

NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON
THE DEVELOPMENT OF
PUBLIC RELATIONS

Series Editor: Tom Watson

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LATIN AMERICAN AND
CARIBBEAN PERSPECTIVES
ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF
PUBLIC RELATIONS

Other Voices

Edited by
Tom Watson





**Latin American and Caribbean Perspectives on the
Development of Public Relations**

National Perspectives on the Development of Public Relations

Series Editor: **Tom Watson**, Professor of Public Relations, The Media School, Bournemouth University, UK

The history of public relations has long been presented in a corporatist Anglo-American framework. *The National Perspectives on the Development of Public Relations: Other Voices* series is the first to offer an authentic world-wide view of the history of public relations freed from those influences.

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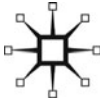
▶ **Latin American and
Caribbean Perspectives
on the Development of
Public Relations:
Other Voices**

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Tom Watson

*Professor of Public Relations, The Media School,
Bournemouth University, UK*

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This series is dedicated to my wife, Jenny, who has endured three decades of my practice and research in public relations ('I'll be finished soon' has been my response to her on too many occasions), and to the scholars and practitioners who have embraced and contributed so much to the International History of Public Relations Conference. They have come to Bournemouth University each year from around the world and reinvigorated the scholarship of public relations history. I hope everyone enjoys this series and are inspired to develop their research.

Tom Watson

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Series Editor's Preface

This series will make a major contribution to the history and historiography of public relations (PR). Until recently publications and conference papers have focused mainly on American tropes that PR was invented in the United States, although there have been British and German challenges to this claim. There are, however, emerging narratives that public relations-type activity developed in many countries in other bureaucratic and cultural forms that only came in contact with Anglo-American practice recently.

▶ The scholarship of public relations has largely been driven by US perspectives with a limited level of research undertaken in the United Kingdom and Central Europe. This has been reflected in general PR texts, which mostly tell the story of PR's development from the US experience. Following the establishment of the International History of Public Relations Conference (IHPRC), first held in 2010, it is evident there is an increasing level of research, reflection and scholarship outside Anglo-America and Central European orbits.

From IHPRC and a recent expansion of publishing in public relations academic journals, new national perspectives on the formation of public relations structures and practices are being published and discussed. Some reflect Anglo-American influences while others have evolved from national cultural and communication practices with a sideways glance at international practices.

I am attached to the notion of 'other' both in its post-modern concept and as a desire to create a more authentic approach to the history of public relations. It was the UK

public relations scholar and historian Professor Jacquie L'Etang who first used 'the other' in discussion with me. It immediately encapsulated my concerns about some recent historical writing, especially from countries outside Western Europe and North America. There was much evidence that 'Western hegemonic public relations' was influencing authors to make their national histories conform to the primacy of the United States. Often it was processed through the four models of Grunig and Hunt (1984). This approach did not take account of the social, cultural and political forces that formed each nation's approach to PR. It was also dull reading.

National Perspectives on the Development of Public Relations: Other Voices will be the first series to bring forward these different, sometimes alternative and culturally diverse national histories of public relations in a single format. Some will be appearing for the first time. In this series, national narratives are introduced and discussed, enabling the development of new or complementary theories on the establishment of public relations around the world.

Overall, the series has three aims:

- 1 Introduce national perspectives on the formation of public relations practices and structures in countries outside Western Europe and North America;
- 2 Challenge existing US-centric modelling of public relations;
- 3 Aid the formation of new knowledge and theory on the formation of public relations practices and structures by offering accessible publications of high quality.

Five of the books will focus on national public relations narratives which are collected together on a continental basis: Asia and Australasia, Eastern Europe and Russia, Middle East and Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, and Western Europe. The sixth book addresses historiographic interpretations and theorization of public relations history.

Rather than requesting authors to write in a prescribed format which leaves little flexibility, they have been encouraged to research and write historical narratives and analysis that are pertinent to a particular country or region. My view is that a national historical account of public relations' evolution will be more prized and exciting to read if the author is encouraged to present a narrative of how it developed over one or more particular periods (determined by what is appropriate in that country), considering why one or two particular PR events or persons

(or none) were important in that country, reviewing cultural traditions and interpretations of historical experiences, and theorizing development of public relations into its present state. Chapters without enforced consistency to the structure and focus have enabled the perspectives and voices from the different countries to be told in a way that is relevant to their histories.

A more original discussion follows in the concluding book because the series editor and fellow contributors offer a more insightful commentary on the historical development in the regions, identifying a contextualized emergent theoretical framework and historiography that values differences, rather than attempting to 'test' an established theoretical framework or historiographic approach.

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Reference

Grunig, J., and Hunt, T. (1984) *Managing Public Relations* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston).

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Tom's research focuses on professionally important topics such as measurement and evaluation, reputation management, and corporate social responsibility. He also researches and writes on public relations history and established the annual International History of Public Relations Conference in 2010. Tom is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations and a Founding Fellow of the Public Relations Consultants Association.

Tom took his first degree at the University of New South Wales in 1974. He was awarded his PhD in 1995 (Nottingham Trent University) for research into models of evaluation in public relations, edits the annual Public Relations History special issue of *Public Relations Review* and is on the editorial board of several other journals.

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Carolina Andrea Carbone is Professor and Director of Career Public and Institutional Relations at the University of Belgrano. She is PR Director of the Asociación Latinoamericana de Carreras Universitarias de Relaciones Públicas (ALACAURP) and has a BA in Advertising and Public Relations (National University of Lomas de Zamora). Ms Carbone has been awarded a Diploma in E-learning Teaching (University of San Martín de Porres, Peru) and a Master's in Travel Journalism (Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain).

Carroll Edwards, PhD, is Director of Marketing, Recruitment & Communications at The University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona Campus. She has extensive PR experience and a strong academic research background in the field, having completed her doctoral studies in the history and development of PR in Jamaica, West Indies. A former lecturer in, and coordinator for, the PR degree programme at the Caribbean Institute of Media & Communication (CARIMAC), UWI, Mona, she is Membership Coordinator for the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and a member of the Public Relations Society of Jamaica.

Carmen Mayela Fallas has been Professor of Public Relations, School of Mass Communications Sciences, University of Costa Rica for 28 years and is the founder and President of Comunicacion Corporativa Ketchum Central America, based in San Jose, Costa Rica. She has also established the communications firms Cocoa Interactive and Dialoga, and Irradia, an executive communications training centre.

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Introduction

Tom Watson

Abstract: Latin American and Caribbean Perspectives on the Development of Public Relations: Other Voices is the fourth volume in this series of six books on national histories of public relations (PR). The nations that comprise the seven chapters range from Mexico at the northernmost, to Argentina at the southernmost and eastward to The Caribbean nations. In all, the histories of PR in 15 countries are examined.

Watson, Tom (ed.). *Latin American and Caribbean Perspectives on the Development of Public Relations: Other Voices*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
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Latin America is one of the few regions in this series that has a unifying factor of language and a mostly common colonial heritage. The language is Spanish and the heritage arises from Spain. The obvious major dissenter to that claim is Brazil because its language is Portuguese and it draws its colonial antecedents from the Iberian neighbour in Portugal. However, five countries and regions covered in this book – Argentina, Central America (Panama, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama), Colombia, Peru and Mexico – are Spanish speaking and maintain strong links with the former colonizer. Historically, this common culture has aided the exchange of ideas on public relations practice and education in a manner that may only be found in the British Commonwealth.

Throughout the development stages of PR in Latin America, from the late 1950s onwards, there were conferences and the formation of organizations that brought practitioners and academics together. These events and professional bodies had to contend with conditions that are adverse to the development of public relations such as military regimes, long periods of state control over economies, censorship and corruption in the media. The theoretical and practice base of PR did not, however, come from the former colonial powers but from the United States which, according to its Monroe Doctrine, considers Latin America to be in its sphere of influence.

It is notable when the sheer geographical size of Latin America is considered, how all-pervasive the US influence has been on the introduction of modern PR. The Argentina chapter highlights the impact of carmakers Ford and GM before World War II. In Brazil, it was industrial investors who made early moves to establish corporate communications. After World War II, the histories of several countries, including Brazil, Costa Rica and Peru note the role of individual PR lecturers who came to their countries from the US and taught government administrators and others about the modern, democratic approaches. One individual, Eric Carlson, appeared first in Brazil in 1953 and then in Costa Rica the following year. Carlson is described in one chapter as a professor and another as a PR 'professional'. He was followed in the region by others including an academic from Princeton University, which was not renowned for its teaching of PR then (or now), and individual academics and Fulbright scholars. The story of how these PR experts were chosen and funded and what type of PR they taught is an intriguing question and may be related to early public diplomacy activities by US authorities. It is a potentially interesting research topic.

As decades passed, the narrative that appears is of Latin America beginning to evolve its own distinctive PR concepts, aided by the common elements of language and culture, and of the networks formed by conferences and organizations. This evolution was encouraged by reduced statism and economic planning that had nearly destroyed several economies, the decline of military regimes and caudillo presidencies, and the opening of economies to competition and investment. From the 1980s onwards (and there are different start dates), PR practice, professionalization and education began to thrive across the region. As one author states, there was a clear correlation between increased democracy and opened economies with PR's development.

With this maturation, came the formation of a new approach to PR which moved away from the corporatist, pragmatic approaches promoted from the US. Called the Latin American School of Public Relations, it was first reported and explained by Juan Carlos Molleda in 2000 (Molleda, 2000). It offered PR in a social role, where the practitioner is a 'change agent or the conscience of an organization' (p. 513), rather than an organizational promoter. Molleda explained that this school of thought 'reflects a more active society that is experiencing political and economic transformations in an era of privatization, deregulation, increased social inequities and market integration' (p. 513).

This development is unlike any other found in the history of PR. Previous books have noted, for example, that 'there is no "Asian model" of PR' although there were some similar cultural influences in two or three countries; Eastern Europe emerged from the Soviet bloc to mostly adopt Anglo-American models of practice; and the Middle East and Africa have three very different influences which come from British colonial influences, Islam, and Western-style publicity/promotion. Two chapters (Colombia and Mexico) mention the Latin America School of Public Relations but it is embedded in others without being.

In terms of historiographic approaches, most chapters have applied timelines as analytical processes while noting that there is little in the way of archives, writing on PR's history or oral records. Thus Latin America is at a 'discovery' stage with more research to follow. The chapter on Peru used a bibliographic approach in which a half century of books were analysed to build insight into the national PR history, while Argentina considered industrialization as a metaphor for the development of PR over a century.

Sitting outside Latin America is the Commonwealth Caribbean, which is made up of Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago. These English-speaking island economies were British colonies until a half century ago and have adopted generally British approaches to governmental and organizational communication. They are also in the ambit of US PR practices because of their geography and the rise of North American tourism and consumer products. They are a contrast to their neighbours in Latin America.

Reference

Molleda, J. C. (2001) 'International Paradigms: The Latin American School of Public Relations', *Journalism Studies*, 2(4), 513–530.

1

Argentina

*Carolina Andrea Carbone and
Manuel Montaner Rodríguez*

Abstract: *Argentina is a democratic, republican country with a rich and varied social, political and economic history. It has developed from agricultural exports that began in the late 19th century, through import substitution to focus on industrial development today. Public relations (PR) thus was born and developed in an ever-changing economic, political and social context. The history of PR in Argentina can be traced from the beginnings of the struggle for emancipation from Spain at the start of the 19th century, expressed in lobbying and public affairs activities, and grew through the years with increasingly sophisticated methods applied by government, social groups and commerce.*

Keywords: Argentinean industry; brand; democracy; Ford; history; industrialization; lobbying; military government; Perón; pioneers; PR stages; public affairs; public relations

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Public relations (PR) in Argentina has antecedents which relate to a range of practices. For example, between 1776 and 1811 the Viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata, which consisted of what is now Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay, Paraguay, part of Chile, part of southern Brazil and southern Peru, was administered through the Cabildo. The Cabildo was a societal representation body that comprised of Creoles, Spaniards and representatives of other communities; all representatives being landowners, merchants, clergy and military. It was a collegial body which sought to influence the Viceroyalty about governmental policies using lobbying, PR and political pressure, to apply modern concepts. Therefore, Argentina recognized background PR actions even before its Declaration of Independence.

First stage

The first stage of PR development was from the time of Argentine independence (1810) to the mid-20th century. It can be considered as the 'white' or 'unsystematic stage', since the activities of the discipline were not based on systematic planning and often not sustained over time. Analysis of this and later periods is undertaken using a political-economic timeline against which the development of PR is gauged and the argument developed that PR's progress has been closely related to both the industrialization of the country and the openness of its political and public sphere.

An example of the early 'white' period was the relationship between Argentine governments and different communities, especially the early governments with the British communities. In 1831 Governor Juan Manuel de Rosas donated land to the British residents in Buenos Aires as a form of PR outreach to the community. The British then built the Anglican Cathedral of San Juan Bautista on the site. In turn, the British resident community, which was mainly engaged in trade, petitioned the authorities and lobbied by various means, such as communication in *The British Packet and Argentine News*, for the six-year blockade by British and French ships of the River La Plata (1845–1850) to be lifted (Ruggeri, 2009). This public affairs action helped them resume their businesses and benefited their host nation.

Also during the government of Rosas (1829–1852) its opponents, the 'unitarios', published and distributed a newspaper attacking governments

in Europe. As this media had significant reach, Rosas developed a PR campaign which included a newspaper, *El archivo Americano y el espíritu del mundo* (The American File and Spirit of the World). It recruited a leading Italian editor, Pedro de Angelis, who wrote in English, French and Spanish and distributed the paper to all legations and embassies in Argentina and many other countries. Ruggeri (2009) noted that Rosas' image appeared on each issue of the newspaper which was published from 1843 to 1851.

In the late 19th century Argentina was emerging as a country with high growth potential and there was a significant inflow of foreign investment that came almost exclusively from British sources (Rapoport et al., 2000). Railroads, utilities, refrigerated warehouses (for agricultural products), banks and industrial enterprises were owned by foreign capital. By the final decade, 40 to 50 per cent of all British investments outside Britain were in Argentina because it offered a high 10 per cent annual return.

In the early 20th century American companies began to enter the market, notably the car manufacturer Ford which opened its first sales operation in 1914 with imported vehicles and two years later started to import parts and assemble cars. The arrival of Ford was very relevant to the history of PR in Argentina because the company has been involved in various PR activities for the past century; its managers and PR directors have been pioneers in the professionalization of the discipline.

In 1919 the first meeting of all Ford dealer agents and representatives in the country took place. It lasted three days and a report with photograph was published in the *Automóvil Club Argentino* [Argentine Automobile Club] magazine. The article's headline stated: 'Meeting of agents and commercial conference at the Buenos Aires Plaza Hotel' (Ford Argentina, 2003, p. 8). Event management and dissemination of activities in the press were typical PR actions of Ford's early years in Argentina.

A by-product of Ford's investment in car assembly and later manufacture was that the boxes in which vehicles had been transported were donated to the neighbours of first Ford plant in the Buenos Aires suburb of 'La Boca' in an early act of the company's community engagement. La Boca was a port district with poor housing. The Ford Model T cars arrived from the United States in wood boxes that were three meters wide and three meters long, and covered by zinc sheeting. These boxes helped improve the quality of shelter for the mainly immigrant community (Ford Argentina, 1988).

Lorenzo Blanco, a PR pioneer who worked for Ford, said:

That moment was when the topic of the Community Relation appeared. Ford began to implement a policy that had already begun in the United States, which by that time was going through the Great Depression. Before economic and unemployment problems started, Ford started to carry out work with the community under the title of Public Information, later Public Relations. In 1922, Ford had a special office for these issues, which was managed by ... Pedro Parapugna (supervisor of the Public Affair office) a good person, very friendly and educated, who was in charge of donations. The Shell Company also had a very important office of Public Relations. Standard Oil published a magazine named *Farol*, a first-rate publication that won global awards for its quality; this was made by a public relations professional called Mardoqueo Torres. (Lattuada, 2009, pp. 35–43)

In 1924 Ford published advertisements offering a free car or truck service and free driving courses for the car owner or his chauffeur. With the driving lessons the drivers were also taught to care and maintain the engine. In addition, guided tours were offered to the La Boca factory from 10 am to 3 pm. A slogan from 1925 said 'For every ten cars that are driven in the country, eight are Ford'; by then there were 120,000 vehicles circulating around the country and 100,000 were Ford vehicles. The company was characterized by its strong ties with the community. Another action was traffic education classes that were taught even in primary schools (Ford Argentina, 2013).

Both World War I and the economic and financial crisis of 1929 aided the industrialization of Argentina, but World War II had a major impact on it. During the war, President Ramón Castillo (1940–1943) and Treasury Secretary Federico Pinedo proposed an 'Economic Recovery Plan' in 1940, which was not approved by Congress. The rejected plan, however, included many economic measures subsequently taken throughout the 1940s.

In the first presidency of Juan Domingo Perón (1946–1952), 'economic independence' became the main national objective in the context of political economy. The Peronist objectives were for Argentina to end foreign domination in important sectors of the economy, such as utilities and transport. The policy of massive industrialization was implemented by the Industrial Credit Bank from mid-decade onwards. It gave low-interest, long-term loans and the policy was supported by favourable exchange rates to import essential goods and higher trade barriers to prevent the entry of similar products produced in the country.

By 1949, however, reserves were almost exhausted and imports continued to grow as a result of the need for new industrial machinery, equipment and fuels. At the same time, prices of Argentine exports fell on international markets and the country suffered a severe drought in 1950–1951.

During the second presidency (1952–1955), Perón began to emphasize self-sufficiency in oil in order to avoid economic stagnation resulting from a lack of energy. Negotiations with many oil companies, including Shell and Esso, took place but only one deal was agreed with Standard Oil of California. There was, however, strong economic growth and exports in the late 1950s and early 1960s in the traditional agricultural and live-stock industry (*agroganadera*) and as a result of steel production having large exports coming from the establishment of large foreign-owned manufacturers and the beginning of a nascent but strong domestic industry. The ground was ready for PR to develop professionally, according to Gonzalo Fernández Madero, a PR pioneer and founder of the Open Group Consultores en Comunicación (Open Group Communication Agency) and the first PR manager of the Molinos Rio de la Plata food manufacturing group (G. Fernández Madero, personal communication, 12 August 2014). The arrival of PR professionals from overseas and the need to build consensus with public in areas in which companies were developing large operations constituted a major boost for PR practice and laid the grounds for sustained growth of the discipline.

Second stage

For another pioneer, Hector Chaponik, creator of the *Public Relations Guide in Argentina*, the first stage (1900–1950) was characterized ‘by capable and enthusiastic men, whose training was the result of the exercise of the duty, even though they had been trained abroad’ (Barresi, 1999, p. 10). Among them was Lorenzo Blanco, who had Pedro Parapugna, Public Communications Manager of Ford, as a mentor. This company was the first to have a PR department in the country in the early 1940s (CONFIARP, 2004). Years later, Blanco would take over the same post. He made a successful career within the company that led him to hold the position of Assigned Manager to the Argentinean CEO. In those days, according to Elias (1990) ‘There was no genuine understanding of the role’. According to Barresi (1999), there was a remarkable lack of a

specific vocabulary for the profession, which brought confusion to its delimitation. Blanco was trained in the United States and studied PR at Wayne State University around 1965. When he returned in 1967, a new PR scenario that had begun in the 1950s is considered to be the turning point in the history of PR in Argentina when the first steps towards professionalization were taken. This was the 'rainbow stage', simulating the transfer of a white light through a prism that breaks the colours in the different fields of PR. It was the foundational phase of PR professionalism and can be termed as the 'systematic stage'.

This second stage was formally initiated on 25 June 1958 when a group of PR executives, who worked in leading companies and institutions (including the Ford PR manager), founded the *Asociación Argentina de Relaciones Públicas* (AARP – Argentinean Public Relations Association). It was the first professional entity that made an extensive effort to classify the field and supported the development of technical standards and its respective scopes. Pereira Parodi (2007) has noted that AARP was a founding member of the *Federación Interamericana de Asociaciones de Relaciones Públicas* (FIARP – Inter-American Federation of Public Relations Associations), which subsequently grew organizationally across the American continent and became the present *Confederación Interamericana de Relaciones Públicas* (CONFIARP – Inter-American Confederation of Public Relations).

All this happened during the Frondizi presidency (1958–1962). His economic plan was based on developmentalist ideas that emphasized industrial growth. The solution to the national industrial problem was the development of basic industries such as petroleum, chemical, cellulose, iron and steel and machinery. In turn, it was important to encourage foreign investment and direct investors to certain industrial and regional areas. Among the investors were Ford and General Motors. The investment policies allowed the establishment of many automotive and tractor factories.

This socio-political–economic context benefited the development of companies, such as Ford, and led to the use of PR techniques in public affairs activity. An important result in 1959 was the Decree 3693/59 automotive industry scheme. This decree set heavy taxes on the import of assembled cars but promoted industrial investment and encouraged progressive replacement of imported auto parts by local manufactures. The decree drove Ford to join the national vehicle and auto parts manufacturing project. Because of the existing relationship between the

government and the US-owned car maker, company president Henry Ford met the national government in January 1959. This was followed by introduction of the automotive industry decree on 25 March and the announcement of Ford's expanded investment in Argentina on 10 April, which was its (then) biggest investment outside the United States. Thus its relationship with government, which was supported by extensive PR activity, had enduring value for Ford in gaining advantageous governmental policy.

The *Círculo Argentino de Profesionales de las Relaciones Públicas* (Argentinean Circle of Public Relations Professionals) was founded in 1961 as a division of AARP because a group of members had 'a new wave of ideas' concerning organization of PR and wanted to promote professionalization of the discipline. Shortly after, it created the *Escuela de Relaciones Públicas* (School of Public Relations) whose courses were taught by practitioner-teachers working in companies and public and private institutions. The *Círculo Argentino de Profesionales de las Relaciones Públicas* was the sponsor of the first professional congress in 1962. Two years later in 1964 the *Universidad Argentina de la Empresa* (UADE – Argentinean Business University) included PR studies in the Law and Social Sciences Faculty, with the introduction of a Bachelor's degree. This new course represented the first significant step in PR education in Argentina. It was promptly copied by several public and private national universities. Subsequently other professional groups were formed such as the *Centro de Relaciones Públicas Internacionales* (CERPI – Centre of International Public Relations) (Pereira Parodi, 2007).

According to Bonaro (2010) 'the professional start was characterized by two aspects that marked the beginning of the profession. Foreign companies decided to import the public relations policies from their main houses and the books were also imported, thus all the publications used in those days referred to another industrial context' (p. 134). Thus the first approaches to the discipline were based on socio-economic realities of other countries and not from Argentina.

In 1965 Ford began the first steps in creating a pillar of its Corporate Social Responsibility programme. The Technical National School 'Henry Ford' was inaugurated with the presence of President Illia. Between 1968 and 1992, 41 schools were built across the country. Latterly, they have been modernized, an indication that education and community relations remain strong pillars of Ford's corporate identity (Ford Argentina, 2013).

In 1965, the Escuela de Graduados en Relaciones Públicas (Graduate School of Public Relations) was formed on the basis of graduates of the Escuela del Círculo de Profesionales en Relaciones Públicas (School of the Circle of Professionals in Public Relations). Its purpose was to assemble a membership of all specialist graduates with proven records in professional practice in order to support enactment of a regulatory law for the professional practice of PR, as would be achieved shortly in Brazil and Panama.

Once again in 1966, a period of military dictatorship called *Revolución Argentina* (Argentine revolution) began and held power unlawfully until 1973. Three years later, on 24 March 1976, a new military dictatorship installed a permanent authoritarian bureaucratic state called *Proceso de Reorganización Nacional* (National Reorganization Process) which was ruled by a military junta composed of three soldiers, one from each armed force. By the end of the military government in 1983, there were a high number of human losses with the 'disappeared', kidnapped people, many murdered by military death squads, plus a lost war against the United Kingdom over the Malvinas' (Falkland Islands) issue. It was followed by a stage of democratization which started under the succeeding Alfonsín presidency.

This government had important political achievements such as the institution of the trial of the previous junta's Military Committee and peaceful settlement of territorial differences with Chile over the Beagle Channel and the Picton, Lennox and Nueva islands. Even though Alfonsín's government had other achievements, such as the suppression of military uprisings, the fight against inflation did not reach the expected results.

In this new democratic context, a new stage in PR's development followed as there were changed ways of interacting with the world. The new government sent signs of stability to domestic and international markets which made helped the profession become more sophisticated:

The democratic context, the economic opening and privatizations refined public relations activities. In addition, representations of the main public relations consultancies from around the world settled in the country. The main activity was the management of relations with the press; in second place, financial communications, then strategic planning and crisis management; in fifth place was event planning and, in final place, consultancy and training. (Barresi, 1999, p. 11)

More companies started PR departments and communication management structures. According Ferrari and França (2012, p. 32), "The

professional role of communication directors in large companies begin to take precedence [and lead to] influence and professional recognition for those years.' PR education spread beyond the small group of traditional universities to more than a dozen universities in several cities.

The 1990s was a period of consolidation of democracy, followed by privatization of state enterprises, which was undertaken to repay external debt. It resulted in many public assets being acquired by national banks and investment groups, and multinational corporations. This reduced competition and marked deep changes in the economy (Rapoport et al., 2000).

This decade, however, resulted in significant growth of the PR profession, as a result of the Menem government's economic policies. Several privatizations of public companies enabled expansion in the corporate communications market. Events, institutional advertising as strategic management tool, and PR branding were extensively used. At this time, more international consultancies accompanying clients that had settled in the country entered the Argentine market. Cited by Pereira Parodi (2007), Miguel de Cavatorta commented: 'The internationalization of public relations in the early 1990s meant the massive arrival of numerous international consultancies on a consolidated path.' Burson Marsteller opened an office in 1995, followed by Hill & Knowlton in 1996, Edelman in 1997 and Porter Novelli the following year. Since then, there has been explosive growth of international PR consultancies in Argentina, rising from 30 consultancies in 1996 to 89 a decade later (Pereira Parodi, 2007).

Brazilian professor María Aparecida Ferrari, speaking at an International Public Relations Association (IPRA) meeting in Córdoba, said: 'In Argentina in the last two decades of the twentieth century, the development of the academy with the creation of university courses in public relations in various parts of the country and the publication of works by local authors, were important elements in the development of professionalism in public and private organizations' (Pereira Parodi, 2007). Professional activities became more sophisticated, developing from the management of relationships with the press to strategic planning and crisis management. According to Ferrari, 'in 1989 all professional associations were unified in the Consejo Profesional de Relaciones Públicas (Professional Public Relations Council) whose function is to provide the unofficial professional registration and spread activity through technical events' (Pereira Parodi, 2007).

The Néstor Kirchner presidential period was an attempt to rebuild the country after an economic and political debacle in 2001 and 2002. In the economic field the President buried the liberal economic model of the previous decade and replaced it with a new model based on the state (Zelaznik, 2008). His wife Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, who succeeded him, is continuing this economic-political model (2014).

In this new context, the profession's growth has risen in a constant manner as the number of tertiary education institutes and universities in which PR studies are offered has doubled. Membership of the Consejo Profesional de Relaciones Públicas (Professional Council of Public Relations) has grown from less than 100 affiliated people, and almost no companies/agencies, to almost 600 professionals, academics, PR agencies, students and young professionals. The Professional Council has acquired an international profile by its membership of the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management.

Conclusion

The history of PR in Argentina has always been tied to political, social and economic changes. In the first 'white' stage, activities were not as complex or as diverse as those which began to develop in the second 'rainbow' stage. From its initial appearance in the country, PR activity and practices grew asymmetrically but unstoppably by winning recognition in both state and private organizations, with peaks of growth appearing after the introduction of academic training in the 1960s, in the economic openness and privatization of public enterprises of the 1990s and, latterly, through the strengthening of social media and the expansion of small and medium enterprises. Proof of PR's growth is that there were only two universities offering PR studies in the 1970s and by 2014 there were 17 universities, both private and public.

Currently, the activity continues to advance steadily. Thanks to this measured expansion, the Consejo Profesional de Relaciones Públicas has opened new offices in different provinces such as Santa Fe in the north east and Buenos Aires around the capital. Other venues are in the process of evaluation to service the training needs of executives from other fields who are entering PR employment. Further examples of growth are that national and international PR consultancies continue to expand and the PR sector has established a large biennial Conferencia Internacional

de Relaciones Públicas (Public Relations International Conference) for this discipline, which attracts international speakers.

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2

Brazil

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Abstract: *Public relations (PR) activities in Brazil emerged in 1914 with the creation of the first corporate PR department in São Paulo, Brazil. However, development of the discipline occurred only in the 1950s following an industrial development policy by the government which opened the domestic market to multinationals corporations. While opening offices and manufacturing plants in Brazil, multinational companies opened PR departments to enhance and strengthen their activities in the country. A unique aspect of PR practice in Brazil is that it has been a licensed profession, regulated since 1967 by Law No. 5377/67 that was approved during a military dictatorship government. In the same year, the first undergraduate course was created at Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo).*

Keywords: Brazil; licensing; organizational communication; public relations history

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The origins of PR in Brazil dates back to the early 20th century (M. Kunsch, 1997; W. Kunsch, 2009). More precisely, the commencement can be set as 30 January 1914 when a Public Relations Department at the Canadian-owned São Paulo Tramway Light and Power Company Limited (today known as Eletricidade de São Paulo S.A. – AES Eletropaulo) was established by Eduardo Pinheiro Lobo. Another initiative was in 1926 when the newly arrived General Motors of Brazil, published its first monthly employee newsletter *General Motors*, the first industrial magazine published in Brazil (Torquato, 1987). ‘From the beginning of 20th century, between 1910 and 1940, the practice of PR activities was restricted to few international corporations and some public information sectors in governmental departments and institutions’ (Fernandes, 2011 p. 39).

The first Brazilian company to create a PR department was Companhia Siderúrgica Nacional (CSN) came later in 1951 (M. Kunsch, 1997) in order to promote this steel rolling company and its symbolic importance to the nation. CSN was created by President Getúlio Vargas (1882–1954) as the result of a diplomatic agreement, known as the Washington Accords, which was signed by the Brazilian and US governments. The political–military agreement included the construction of a steel rolling mill that would supply steel for the Allies during World War II and, during peace times, symbolize Brazil’s development and growth.

The CSN example shows that the actual development of the PR activity in Brazil did not flourish until the 1950s due to several factors. One was that democracy had spurred an industrial development policy with the ensuing opening and growth of the domestic market. ‘Large foreign multinationals came to Brazil, set up public relations departments, and ran them with the structure and expertise that characterized headquarters organizations’ (Kunsch and Nassar, 2009, p. 655). This environment helped to strengthen and enhance the value of the PR activity in Brazil. At that time newspaper, magazine and radio conglomerates were formed and the first television broadcasts emerged nationwide.

In this scenario, PR established its position as a business activity and the first training course in Brazil opened in 1953. It was organized by the Brazilian educational institutions Fundação Getúlio Vargas, Instituto de Administração da Universidade de São Paulo, Instituto de Organização Racional do Trabalho (Idort) and the United Nations Organization and was led by the US professor Eric Carlson and later,

in 1955, by Harwood Childs from Princeton University who presented a training course in Sao Paulo which introduced contemporary PR theory. Moves to professionalization and organization were symbolized by the incorporation of the Brazilian Public Relations Association (ABRP – Associação Brasileira de Relacoes Publicas) by leading practitioners in 1954 (W. Kunsch, 2009).

The first Brazilian Public Relations Seminar took place four years later in 1958 and served as a presentation platform for the consolidation of the PR activity in Brazil. Papers presented at the seminar are indicative of the imperatives of the time: 'Norms and standards for PR work' by Ney Peixoto Valle, 'PR communications' by João Firminiano da Silva, and 'Training and education of PR staff' by Francisco Gomes da Silva. That event showed that the environment was conducive for the development of PR activities. In the following years, a series of other PR-related events were held across the country, such as the first Paraná State Public Relations Congress in Curitiba in 1959 and, in 1962, the first Minas Gerais State Public Relations Congress in Belo Horizonte. Also noteworthy was the fourth Inter-American Public Relations Conference, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1963 and organized by ABRP. Delegates came from Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Equator, Colombia, Venezuela, Netherlands Antilles, Mexico, Puerto Rico and United States (Fernandes, 2011). The fourth IPRA International Public Relations Congress was held in Rio de Janeiro later in the decade in October 1967 (M. Kunsch, 1997). Major entrepreneurial initiatives also drove PR forward, notably the creation of Assessoria Administrativa Ltda (AAB), the first Brazilian PR consultancy, in 1962. Before, PR work was undertaken by advertising agencies.

The first book on PR published in Brazil and Latin America was *Para entender as relações públicas* (Understanding Public Relations), which was written by Cândido Teobaldo de Souza Andrade and published in 1962 (W. Kunsch, 2009). Andrade was a key Brazilian educator, considered by many to be the father of public relations in Brazil, wrote seven books on PR theory and practice and authored the first doctoral dissertation written in Brazil entitled 'Relações Públicas e Interesse Público' [Public Relations and Public Interest] at the School of Communications and Arts (ECA) at University of São Paulo (USP) in 1973. He was one of the founding teachers of the PR bachelor degree programme at the-then School of Cultural Communications (ECC), the former name of School of Communications and Arts USP in 1967.

PR licence

In 1964, Brazil began to be governed by the military after a coup, which led to the dictatorship that lasted 21 years. The PR profession was regulated on 11 December 1967 through Law No. 5,377 legalized by Decree-Law No. 63,283 on 26 September 1968. This restricted the activity to social communications bachelor degree graduates with qualification in PR. 'Brazil was the first country in the world to licence public relations. However, the licensing of the profession was premature because at that time public relations activities were not recognized either by academia nor society, despite efforts made in this direction, for example, by ABRP' (M. Kunsch, 1997, p. 22).

Although it has been a licensed profession since 1968, the licence does not guarantee that only licensed professionals practice PR. The legalization of the profession by the military government was largely aimed at restricting and controlling the right to freedom of expression and social relations, mainly in the social communications area. Today, Brazilian companies hire professionals from multiple academic backgrounds such as journalism, advertising, marketing, business, law, social sciences, as well as PR to manage their corporate communications departments. This area or department within a company is rarely referred to as 'Public Relations' but is usually called Corporate Communications, Institutional Communications, Public Affairs, Business Communications or only Communications. In 1971, the Federal Council of Public Relations Professionals (CONFERP) and the Regional Councils of Public Relations Professionals (CONRERPs) were created to issue the PR licence and oversee PR activities in Brazil.

Kunsch and Nassar consider that 'the year 1967 was a landmark for public relations in Brazil and for the relationship between the academy and business organizations' (2009, p. 655). The first undergraduate PR course was set up by the Escola de Comunicações e Artes at the Universidade de São Paulo in 1967. In that year Aberje, the Brazilian Association of Business Magazines and Newsletters Editors, was created by Nilo Luchetti, a journalist and PR manager at Pirelli. Large multinational and national corporations with established PR/communications departments joined Aberje and benefited from its academic and research programmes, conferences, orientation, meetings, publications (Caldas Junior, 2005). It also created the Aberje Award that recognizes high-quality communication activity.

'In the 1970s, event planning, ceremonial, speech writing, among others, were the main public relations activities practiced in governmental departments and institutions. The same kind of activities took place in corporations. In this decade a number of new PR agencies were established' (Fernandes, 2011, p. 44).

In the academic field, the first doctoral thesis on business journalism was written by Gaudêncio Torquato from ECA-USP in 1973. A decade later, in 1983, he defended his *livre-docência* (the second level of doctoral advancement in Brazil) thesis at the same institution, arguing for the need to use business communication in a synergetic manner in order to get effective results within organizations.

The Federal Council of Public Relations Professionals was created in 1971 – a nationwide organization to discipline and supervise the national practice of PR. It now operates through a system of seven Regional Councils.

The military rulers, who maintained power in Brazil until 1985, used many PR techniques to communicate with society. In 1968 they created the so-called Special Public Relations Advisory Office (AERP). 'During General Médici's government (1969–1974), the AERP was widely used as a political propaganda office to "promote" the dictatorial regime, thus masquerading the most violent censorship intervention in Brazilian history' (M. Kunsch, 1997, p. 26). Torquato (2002) has critiqued the dictatorship's approach strongly:

The well-equipped public relations machine used by military rulers, a hub of propaganda and vainglorious communication that characterized the grandiloquent language of business communication in the early 1970s, was well respected by the mainstream media vehicles, most of which were submitted to previous censorship. (p. 3)

During the government of General Ernesto Geisel (1974–1979), AERP, which had operated in the first half of that decade to promote government actions, ceased operations and was closed in 1975 only to be replaced by the AIRP (Press Advisory and Public Relations Office), which later became ARP (Public Relations Advisory Office).

The image of PR professionals was tainted by the actions undertaken by the ARP, which acted as spin doctors trying to change the narrative of facts such as imprisonment and torture of thousands of Brazilians who demanded the return of democracy. An example of this was the murder of journalist Vladimir Herzog in a São Paulo military prison in

October 1975, which caused great commotion in the country and was documented by numerous domestic and international institutions. The official version of the event that was released to the public through ARP at the time was that the journalist had committed suicide, when in fact he was tortured and killed by the military (Nassar, 2012).

In the 1980s, three factors contributed to the strengthening of PR activities in Brazil: economic transformation, political opening ('abertura') and the establishment of democracy, and development of scientific research (Fernandes, 2011, p. 44). This social, political and cultural environment stimulated significant changes in organizational behaviours, at government and private levels, and transformed the way that business communication was conducted. With the curtailment of the authoritarianism after years of military rule, Brazilian society began to demand more transparency from governments and companies. The old management style no longer served its purpose and the circumstances called for a radical change in business communication as well:

The first unions for public relations professionals were established first in Rio Grande do Sul State (1981), followed by Rio de Janeiro (1984) and São Paulo (1985). In this decade several associations also flourished: Brazilian Association for PR Firms (ABERP) in 1983, National Association for Communication Firms (ANECE) in 1985 and Union of Communication Agencies (SINCO) in 1989. With the growth of public relations and communications agencies in the 1990s it didn't make sense to have two associations representing the agencies. ABERP and ANECE merged in 1999, forming the Brazilian Association of Communication Firms (ABEP), but it was dissolved in 2001. In 2002, the Brazilian Association of Communications Agencies (Abracom) was created. (Fernandes, 2011, p. 46)

The effort of those associations is to represent the interests of communication firms among the government and the market.

Modern-day PR

During the 1980s the first attempts were made to achieve integrated, strategic corporate communications in Brazil. The first company to operate within this new institutional scope was the French-owned Rhodia, which in January 1985 launched its social communication policy. Entitled 'Open Doors', this policy soon became a benchmark

for other companies seeking to establish open communication channels with stakeholders. During the same period Margarida Kunsch published her Master's dissertation in 1985, which later gave rise to the book *Planejamento das Relações Públicas na Comunicação Integrada* (PR Planning in Integrated Communications) in which she addressed the role played by PR in integrated communications. This book became the benchmark for PR practice in the country. Margarida Kunsch offered a step-by-step approach and advocated PR's practice from an integrated communications perspective. In 2003, a revised and expanded edition was published. From its original 170 pages, the new edition grew to 422 pages that reflected a more thorough and in-depth review and analysis of the changing practices of PR in Brazil.

Another important contribution to Brazilian PR theory was published in 1984 by Roberto Porto Simões. Entitled *Relações Públicas: Função Política* (Public Relations as a Political Function), in this book Simões applied a critical perspective to theory, academic curricula, professional profile, practice, ethics and aesthetics. In 1995, a revised and expanded third edition was published (Simões, 1995). From this decade onwards, there was increased publication of books, Master's theses and doctoral dissertations focused on PR.

In 1989, Aberje changed its name to Associação Brasileira de Comunicação Empresarial (Brazilian Association for Business Communication), while maintaining its well-known acronym as a trademark. 'The new name was an attempt to express the transformation underway in business communication and in our relationship with companies, which were taking their first steps towards a major restructuring in a country that was once again breathing the air of democracy' (Nassar, 2009, p. 30).

Since its foundation, Aberje had contributed to the strength and improvement of the national practice and education of PR and business communication through knowledge sharing, education programmes, courses, conferences, seminars, publications, meetings and research. 'Aberje aims to be a reference source for the production and dissemination of knowledge about communication practices that drive management strategies within organizations... in order to strengthen the strategic role of communications in business' (Kunsch and Nassar, 2009, p. 658). It has played a significant role to improve and strengthen the PR activity in both the professional and educational fields, while providing the basis for modern PR practice in Brazil. As an example, since 1991, Aberje has published *RCE Revista Comunicação Empresarial* (Business

Communication Magazine), the first Brazilian magazine geared towards corporate communications and PR:

In the 1990s, the Conferp System organized a wide-ranging discussion with the profession, titled National Public Relations Parliament (1997), aimed at reviewing some aspects of the licensing law, especially the requirements for professional registration. After five years of discussion (1992–1997), the final document was submitted to the industry during Brazilian Public Relations Congress in the city of Salvador/Bahia. The main decisions were (a) continuing the requirement for professional registration to practice the profession and (b) accepting professional registration from practitioners who have undergraduate degrees other than public relations, such as business administration, journalism, advertising and so forth, but who have a specific graduate degree in public relations. (Athaydes et al., 2014, p. 156)

In 2002, the Brazilian Association of Communication Agencies (Abracom) was created to represent agencies which provide services related to management of strategic communication relationships. It acts as a facilitator for institutional and corporate communication agencies. Abracom was created to help operational and professional standards for the corporate and business communication segment in its relationship with customers, suppliers, representative entities, government and local communities. The organization also aims to strengthen the participation of communication agencies in the private market and expand their presence in the public sector.

In the scientific field, an important contribution was the creation of Abrapcorp (Brazilian Association of Organizational Communication and Public Relations Researchers), an entity created by a group of Brazilian researchers who are active in public and private universities, as well as in the corporate communications environment, to promote scientific research and studies. Since 2006, when it was created, Abrapcorp has held yearly scientific seminars with the presence of key personalities operating in the field of communications research and development geared to the organizational environment.

In addition to Andrade, Kunsch, Simões and Torquato, the following titles and authors have influenced PR researchers and practitioners: ‘Imagem Empresarial’ (1998) [Business Image] by Roberto de Castro Neves; ‘Relações Públicas: processo, funções, tecnologia e estratégias’ (2003) [Public Relations: Procedures, Functions, and Technologies and Strategies] by Waldyr Gutierrez Fortes; ‘Relações Públicas: Arte de Harmonizar Expectativas’ [Public Relations: The Art of Harmonizing

Expectations] by Carlos Eduardo Mestieri. Coleção; ‘Faces da cultura e da comunicação’ (2006) [Communications and Cultural Faces – Collection] organized by Marlene Marchiori; ‘Relações Públicas: a construção da responsabilidade histórica e o resgate da memória institucional das organizações’ (2007) [Public Relations: Building Historical Responsibility and Institutional Memory of Organizations] by Paulo Nassar; ‘Cartas a um jovem Relações Públicas’ (2010) [Letters to a Young Public Relations] by Lalá Aranha; ‘Relações Públicas Estratégicas’ (2011) [Strategic Public Relations] organized by Luiz Alberto de Farias; and ‘Públicos: como identificá-los em uma nova visão estratégica’ (2012) [Public: How to Identify Them in a New Strategic Vision] by Fabio França.

A committee of experts was invited by the Brazilian Ministry of Education in 2010 to formulate a *Proposta de Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para os Cursos de Relações Públicas* (National Syllabus Proposal for Public Relations Courses). The committee worked from May 2010 to October 2010 focusing on (a) the desired profile of the PR professional in the face of contemporary political, cultural, social and technological change; (b) the professional abilities to be taught in superior education in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values; and (c) learning instruments and mechanisms used by academia to teach their students. The new National Syllabus Proposal for Public Relations Courses in Brazil was approved in 2013 and every university PR degree must follow these new guidelines (Ministério da Educação, 2010).

Professional environment

According to research conducted by Data Aberje, the research institute of Aberje (2008, 2012b), in the past decade, the main duties of practitioners were internal communication, institutional relations, government relations/public affairs, press relations, corporate social responsibility, crisis management, sustainability, investor relations, corporate history and branding. The communicator has become a mediator, team manager and relationship manager. Today, the organization is a node in a huge network and must build its image through dialogue.

The data revealed the growth of the organizational communication area. Investment has increased since 2000, as this practice has gained more prestige and power inside the corporation. However, in only half

of the companies surveyed did the Chief Communication Officer have a seat on the Executive Committee or Board.

The size of most PR/communications departments ranges from four to ten professionals. In large corporations this number is higher. Despite their lean size, these sectors are responsible for important action in daily business activities, such as relationship with employees, the community, government, press and organized civil society.

In a survey conducted by Aberje/DMR Consulting that focused on corporate communication suppliers, 75 per cent of corporations hire an external firm for press relations, 70 per cent for events, 62 per cent for internal communication, 53 per cent for research and measurement, 40 per cent for branding, 20 per cent for corporate history, 19 per cent for corporate social responsibility/sustainability, 13 per cent for sponsorship, 10 per cent for investor relations and 9 per cent for government relations (Aberje, 2012b).

The creativity of local professionals, associated with the receptive profile of the Brazilian citizen, produces a favourable situation for the implementation of collaborative models of communication and increases receptivity in relation to initiatives in the area.

Conclusion

Brazil was the first and one of the few countries in the world where the PR profession is licenced by the government. This has, however, not ensured more employment opportunities for PR professionals, nor has it improved PR's image. Today, it is hard to find a professional hired for a PR manager position in Brazilian corporations; most posts for PR professionals are titled as communications managers. As shown in Aberje's Corporate Communications in Organizations survey (2008), leaders of communications departments in Brazilian organizations come from multiple academic backgrounds such as journalism (29%), business (20%), marketing (17%), advertising (13%) with PR trailing at 12 per cent. On the other hand, PR principles are valued in Brazil, although most of the time they are related to corporate communications.

To better understand the role of PR activity in Brazil today, one needs to understand the new social, political, economic, cultural, and technological configurations. Government leaders' concern with the modernization of the PR profession has led to the review of Law No. 5377, under

the leadership of CONFERP. The review included the active participation of representatives from major professional communications associations, such as Aberje, ABRP, Abracom and Abrapcorp. The findings from the review included a call for the profession to be more inclusive of practitioners with academic credentials from other communication disciplines, such as corporate communications, journalism, advertising and marketing.

Thanks to the growth of the national economy, ranked fifth among the top ten economies in the world, several Brazilian companies have become multinational or global companies. As a result, business communications and PR professionals now face the challenge of defining global communication policies from Brazil to their operations worldwide. Corporate communications departments in Brazil are broadening their scope regarding corporate social responsibility and sustainability, public affairs in a non-regulated environment, digital media and stakeholder engagement. Educational institutions and industry associations in Brazil are aware of these challenges and are willing to help communications professionals improve their expertise and skills and build a strong relationship with their stakeholders.

From our research, there are four key themes and contributions to the practice of PR that differentiate the profession in Brazil: the impact of licensing, the negative impact and perception of PR as a result of the control of the media during the military dictatorship, the growth and development of scholarly research and professional development by both universities and professional associations and finally the impact of globalization on the Brazilian companies and the need to be more communicative and transparent in their international business initiatives.

Over the past 100 years of public relations in Brazil, the profession has grown from simple in-house newsletter communications to becoming an integral part of an organization's mission and values as public relations helps to position these organizations to become more global and more transparent.

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3

The Caribbean

Carroll Edwards

Abstract: *The development of public relations (PR) has taken similar paths in Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago, with origins in the colonial period, before adopting more professional practices with the entry of international companies and growth of the public and private sectors. In the early years, the focus was on information and community relations. As the business environment has become more competitive, the emphasis has shifted to media and publicity, with limited emphasis on strategic public relations practice.*

Keywords: PR in English-speaking Caribbean; PR history; strategic PR

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The English-speaking Caribbean countries (also known as the Commonwealth Caribbean or the West Indies) form an arc ranging from the island of Trinidad & Tobago at its southern-most end, near to Venezuela, up to Jamaica at its northern-most point, near to Haiti, with some 1915 kilometres (approx. 1200 miles) separating Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica. The islands vary in size and population, the smallest (Anguilla) having some 7000 inhabitants living on 91 square kilometres while the largest (Jamaica) has a population of nearly three million and a territory of some 11,000 square kilometres (approx. 4400 sq. miles). The countries are bound by their common history as former colonies of Britain, and have similar political structures.

Little empirical research exists on the practice of PR in the region nor is there an easily defined population of practitioners. There are few official records, and significant variations exist in organizational titles for persons performing PR roles. This chapter focuses on the development of PR in the three largest islands, Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica, which are considered to be fairly representative of the region's diversity (Punnett et al., n.d.). All three are democracies, have relatively well-developed economies and formal communication systems which provide a foundation for the growth of PR (Jones, 2008). Further, they are the only countries in the region with either local PR associations or an established chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), signifying the existence of a certain level of professionalism.

Barbados

Barbados, the most easterly in the chain of Caribbean islands, is 34 kilometres (21 miles) long and 23 kilometres (14 miles) wide with an area of approximately 430 square kilometres (166 sq. miles). Its population is approximately 270,000 people and it has a stable political climate. Barbados remained under British rule for more than 300 years, from its first settlement in 1625 to political independence in 1966. The island's economy has been dominated by the production of sugar and, more recently, by its thriving tourism industry. Considered to be the most conservative of the Caribbean nations, its political, economic and social stability have given it one of the highest standards of living in the developing world.

The environment is supportive of PR practice given Barbados' long tradition of media operating in the country with its first newspaper, the *Barbados Gazette*, having been founded in 1731. Freedom of the press is constitutionally guaranteed and the media in Barbados are considered to be free of censorship and state control.

The PR community in Barbados is relatively small. The profession is mainly dominated by the government information service and small companies, while the formation in 2008 of the Barbados chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators marked an attempt to become more professional (Proverbs, 2013).

The earliest indication of PR-like activity has been traced to the 1930s. The Colonial government, reacting to widespread protests against social and economic conditions, introduced legislation to ameliorate the situation. However, there was a clear focus on image management and an effort to use strategies to influence public opinion. The Colonial Office emphasized that the objective of the legislation was 'to impress this country and the world at large with our consciousness of our duties as a great Colonial Power' (Beckles, 2004, p. 66) as well as 'the need to woo neutral opinion by demonstrating a constructive colonial policy, and the need to prepare for postwar criticism of Britain's role as a colonial power' (ibid.).

Jones (2008) maintains that the first record of official PR activity came in 1958 with the establishment of the Barbados Government Information Service (BGIS), the government's official communication arm. BGIS is 'the most visible and longest serving and largest PR/communication entity with educated and trained staff that has been practicing the profession for a considerable amount of time' (Jones, 2008, p.11). It was established before Barbados gained its independence from Britain in 1966 'in response to the need to inform and educate the public regarding government and its activities' (BGIS Media, 2014). Over the years, the department has evolved from a fledgling information management function to a broad-based news and PR agency of government (Jones, 2008, p. 12).

PR services were also utilized by a growing number of locally owned businesses which identified 'new niche areas in the slowly expanding economy' (Higman and Monteith, 2010, p. 216) and today there are some 13 consultancies operating in the country alongside practitioners in the public and private sectors.

Jamaica

Jamaica, like Barbados, had been under British rule for more than 300 years when it became the first of the Commonwealth Caribbean countries to gain political independence in 1962. The country's economy has been based largely on the supply of raw materials and commodities, with sugar, bananas and, later, bauxite and tourism being the mainstays of its economy. The country has an entrenched parliamentary two-party democracy, with political power alternating between two parties, the social democratic People's National Party (PNP), the first national party to be established in colonial Jamaica, and the conservative Jamaica Labour Party (JLP). Jamaica is a relatively stable parliamentary democracy in which the rights of PR practitioners to represent various views are guaranteed.

Jamaica has an essentially masculine culture (Hofstede, 2003), yet it is also a society in which women have made tremendous strides and are outperforming men, particularly in the educational arena. In 2006, the country elected its first female prime minister and, in 2014, two of the top legal positions, the Chief Justice and Director of Public Prosecutions, are held by women. However, as many scholars have pointed out, the real power still lies in masculine hands (Bailey and Ricketts, 2003; Henry-Lee, 2005). The implications for PR practice which is conducted predominantly by females are that their work is devalued. In this regard, the comments of two female practitioners regarding how PR is perceived in their respective companies are instructive:

Comment 1: People still see the field as one where people only 'look pretty', smile and nod; practitioners are sometimes 'brainless' and anyone can do it.

Comment 2: It's not seen as valuable to organization as other positions. Seen as a female job. (Edwards, 2011)

This diminished status of female practitioners is reinforced by a male practitioner's recall of a conversation:

I will never forget a line from one of our senior managers in the Caribbean: 'The PR person should really be a bright personable young lady'. It did not do much for my fragile male ego. I think the misguided manager was being very sincere. Many of them mistakenly view the PR function as a 'pretty, powerless afterthought' rather than a powerful part of organizational strategy. (Ibid.)

The growth of PR has been encouraged by the expansion of media. There are many organizations and providers of goods and services competing for attention and therefore seek the services of practitioners to publicize their interests (*ibid.*). Jamaica also has a diverse media landscape and freedom of the press is ensured through the necessary legal and institutional framework, so there is plenty of scope for public relations initiatives. However, there is growing media consolidation and convergence, so that while the number of media outlets has increased, this has not necessarily led to an increase in the diversity of views (*ibid.*). Nor has it meant an automatic increase in access for PR practitioners and their clients. In the more fragmented media landscape, practitioners have had to become more focused and creative in their efforts to highlight their clients' messages, resulting in an increase in the number of sponsored mini-features on television, sponsored newspaper supplements and advertorials (*ibid.*).

The practice is also impacted by the high level of activism with various pressure groups making demands on behalf of their constituencies. This means that the services of PR practitioners, in their roles as problem-solvers and mediators, and as communicators of information, are constantly required (*ibid.*).

PR is said to have been practised in Jamaica since the 1930s, although the records of the Office of the Registrar of Companies reveal that the first three local companies that engaged in communication activities were only established in 1967 and their primary focus was advertising. The practice developed between 1939 and 1949 during World War II, as part of an effort by Great Britain to garner support from its colonies to join the armed forces and to work in its munitions factories (Neita, 2004a). At the time, the term 'Public Relations' was not used; rather, it was projected as a means of providing 'information' to the colonies (Taylor, 1981).

In the post-war period, Jamaica began demanding greater autonomy and by the 1950s was being fully self-governed. In 1955, the government 'decided that in the same way that Jamaica and Jamaicans were persuaded to be loyal Britons, an agency could be created by the Jamaican government to provide Jamaicans with information about government's policies, programmes and projects and explain why they were being implemented' (Neita, 2004a). The 1950s therefore saw a deepening of the information function in Jamaica. In 1957, the name of the government Public Relations Office (GPRO) was changed to Public Relations and

Information Services to reflect its expanded focus. In 1963, there was yet another name change to the Government Information Office (later changed to the Jamaica Information Service) (Neita, 2004b).

While the British government may be regarded as the pioneer of PR in government, the introduction of corporate PR must be credited to the bauxite companies, Kaiser and Alcan and, to a lesser extent, Reynolds Jamaica Mines. Their entry into Jamaica was marked by a period of massive community-based PR programmes, aimed at winning the support of rural folks whose livelihood had been disrupted by the bauxite mining. This transformed the relationship between the business sector and the Jamaican population forever, and modernized the face of PR in the country (Cowell, 1983).

PR activity in the private sector also emerged during the 1950s. Even then, it was regarded as a 'female' activity. Practitioners were for the most part fair-skinned, attractive young women who smoked, then a sign of elegance, and were engaged mainly in the organization of cocktail parties (event planning) (Neita, 2004).

Efforts to diversify the economy also stimulated PR's development as the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) was established in 1955 'to promote tourism with maximum vigour and effectiveness' (JTB, 2005, p. 5). The resulting infusion of North American practices took marketing and PR activities to new levels.

The first three local companies that engaged in communication activities were established in 1967, in the post-independence period, when many companies recognized the need to use local talent and expertise. Managers of multinational businesses, who up to that time tended to rely on in-house PR planning and programming by foreign operations staff, began to see the value of utilizing the services of indigenous counsellors and became aware of the consequent problems that could arise because of strategies planned by practitioners who were ignorant of the customs and national policies of the host country (Commissiong, 1999).

The first wholly Jamaican-owned company to focus fully on PR (as distinct from advertising) was Public Relations Associates (PRA) established in 1969 by Ralston Smith, Desmond Henry and Ken Jones (Edwards, 2011). At the time, PR activities were being conducted on an ad hoc basis mainly through advertising agencies. However, buoyed by the partners' collective experiences, Smith began to hold seminars and workshops aimed at passing on the fundamentals of PR practice. By 1980, he had developed a full-fledged programme which was offered

through the-then Institute of Management and Production. PRA became a training ground for many practitioners, most of whom would go on to form their own agencies (*ibid.*).

The next decade saw a rapid increase in the number of locally owned agencies. With the increase in the number of local practitioners, demand grew for the creation of a professional association and the Public Relations Society of Jamaica (PRSJ) was established in 1980. Its aim was to promote the development of PR as a profession in Jamaica; to seek national acceptance and recognition of public relations practice as a profession; to establish and protect the code of professional standards; to act as a forum for the exchange of ideas and dissemination of information among members; and to seek recognition and affiliation with international organizations (Minutes of PRSJ meeting, 28 January 1981). However, PRSJ has had a relatively low profile and has not been consistently active.

PR seemed set to be institutionalized when PRSJ was successful in having a structured PR degree programme introduced at the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC) at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus. It started in 1988 as a module within the general degree programme in Communications, and was later upgraded to a full degree programme. However, PR is no longer offered as a separate discipline (2014) but is being taught as part of a degree programme in Integrated Marketing Communications.

Accreditation continues to be an issue. The matter was addressed in 2004 when CARIMAC, in association with the PRSJ, mounted courses leading to accreditation by the International Association of Business Communicators. However, this programme was discontinued after the first cohort graduated in June 2005.

Trinidad & Tobago

The twin-island state is situated at the south eastern end of the Caribbean, approximately 11 kilometres (7 miles) from Venezuela). It has an area of 5128 square kilometres (1980 sq. miles), of which Trinidad accounts for 4828 square kilometres (1864 sq. miles) and Tobago 300 square kilometres (116 sq. miles). Its population is approximately 1.2 million.

Like Jamaica, it gained independence in August 1962 and adopted the Westminster model of government before becoming a Republic in

September 1976. The petroleum industry has dominated the economy since the 1950s. Unlike other Caribbean countries, it has a strong manufacturing sector, with an emphasis on heavy industry and petrochemicals and produces a wide range of consumer goods for national and regional markets. The discovery of natural gas and rising oil prices has resulted in rapid development and transformation of the economy from an agricultural base to one based on petroleum (Kirton et al., 2010), making Trinidad the most prosperous of the islands in the English-speaking Caribbean.

This is a pluralistic society, divided almost equally between persons of African and East Indian origin. The diversity in racial mixes, religion and political groupings provided conditions conducive for the development of the practice of PR. Democracy has been largely stable although there have been two instances when it has come under serious threat: the first, in 1970, took place against the background of the Black Power movement and sought to address issues facing persons of African descent, workers and the disadvantaged. The second attempt came in 1990 when a pressure group, the Jamaat Al Muslimeen, attempted to overthrow the government which it felt was dealing inadequately with the socio-economic issues facing the country. However, neither event has significantly impacted the country's commitment to democratic governance (*ibid.*). Interestingly, Mitchell (2009) has argued that 'one of the main reasons advanced by the political analysts for the (1970) violent revolution which threatened the overthrow of the Government, was the lack on the Government's part, of an effective public relations programme' (p. 27). One outcome, he says, was the 'appointment of Public Relations and Publicity Officers in an appreciable number of Government departments, supported by a deliberately planned programme of consultations with the people' (*ibid.*, p. 27).

PR activity is further facilitated by Trinidad & Tobago's wide array of communications infrastructure. Freedom of the press is protected under the Constitution although defamation and libel remain criminal offences. Media is mainly privately owned, with the government owning one radio station and a television station. Relations between the government and the media have often times been strained. In 2013, Trinidad ranked at 44th on the press freedom index due mainly to the government's illegal monitoring of journalists' phones and attempts to identify their sources. (In comparison, Jamaica ranks at 16th, the highest in the western hemisphere.) Despite this, the relationship between media and

PR practitioners is relatively good, with the media being generally accessible (R. Mitchell, personal communication, 6 August 2014).

Mitchell (2009) traces the early history of PR to the 1950s and 1960s. He maintains that the transformation from colonial dependency to the national movement gave impetus to the introduction of PR in the public sector with the establishment of the Information Office of the government in the colonial days, transitioning to PR practice with the first appointment of PR staff at the Office of the Prime Minister. However, he gives even greater credit for development of PR functions to the 'oil companies which were very active in the colony at that time' (Mitchell, 2009, p. 168).

As occurred in Jamaica, the private sector in particular recognized the need to employ local practitioners. 'Corporate Trinidad and Tobago began the process by creating the positions of Public Relations Officers charged with that responsibility which was at that time focused mainly on image building: projecting their organizations as good corporate citizens' (R. Mitchell, personal communication, 11 August 2014). He added:

Public relations officers were appointed in the oil Companies (Shell and Texaco) and in at least two large commercial enterprises, West Indian Tobacco Company Limited and Neal & Massy Limited (now called Massy Ltd) and in at least four public utilities, the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission, the Telephone Company, the Water and Sewerage Authority and Cable & Wireless. The major hotels, Hilton and Holiday Inn, and the commercial banks followed, commencing with Barclays DCO (now Republic Bank). (Ibid.)

In those early years, PR was manifested mainly through community relations and employee relations demonstrated through sponsorship of steel bands, sporting events and radio programmes (Mitchell, 2009, p. 26). It was thus used as a tool of social engineering by providing support to the steel bands which had previously been regarded as the preserve of lower class blacks in the society. Sponsorship gave them legitimacy and, in return, members committed to maintain certain standards of behaviour and level of discipline (ibid., p. 41).

The formation of the Public Relations Association of Trinidad and Tobago (PRATT) in 1972 led to a new dimension in professionalism; its focus being on education for professional practice. PRATT staged seminars, training programmes, breakfast meetings and presentations in collaboration with the University of the West Indies (UWI) Extra Mural

Department (now the Open Campus), the Cipriani Labour College and the Management Development Centre. Other educational institutions in the private sector also developed and delivered PR educational offerings.

The development of PR was also impacted by the International Public Relations Association (IPRA). In 1978, PRATT was inducted into IPRA with Roy Mitchell being the first practitioner in the Commonwealth Caribbean to have been invited to be a member (Mitchell, 2009). After a period of inactivity, PRATT was revived in 1982 and its return to action was signalled by the hosting of the IPRA Spring Council Meeting and Professional Development Symposium 10–16 June 1984 (*ibid.*, p. 171). Mitchell was also involved in formulation and adoption of the IPRA Gold Paper No 4: ‘A Model for Public Relations Education for Professional Practice’ at the Ninth World Public Relations Congress in 1982.

The profession received a further boost in 1987 when Minister of Works, Settlements and Infrastructure, John Humphrey, announced the formation of the Public Relations Resource Group. Its mission was ‘to provide a public relations support base for the implementation of policies, programmes and projects within the arms of the Ministry’ (*ibid.*, p. 102).

According to Mitchell, this marked the first time in the history of the country that a Minister of Government was giving such ‘unqualified recognition to the true value and role of Public Relations in the affairs of Government’ (*ibid.*, p. 103) and was ‘one of the most significant steps ever taken in the history of Trinidad & Tobago to place Public Relations Practice in a strategic position to contribute effectively to the successful operations of any institution’ (*ibid.*, p. 102). Some 30 years later, Mitchell lamented that practice has lost this momentum as, in 2014, PRATT is dormant (R. Mitchell, personal communication, 11 August 2014).

Current status of PR

In order to determine the current status, PR practitioners in Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago were asked to complete a questionnaire on the Status of Public Relations in the English-speaking Caribbean (Edwards, 2014). The research effort was confined to practitioners who were members of the professional associations which have sought to register/identify persons engaged in the practice: the Public Relations

Society of Jamaica, the Public Relations Association of Trinidad & Tobago and the Barbados chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators. The research therefore aimed to capture the 'universe' of PR practitioners in the three countries, as evidenced by their membership in the professional bodies, rather than attempt a random sample.

When asked about the main focus of their work, practitioners in Trinidad & Tobago said they were engaged in communication management, image building, media relations and publicity. Practitioners in Barbados listed communications management, media relations, publicity and special events planning while in Jamaica, females said that the main focus of their work was communications management, media relations, publicity and image management while males identified their main focus as communications management and communication strategy development.

However, when practitioners were asked to indicate what they thought was the focus of PR in their respective countries, they all identified media relations, publicity and special events management as the primary areas.

The difference between what the practitioners identify as *their* primary job function compared with the main focus of PR activity in their respective countries leads one to speculate that practitioners are aware of what they *should* be doing at the management level, and this might be an attempt to appear to be operating at a more strategic level than actually happens.

This is understandable given the job titles held by most practitioners. Departmental heads are positioned at a fairly high level in their organizations with 81 per cent holding the title of 'director' or 'senior/manager' and 44 per cent reporting that they are members of the management team. The majority also say they have access to senior management. However, when asked to indicate whether they operated as managers or technicians, 62 per cent reported that they were operating at the level of communication technicians. This suggests that not all are performing strategic public relations functions. Fifty-five per cent said that they sometimes used research to plan activities and choose objectives for public relations programmes; 14 per cent reported that they were doing research to evaluate programmes and only 22 per cent said they use research to counsel management, effectively limiting the extent of data-driven advice that they would be in a position to offer (Edwards, 2014).

PR appears to be narrowly defined by the scope of its day-to-day tasks, and practitioners are minimally involved in strategic management. The focus on media and publicity suggests that their main purpose is to boost public perception of the organization. This is in marked contrast to the earlier period when the focus was on providing information and relationship building.

Mitchell laments this focus on the means of communication (publicity) rather than the purpose of communication (relationship building) which he says lies at the heart of true PR practice. He adds that given the lack of uniformity in PR practice, a practitioner's ability to function at the strategic level within an organization will depend on the value that the individual practitioner brings to the organization (R. Mitchell, personal communication, 11 August 2014). A similar sentiment was expressed by a practitioner in Jamaica who put the onus for changing the image of the practice squarely at the feet of the practitioners themselves: 'The challenge is to educate the executive management team whose training does not necessarily include (public relations) and to get PR into management degree programmes. The onus is on the PR practitioner to make himself or herself indispensable to the company' (Edwards, 2011). This suggests that personality is as important as competence in the practice of PR, and might influence the extent to which practitioners are able to perform at a strategic level.

Culture may be another factor that has historically influenced the way in which PR is practised. In Jamaica the high levels of power distance, the essentially masculine and individualistic nature of the society, coupled with the absence of a strong professional body limit the extent to which PR has operated or can operate as an effective management tool (*ibid.*).

Political interference seems to be an issue in Trinidad & Tobago. This can be related to the country's relatively low position on the press freedom index and the uneasy relationship between media and the government, especially since this factor was not mentioned in either Barbados or Jamaica (Edwards, 2014). Practitioners also have to be sensitive to the ethnic divisions in the country (R. Mitchell, personal communication, 11 August 2014).

Interestingly, gender has not, over time, emerged as a factor as to whether practitioners functioned as technician, manager or consultant nor has it impacted on whether or not practitioners functioned as part of the dominant coalition in the organization. Furthermore, being male

or female did not seem to influence the extent to which practitioners counselled or had access to management, were asked for advice or had senior management seek out their opinion (Edwards 2011, 2014).

Of greater concern is that some 66 per cent of practitioners reported that the PR function is being conducted within offices entitled 'Corporate Communications' or 'Marketing'. Only 11 per cent of practitioners indicated that they were operating out of a department using the name 'Public Relations' (Edwards, 2014). This reflects a change from the situation in Jamaica in 2008, when 39.3 per cent indicated that they worked in offices with the name 'Public Relations'. This seeming diminution of PR suggests that other societal/cultural factors may be at play.

Another area of concern must be the low profile of the PR societies in the three countries. This not only denies practitioners the opportunity to be part of a strong professional association, one of the prerequisites for professionalism, but also reduces the possibility of elevating perceptions of Public Relations in the countries (Edwards, 2011).

Questions also arise as to whether practitioners possess the knowledge or expertise to carry out the strategic management function. Jones (2008) pointed out that while practitioners in Barbados were aware of what needs to be done in this regard, they were not acting on this knowledge, nor did they think they had the expertise to do so. Some practitioners also seemed to believe that while they might have the knowledge and capacity to perform at a strategic level, their organizations did not facilitate this (Jones, 2008, p. 76).

Conclusion

The colonial history of Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago impacted the development of PR with an initial focus on the dissemination of information and relationship building, transitioning to more professional practices with the entry of international companies, the growth of the public and private sectors and independence. In today's more competitive environment, the focus has shifted to media relations and publicity.

Given its location within many companies, the stage is set for PR practice to take a leap forward. However, this future is predicated on the practitioners revitalizing the professional associations, fighting for the establishment of standards and practicing strategic public relations.

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4

Central America

Carmen Mayela Fallas

Abstract: *Central American public relations (PR) is 100 years old, with the formation of the Panama Canal spurring the earliest efforts. During the initial stages of development, the press agency model prevailed in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, due to world trends and journalism influences. Extreme regimes, both right and left, were unfavourable to PR through most of the 20th century. Economic expansion in the past 30 years, while uneven, originated from political stability, democratization and commercial treaties which boosted specialization in media relations, crisis management, brand public relations, internal communications, and corporate social responsibility.*

Keywords: Bernays; Central America; Costa Rica; El Salvador; Guatemala; history of public relations; Honduras; Nicaragua; Panama; public relations

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Central America is a relatively small region. In spite of sharing a common language, Spanish, there are significant cultural and historical differences among the fragmented small nations that comprise the isthmus. Hall (1985) comments that:

between the 16th and 19th centuries, the Spanish tried to create a functional region that would aggregate most of Central America into a single colonial system; in reality, the Kingdom of Guatemala lacked coherence and the centrifugal forces won when the Central American Federation was replaced by several independent republics. The Central American Common Market, which has been in operation since 1960, is merely a weak approach towards new isthmian integration. (p. 5)

Spain exercised dominant influence in the region during the colonial period from 1492 to 1821. Subsequently, Central America was influenced by the United States, which has considered the isthmus an area of strategic commercial and geopolitical importance. ‘In the second half of the 19th century the balance of power leaned progressively toward the United States. By the end of the century, the US presence in the Caribbean area had become hegemonic ... By the time the Panama Canal was inaugurated in 1914, the Caribbean was a veritable *Mare Nostrum* of the US Navy’ (Pérez, 1986, pp. 23–25).

At present (2014), the region’s economy and communications are immersed in the processes of globalization. Central America is also influenced by intraregional free trade agreements as well as one with the United States:

On August 5, 2004, the United States signed the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) with five Central American countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua) and the Dominican Republic. The CAFTA-DR is the first free trade agreement between the United States and a group of smaller developing economies. This agreement is creating new economic opportunities by eliminating tariffs, opening markets, reducing barriers to services, and promoting transparency. It is facilitating trade and investment among the seven countries and furthering regional integration. (Office of the United States Trade Representative, 2014)

Similarly, the region established an agreement of association with the European Union in June 2012: ‘The European Union and Central America (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama) signed an association agreement on occasion of the Meeting of

Presidents of the Central American Integration System, in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on 29 June 2012', and another with Mexico in 2012 (Foreign Trade Information System – SICE, 2014). More recently, Central America has experienced an increased trading relationship with Asia.

All these factors are fundamental to an analysis of the origins and development of PR in the region. The activity has been marked as much by the characteristics of the region itself and the differences among the nations that comprise it, as by the influence that other nations have exerted during its history and at present.

This chapter's focus is to explain the evolution of modern PR in Central America, as well as the factors that have inhibited or fostered its development. It covers Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama, but excludes Belize due to the small amount of information and historical background found. Bibliographical investigation yielded few results, an indication that the topic of PR and its history in Central America has been little studied. For this reason, it was necessary to draw on primary sources of information, mainly through interviews with academics from regional universities and leading practitioners.

Initial manifestations

Following the declaration of independence from Spain in 1821, which ended more than 300 years of colonialism, Central America undertook multiple unsuccessful attempts to maintain its unity as one nation, passing through a federal period between 1824 and 1839 that produced much controversy and painful conflicts. During the second half of the 19th century the republics consolidated and the nascent states began defining their political and administrative structures. Then the economies were essentially agricultural, based largely on the cultivation of coffee. In the midst of conservative and caudillo (dictator)-led governments, the region grew increasingly attractive to world powers that were still intent on dividing the world among themselves. In the case of Central America, 'the competition for commercial dominance of the new markets, in addition to the strategic position of the isthmus and the interest in building an interoceanic canal, led Great Britain and the United States to vie with each other to maintain the area under their own sphere of influence' (Acuña and Fernández, 2000, p. 378).

As a consequence, during the last part of the 19th century several British and US companies arrived in the region to establish agricultural enclaves dedicated mainly to banana cultivation, and made important investments in port infrastructure and railways to transport agricultural products. These included the epic Panama Canal project, initiated by the French and successfully finished by the US (Araúz and Pizzurno, 2003). The first documented formal PR plan was forged in Panama in 1914, in relation to the Canal's construction. The US government primarily used the media relations since its central objective was to inform the press about the project (M. Binda, personal communication, 24 April 2012). However, although focused on the Canal project, the PR programme was aimed mainly at US national media and chronicled the engineering adventure that held great strategic interest for the West, a project which was to gain even more relevance with the outbreak of World War I and would play an important logistical role in World War II. Because this first plan was orchestrated and implemented by US practitioners, it left very little mark or learning experience upon the local organizations. Several decades would pass before PR practices developed in Panama.

Isolated cases were also registered in the rest of Central America during the first decades of the 20th century, mostly associated with banana growers and construction companies.

In Costa Rica, there is evidence of PR efforts undertaken by the United Fruit Company and its subsidiary, the Northern Railway Company, a British enterprise that initiated the extension of the railway to Costa Rica's Atlantic coast. It was not until the second half of the 1950s that banana grower Standard Fruit opened the first PR office (A. M. Jiménez, personal communication, 20 March 2012), thus initiating formal PR activities in the country. Around the same time, several government institutions also opened PR operations which can be identified by titles such as Information Dissemination or Press Office. This took place in the years following the Revolution of 1948 and the establishment of the Second Republic. The Caja Costarricense del Seguro Social [Costa Rican Social Security Fund, a national health care services institution], the Ministerio de Obras Públicas y Transporte [Ministry of Public Works and Transportation] and the Instituto Nacional de Vivienda y Urbanismo [National Housing and Urban Development Institute] were pioneer organizations in governmental PR.

During this period, United Fruit of Guatemala incorporated PR activities into its operations in that country. Edward Bernays advised the fruit

company in the 1940s and 1950s. In particular, in 1952 he directed a public relations strategy to manage a public opinion crisis, as United Fruit was identified as responsible for exploitation of its workers (K. García, personal communication, 29 September 2014; Tye, 1998; Hove and Cole, 2010). Bernays was recognized as the first PR adviser in Guatemala to apply research-led planning processes. In addition to undertaking psychosocial investigation of public opinion, he advised the company about philanthropic projects; for example, it is claimed that Bernays organized the construction of schools and health centres in areas neighbouring the United Fruit Company plantations. He had also planned to make a video about the Mayan people and their ties to the production of bananas and other Guatemalan fruits, but this project did not materialize. Other PR works in Guatemala, advised by Bernays, include the creation and maintenance of a file on journalists and a 'map' of the key actors who shaped public opinion. In addition, he initiated outreach projects and organized the press tours or familiarization trips for local and foreign journalists to show labour and corporate activities (Garcia, personal communication; Tye, 1998).

In El Salvador, PR's genesis was in mid-century, with the establishment of an office in the newly created Instituto Salvadoreño de Seguridad Social [Salvadoran Institute of Social Security], a governmental health care institution.

With the exception of Costa Rica, where the emergence of PR activities was gradual, these other instances, significant but isolated, did not stimulate the field's development in their respective countries: in Panama, because the practice was carried out without local involvement, and in Guatemala, because of the years of dictatorships and armed conflict that followed its inception. In Central American countries, PR has developed with significant influence from the United States, through the presence of US companies, access to bibliography and a variety of publications, and the contributions of professionals who have studied in the US. More recently, Spain has also become a reference. Thanks to collaborative agreements between Central American and Spanish universities, young generations of professionals are undertaking postgraduate studies there (M. Alfaro, personal communication, 20 August 2013).

During this initial phase most PR work was oriented towards informing public opinion through the media. For this reason, the professionals in charge of the initial projects, with the exception of Bernays in Guatemala, were journalists who carried out informational tasks in an ad hoc manner from within an organization. At that time, the Central

American region did not have schools that would train professionals in any of the fields of communication. Journalists were self-taught, although a few came from other professions such as law or economics. Nevertheless, the seed of PR had been planted in the region. It would wait for more fertile soil in which to grow and become a strategic function of local, regional, international and multinational organizations operating in Central America.

Development associated with peace and democracy

During the second half of the 20th century, PR in the countries within the Central American isthmus evolved unevenly, dependent upon the political climate. It was particularly adverse during periods of military dictatorships and internal wars in some nations. The growth of PR coincided with periods of greater political stability and democracy, between 1980 and 1990.

Panama

In Panama, the early activities linked to the Panama Canal did not stimulate the development of PR practices during subsequent years. It was not until the second half of the 20th century that these were established and began to develop. In 1953, the first PR courses were successfully created in the School of Public Administration of the University of Panama. This process encouraged professional development in the field, albeit with a limited scope. At that time, if anyone could produce a text that would enhance a company image, it was considered to be 'PR'. 'Not much thought was given to what public relations professionals should do to save the company in case of a crisis; mostly, they organized events' (G. Thomas, personal communication, 11 May 2012).

PR appeared initially in government institutions and later in private companies. The latter took more time to discover the objectives of the profession and to recognize their value because, at first, the private sector was only interested in the financial return on investment for each of their activities or business projects and saw little need for communication. As other enterprises with more experience of applying PR techniques arrived in Panama, its value was recognized (P. Valdés, personal communication, 27 April 2012).

Among those private firms that showed greater success in their efforts to implement public relations activities were the Chiriquí Land Company, the Fábrica Panameña de Aceites [Panamanian Oils Factory], the Compañía Panameña de Tabaco [Panamanian Tobacco Company], Parke David Inc., and the Compañía Panameña de Fuerza y Luz [Panamanian Light and Power Company] (Espino, 1989).

In 1958, the Asociación Nacional de Relacionistas Públicos [National Association of Public Relations Professionals] was formed to strengthen the profession. It existed until the middle of the 1990s, giving way to the establishment of the Colegio de Relacionistas Públicos de Panamá [Association of Public Relations Professionals of Panama] in 1995.

With the creation of a PR degree in the University of Panama's Department of Social Communication in the 1980s, the profession gained standing in the country's academic and professional circles. Graduates and self-taught practitioners who had earned recognition and acceptance from the National Association of Public Relations Professionals promoted the activity in the governmental and private sectors, and even in religious, civic and trade organizations (M. Solórzano, personal communication, 5 June 2012).

Panama is the only country in the region, and the second in Latin America (after Brazil in 1967), that regulates the exercise of the profession, under Law No. 21 of June 2005, preceded in 1980 by Law No. 37. This law defines the framework of the profession's activities and sets aptitude requirements as well as fines, which are approved by a technical board. M. Binda (personal communication, 24 April 2012), F. Bósquez (personal communication, 24 April 2012) and M. Mosquera (personal communication 25 April 2012) agree that PR consultancy firms emerged after the 20-year period of military dictatorships ended with the United States' invasion of Panama, called Operation 'Just Cause', in 1989.

Costa Rica

In Costa Rica, PR has enjoyed uninterrupted growth from its inception. After the Civil War of 1948, the government of the Second Republic adopted a statist model that created and strengthened autonomous institutions in charge of health care, insurance, banking, energy, telecommunications, and water works, among others. This aided the development of PR, which became permanently established in offices dedicated to explaining services, generating information about issues of

institutional interest in the media, working on issues of internal communications and image for the organization leadership, as well as organizing formal events. The first institutional efforts to incorporate PR at the core of the organization took place in the 1950s with the creation of the Department of Public Relations of the Instituto Nacional de Vivienda y Urbanismo, [INVU – the Housing and Urban Development Institute], the Department of Public Relations of the Ministerio de Economía y Hacienda [Ministry of Economics and Revenue], and the Information Department of the Ministerio de Obras Públicas y Transportes [Ministry of Transportation and Public Works] (Incera, 1985).

While growth was greater in the public sector, advance was slow in the private sector between 1950 and 1980, but by the end of the 1980s a significant economic surge encouraged the creation of firms specialized in PR services, departments responsible for this function within companies and non-governmental organizations, and new university programmes.

The academic progress of PR did not advance on a par with the profession's development: PR was incorporated into institutions before academically trained PR professionals came on the scene (Chaves et al., 1998).

In 1954, Eric Carlson, a PR professional from the US, was brought to the Escuela Superior de Administración Pública para la América Central [ESAPAC – Central American School for Advanced Public Administration Studies] in San José, Costa Rica, to teach the first PR course as part of the government's Civil Service training programme. In the following year, with Venezuelan Mario García Arocha and under the auspices of ESAPAC, Carlson wrote the first book on PR to be published in Costa Rica: *Nociones fundamentales de relaciones públicas* [Basic Notions of Public Relations]. Two years later, García Arocha (1957) produced another book entitled *Un programa mínimo de relaciones públicas para organismos estatales* [A Basic Program of Public Relations for State Organizations] (Chaves et al., 1998).

In 1968, the University of Costa Rica created the Department of Journalism, later transformed into the Escuela de Ciencias de la Comunicación Colectiva [School of Mass Communication Sciences] in 1972, and incorporated PR as one its four subject areas. This factor precipitated the development of the field in the private sector in the middle of the 1980s, with the appearance of the first companies that offered specialized services: Comunicación y Relaciones Públicas [Communications and Public Relations, now Porter Novelli], Edilex

and Comunicación Corporativa [Corporate Communications, now Comunicación Corporativa Ketchum].

The organization of PR specialists into industry groupings has had little impact on the development of the profession in Costa Rica (A. M. Jiménez, personal communication, 20 March 2012; E. Mata, personal communication, 6 August 2012). Recent history has seen the birth and disappearance of at least four associations that failed to integrate PR professionals and motivate them to work collectively. The first was created in 1980 (Asociación Costarricense de Relacionistas Públicos [ACOREP – Costa Rican Association of Public Relations Professionals]. In 1985, a second attempt to invigorate the association was made, with the creation of the Asociación de Profesionales en Relaciones Públicas [Association of Public Relations Professionals]. In 2010 the Asociación Costarricense de Relacionistas Públicos [ACOREPU – Costa Rican Association of Public Relations Professionals] was formed but its activity was minimal. At present (2014), a significant percentage of professionals are members of the Colegio de Periodistas de Costa Rica [Costa Rican Journalists Association], an organization which includes professionals from various communication disciplines.

Although the profession's practices were focused on media relations during the early stages, they have progressively widened to reach a more comprehensive and strategic level of development that now includes all the areas of modern PR.

Guatemala

In Guatemala, notwithstanding some isolated initiatives, more than four decades have passed after the first project led by Bernays for United Fruit before PR burgeoned again. In 1986, after the peace process and with the democratic election of the Vinicio Cerezo government, PR activities began gaining strength, especially in the public sector. Activities began in the private sector in 1992, when a PR agency opened to represent the US consultancy firm Burson Marsteller; in 1998, the Costa Rican company Comunicación Corporativa, a Ketchum affiliate, initiated operations there, as did Porter Novelli. In the following year, another US agency Hill & Knowlton started an office. Along this process, there were also several individuals who offered PR services consultancy.

Guatemalan efforts did not go hand in hand with professional training at the university level. There were no degree level studies in PR but

specialist courses are taught as part of Social Communication programmes. Similarly, there is no professional association in Guatemala.

El Salvador

El Salvador offers little written or recorded history that enables a comprehensive study of the first phases of the PR field there. Nonetheless, there is evidence of activities to attract eligible clients to the Instituto Salvadoreño de Seguridad Social [Salvadoran Social Security Institute] around 1950, which was led by Efraim Imendia, manager of its PR department (Aguilar et al., 2009). Early companies to institute PR departments were Cervecería La Constancia, S.A. [Perseverance Beer Company], *La Prensa Gráfica* [The Graphic Press], *Embotelladora Salvadoreña* [Salvadoran Bottling Company], Hotel El Salvador Sheraton, *Diario El Mundo* [The World Newspaper], *Lima Zablah*, *Compañía General de Seguros* [General Insurance Company], *Compañía Distribuidora S.A.*, *CODISA* [Distribution Company] and *Toyota DIDEA* (Chiliseo et al., 2005).

In 1971, the first PR company, Munés Relaciones Públicas, was founded but it closed the following year because, according to its owner, the company was unable to subsist solely by offering PR services (ibid.). In the 1990s, several local and international agencies began offering PR services.

The Asociación Salvadoreña de Ejecutivos de Relaciones Públicas [ASERP – Salvadoran Association of Public Relations Executives] was founded in 1972 and points to an increase in this activity between 1950 and 1970. ASERP played an important role in promoting the profession but closed in the 1990s (Burgos et al., 2008).

At the end of the 1980s, the armed conflict in El Salvador worsened. This provoked persistent closures at the Universidad Nacional [National University] which gave rise to several private universities aiming to fulfil the demand for higher education in the country. These universities provided the framework for the first PR study plans, within their departments of economics (Barahona et al., 2001).

Nicaragua

In Nicaragua, PR appeared less than two decades ago, in the context of political democratization, after decades of military dictatorships followed by the armed conflict that brought down the government of Anastasio Somoza. In 1990 the first democratically elected government

of Violeta Barrios de Chamorro came to power and the newly formed Sandinista party started making intensive use of communications and information strategies.

A combination of political, socioeconomic and academic factors fomented the development of the industry in the 1990s, when the first PR agencies entered the country. Porter Novelli was first in 1997 followed by Comunicación Corporativa Ketchum of Central America (2003) and Crea Comunicaciones and Comunica (both in 2005). These key events in the business sector were complemented by decisions in the academic sector. In 2004, the Universidad de Ciencias Comerciales [UCC-Managua – Commercial Sciences University], a private entity, became the first higher education institution in Nicaragua to offer a degree in Public Relations and Communication. In addition, the Universidad Americana [UAM-Managua – the American University], another private university, announced the opening of a degree program in Communications and Public Relations in 2014. PR practice in Nicaragua focuses on developing relationships with mass media and managing mediating between the organization and its audiences in internal and external environments.

Honduras

Honduras shows the least-developed PR sector in Central American region, other than Belize. The absence of experienced PR practitioners and the mid-decade establishment of a degree program at the Universidad Tecnológica de Honduras [UTH – Technological University of Honduras] mean that few graduates have entered the PR labour force. Thus, organizations look for experienced journalists with contacts in mass media, given the widespread belief that relationships or contacts within mass media are the basis for a successful public image (N. Rodríguez, personal communication, 29 May 2012). As in most of Central America, the first PR practitioners were self-taught journalists. They possessed few formal skills with which to develop a profession that began to develop in the 1980s and mostly still use the same skills tools within public institutions where many work.

As an exception, PR practice began during the time of the military governments and reached its peak as the result of a clash between the media and the government, during the administration of former president Rafael Leonardo Callejas (1990–1994). At that time, the private sector did not attribute much importance to PR (N. Schauer, personal communication, 14 May 2012). PR's progress improved when democracy

became stabilized (N. Rodríguez, personal communication, 29 May 2012).

In Honduras, PR practice has been especially influenced by the former journalists who have practiced it. Therefore, it has focused on establishing relations with mass media and advertising, given that the first PR services were offered through the nation's advertising agencies. It has only been in the past five years that international companies with a more comprehensive, specialized vision have established offices.

The concept of strategic PR management does not exist in Honduras. A slight evolution is underway, but there is little awareness of the importance of PR for organizations or private industry (A. Flores, personal communication, 20 July 2012). Nevertheless, PR is playing an increasingly important role to raise public awareness, promote image and to reach new markets, projects and opportunities (G. Castellanos, personal communication, 2 May 2012).

Conclusions

This first exploratory study of the history of PR in Central America has yielded ten findings:

- 1 PR practice in the region celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2014, with its links to the construction of the Panama Canal.
- 2 The first PR projects in the region were initiated by US companies, as exemplified by the cases of the United Fruit Company and the Panama Canal. Nevertheless, the rise in the second mid-20th-century phase occurred in state public institutions or state enterprises. The exception was Nicaragua, where PR emerged latterly within the private sector.
- 3 Edward L. Bernays exposed Central America to American style research planning and execution of PR programmes in his highly contentious work for the United Fruit Company in Guatemala in the 1940s and 1950s. No evidence was found, however, that this experience or Bernays' presence in the region had any impact on the development of the profession in Guatemala or elsewhere in the isthmus.
- 4 During its first 50 years, PR was practiced in Central America almost exclusively by journalists, self-taught or with limited

academic background. More recently, exceptions have been found in Guatemala and Honduras, where advertising and marketing professionals have played an important role in the exercise of PR activity. This is consistent with the appearance of specialized PR programmes at universities being a late development such as Honduras or non-existent, as in the case of Guatemala.

- 5 During the first 80 years of PR activities in the region, the media relations was the dominant practice model due mainly because initial practitioners had journalistic backgrounds.
- 6 It took 60 years from 1914, for universities to begin offering academic programmes in specialized PR studies. The first school commenced in Costa Rica in 1972. However, there were long gaps before university-level PR studies commenced in Honduras and Nicaragua in the 21st century. In the case of El Salvador the first programme of PR was established in 1981 and in Panama in 1984. Guatemala is the exception where PR courses are taught within the Social Communication degree programmes.
- 7 The development of PR in the Central American region was influenced initially by the United States, and later by Spain through two channels: PR texts used by universities and the vision and expectations of the international companies that have established their offices in the region and demand services from local PR practitioners. Isthmian PR companies have also exerted influence among themselves by expanding into neighbouring countries.
- 8 With the exception of Panamanians, Central American PR practitioners have shown a limited capacity or interest in the formation of trade or professional associations.
- 9 There is a positive correlation between the development of PR and democratic political processes. Extreme right-wing regimes, such as those that governed Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador and left-wing regimes, such as in Nicaragua, were unfavourable environments. This demonstrates that transparency in communications and the freedom of the public to make demands on organizations' performance require an open social and political climate. In the late 1980s, the peace process that resulted in the Esquipulas Peace Accords ended the war in Nicaragua and later led to an end of conflicts in Guatemala and El Salvador. It had a positive effect upon the region and, consequently, created a favourable climate for the development and strengthening of PR.

- 10 Economic growth during the past three decades, although uneven, has been the result of political stability, democratization and important commercial treaties between the Central American nations and the United States, Canada and the European Union. This, in turn, has bolstered PR. The region has seen the rise of firms that specialize in PR services (agencies); academic education and professional training have gained momentum and strength; and there has been a significant increase in the number of organizations that possess their own communication and PR departments. This growth has fostered the specialization of professionals in the areas of crisis management, brand PR and internal communications.

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Colombia

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Abstract: *Historically, the development of public relations (PR) in Colombia can be recognized from three main points of analysis: The first is the vision of professional men and women who learned the discipline and its workings from other countries with more experience in the matter, and who returned home to bring awareness of PR to Colombia. They built effective relations as well as letting the world know about the Colombian corporate sector through their understanding of international approaches to corporate and organizational communication. The second point refers to the support from the public and private sectors in Colombia, which believed in PR from an early stage, even though there was a lack of theorization and research, and formal teaching of the discipline was still very incipient in Latin America. The final point is the role that professional PR associations accomplished in legitimizing it as a profession and supporting its development, which was crucial in making PR a part of Colombian organizations' core communication activities.*

Keywords: CECORP; education; history; Latin American School of Public Relations; public relations

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Historically, the development of public relations (PR) in Colombia has been based on anecdotal accounts relying on the memory of early, few references and the tradition of the discipline within public and the private sector organizations. This chapter is based on the methodology of the history of ideas and relations between knowledge, culture and society by the Colombian historian Renán Silva (2002) who supports the value of asynchronous recollections, testimonies and personal archives. This approach is valid for Colombia, as the field has been criticized for placing low value on conceptual discussions and lacking archives and publications. Also, the chapter derives data and historical interpretation from recent research projects (Botero et al., 2010; Universidad de Medellín, 2007, 2009a, 2009b and 2010) and the authors' understandings of the under-researched field of PR history in Colombia.

In Colombia, PR has been criticized for having a trajectory of poor conceptualization. Its action has been often confused with simple activities such as contact-making or with the logistics of event planning, and seen as merely cosmetic, thus, giving a reductionist value to the profession's practice; at the beginning, the discipline's emphasis was placed on performing tasks, rather than on its character as a strategic activity.

The earliest records of people who engaged in PR in Colombia are from the late 1950s and early 1960s, when multinational companies recruited PR practitioners, especially for advocacy to the branches of government, and specifically to the Executive. It was therefore not surprising to find that most were lawyers. A pioneering example, before PR began to be established, is the man considered to be the first PR specialist in the country, Andrés Samper Gnecco (1918–1988). Born in the capital Bogotá, Samper Gnecco was a lawyer by training but a journalist at heart, as well as a writer and university professor. Within PR, he worked for oil and aviation companies, was a founder of the Colombian Association of Public Relations (ACORP), and wrote the first Colombian-published book on PR.

His multi-tasking as a 'one man band' in the airline SACO (Servicio Aéreo Colombiano, or Colombian Air Service, 1933–1940, predecessor to today's Avianca) demonstrated his pioneering role. Within SACO, Samper Gnecco served as the CEO, commander, chief of maintenance, business manager and, of course, as head of PR. He attracted the tango superstar singer Carlos Gardel from Argentina to Colombia in 1935 to take part in a strategic marketing campaign. As a result, SACO gained

the highest media coverage of the 1930s, thereby achieving an important publicity coup for the company.

Another important early figure was Humberto López López, who was also a lawyer, journalist and university professor. In the early 1960s, he and a group of newly graduated journalists and publicists, some with education in the United States, used PR in a strategic way to differentiate those with a professional approach to communication from fellow technically oriented practitioners. With the support of private companies, they devoted themselves to travelling across the country to organize PR-centred events. In this fashion, PR in Colombia began to be professionalized. Later, these men and women travelled to other countries in Latin America to share developments and advances in the field, and likewise, they also invited their foreign colleagues to Colombia to exchange their knowledge and publications, so as to learn the best practices.

There were many events, including conferences and seminars, which were held under the system of sharing, mostly between organizations and later on within universities, allowing PR to reach a higher professional status. As a result of this activity – travel to the US for study and the gradual entry of North American multinational companies into the economy – Colombian practitioners had greater access to the US conceptualization of PR and a more pragmatic approach was developed. Nonetheless this pragmatic style of practice was sometimes confused with mediocrity and thus with unethical activities, which led to a negative public perception of PR, mistaking it for politicking or, worse, for influencing peddling. Along these lines, PR practice had a marked tendency to bind journalism and law, revealing the application of the tool of lobbying at the service of both private and public companies.

Formation of PR trade bodies

In Colombia, professional partnerships and relationships with trade and industry associations marked a milestone in the development of PR. A key period when trade organizations were formed was the 1960s. The current Colombian PR professional body, CECORP, was created in Medellín in 1963, under the name of Public Relations Center (CERP). It was later renamed as Antioqueño Circle Public Relations (CARP). In 1970 it adopted the name of Colombian Society of Public Relations (SOCORP) of Antioquia, and since 1980 has been the Colombian Center

for Public Relations and Organizational Communication (CECORP, 2014).

Legitimizing PR

Between 1970s and 1990s CECORP began to consolidate its relations with regional associations and guilds of practitioners, with the support of the Grupo Económico Antioqueño conglomerate (now the GEA business group of Antioquia), which had developed in Colombia's industrial capital of Medellín. This led to the central national organization of PR sector to be based in Medellín and the opening of regional chapters in Bogotá, Cali and Barranquilla. Also, during that time, some members were both professors at universities and heads of communication and PR departments. This had an impact on education, and training as practical and skilled-based components of PR and communication were introduced into existing mass communication programmes. Having had these accepted, they started to introduce subjects related to PR in these curriculums, thus setting the platform for the development of specialist PR courses.

As a discipline, PR grew in Medellín and went to other cities such Cali and Barranquilla. These are the most three important cities outside the capital Bogotá in the region known as the *El Triángulo Económico Colombiano* (Colombian Economic Triangle). Thus, business interest in PR was secured and CECORP members looked for strategic partners in the business sectors, under the premise that this was where the PR had more space and was more likely to progress, rather than the governmental sector. CECORP's 20-year-long strategy developed the standing and legitimization of PR, with the result that organizations have developed strategic and tactical communications/PR departments and PR is defined and well-understood by managements. This definition and operational understanding arises from the historical influence of the pragmatic American PR view and because early PR practitioners with a professional outlook brought the knowledge of the discipline from the US to Colombia.

Private companies and public entities that were previously reluctant to recognize the value of this discipline began to understand the role of the PR practitioners, and by the decades of the 1980s and 1990s, the number of jobs directly related to communication and PR grew exponentially,

which led universities to create undergraduate and graduate programmes for PR training from a strategic perspective, as well as to reinforce its theoretical body. The leading educational roles from the 1990s onwards were performed by the Universidad de la Sabana (Bogota), Universidad de Antioquia, Universidad de Medellín, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (Medellín), Universidad del Norte (Barranquilla) and the Universidad de Pamplona (Santander) among others (see later section ‘The role of universities’).

Early development in PR education

These associations were intended to bring practitioners together and to impact upon the development of education and training. It was from them that the first higher education PR professors arose. In the case of Universidad de Medellín, they included Humberto Lopez, Dario Arismendi, Ignacio Arismendi, María Victoria Mejía, Amparo Restrepo, Yolanda Restrepo and Alba Gutiérrez. Two communication schools were formed: the School of Communication from Universidad de Antioquia in 1964, which had a more journalistic orientation, and the School of Communication of Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana in 1967, which was geared towards business relations and advertising.

Along the same lines, within the business sector, knowledge was carried over to other cities of the country, such as Barranquilla and Bogotá and then to other regions such as the Caribbean, Andean and especially to Medellín. From the late 1960s, the base of PR education was internationalized by Carmen Vásquez, Maria Eugenia Gutiérrez and Nancy Murgas – professionals who travelled to the United States to study and returned to Colombia to work in higher education.

Significantly, academic experience and knowledge was widened through participation in academic events in Mexico, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Panama, Uruguay, Chile, Argentina and the Netherland Antilles. That knowledge was brought to Colombia and implemented in organizations. The early education development, however, was geared towards technical points and professional practice, rather than towards academic reflections and much less on research.

In these various travels, Colombian pioneers had relations with organizations such as the Center for Studies of Andean Public Relations Professionals (Centro de Estudios de Relacionistas Uniandinos – CERA);

Association of PR Executives in Paraguay, Uruguay, Peru, Argentina, Ecuador, Venezuela, Panama and Puerto Rico and the Interamerican Federation of Public Relations (FIARP) among others.

PR education was notably supported and sponsored by the Suramericana de Seguros insurance company and the State educational organization, Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje (SENA), whose resources were instrumental in allowing practitioners to travel. They learnt from international colleagues and applied new PR, media management and publicity techniques to Colombian businesses and then supported development of academic studies.

The role of the universities

During the 1990s, practitioners such as Humberto López López wanted to secure specific academic education for the new PR professionals. López proposed to the Universidad de Medellín that a communication programme that focused on PR be introduced; it opened in 1995 with the Communication and Corporate Relations title. At its inception, the programme was based on concepts from North American perspectives and communication theories from the European mainstream. Over the past 20 years, the programme has developed a Colombian aspect with a corporate communications theoretical construction in which the professional leads the role of social transformation, working from inside and outside the organization. This uses the principle of cooperation from the 'Latin American School of Public Relations' (Molleda, 2001).

Applied theories and styles of practice from the US have been of central importance for the formation of PR in Colombia, not only in terms of knowledge, but in their model of professional association activity. For example, the School of Communication at the Universidad de Medellín was awarded the Certification on Education in PR (CEPR) from the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in 2010. Its Chapter of the Public Relations Students Society of America (PRSSA), formed in 2012, has become a reference for activity, advising the Universidad de San Martín de Porres (Lima, Perú), and the Universidad de Antofagasta (northern Chile). The university has also formed links between its Professor Ana María Suárez Monsalve and the University of Florida, whose Venezuelan-born Latin American liaison Professor Juan Carlos Molleda has helped support the development of PR education in

Medellín, Bogotá and Cali and link the Colombian universities with PRSA.

In Colombia, many schools offer communication and mass media programmes at undergraduate level, including universities in Bogotá, Barranquilla and Cúcuta that have added organizational communication to mass media curricula. This follows a trend in Latin American peer countries, such as Brazil, Argentina and Mexico.

PR in public and private sectors

The public sphere

The role of PR practitioners in the public sphere, which includes both government and NGOs, has been mainly concerned with producing pieces of information, shaping events and conveying information to the community, through different media formats. In other words, this task has been characterized by preparation of press releases and inviting journalists to press conferences, in the hope that they will reproduce the notes that supplied to them by the PR practitioners in their publications. The press releases report actions or statements from higher actors in the public sector. These communicators (or PR practitioners) in the public sphere-state primarily highlight the acts and achievements of the current government officials which is often political propaganda favouring the current leadership, rather than any notion of public and political communication (Galvis and Botero, 2014). Within the Colombian public-state sector, the title of 'Communicator' is used in preference to 'PR executive'; that is, 'comunicadores' instead of 'relacionistas públicos', which indicates the primary role of media relations-based information dissemination.

Professor Javier Álvarez (personal communication, 6 May 2014) has pointed out that public sphere PR practice in Colombia has also been marked by relations of power, which have been fostered by belonging to specific politically influential social clubs. These power relationships were among the reasons that PR has developed its bad reputation in the public sphere as the relevance of many activities was questioned. Galvis and Botero (2014) have also commented that, historically, in matters of public communication in Colombia, political propaganda favouring the current leadership trumps any real notion of public and political communication.

The private sphere

The history in the private (commercial) sphere is no different, in essence, than the public sphere (Galvis and Botero, 2014). Historically, communicators and/or PR practitioners performed the same practices as in the public-state, with some minor differences. In the early period of PR's development, the director of communications undertook routine work, very close to that undertaken in public sphere-state. However, starting from the early 1990s the role and tasks changed because of market globalization and the incorporation of issues of importance to the management of publics or stakeholders in areas such as organizational culture, image and corporate identity, merchandising, brand management, advertising, signage, sponsorship, corporate social responsibility and corporate reputation management, among others.

Javier López Velásquez, the founder of CECORP, has commented that the private sector tended to hire PR executives while the public sector has traditionally hired journalists and publicists. The public sector demanded mostly press agents, while private companies sought professionals to enhance their public image (26 June 2014). For López Velásquez, the four most common actions for PR professionals were, and are, events, relations with the press, 'wet hands' (cocktail management and social spaces) and segmentation of audiences.

Practitioners' roles

The profile of the PR practitioner in Colombia has evolved over time. In the 1960s and 1970s, the scope of the PR did not include a very clear understanding as to why communication professionals would be hired by companies. Therefore, they were called to perform communication tasks at the lowest level, such as placing flowers, setting tables, and other secretarial duties for the executives in any meeting, organizing cocktail parties, and so on; thus they performed any kind of cosmetic activities with very little impact on management.

Today, practitioner's tasks vary from technical activities to strategic and planning where managing and directing skills are required. However, in Colombia PR remains a gendered profession: more women get an education in PR, but more men occupy the managerial and directive places in organizations. This situation is changing little by little thanks to the

implementation of international standards, professional regulation and the realization of the place that PR deserves inside organizations.

PR agencies

Despite the long external influence on PR, mainly from the US, there is not a wide spectrum of PR agencies in Colombia. Most consulting agencies operate from within the realm of organizational communication. Many are global communications agencies and the presence of American agencies has been very recent and is growing as a result of the Free Trade Agreement between Colombia and the United States signed on 15 May 2012. During the following two years, American companies in Colombia, especially the mining and hydrocarbon sectors, technology and innovation sectors have begun to commission PR activities. An example of the expansion is that the international agency, Burson Marsteller, has been the first organization to open a decentralized office in Medellin and thus outside the capital of Bogota. Lobbying in Colombia has traditionally been undertaken by law firms and has not been part of PR agencies' portfolios (Caicedo, 2010).

Conclusions

PR's development in Colombia has factors that should be recognized: One is the vision of professional men and women who learned the discipline and its workings from other countries with more experience in the matter, and who returned home to bring awareness of PR to Colombia in the 1960s and 1970s.

It is notable that the early development was shaped by North American education, practice and theorization, a link which remains strong. However, in the past decade, the Latin American School of Public Relations (Molleda, 2001) has developed and offers a more socially focused approach than the more pragmatic US model. This is an important evolutionary development.

Professional associations were important in legitimizing PR as a professional activity, especially from the mid-1960s to 1990 by supporting its development, especially in higher education. The positioning and representation of PR as a professional activity of high value was crucial

in making it part of Colombian organizations' core communication activities. The expansion of university education since the 1990s has also contributed to the growth of the discipline and its perception among decision-makers and influential people.

Today, PR in Colombia is recognized as a profession full of challenges in terms of relations with the world, research possibilities and continuity of a scholarly production, thanks to the role played by pioneers, early practitioners, professional bodies and educators.

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Mexico

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Abstract: *This chapter explores the historical evolution of public relations (PR) in Mexico by taking a journey that begins with the foundation of the first PR agency in Mexico in 1945 to the present day. It also considers the factors that influenced the development of the scientific and professional disciplines involved in the practice. Particular emphasis is on six factors: (1) the transition from a skilled occupation to modern profession; (2) the evolution of PR departments and agencies; (3) partnerships between national and international agencies; (4) consolidation of specialists in the field and the creation of professional associations; (5) professionalization of the practice through academic training; and (6) government PR. The chapter demonstrates the scope and value of PR in Mexico and its contribution to the practice in Latin America.*

Keywords: business management; corporate communications; internal communications; public relations; strategic communications

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Public relations practice (PR) in Mexico has been institutionalized successfully thanks to six fundamental factors: (1) the transition from a skilled occupation to modern profession; (2) the evolution of PR departments and agencies; (3) partnerships between national and international agencies; (4) consolidation of specialists in the field and the creation of professional associations; (5) professionalization of the practice through academic training; and (6) government PR.

Conceptual evolution of PR

The Peruvian Flores Bao (1965) wrote that a truly humanistic sentiment was generated throughout Latin America from the early 1930s onwards with a growing interest in human relations. In order for people to achieve goals through others, they must be seen as more than simple instruments of production but as fellow beings who have their own personalities, feel reason, have ambitions and want to be respected and treated as human beings. It took many years for businesses to realize the need to address not only the demands and claims expressed by customers or end users, but also the exigencies, views and opinions expressed by the other human sectors involved in the company's socio-economic, production, distribution and consumption processes. Once the full magnitude of this need was understood, PR emerged as an administrative psychosocial function essential to reconciling the interests, attitudes and opinions of all audiences involved in daily business activities (Bonilla, 1988).

The evolution of the 'Public Relations' concept was closely linked to this development and thus there is need to review historical aspects of PR practice and theory in order to understand its advent in government and business and how it gradually became a management function (AMPRP, 1967).

At the end of the 1960s, both the concept and the practice of PR had completed the 'human relations' period that began in the 1930s. During this first phase, PR managed to penetrate and be accepted by companies and institutions worldwide, although under varying levels of acceptance of the practice (Flores Bao, 1981). In the next phase, from the 1960s to the 1990s, PR's development and positioning was consolidated through the role played by Mexican agencies that were closely linked with US agencies operating in regional and Latin American markets. Many local

agencies merged with international consultancy groups or were acquired by American capital serving particularly transnational companies.

In the 1990s, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) radically transformed the image of Mexicans and their links to global markets. This impact was also felt in the practice of PR which experienced exponential growth, particularly since the 1994 economic crisis in Mexico. The many influential factors included (1) foreign partners; (2) government and corporate investments to improve the country's international reputation; (3) the growth of the media industry; (4) the democratization of political spaces and the presidential election of 2000, and (5) substantive changes to the role of media in society and public engagement that called for greater openness and accountability (Díaz, 2002).

The evolution of PR agencies

PR in Mexico began as a skilled occupation and not as a profession prior to the emergence of formal agencies. In a broader sense, it began to spread within institutions when Pan American Airways opened an office in Mexico City in 1930. Wilbur L. Morrison was the first PR specialist in a private company in Mexico. He created and organized the Public Relations Division for Pan American Airways and hired reporters José F. Rojas, Manuel Ramírez and Ángel Viniegra to work in this division, who were then considered the first public relations practitioners in Mexico (Sánchez Fogarty, 1979). By 1950, practically all airlines operating in Mexico had followed Pan Am's lead, as had as numerous other companies that had, or were beginning, to create in-house PR departments.

The first agency created in Mexico was *Agencia Mexicana de Relaciones Públicas* founded by Federico Sánchez Fogarty in 1945 (García Turincio, 2012), and its main customers included the different industrial chambers existing in Mexico at the time (Bonilla, 2002). It was followed by the foundation of *RelaMex* by Walker and Crushaw of New York and was initially headed by Noel N. Lindsay and then by Raúl Horta. While *Agencia Mexicana de Relaciones Públicas* focused on institutional campaigns for the Mexican private sector, *RelaMex* served US companies with local business interests, such as General Electric, General Motors, E.R. Squibb and Sons, and Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, among others.

In 1947, Sánchez Fogarty founded the Public Relations Committee of the Confederation of Chemical Pharmaceutical Industrial Chamber. Meanwhile, Héctor Manuel Romero formed the third agency in Mexico, Relaciones Públicas and later changed to Romero Sadurni, Relaciones Públicas and finally to Consejeros en Relaciones Públicas. In 1949, Guillermo D. Ramírez Aguilar founded the fourth agency in Mexico, Agencia Periodística Mexicana that specialized in national and international congresses and conventions.

More major PR, market research and promotional agencies began operations between 1960 and 1970. Some of the oldest companies in the field in Mexico include Alonso y Asociados, founded by Manuel Alonso Muñoz, the first Mexican member of PRSA (Bonilla, 2002), Grupo Prom (1971), Advertising and Promotion (1978), Marketing & Promotion (1979) and Cosmic (1980) (Baran and Hidalgo Toledo, 2005).

During the 1970s, agencies provided marketing-related production services dedicated to the production of promotional items from brands, products and services, and public relations strategies. However, PR agencies truly began to grow in the 1980s, at a rate of nearly 15 per cent per year. From 1987, growth was rapid as the total of six medium to large firms had risen to 40 by 2002 and 159 by 2009 (Rebeil Corella and Arévalo Martínez, 2011).

During the 1980s, the media became the object of censorship and self-regulation policies because of the corruption and manipulation found in certain sectors. PR agencies had to find creative ways to avoid being censored or to stop publicity and information dissemination being blocked by publishers. In the mid-1990s, the country began to experience substantial political, economic and social shifts with the positive presence and influence of an open media, particularly print and electronic, that produced a powerful influence on society. This impact on public opinion strongly benefited the PR sector and they reduced reliance on newspapers and accessed new spaces on radio and television, the world of entertainment, news, politics, culture, economics and social events to spread the ideas of people who did not think like the political party in power. The type of clients who hired PR agencies started to diversify (Díaz Manero, 2002) and the sector expanded.

Given the expectations generated by NAFTA, large international PR consultancies partnered with Mexican PR firms or opened their own offices to meet the growing demand for the services generated by the influx of foreign companies.

Despite the recurrent financial crises the country has faced over the past three decades affecting most companies in Mexico, in the late 1980s towards the end of President Miguel de la Madrid's term and the beginning of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari's administration, trade liberalization and the subsequent signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement led to the establishment of a large number of foreign companies in Mexico (Díaz, 2002). Some of these were subsidiaries of large foreign companies, whose corporate cultures considered the inclusion of PR activities. This led to a significant increase in demand for PR services.

Another phenomenon that influenced the increase of PR agencies was the 'awakening' of local companies to use PR for competitive advantage. Previously, they had not engaged in any kind of formal activities but were forced to do so as foreign competitors sought to take over the domestic market that had previously 'belonged' to them. One indicator of the PR agency market's expansion was the launch of *Directory of Public Relations Firms and Agencies* published by Editorial Katedra, which reported the existence of 51 PR agencies in late 2000.

The first foreign agency to enter the Mexican market was Grupo GCI, a subsidiary of the New York City-based Grey advertising group, that came in 1981 and partnered with local firm Alonso y Asociados, which itself was founded in 1963 by PR pioneer Manuel Alonso Muñoz. Muñoz later served as General Director of PR for President Miguel de la Madrid (1982–1988).

The second US company was Burson-Marsteller which first associated with, and then acquired, local agency Omo Delta, founded by Fernando Mariscal. Manning Selvage & Lee joined with Silvia Pendás to become the third foreign agency. Fleishman-Hillard chose to open its own office. Edelman linked with local firm Comunicaciones Interamericanas owned by Robert Benjamin and Robert Prescott, and later bought the company and renamed it Edelman México. Ketchum and Hill & Knowlton later opened their own offices, the latter after a first attempt through a partnership with Bruno Newman that did not work out. Porter-Novelli partnered with local firm Martec, as Golin Harris did with communications firm Zimat. Partnership, followed by acquisition, was thus the predominant manner by which these ten US firms entered the consulting services market in Mexico.

The main 50 agencies operating in the Mexican market include the foreign firms mentioned above, plus other local agencies, most of which operated on a small or medium scale.

Currently (2014), 81 per cent of all Mexican agencies are between 20 and 35 years old (ProRP, 2010). By 2009, 82 per cent of all Mexican agencies maintained global ties with Canadian, US, European, Asian and Latin American firms, both in terms of shareholding (14%) or as franchises (40%) (ProRP, 2010).

The institutionalization of PR

In 1951 the Asociación Mexicana de Profesionales en Relaciones Públicas (AMPRP) was formed by Federico Sánchez Fogarty, Juan M. Durán y Casahonda, Domingo Alessio Robles, Andrés du Bouchett, Héctor Manuel Romero and Guillermo B. Ramírez de Aguilar, with the intention to support the work of the professionals involved in PR, exchange experiences and share a vision of the profession's future (García Turincio, 2012). AMPRP was followed by the gradual formation of regional and specialist associations between 1952 and 1972 which included Asociación de Profesionales en Relaciones Públicas in Monterrey, Guadalajara, Juárez and Chihuahua and the Asociación Nacional de Ejecutivos en Relaciones Públicas.

Sánchez Fogarty, then serving as AMPRP president, invited the presidents and senior representatives of all national associations in Latin America to the First Conference of Public Relations Associations in 1960. The purpose of this conference was 'to analyze the possibility of establishing an Inter-American Federation that would gather the national associations of each country to open communication channels and organize the exchange of ideas and experiences in an effort to enhance the prestige of Public Relations activities' (Cueto Vera, 1960).

AMPRP sponsored the first Inter-American Conference which was held in Mexico City on September 26–29 1960 and attended by representatives of groups in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Panama, Puerto Rico, the United States and Venezuela, who unanimously approved the idea of founding the Inter-American Federation of Public Relations Associations (IFPRA). The attendees also agreed to organize an annual conference similar to the first meeting held in Mexico (Cueto

Vera, 1960). In 1966, the United Nations admitted IFPRA as one of its consultative non-governmental members.

In March 1967, the Asociación Mexicana de Profesionales en Relaciones Públicas was established to link professionals and thereby generate collaborative networks for training.

On 26 February 1970, the Consejo Mexicano de Profesionales en Relaciones Pública was formed in the city of Monterrey, in northern Mexico. This Council was founded by the associations working in Mexico City, Guadalajara, Monterrey and Ciudad Juárez. The Asociación Chihuahuense subsequently joined the group while the Asociación de Guadalajara decided to leave the Council (Sánchez Fogarty, 1979).

Over a quarter of a century, the Mexican Council of Public Relations Professionals sponsored several national PR conferences starting with the 1st Mexican Public Relations Conference in 1959 and continuing until the 7th National Public Relations Conference in 1984. In 1972, the Public Relations Society of Mexico, the National Association of Public Relations Executives and the National Association of Executives in Public Relations merged to form the Public Relations Society of Mexico (AMRP). In the following year the Mexican Association of Internal Communications (AMCI) was set up and changed its name several times to become the Asociación Mexicana de Comunicadores (2003).

The First World Assembly of Public Relations Associations was held in Mexico City in 1978, where PR was defined in the form of the Mexico City Declaration as: 'the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organizational leaders, and implementing planned programs of action, which will serve both the organization and the public interest' alongside the First World Forum of Public Relations, sponsored by the Mexican Public Relations Association (chaired by prominent PR Carlos Navarrete and the Inter-American Federation of Public Relations Associations. This was attended by representatives of national associations from Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, Ghana, Great Britain, Ireland, Kenya, Nigeria, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States, Uruguay and Venezuela, and the host country. Since then some multinational PR agencies extended their operations to the Mexican market.

The Mexican Association of Communication Researchers (AMIC) was formed in 1979, to develop a specialist PR and organizational communications research group. In 1980, the Asociación Nacional de Relaciones

Públicas de Instituciones de Educación Superior (ANARPIES) was created to gather the directors of PR of universities and technical institutions across the nation. The Asociación de Relaciones Públicas del Caribe Mexicano A.C. was founded in 1983. More PR industry bodies were formed in this decade. In 1984, the Asociación Mexicana de Profesores de Relaciones Públicas (AMPRORP) was designed to gather faculty members of universities and higher education institutions with PR programmes at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Mexican Public Relations Federation (FEMARP) was created that same year to integrate the work done by three representative groups: Asociación Mexicana de Relaciones Públicas, Asociación Nacional de Relaciones Públicas de Instituciones de Educación Superior (ANARPIES) and Asociación Mexicana de Profesores de Relaciones Públicas. Later, in 1985, the Mexican Public Relations Association sponsored the creation of the Asociación Mexicana de Estudiantes de Relaciones Públicas (AMERPAC) that brought together students majoring in PR studies in Mexico City. The Mexican Public Relations Association organized the 1st Ibero-American Week of Public Relations in Mexico City in July 1987.

In the 1990s the Mexican Academy of Public Relations was founded within the Mexican Cultural Institute in 1992, but changed its name to the National Academy of Public Relations in 1995 and became one of the member institutions of the National Advertising Council, now known as the Communication Council.

The Mexican Association of Public Relations Agencies (ProRP) was created in 1995, to bring agencies and consulting firms together in an effort to bring order to this market. It was launched with the support of eight of the 120 agencies operating in Mexico at that time, including Grupo GCI, Edelman, Martec Porter Novelli, PCC Comunicación, Arvizu, McBride Communications, Zimat Golin Harris and Hill & Knowlton. These agencies collectively billed US \$18.5 million (\$240 million Mexican pesos) per year. In 2003, the overall PR consultancy market was valued at US \$650 million (\$8.4 billion pesos).

The Confederation of the Marketing Communications Industry has represented and supported the PR industry's interests since 2003. It comprises the Mexican Internet Association (AMIPCI), the Mexican Association of Market Research and Public Opinion Agencies (AMAI), the Mexican Direct Marketing Association (AMMD), the Mexican Association of Promotions Agencies (AMAPRO), the Mexican Association of Advertising Agencies (AMAP) and the Mexican Association of Public

Relations Professionals. By 2003, a total of 233 companies comprising the corporate and marketing communications industry was valued at more than US \$2.3 billion (\$30 billion pesos), creating 65,000 direct jobs and more than 425,000 indirect jobs (Baran and Hidalgo Toledo, 2005).

The 1st International Congress of Public Relations, organized by ProRP, was held in 2007 and attracted more than 200 delegates. Its seventh edition was held in 2014.

Despite all these organizations, there is still a lack of cohesive effort to strengthen partnerships in Mexico and to promote the profession at the regional and local levels (Rebeil Corella et al., 2009).

Professionalization through academic training

In 1976, Pacific University and Latinoamericana University offered the first bachelor programmes in PR. More than 60 years after the foundation of professional journalism and communication study programmes in Mexico, the discipline of PR is still in the process of strengthening its identity and location. In Mexico, there are more than 1000 educational institutions that offer communications programmes, 28 per cent of them located in the Mexico City metropolitan area (Rebeil Corella, 2009) and more than 50 universities that offer specific academic programmes in PR, organizational communication and advertising (Fuentes Navarro, 2005).

Nine universities in Mexico have developed degree or specialty programmes in PR or communications: Universidad Anahuac University, Escuela de Comunicación Social de Sinaloa, Universidad del Valle del Bravo, Universidad de Sonora, Universidad del Noroeste, Universidad del Tepeyac, Universidad Iberoamericana, Universidad Latinoamericana and Universidad del Valle de México. However, only three offer a degree in PR: Universidad del Valle de México, Universidad del Noreste and Universidad Latinoamericana. The teaching of PR study programmes has also grown considerably, particularly in private schools that offer professional development courses, diploma programs, Bachelor's and Master's degrees (Rebeil Corrella and Hidalgo Toledo, 2010).

Government PR

In 1931, the Mexican government established the Information Department in the Ministry of the Interior, followed by the Directorate General of

Information in the Office of the President of Mexico, in 1938. The first presidential press office was opened in 1946, during President Miguel Alemán's administration in order to improve the media image of the President and thus affect public opinion positively (Sanchez Fogarty, 1979).

Since then, government agencies and state-run enterprises have gradually established PR divisions or departments, albeit under different names, such as press office, broadcasting, information, social communications, press and propaganda, and institutional relations. The status of PR in government was lowered during the José López Portillo administration (1976–1982) when it was changed from the Directorate General of Information and Public Relations of the Office of the President of Mexico to the General Social Communications Coordination Office of the President of the Republic. This downgrading was immediately adopted by all Federal government agencies and state governments, which changed the names of the PR departments to 'social communications units'. Such units then created PR departments assigned to carry out operational, complementary and even trivial tasks focused on providing support for institutional events (contracting of services, recruiting hostesses, etc.) and to serve as information modules (Caloca Carrasco, 1982).

Mexico has since had a difficult time politically, with a high level of public disappointment in government and the political class. The extreme political situation that led to the perpetuation of one-party government through the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) for 71 years was unblocked a decade ago, leading to a change in power and therefore a transition to real democracy. In 2000 President Fox, representing the conservative PAN party, won the presidential election for an election period of six years. However, there was disenchantment with the broken promises of the Fox administration and claims of corruption. The campaign against this administration started well ahead of the 2006 presidential election and led to the expansion of political PR that focused on improving the image of politicians, presidents and through the work of consultants and external agencies working with departments created to support the presidency.

The PR market

With respect to the development of PR consulting services, the Mexican Advertising Agency Directory reported the existence of ten agencies in 1984. Three years later, in October 1987, only six of these remained

due to the financial crisis the country faced at that time (ProRP, 2008). However, the Mexican PR market has grown to become a multi-million dollar industry valued at more than US \$230 million (\$3 billion pesos). It serves 418 companies with registered PR divisions and investments, thereby creating more than 5000 direct jobs and 8556 indirect jobs. In 2011, it reported a 22 per cent growth over the previous year. According to the Mexican Association of Public Relations Professionals, 60 per cent of all PR activities in Mexico are undertaken by women, 50 per cent of companies buying PR services are foreign-controlled, and 73 per cent of all services are outsourced to external consultants. The sector has increasingly grown among small- and medium-scale enterprises, although it is still considered as belonging to large business corporations. The industry in 2011 used up 3.5 per cent of the marketing budget in Mexico and employs some 6480 staff (Carreño, 2011; CICOM, 2013).

Major trends

PR has become more sophisticated and institutionalized, with operations in Mexico focusing on the five major dimensions:

- 1 Corporate and institutional communications to benefit companies by ensuring stronger visibility. These include strategic consulting services and internal and external communications programmes.
- 2 Brand communication to establish sales and market networks supporting the corporate logistics and promotion divisions. This covers the development of launch strategies for new products and services.
- 3 Product marketing to support the positioning and marketing of a product by highlighting its design, packaging, image and innovation. This includes the development of communication and marketing strategies, and event planning and organization.
- 4 Lobbying and political communication to support political, economic, cultural and social management and negotiations in the public, private and third sectors. This includes both media training, and crisis prevention and management.
- 5 PR 2.0, which considers services involving new technological tools to produce a visual impact and reach the hearts and minds of the target audiences through the creation of interactive content (Hodges and Hidalgo Toledo, 2013).

Conclusions

Some of the main challenges that PR faces include generating qualitative value for companies, brands and institutions, strengthening its credibility, implementing new technological tools to reach target audiences; the diversification of communication vehicles, and designing new strategies to build brands (Castellanos, 2012). The dynamics of faster, deeper and extensive globalization experienced in the Latin American region, the increased participation of foreign consultants, the rapid incorporation of information and communication technologies as well as the political, economic and cultural changes are allowing PR to expand faster in all forms, especially because of the concentration and participation of the supranational firms that coexist and compete with national and regional firms.

PR services today are contracted by the private, public and third sectors. An increasing number of agencies are offering integrated communication services in an attempt to address internal, corporate, commercial, marketing, administrative and creative communications and crisis management.

The professionalization of teaching as a professional practice is forcing PR professionals to take more courses to obtain their certifications. Mexico is increasingly offering programmes in the second and third levels of education that will serve to increase the culture, research and outreach in the field.

The profession is undergoing major transformations as the result of the new role information technologies play in shaping public opinion, citizen demands, and corporate branding. Today we can talk about the evolution of amateur Public Relations to the consolidated professional level, but above all, about the institutionalization of the sector, heralding its maturity.

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7

Peru

Amybel Sánchez de Walther

Abstract: *The evolution of public relations (PR) in Peru from the mid-20th century to the past decade is described. It focuses on pioneering texts about this communicative discipline, referring in detail to their role in the theoretical and academic debate of the specialization. As well, it considers the first professional societies and the formation of the ethical regulations which aided the consolidation of PR in this country.*

Keywords: ALACAURP; FEREP; legal framework; Peru; publications; public relations; research

Watson, Tom (ed.). *Latin American and Caribbean Perspectives on the Development of Public Relations: Other Voices*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
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The first books written about public relations (PR) in Peru give strong indications as to the influences from the United States of America that have shaped its practice. The earliest publication, registered in the National Library of Peru, was a booklet prepared by Alberto Joffré Cousido in 1958. In the following year, the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos in the capital Lima published *Issues of Public Communication in Peru*, written by a visiting US academic Douglas Waples who devoted five chapters to the topic of public communication, followed by a case study the communication strategies put in practice to conciliate the disputing parties in a bank strike. Waples also analysed the visit of the-then US Vice-President Richard Nixon to Lima and mining issues.

Although the topics in Waples' book are within a Peruvian context, the bibliography includes neither any article about PR written from a local perspective nor a reference to local newspapers. All the sources were American. In that sense, it was a book made in Peru and about Peru, but with American knowhow, based on a two-way communication model, which can be inferred from the preface written by the book's editors at San Marcos university which said organizations should 'listen to the voices and souls, feelings, complaints and desires gently as a free spirit would do' (Waples, 1959, p. 7).

Another US scholar, Howard Stephenson, who came to Peru as a Fulbright Scholar, published *Public Relations* (1960) through Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, another leading university in Lima. This book was also made up of five parts: (a) PR: power and prestige; (b) public opinion; (c) publics; (d) communications; and (e) using PR. The bibliography, like Waples' book, does not have any Peruvian references and even lacked Spanish-speaking authors. However, it also corresponds to the two-way model:

To sum up, we can say our scope is triangular. One apex is Public Opinion, another one is the Company, and the connection of both of them results in a two-way communication: from the company to the public and from the public to the company. (Stephenson, 1960, pp. 4–5)

Pioneering research

In 1962, Ubaldo Velasco Alvarado, a student in the Faculty of Economic and Commercial Sciences from Universidad Nacional Mayor de San

Marcos, defended the first bachelor thesis about PR with *Organization and Performance of the Public Relations Department Inside a Mining Company*. In addition, the Office of Information and Publications of the Peruvian National Institute of Planning published a document entitled *Public Relations and Information in Public Administration* (1964), thus becoming the first governmental organization to analyse formally the practice of PR. At the same time, a number of booklets arose from different entities captivated by the discipline. These included the Bylaws of the Peruvian Society of Public Relations Leaders (1966) and the admission booklets of the Escuela Superior de Relaciones Públicas del Perú (1966–1967).

Because of the interest of the students and practitioners of the 1960s, Peruvian academics started to develop studies in PR. Thus, Francisco Flores Bao became the author of the first specialist Peruvian publication, entitled *Foundations of Public Relations* (1965), in which the contributions of Stephenson and other American authors such as Cutlip and Center, and Bernays were mentioned.

The decade ended with the publication by the Portuguese author Joaquín Mateus dos Santos, entitled *Human Relations in Our Times. Analysis of the Contemporary Thinking* (1969), in which the author took into consideration American PR models and referred to Cutlip and Center, and Stephenson.

In summary, early Peruvian publications were influenced by American academic contributions. Moreover, authors' perspectives came not from the conceptual pillars of communication sciences, but from economic and administrative sciences.

PR inside Peruvian statism and protectionism

By the beginning of 1970s, the production of books about PR was very limited. It was assumed to be an academic subject, more than having arisen from the regular practice of the companies. Moreover, the mindset of local businessmen was not to pay much attention to their publics.

This situation became more complicated during the military government from 1968 to 1980, mainly due to the statist and protectionist economic policy that involved the entire business activity of the country: the market was overprotected and Peruvian businessmen had no need to position or promote their products as they had no foreign competition. In this scenario, businessmen did not feel obliged to develop close

relationships with clients who had no option other than to buy the local products, thus, creating a wrong idea of viability inside the companies.

With this economy of centralized control led by the military dictatorship, Perez Astete published his booklet, *Public Relations in the Civil Guard of Peru* (1971). The following year, a governmental entity produced *Public Relations in the Sanitation Company of Lima, a Decentralized Public Organisation of the Housing Sector* (1972), which analysed the situation between that company and its clients and employees. Also, at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Temístocles Armendáriz Cuba de Piérola defended a thesis about the internal publics of a public service entity entitled *Research about Attitudes inside the Administration of the Post and Telegraph Office* (1975). As may be deduced, these studies researched what was happening in public organizations in order to improve the respect of the publics through external communication.

In that decade, Flores Bao reprinted *Foundations of Public Relations* (1971). Francisco José del Solar Rojas edited his first works entitled, *New Concepts about Public Relations* (1972) and *Significance of Public Relations in the Process of Change* (1973). Additionally, there were four other reference manuals published: *Public Relations* (1997) by Javier Vela Jones; *Public Relations* (1977) by Alfieri Olcese Salvatecci and Gildomero Arista; *Manual of Public Relations* by Hernández Urbina (1978), which had a second edition in 1982; and *Vocabulary of Public Relations, Usual Terms in This Modern Specialization* (1978) by Roberto José Bustamante Flores.

End of century: Between instability and economic liberalization

The 1980s was a time of involution, when the country turned in on itself. It was a lost decade as the country experienced the worst economic and political crisis of the republic's history. Terrorism, poor administration and hyperinflation drove the nation impetuously towards the chaos and social collapse.

This critical situation was reflected in the intellectual production about PR, with just a few publications about the specialization: *Public Relations: Science of Human Integration* (1981) by Francisco Flores Bao and *Human Relations and Public Relations* (1981) by Francisco José del Solar Rojas at the decade's beginning. In 1982, the *Manual of Public Relations* was re-edited by Hernández Urbina. Enrique Estremadoyro Escobar wrote

Public Relations and the Company (1982) and Justo Avellaneda composed the book, *Public Relations* (1985), based on class notes (assembled since 1967) at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos.

The 1990s marked a positive turning point for the development of PR due to emerging interest from higher education institutions towards the discipline, which was reflected in academic and teaching material. The Universidad Nacional San Antonio de Abad del Cuzco published *Public Relations in the Context of Communication* (1990) by Ortiz Castillo. With the support of the National Council of Science and Technology, the *Manual of Public Relations* (1990) was edited by Aragón Candía. In 1993, the academic Emilio Solórzano Hernández published *Public Relations in Latin America and Peru, on the Way to the 21st Century* (1993). The Faculty of Communication Sciences of Universidad Inca Garcilaso de la Vega launched José Francisco del Solar Rojas' book, *Protocol, Federal Ceremonial and Public Relations* (1994). The same year an international seminar took place and the resultant *Public Relations: Elementary Tool for Modern Business Management* was edited by Calderón Quino and published a year later by the Professional School of Communication Sciences of Universidad de San Martín de Porres in Lima. This author published a second title: *Public Relations, Total Quality and Human Factor* (1996).

Other important educational institutions continued to expand the research and publication base of documents about PR. In 1996, Lima's School of Journalism Jaime Bausate y Meza prepared teaching material for a distance learning programme on PR. Again, Del Solar Rojas wrote a new title: *The Science of Public Relations* (1996), published by Universidad Inca Garcilaso de la Vega in Cuzco.

By the mid-1990s, Universidad de San Martín de Porres (USMP) had become a strong supporter of the debate and systematization of PR with the publication of the minutes of the *First Latin American Forum of Public Relations* (1996), which had taken place in Madrid the previous year. This forum recognized the need to build bridges and establish connections between academic education and the practice of the profession in the real working environment. To support the education–practice relationship, the Agreement of Mutual Cooperation was ratified and registered between the General Council of Associations of Public Relations Practitioners and the Inter American Federation of Public Relations (CONFIARP), both from Spain, in order to develop research projects and develop courses for the undergraduate PR studies. As well, USMP held the Second Latin American Forum of Public Relations in 1998,

which had been developed in Lima in the previous year. Additionally, it launched *Higher Public Relations: A New Education* (1999) by Román Pérez Senac and Emilio Solórzano.

This bibliographic review confirms the decisive interest that academic institutions had in PR, which provided the discipline with a scientific basis and research. Although initial PR research was influenced by American sources (e.g. Cutlip and Center, and Bernays), books written in the 1990s focused mainly on Peruvian national and regional (South American) realities, as reflected in Pérez Senac and Solórzano Hernández (1999) who proposed PR as a complex system which used an integrated multi-disciplinary approach to manage communicational strategies.

Peruvian PR professional ethical–legal frame

The end of military dictatorship and the return to democracy significantly motivated the development of PR in Peru. Following the controversial 1980s when the country suffered from and combated terrorist attacks by Maoist and Marxist groups, Peru took action and decided on a free market policy and opened its markets to the world. This was aimed at re-entering the international financial world, thus taking up a big step towards progress and economic welfare.

In that sense, the neoliberal Constitution of 1993 (Tribunal Constitucional del Peru, 2014) assured not only the freedom of expression (item 2, number 4) but also the liberty of corporations, trade and industry (item 59). In addition, it established the State as the promoter for the creation of small companies. The constitution also rejected any monopoly practice or dictatorial property, including communications activities (item 61).

Based on these foundations, PR was able to develop with dynamism and grew in parallel with the economic sectors and the Peruvian entrepreneurs, specifically in the fields of gastronomy, tourism, entertainment and services. Meanwhile the bureaucratic system started its way towards modernization, working on better management of resources. Although there was undeniable leadership by transnational companies in key sectors such as telecommunications and mining, the Peruvian economy reached important growth rates, very distant from those registered in previous decades. During the first decade of 2000s, Peru signed a number of agreements related to free commerce with several financial world powers, the United States among them, which assured a greater

participation in the global market. As a result, corporations began to place their PR departments in charge of the communicational issues inside and outside the organization.

Formation of professional organizations

The First National Congress of Public Relations had been held in Arequipa in 1976. Participants came from the province associations of Piura, Lambayeque, La Libertad, Lima, Junín, Cuzco and Tacna. They started a process that ultimately formed an organization which later became the Federation of Public Relations Specialists of Peru (FEREP). This process continued in national congresses held in Cuzco, Lima, Chiclayo and Trujillo in the subsequent years. After a decade, the objective was accomplished in the sixth National Congress carried out in Huancayo (1986). In that city, the provincial PR associations of Piura, Lambayeque, La Libertad, Lima, Junín, Cuzco and Tacna unanimously agreed to create a PR society to bring all them together. The legal procedures to form the body which became the Federation of Public Relations Specialists of Peru (FEREP) were started. In the same year, this organization introduced a six-item Code of Ethics of PR. Despite the small number of articles, the content referred to a series of general aspects around the practice of PR, based on ethics, truth, general culture and the theoretical corpus of PR itself (items 1 and 3). There was also reference to the respect of law and the values of the nation (item 2).

The Federation of Public Relations Specialists of Peru was formally established on 10 February 1989 in Public Registries as entry number 9755. But the formation of these bodies also had bureaucratic and legal delays to overcome. Perla Anaya (2001) describes the initial challenges and delays experienced by Peruvian Society of Public Relations Specialists, one year later:

On June 18, 1990, during the last year of the government of President Alan García, under the law 25290, the Peruvian Society of Public Relations Specialists was created. It was intended that the different representative organizations of the professional guild throughout the country would come together. However... the subsequent government of President Alberto Fujimori reduced support to the professional societies... this measure frustrated the process of registration which was an essential requirement to put the professional society into operation. (p. 195)

Law 25290 was, however, not declared until 2004. A year later, the Peruvian Professional Society of Public Relations Specialists was booked into the Public Registries. This important guild of practitioners is comprised of nine chapters around the nation. The separate Professional Society of Public Relations Practitioners of Peru waited until 2005 to be officially booked in the Public Registries. This body supports deeper and greater research, the development of international events aimed at keeping in contact with the academic institutions, a knowledge network to exchange experiences, and a broader approach towards the needs and demands of the national business world.

The organization that connects communication and PR teaching and research in Peruvian universities with the rest of the Latin America is ALACAURP (Latin American Association of University Careers of Public Relations), which was founded by the Declaration of Cuzco in 1999 after a meeting of representatives from different Latin American universities. Guided by integrating principles of mutual solidarity and collaboration, ALACAURP has aimed at raising the value of the humanistic approach of PR, in parallel with specialized and research-led education that contributes to the substantial development of the countries from the region. The formation of this international association has benefited the practice, teaching and publications about PR in Peru through alliances and university agreements (i.e. in the framework of certification processes as well as conferences and academic seminars). These have permitting Peruvian PR specialists to develop their practice and educational knowledge alongside fellow regional practitioners and educators.

Conclusion

The practice of PR in Peru was essentially empirical and intuitive, based only on experience until the arrival of American academics and professors in the 1960s who exhibited the proposed two-way communication model which would be theorized during the following decades. Although Waples and Stephenson came from different branches of the social sciences, both agreed about the existence of a need to achieve mutual understanding between the organization and its publics, whether internal or external (cf. Grunig and Hunt, 1984).

The American influence increased significantly when early Peruvian PR theorists referenced the academic works of Cutlip and Center, and

Bernays. However, progress was limited to certain fields related to administration and business management, leaving aside the dimension purely communicative and relational. By the late-1980s, Peru had no centres of academic researching to promote communication science with energy. This situation gradually changed with the formation of the first PR societies and unions.

In that context, by the mid-1990s, PR was understood to be more than publicity that disseminated information in a one-way communication flow between the company and its clients, but it also went beyond, towards getting a feedback and subsequent assessment of the contents. Thus, this two-way dialogic aspect has become essential in a multicultural market such as Peru, where the ever more diversified and demanding publics use different sources of information to validate an idea. Besides the creation of professional societies, by the middle of the past decade, and the increasing number of Faculties and Schools of Communication Science, research has also expanded the outlook of both academics and practitioners.

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