

## The right-wing also laughs. Graphic humor in the magazine *El Caudillo de la Tercera Posición*

### Abstract

This paper presents a study of graphic humor in the Peronist magazine *El Caudillo de la Tercera Posición*. This magazine was published between 1973 and 1975 as a weekly political news publication and it became a flagship vehicle of the right-wing Peronism. It fought and denounced the 'infiltration' of the left-wing. Since the early issues it included a continuous humor section with caricatures and comic strips. By analyzing the humor section, it is possible to grasp the political culture of the Peronist right-wing and the stereotypes that it has built about its enemies.

**Keywords:** Humor; Right-wing; Anticommunism; Peronism.

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## La derecha también ríe. El humor gráfico en la revista *El Caudillo de la Tercera Posición*

### Resumen

Este trabajo presenta un estudio del humor gráfico de la revista peronista *El Caudillo de la Tercera Posición*. Esta revista fue editada entre 1973 y 1975 como un semanario de información política y se convirtió en una publicación emblemática del peronismo de derecha. De allí se combatió y denunció la “infiltración” de la izquierda. Desde sus primeros números incluyó una sección fija de humor con caricaturas y tiras cómicas. Es a través del análisis de la sección de humor que se hace posible entender la cultura política de la derecha peronista y los estereotipos que esta construyó sobre sus enemigos.

**Palabras clave:** Humor; Derecha; Anticomunismo; Peronismo.

### Introduction

In this paper, I seek to analyze the political culture of the Peronist right-wing through humor. I define the Peronist right-wing as a particular current within the broad Peronist movement that may be traced from the very early stages of the movement, by means of a number of organizations, intellectuals, and publications. The political culture of the Peronist right-wing may be traced back to 1943, the result of a combination between the culture of the nationalist right-wing and the emerging Peronist movement. This political culture of the right-wing gained momentum in the 1960s, as a counterpart to the consolidation of a left-wing sector in the Peronist movement. The coexistence of a left-wing political culture and a right-wing one took a violent and irreconcilable nature since the 1970s, when Peronism came back to power (BESOKY, 2013).

By political culture I mean, following the definition by Berstein (1999), a shared worldview, and according to Sirinelli (1993): “a kind of code and a set of references

formalized within a party or in a rather broad way, within a family or a political tradition.” In the case of the Peronist right-wing, such a culture consisted of: “a philosophical or doctrinal ground, most often expressed in the form of a vulgata accessible to many,” which was the national-justicialism, as a nationalist position related to the Tercera posición, anticomunista y anticapitalista; of “a historical narrative, i.e. a common and normative reading of the historical past connoting, positively or negatively, the long periods of the past,” which was historical revisionism and the claim of the triad San Martín, Rosas, and Perón; and of “a coded discourse where the vocabulary used, the keywords, the repetitive formulas bear meaning,” which were the ideas of social justice, national liberation, economic independence, anti-imperialism, anti-liberalism, anticommunism, Judeo-Masonic conspiracy, synarchy, etc.

One of the most characteristic publications by the Peronist right-wing and just the one that has deserved the attention of researchers has been *El Caudillo de la Tercera Posición*<sup>1</sup>. In this article, I focus exclusively on the humor section of this magazine, in order to analyze the political culture observed in the so-called ‘orthodox Peronism’<sup>2</sup>.

### *The Magazine El Caudillo de la Tercera Posición*

The magazine *El Caudillo de la Tercera Posición* was a general weekly news publication directed by Felipe Romeo, and holder of the slogan of the ‘Peronist nation’ as a counterpart to the ‘socialist nation’ of the Revolutionary Tendency of Peronism<sup>3</sup>. Romeo was a well-known figure in the right-wing nationalism, who had fought in the Guardia Restauradora Nacionalista and he had participated in the birth of the Peronist

<sup>1</sup> The papers focused on this publication are Murano (2007), Besoky (2010), Micieli& Pelazas (2012), Silva (2013) Simonetto (2015), and Iribarne (2015), although none of them address the issue of political humor.

<sup>2</sup> Preliminary versions of this paper took the form of presentations at conferences. See Besoky& Moya (2012) and Besoky (2014).

<sup>3</sup> By Tendencia Revolucionaria del Peronismo people meant a number of organizations that supported the revolutionary Peronism and national socialism as a political project. Such a designation included the military political organization Montoneros (which would be joined by the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias since October 12, 1973) and all surface groups related (JP, JTP, JUP, MVP, UES, AE, MIP). In addition to a sector of the Fuerzas Armadas Peronistas, Peronismo de Base, and Movimiento Revolucionario 17 de octubre. Meanwhile, figures from the artistic, intellectual, political, and trade union circles that fought in the ranks of combative Peronism, but did not belong organically to any of these entities, were also recognized as members of the Tendencia Revolucionaria. In this way, the Tendencia covered a broad current of the left-wing Peronism. Tocho (2015).

right-wing, specifically in the Juventud Peronista de la República Argentina (the *jotaperra*), in early 1973. *El Caudillo* came to light on November 16, 1973, 5 days before the public emergence of the Alianza Anticomunista Argentina (Triple A), in order to represent the voice of the Peronist right-wing and resist the Peronist left-wing that was expressed through the *El Descamisado*, a press medium of Montoneros, and also the magazine *Militancia Peronista para la Liberación*<sup>4</sup>. *El Caudillo*, whose design virtually mimicked the *El Descamisado*, was released on an almost regular basis until the end of 1975 and it eventually sold about 9,400 copies in newsstands in the Federal Capital.

The investigation conducted by journalists Alberto Moya and Adrián Murano in Murano (2007) has enabled clarifying who were the members of *El Caudillo*. As they report, Romeo had the money to create the magazine, but he had no idea of how to get the staff. This task was left to journalist José Miguel Tarquini, an old militant of Tacuara and leader of the Guardia Restauradora Nacionalista as the first editor-in-chief. He recruited colleagues who wrote in the newspaper *Crónica* and the magazine *Extra* and his sympathy for fascism and Franco's phalanx were notorious. The rest of the staff was completed by members of the Concentración Nacionalista Universitaria (CNU), the Juventud Peronista de la República Argentina (JPRA), and employees leased from the Ministerio de Bienestar Social.

The magazine had a strong political and financial support by the Ministerio de Bienestar Social provided by José Lopez Rega, as evidenced through the analysis of the extensive and repeated warnings of many government programs funded by this agency<sup>5</sup>. Thus, there were recurrent notices of housing programs and entire pages on youth sports events. There were no private advertisers, but ads by the Unión Obrera Metalúrgica (where, for instance, Rosas is compared to Perón due to his defense of sovereignty) and the CGT 62 Organizaciones (where the return of Evita's body is celebrated). The magazine

<sup>4</sup> The magazine *Militancia* had interests similar to the Peronismo de Base (PB), although it was not strictly an official organ of this group. It was related to the Fuerzas Armadas Peronistas (FAP) to the point that in some cases the PB was shown as the surface entity of the FAP.

<sup>5</sup> A cable from the U.S. embassy in Buenos Aires on December 9, 1975, sent to the State Department pointed out that one of the editors of *El Caudillo* had confirmed, to a press officer at the embassy, that funding for the magazine came from López Rega. See "Right-wing Terrorism Since López Rega", 1975BUENOS A-252: "El Caudillo's offices were suspected of being the AAA's headquarters before it went out of publication, and one of its editors recently admitted to an Embassy press officer that during that time it was financed by Lopez Rega. (Now, he added, it is financed by Lorenzo Miguel.)" For a more detailed analysis of funding for the magazine see Simonetto (2015, p.133-138).

was devoted to analyzing the political situation and it brought several permanent sections: the first pages contained the editorial, a section of investigation and denouncement of ‘synarchy’ practices, and other section, entitled OÍME, where some character of the Argentine politics was condemned.

Just since the second issue the weekly publication began to provide almost always on the last page a space devoted to humor. José Miguel Tarquini, Editor-in-Chief, included a section of gossip and entertainment – identified in a black heading on the header – with exclusive references to politics, like a crossword game under the name Peronograma. Riddles and poems with the specific purpose of ridiculing the left-wing were also included. Then, only the cartoons and comic strips representing the many enemies of the magazine remained in the subsequent issues. Unfortunately, the humor section had neither signature of the cartoonist or any additional data in the successive issues that could enable the identification of the author or authors. However, the kind of caricatures that appear have similarities with other drawings by the *Mazorca*, published by the Guardia Restauradora Nacionalista, in 1968, something which suggests that perhaps this is the same person who years later would collaborate to *El Caudillo*<sup>6</sup>. In turn, Alberto Moya has identified the same style of caricatures on the cover of the magazine *Cabildo* in 1976, and this also suggests collaboration by the same cartoonist<sup>7</sup>.

The spectrum of enemies of the weekly *El Caudillo* can be seen in the vignette of the issue 7 on December 28, 1973, where, under the inscription “Seis proyectos municipales para la patria nacional-justicialista (Asunto: La horca más alta del mundo),” an obelisk was drawn and there were string ties under various symbols<sup>8</sup>: “Para los delincuentes económicos,” he included a six-pointed star with the sign \$; “Para los yanquis,” the obelisk as a missile has the inscription USAF; “Para los bolches,” a dark pentacle added with the hammer and sickle; “Para los masones,” the obelisk tip as a triangle connecting three points; “Para los gorilas,” a palm tree with coconuts; and “Para los liberales,” a Phrygian cap.

<sup>6</sup> See, for instance, “!!!NO A LOS FANTASMAS!!!...” in *Mazorca*, número 1, año II (segunda época), 1968, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup> “Cover of *Cabildo* in October 1976, Año I; N° 3; 2ª época. The drawing shows an individual in uniform with starred beret and a logo on the shirt that reads ERP- Montoneros with a sickle and a hammer in the center. Hugging Uncle Sam, whose galley and pants have a U.S. flag.” Taken from Moya, A. “El facho honesto”, unpublished. I thank the author for providing me with this information.

<sup>8</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 7, on December 28, 1973, p. 23.



Illustration 1. Humor section of *El Caudillo* (EC), N°7, 28 de diciembre de 1973, p. 23.

An analysis of these caricatures allows us to find continuous aesthetic features that helped creating a stereotype of the leftist militant. The stereotype, as pointed out by Burke (2005), may not be entirely false, but it often exaggerates actual elements and omits other elements. The caricaturist appeals to pre-existing prejudices while he reinforces them and, as noticed by Burke, “The stereotype may be more or less cruel, more or less violent, but in any case it is necessarily devoid of nuances, because the same model applies to cultural situations that considerably differ from one another.”

Some of the common places that nurtured the magazine to take a viewpoint<sup>9</sup> on the left-wing had to do with elements already observed in the right-wing nationalism. The figure of a montonero was represented wearing lenses of intellectual, with big ears,

<sup>9</sup> The concept of ‘look’ is a term from psychoanalysis, since Jacques Lacan designates what was ‘viewpoint’ before. As Burke states: “both if we refer to the artists’ intentions and the way how different groups of viewers look at their work, it is compelling to think in terms, for instance, of western look, scientific look, colonial look, tourist look, or men look. The look often expresses a mental attitude that the viewer may not be aware of, both concerning hatred, fears, or wishes towards the other.” Burke (2005)

aquiline nose, and insignias such as the Star of David, the hammer and sickle, or the American flag. These traits sought to emphasize the characterization of sectors of the Tendencia Revolucionaria as intellectuals (hence, not workers); Marxists [Illustration 2] (not Peronists; i.e. undercover agents); Jews (stateless) and pro-Yankees (CIA agents) [Illustration 3].



Illustration 2. EC, N°15, 22 febrero de 1974, p. 23.



Illustration 3. EC. N°7, 28 diciembre de 1973, p. 23.

Some women's gestures and clothes are added to characterize them as homosexuals [Illustration 4] and junkies [Illustration 5].



Illustration 4. EC, N°55, 17 diciembre de 1974, p. 23.



Illustration 5. EC, N°7, 28 diciembre de 1973, p. 23.

### Ortodoxio against Tendencio

Since the issue 4 on December 7, 1973, the various caricatures on the humor page shared their space with a funny strip consisting of three boxes entitled ‘Ortodoxio.’ Under that name there was the flagship character of the magazine, which was rolled up to the elbows, wore mustaches, and had a P-shaped head that fit through a big V-shaped neckline. In the strip, Ortodoxio, holding a copy of *El Caudillo* in his left hand, said: “Move over Tendencio!, see that since next Friday... I am the BOSS,” as he touched Tendencio on the neck with his right hand. This Tendencio was similar to that drawn in *Militancia*, but he had a huge T on the chest. [Illustration 6]



Illustration 6 EC, N°4, 7 diciembre de 1973, p.23.

Tendencio had originally appeared in issue 9 on August 9, 1973, of the Peronist left-wing magazine *Militancia*, quickly becoming an iconic character through which the political positions of the magazine were expressed<sup>10</sup>. In this issue, there was in the lower left corner of page 21 a vignette with a humanoid figure, drawn by using a simple and straight line, holding a poster which reads: ‘Mongo and Aurelio are our partners.’ Under the title ‘Ellipsis,’ the vignette was a direct reference to Perón’s discourse where the

<sup>10</sup> The magazine *Militancia peronista para la Liberación* appeared since June 14, 1973 (one week before the clashes in Ezeiza), under the direction of the defense lawyers of political prisoners, Rodolfo Ortega Peña and Eduardo Luis Duhalde. Thirty eight issues were published until March 28, 1974, when they were arrested due to a decree by the Peronist administration.



youth was put into question<sup>11</sup>. Through the character Tendencia, there is a clear identification between the magazine and the Peronist left-wing sectors. [Illustration 7]



Illustration 7. *Militancia*, N°9, 9 de agosto de 1973, p. 21.

The appropriation of a distinctive character of the magazine *Militancia* by *El Caudillo*, with the purpose of ridiculing and rebuking him made apparent, through humor, the clash between the left-wing and the Peronist right-wing. It is clear that the right-wing and particularly *El Caudillo* knew and saw the positions of the Peronist left-wing. The weekly publication not only had a design very similar to *El Descamisado*, but the editorial line of *Militancia*, as well as its humor, were constantly challenged, as demonstrated by the funny strip in issue 6. There, Ortodoxio had the following dialogue with Tendencia:

- And are you just about to put your feet inside the plate?
- How did you guess?
- Because you have a noodle in the big toe.

<sup>11</sup> On August 2, Juan Domingo Perón announced the presidential formula, along with his wife Isabel as Vice President, and delivered a lecture to governors at the Olivos residence. In this speech, Peron called upon to institutionalize the *Movimiento*, avoiding ideological deviations and the flowering of the extreme left-wing, and ‘guiding a youth that is, at least, put into question in some major issues.’ In the conference it was also noticed that the general pointed out there would be no tolerance to the guerrillas anymore by saying: ‘this is a subject that the law does not tolerate, as a consequence we cannot tolerate it. We do not assign any problem to it, if this political party – either Comunista, E.R.P., or Mongo Aurelio, whatever name it takes – operates under the law, just as we do.’

This strip was a response to an earlier one, published by *Militancia* on November 8, 1973, in issue 22, where we could see Tendencio, but not his feet, while he was saying his son ‘the key is not getting the feet off the plate,’ while before him there was a giant plate with his mutilated feet in.

Another character that *El Caudillo* included only once was “Fierrito,” a character from the newspaper *El Mundo* linked to the PRT-ERP. Fierrito, drawn as a young skinny and mustached man, used to appear on the cover of the newspaper and it illustrated some political or social event that was explained in simple language on the inside pages. The director of *El Mundo*, Manuel Gaggero, noticed in a report that: ‘Fierrito, which was a kind of contemporary and working Martín Fierro, became a quite significant character synthesizing what happened in the day. In the talks I had over the country I was always asked about Fierrito.’<sup>12</sup>



Illustration 8 Fragmento de la tapa del diario *El Mundo*, N°130 15 de enero de 1974.

<sup>12</sup> Magazine *Veintitrés* n° 608, 25 de febrero de 2010.

In issue 19 of *El Caudillo*, *Fierrito* appeared only once along with the strip featuring *Ortodoxio* and *Tendencio*. That was within the context of the closure of the newspaper *El Mundo* decreed by the Peronist administration. In the strip we saw the character *Fierrito* passing while *Tendencio* was telling *Ortodoxio*:

- There goes my cousin *Fierrito*... he worked in 'El Mundo' and now the fascist bureaucrats threw him out on the street, poor... bye, *Fierrito*! Do not be discouraged, because I will try to get a job in 'Militancia' for you!... I see you soon, cousin, wait for me!
- Why did you say him wait for me? - *Ortodoxio* asked.
- Because after him it is my turn. [Illustration 9]



Illustration 9, N° 19, 22 de marzo de 1974, p. 23.

As we have seen, in several strips and vignettes of *El Caudillo* there was criticism of the Peronist left-wing. In issue 23, *Tendencio* was represented with a poster that reads 'JUP Montos' as he pushed a part of the box frame. Asked by *Ortodoxio*, who urged him to leave the space that belonged to him, *Tendencio* answered:

I am here to support Perón against the imperialism Yankee and its fascist lackeys. (...) The order was final: we must first support, then press, then condition, and if there is a need to freeze, squeeze, and burst the administration of popular government. The 'alternative exit'... did you see?

Another common association in *El Caudillo* was relating the Peronist left-wing to Marxism naming them as 'undercover agents.' In the *Ortodoxio*'s vignettes there were frequent associations like this. In one of the early issues, *Tendencio* appeared digging a well while *Ortodoxio* asked what he was doing. - 'Doctrinal deepening' - he answered. Then *Ortodoxio* delimited: 'You will not go far. These tools have no use for this work.' *Tendencio* was digging with a sickle and a hammer. In another one, in issue 17, on March

8, 1974, after the Corsican holidays, Tendencio removed his hood as he said: ‘For me, the whole year is Carnival.’ Below, he appeared with a beard, long hair, sunglasses, wearing a starred beret. [Figure 10].



Illustration 10 EC, N°17, 8 marzo de 1974, p. 23.

Just in one of the early drawings, entitled “metamorfosis de un símbolo,” there was a V with a P in the center that, step by step, turned into a chained fist on a base that read ‘left-wing imperialism’ as a result that ‘things are turning to the left.’

In another issue, which appeared soon after Perón’s death, Ortodoxio asked to Tendencio what he was going to do, and he replied: ‘Wait to evaluate the economic situation before the power gap, I am going to develop a global strategy and then come back.’ In the last frame, he returned fully armed with machine guns, bombs, and banners that read “FAR-Montos, FAL-FAP-ERP CIA.” [Figure 11]

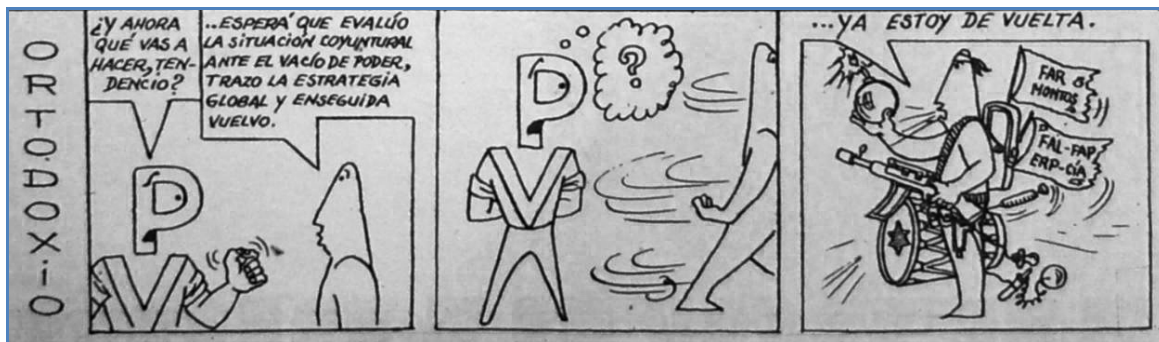


Illustration 11 EC, N° 37, 2 de agosto de 1974, p. 23.

The rest of the caricatures that appeared in addition to the Ortodoxio’s strip, but sharing the humor section of the magazine, also stressed the denouncement of infiltration. *El Caudillo* accompanied the Perón’s policies embodied in the Documento

Reservado del Consejo Superior Peronista, where people were called to fight ‘the infiltration of these Marxist groups in the boards of the Movimiento.’ In a vignette on a march with militants of Montoneros that stood before two spectators, it is stated: ‘– And since when do they walk like that?... – Since I the purge started.’<sup>13</sup>

There were also echoes of Perón’s question to the Juventud recalling his speech to the governors on August 2, 1973. In a caricature, Sancho Panza and Don Quixote, with a shield of the Juventud Trabajadora Peronista, said: ‘They asked, Sancho, a sign that we rode off the plate.’<sup>14</sup> In the background, a mill had the inscription ‘Board of Directors.’

The character of undercover agents reappear under the title “Caballo de Troya ‘74”, where a wooden horse carrying the legend “Patria socialista”, inside which fell alleged warriors with shields of JTP, ERP 22, PB, FAR, JUP, MONTONEROS, MVP.<sup>15</sup>

Following this line, *El Caudillo* accompanied and celebrated the events on May 1, 1974, which contributed to the ‘expulsion’ of the Tendencia de la Plaza on the Workers’ Day.<sup>16</sup> It also supports the “limpieza de marxistas” at the University, in order to support Ivanissevich and Ottalagano, its propellers from the Principalship of the UBA and the Ministry of Education [Illustration 12].



Illustration 12 EC, N°52, 26 de noviembre de 1974, p.23.

<sup>13</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 4 del 7 de diciembre de 1973.

<sup>14</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 5, del 14 de diciembre de 1973.

<sup>15</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 19, del 22 de marzo de 1974.

<sup>16</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 49, del 1° de noviembre de 1974.

### The political culture through humor

We have noticed that the political culture of the Peronist right-wing was grounded in the defense of the national-justicialism, as a party-based nationalist position of the Tercera posición, anticomunista y anticapitalista. This was added with a historical narrative named as historical revisionism and Juan Manuel de Rosas, a character reviled due to his liberal historiography.

In a vignette [Illustration 13], two *mazorqueros* with vintage clothes, looking at a young well-dressed man on the street, shouted “Mazorca!, Mazorca!, The bolsy to the gallows!” The boy, an alleged representative of the oligarchy, was carrying a poster that claimed the liberal story “Mayo-Caseros: Rivadavia, Mitre, Cisneros.” The *mazorqueros* looked contemptuously: “– Hey, Cutiño! Look, another undercover agent! – Yeah, he will be packeted, such a ladylike man! And we will give him something, too, pigeon-breasted oligarch!..”



Illustration 13 EC, N°49, 1 noviembre de 1974, p. 23.

As pointed out by Ladeuix (2005) and Senkman (1986)<sup>17</sup>, the invocation of the Mazorca and the gallows for ‘bolshy and Jews’ were frequent in the acts of the Peronist right-wing. Just this song “is a tragic summary of the vision they had about themselves and the role to be played by groups of the Peronist right-wing. If Juan Manuel de Rosas had the Mazorca, Juan Domingo Perón had them all” (Ladeuix 2005).

The claim of the Tercera posición was represented in another strip where it was remarked that, around 1845, Rosas fought against English and French men; that, in 1973, Perón fought against Yankees and Marxists. [Illustration 14]. There, Ortodoxio objurgated Tendencia:

See if you stir up once and for all, you little goose! This is the third position, and although you do not like it, or exile or beheading. There is no choice! And since it is lacking we will resurrect the very ‘Mazorca,’ so the people can enjoy the opportunity to let the example of your own come to light a second time!!<sup>18</sup>



Illustration 14 EC, N° 32, 21 de julio de 1974, p. 23.

The coded discourse of the Peronist right-wing included, along with anti-imperialism and anticommunism, the denouncement of the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy and synarchy. These discourses may be clearly seen when the caricatures and funny strips used by *El Caudillo*. The denouncement by synarchy – seen as a global conspiracy between capitalism, Judaism, and Marxism, which sought to destroy nationality – was a trend.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Senkman reports an event organized by the Alianza Libertadora Nacionalista on October 22, 1974, on the occasion of the promulgation of the law on repatriation of the remains of Juan Manuel de Rosas where it was loudly heard “Mazorca, Mazorca, Jews to the gallows.” Senkman, L. (1986, p. 144).

<sup>18</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 32, del 21 de junio de 1974.

<sup>19</sup> In issues 31 and 32 of *El Caudillo* there are two extensive notes entitled “Un estudio sobre la Sinarquía. Para conocer el enemigo”, where the Jesuits were also included as a part of the synarchy.

In a vignette published in issue 26 of the magazine with the inscription “Para que no olvidemos, 1974: pacto ESSO-ERP. El pacto de la sinarquía,” a vignette with the logo of the Esso oil bills delivered to another pentacle head and a guerrilla bracelet; in the center, a name: “Samuelson”.<sup>20</sup>

The synarchy was explained to Peronists as ‘the damn clamp’ that sought to boycott the Social Pact. In a full-page drawing<sup>21</sup>, this domination pattern represented as a clamp, exhibits on the right arm the support of the liberal nation symbolized by the “excrecencias de la administración Lanusse”<sup>22</sup> and entrepreneurs that create shortages and chaos supported by the newspaper *La Opinión* and normal repression by the police force. The left arm, symbolized by the socialist nation of the “excrecencias de la administración Cámpora” and Marxist ideologues, encouraged the guerrilla actions by promoting agitation. Between the clamps, there was a worker who, due to confusing information and synarchy attack, “reacts with factory occupations, demonstrations, strikes.” The effect was the isolation of the trade union leadership and breaking the social pact.

Another vignette, entitled “Qué dice el sinarca,” graphed a gorilla in uniform, with the initials of United States in the cap, sitting in front of a similar U.S. flag, saying: – *It is done! I let my beard grow, I change the beret, then I go!*<sup>23</sup>

To a bearded man whose hair was fastened in a headband of Montoneros, dressed as a gaucho but with inscriptions on the rowler that read “CIA, FAR, Yale University,” there hung bowlers with symbols of dollar and communism.<sup>24</sup>

When Augusto Pinochet met Perón, the magazine displayed him under the slogan “‘Welcome’ deliverer of your own country!,” as a puppet handled by the CIA whose arm was holding a sword “made in USA” and the other had a briefcase full of dollars:

<sup>20</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 21, del 5 de abril de 1974, p. 23. Víctor Samuelson was an Exxon oil executive, kidnapped on September 6, 1973, for whom the ERP demanded a ransom.

<sup>21</sup> *El Caudillo*, N°28, 24 de mayo de 1974.

<sup>22</sup> Alejandro Lanusse was the last dictator before the 1973 democracy, who said that ‘Peron is not given the leather to come back’ from exile.

<sup>23</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 2, del 23 de noviembre de 1973, p. 23.

<sup>24</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 7, p 23.



Pinocchio is a lying puppet immortalized by Walt Disney: it was used by the CIA to flip Segunda Posición in Chile, and erect in its place the reactionary Primera Posición, gorilla and liberal. (La TERCERA POSICIÓN Nacional-Justicialista LO REPUDIA).<sup>25</sup>

Anti-semitism was a part of the Peronist right-wing and, as it could not be otherwise, this was reflected on graphic humor. However, it was not exclusive, since the use of anti-semitic caricatures had been included in several publications of the nationalist right-wing in previous decades<sup>26</sup>. For instance, as noticed by Gené (2007, p. 137):

The gibbous giant is dressed as a Levite over a horizon of eastern domes. Pointy beard, large ears, and a hooked nose are summary features that define the ‘Jewish’ stereotype. A conventional image, unchanged in its physical features, multiplied in publications in Buenos Aires in the 1930s, through which sections of the right-wing aspired to popularize their furious anti-semitism. However, the anti-semitic visual rhetoric was far from exhausted in such a physiognomic story: an extended gallery of monsters where hydras and dragons, disturbing octopuses, or snakes parade were recurrent and never-ending figures to express the visceral hatred for the ‘enemy of the Argentine nation.’

These cartoon types were observed in *Clarínada. Revista mensual de propaganda argentina y contrapropaganda roja*, published between 1937 and 1945 and one of the most important representatives of Nazism in Argentina (Gené 2007). Also in the newspaper *Alianza* of the Alianza Libertadora Nacionalista in the 1940s and 1950s, and in *Tacuara*, the magazine of the Unión Nacionalista de Estudiantes Secundarios, where, for instance, one of the occasional strips entitled “Samoil Cipayosky”<sup>27</sup> was in charge of satirizing Jews with regard to some aspects of what was seen in their daily life (López de la Torre, 2015). The same happened to the organization Tacuara and several of its divisions, such as the Guardia Restauradora Nacionalista and its publication *Mazorca* (Galván, 2008).

One of the innovations brought by *El Caudillo* in the representation of the Jew was, as already noticed by Senkmann (1986), that the figure of the militant Montonero was often caricatured through the anti-semitic iconography. This way and as a result of conflict with the left-wing in the movement, the editors of the weekly deliberately sought to associate the already classic repertoire of enemies: Judaism and communism within

<sup>25</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 27 del 17 de mayo de 1974.

<sup>26</sup> Regarding the issue of nationalism and anti-semitism see Lvovich (2003, p. 293-356).

<sup>27</sup> “Samoil Cipayosky” in *Tacuara. Vocero oficial de la UNES*, número 6, año IV, Buenos Aires, octubre de 1948, p. 14.

the leftist sectors of Peronism. The representation of the ERP is different: portraits of women in guerrilla uniform, with a star and a fusil; but they were also covered with a bed sheet and five-pointed star.

However, anti-semitism was not observed only in the characterization of the Tendencia, but also in other figures in the public sphere as the Economy Minister José Gelbard or the director of *La Opinión*, Jacobo Timerman. Criticism to Gelbard became more frequent after Perón's death,<sup>28</sup> while Timerman always faced it: on the occasion of a labor dispute in the newspaper, a caricature of its Director at the office has a small poster: "Federación sinárquica mundial, primer presidente". In front of him, starving employees hold posters up: "Gringo cerdo. ¡Los criollos necesitan comer!" Impassive, Timerman lights a Cuban Cigar with a ticket and says: "– Are they mishiguenes? I do not mind, my friend... I cannot afford a little money, nice to do bribery business! Do not you see, country folk, that I have to wash money and escape abroad?"<sup>29</sup> [Illustration 15].



Illustration 15 EC, N° 32 del 21 de junio de 1974, p. 23.

A mobilization of 'Montoneros' was graphed with long-haired and bearded individuals or students called Jacobo, Raquel, Lázaro, Judith, where it was said "Viva el

<sup>28</sup> Senkman points out, op. cit., p. 133: " In those days it was possible to see some central streets in the Federal Capital with graffiti that read: 'FUERA GELBARD JUDIO VENDE PATRIA', 'FUERA JUDIO BOLCHE', 'GELBARD SIONISTA,' and other similar ones."

<sup>29</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 32 del 21 de junio de 1974.

paisano Kestelboim.”<sup>30</sup> On another occasion, on a divan, before a degree of “Dr. Moscovich, psychiatrist,” a young slim blonde with a peace sign on the bag and flowers in her bell-bottom jeans, lamented: “– It is alienating! Did you see? Look, I have never been a Peronist, then I militated in the Tendencia, and here I am again AGAINST Perón.”<sup>31</sup>

### *The triumph of Ortodoxio*

Within the four months when *El Caudillo* and *Militancia* were concomitantly published, the character Tendencia had in the pages of the first publication a constant presence. However, the editors of the second publication never included Ortodoxio or made any mention to his figure in the vignettes. Only one vignette, which appeared in issue 34, brought a reference to the ‘synarchy,’ a concept that, as we have seen, was widely used in *El Caudillo* to refer to the conspiracy of liberals, Marxists, Jews, and other forces that attacked the Argentine nation. In this vignette, Moderato asked his father what synarchy was, to which he replied “Cuckoo’s nom de guerre, baby.”

The disappearance of *Militancia*, soon after being arrested by the Peronist administration, did not mean that *El Caudillo* stopped including Tendencia in its strips, at least until issue 63 on February 19, 1975, although the magazine was published until December 1975.

The events on May 1, 1974, when the break between Montoneros and Perón became public, had an impact on the magazine’s mood, which in issue 26 presented a lone Tendencia evoking the tango “Cuesta abajo,” although with different lyrics, like this: “Si arrastré por esta plaza la vergüenza de haber sido y el dolor de ya no ser... cuantas veces agrupado bajo el lema ‘Montoneros’ la consigna subversiva ya no pude contener... si soy así, que voy a hacer... nací infiltrado y de espaldas al país.” At the end of the frame, an explanatory note addressed the absence of Ortodoxio, who was celebrating his May Day.

Another fact with repercussions in the magazine was the murder of Father Mugica in May 1974. In its latest issue, *Militancia* had placed it on the section “Cárcel del pueblo,” and issue 27 of *El Caudillo* brought Tendencia and Ortodoxio talking about the murder:

<sup>30</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 5, del 14 de diciembre de 1973, p. 23.

<sup>31</sup> *El Caudillo*, N° 6, del 21 de diciembre de 1973, p. 23.

– Here they murdered Father Mugica... I think they were the bullies of the trade union bureaucracy or fascist vigilante gangs...  
 – Think what the hell you want – answered Ortodoxio – I think that it could be both the extreme right-wing or the extreme left-wing... If it was the extreme left-wing, the reason was that they felt attacked... if it was the extreme right-wing, the reason was that they were outdated. Anyway... did you know that lefties execute their deserters and the pentagon has its terrorist agents here? or do you think I suck my thumb like you do, little shortsighted guy?

The latest vignettes in the magazine made their support clear for the Peronist administration measures, such as Ottalagano's intervention in the Principality of the University of Buenos Aires. In another, it might be the last vignette, Ortodoxio appeared on the full page hitting the gorilla and the octopus<sup>32</sup> of shortage with a bamboo pole in his right hand and, on the other, using a cudgel with which he hurt Tendencio and the guerrilla in Tucumán and Córdoba. [Illustration 16]



Illustration 4 EC, N° 63, 19 de febrero de 1975, p. 23.

<sup>32</sup> As pointed out by Gené (2007, p. 146): “Expression of tentacular power, the octopus appears in the repertoires of the Western political representation in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, as a correspondence to the big fights against capitalism – particularly of anarchists – and in opposition to the expansion of colonial empires. Compared to other allegories of oppression as the snake or spider ensnares the victim in its web, the figure of octopus redoubles these meanings due to the regenerative ability of its arms and whose annihilation is only possible by a sharp blow to the head.” In this way, the octopus drawing already has a history, as the author states, in the magazine *Clarínada* in September 1937, where on the octopus head there is the legend “Revolución, judío, comunista.”

## Conclusion

In this paper, I have resorted to the analysis of political humor in the magazine *El Caudillo de la Tercera Posición* as an alternative way to address an approach to the political culture of the Peronist right-wing. Precisely through the analysis of funny strips and caricatures we managed to observe how the magazine conceived and spread a common grammar while contributing to establish certain characteristics of political enemies. Denouncement of communism, Judaism, and synarchic conspiracy, which were constant in articles written for the weekly, found in humor a quick and concrete explanation. What also happened to anti-imperialism and historical revisionism, including the claim of the figure of Rosas and his *mazorqueros*. Along with him, *El Caudillo* also sought to justify and encourage the use of violence against the enemies.

Many of these elements were already a part of the imagery of the nationalist right-wing since the 1930s and they were incorporated into a sector of Peronism in the following decades. The similarities between the topics and iconographic representations of *El Caudillo* regarding previous nationalist publications, such as the newsletters of Tacuara, not only due to a shared political culture, but also to the fact that several of the editors had participated in Tacuara. Thus, and in the very fight against the Peronist left-wing, *El Caudillo* took care of assigning the same negative traits that were already used to characterize communism, Judaism, homosexuality, and the hippie movement. The militant of the Tendencia ceased to be a Peronist to become 'an undercover' or 'disguised' agent. Accusations of traitor or infiltrate, which were frequent in Peronism, they reported the struggle within a shared political identity (particularly broad and heterogeneous) and the various political cultures related to it. Thus, *El Caudillo* advocated for Peronism seen as a national and Christian movement, with a revisionist reading of the past and a bitter enemy of communism, Judaism, and liberalism.

The centrality of humor within the publication came to the point of incorporating iconic characters of the leftist publications (such as Tendencia and Fierrito) with which Ortodoxio discussed. That was used, by a magazine that addressed the Peronist militant, in order to emphasize the differences from the left-wing while this was ridiculed and assaulted. Thus, graphic humor was another of the many spaces where the struggle between left-wing and right-wing took place.

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