patria duerme en su pequeño corazón con la certeza serena de que cayeron los muros de Jericó (RN 1987?: 4).⁴⁹

The father is depicted as a warrior fighting for the Promised Land, which represents a new Nicaragua free from the FSLN, who are 'vipers and scorpions'. Unlike the FRS passage above, this excerpt displays the influence of liberation theology. The Promised Land of Old Testament Israel represented a present day nation of equality in liberation theology (cf Gutierrez 1975: 206). The passage also displays a mixing of Greek mythology and Biblical stories similar to the Sandinista discourse, with the

⁴⁸ This image can be found reproduced in Lorraine Bayard de Volo 2001. *Mothers and Heroes of Martyrs: Gender Identity Politics in Nicaragua 1979-1999*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. p. 84.

⁴⁹ ‘certain to find very soon the Promised Land that God has shown him in his dreams. ...[the] destiny [of this child] will be the Nicaraguan Paradise, free of vipers and scorpions. His father has recovered history, like a modern Hercules, he has confronted the 9 Headed Monster, with the valour of David and the shrewdness of Saul he has defied soviet steel and is defeating it. The Homeland sleeps in the baby’s little heart with the serene certainty that the walls of Jericho have fallen’

opposition warrior's fight against the Soviet Union being simultaneously compared to Hercules fighting the Hydra and David fighting Goliath. Echoes of Christology are apparent in the reference to the *Patria* safely sleeping in the baby's heart. The baby in this instance can be viewed as symbolising the infant Christ, and the country is secure in the protection and hope his purity brings. The opposition discourse contests the Sandinista discourse using similar strategies and imagery to that found in the FSLN corpus. Again, the sub-altern opposition make use of the dominant language to fill gaps in their own counter-hegemonic discourse, in this instance using a common pictorial reference to discuss the new man. This extract additionally indicates that the influence of liberation theology had perhaps displaced some of the hegemony of the traditional Church in religious political discourse, leading the opposition to also incorporate that language into their own, particularly in references to the Promised Land. The polysemic nature of the ideological imagery is also visible in this instance (Hall 1982: 80). The iconic image of the Sandinista militant holding her baby is replaced with that of a campesino male fighting against the FSLN for the benefit of the baby he is holding. The baby is used to redefine what the 'new man' is, with the article describing him as the true representation of a Nicaraguan, as a tender and innocent child. By recreating the famous image, the opposition are imbuing an existing ideological sign with a different signified that supports their own narrative of political transformation on the basis of traditional Christian principles.

Journalist and Conservative Party activist, Jose Castillo Osejo likewise draws on the distinction between communism and Christianity in his editorial commenting on Ernesto Cardenal's departure from the government. He wrote: 'Estamos seguros, que de ahí saldrá la mejor obra de Ernesto, pues ahora tendrá tiempo de repasar cada página de su vida; el por qué se enamoró de Marx, cuando Cristo lo había llamado antes' (Castillo Osejo 1995: 247).⁵⁰ Castillo Osejo accuses Cardenal of abandoning Christianity for Marxism for the sake of the government, the implication being that the two cannot coexist. The tone of the editorial from which this statement is taken is one of support for Cardenal and dismay at his being seemingly forced from office. The belief that he will create the best poetry of his life given distance from the

⁵⁰ 'we are sure that from this point will come the best of Ernesto's work, since he will now have the time to go back over each page of his life; the reason why he fell in love with Marx when Christ had called him before'

government, and the supportive tone of the article, suggests that, rather than blaming Cardenal for trading Christianity for Marxism, Castillo Osejo believes that it is the FSLN's fault that he strayed from the true Christian path that opposes Marxism.

6.3.3 FSLN Responses to the Opposition

The FSLN corpus, however, provides evidence of the Sandinistas' attempts to diminish the impact of the black and white comparison of Marxism and Christianity by arguing that they are not truly Communists. Comandante Borge objects to this characterisation in comments he made regarding the literacy crusade. In his speech at the rehabilitation centre, he claims that opponents to the FSLN had said that 'la Cruzada está destinada a establecer el comunismo en Nicaragua, y están furiosos. Esos muchachitos... que incluso no han leído un texto de Marxismo' (Borge 1980: 13).⁵¹ Though not directly stating that the FSLN is not a Marxist party, Borge attempts to indirectly delegitimise the claims by pointing out that the children had not read a Marxist text. He takes this as proof enough that the Crusade was not indoctrinating the children in Communist principles.

Nine years later Tirado López (1989) similarly argues, in an interview, that the FSLN was not Marxist, but merely applied a Marxist analysis to help understand and solve Nicaragua's social and economic issues. Referring to Nicaragua's non-alignment and commitment to political pluralism, he states that, 'esa es la doctrina de liberación de Sandino, porque amarra la unidad nacional y no el marxismo dogmático como dicen algunos empresarios del país' (ibid: 15-6).⁵² For Tirado López, Sandinista politics come directly from Sandino, not Marx. Therefore, the businessmen's claims against the government are baseless. In an interview after the FSLN's electoral defeat Tirado López remarked that for the Terceristas, of which he was a founding member, Marxism did not help them much, as they had to break with the traditional models and create broad alliances in order to bring about the Revolution in Nicaragua (García 2007: 198). These statements indicate that the Sandinista leadership was aware of the dangers of an overt Communist alliance,

⁵¹ 'the Crusade is destined to establish communism in Nicaragua and they are furious. These children that have not even read a Marxist book'

⁵² 'this is the Sandino's doctrine of liberation, because he loved national unity and not dogmatic Marxism, like some businessmen in the country say'

since it was a polarising position. Additionally, as I discussed in chapter two, orthodox communist principles had to be rejected in favour of national realities for the Revolution's success. For the FSLN, the opposition's black and white discourse casting them as Communists opposed to Nicaraguan Christians was a powerful accusation which caused their discourse to directly engage with and contradict the repeated accusations.

Additionally, the FSLN corpus confronted the issue of religion in their discourse. For the Sandinistas, faith was an option that should remain open to all citizens, as part of the pluralistic society they envisioned creating, as well as being a significant pillar of support in their coming to power. The FSLN also placed importance on religion's contribution to national identity as a cultural element, as seen in its declaration that '[e]l Frente Sandinista se compromete asimismo, a seguir respetando el perfil cultural y las creencias religiosas de los criollos, miskitos, sumos y ramas que son parte de la nacionalidad nicaragüense' (FSLN 1984: 8).⁵³ Likewise the DN stated that:

Seremos siempre respetuosos de las creencias religiosas del pueblo en sus diversas manifestaciones. Invitamos a todos los creyentes a participar en la defensa de esta gigantesca obra moral que procura la liberación integral del hombre, alimentando la fe de quienes consideramos que entre cristianismo y revolución no hay contradicción (DN 1986: 45-6).⁵⁴

Whilst the FSLN corpus evidences a robust religious discourse, religion is not mandatory; it is a contributory cultural element in the national character and the spiritual characteristics of the new man which are important in the new society. Conversely, the opposition discourse prioritized the Christian religion as an integral component of the Nicaraguan identity.

As I have indicated, the opposition discourse held up Christianity as a central pillar around which both social and political identification could be organised. The discourses on the founding fathers, the model national character and anti-Marxism each connect back to the primacy of Christian faith in the nation. As seen in the FRS extract, the heroes and martyrs were emulating Christ, therefore their example is an

⁵³ 'the Sandinista Front promised likewise to continue respecting the cultural profile and religious beliefs of the Creoles, Miskitos, Sumos and Ramas which are part of the Nicaraguan nationality'

⁵⁴ 'We will always be respectful of the people's religious beliefs in all their diverse manifestations. We invite all believers to participate in the defense of this gigantic moral effort to procure the integral liberation of man, nourishing the faith of those of us who believe that there is no contradiction between Christianity and the revolution.'

extension of Christ's example. The forefathers' sacrifice is not done for the Revolution, but as an aspect of Christian faith, where one is to lay his or her life down for their beliefs. The citizens' faith likewise meant an *a priori* antagonism with the Communism the opposition perceived in the FSLN. This ingrained hostility between Christianity and Communism, the opposition and the Sandinistas also led to the influence of the USSR and Cuba being construed as imperialist. The FSLN government was accused of working with the dominant Communist forces in the world to bring about Nicaragua's downfall.

The opposition's narrative of national political transformation links the nodal points of Christianity, freedom and democracy, creating an image of a holy nation based on democratic freedom. This was juxtaposed with the Sandinista narrative which the opposition claimed wanted to transform the nation into an atheist entity that contradicted the traditional values of the country. It was an image of a nation subservient to Soviet-Cuban domination, where the people were denied their basic freedoms. The diametric opposition of the two narratives in this way reflects Howarth's logic of equivalence (Howarth 2006: 113), with the dichotomy separating the national space into two antagonistic poles. The opposition discourse divided the national space into two poles, one that presented a vision of freedom under democratic governance and another that had a vision for domination under totalitarian communistic governance. From the FSLN references to the opposition discourse seen above, it is evident that the contestation over the narrative of national transformation was an ongoing process, with each group working to undermine the other and gain hegemony for their side.

6.4 The Interviews and the New Nicaragua

As I noted in chapter five, there is no overarching narrative that can be attributed to the interviews; they nonetheless aid in triangulating my analysis of the FSLN and opposition corpora, and provide a different perspective on the theme of the national explored in this chapter. It is important to note that the topic of national sovereignty was not generated by the participants as a theme within the interviews. Their comments were given in response to my questions about their views on several terms, among them 'national sovereignty' and 'national liberation'. Significantly, the comments centring on nationalism were largely supportive of the FSLN's efforts in

this area. The comments on nation are less easily separated from those on national character than those in the FSLN and opposition discourses. As such, I elaborate on the discussion of national identity when examining the national character further below.

Inés is one of those who commends the Sandinistas for their work in developing the national identity. At the end of her interview, Inés answers my question regarding her opinion of the terms ‘unidad nacional’, ‘liberación nacional’ and ‘soberanía nacional’ by applauding the FSLN’s efforts, stating:

Mira, en realidad, yo considero que los sandinistas rescataron la nacionalidad de Nicaragua, en cuanto a todos los que son nuestros valores, con lo que tiene que ver con la cultura nacional, ¿verdad? ... Y lo otro también a que uno aprenda a querer a su país, a defender a su país, a defender los intereses del país de uno como tal.

Entonces en ese aspecto, ellos enfocaron mucho, y a uno como joven en esa época, yo me estoy acordando de cuando yo empezaba a valorar lo que es la identidad de uno como ciudadano, como nicaragüense, y aprender a amar a su patria. Entonces, en ese sentido, ellos enfocaron bastante en eso y creo que sí, pues, esto fue algo positivo porque se rescató todo lo que es la parte cultural del país que se estaba perdiendo.⁵⁵

There are echoes of the Sandinistas’ discursive strategy of a national rebirth in Inés’s comments. Crediting the Sandinistas with rescuing the Nicaraguan nationality is an emphatic statement of support for their national and cultural project. Indeed, on the concept of the national, the interviewees largely reference the Sandinistas’ cultural project rather than their political project. However, Inés connects the cultural renaissance to the political aims when she indicates that loving one’s country went hand in hand with defending the nation as well as its interests. The identity as a citizen reflects the Sandinistas’ idea of the *Hombre Nuevo*’s civic responsibility. The idea of defending the nation reflects the topos of threat and the strategy of autonomisation, suggesting the influence of the FSLN’s use of these same strategies.

⁵⁵ ‘Look, in reality, I think that the Sandinistas rescued the Nicaraguan nationality, as far as all our values are concerned, with what is related to the national culture, right. ... And the other thing is that people learnt to love their country, to defend their country, to defend the country’s interests as one’s own. So, in that aspect, they focused on that a lot and to someone who was young in that epoch, I am remembering when I began to value what is one’s identity as a citizen, as a Nicaraguan, and to learn to love one’s country. So, in that sense, they focused a fair amount on that and I believe that yes, well, that was something positive because they saved all that is the cultural part of the country that was being lost.’

The mention of defending interests brings to mind the economic policies of the FSLN, which were often precipitated by external forces, such as the US embargo.

Similarly, during Soledad's interview, I asked her to speak about art and culture during the 1980s. She discussed the cultural emphasis made by the Sandinista government and indicated that the Sandinista discourse on reclaiming Nicaragua for Nicaraguans was highly successful as it even impacted the contra, stating that

‘Un nicaragüense es una persona muy que tolera, que aguanta, que esto que el otro, pero que llegó un punto que dice que no, y siento que esa parte de culturizar la soberanía también le dio a la contra una idea como de nosotros también podemos, somos unidos, somos nicaragüenses, ¿me entendés? Tenemos identidad propia y hay que defender la identidad propia que hemos perdido’.⁵⁶

For Soledad, the Nicaraguan people are independent, a characteristic which helped form the contra, as they opposed the dictates of the FSLN. Additionally, the increased appreciation of what it was to be Nicaraguan served to ground the opposition in a sense of national unity, albeit one allied against the FSLN. However, the theme of losing the freedom that had been gained through the Revolution due to Sandinista governance is also visible in this passage. Soledad indicates that the identity they had come to value through the FSLN's cultural work was also lost under the FSLN policies. This reflects the opposition's position that the nation was being betrayed by the Sandinistas.

Though fostering nationalism is praised by the respondents, when I asked about the terms ‘national sovereignty’ and ‘national liberation’, the tone of the responses noticeably changed. The two expressions appear to be conflated in the perception of the interviewees, as discussions about sovereignty quickly revolved around liberties. It is also important to note that for most of the respondents, national liberty is also understood as civil liberties, such as freedom of speech and freedom of the press, rather than referring to freedom from foreign interference. Typifying this perspective, Elena describes sovereignty as ‘cuando uno se sabe elegir con libertad en un país entonces, somos soberanos, ¿de qué? ¿Soberanos de administrar el país,

⁵⁶ ‘A Nicaraguan is a person who tolerates a lot, who puts up with this, with that, but who arrives at a point where he says no, and I feel like that part of enlightening sovereignty also gave the contra an idea of how we also can, we are united, we are Nicaraguans, understand? We have our own identity and it is necessary to defend the identity that we have lost’

de gobernar el país, de declarar una opinión, de no ser susurrados?'.⁵⁷ Here, Elena begins discussing national sovereignty, and then relates it to electoral choice, and freedom of speech. Freedom from external intervention is not a separate issue from civil liberties for her.

Lucinda also answers my question about her opinion of the terms by discussing the lack of freedom within the country. She argues that:

Entonces sobre la libertad, sobre todo eso, era como una doble moral. Porque no era cierto, no tenías libertad. No tenías libertad de expresión. Como te digo, ni siquiera tenías libertad de comprar lo que vos quisieras porque... siempre estabas con el miedo de que los CDS te denunciara... Entonces, libertad en si no existió. Eso es mentira. No hubo libertad, ni de expresión, ni nada.⁵⁸

She equates freedom with civic freedoms, primarily freedom of speech. Lucinda also comments on restrictions on purchasing power and the CDS. Rationing, particularly after the creation of the *Diplotienda*, caused the most disenchantment with the FSLN after the Revolution, as seen in the last chapter. Additionally, the CDS were seen as the civil policing arm of the government, put in place to ensure compliance with and support for government policies. Thus, the inclusion of these concerns in a list of evidence against true liberty indicates that the perceived lack of civil and personal liberties overshadowed any new liberties the people gained, such as a woman's right to work and national freedom from US influence.

A more sympathetic voice suggests that it was a lack of experience that led the FSLN to infringe on liberty. Sergio states that:

comenzó el Frente Sandinista, pues, le dijo al pueblo que aquí iba a haber libertad, libertad de trabajo, libertad de comerse, toda clase de libertad. Pero ya sin embargo estando en el poder el Frente Sandinista, entonces si por la inexperiencia de ellos o querían trasladar el comunismo a Nicaragua, cosa que no estaba preparada Nicaragua. Y entonces se comenzó a expropiar, a encarcelar a personas aligadas a Somoza, una crisis. La economía bajó. Se volvió dictador el Frente'.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ 'when one knows how to chose with freedom in a country, then we are sovereign, of what? Sovereign in administering the country, in governing the country, in declaring an opinion, in not being hushed?'

⁵⁸ 'So on liberty, on all of that, it was like a double-moral. Because it was not true, you did not have freedom. You did not have freedom of expression. Like I told you, you did not even have the freedom to buy what you wanted because you always had the fear that the CDS would report you... So freedom in itself did not exist. That is a lie. There was no freedom, not of expression, not of anything.'

⁵⁹ 'The Frente began, well it told the people that here there was going to be freedom, freedom to work, freedom to eat, all kinds of freedom. But, already without a doubt, with the Frente in power, maybe due to their inexperience, or because they wanted to transfer communism to Nicaragua,

Freedom is again equated with civil liberties in these comments. The lack of experience, in Sergio's opinion, prevented the FSLN from implementing the freedoms they had promised. However, Sergio expresses doubt about the FSLN's intentions when he indicates that the failure to implement the freedoms could also be due to their desire to bring communism to Nicaragua. Though his comments on the FSLN's failings are not as pronounced as the opposition's black and white portrayal of the FSLN, Sergio echoes the opposition's contention that the Sandinistas had become a dictator, with the promised freedoms never coming to fruition.

The most dissenting individual in the interviews voices an opinion not heard in the other interviews. As i discussed in the last chapter, María does not believe any of the parties are interested in liberty, only the power they can achieve for themselves. This was evident from her comment on national unity seen in the previous chapter. In that extract, she argues that '(s)on dos poderes que están luchando contra si, y al mismo tiempo pactan entre si y engañan al pueblo, engañan al pueblo con su soberanía, con su lucha por el pobre, por el profesional, por el otro lado. Es todo una mentira'.⁶⁰ The two powers she references are the FSLN and the leading opposition group the PLC, headed by Alemán. The antagonism of the two parties, exemplified through one fighting for the poor and working class and the other for the professional class, serves only to deceive the people into voting for one side or the other, whilst each knows that they will not divest any power to the people themselves. Her response to my question about the FSLN's phrases from the 1980s led her to discuss the present situation. Her concerns about the current corruption and the lack of freedom the people experience presently indicates that the problems of the present impact her thoughts and perceptions of the past. However, shortly after these comments, I asked her about her opinion of Somoza, to which she responded that she initially was a Sandinista, due to Somoza's abuse of the people and nation. However, after coming to power, María accuses the FSLN of also becoming a dictator.

Y en un tiempo, te digo sinceramente, toda la Nicaragua era sandinista, inclusive yo.

Porque quería, veía tantas, tantas cosas malas por parte del gobierno somocista, tanta

something that Nicaragua wasn't ready for. And so they began to expropriate, to imprison people linked to Somoza, a crisis. The economy declined. The Frente became a dictator'

⁶⁰ 'There are two powers that are fighting against each other, and at the same time, they are making deals with one another, and deceiving the people, deceiving the people with their sovereignty, with their fight for the poor, for the professional, for the other side. This is all a lie'

agresión y tanta maldad, que yo no quería, uno es idealista como joven, y quiere un cambio, quiere un cambio pero realmente no fue así. Hay una película que a mi me llama mucha la atención que se llama ‘El Mundo de los Aventureros’, en el que se plasma de forma autentica lo que son los gobiernos, y eso es lo que refleja la historia de Nicaragua. Una necesidad por liberación un pueblo oprimido, un grupo que quiere libertar el país. Bueno al fin lo liberta pero años después se convierte en el mismo gobierno dictador que fue el anterior. Entonces es lo mismo.⁶¹

The need for liberation from the Somoza’s repression united the nation around the Sandinistas. However, the change María indicates that the people fought for did not occur. Rather, like the movie she references, the country was freed, but the government became another dictatorship. María’s comments are similar to the opposition narrative that an opening for lasting democratic change occurred with the Revolution, but that under the FSLN, that opening was ignored and democracy could not thrive in the nation.

The interview data also shed interesting light on the discursive creation of the ideal Nicaraguan. The term *Hombre Nuevo* was only used by Soledad in passing when commending the Sandinistas efforts at resuscitating the cultural production in the country. She praised different musical groups, and Ernesto Cardenal’s works because ‘hablaban de la libertad, del hombre nuevo, cosas así que todo al fin eso era lo que queríamos en realidad’.⁶² She then discussed the role of education in shaping the minds of the youth, referring to it as brainwashing. This education included books on moral ethics which referenced national sovereignty and civic responsibility, shown through respecting the decisions of the president for the good of the country.

I asked her if this was part of the new man she had mentioned previously. Soledad replied:

había muchas ideas de que ahora es un hombre nuevo, un hombre que es libre en sandinismo,... entonces se utilizó la educación para lavar los mentes de

⁶¹ ‘And at one time, I’m telling you this sincerely, all of Nicaragua was Sandinista, including me. Because I wanted, saw so, so many bad things on the part of the Somocista government, so much aggression and so much evil, that I did not want, one is an idealist when they are young, and wants a change, wants a change but, really it was not like that. There is a movie, that really catches my attention, that is called ‘The Adventurers’, in which it is expressed, in an authentic way, what governments are, and that is what reflects Nicaraguan history. A need to liberate an oppressed people, a group that wants to free the country. Well, at the end they free it, but years later the government turns into the same dictatorship as before. So, it is the same’

⁶² ‘talked about freedom, the new man, things like that which in the end were what we really wanted’

los niños y para consolidar el pensamiento, no pienso que era sandinista, el pensamiento de Daniel Ortega y la gente que estaba en su gobierno durante ese tiempo.⁶³

Her commentary on the purpose of the new man is telling; she confirms that the education attempted to establish the new man as the standard to attain under Sandinismo. However, her doubts over the actual Sandinista pedigree of this moral creation are reflected in her suspicions that the promotion of the new man, and the education in general, were aimed at reinforcing the dominant ideological perspective promoted by Ortega and his government at the time. There is a tension in her account between the positive steps the Sandinistas took to reinvigorate a sense of Nicaraguaness and the perceived negative ideological formation that the party sought to achieve via the new education. In questioning the degree to which the new education and the new man were Sandinista or merely an extension of FSLN leadership's thinking, Soledad reflects the strategy found in the opposition discourse of delegitimising the FSLN through distancing them from Sandino and true Sandinismo.

Ignacio, a former member of the EPS, refers to the founding fathers in a similar manner to the Sandinistas. He states that:

el rol que nos está tocando vivir en nuestro momento, nuestra época. El mismo rol que jugó en 1856 Andrés Castro ... y toda la gente y toda la juventud que defendió la primera invasión que hizo los EEUU en Nicaragua. Fue el rol que jugó la juventud de 1926 cuando Sandino que fue la segunda invasión que vivió en Nicaragua de EEUU. Igual a nosotros, tuvimos el honor también en su momento de jugar un rol similar. Y la patria nos demandó ir al ejército a defender nuestra patria....⁶⁴

The representation, here, of the responsibility of the youth, particularly young men, to follow in the footsteps of the rebellious figures of the past directly reflects the Sandinista and opposition discourses on the founding fathers' model national character. The identity of those who joined the army is wrapped up in that of the rest

⁶³ 'there were a lot of ideas that now one is a new man, a man who is free in Sandinismo... so education was used to brainwash the children and to consolidate, I do not think it was Sandinista thought, Daniel Ortega's thought and the people who were in the government at this time'

⁶⁴ 'The role that we are being called to live in our moment, our epoch. The same role that Andrés Castro played in 1856... and all the people and all the youth who defended the first invasion the USA made in Nicaragua. It was the role that the youth played in 1926 in the time of Sandino which was the second invasion by the USA that Nicaragua lived through. Like us, we had the honour also in its moment to play a similar role. And the Homeland demanded that we go to the army to defend our homeland'

of the Nicaraguans who have sacrificed for the nation over the years. Ignacio asserts that the homeland, rather than a government, required their military service. The defence of the nation was also a historical legacy, which Ignacio was proud to have continued, as he states that they ‘had the honor to also ... play a similar role’. The importance of following in the forefathers’ footsteps for Ignacio suggests that it was an area of the popular will to which political groups could appeal in order to gain hegemony for their vision. Allying their own narrative to the historical legacy of Nicaraguans fighting for freedom would have helped foster integral hegemony for a particular group.

After the first few interviewees made a point of giving me their overall assessment of Nicaragua and its people at the end of their interviews, I asked each subsequent participant to tell me what they wanted me to know about Nicaragua. Most of them chose to highlight the positive characteristics of the citizens. I believe they felt the need to give a good impression of their nation and its citizens after having discussed, often negatively, a dark period in their country’s history and its currently precarious political situation.

Sergio describes Nicaraguans as peace loving, ‘trabajador y necesitamos para que haya reconciliación en todos los sectores de Nicaragua’.⁶⁵ He laments that there is not work for a people who are by their nature hard working. In other interviews, unity, or the need for unity, and a desire for peace also emerge as typical of the Nicaraguan people. Elena explained that ‘la naturaleza del nicaragüense es de son individuos unidos, son como personas no pactados al partido. Nosotros somos personas que ayudan al vecino que tiene problemas. Si hay una persona que está maltratado por otra en la calle, nosotros vamos a ayudarlo, y cosas así’.⁶⁶ For her, the people are naturally united and helpful, not scheming against one another. Elena goes on to criticise those in government for being more partisan than united for the sake of the nation.

After detailing a list of qualities possessed by the Nicaraguan people, among them being open and courteous, Miguel adds that he believes that the people love freedom. He states that, ‘el nicaragüense es muy abierto, muy atento, muy cortés, no

⁶⁵ ‘hardworking, and we need there to be reconciliation between all sectors in Nicaragua’

⁶⁶ ‘the Nicaraguan nature is that they are united individuals, they are like people who are not in a pact with the party. We are people who help our neighbour who has problems. If there is a person who is abused by someone else in the street, we are going to help him, and things like that’

sé si lo ha notado, pero yo sí creo que es un pueblo muy, es un pueblo amante de la libertad también. No le gustan las dictaduras'.⁶⁷ Here, one can see echoes the discourses of both the FSLN and the opposition in his statement that Nicaraguans highly value freedom. He then contrasts that with their dislike of dictatorships. Though Miguel was reluctant to make any statements too critical of the government, due to his detention and interrogation by the government in the 1980s, this statement seems as much a gentle rebuke of the Sandinista government as a statement on the Somozas. He ends his interview with the following statement:

Y yo creo que Nicaragua en su historia ha luchado por ser libre, por querer, digamos, ser un pueblo amante de la paz también. Y talvez en eso de ser amante de la paz, se ha hecho la guerra, creyendo que se la puede lograr a través de ese medio. Eso sería mi comentario final.⁶⁸

The overarching desire for freedom, in Miguel's estimation, goes hand in hand with the people's desire for peace, and he wonders if this desire for peace has been a motivation for war in the past. His comments indicate that peace and freedom are the primary components of the Nicaraguan identity. His statements, considered alongside those which praise the independent nature of the Nicaraguans, emphasise the role of freedom in the national ethos.

For several of the participants, the literacy crusade represented the chief accomplishment of the FSLN government. All were positive about their experience in the crusade. However, there were some negative perceptions of the process as politicised indoctrination. Carlos, a former member of the EPS, indicates that the literacy crusade was one of the first actions the new government took after the Revolution, as there were so many youths who lacked direction and opportunities. He states that 'lo primero es enseñar a leer, comienza la Cruzada, se formó la Cruzada y la Cruzada comienza con gente, estudiantes, chavalos... fueron seis meses... bien puestos en la montaña, gente que nunca había conocido la montaña'.⁶⁹ Carlos highlights one of the most praised elements of the crusade, the connection of

⁶⁷ 'is a people who love freedom too, who does not like dictatorships'

⁶⁸ 'And I believe that Nicaragua, in its history has fought to be free, because of the desire, let's say, to be a peace-loving people also. And perhaps in being peace-loving, they have made war, believing that they can achieve peace by that means. That would be my final comment.'

⁶⁹ 'the first thing is to teach how to read, begin the Crusade, the Crusade was formed and the Crusade began with people, students, children... they were six months there... well up in the mountains, people who had never known the mountains'

people from the cities with people in the more rural areas, which fostered a deeper sense of connection and national awareness.

Sofia echoes this sentiment, recollecting that ‘[f]ue linda, fue preciosa. Yo creo que todos los que fuimos a la alfabetización a las montañas vivimos ese acercamiento con el campesino’.⁷⁰ However she goes on to state that, whilst education improved under the Sandinistas and was made available for free to all children, the Sandinistas:

‘usaron a los estudiantes. ¿Por qué? Porque además de enseñar a leer, el plan era politizar, sembrar una ideología. Entonces, enseñábamos a leer con cartillas que decían “la Revolución es muy importante. La Revolución es el pueblo. Carlos Fonseca siempre vivirá en nuestros corazones.”’.⁷¹

Here we can see the two sides of the literacy crusade. It is remembered as a positive experience where the people were able to come together as a nation and gain a deeper knowledge of one another as Nicaraguans. However, it is also remembered as a time where the students’ enthusiasm and work were exploited by the government.

The perceived politicisation of the literacy primer and the further educational materials produced by the government was seen as an abuse of the altruistic attempt to educate the masses. Rather than education being promoted purely for the benefit of the citizenry, the political elements in the materials tainted the assessment of the government’s project. María elaborates on the political aspect of the education materials, saying that:

‘una de las cosas que no me gustó de la alfabetización, es que el libro, el librito que ellos hicieron, fue en una medida un lavado de cerebro también, porque, por ejemplo, para poder explicarle a una persona analfabeta “dos más dos son cuatro” tenía que agregarle “dos pistolas más dos pistolas es igual a cuatro pistolas”. O sea que todo estaba inducido a la violencia y a la lucha de clases y también al odio hacia el imperialismo norteamericano’.⁷²

⁷⁰ ‘it was beautiful, it was precious. I think that all of us who went to alphabetise in the mountains lived this coming together with the peasant’

⁷¹ ‘used the students. Why? Because apart from teaching how to read, the plan was to politicise, sow an ideology. So, we were teaching to read with books that said. “the Revolution is very important. The Revolution is the people. Carlos Fonseca will live forever in our hearts”’

⁷² ‘One of the things that I did not like about the alphabetisation, is that the book, the booklet that they made, was to some extent a brainwashing also, because, for example, in order to be able to explain to an illiterate person “two plus two is four”, you had to add “two pistols plus two pistols is equal to four pistols”. That is to say, everything was inducing violence and class war and the hatred for American imperialism.’

The connection between the ideological stance of the FSLN and the education materials is made explicit here; the materials, in María's estimation, promoted the FSLN's view on anti-imperialism and class consciousness. Again, given María's own political position, her perceptions must be considered alongside her strong opposition to the FSLN. However, both her and Sofia's comments indicate that the efforts to remake the nation via cultural and educational reforms were palpable at the time. The Sandinistas' ideological formation was not presented in a subtle manner, but rather, as I discussed in 6.2.3, was promoted as a means of furthering the Revolution and developing the new society in the new Nicaragua.

Though depicted by the opposition as ideological propaganda attempting to instil Marxist-Leninist values in society, the FSLN discourse on nationalism is viewed by most as a positive aspect of their governance, despite the party's other perceived shortcomings. Additionally, there is on the whole a positive view of the national character of the citizenry, in spite of high profile political actors not always portraying this character. However, we can see from the participants' comments that the efforts to make freedom a more prominent theme were both applauded and also capitalised on in order to criticise areas of FSLN governance perceived as failing the people. As with the analysis in the last chapter, individual concerns took precedence over the political groups' efforts to gain hegemony. The lack of civil liberties, evidenced through censorship of the press, the presence of the CPS and other restrictions, overshadowed positive actions on the part of the Sandinistas.

Perhaps most significant is what is lacking in these descriptions of the Nicaraguan people. Religious practice is not mentioned as an aspect of the national identity or model character of the people. Despite various religious references and a general tone of religion in both the Sandinista and opposition discourses, there is no reflection of this discourse in the interviews. It is difficult to explain this away in simple terms of secularisation, since more than eighty percent of the population still claim to belong to a Christian church (US Department of State 2006). Instead, it is perhaps a reflection of a decrease in tensions between the Catholic Church, the Right and the Left in the current political climate as compared with the 1980s. Though rivalries still exist between the current Sandinistas and those in opposition, these sentiments are perhaps less polarised than before. Additionally, though most parties still call on Christianity and Christian morals to legitimise and support their cause, religion is more of a common currency among all groups than a commodity to be

controlled in the current discursive climate. Indeed, as I discussed at the end of chapter three, even Ortega and Obando y Bravo have reconciled, with the Church officially supporting Ortega's reelection bids in 2006 and 2011.

6.5 Summary

Attempts to redefine the national character after nearly four decades of Somoza rule where American and European cultural and political influences were encouraged above national ones are visible in the FSLN discourse. The party organised its discourse around the nodal point of nation, emphasising the new Nicaragua as the expression of national sovereignty. As I have shown, the strategy of autonomisation and the topos of threat functioned together to foster national cohesion around the reconstruction of the new Nicaragua. Legitimacy for this view came from the narrative of the historical patrimony of liberation struggles identified in the founding fathers. Sandino, chief among the founding fathers, played a salient role in both the FSLN's and the opposition's attempts to discursively establish the historical basis for each respective narrative of national transformation. The new man and the new society were the embodied transformation of the nation, representing those who would bring about the completion of the revolutionary project. Within this new society, sacrifice and the primacy of the collective national interests were integral characteristics of the new citizen. The notion of the nation draws together the discourses on the new Nicaragua, the founding fathers, the new man and the new society, promoting the FSLN's narrative of a national social transformation.

Conversely, freedom in the opposition discourse served as a means of calling for liberation from the Sandinistas themselves, as they had betrayed the people's desire for democracy. In emphasising this freedom, the opposition documents were shown to also employ the strategies of the founding fathers and the model national character. Linking these with the topos of betrayal allowed the opposition to claim that the FSLN had not been true to the principles of Sandino or the Revolution.

The strategy of black and white portrayals is another area where there is similarity in the discursive contestation between the parties. For the FSLN, the present era of the new Nicaragua represents a complete break with the past of

Somoza, allowing for comparisons between the two leading to positive self-presentation. The opposition employ the same strategy, again in the context of delegitimising the Sandinistas where a comparison between the Christian nature of the Nicaraguan people and the Marxist orientation of the FSLN permits *ad-hominem* defamation by attacking their opponent's identity. Additionally, the opposition was able to capitalise on the existing discourse that pitted the traditional Church against Marxism. Within this discourse, my analysis also showed that the opposition attempted to delegitimise the new man, as described by the FSLN, by instead promoting the Christ-like nature of Nicaraguans as a whole, and of the opposition militants in particular. Likewise, the opposition discourse capitalised on themes and strategies that the FSLN had come to dominate in order to reorient the discursive terrain and attack the Sandinista government. This is evident in the recontextualisation and redefinition of 'anti-imperialism', which reinforces my contention that the term acted as a polysemous sign. The opposition, despite presenting a distinctly different narrative from the FSLN, nevertheless were shown in my analysis to make use of similar discursive elements. The counter-hegemonic discourse is seen to engage the dominant discourse within its own ambit, evidencing Peter Ives's (2004) contention that sub-altern groups lack a sufficiently developed language of their own and therefore must make use of the extant language of domination in their contestation. The comparison of the images of the FSLN militant and the opposition militants each holding a baby exemplify the opposition's use of existing discourses to counter the FSLN narrative. The nodal points that my analysis highlighted in the opposition discourse, the Christian character and freedom, function with the nodal point of democracy to present the opposition narrative of national transformation leading to a lasting political, rather than social, change.

My analysis of the interviews indicated that the people's personal concerns trumped the national ones being contested by the fsln and the opposition. Chief among these concerns were the lack of civic freedoms, indicating an area where the opposition discourse on freedom and democracy may have enjoyed a degree of hegemony. The FSLN discourse appears not to have been reflected in any consistent way in the respondents' comments. However, it is telling that the participants, on the whole, were supportive and even praised the government's work in re-building a national identity and educating the masses. This indicates that though most of the

respondents came to view the government negatively, and currently do not support Ortega as president, they still value the FSLN's efforts in these areas, suggesting an area where the FSLN had gained some hegemony among the population.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

7.1 Toward Answering the Research Questions

Throughout this thesis, I have endeavoured to address the research questions presented in chapter one, which were:

- Do prevailing theories of national identity apply to and function in a non-European, and specifically Nicaraguan, context; if so, how, and if not, in what ways not?
- How did the FSLN government discursively create a new sense of national community in Nicaragua?
- How was the terrain of the 'national community' contested discursively by the FSLN and the opposition?
- What are the citizenry's perceptions, in retrospect, of the government's and opposition's efforts to gain support for their respective positions?

Regarding the question of whether the dominant theories on national identity apply to the Nicaraguan context, I have shown the gaps in work by Anderson (2006), Smith (1991), Gellner (1983) and Hobsbawm (1990) when considering the Nicaraguan perspective. As indicated in the introduction, I do not intend this thesis to elaborate a new theory particularly tailored to the Latin American situation. Rather, in chapter two I laid bare the areas where current thought on national identity ignore or exclude the examples found in countries like Nicaragua, which do not fit easily within the Eurocentric models. Particularly, we have seen that three concepts, those of national identity, communism and liberation theology, which are traditionally considered separate and opposed, are all necessary in understanding the creation of national community in Nicaragua. I have shown that whilst each of the theorists has applicability to a certain extent in this situation, it is limited in each one, as other considerations, such as radical Marxism and liberation theology, come to bear.

Through my analysis, the discursive creation of nationalism under the FSLN has become more evident. In attempting to answer the question of how the FSLN discursively created a new sense of national community, overlaps between the

theoretical concerns and the analytical outcomes emerge. In chapter six, I contend that the Sandinista discourse reformulated the nation into their concept of the new Nicaragua, which incorporated the legacy of the founding fathers in the patrimony of rebellion and the formation of the new man through the new education. This direct creation of a national consciousness and the related national character reflects aspects of nationalism as discussed by Anderson, Gellner and Smith.

Particularly, the literacy crusade and new education programme established under the FSLN are indicative of Anderson's (2006: 62) emphasis on literacy and the print media for the dissemination of periodicals which conceptually construct national boundaries and interests. Indeed, the volume of pamphlets, broadsheets and transcribed speeches published by the Sandinista government in the 1980s indicates that literacy was a notable element in the ideological formation we saw in Tirado Lopez (1986) comments. Likewise, the importance Gellner (1983: 63) places on a common high culture in creating national identity is inverted by the FSLN through the party's cultivation of popular culture at this time, focusing on the masses as the source for a grassroots culture, rather than on the social elite in Gellner's account. Through the Ministries of Culture and Education, the disparate regions' cultural traditions were brought to national awareness and, as indicated by the interviews, formed the basis of a new national sentiment among the people. Also within the educational realm, we have seen how the fostering of the new man as an embodiment of the founding fathers is similar to the importance Smith (1996: 584) places on historical precursors as an integral aspect in the formation of nationalism. Each of these areas draws on the nodal point of the Revolution as a reified entity, which we saw as a significant component of creating national community from a grass-roots level. This aspect of the Sandinista national discourse highlights Hobsbawm's perspective of nationalism as a creation from below. This can be seen in the discussion of the grassroots nature of the FSLN push for unity in chapter five, where the Sandinistas are portrayed as co-labourers for the Revolution who also act as the Vanguard.

Beyond the overlap between the various theories of nationalism within the Sandinista discursive creation of national community, we have seen the narrative of national transformation focusing on societal transformation, focused on the nodal points of the Revolution, unity and the nation. Unity in the FSLN discourse was shown to revolve around the party's conception of the nation. Particularly important

was the creation of the *pueblo* as composed of the peasants and working class, allied against American imperialism imposed through capitalist aggression. We have seen in the emphasis on anti-imperialism and national liberation the influence of the FSLN's Marxist oriented ideology on their discourse. Additionally, the impact of liberation theology is visible in the way the discourse on the new man overlaps with the Christian use of the term to such an extent that both understandings of the term combine in a Christmas poster depicting the Christ-child as the Sandinista *hombre nuevo* (Hodges 1986: 261). Various discursive devices were shown to likewise convey a dual meaning connecting the FSLN to the nation's Christian tradition. In one instance this occurred through the personification of the Revolution as a body with the FSLN as the spinal column supporting the Revolution as the head and the people as the body of the nation, echoing the Christian discourse on the church as the body of Christ.

Significantly, none of these discursive elements was found to exist independently from the others, exhibiting what Lilie Chouliaraki and Norman Fairclough term 'interdiscursivity', which is the combination of different various discourses in another discourse (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999: 49). Discussions of nationalism occurred beside Marxist concepts, exemplified in the anti-imperialist nature of the creation of the new Nicaragua seen in chapter six. As already mentioned, elements of liberation theology and Marxism also occurred in tandem, highlighting the unique nature of Sandinista ideology. All three of the areas highlighted in chapter two as significant in the discursive creation of national identity in Nicaragua emerged in the analysis as intertwined aspects of the discourse, suggesting that each area represents a powerful source for generating support among the populace in Nicaragua for the FSLN's narrative of national transformation.

The contestation over the discursive terrain has also been presented as a salient aspect of the battle for hegemony within the country. My analysis of the opposition documents showed a contradictory narrative of national transformation which focused on political rather than societal change, with the discourse organised around the nodal points of democracy, freedom and Christian character. Within the contestation, the opposition were seen to engage the dominant Sandinista discourse, challenging the FSLN's in-group creation. The opposition documents showed a tendency toward reshaping the Sandinista identity through the topos of betrayal with claims that the FSLN had betrayed the true legacy of Sandino. Additionally, the

opposition discourse presented a broader picture of unity that contrasted with the FSLN's construction of the *pueblo* as Sandinista supporters. For the opposition, the people were united as 'Nicaraguans', despite party affiliation, which evidenced the people's desire for democracy and political pluralism, according to the opposition. The strategy of autonomisation and the topos of threat were also shown to be present in both discourses. The Sandinista discourse used these tools to reinforce the newly independent nature of Nicaragua after the Revolution, and also to rally support for their government in the face of external aggression. The threat of imperialism provided ammunition for the opposition against the FSLN, as the opposition corpus linked the government to an implied invitation to the USSR to become the new imperialist threat in the country.

The overlapping themes and strategies are indicative of areas where perhaps more hegemony had been gained by the FSLN for their discourse. As I have shown, the opposition, as the subaltern group, made use of the dominant discourse as a way to enter into the discursive arena, supporting Ives's (2004) contention that the subaltern groups reproduce the dominant 'language'. The opposition's contestation of the Sandinista narrative also made use of the polysemic nature of several ideological signs, indicative of Voloshinov's (1986) and Hall's (1982) argument that signifiers can be recontextualised and redefined, thereby representing multiple signifieds. The varying uses of Sandino and the founding fathers as examples of model national behaviour by both the opposition and the FSLN discourse is indicative of the multiaccentuality of Sandino as a sign. Similarly, my analysis has shown how the concept of the *Hombre Nuevo* is polysemic, as its use in Christian discourse was incorporated into the Sandinista use of the term. Likewise the opposition visually recontextualise the *Hombre Nuevo* as an ideological sign through the reproduction of the iconic Sandinista image of the militant with a baby, redefining the 'new man' as an innocent baby that is representative of every Nicaraguan's true nature. The discursive contestation that occurred between the two opposing narratives evidenced the fight for hegemony within the country. Each group was striving to gain support for their vision of national transformation. The Sandinistas appeared to gain hegemony in certain areas, such as their discussion on unity and the emphasis on Nicaraguan autonomy, whilst the opposition were seen to capitalise on the existing discourse of the antagonism between the Church and Marxism when refuting the concepts of social change and the 'new man'.

One area that has greatly benefitted my analysis is the insights provided by the triangulation of data. Beyond the comparison of the two textual corpora from the 1980s as a means to illuminate the contest for discursive hegemony, the interviews from 2010 have provided the possibility of, at least partially, gauging the impact of the competing discourses in gaining support for one side or the other. Certain topics within both discourses appear to have maintained a presence in the people's memory or their own language use, indicating areas where the FSLN or opposition may have gained a degree of hegemony. Among the surviving Sandinista themes are unity and national or cultural identity. As I discussed in chapter five, Inés and Lucinda's comments highlighted the awareness of the Sandinistas' use of '*pueblo*' as both an inclusionary and exclusionary term. For these two respondents, that discourse undermined the inherent unity of the people. However, we also saw how the interviewees had a positive view of the initial unity under the FSLN government. In chapter six, the participants were shown to be largely positive about the sense of recapturing the nation's identity under the FSLN, as we saw in Inés's comment that:

en realidad, yo considero que los sandinistas rescataron la nacionalidad de Nicaragua, en cuanto a todos los que son nuestros valores, con lo que tiene que ver con la cultura nacional, ¿verdad? ... Y lo otro también a que uno aprenda a querer a su país, a defender a su país, a defender los intereses del país de uno como tal.¹

The opposition's discourse appears to have remained present in the interviewees' discussion of freedom, where their comments on the phrase '*libertad nacional*' tended to focus on the lack of civil liberties, such as freedom of speech, and the FSLN's turn toward dictatorial governance. This was evident in Sergio's comments, seen in chapter six, that:

comenzó el Frente Sandinista, pues, le dijo al pueblo que aquí iba a haber libertad, libertad de trabajo, libertad de comerse, toda clase de libertad. Pero ya sin embargo estando en el poder el Frente Sandinista, entonces si por la inexperiencia de ellos o querían trasladar el comunismo a Nicaragua, cosa que no estaba preparada Nicaragua. Y entonces se comenzó a expropiar, a encarcelar a personas aligadas a Somoza, una crisis. La economía bajó. Se volvió dictador el Frente'.²

¹ 'in reality, I think that the Sandinistas rescued the Nicaraguan nationality, as far as all our values are concerned, with what is related to the national culture, right. ... And the other thing is that people learnt to love their country, to defend their country, to defend the country's interests as one's own.'

² 'The Frente began, well it told the people that here there was going to be freedom, freedom to work, freedom to eat, all kinds of freedom. But, already without a doubt, with the Frente in power, maybe

Importantly, the interviews showed that individual concerns often outweighed the impact of the discourse. For example, the interviewees' commentary on rationing and the *diplotienda* indicated that the restrictions placed on the general populace, which were not also always placed on the members of the government, disillusioned the people and served to decrease their acceptance of the FSLN narrative.

7.2 Implications for Discourses of Nationalism

My analysis also flagged some areas of the discourse that do not appear to have achieved any longevity within the population. For instance, the new man, a significant element of the new education many of the respondents experienced, was never raised by the interviewees themselves, rather the few references to it were elicited by my questions about the concept. Similarly, the concept of the new Nicaragua was not echoed in the interview corpus, indicating that it perhaps was not an area of the Sandinista discourse that had much impact for the people. Perhaps most tellingly, the Revolution as a reified entity separate from the Sandinistas and serving as a beacon lighting the way to Nicaragua's future, was not produced by any of the respondents, including those who served in the EPS. The areas which exhibit a lasting impact from the Sandinista discourse indicate that the themes which focused on the emotionally charged aspects of identity and unity were favourably viewed and more readily entered into the public discourse. Conversely, those topics which related to the Sandinistas' specific political goals, with the exception of the Literacy Crusade, met more resistance, as highlighted by the comments indicating an awareness of the discursive efforts of the FSLN.

Taken together this suggests that national themes related to the people's cultural identity and unity have a more lasting impact on the population than those that are more policy related. I contend that the emotional content of connecting the people with their imagined community via their cultural and social identity is an effective tool in cultivating support across the political spectrum for a certain ideology. Where the emotional connection falters, or is aligned with a specific party more than with a nebulous concept of the unified nation, the process of naturalisation

due to their inexperience, or because they wanted to transfer communism to Nicaragua, something that Nicaragua wasn't ready for. And so they began to expropriate, to imprison people linked to Somoza, a crisis. The economy declined. The Frente became a dictator'

meets increased resistance from varying political views. What this also suggests is that nationalism is not likely to die away. Again, taking as evidence the naturalised elements of the Sandinista discourse, themes of national uniqueness and importance can cut across ideological differences and foster widespread acceptance.

Additionally, my research here suggests that far from being a static entity that can be addressed by any one theory, nationalism is a dynamic process of identification that must take into account the specific socio-cultural and political circumstances within a particular country. In considering future studies on Latin American nationalism, a regional variant of the dominant theories of national identity would greatly aid in understanding the processes that occur in the individual constituent nations.

My analysis also indicates that the opposition discourse is necessarily framed in large part by the dominant or governmental discourse. As seen in section 7.2, the opposition groups entered the discursive contestation with the FSLN via the dominant group's topics and strategies and through the multiaccentual potential of ideological signs. Ignacio himself indicates this in his interview when he claims that 'Honestamente, pienso que [los partidos de la oposición] siguen utilizando la misma retórica de la revolución, de gobierno Sandinista, como una forma de ganar votos para su partido'.³ In this way, examinations of discourses on national identity found in situations of political contestation must consider the form and substance of subordinate or subaltern discourses in light of the discursive space and form created and provided by the dominant discourse.

7.3 Methodological Implications and Future Directions for Research

Methodologically, my thesis has shown that a critically oriented discourse analysis can reveal important patterns in the creation of national identity. Similar strategies are visible in both the FSLN and opposition corpora. Beyond uncovering strategies applicable to a particular situation in the past, the strategies brought to light through this type of analysis can also be applicable in examining current situations in a variety of geopolitical settings. For example, the strategy of stripping citizenship seen in the FSLN discourse is also evident in the recent political discourse in Libya when Muammar Gaddafi stated that 'There is no division

³ 'Honestly, I think that [the opposition parties] continue using the same rhetoric as the revolution, as the Sandinista government, as a way to win votes for their party'

between the Libyan people; there is a division between extremists and the Libyan people' (van Kemenade 2011). The methodology I employed in the analysis for this thesis can be seen as a useful tool for understanding political discourse in a variety of contexts. However, one potential drawback of a critically oriented discourse analysis is the tendency to take a lack of evidence as evidence itself. This can be seen in my analysis of the opposition and interview data. When strategies and topics present in the FSLN corpus did not appear in the other two corpora, the absence signalled that the particular groups did not engage in that aspect of the discourse for one reason or another. Given that most studies applying this type of methodology have a relatively small data pool, rather than large multimillion word corpora, a definitive claim regarding absence is not possible. Studies of this nature must guard against drawing rigid either-or conclusions, and instead address trends indicated by the data.

Another potential drawback of this methodology is the lack of consideration of intentionality when examining a discourse. Aith a lack of interviews with the relevant political actors, or documentation produced at the time referring to the internal workings of a party's political strategies, it is not possible to ascribe intentionality to the authors of a discourse. The resulting strategies and overall implications of a discourse ought to be regarded at least partially, if not wholly, as constructs of the social, political, historical and cultural circumstances from which it emerged.

Echoing this need to consider specific situational aspects of a discourse, my work in this thesis has shown the need for future scholarship to focus on the peculiar aspects of national identity formation in Latin America, with an eye to elaborating a theory that encompasses the shared regional circumstances. Additionally, the importance of discourse cannot be understated in national identity formation, as most political work is accomplished through talk and text rather than armed actions in the current global political order. Specific to the Nicaraguan context, in my analysis I have presented a variety of discursive strategies which were employed to varying degrees of success. Moving on from this, an analysis of the current Sandinista discourse, with Daniel Ortega as the party head and Nicaragua's President (2006 and relected in 2011), will aid in understanding the diachronic nature of the discourse on national community in Nicaragua, and provide insight into the evolving nature of political discourse in revolutionary and post-revolutionary contexts.

Appendix A:

Contents of the FSLN Corpus

Author	Title	Publication year	Document Type
Arce, Bayardo	Discurso Pronunciado por el Comandante de la Revolución Bayardo Arce, 8 de Noviembre 1980	1980	Speech transcript
Arce, Bayardo	Unidad para Proteger la Revolución	1980	Journal article: <i>Nueva Sociedad</i>
Borge, Tomás	Nuestros Niños Lo Van a Entender	1980	Speech transcript
Borge, Tomás	La Democracia del Poder Popular	1986	Speech transcript
Cardenal, Ernesto	La Paz Mundial y la Revolución de Nicaragua	1982	Book
Carrión, Luis	El Patriotismo Base de la Unidad Nacional	1981	Speech transcript
Dirección Nacional	Ayer Unidad Nacional para Lograr el Triunfo; Hoy Unidad Nacional para Mantener la Victoria	1980	Newspaper article: <i>Poder Popular</i>
Dirección Nacional	Proclama de la Dirección Nacional del FSLN	1986	Speech transcript
FSLN	Propaganda de la Producción	1980	Recompilation of articles published in <i>Poder Sandinista</i>
FSLN	Plan de Lucha del FSLN: Por qué Lucha el FSLN junto al Pueblo?	1984	Special issue of newspaper: <i>Barricada</i>
Ministerio de Educación, FSLN	Fines y Objetivos de la Nueva Educación	1983	Book
Ortega, Daniel	Esta Revolución Es Irreversible	1989	Speech transcript
Tirado López, Víctor	Nicaragua: Una Nueva Democracia en el Tercer Mundo	1986	Speech transcript
Tirado López, Víctor	El Sandinismo a Diez Años de la Revolución	1989	Interview transcript
Zamora, Daisy & Julio Valle-Castillo	Hacia una Política Cultural de la Revolución Sandinista	1982	Compilation of several speech transcripts

Contents of Opposition Corpus

Author	Title	Publication Year	Document Type
Alianza Revolucionaria Democrática	ARDE... hacia el rescate de la libertad	1983, September-October	Newspaper
Asamblea Nicaragüense de Unidad Democrática	Boletín ANUDE	1985, January	Newspaper
Asamblea Nicaragüense de Unidad Democrática	Boletín ANUDE	1985, February	Newspaper
Belli, Humberto	Unidad o Caos: Nicaragua en la Encrucijada	1981	Special edition of newspaper <i>La Prensa</i>
Bloque Opositor del Sur	12 Apuntes acerca del B.O.S.	1985?	Party manifesto pamphlet
Calero Portocarrero, Adolfo	José Castillo Osejo Entrevista a Adolfo Calero Portocarrero en Conservatismo en Marcha, Radio Corporación	198?	Interview transcript
Castillo Osejo, José	Editoriales: Retazos de una Historia Negra, Tomo I	1995	Recompilation of editorials published in <i>La Prensa</i>
Frente Revolucionario Sandino	Un Pueblo en Lucha por su Libertad	1983, January	Journal
Movimiento Democrático Nicaragüense	Rescate	1985, April	Journal
Movimiento Democrático Nicaragüense	Rescate	1985, September	Journal
Movimiento Democrático Nicaragüense	Rescate	1988, January	Journal
Resistencia Nicaragüense	Resistencia	1987, August	Journal
Resistencia Nicaragüense	Resistencia	1987, September-October	Journal
Resistencia Nicaragüense	Comandos: Boletín Informativo del Ejército de la RN	1987?	Journal
Resistencia Nicaragüense	Comandos: Boletín Informativo del Ejército de la RN	1987, December	Journal

Appendix B:

Interviewee Profiles

María was a young mother during the revolution. She was teaching at a catholic primary school in Managua and largely refrained from taking part in the revolutionary fighting. After the FSLN came to power, she participated in the literacy crusade teaching urban adults. Her husband's work for a foreign embassy placed pressure on the family as the FSLN grew more suspicious of foreign efforts to remove them from power. Marisol and her family went into exile in the United States and only returned to Nicaragua after Violeta Chamorro was elected president. A long-time opponent of the Sandinistas, she openly states her belief that the country has been better off under Somoza than under the FSLN.

In her late teens during the Sandinista government, **Soledad** and her extended family moved from the capital to the countryside to avoid her uncles and nephews being forced into the Patriotic Military Service. Though she supported the FSLN during the first years of their government, she notes the privations and the forced military service in the 1980s as contributing to the waning of that support. She considers herself then and now a Sandinista, but in the vein of Sandino, rather than that of the FSLN. Soledad credits the Sandinistas with helping to improve the educational situation in Nicaragua and also with instilling a sense of pride in being Nicaraguan amongst the population.

Sofía actively participated in the insurrection in 1979 and supported the FSLN's platform. She also participated in the literacy crusade in the mountains and was supportive of the Sandinista government at first. Whilst in college, she grew frustrated with what she considered the hypocrisy and double standards of the FSLN, evidenced by the leaders' lavish lifestyles and the obligatory military service. Sofía began to attend meetings of students opposed to the government. She does not support the current government, but also feels that there has never been a viable opposition to the FSLN.

Miguel was studying to be a physician's assistant during the revolution and had

moved to Managua from the countryside at that time. He particularly remembers the fighting in the city to overthrow Somoza; however, as a member of the Mennonite church, which advocates pacifism, he refrained from participating actively in the insurrection. Instead he helped man the clinic in his neighbourhood. Though he was of age to be drafted into the EPS during the Sandinista government, he was able to obtain a card of exemption due to his religious belief in pacifism. His perspective is one of detached observation rather than direct engagement with either the government or the opposition. Miguel expressed support for many of the FSLN's policies, but did not support their politics and the continued fighting that occurred under their government.

A passionate supporter of the Sandinistas during the insurrection, **Rosa** spoke only of the time leading to the overthrow of Somoza and then the Literacy Crusade. Having suffered abuses at her workplace, she quickly sympathised with the FSLN and joined in the general strikes called for in the capital. Both of her sons left to join the guerrillas, and both eventually were killed by Somoza's guard. This emboldened Rosa and she continued to support the Sandinistas throughout the insurrection and then during their government. She also participated in the Literacy Crusade and was honoured by the FSLN government for her service during that time. Her choice of topics for the interview stemmed from the time when people were largely united around the FSLN and its revolutionary project.

Elena was also in her teens during the 1980s. She recalled the beginning of the 1980s as a time when everyone seemed to be united and supportive of the Sandinistas, and full of hope. However, her perspective changed as the decade progressed. She particularly remembers the educational situation creating what she called a 'bloody mentality' where students were taught using references to terms of weapons and war. She also recalls the personal struggles her family faced due to her father's position as a driver for one of the foreign embassies. Elena expressed the continued suspicion she and her family felt was levelled at them because of their connections to an outside political actor.

Living in a rural town during the insurrection, **Inés's** parents sent her to a farm in the mountains to protect her from the fighting, in which her whole family participated to

support the Sandinistas. After the insurrection she returned and participated in the Literacy Crusade in her town, which she still counts as one of the best memories from that time period. She entered college shortly after the 1984 elections and credits the FSLN government and its policies for making that possible, as she could not have afforded it if they had not abolished tuition charges. Though largely supportive of the FSLN during the 1980s, Ines does lament the homogenising efforts she witnessed in university where only those supportive of the government were given teaching posts, and classroom discussions discouraged dissenting opinions. She paid attention to the opposition groups that sprang up amongst the students, but did not participate for of losing her job and her place at university.

Carlos voluntarily joined the Sandinista Army in the 1980s. He remains a loyal Sandinista party member and recalls fondly his time of military service. He, too, highlighted the Literacy Crusade as a positive action on the part of the government, but also remembers the army members bringing milk and other goods to houses in their neighbourhoods to benefit the people. Carlos recounted some of the atrocities of war he endured in the army, but he believes they were integral in his formation as a man and a citizen. In his opinion, the current struggles in the country with crime and poverty are a result of the FSLN's electoral loss in 1990, and he blames that loss on the people being soft and not supporting the military draft.

One of the older respondents, **Esteban** had been employed by the Somoza government in a low-level post prior to the insurrection, and initially retained that position under the FSLN government, though he was later let go due to his links to the dictatorship. He quickly found new employment in a different government agency. In Esteban's memory, the first four years were of the Sandinista government were wonderful, but that quickly reversed with the intensification of the counterrevolution and the national economic downturn. Though he views the Sandinistas as caudillos and dictators, he blames their downfall on the economic situation of the 1980s caused by the counterrevolutionary war.

Though **Sergio** acknowledges that the Nicaraguan population was nearly unanimous in calling for Somoza's removal from power, he remembers the time before the revolution as imminently better than what followed in the 1980s. He has no kind words for the initial years after the insurrection, as did many respondents, and

patently dismisses the FSLN as merely desiring to establish another Cuba in Nicaragua. Sergio chose not to speak of his own experiences, preferring to discuss the period in more general terms.

Lucinda was in her teens during the 1980s and recalls being fortunate not to suffer the same privations that her classmates at school did, as her parents were able to purchase goods on the black market rather than depend on the ration cards and government provisions. She credits the FSLN government with promoting and developing technical training programmes and careers and with promoting the literacy campaigns. She was sent to another Latin American country after graduating secondary school to remove her from the political and social situation in Nicaragua at the time. Though critical of the Sandinistas during the 1980s, she believes the party was more interested in working for the betterment of the country than they are currently.

Largely critical of the Sandinistas, **Daniel**, believes the FSLN came to power by manipulating the situation under Somoza and the people's desire to end the fighting between the National Guard and the FSLN. For him, disenchantment with the new government began within the first six months, citing the *Diplotienda*, the curtailing of dissent, and the military draft as contributing factors. As a driver for a private businessman, he was particularly impacted by the different levels of access to basic goods between those with links to the government leadership and the average citizen.

Ignacio voluntarily joined the Sandinista Army and considers his time of service as one of his most precious memories. Through it, he gained an appreciation of the historical role he was playing, and believed he was continuing the fight started in the 1800s against imperialism. He credits the FSLN government with bringing the highest levels of achievement in academics, sports and health services. Ignacio realises that his time in the military influenced his political views due to the ideological education he was given, and is at times critical of the government's missteps.

Appendix C:

Transcript of Miguel's Interview

L: ¿Puede contarme sus pensamientos de lo que sucedió en los 80?

Bueno, eso fue una situación difícil para Nicaragua. Había digamos, un dictador, mandando y haciendo, ya al final se puso difícil, más difícil. Entonces, yo creo que la gente ya tenía mucha furia en contra, mucho enojo contra Somoza digamos porque él estaba cometiendo abusos Había mucha corrupción, mucho robo, muchos atropellos. Entonces el pueblo de Nicaragua se levantó digamos para luchar contra Somoza. Entonces todo eso pues dado lo que ya conocemos la revolución de 79, con los sandinistas a la cabeza.

El 79 yo estaba haciendo cursos para trabajar como auxiliar de enfermería, como líder de la comunidad, un líder de salud para la comunidad. Y estaba aquí en Managua. Entonces yo viví los últimos meses de la guerra aquí, estaba en el barrio Dalvasia. En Managua, recibí unos cursos para ese trabajo en la comunidad. La comunidad me ha nombrado como su líder para digamos capacitarme y trabajar en una clínica que teníamos en ese tiempo como iglesias como convenciones allá en puertas viejas, en Matagalpa.

L: ¿Cómo fueron los primeros años de los 80? ¿Cuáles cambios había?

Bueno, los cambios que hubieron, fueron muy drásticos. Lo primero que vivíamos, digamos, fue una sociedad polarizada. Porque había mucha gente que, bueno mucha gente apoyando Somoza, pero otra gente que estaban en contra de Somoza. Entonces, hubieron venganzas, hubieron confiscaciones, a la familia de Somoza, a los amigos de Somoza, a los empleados del gobierno anterior. Entonces los sandinistas fueron quitando propiedades, confiscando, encarcelando, y todo eso fue traumático. Entonces, eran cambios muy, muy bruscos de repente, ocurriendo muy seguidos. Y eso generó lo que se llamaba en su momento la contrarrevolución. Que los sandinistas vinieron proclamando su revolución pero a la vez, todas estas acciones generaron en reacciones de esa gente que estaba a favor de Somoza o

protegidos de Somoza. Reaccionaron y se amaron para luchar en contra de la revolución. Lo que se llamó los contras.

L: ¿Tenía contacto con grupos opositores?

No, no directamente con ellos. Pero sí tuve una experiencia que yo no me lo imaginé nunca sin querer. Me metí un problema que yo nunca pensé que sería problema. En el año 81 se dio la ley del servicio militar. Entonces estaba estudiando yo, ya había dejado el centro de entrenamiento, lo terminé y trabajé un año o año y medio para la clínica. Y después yo renuncié ese trabajo porque ellos quitaron la clínica de la iglesia e hicieron lo que llamaron en ese momento el sistema único de salud. Entonces era el sistema del gobierno que había. Entonces como quitaron la clínica, mandaron los cubanos, los médicos cubanos, nosotros ya no teníamos nada que hacer. Entonces yo renuncié al trabajo y me vine para Managua para estudiar, terminar mi secundaria. Entonces allí pasó. Y después de eso ellos sacaron la ley del servicio militar. Entonces yo no estaba de acuerdo con esa ley por mis principios cristianos, porque la iglesia menonita tiene principios bien fuerte en eso de no violencia. Entonces para mí, eso era en contra de mis principios. Entonces yo busqué la manera de salirme incluso de Nicaragua. Tuve que dejar mi colegio, estaba en tercer año en el básico, dejar mi colegio y me fui a Costa Rica pensando viajar a EEUU. Me fui a Costa Rica para solicitar visa americana. Pero estando allí tuve una experiencia que es lo que le quería contar. En los periódicos en San José estaban saliendo artículos que hablaban del conflicto aquí en Nicaragua. Entonces yo mandé a mi familia, hice un recorte del periódico, lo mandé a mi familia para que supieran lo que estaban diciendo los periódicos de allí porque aquí había una censura digamos de prensa. Entonces, eso me creó un problema después. Yo mandé eso con unos misioneros de Costa Rica que iban para Honduras y gente que iba de Nicaragua a Honduras trajo esos documentos, esa carta para acá. Y cuando llegó el señor que la traía al aeropuerto, lo agarraron, le quitaron todo, lo desnudaron, y lo comenzaron a investigar. Entonces yo tuve que venirme a Nicaragua de urgencia para aclarar la situación, porque yo temía que mi familia iba a tener problemas, le podían quemar, le podían matar, y cosas... Me vine, y cuando vine, me dice 'mire ud. tiene que presentarse a la seguridad del Estado de Nicaragua para aclarar toda esa situación.' Entonces yo estaba muy asustado porque después del interrogatorio que había allí,

habían militares cubanos, entonces me dio mucho miedo, no. Bueno, por fin no pasó más, ellos me... y la persona, varias personas me interrogaron, militares y dicen ‘mire nosotros queremos cuando ud. salga del país, no vaya a hablar más de la revolución’. ‘Y en ningún momento yo hablaba más, solo lo que hice por curiosidad fue hacer un recorte de periódicos allá en San José y mandarlo a mi familia para informarle, nada más de lo que decía allí afuera. Pero yo no tengo intención de andar hablando mal de la revolución.’ Es que en esos días había un ataque en la frontera sur, Edén Pastora que estaba como guerrillero y andaba comandando digamos un grupo de los contras. Entonces el reportaje en el periódico, el artículo era sobre ese caso, sobre ese ataque. Entonces eso creó el problema. La cosa que después de como dos semanas ellos estaban investigando y estaban llamando cada yo tenía que presentarme allí a la oficina de ellos para decirles ‘yo estoy aquí, yo soy un estudiante, yo quiero seguir mis estudios. No tengo interés en andar con asuntos militares. No es mi idea, yo soy un cristiano y yo comencé a explicarla, pues, y así se fue quedando. Pero fue un susto muy feo esa experiencia, sí.

L: ¿Y Ud. no tenía que ir al servicio militar?

Sí, eso fue para mí una protección especial del Señor. Porque cada vez yo tenía que, bueno yo tenía una tarjeta, y creo que la guardo de recuerdo todavía, de que yo tenía, estaba como un militar supuestamente para ellos. Y cada vez, cada seis meses yo tenía que presentarme a la oficina que me correspondía del distrito aquí para una entrevista. Entonces, cada seis meses me llamaba, me reportaba, y bueno, nunca ellos me llamaron. En ese tiempo yo estaba dirigiendo también, estaba trabajando como maestro a un grupo de estudiantes que teníamos en la primavera, enseñando la Biblia y eso le llamamos el instituto bíblico. Era pequeño, pero estábamos haciendo eso, capacitando jóvenes para trabajar en la iglesia. Y yo no sé, Dios me protegió de una manera especial. Nunca ellos me dijeron que yo tenía que ir a la guerra, ni venir al entrenamiento, ni nada. Fue una cosa...

L: ¿Experimentó Ud. resentimiento de otra gente por no tener que ir al servicio?

No, no. Gracias a Dios, no. Bueno, la cosa para mí, incluso yo en esos días después yo fui nombrado presidente de nuestra convención, y como presidente de la

convención, me tocaba ver casos de gente que había sido llevado a la guerra, el entrenamiento. E incluso hablar por ellos, y sacarlos de alguna manera de esa situación. Y enfrentarme con gente del gobierno, decirles ‘mira es que nosotros somos de la iglesia. Nosotros tenemos como principios no violentos, no participar en la guerra, queremos si hay maneras, otras maneras para ayudar, estamos dispuestos como cocinar... Otras cosas, enseñar como maestros, cualquier otra cosa que no sea llevar a armas, estamos de acuerdo. Y pues, ellos entendieron parece. Pero algunos se oponían los militares. Decían ‘mira. Si tú me vienes con esa posición entonces estamos diciendo que eso es como tú me matas un soldado.’ ‘No pero que no somos soldados, somos cristianos’. Tratando de explicarlo, ¿no?

L: ¿Y después de, digamos, el 85, como era la vida cotidiana?

Dura, muy dura. Había escasez de todo con el bloqueo, y había un acoso para los jóvenes muy fuerte, que eso nunca lo habíamos visto. Y me tocó vivir en esos días, todavía siendo, digamos, en la edad posible de ser reclutado para la guerra. Pues, ser joven en ese tiempo era casi un delito, era un peligro. Y muchísima gente mandó sus hijos afuera, a cualquier otro lado, pero no Nicaragua porque, los que fueron llevados normalmente tenían, eran lesionados, o muertos en la guerra. Era una guerra cruenta, era muy dura, ¿no? Fue una guerra dura. Y pues, yo lo miraba tan lejano, Lisa, eso porque cuando yo crecí antes de la guerra de Somoza, mi papá... Eso, que en los tiempos de 19... mi papá fue un viejo ya de 85 cuando... se casó con mi mamá de 60 años, yo soy hijo del segundo matrimonio. Y mi papá contaba de todas esas guerras que ya habían. Y por eso me parecía tan lejano a mi ‘nunca vamos a hacer o tener una cosa como eso’. Y de repente estábamos ya metidos así. Era un tramo para todo este país. Y la otra cosa es que la escasez de recursos era terrible, porque todo lo que había, lo poco que había en Nicaragua era empleado para la guerra, para defendernos supuestamente de la guerra ¿no? Porque ellos decían era una guerra de agresión que EEUU nos estaban metiendo, y bueno, EEUU con todos sus recursos, nosotros con la pobreza y dando lo poco que había para la guerra, eso me parecía una locura. Pero así estábamos en esos días.

L: ¿Qué opinaba Ud. de los sandinistas durante los 80?

Bueno, yo nunca he tenido, honestamente, nunca he tenido una buena impresión de... acepto a los comienzos de la revolución. No me gustaba como Somoza estaba haciendo con Nicaragua, por 40 años era una familia establecida aquí, y había mucho abuso y eso no me parecía lógicamente. Pero después vi la otra cara de las cosas y tampoco me gustaban. Después de tres años y sobre todo después, me parecía una cuestión absurda que estuviéramos peleando con la potencia más grande del mundo. Un disparate que un país chiquitito que está empobrecido, es una locura. Por qué no buscamos un entendimiento, una manera de no estar en esto. Gastando los pocos recursos, desangrando el pueblo de Nicaragua, me parecía un absurdez, sí, honestamente.

L: Y durante esa época, los Sandinistas hablaron mucho sobre la 'unidad nacional' y la 'soberanía nacional' y la 'liberación nacional'. ¿Cómo le parecían esos términos?

Bueno, eso es un discurso político, como queriendo lavarnos la cabeza, el cerebro, ¿no? Para que todos comulgáramos y pensáramos como eso. Pero yo, yo después de eso me quedé a una distancia porque incluso uno de mis hermanos estaba en el ejército y me tocaba irlo a ver cada vez allí en una base militar arriba de Managua donde podía ver toda la ciudad. Él estaba entrenado para las cuestiones de los aviones militares. Todos, él conocía la velocidad, los motores, los aviones, los tipos de aviones, la velocidad que llevaba, el tipo de armamento que tenía, todo eso lo sabía. Y yo pensaba, mi hermano está quedándose loco porque está llena su cabeza de estas cosas. Entonces me daba una gran tristeza y mi mamá estaba muy preocupada porque no,... porque estaba la guerra y de repente se va a morir también mi hermano. Entonces fue traumático para la familia. Al fin cuando ganó Doña Violeta, se salió pues porque miraba que era una tontería. Ellos, para mí que los grandes, se aprovecharon, sacaron beneficios económicos, y mi hermano disponiendo la vida y no sacando nada. Yo lo miraba 'no, no, no. ¿Por qué tiene que estar allí?' Nunca hemos sido militares, pero él simpatiza todavía con el gobierno. Está bien. Yo respeto lo que el quiere hacer con su vida.

L: ¿Y cómo fue cuando el gobierno de V. Chamorro ganó?

Bueno, fue una alegría, un... fue algo maravilloso realmente, un cambio notable. Los mismos militares estaban cansados de la guerra. Recuerdo que aquí cerca de nosotros hay una colina, había una base militar allá arriba. Y pasaban los militares, desertando, dejando armas, equipo, uniformes, todo botado, porque ellos no querían estar en eso. Y para mi eso, pues comenzó a sentirse la libertad, como descompresionar algo que estaba por reventar, no como hoy, depresión, ¿no? Fue algo grandioso pues, fue lo que Nicaragua necesita, necesitaba esa libertad. Estábamos como en un cerco ¿no?

L: ¿Y ahora?

Bueno, cada quien Lisa, tiene su opinión en esto. Pero yo lo veo muy difícil. Cada día Nicaragua está yendo hacia abajo. No veo que estamos avanzando. Más bien están allí haciendo, preparando para otro asalto digamos, al poder. Están destruyendo las pocas instituciones democráticas que hay. Y se están imponiendo por la fuerza. Yo lo veo casi así. Haciendo su voluntad y preparándose para seguir en el gobierno, pues, 'forever' como dicen. Por allí unos de sus comandantes dicen 'no, aquí hay sandinismo para siempre'. Entonces ellos se creen como dioses en el poder. Y es preocupante porque cada vez estamos, está socando más el anillo, es una presión me parece horrible. Y yo confié que de alguna manera el Señor nos va a sacar de este lio porque ha sido... ellos dicen, bueno fueron 16 años que tuvimos de Alemán, de Doña Violeta y ellos tildan y meten a todos en un mismo saco que ... Alemán fue corrupto, hay que reconocer, pero meten a Doña Violeta también en el mismo saco. Entonces ellos dicen, fueron 16 años de neo-liberalismo que ha venido, que nos robaron, que nos saquearon, pero nada en comparación con lo que ellos están haciendo. Sí. Entonces, un señor decía, un señor ya mayor decía, que era abogado y muy sabio, en realidad Somoza solo fue un niño travieso a la par de estos Ortegas sandinistas, solo hacía ciertas travesuras en comparación con todo lo que se han hecho estos. Y como le digo, están queriendo seguir y establecerse para siempre quedarse,... no sé cual es la idea.

L: ¿Le parece que los Sandinistas de hoy son los mismos de los 80?

No, no. Ahora me parece que más bien es la familia de Ortega, manejando todo, incluso lo de su mismo partido. Por eso salió digamos el movimiento el MRS, el Movimiento de Renovación que han querido ellos luchar contra esa, contra una familia que está establecida solo para su beneficio. Y el grupo de ellos es muy reducido, incluso la gente de su partido. Ellos les dan migajas de cosas. No son... pero quieren mantenerlos contento con el discurso, no, y las migajas que les dan. Pero lo que verdaderamente están beneficiados son su familia, lo de su círculo íntimo.

L; ¿Cómo puede salir de la situación que vive hoy Nicaragua?

Bueno, aquí ha tenido una... Ellos, ellos ven, Lisa, siempre la comunidad internacional, solo la ven bien cuando ellos pueden recibir ayuda, pero no la ven bien cuando la comunidad internacional opina sobre los asuntos nacionales y empiezan a decir que esto es un descaro, que ellos no tienen porque venir a opinar de lo que pasa aquí, que solo somos los nicaragüenses que debemos opinar. Entonces por un lado decimos, bueno aquí que no se metan los extranjeros, que no se meta la comunidad internacional, pero por otro lado estamos pidiéndole ayuda a ellos. Entonces es un doble discurso me parece. Y en el pasado, aun cuando Carter estaba en el poder, me parece que sí influyó mucho en la decisión, en la caída de Somoza. Porque yo pienso por como yo lo entiendo, si Carter no hubiera cortado la ayuda a Somoza, quien sabe si Somoza todavía estuviera, o fuera otra la situación, talvez Somoza hubiera ido... es decir, Carter, el gobierno de EEUU, soltó las manos y dejó solo a Somoza, entonces, allí ellos aprovecharon y se logró el cambio. Pero ahora ellos no quieren que EEUU intervenga porque son ellos, serían ellos los afectados. Entonces, un doble discurso ¿no?

Pero sí ha tenido mucha influencia digamos los países amigos, comunidad internacional ha tenido mucha influencia en Nicaragua. Y yo creo que si no,... hay presiones digamos fuertes en contra del estado que ellos quieren instaurar o poner aquí, ellos irían y nos acaban de derrocar. Sí porque ellos de su parte ellos harían, van en su proyecto adelante y todos que se lo oponen los pelean, los garrotean, los matan, y los desaparecen. Esa es la política que quisieran usar en contra de los que

no están con ellos. Es la verdad. Y eso se vio por ejemplo en las elecciones de municipales que hubieron. Ellos se lo robaron, descaradamente se lo robaron. Ah, pero después, la gente andaba protestando, solo mandaron a garrotear con la policía, lo mandaron a quemar, a pelear, y hasta a matar muchos, en muchos casos. Entonces es una cosa bien difícil. Entonces para mi es clave que la comunidad internacional exija que en Nicaragua hayan libertades, que hayan procesos de elecciones transparentes, vigiladas, no solo vigiladas, súper-vigiladas, para que se pueda saber qué es lo que el pueblo de Nicaragua quiere. Porque con una mordaza así, con una dictadura así, no, no te puede expresar, en tu voto incluso. Porque a la hora de votar, la gente votó. Pero se robaron el voto y echaron el voto al caos. Entonces, ¿cómo vamos a saber qué es lo que quiere el pueblo? Allí está la cosa. Entonces, para mi es determinante que la comunidad internacional presione y exija que se le dé libertad a este pueblo para que se exprese, incluso los medios. Ellos los tienen controlados. Los medios que no son los medios oficiales reciben presiones, les quitan la publicidad y están ahogándolos económicamente para que... tienen que plegar a eso. Entonces es una,... allí se ve la situación. Así que yo pienso que hay mucho que hacer en este país.

L: ¿Qué opina Ud. del personaje de Sandino?

El personaje de Sandino. Bueno, no lo conocí personalmente. Mi papá me habló mucho de eso porque mi papá vivió esos tiempos. Mi papá, Lisa, era casi contemporáneo de Sandino. Sandino nació el 18 de mayo, y mi papá nació el 9. Entonces no había de diferencia, el mismo año en el mismo mes. Entonces mi papá conoció mucho de él, de Sandino. Y sí, Sandino tenía, digamos, su patriotismo, era bien firme. Fue digamos un defensor. Él no quería a los norteamericanos, y eso es un hecho, ni quería que ninguna potencia se estableciera aquí en Nicaragua. Entonces, él luchó de ese aspecto, de ese punto. Luchó y... pero, no creo que fuera sandinista. Hoy definitivamente Sandino no fuera sandinista.

L: Y Ud. estaba estudiando durante los 80. ¿Cómo fue la educación pública?

Bueno, aquí se habló mucho de la educación gratuita, pero para mí siempre ha carecido la calidad de la educación en Nicaragua, la educación pública, ha carecido

de calidad. Me parece que, y todavía hoy en día, sigue siendo una debilidad del gobierno, digamos, dar una calidad de educación. El presupuesto que se le da a la educación es un presupuesto muy bajo en comparación con otros, como el ejército, la policía. Ellos tienen muchos recursos, más el ejército pues. Entonces allí se ve el énfasis, el enfoque que tiene el gobierno. Así no estamos apoyando la educación, no se está brindando el apoyo que se necesita para desarrollar este país.

L: ¿Y la educación bajo V. Chamorro?

Siempre ha sido una lucha, pero me parece que fue mejor en ese tiempo. Yo creo que el gobierno de Bolaños, Lisa, él enfatizó y se hicieron muchos proyectos de escuela, aun en los lugares más apartados de Nicaragua. Si hay algo que reconocerle a Alemán, fue eso. Cada vez estaba inaugurando nuevas escuelas, aunque sí sabemos de la corrupción que había. Pero sí él puso atención en eso de la educación.

L: ¿Hay algo Ud. quiere que yo sepa sobre Nicaragua?

Bueno, que es un país muy lindo, con su gente muy, muy linda. Son gente muy hospitalaria, muy abierta, y también muy sencilla en su manera, incluso con los extranjeros, son... el nicaragüense es muy abierto, muy atento, muy cortés, no sé si lo ha notado, no sé si lo ha notado, pero yo sí creo que es un pueblo muy, es un pueblo amante de la libertad también, no le gustan las dictaduras y a veces lo digo eso hasta en broma en reuniones que tenemos porque ya todavía ahorita soy el presidente de la convención, y muchas veces hay gente que dicen ‘hermano pero que ud. es presidente, ud. es el que decide, es el que toma decisiones.’ No, le digo, me de manera de hacer no es esa. No me gusta imponer mis ideas. Me gusta la democracia, me gusta la libertad. Entonces, a mí me gusta la gente se exprese, y que no tengan miedos. Pero aquí, nos tienen, Lisa, con un bozal, como decimos, para que no hablar. Entonces, eso me molesta a veces, me da coraje, pero estamos ahí pasando estas cosas, esta situación. Y no es con todo el mundo que voy a expresar digamos por lo mismo, que hay temor digamos a decir lo que tú piensas. Entonces yo creo que necesitamos tener libertad de expresarnos, sin miedo a que te vayan a tomar en la calle, o que te vayan a arrastrar, quitar la casa, confiscar, o quemar. Por eso luchamos para salir, queremos salir. Y yo creo que Nicaragua en su historia ha

luchado por ser libre, por querer, digamos, ser un pueblo amante de la paz también. Y talvez en eso de ser amante de la paz, se ha hecho la guerra, creyendo que se la puede lograr a través de ese medio. Eso sería mi comentario final.

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