



Routledge Studies in the History of the Americas

A NEW STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE IN MODERN LATIN AMERICA

Edited by
Pablo A. Baisotti



A New Struggle for Independence in Modern Latin America

This volume explores several notable themes related to foreign affairs in Latin America and the reconfiguration of the power of the different states in the region. It offers insightful historical perspectives for understanding national, regional, and global issues from the beginning of the 20th century to the present day, from analysis of the traditional “hegemony” of the United States over Latin America through its military and political influence due to the presence of the European Union, Russia, and China. These views cannot be reduced to a simplistic vision of the dominant and subordinate; rather, they attempt to seek lines of continuity by highlighting traditional interpretations of new scenarios such as regional trading and security blocs. The volume refuses to impose a traditional and uncritical linear historical narrative onto the reader but instead proposes an alternative interpretation of the past and its relation to the present. Finally, the growing importance of international mechanisms in enabling the success of certain Latin American regimes is also highlighted, in particular, the influence of regional diffusion through international organizations or other networks.

Pablo A. Baisotti is currently a research assistant at the Department of Latin American Studies (ELA) at the University of Brasilia.

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A New Struggle for Independence in Modern Latin America

Edited by
Pablo A. Baisotti

First published 2022
by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

and by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
A catalog record for this title has been requested

ISBN: 978-0-367-48748-5 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-0-367-49257-1 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-04268-6 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003042686

Typeset in Sabon
by codeMantra

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Foreword

The idea that there was something unfinished in the independence of Latin America is of long standing. With the rise of the notion of dependence, between 1960 and 1990, the emphasis was mainly on economic aspects, and it is worth recalling that in 1947 the Argentine government of Perón proclaimed “economic independence” by nationalizing the railroads, something that had more than a symbolic scope. The conceptualization oscillated between center-periphery relations, proposed by the thinking of Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) through the work of important authors such as Raul Prebisch and Celso Furtado, and the theories of imperialism, dominated above all by the thinking of Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg. In between, there was the development of a rich series of studies, both on the integration of Latin American countries into the world market through exports and on industrialization through the import substitution model, as occurred above all from 1930 onwards. These emphases, understandable at the time, meant that international relations, in their political dimensions, were relegated to the background.

Fortunately, the book presented to the reader successfully recovers the field of power relations between the powers and notably widens the field of analysis. Relations between countries must be considered in the context of geopolitics and its determinants; of markets for goods, services, and capital, which are inevitably asymmetrical; of migratory movements; of strategic and military aspects; and also of cultural relations. An important aspect of the imperial power of the United States has to do, precisely, with the international triumph, in the 20th century, of the “American way of life”.

In Latin America, a distinction should be made between Mexico and the South American countries, on the one hand, and the small nation-states of Central America and the Caribbean, on the other. The political fragmentation that characterizes Isthmian America and the Antilles led, in the 20th century, to the configuration of what John Coatsworth has appropriately called “client” or “satellite” states *vis-à-vis* the American colossus.¹ This type of relations, which former Guatemalan President Juan José Arévalo² characterized as “the fable of the shark and

the sardines”, entail substantial differences with relations involving the larger countries.

The challenge of Latin American integration (and also disintegration) is another constant throughout the history of the 19th and 20th centuries, from the Congress of Panama (1826) to LAFTA (1960–80) and LAIA (since 1980), passing through the Central American Federation (1824–1838), the Gran Colombia (1821–31). It’s also important to mention the Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation (1836–39), the successive attempts at Central American Union up to the Central American Common Market (since 1960), the ALBA led by Hugo Chávez (since 2004), MERCOSUR (since 1991), and the vicissitudes of UNASUR (2008–2019). As is well known, regional alliances and deeper integration processes between countries play a key role in the context of 21st-century globalization.

All these topics, and many others, are being treated in this book. I am sure that it will open up discussions and new research projects in a spirit of open debates.

San José, Costa Rica, February 15, 2021.

Héctor Pérez Brignoli
Professor Emeritus of the University of Costa Rica
and the Universidad Nacional (Heredia, Costa Rica)

Notes

- 1 Coatsworth, John H. *Central America and the United States. The Clients and the Colossus*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994.
- 2 Arévalo, Juan José. *Fábula del tiburón y las sardinas. América Latina estrangulada*. Santiago de Chile: Ediciones América Libre, 1956.

Introduction to Latin American International Relations

Pablo A. Baisotti

Latin America until World War II

In the first few decades of the 20th century, the Caribbean and Central America fell under the American orbit. In 1898, Puerto Rico and Cuba were subject to its will; Puerto Rico passed into its direct control, becoming a net sugar producer and framed in a free-market regime. In 1952 it became a Commonwealth (Ayala and Bernabe 2012, 177–179). In Cuba, the United States appropriated the Guantanamo naval base. A constitution was imposed with several articles that allowed a real intervention in the island's internal and external affairs (Platt amendment, 1901). The interference extended to all of Latin America and was diplomatic, even before economic, and was not exclusively American. In 1895 President Grover Cleveland (1893–1897) arbitrated a dispute between Brazil and Argentina, ruling in favor of the former. In 1900 Switzerland did the same in a territorial dispute between Brazil and French Guiana, ruling in favor of the former. Brazil continued to expand its territory when it bought the territory of Acre from Bolivia in 1903. Other border disputes pitted Venezuela against British Guyana in 1899, resulting in its favor (del Pozo 2002, 67, 68). In 1902, during a civil war in Venezuela, England and Germany blocked the Venezuelan ports. They seized some ships claiming the foreign debt's payment together with the damages suffered by their subjects. This attack ended due to the United States mediation, and Venezuela recognized the debt (Domínguez, and Franceschi 2010). Litigation between Latin American states also followed; in 1904, Chile and Bolivia signed a peace treaty by which the city of Antofagasta effectively became Chilean, preventing Bolivia from going to sea (del Pozo 2002, 68).

Faced with this situation of instability, President Theodore Roosevelt (1901–1909) intensified the Monroe doctrine.¹ He complimented it with a corollary that stipulated that no European power could be part of an American continent issue.² In 1910, the Pan-American Union was established promoting peace through cooperation between Latin American countries and the United States, fostering a shared interests' community idea within equality's legal framework. Both parties should be equally

protected from extra-continental intervention. However, it became a diplomatic mechanism for U.S. pressure (Knight, Castro-Rea and Ghany 2016, 14; Connell-Smith 300). During the William Howard Taft administration (1909–1913), the U.S. diplomatic purpose was to stimulate economic investment in the continent under the military to protect property and commercial interests, making Central America and the Caribbean countries particularly vulnerable. This foreign policy became known as Dollar Diplomacy (Lemus 2001, 244).

U.S. international meddling continued unabated. In 1906 Guatemalan revolutionaries attempted to overthrow dictator Manuel Estrada Cabrera (1898–1920) with the Salvadoran government's help, resulting in a war that eventually involved Honduras. The United States, along with Mexico, intervened to end the confrontation. In San José, Costa Rica, four Central American countries decided that the Mexican and U.S. presidents would arbitrate the recent war's possible consequences. In contrast, a Central American court would resolve future problems in the region. In the 1907 Washington meeting, it was decided to promote an effective cooperation program among Central American countries and create a Central American office (Central American Bureau) to promote reunification and a Central American court of justice to resolve future disputes (it functioned until 1917). In 1908, for example, this court successfully intervened in an issue that pitted Guatemala and El Salvador against Honduras. In 1921, the United States mediated for the resolution of the war between Costa Rica and Panama; it also caused the shipwreck of the Central American confederation project of 1922, promoting an arbitration mechanism through an agency located in Guatemala (Cardoso 1992, 206–207; del Pozo 2002, 67).

One of the United States' foreign initiatives towards Latin America, perhaps the most important, was constructing an inter-oceanic canal in Panama inaugurated in 1914. This colossal work's antecedents can be traced to the Colombian concession of the rights to build a canal to a French company in 1882. The company went bankrupt in 1889 and its chief engineer, Philippe Bunau-Varilla, sold the concession to the United States. After the second Hay-Pauncefote treaty with Great Britain (1901), the United States was offered the possibility of exercising total control over a fortified canal. In 1903 the Colombian Congress did not ratify the Hay-Herrán treaty (1903) that provided for the construction of the inter-oceanic canal due to a U.S. military intervention in Panama (then belonging to Colombia) during the "Thousand Days" civil war. This war ended in 1902 with the treaties of Holland and Wisconsin, while the United States promoted Panama's secession, which was recognized in 1903. From then on, the United States controlled the canal zone and exercised authority in the country until approximately 1930 (Cardoso 1992, 207; Conniff 2001, 248).³ Panama's President Harmodio Arias Madrid (1932–1936) maintained cordial relations with the United States

despite his refusal to join the Society of Friends of the United States. In 1936 the United States and Panama renegotiated the Hay-Bunau-Varilla treaty, establishing the United States' renunciation to intervene in Panamanian internal affairs and consequently concluded the protectorate status. After that, future acquisition of land in the canal zone required Panama's consent (Conniff 2001, 262).

In Mexico, after the revolution (1910–1917), a heterogeneous coalition committed to a project of building a new state, with a capitalist tendency, had installed itself in power. This position clashed with U.S. economic interests, which is why President Woodrow Wilson (1913–1921) opposed President Victoriano Huerta (1913–1914) and decided, in 1914, to occupy the port of Veracruz. Wilson also tried to impose a conciliatory formula among the enemy chiefs during the revolution. Finally, he opted for Venustiano Carranza (1917–1920) (Freeman Smith 1991, 95, 96; Knight 1998, 13). The government of Álvaro Obregón (1920–1924) experienced difficulties in its relations with the United States, which refused to officially recognize it, alleging that it was the product of a military coup. However, the strongest motive was the United States' interest in protecting its own interests, which were violated by the Mexican Constitution of 1917. President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–1940), in 1938, expropriated foreign oil companies that had defied the State by disregarding a Supreme Court ruling favoring workers. The Catholic hierarchy, business people, workers, peasants, intellectuals, and artists supported President Cárdenas. *Petróleos Mexicanos* (Pemex) was born from this expropriation, whose initial fragility forced the government to subsidize it differently. During World War II, Mexico and the United States recomposed their relationship. They reached several agreements regarding debt, trade, braceros, water, technical assistance, and the oil issue derived from the expropriation of 1938 (New Minimum History of Mexico Illustrated, 2008, 459, 478, 481, 482, 485).

Wilson was recognized worldwide for holding positions in favor of sovereignty and self-determination. However, on the American continent, his actions were more like continental policing. In 1915 he sent troops to control Haiti's unstable situation and as part of an economic strategy to control the rest of the Caribbean and block Germany's influence in the region. The U.S. economic presence was felt more strongly at the end of World War I. Its corporations achieved favorable positions in the extractive industries such as Venezuelan oil and Chilean copper (Brands 2010, 12). The United States also occupied the Dominican Republic between 1916 and 1924. In 1928, due to continued instability, the Marines reoccupied the country with the excuse of preventing another coup d'état. Although the quasi-protectionist method was renounced as in Cuba, successive U.S. governments decided that U.S. policy should be guided until social peace was achieved (Freeman Smith 1991, 94, 100).

In Nicaragua, after the overthrow of President José Santos Zelaya (1893–1909), the United States occupied the country intermittently until the 1940s, taking over customs, the railroads, and the national bank. On top of that, the Bryan-Chamorro Treaty (1914) made possible for the United States to acquire in perpetuity the building of an inter-oceanic canal, plus the 99-year lease (with the possibility of renewal) of the Little and Great Corn Islands in the Caribbean, and a possible naval base in the Gulf of Fonseca (Cardoso 1992, 208; Bulmer-Thomas 2001, 145). Due to the agreements between the liberal and military José María Moncada (1929–1933) with the U.S. administration, a nationalist guerrilla group emerged headed by Augusto César Sandino, who denounced the Bryan-Chamorro Treaty and all manifestations of U.S. intervention. Moncada's successor, Juan Bautista Sacasa (1933–1936), elevated to higher positions military members of the National Guard, among them Anastasio Somoza García. The intermittent civil war lasted seven years until the assassination of Sandino in 1934, ordered by Somoza, who controlled the National Guard. In 1937 began the long period of patrimony domination (Bulmer-Thomas 2001, 154–156; Torres Rivas 2001, 20). In Honduras, outgoing President Rafael López Gutiérrez (1920–1924) declared himself the dictator and civil war broke out, threatening the U.S. capital. The country was occupied in March 1924, and the Amapala Pact was signed where Miguel Paz Barahona (1925–1929) was elected president. The future dictator Tiburcio Carías Andino (1933–1949) resorted to arms when López Gutiérrez declared himself dictator but accepted the Pacto de Amapala elected Paz Barahona (Bulmer-Thomas 2001, 117, 118).

The South American situation was not economically different from Central America and the Caribbean since the American capital's penetration was favored, above all, by England's decline of its participation in the world market (See Rapoport 1988). Argentina was considered a strategic trading country during World War I. Britain sought to protect its maritime trade obstructing its rivals, especially Germany, whose presence in Argentina's grain trade was perceived as a British commercial interest threat (Weinmann 1994, 45). After the world conflict, the growing competition between British and American capitals created a triangular economic relationship between Argentina, Great Britain, and the United States. By the 1920s, the United States became the primary provider of capital for Argentina. This did not prevent the fact that in the 1930s, Argentina and the United States were perceived more as rivals than allies (Rock 2002, 3).

The result was a shift in the world's economic power axis: England began to cede its primacy as the world's financial and commercial center to the United States. At the regional level, dollar diplomacy remained in place, even after World War I, when Latin American trade relations moved away from Europe. During the 1920s, while Germany,

Great Britain, and France regained some of the lost trade, the United States had established itself as the most important trading partner in the hemisphere (Freeman Smith 1991, 99). It was during this decade that weaknesses and tensions accumulated in the export-based model. In Argentina, the wheat market declined from 1928 onwards. The balance of payments was further damaged when an outflow of capital took place in the same year in response to the booming U.S. economy. Colombia, Peru, and Chile had an even broader effect, with Central America experiencing a recession from 1926 onward (Thorp, 1991, 71). With the 1929 crisis, the Brazilian coffee market collapsed. In Cuba, during the 1930s, 90% of the arable land belonged to U.S. corporations through long-term leases or mortgaged in favor of creditor banks, as did most of their industries. The economic crisis moved into the political arena. In January 1934, the military man Fulgencio Batista withdrew his support for Cuban President Ramón Grau San Martín (1933–1934). He backed Carlos Mendieta (1934–1935), a liberal politician who was quickly recognized by the United States. The turmoil of the 1930–1934 period produced by nationalist, social, and political forces transformed the island. The leaders, parties, and ideas that emerged in 1933 would dominate and control Cuba's destiny for the next 25 years (Aguilar, 1992, 239).

The Venezuelan dictator, Juan Vicente Gómez (1908–1913, 1922–1929, 1931–1935), who dominated politics until the mid-1930s, granted extensive concessions to the large international oil companies, primarily American and, to a lesser extent, British and Dutch. By 1929, U.S. investment in oil reached 63.68% of total investment in this sector, with the remaining 36.32% being Anglo-Dutch capital. Venezuela's neutral position in the face of World War II produced a decline in its foreign trade with a consequent increase in social crisis (Domínguez, and Franceschi 2010). Like the Venezuelan case, Ecuador during the 1930s signed several mining and oil contracts with international companies: Anglo Ecuadorian Oilfields Limited, Ecuador Oilfields Limited, Carolina Oil Company, International Petroleum Company, Concepción Ecuadorian Oilfields Limited, and Petropolis Oil Company, all dedicated to oil activities (Acosta 2006, 96).

The competence of the League of Nations (1919–1946) to decide on possible differences between American states was practically ruled out as the United States put in place a treaty system to resolve disputes peacefully and promote political order. In 1923, the Gondra Convention stipulated that future disputes should be submitted to a Pan American Commission for decision if not resolved through diplomatic channels. That same year, under U.S. leadership, the Central American nations signed a peace and friendship treaty resurrecting the 1907 general treaty, which used the Tobar doctrine of disapproving of coups d'état revolts and recognizing the governments that emerged from them (Freeman Smith 1991, 101).

Between the 1920s and 1930s, there were border conflicts between Latin American states. In 1929, Peru and Chile ended the conflict inherited from the Pacific (1879–1884). The city of Tacna was transferred to Peru, and the city of Arica came under Chilean control. At the beginning of the 1920s, Chile and Argentina were involved in border problems in the areas of Palena, Laguna del Desierto, and the Beagle, where they disputed the sovereignty of waters and islands. In the case of Palena, the issue was resolved in the 1960s through British arbitration. As for the Beagle, protocols signed in 1915, 1938, and 1960, presented the problem before a British arbitrator, although they were not ratified. This process was concluded in the 1980s. Laguna del Desierto was resolved in the early 1990s under the government of Chilean President Patricio Aylwin (1990–1994) (Gazmuri 2012, 140, 274). There was a war between Colombia and Peru (1932–1933) over Leticia’s territory in the Amazon region. Peru achieved victory, yet the war was useful to Colombian President Enrique Olaya Herrera (1930–1934), who managed to reduce the influence of the conservative party and increase the number of officers who mitigated social unrest (Abel and Palacios 2002, 181).

Undoubtedly the most crucial conflict in Latin America was the Chaco War, which pitted Bolivia and Paraguay against each other in a bloody war (1932–1935). President José Patricio Guggiari (1928–1932) decided to attack the Bolivian “Vanguardia” fort in 1928. In response, the Bolivians took two Paraguayan forts. Bolivia was finally defeated, and Paraguay obtained large territorial extensions (Lewis 2002, 187, 188). This war was mediated by the economic interests of the transnational corporations Standard Oil in Bolivia and Royal Dutch Shell in Paraguay. After the war, the Bolivian government presided over by the military German Busch (1937–1939) nationalized Standard Oil, strengthening the company Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales Bolivianos, founded in 1936 (González Ortega, 2017, 46, 47). In Paraguay, the liberal president Eusebio Ayala (1932–1936) led the country during this conflict. On the eve of the World War II outbreak, he secured the United States’ financial cooperation to promote its development. The U.S. government also undertook to send technical missions to help modernize the financial system and public healthcare, with the primary objective of neutralizing the sympathy and support that German Nazism enjoyed among the Paraguayan military high command (Scavone Yegros, 2010). Peru and Ecuador also had long-standing border problems in the Amazon region. In May 1941, after a series of border incidents, the Peruvian military launched an offensive. In 1942, a peace treaty was signed with Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and the United States as guarantors (Bertram 2002, 36).

In 1930, an era of profound social transformations was inaugurated in Latin America: at least six nations suffered coups d’état: Argentina, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Peru, and Guatemala. Ecuador and El Salvador joined the previous countries and Chile in 1932.

President Herbert Hoover (1929–1933) changed his predecessors' diplomatic position by cooperating with Central America. In those years, Latin American communist parties were linked to the Soviet Union through the Comintern. However, the Third Communist International (1919) had not considered Latin America as one of its priorities in international politics. It was during the sixth and seventh Pan-American Conferences, held in Havana (1928) and Montevideo (1933), when anti-interventionist sentiments in Latin America were at their height, that the Third Communist International initiated a broad debate on the nature of the revolution in Latin America, considering the United States to be the continent's main enemy (Freeman Smith 1991, 103). From this moment on, diplomatic relations between the Latin American countries and the Soviets multiplied.

In the Dominican Republic, by blood and fire, social peace was achieved during the dictatorship of Rafael Leónidas Trujillo (1930–1961), one of the most personalist and cruel dictators the continent has ever known. Unlike other military uprisings led by caudillos and military chiefs in the 19th and early 20th centuries, Trujillo's coup d'état marked a definitive break with the traditional political order. Then the Dominican people were subjected to a totalitarian dictatorship that lasted 31 years. Trujillo's interests were confused with those of the State, forming a patrimonial political system with monumental characteristics, partly thanks to the alliance he had forged with the United States (Moya Pons 1998, 228). In El Salvador, a coup d'état took place that brought General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez (1931–1944) to power. Washington refused to recognize the new regime. However, General Hernández Martínez, after quelling the 1932 revolt, forced the United States to recognize his government by putting an end to the 1923 Gondra Treaty (Torres Rivas 2001, 20, 21). At that time, President Franklin Roosevelt (1933–1945) had enunciated a new form of foreign policy called good neighborliness, avoiding intervention in countries of the continent and strengthening international organizations for dialogue, which were used as instruments of his foreign policy. Considerable diplomatic and economic activity continued to be carried out to prevent Latin American countries from falling under the Nazi – or communist – orbit, especially in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Bolivia. Roosevelt refused to intervene in Bolivia and Mexico, where expropriations and nationalizations of U.S. oil companies had taken place in 1937 and 1938. To stimulate international trade, the Export/Import Bank was created in 1934 and quickly extended its loans to Latin America on the condition that these resources be used to purchase U.S. imports (Lemus 2001, 250, 251). On the eve of World War II, most Latin American republics were governed by the military, some appearing to have a civilian façade (Uruguay and Mexico) and others governed by regimes resulting from military revolutions (Brazil and Argentina) (Rouquié, and Suffern 1997, 282). When World

War II broke out, the U.S. government stepped up its search for political and military allies in Latin America in order to increase its military bases; gain access to a greater quantity and diversity of raw materials, and achieve consensus and unity to fight the Axis, or prevent hostile non-continental powers from creating strongholds on the continent. These objectives were mainly achieved. The inter-American system that emerged in the 1880s was exploited for U.S. defensive interests (Skidmore and Smith 1996, 391).

At the same time, the United States continued to cultivate diplomatic relations at the various conferences in the Pan-American arena (Panama, 1939; Havana, 1940). Brazil and Mexico emerged as crucial players in this hemispheric alignment. During the period 1940–1941, Mexico became the political and strategic Axis of U.S. policy on the continent (Knight 1998, 53). In contrast, at the 1942 Rio Conference, in opposition to Chile and Argentina, the United States only managed to recommend the rupture of relations with the Axis, accepted by most Central American and Caribbean countries (Lemus 2001, 253). In 1940 the Brazilian government obtained financing from the Roosevelt government to develop the Volta Redonda steel plant's installations and the Paulo Afonso hydroelectric plant and purchase ships for the merchant navy as military equipment for the modernization of the Armed Forces. When Getulio Vargas (1930–1945) was deposed in October 1945, two political parties had been created: the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the Brazilian Labor Party (PTB), as a counterweight to the communist influence. From then on, U.S. companies' presence was facilitated, and Brazil guaranteed its place in the new international order by its alignment with U.S. policy (Mota and López 2009, 466, 476, 503). The Loan and Lease Act of January 1941 was a clear demonstration of the United States' interest in gaining Latin American governments' support. Argentina had almost no access to these loans, mainly due to its neutral stance on World War II (Rock 2002, 39). The tension was exacerbated when the Argentine foreign minister, Enrique Ruiz Guiñazú, tried to promote neutrality at the expense of Pan-Americanism. In 1944, Argentina and the United States reestablished diplomatic relations when trade and financial embargoes were relaxed. In February 1945, Argentina signed the Chapultepec Act committing to inter-American cooperation to defend the continent and mutual trade. Soon after, war was declared on Germany and Japan (Rock 2002, 55).

In Chile, President Arturo Alessandri (1932–1938), thanks to Roosevelt's acceptable neighbor policy, maintained good relations with the United States while Great Britain and Germany regained a significant portion of their trade. However, during these years, Chilean foreign policy adopted a neutral stance in the face of the Spanish civil war (1936–1939) with a bias towards the future Spanish dictator, Francisco Franco (Drake 2002, 229). This did not prevent this country, in 1943, from

breaking relations with the Axis powers. On the other hand, Uruguay declared itself officially neutral, although public sentiment against the Axis was very strong. President Alfredo Baldomir (1938–1943) gave all possible assistance to the Allies and, in 1940, agreed to the installation of a naval air base on Uruguayan territory, a plan that was activated in the later stages of the war although it was never approved. In 1942 Uruguay received loans from the Export/Import Bank, and in 1945 declared war on the Axis, earning a place at the United Nations conference held that year and, subsequently, supporting the United States at the 1947 Rio de Janeiro conference (Finch 2002, 161, 162). In Bolivia, there was ambiguity regarding its international alignments as nationalist sectors were more akin to the Axis powers, Marxist groups to the Soviet Union, and the traditional right to Anglo-American democracy. The British government was the most sensitive to German influences in this country, which, by 1945, supplied about half of the world's tin production, essential for war purposes. The U.S. government did not appreciate the arrival in power of Gualberto Villarroel (1943–1946), considering that he was heavily influenced by the Axis (Whitehead 2002, 119). The military uprising in Ecuador in 1944 ended the regime of Carlos Alberto Arroyo del Río (1939–1944). It brought José María Velasco Ibarra to the presidency for the second time (1944–1947) (Acosta 2006, 95). In Colombia's case, Presidents Olaya Herrera and Alfonso López Pumarejo (1934–1938) sought to approach the United States to obtain credit and better trade conditions, and oil investments increased significantly between the 1940s and 1950s. Initially, Colombia declared itself neutral, but in 1941 it became the first South American country to break diplomatic relations with Nazi Germany. When the government of Eduardo Santos Montejó (1938–1942) ended, López Pumarejo (1942–1945) was reelected amidst a great political polarization that was increasing as the IX Pan-American Conference was being prepared, in which the United States sought to align the countries of the continent in their fight against communism. At that time, the famous Colombian politician Jorge Eliécer Gaitán was assassinated in Bogotá (Murillo Posada 2007, 287). In 1947, and under the Cold War's influence, most Latin American governments broke relations with the Soviets. During these years of World War II, new dictatorial cycles were recreated, especially in the Caribbean and Central America (del Pozo 2002, 142).

The Cold War

1947 to 1962

After World War II, the international strengthening of the United States was embodied in the Bretton Woods agreements of 1944 and, in particular, with the emergence of the International Monetary Fund

(IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development later the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. This was a sophisticated institutional arrangement whose mechanisms and procedures were primarily intended to lay the foundation for a new international political order coupled with a financial reorganization. At the United Nations Conference in San Francisco, between April and June 1945, the Latin American countries endeavored to put social and economic development on the international agenda and issues of international security. From then on, the weight of Latin America and the Caribbean in various international organizations was relevant: in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Non-Aligned Movement, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Oil Exporting Countries (OPEC), etc. The Inter-American Conference on “Problems of War and Peace” in Chapultepec, Mexico, in 1945, reaffirmed the principle of non-intervention, mutual assistance, and American solidarity. It was completed in 1947 with the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance. In 1948 the Organization of American States (OAS) was created, replacing the Pan American Union to ensure equality among the different American States, promote economic cooperation, mutual defense against possible aggressions, and the peaceful solution of international controversies. Also, any form of totalitarianism was rejected. The signatory countries’ priorities soon proved dissimilar: the United States considered it an alliance to fight communism in the region. Most Latin American and Caribbean countries conceived it as an engine to promote the region’s economy and social development. The OAS provided a space for some independent action by member countries, such as creating the Latin American Economic System (SELA) in 1975, a mechanism designed to promote cooperation in the development and economic security of 25 Latin American countries. In 1948, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) was created to explore and suggest policies for development, industrialization, and economic cooperation in the region. A series of measures were proposed for integration that included, among other actions, the liberalization of intraregional trade and the adoption of tariffs for external members. Some critics saw these measures as encouraging the practices of “closed regionalism” based on the dependency theory as a vehicle for accelerating economic development. By the 1980s, it became clear that this approach had not met initial expectations. From within the World Bank (W.B.), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) was created in 1959 to provide financial assistance to Latin American nations and align with U.S. efforts to rally political support against Cuba’s growing influence in the region. Even the IDB supported dictators with U.S. approval (Pérez Herrero 2001, 339; Knight, Castro-Rea and Ghany 2016, 15).

In March 1949, the Havana conference met to discuss British, Dutch, and French possessions. However, the United States considered this proposal to be without a legal basis. The American continent system gave rise to American interests' penetration on a large scale (military, diplomatic, and economic) (Zorgbibe 1997, 195). During the first years of the Cold War, the United States' situation with the Soviet Union was acquiring a confrontational character. President Harry Truman (1945–1953) actively boycotted Soviet-Latin American relations. Many governments on the continent banned communist parties during these years (except Mexico, Argentina, and Uruguay). The Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Colombia, and Peru, for example, activated local containment devices to stop the advance of communism as demonstrated by the military dictatorships of Marcos Pérez Jiménez (1952–1958)⁴ in Venezuela, and Manuel Odría (1948–1956) in Peru, achieving substantial support from Washington. Between 1952 and 1954, the United States signed mutual defense assistance pacts with ten Latin American countries: Ecuador, Cuba, Colombia, Peru, Chile, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Nicaragua, and Honduras (Skidmore and Smith 1996, 392, 393).

The consequences of the Korean War (1950–1953) produced a change of doctrine for the Soviet Union: peaceful coexistence. This doctrine sought détente and limitation of nuclear weapons (Pereira Castañares 2001, 323). The United States, for its part, began to provide more resources in the hemisphere through a program of military aid and assistance in counterinsurgency techniques in order to counteract any kind of subversion in the continent. This military assistance led to the so-called National Security Doctrine, which supported allied military regimes. For example, Nicaraguan and Honduran bases assist the coup d'état in Guatemala or Venezuela's support to activate heterogeneous strategies against the Cuban revolution.⁵

In 1947, the United States returned 120 of the 134 bases granted during the world conflict to Panama but obtained from the Panamanian government the leasing of 14 more. Due to the canal's reorganization in 1951, the United States reduced the loans to this country. It was not until 1955 that a new treaty was signed. The issue of the canal caused tensions between the two countries. In 1959, during the government of Ernesto de la Guardia (1956–1960), three insurrections took place, one of them with Cuban support, increasing anti-American feelings (Conniff 2001, 268–270). In Puerto Rico, the United States supported socio-economic improvements that allowed for population growth and sugar trade growth. Luis Muñoz Marín, a member of the Partido Autonomista and a supporter of annexation to the United States, was crucial in bringing the masses into politics. He founded the Popular Democratic Party and was elected governor in the first elections held in 1947. Foreign investments were the way to promote economic development, although

they proved to be insufficient. As mentioned, Puerto Rico became a U.S. commonwealth in 1952, breaking the government's alliance, the labor movement and the left (See: Ayala Casás, and Bernabe).

In 1953, 1956, and 1959, Fidel Castro and a group of guerrillas attempted to overthrow Batista. In the last attempt, they succeeded. Castro entered Havana, and in those early days, Washington supported him lukewarmly. The relationship deteriorated rapidly. The agrarian reform of May 1959 affected American sugar properties and the appropriation of oil facilities and 200 societies in this country. The reaction was not long in coming: The United States abolished the agreed-upon oil quota. Later, an almost total embargo was put on the island. In February 1960, Soviet Vice-Premier Anastas Mikoyan visited Cuba to sign the first bilateral economic agreement that provided Cuban sugar exchange for Soviet oil, cereals, and machinery. In August, a great Soviet penetration in Latin America offered "friendship treaties" and commercial credits (Kennedy 2017, 612). Castro, backed by the Soviet Union, continued his actions and confiscated two important U.S. oil refineries operating in Cuba after refining Soviet crude oil. By October 1960, almost all U.S. companies based in Cuba, worth some \$6 billion, plus all large Cuban companies worth over \$125 billion, had been expropriated. It was then that President Dwight Eisenhower (1953–1961) authorized the CIA to train Cuban exiles, and his successor, John Kennedy (1961–1963), made Cuba the central theme of his presidential campaign. In April 1961, he published the "white book", accusing Castro of betraying the real revolution, and accepted that the CIA would prepare a covert invasion of the island. This was carried out the same month by Cuban exiles who bombed strategic points in Cuba, followed by a landing at the Bay of Pigs. The Cuban government defeated the invaders, and Castro announced that the socialist revolution was consolidated. In October 1962, the Soviet Union installed strategic missiles on the island to compensate the U.S. military bases around the Soviet Union. The United States decided to "quarantine" Cuba, while the Soviet ambassador Anatoly Dobrinin was summoned to Washington. At the same time, meetings of the U.N. Security Council and the OAS were convened.

Kennedy asked Khrushchev to withdraw the missiles under the control of the United Nations. The OAS – with Cuba excluded – unanimously approved Washington's decisions. However, in the United Nations, the Soviet Union was supported by the Group of "non-aligned" countries. Secretary-General U Thant proposed a half-hearted motion that consisted of lifting the blockade and interrupting Soviet arms shipments to the island. The conclusion of this event came when the Soviet ships on course for Cuba returned. Khrushchev proposed withdrawing the missiles to promise that Cuba would not be invaded and that Turkey's American missiles should be removed. Both requests were accepted, and

East-West relations were stabilized in the positions acquired (Zorgbibe 1997, 302–305, 308–312; Domínguez 1998, 187–191).

The situation in Guatemala was not interpreted by the United States as critically as in Cuba, despite the suspicion of promoting communism that weighed on President Jacobo Arbenz (1951–1954). In 1952, Arbenz had ordered the expropriation of large tracts of land to be distributed among the peasants, affecting many properties controlled by the United Fruit Company. The United States began a diplomatic campaign against this president with the OAS and the United Nations' diplomatic support. In May 1954, Washington denounced the arrival of an arms shipment from Czechoslovakia to Guatemala. The following month Guatemalan troops under the command of Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas rebelled against Arbenz. Castillo Armas (1954–1957) took over the presidency that was being financed by Washington. The government of José María Figueres in Costa Rica (1948–1949) was faced with a military uprising organized by Nicaragua's dictator, Anastasio Somoza. In this situation, the United States and the OAS provided air support to Figueres and kept the insurgents at bay (Zorgbibe 1997, 195, 196; Dunkerley 2001, 68, 69). Among the United States' Central American allies was the dictator of Haiti, François Duvalier (1957–1971). President Kennedy felt that human rights were not respected in this country. However, he needed their support in the OAS, especially during the 1962 meeting in Punta del Este, Uruguay, when Cuba was expelled from the organization. The United States subsequently lowered its level of diplomatic representation. The Eisenhower administration sought to improve relations with Panama by approving loans worth \$11 million. Thus, President Roberto Chiari (1960–1964) began a major road-building program. However, this agreement ended when violent riots broke out. It was the first foreign crisis presented to President Lyndon Johnson (1963–1969). He did not even have an ambassador in the country. Later Chiari and Johnson resumed relations and agreed to renegotiate all the canal aspects (Conniff 2001, 272, 273).

The cooperative relationship established between Mexico and the United States during World War II defined a good part of its course in the second half of the 20th century. The Mexican administrations' commitment to their anti-communist struggle widened the margin of their diplomatic and economic autonomy; however, essential disagreements arose between the two countries in the commercial, economic, and border areas. During the Eisenhower administration, Mexico carried out nationalizations, maintained trade protection and restrictions on foreign investment without retaliation from the United States, and even received credits from Exim bank and other commercial banks, such as Bank of America and Chemical Bank (Loeza 2010, 570, 590, 591). In Colombia, President Laureano Gomez (1950–1951) adopted an unconditional attitude in favor of the United States and enacted laws on the

foreign investment considered the most favorable in the continent. He was the only Latin American government to send troops to the Korean War, confirming his staunch anti-communism. He thus was able to obtain full military supplies (Abel and Palacios, 2002, 203). The militancy that Colombia demonstrated in the United States' favor of continental policy took shape with the establishment in 1956 of the first school of counterinsurgency in Latin America. Even before the Cuban revolution, Colombia was already inserted into the dynamic of subversive confrontation associated with international communism.

The Kennedy administration launched a plan for military assistance in Latin America, mainly through an extensive economic aid program called the "Alliance for Progress. The government of Alberto Lleras Camargo (1958–1962) was the first to receive a part of these benefits by implementing a development plan in ten years (1961–1970) adjusted to U.S. requirements: land reform, fiscal order, monetary stability, and instruments of control. Likewise, U.S. teams arrived to cooperate with national agencies (Abel and Palacios 2002, 220; Moreno Mancera 2012). The president and dictator of Venezuela, Pérez Jiménez, also approached the United States, although without neglecting relations with other Latin American governments, such as that of Juan Perón (1946–1955) in Argentina and that of Odría in Peru. He sponsored the 1954 Inter-American Conference, which supported U.S. efforts to isolate and overthrow the Arbenz government (Ewell 2002). By contrast, Romulo Betancourt (1959–1964) sought a foreign policy independent of the "impositions" of the oil industry. He decided to join the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA). He revived the old idea of forming a union of democratic Latin American governments. In January 1962, he voted in favor of a resolution to expel Cuba from the OAS. He even called for sanctions against Cuba the following year because of that country's support to the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional (FALN), a guerrilla group operating in Venezuela (Ewell 2002, 331).

For his part, he would restore diplomatic relations with Franco's Spain and ease tensions with the Somoza regime in Nicaragua and the Trujillo regime in the Dominican Republic. In 1951, he agreed with the United States in various sectors (education, public health, agriculture, etc.). For that reason, he received arms and military training. In exchange, the Odría agreed to grant facilities to acquire minerals and establish U.S. military bases (See Portocarrero Grados).

In Paraguay, President Federico Chaves (1949–1954) was overthrown by military man Alfredo Stroessner (1954–1989), who had previously traveled to Lima to meet with the heads of the U.S. Strategic Command. Likewise, Washington supported him during his consolidation phase. In exchange, Stroessner maintained an anti-communist stance throughout the Cold War. In October 1955, the Colorado Party was reunified on terms acceptable to Stroessner. From that moment on, he imposed an

economic stabilization program defined by the IMF to control rising inflation. In the absence of a significant industrial bourgeoisie, the regime won the support of the agro-export and financial sectors, the primary beneficiaries of the stabilization program (Nickson 2010). Between 1954 and 1960, Paraguay became the third-largest recipient of U.S. aid under the Alliance for Progress program. Stroessner allowed the establishment of a specialized counterinsurgency intelligence unit within the Paraguayan police. Between 1956 and 1958, U.S. Colonel Robert Thierry organized the National Directorate of Technical Affairs (DNAT), which was later transformed into a torture center for political detainees (Nickson 2010). In Argentina, the Perón government (1946–1955) did not demonstrate the same docility to the United States as other Latin American countries. For example, diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, suspended since 1917, were resumed. Perón faced a foreign policy called “Third Position”, placing himself between the two blocs and influenced by the non-aligned countries (mostly those that had achieved independence during the postwar period). After 1953, this independent international policy was progressively modified to understand the Eisenhower administration (Torre and de Riz 2002, 73). President Arturo Frondizi (1958–1962) adopted a particular line on the Cuban question. In August 1960, at a meeting of Latin American foreign ministers held in Costa Rica, Frondizi condemned the communist threat and the underdevelopment of Latin America and pointed out that both should be combated in the same way. In March 1961, Frondizi offered his good offices to understand the United States and Cuba but was rejected. A month later, he signed a friendship treaty with Brazil. After the secret meeting between Frondizi and Ernesto Che Guevara, plus a new attempt at mediation between Cuba and the United States, the Argentine military forced the president to sign a joint declaration condemning the Castro regime.

At the 1962 Punta del Este conference, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Bolivia, and Ecuador abstained from voting for Cuba’s expulsion from the OAS. The Argentine military demanded Frondizi’s immediate break with Cuba, which he finally accepted by signing a decree ordering end of relations with Havana. In 1962, he was deposed (Torre and de Riz 2002, 89, 90).

1962 to 1989

From the 1960s to the 1980s, British and Dutch colonies in the Caribbean and northern South America became independent: Jamaica 1962, Trinidad and Tobago 1962, Barbados 1966, Guyana 1966, Bahamas 1973, Grenada 1974, Suriname 1975, Dominica 1978, St. Vincent 1979, St. Lucia 1979, Antigua 1981, Belize 1981, and St. Kitts and Nevis 1983. This produced new geopolitical tensions that gave way to simultaneous pockets of conflict both within states and at the regional level (del Pozo

2002, 169). This period is framed by the tenure of President Richard Nixon and Prime Minister Leonidas Brezhnev in the early 1970s. By then, a treaty banning nuclear tests (1963) – also signed by the United Kingdom – had been signed, followed by a treaty limiting strategic weapons (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks 1) in 1972. Finally, in June 1979, the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) II treaty was signed (though never ratified by the U.S. Senate) (Kennedy 2017, 618, 619).

At the regional level, during this period, there were border conflicts between Mexico and the United States; Argentina and Chile; Peru and Chile; Ecuador and Peru; Venezuela and Guyana; Bolivia, Peru, and Chile; Venezuela and Colombia; Guatemala and Belize. Many governments that emerged in this period perceived economic development as a crucial matter of national interest and maintained regional balance. The “great fear” of Castroism spread throughout the continent as dozens of leftist parties were reactivated, and guerrillas appeared in many countries. The United States modified its strategic concepts. Latin American armies adopted new strategic and tactical hypotheses to adjust to the internal threat type represented by communist subversion. Thus, between 1962 and 1966, a series of coups d’état were unleashed in the region (Rouquié, and Suffern 1997, 291).

The Cuban regime attempted to become a worldwide focus on revolutionary influence and action. In January 1966, Cuba hosted a tricontinental conference, from which the Organization for Solidarity with the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (OSPAAL) and the Organization for Latin American Solidarity (OLAS) were founded. At the 1967 Organization for Latin American Solidarity (OLAS) conference, the proposal to create guerrilla zones in Latin America and other Third World countries was approved. Castro wanted to promote the revolution and maintain and expand his influence on Latin American leftist parties. This policy provoked conflicts between Havana and other governments, especially in Latin America. With Ernesto Che Guevara’s death in Bolivia in 1967, the “export” period of the Cuban revolution and the beginning of the withdrawal ended. The ideological dispute between the Soviet Union and Cuba harmed the delivery of fundamental matters for the American country, such as oil. Most of the technical advisors withdrew until the re-composition of relations in 1968 when Castro approved the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union’s intervention in Czechoslovakia. The bilateral relationship improved during the following decade, reaching its peak with Cuban cooperation in the African wars at the end of the 1970s (Rouquié, and Suffern 1997, 292, 293, Domínguez 1998, 223). In the 1970s, Castro’s government had exclusive control over the ideological orientation and the various social levers and had enormous population support. At the first Congress of the Cuban Communist Party, ties to socialism were strengthened. Simultaneously, there was considerable economic and social growth (Acanda González

2005, 146; Silva León 2005, 241, 243, 244, 245, 248). The government of Gerald Ford (1974–1977) and the Cuban government held bilateral talks in 1975, interrupted by Cuban participation in the war in Angola. In 1977, U.S. President James Carter (1977–1981) and Castro agreed to open the U.S. Interest Section in Havana (within the Swiss Embassy) and a Cuban Section in Washington DC. However, Castro that year supported the Nicaraguan Sandinista insurgents fighting the Somoza government (Domínguez 1998, 225, 226).

In the Dominican Republic, President Juan Bosch (1962–1963) had been deposed by a military clan eight months after his inauguration. A triumvirate was formed in 1963, characterized by political immobility and economic crisis that turned into military plots and later civil war. In 1965, President Johnson approved the invasion of this country. This logic was inserted within the framework of a new world strategy that manifested the will to maintain the world status quo based on nuclear balance. Any revolutionary movement could have been a destabilizing factor. The United Nations Security Council was successively informed of the OAS resolution of May 1, 1965, that had created a committee in charge of intervention in the Dominican Republic. Another resolution referred to the creation of an inter-American peace force. This was the first time that a collective intervention force was created within the inter-American framework. Between 1966 and 1978, the Dominican Republic was subjected to the regime of terror imposed by anti-communist forces organized by the government of Joaquín Balaguer with the United States (Zorgbibe 1997, 431, 434, 435; Moya Pons 1998, 250).

Following the Alliance for Progress principles, the U.S. government provided Guatemala with \$24 million in military aid in 1964 and 1966. Enrique Peralta Azurdia (1963–1966) regime promoted the formation of the Central American Defense Council (CONDECA), approved in 1963 and ratified in 1965. Given the social and political dynamics imposed by the emergence of the guerrillas, the Guatemalan army decided to establish more military bases in all the country regions thanks to the support given by United States. The existing climate of social polarization led to the emergence of extreme right-wing paramilitary groups, the “death squads” that operated with the State’s tolerance. Among these were the National Organized Anti-Communist Movement (MANO) and the Anti-Communist Committee of Guatemala (CADEG) (Berganza 2004). During the Carter administration, the State Department produced a report identifying Guatemala as one of the Americas’ countries where human rights were most violated, generating pressure on the government. General Eugenio Laugerud Garcia (1974–1978) was unwilling to accept the report, so he resigned from military aid. On the other hand, in 1981, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland granted independence to Belize, which resulted in further isolation from the Guatemalan government. President Ronald Reagan (1981–1989)

expressed a strong interest in fighting guerrillas in Guatemala and El Salvador and overthrowing the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. This boosted the Guatemalan government, which again began to receive political support and training from the United States. At the meeting in Esquipulas II, in August 1987, the document “Procedure to Establish Firm and Lasting Peace in Central America” was signed, establishing the International Verification and Follow-up Commission countries of the Contadora Group, plus the U.N. and the OAS. In October of that year, a “National Dialogue” was called, allowing for the first time convening of diverse society sectors to present their political and social demands. Nevertheless, in 1989, guerrilla activity and political violence increased throughout the country (Berganza 2004).

The civic-military junta of El Salvador, integrated in January 1961, was pressured by the Kennedy administration to hold elections and promote social and economic reforms. New non-communist political parties appeared that offered the population a reformist alternative, among them Christian Democracy and Social Democracy. Despite the prohibition established by the Constitution, these maintained links with international political organizations (Walter and Williams 2011, 79). The 1969 war between Honduras and El Salvador affected Guatemala because the Central American Common Market was fractured, which harmed its economy. Guatemalan President Carlos Arana (1970–1974) had a problematic relationship with the United States, unlike the successive governments in Honduras in the 1980s, which, supported by the United States improving their armed forces, transformed into a strategic stronghold against the Sandinistas. The U.S. military presence was semi-permanent from 1983 and led to close collaboration with the Honduran armed forces (Bulmer Thomas 2001, 143).

By the mid-1970s, constitutional rights in Nicaragua were suspended, and the human rights of opponents of the regime were violated. An example of this was the policy of open terror against peasants, urban movements, religious activists, and political organizations, further tarnishing the Somoza dictatorship’s already worn-out international image. The immediate antecedents to the fall of this dictatorship were clearly expressed at the international level. The OAS, in September 1978, demanded that the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights produce a report on the regime’s violations and approved the creation of a Mediation Commission, composed of the United States, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic. Somoza had to agree. The Carter administration focused its assistance on this country as long as specific objectives were met, such as the release of political prisoners and the lifting of restrictions on the Constitution. After the Sandinista revolution’s triumph in 1979, the Nicaraguan government sought foreign support for its reconstruction. It expanded diplomatic and commercial ties with the international community. Already in the reconstruction phase, the

international presence was notable, manifested in financing and external cooperation. From July 1979 to 1982, Cuban economic assistance reached a total of 286 million dollars. The revolution could be maintained thanks to long-term credits, financial aid, and donations from many countries (González Arana 2009, 238, 250, 251, 260, 261).

In Panama, in 1977, dictator Omar Torrijos (1969–1981) signed two treaties with the United States that recognized Panamanian sovereignty in the canal zone, providing for joint exploitation until 1999. In 1988, the United States began a campaign to overthrow dictator Manuel Noriega (1983–1989) by imposing rigid external restrictions on an economy that was especially vulnerable to foreign interference. In 1989, the administration of George Bush (1989–1993) supported Noriega's opposition candidate, who ignored the results, attracting condemnation from the OAS. Finally, Noriega provoked the invasion by declaring a state of war with the United States. Since the Vietnam War, it was the first unsolicited intervention since Panama's independence and the United States' most massive military operation (Conniff 2001, 277–281).

In Mexico, the governments of Adolfo López Mateos (1958–1964) and Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964–1970) maintained cordial relations with the United States, although not without moments of tension. The former, for example, refused to isolate Cuba economically and diplomatically. In contrast, the latter refused, along with four other Latin American countries, to support the Dominican Republic's occupation. In late 1969, border traffic was disrupted by Operation Intercept, the Nixon government's ineffective instrument for combating drug trafficking (Smith 1998, 114). By the end of this decade, the accelerated economic growth was coming to an end. In Mexico, there were symptoms of the economic model's exhaustion (Loeza 2010, 508). President Luis Echeverría (1970–1976), assuming the geopolitical and economic reality dictated by his relationship with the United States, declared Soviet embassy officials accused of collaborating in training guerrilla groups unwelcome. However, the U.S. economy began to apply tariffs to imports, including Mexican ones, provoking Mexico's diplomatic turn that developed a much more independent international policy. Echeverría visited 32 countries (including the Vatican and the Soviet Union) and received 30 heads of State, participated in two United Nations assemblies, and proposed normative documents such as the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. José López Portillo (1976–1982) re-established diplomatic relations with Spain when he began the transition from dictatorship to democracy. Between 1977 and 1978, relations with the United States were low profile. He broke off relations with the Somoza government, citing the massive and systematic violation of human rights. In 1981, he issued a joint communiqué with the French socialist government of François Mitterrand asking the international community to recognize the guerrillas as a belligerent party in El Salvador's civil war. Miguel de

la Madrid (1982–1988) approached foreign policy with caution. In early 1983, he joined Colombia, Panama, and Venezuela in forming Contadora's Group to mediate the conflict in Central America. Peru, Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina supported this Initiative (Smith 1998, 140) (Rodríguez Kuri and González Mello 2010, 640, 641, 643, 644).

Pressure from the United States also resulted in Bolivia supporting Cuba's expulsion from the American States Organization. President Víctor Paz Estenssoro (1960–1964) was considered by much of the citizenry to be a puppet of Washington, winning powerful rivals within and outside his party (Whitehead 2002, 145–147). Starting in the 1970s, the social conflict intensified, aggravated by anti-American sentiment since the Gulf Oil Co.'s nationalization. This had led to the overthrow of Alfredo Ovando (1969–1970), replaced by General Juan José Torres González (1970–1971), who began his government in Bolivia after defeating an ephemeral military junta. Torres governed at a time of ideological polarization in the country, leaning towards the radical left, so one of his first acts was to accept financial aid from the Soviet Union and the Socialist Bloc. He also signed contracts to install tin smelters, freeing Bolivia for the first time from its dependence on foreign smelters to process its minerals. In 1971 Hugo Banzer (1971–1978) took over (Cajías 2012, 115, 116; González Ortega 2017, 62). During this period, an agreement was reached between the presidents of the military governments of Chile and Bolivia, Augusto Pinochet and Hugo Banzer, on Bolivia's access to the sea, increasing the tension in relations between these governments and Peru (Cotler 2002, 75). Likewise, the government of Juan Velasco Alvarado in Peru (1968–1975) showed signs of independence from U.S. policy, withdrawing, for example, U.S. military missions, as well as turning to the socialist bloc, including Cuba and China. Peru hosted the Group of 77 of the non-aligned movement in October 1971. However, it only participated as an observer until September 1973, when it became a full member (Portocarrero Grados). In 1973 Velasco Alvarado launched an arms purchase program, mainly in the Soviet market, further straining relations with the United States. In May 1974, the President of Venezuela, Carlos Andrés Pérez (1974–1979), announced the iron industry's nationalization. In March 1975, the government introduced the bill for the oil industry's nationalization in Congress, initiating an extensive search for oil fields. The increase in oil prices enriched the Venezuelan State. It also became the owner of the steel, gas, petrochemical, hydroelectric and thermoelectric industries, and many other economic activities. Pérez abandoned previous anti-communist attitudes and resumed diplomatic relations with Cuba in 1974, leading an unsuccessful campaign, aiming to have the OAS lift sanctions against Castro's government. He supported Torrijos during the Canal Treaty negotiations and the Sandinista guerrillas. Caracas played a leading role in the economic debates between the global North and South at the conferences on maritime law

and signed a pact with other neighboring nations that provided for its multilateral development (Ewell 2002, 342, 343, 346; Domínguez and Franceschi 2010). The *Caracazo*, which occurred in 1989, just weeks after the beginning of Pérez's second presidential term, revealed the decomposition of the political system based on the "Pacto de Punto Fijo" (an agreement of alternation between the parties Acción Democrática (social democrat) and COPEI (Christian democrat), of 1959) (Regalado Álvarez 2006, 172).

On the contrary, and under the pretext of fighting the revolutionary forces and convinced that Colombia, like Central America, was close to falling into the clutches of international communism, the government of Julio César Turbay (1978–1982) committed all kinds of violations of the legal order. The government's abuses and international condemnations worried the political representatives of the main parties. They were also concerned about clientelism, corruption, and rampant inflation. In 1983–1984 Belisario Betancur (1982–1986) became the leading spokesman for the Contadora group and Latin American debtor nations. He convened a meeting of the countries of the region in Cartagena to suppress U.S. protectionism. By the mid-1980s, the limitations of the lack of concerted action among the large Latin American economies were evident in contrast to the United States' economic resurgence, which weakened the region's economic autonomy attempts (Abel and Palacios 2002, 247).

In Brazil, the fear of communism, agrarian reform, the loss of profits of the multinationals, and the guerrillas accelerated the coup d'état in 1964 and was immediately supported by the Johnson government. Brazil automatically realigned itself with the United States policy, ending the independent foreign policy and the vastest liberal experience initiated with the 1946 Constitution. It thus entered into the logic of the Cold War until at least the 1980s (Mota and Lopez 2009, 565, 566, 571). The Stroessner regime in Paraguay was then consolidated. The dictator had been building a facade of parliamentary democracy since 1963, when the liberal faction, Renovación, was officially recognized as the Liberal Party in exchange for its participation in the presidential elections of that year. Stroessner was repeatedly reelected. Despite a policy of tax breaks to attract foreign investment and growing U.S. aid under the Alliance for Progress program, economic growth until 1973 barely exceeded the population increase (Nickson 2010).

Not counting Cuba, Salvador Allende's (1970–1973) victory in Chile was interpreted as the path to socialism without revolution. However, it was also seen as a reaction against U.S. hegemony. Companies and international organizations that control the world capitalist economy boycotted the Chilean socialist experience. The United States, which did not want another Cuba in Latin America, opposed its success as much as it could. Allende was overthrown by a coup d'état led by Augusto

Pinochet, who led the country until 1990 (Gazmuri 2012, 326). In December 1976, Argentina had persuaded the U.N. Assembly to urge Britain, for the third time, to initiate talks on the decolonization of the islands. The British chose to continue their delaying tactics for the next four years. Within this framework, a territorial dispute between Argentina and Chile was presented and resolved through papal mediation in 1978. In 1982, General Leopoldo Galtieri took control of the State and decided to invade the islands. On April 2, the Argentine military landed in the Malvinas Islands. A few weeks later, this adventure ended with the Argentine defeat (Torre and de Riz 2002, 135, 136). The following year, U.S. troops landed on Grenada's island, acting with six Caribbean countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Barbados, Saint Vincent, and Jamaica). Other threats perceived by the United States in Central America occurred in Dominica where socialist governments had been established; in St. Lucia, with strong official pro-Cuban opposition; and in Jamaica, where politician Michael Manley had become a significant representative of the Third World (Zorgbibe 1997, 565, 567).

Since 1990

From the 1990s onwards, Central America became an important route for drug trafficking into the United States and colonial roots' structural violence. Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua became dependent on the State's peasantry and notorious deficiencies, often authoritarian and supported by – or fought against – the United States (Pérez Brignoli 2019, 137, 143). In 1992, the peace agreements were signed to end the civil war between the government of El Salvador and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front. The document committed the State to make strategic institutional changes that would be an alternative to the political order that, although already exhausted, had provoked this armed conflict. Both parties then accepted the U.N. intervention in the negotiations. Very concrete proposals were presented, and, once agreed upon, they were monitored and verified by this organization (Véjar 2011, 98, 102).

Cuba's situation changed radically when the fragile bipolar balance collapsed with the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the Soviet Union's disappearance two years later. Castro had to look for new commercial partners and found them in China and several Latin American countries as the economic blockade intensified. It was, in this first half of the 1990s, the so-called Special Period. The Torricelli Act, passed in the United States in 1992, authorized the president to apply sanctions against countries that had commercial relations with Cuba. The U.S. economic blockade was also tightened, particularly after the passage of the 1996 Helms-Burton Act and the 1997 Graham Amendment, which labeled Cuba a threat to national security (Silva León 2005, 248,

254, 261, 262, 263). This was followed, in 2000, by the prohibition of the sale of medicines and food and any financial transaction between the United States and Cuba. Starting in the second half of the 1990s, the Cuban authorities began to apply a series of measures that were the opposite of those of the Special Period, as they assumed they had overcome the worst of the economic crisis. Castro called this new period the Battle of Ideas. The objective was to go back to the previous period to stop the economic reforms tending to liberalization, seeking to exalt, above all, the human and social aspects over the economic one. It was a return “backward” and had its antecedent in 1986 when there was talk of “rectification” of the previous period, which attempted lukewarm economic openings. For this reason, there was a return to statism as in the early days of the revolution, endorsed by repeated mass mobilizations (Álvarez and Mattar 2004, 88; Valdéz Paz 2005, 98; Font 2008, 43, 48, 51, 61). Cuba began a rapprochement with the member countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), creating a Joint Commission in 1993. The following year the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) was formed. This normalization continued with the intensification of relations with South American countries, both bilateral and multilateral. Cuba joined ALADI in 1998 (Serbin 2011, 236, 238).

In 2006 Fidel Castro handed over the leadership to his brother, Raúl. The latter began to cultivate political-economic relations with different states, particularly in Latin America. By this time, the embargoes and the politics of tension typical of the Cold War were anachronistic. This was demonstrated by a 2009 OAS resolution that rejected isolation and sanctions against Cuba (see Ramírez Cañedo and Morales Domínguez 2014). In October 2014, Obama and Castro accepted mediation. They sent representatives to the Vatican to agree on a process of normalization of relations. Both presidents sealed the reconciliation in December by expressing gratitude to Pope Francisco. President Obama announced a new direction in US-Cuba relations. A bilateral commission was established to advance the process of normalization with Cuba. The National Security Council spokesman said the United States and Cuba had reached more than a dozen agreements to expand cooperation. President Obama’s goals for Cuba had been simple: to help Cuba’s people achieve a better future for themselves and advance U.S. interests.⁶ President Castro reiterated that for normal relations between the two countries, the blockade should be lifted. During the election campaign, Donald Trump indicated that he would reverse the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba that his predecessor had carried out.

In Honduras, the Rafael Callejas government (1990–1994) achieved a favorable ruling in September 1992 by the International Court of Justice in The Hague on the dispute with El Salvador over the jurisdiction of a border territory (the subject of a war in 1969) in the Gulf of Fonseca, which resulted in the surrender of three-quarters of the disputed area to

Honduras. In 1999, President Carlos Flores (1998–2002) had to manage the severe deterioration of diplomatic relations with Nicaragua due to the ratification of a 1986 treaty delimiting the borders with Colombia, which implied the recognition of the sovereignty of this country over the Caribbean islands of Providencia and San Andrés, claimed by Managua. His presidency was linked to democratic normality. President Manuel Zelaya (2006–2009) settled with his counterpart from El Salvador, Antonio Saca (2004–2009), a long-standing bilateral dispute on the typical border's good demarcation. The severe energy crisis pushed Zelaya to propose three alternatives: to open an international contest of public bids for the importation of fuels; to undertake negotiations with Venezuela for the purchase of oil derivatives at preferential prices within the Petroamerica scope, which was one of the instruments of continental integration created by Chavez within the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) framework; to seek the advice of Brazil to develop the local production of biofuels, particularly ethanol. The government took firm steps in the three areas, obtaining favorable results in all of them (Zelaya and Ferrera 2012).

Another characteristic of the period was the negotiation of the guerrilla struggle in Guatemala (1996). However, it was not until the 21st century that a ceasefire was established in Colombia between the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) against the State. Peace negotiations and military offensives were carried out by the governments of César Gaviria (1990–1994), Ernesto Samper (1994–1998), Andrés Pastrana (1998–2002), and Álvaro Uribe (2002–2010). In 2000, Pastrana announced Plan Colombia to combat drug trafficking with the United States' support, which constituted a counterinsurgency and interventionist scheme on a Latin American scale. Colombia became the third-largest recipient of U.S. military aid in the world (Guerra Vilaboy 2006). This led to the negotiated demobilization of the Movimiento 19 de Abril (M-19), the indigenous guerrilla group Quintín Lame, and the majority faction of the Ejército Popular de Liberación (People's Liberation Army, EPL) and part of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP), the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), and the minority faction of the EPL, which did not plan to disrupt guerrilla activity completely. For their part, armed actions by Sendero Luminoso and the Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru (MRTA) increased in Peru (Regalado Álvarez 2006, 178, 179).

The Mexican and Brazilian financial crisis led to a new period of privatizations and loans. In Paraguay, Juan Carlos Wasmosy (1993–1998) achieved parliamentary support for the approval of a million-dollar loan from the IDB, representing the Washington Consensus ideology. Most of the proposed laws were approved, including the Central Bank's reform, the creation of the capital market, the new Banking Law, and

the Privatization Law modification (Abente Brun 2010). In Ecuador and Venezuela, the breakdown of democratic institutions made the Andean region the epicenter of the Latin American political crisis. Ecuadorian President Abdalá Bucaram (1996–1997) was dismissed as a result of widespread protests against his neoliberal policies and corruption, while Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez (1999–2013), at the head of a coalition of nationalist military and various political currents, capitalized on the power vacuum by initiating a process of legal-institutional transformation that included the revalidation, through a new Constitution (1999), of his presidential mandate. The ex-dictator who became president of Bolivia, Hugo Banzer (1997–2001), aimed at the forced eradication of coca crops, a situation imposed by the U.S. government (Regalado Álvarez 2006, 189, 191–195). During his mandate and Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (2002–2003), popular sectors fought and won two battles bordered on rebellion. They were known as “the water war” and “the gas war”. The first began in the Cochabamba region in 2000 and later spread to the rest of the country. This mobilization led to the collapse of the national economy, forcing President Banzer to terminate the contract with the Bechtel-Aguas del Tunari company. By September 2003, social unrest had intensified because the president decided to export gas to Mexico and the United States through a Chilean port. As a result, social protest mobilizations resumed throughout the country (Gallardo 2007; González Ortega 2017, 75, 77, 81). Sánchez de Lozada resigned his post and was replaced by Carlos Mesa Gisbert (2003–2005) and Enrique Eduardo Rodríguez Veltzé (2005–2006). Mobilizations continued, even increased. In 2005 thousands of peasants, workers, coca growers, intellectuals, and parts of the middle-class and popular sectors pushed for the government’s collapse. The new president was Evo Morales (2006–2019), a cocalero leader, who was reelected through the modification of the Constitution in 2009 and the application of a referendum. Morales reinforced the region’s geopolitical image by a “return of the left” (González Ortega 2017, 76, 83). In 2006, Morales decreed hydrocarbons’ nationalization. Foreign companies signed new contracts with the state company Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales Bolivianos and even increased their investments (Morales 2017, 239).

After a decade and a half of the rise of leftist governments, supported by Chinese expansion and the record value of commodities, the electorates in many countries of the region began to turn towards the center-right, less statist and more akin to the free market, as was the case of Mauricio Macri (2015–2019) in Argentina. There were exceptions, however: Andrés Manuel López Obrador in Mexico (2018) triumphed in putting an end to the cycle of alternation between the traditional parties, the Partido Nacional Revolucionario and the Partido Acción Nacional; Alberto Fernández in Argentina (2019) who succeeded Mauricio Macri. Evo Morales resigned in October 2019, after the OAS denounced severe

electoral irregularities. In Brazil, Dilma Rousseff (2011–2016) was dismissed in 2016 and her vice president, Michel Temer (2016–2018), assumed her powers, a centrist of the Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (MDB) who marked the beginning of the ideological turnaround in this country that deepened when in 2018 Jair Bolsonaro defeated the P.T. (Worker's Party) candidate, Fernando Haddad. Socialist Michelle Bachelet's 2013 victory in Chile signaled a return to the moderate, center-left governments inaugurated by Ricardo Lagos in 2000. However, Sebastián Piñera won in 2017 with a center-right coalition. In Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos became president in 2010 and 2014, representing the center-right. The victory of Iván Duque (2018) ratified the trend that the country has had for years. In Costa Rica, centrist governments followed one another. In 2014 Luis Guillermo Solís, from the Citizen Action Party, governed and in 2018, Carlos Alvarado Quesada, the official candidate, triumphed. In 2018, Raúl Castro ceased to be president of the Council of State and Ministers in Cuba, leading a transition led by Miguel Díaz-Canel. In Ecuador, Rafael Correa left power in 2017 after a decade as president. His successor, Lenin Moreno, adopted a much more centrist policy moving away from the Bolivarian Axis. In Panama, presidential elections were held in 2019, and Laurentino Cortizo of the Democratic Revolutionary Party triumphed, demonstrating a center-right political and economic orientation. Pedro Pablo Kuczynski (2016–2018), president of Peru, resigned after a corruption scandal. His center-right vice president, Martín Vizcarra (2018), took office. Tabaré Vázquez's victory in Uruguay in 2005 and 2015 gave impetus to the Frente Amplio, as did the victory of José Mujica (2010–2015). However, the cycle of the Frente Amplio came to an end with the victory of Luis Lacalle Pou in 2019. He belongs to the Partido Nacional, the country's traditionally conservative force. In Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro (2013) heads the oldest and most radicalized leftist political cycle in the region (except for Cuba). His government is unknown to almost 60 countries, and his level of legitimacy is minimal.

In short, the region lacks a defined political course, coupled with growing political and economic instability. The citizenry's mood seems to be directed against the governments of the moment, whether right or left. The turn to the left at the beginning of the 21st century weakened in favor of the center-right. However, the populist style continues to be in force. In the 15 presidential elections between 2015 and 2019, there was an alternation in nine of them: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala, and Peru. Of the six countries where there was continuity, in four, the electoral results were questioned by the opposition and/or by international electoral observation organizations: Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Venezuela. This translated into constant social unrest expressed in protest and conflict movements (Alcantara Sáez 2019).

Regionalism. Yesterday and Today

Since the 1960s, various vehicles for regional cooperation have progressively evolved. The Central American Common Market (CACM) established by the Treaty of Managua in December 1960 and signed by Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua created an intraregional free trade area that grew exponentially throughout the 1960s. Contemporary to the CACM, the Trade Association Program (LAFTA/LAC) was born in February 1960 through the Treaty of Montevideo and was endorsed by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and later by Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Bolivia. The purpose was to form a typical Latin American market. In 1980, the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA/ALADI) was replaced by the region's economic and social development (Knight, Castro-Rea and Ghany; Pérez Herrero 2001, 334, 335). In 1968, the Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA) was launched, replaced in 1973 by the CARICOM and Common Market, reflecting broader objectives and many countries. CARICOM was renamed the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). Based on the Andean Pact (A.P.), created in 1969 by Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Chile (withdrawn in 1976), and Peru, then Venezuela in 1973, the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) was established in 1991 and led to genuine investment and free trade liberalization in some sectors. In 2003, CAN concluded a trade liberalization agreement with the Southern Common Market (Mercosur).

During the 1980s and 1990s, a series of new agreements were negotiated throughout the Americas through an approach called “open regionalism”, framed by the idea of globalization and focused on industrialization on an intraregional scale in order to free and deregulate the continent's economies. This process was promoted and supervised by the IMF, the W.B., the IDB, among other international institutions. The credits granted to Latin American governments were conditioned to the change of their macroeconomic policies. The launch of the Caribbean Basin Initiative in 1984 targeted 22 Caribbean countries, while the Initiative for the Americas in 1990 was, in principle, open to all countries in the continent. In both cases, it was conceived that the main actors would be private companies, which received incentives to expand their business internationally through an unprecedented economic opening (Knight, Castro-Rea and Ghany 2016).

Mercosur was born in 1991 and is made up of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Venezuela, while Bolivia is in the joining process. In this partnership, intraregional tariffs were drastically reduced, external barriers were lowered, and investments were liberalized (Knight, Castro-Rea and Ghany 2016, Domínguez 2000). In 1993, Brazilian President Itamar Franco (1992–1994) proposed creating a South American Free Zone project (SAFTA). His successor, Fernando Henrique Cardoso

(1995–2002), slightly modified the project at the first Summit of South American Presidents, held in Brasilia in 2000. On that occasion, Cardoso proposed a South American Community of Nations (SACN), whose focus remained the promotion of free trade, but with new objectives such as infrastructure development, energy cooperation, and political cooperation added.

In December 1991, the Central American Integration System (SICA) was established, comprising Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and the Dominican Republic. Despite efforts to seek strong economic integration, almost all Central American countries negotiated separate agreements (See Kim, Haug, and Harris Rimmer 2018). For example, Costa Rica signed preferential agreements with Mexico, Venezuela, Chile, and the United States. Similarly, Panama concluded a trade promotion agreement with the United States. In 2004 the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement with the United States (CAFTA-DR) was concluded, associating the United States, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic (Domínguez, 2000; Knight, Castro-Rea and Ghany 2016).

Market integration was closely linked to creating democratic national and continental institutions to overcome historical rivalries and promote the convergence of foreign and security policies. In this way, regional policies that promoted the integration of the subcontinent, the limitation of the United States' influence, and opening out to other markets, such as the European and Japanese markets, were oriented. In the late 1990s, the position was more of building a fruitful relationship with the United States, based on free trade (although asymmetrical for Latin America) (Carmagnani 2011, 323). The attempt to impose a “new world order” encouraged the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO, 1995). Almost at the same time, the United States, Canada, and Mexico joined the North American Free Trade Agreement of 1994 (NAFTA). Also, the United States was supporting multilateral agreements such as Rio and the Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty (ANZUS), increasing its links with Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Israel, and Japan, and even having the capacity to exert significant influence on bodies such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO. Despite disagreements between the United States and most Latin American countries, the William Clinton administration (1993–2001) promoted and held a summit of the Americas in 1994. Except for Castro, the other countries of the continent were represented. The meeting's objective was to develop a hemispheric collaboration project in the 21st century, which eventually focused on a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Latin American governments responded cautiously, preferring to promote subregional integration strategies among Latin American countries rather than for the continent as a whole. For example, Brazil launched a proposal for a

South American Free Trade Area that year (Skidmore and Smith 1996, 414, 415).

Other economic actors began to stand out during this period: the European Union (E.U.) and Japan. In Latin America, open regionalism moved indirectly to some groups such as the G-3 (Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela), or bilateral agreements, for example, between Mexico and Bolivia, Costa Rica, Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Uruguay, and Mercosur plus preferential agreements with six South American countries plus Panama. Canada also reached agreements with the United States, Mexico, Chile, and Costa Rica, Peru. For its part, Cuba substantially increased its trade with the Caribbean countries, Mexico, and Venezuela (Domínguez, 2000; Taibo Arias 2001, 411–414; Knight, Castro-Rea and Ghany 2016).

In the first decade of the 21st century, U.S. influence weakened, as evidenced by insufficient support for a new international trade agreement under the WTO, international energy issues, or efforts to isolate the governments of Cuba, Russia, Venezuela, or Zimbabwe. Relations between the E.U. and Latin America also slowed, due in part to the “eastward” enlargement of the E.U., the growing interest in Asia (mainly China), and the “shift to the left” in Latin American policy that added to the economic crisis and European stagnation that made it challenging to reach free trade agreements with Latin American regional groupings. The United States, during this period, made security a primary focus of its foreign relations with the Caribbean, Central America, Colombia, and Mexico, but much less so with Argentina and Paraguay. The multi-lateralization of international relations became a response to inter-American problems by sharing issues as diverse as finance, trade, security, defense, democracy promotion, crime control, and immigration (Domínguez 2000; Ruano 2013; Briceño-Ruiz and Morales 2017).

In 2001 the ALBA was born, a unilateral Venezuela proposal to confront the FTAA, transforming itself in 2004 into an integration scheme described as non-capitalist and not centered on trade and competition. It proposed a break with open regionalism and suggested an integration model based on complementarity, cooperation, and solidarity. In 2003–2004, the divergence of interests around the FTAA crystallized, as expressed in the dispute between the countries that supported the U.S. project (including Mexico, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Peru, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic) and those that opposed it, represented by the members of Mercosur plus Venezuela.

In December 2004, Cuba and Venezuela signed the first declaration and agreement within the ALBA framework, consolidating a strategic alliance with a strong symbolic anti-imperialist charge. After the victories of Evo Morales in Bolivia (2006), Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua (2007), and Rafael Correa in Ecuador (2007), ALBA expanded and

consolidated itself as a Latin American regional bloc. Presidents Lula da Silva of Brazil (2003–2011) and Néstor Kirchner of Argentina (2003–2007) sought to create a new economic model for Mercosur that aimed to complement the original approach with new social and productive dimensions (Briceño-Ruiz and Morales 2017). In 2008, Dominica joined ALBA as a full member, followed by Honduras in October of the same year. However, its participation was frustrated by the coup d'état in June 2009. St. Vincent and the Grenadines joined in April 2009. ALBA allowed for the forming of a platform for strategic consultation, given the proximity to leftist governments that hold a sustained discourse critical of U.S. initiatives. Within this framework, there has been a growing impulse to the proposal of the People's Trade Agreements, which was initially promoted by Bolivia, Venezuela, and Cuba in 2006, and progressively taken up by various social movements as a slogan of fair trade and an antithesis of the free trade agreements. ALBA formed a platform to negotiate strategic alliances of energy, economic-commercial, and primarily ideological nature. These dimensions take on relevance, considering that the space of Central America and the Caribbean has geopolitical connotations that show the United States' interest in incorporating this region into its primary security perimeter, as demarcated by the limits of the projection of the Northern Command, the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement treaty, and the support for the Initiative led by Mexico with the so-called Mesoamerican Initiative. This project has reformulated the Puebla-Panama Plan (Sánchez Egozcue 2011, 54–56, 58, 59).

In December 2004, 12 South American presidents created the SACN. The bloc intended to become a free trade area made up of the CAN, Mercosur, and Chile, and an organization of a geopolitical nature. In April 2007, within the framework of the 1st Energy Summit of the region, the relaunching of the SACN was announced under the name of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR). Brazil's regionalism and its leadership aimed to strengthen South American bodies such as Mercosur, the SACN, and UNASUR. In fact, in 2008, UNASUR helped alleviate the severe political crisis in Bolivia, and in 2010 it mediated between Colombia and Venezuela and Ecuador (Kan 2013, 164–174). By this time, inter- and extra-regional relations had multiplied; for example, Brazil is a member of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and IBSA (India, Brazil, and South Africa) and together with Mexico promoted the Community of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (CELAC); Chile, Peru, and Mexico belong to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). In 2007, the Colombian government organized a Summit in the city of Santiago de Cali, in line with the creation of the Latin American Pacific Basin Initiative or Pacific Arc (2006), seeking to implement open regionalism. In 2011, this Initiative was transformed into the Pacific Alliance, a new regional block established by Colombia,

Chile, Peru, and Mexico (Domínguez and Covarrubias 2015; Briceño-Ruiz and Morales 2017).

That New Guest

In January 2020, the first case of Covid-19 was detected in the United States. From then on, they multiplied throughout the continent, at different rates, without yet knowing when or what the consequences would be. However, the impact in Latin America, the region most affected by the pandemic, is and will be profound, affecting all areas.

According to the article by Carlos Malamud and Rogelio Núñez, the continent was written in June through three differentiated phases. In the first phase (March-April), most Latin American countries – except Brazil, Nicaragua, and Mexico – were aware that their fragile and fragmented health systems would not withstand an onslaught similar to that experienced by Spain and Italy. This led to proactive measures being taken, resulting in a certain sense of success. Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Costa Rica, and Chile were considered models of this. Their leaders began to increase their acceptance rates: Piñera went from 5% to 20%. Vizcarra reached 83% when it barely exceeded 50% in January. Fernández and Duque also grew in popularity. In the second phase (April-May), an exciting feeling spread that the virus was under control. However, in May, the situation became heterogeneous in each of the Latin American countries, as there were low-impact countries such as Uruguay and Paraguay and most of the Central American countries, others of moderate incidence, among which Argentina and Colombia, Panama, Dominican Republic, and Chile stand out, and finally a group of countries with high numbers of infections, Brazil, Mexico, Ecuador, and Peru. Finally, the third phase indicated by these authors (May-June) was expected – wrongly – the pandemic’s peak coinciding with the economic recession’s first manifestations. In June, Latin America became the world epicenter of the Covid-19, particularly in Brazil, Peru, Chile, and Mexico (Malamud, and Núñez 2020a). To these phases, two more should be added corresponding to the period July-August and September-November. In July and August, the Latin American countries became increasingly disconcerted, with severe drops in their economies going into rigid quarantine and continuous denial of the increasingly worrying situation. While between September and November, with a certain air of resignation, many Latin American governments began to trust more in a gradual opening and an external solution, represented by the longed-for vaccine against Covid-19. The first option, necessary in the face of the real economic crisis, was generally not successfully managed. In contrast, the second is still today a wish rather than a reality. Cases continue to grow at an alarming rate. In April, the authors wrote another article pointing out that in the fight against the pandemic, many Latin

American leaders were gambling a critical portion of their political capital by prioritizing the fight against the pandemic in their agenda. This is a risky but necessary gamble since none of them were prepared to face it, especially the Latin American countries, historically lacking an adequate state apparatus and a prepared health system. Hence, since the beginning of this global crisis, Latin American presidents' role has gained prominence. The population has repeatedly trusted their opinions more than a multiparty consensus. However, the regional rapprochement was also uneven. Bolsonaro and López Obrador turned inward, while Piñera sought regional support, and even others, like Ortega, operated a negative opening, that is, they denied the recommendations of the WHO (Malamud and Núñez 2020b).

According to the Bertelsmann Foundation's transformation index that measures three dimensions of political performance (democracy, governance, and economy), in 2020, compared to 2018, democracy and governance regressed, affecting Guatemala, Honduras, Venezuela, and Nicaragua in particular, while economy-wise Venezuela and Nicaragua are the most complicated countries. These times of crisis fertilized the ground for the resurgence of authoritarian practices, protected by the State of exception and emergency and hyper-presidential. The pandemic demonstrated the growth and the need for a present State capable of enacting public policies in a scenario of economic depression and increased poverty (Alcantara Sáez 2020). Perhaps it is an appropriate moment to face homogeneous Latin American policies for the first time in its history. These are the kick-off for new encounters. So far, this has not happened since the region shows little regional articulation, especially the CAN, where the desire to return to the pre-crisis trade dynamism and exchange prevailed. Colombia, Peru, Mexico, and Chile maintain positions that lack the necessary regional commitments. Ecuador and Bolivia have abandoned the integrationist approach, while Mercosur, like the CAN, seeks a return to normality to regain new economic strength. The Central American model seems to have the most complicated answers to the current situation since the eight presidents in March 2020 promoted the declaration "Central America united against the Coronavirus". They committed to following a regional contingency plan to prevent, contain, and overcome the pandemic's effects on a regional key. ALBA, UNASUR, and CELAC also do not offer viable scenarios to face this situation. ALBA and UNASUR are going through a time of anxiety. Except for Cuba and Nicaragua (and some small Caribbean states), most of the countries that once belonged to them no longer maintain their position as member states; while UNASUR was reducing the participation of states: in 2018, six member countries, out of a total of twelve, temporarily suspended their membership (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, and Peru) and in 2020 Ecuador and Uruguay were added to the list. Although CELAC is in force, it represents a regional agreement

process rather than intergovernmental cooperation, as was the case in the past (Sierra Ríos 2020, 214–217).

Organization of the Book

In Chapter 1 *Great Britain, the United States, and China as competing great powers striving for hegemony in Argentina, 1880–2020*, Carlos Escudé highlights the complementary (although asymmetrical) relationship between Argentina and Great Britain until the end of World War II, which had generated considerable economic, social, and cultural development in Argentina. The replacement of Britain by the United States as hegemon in the Southern Cone region of the Americas had ruinous consequences for Argentina, for the simple reason that the United States did not need anything from Argentina. Even Argentina's policy of neutrality during the war and its aftermath earned it unceasing diplomatic and economic aggression from the United States that focused, at least until 1949, on depriving Argentina of many vital supplies of which the United States had become virtually the sole source. For this author, the rise of the United States to world power meant the fall of Argentina in the Third World. While the influence of the United States in the continent was decreasing at the end of the 20th century, the influence of China was emerging. This country impacted the world markets with enormous force and since the beginning of the 21st century, China's international trade has influenced all Latin American countries.

In Chapter 2 *Russian foreign policy towards Argentina. More than a hundred years of history*, Bestolkova Galina Vasilievna reviews the diplomatic, political, and economic ties that Russia rebuilt with some Latin American countries, such as with Venezuela, including arms sales and visits by the Russian Navy to ports, or with Cuba, hosting President Raúl Castro in Moscow and later, in July 2014, President Putin traveled to Havana to cancel 90% of Cuba's former debt to the Soviet Union. On that trip, he visited Buenos Aires and Brasilia signing nuclear energy agreements. The author considers that the diplomatic policy of Russia (formerly the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union) in Argentina particularly dates back to the last third of the 19th century. Currently, both countries are developing a variety of diplomatic interactions and economic and political cooperation.

In Chapter 3 *The Comintern, Soviet Diplomacy and Latin America, 1919–1941*, Victor Jelifets and Lazar Jelifets study the influence of the Third Communist International (1919) in Latin America. He considered that Latin America was not one of his priorities in international politics until at least 1928, the date of the Sixth Congress of the Third Communist International, where a broad debate began on the nature of the revolution in the continent and where the United States was considered the main enemy of the Latin American countries. The first wave of

diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Latin America was characterized by a dualism: a close intertwining of Soviet foreign policy functions, and the desire to realize, through diplomatic missions, support for the communist and anti-imperialist movement. In the 1940s these relations were resumed on a larger scale, but under different conditions due to World War II.

In Chapter 4 *Brazil and Argentina in the context of the two World Wars: Latin American regional geopolitics and the paradox of insertion through isolation (1914–1945)*, Günther Richter Mros describes the interwar period in which distrust prevailed among some Latin American countries, such as Brazil and Argentina. Partly as a result of a historical rivalry that progressively threatened regional stability. The dominant model, the author asserts, continued to be one of relative isolation and caution among Latin American nations, or between these and the United States.

In Chapter 5 *Latin American Diplomacy: the years around the Bretton Woods Conference, 1944*, Roberto Durán described the sophisticated institutional arrangement that was the IMF and the World Bank, whose mechanisms and procedures were intended to lay the foundations of a new international order and influence the restructuring of world politics. It should be recalled that the Bretton Woods Conference was a major milestone in the professionalization of diplomacy in many Latin American countries. Multilateralism was imposed and gave voice to Latin American diplomacy, which, during the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944 and the San Francisco Conference in 1945, was able to include international security, social and economic development as a major task of the United Nations.

In Chapter 6 *Latin America and the Great Cold War Strategy*, Alejandro Cardozo Uzcátegui and Luis Ricardo Dávila analyze the period of the cold war in Latin America, subdividing it into four stages. First, the period where there is a local containment of ideological dynamics against the interests of the United States, such as processes or revolutions of nationalist rhetoric (Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Colombia, and Peru). Second, the containment becomes international and the United States intervenes, supported by allied military regimes (Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Guatemala) to verify and participate in the containment of a specific country, and later the use of allied governments to activate heterogeneous strategies against the Cuban revolution. Third, the intervention of the Soviet Union in Cuba, and from this country began the ideological, propagandistic, logistic, tactical, and military-guerrilla irradiation as a revolutionary and destabilizing strategy of all Latin America. Fourth, the intensification of the National Security Doctrine in Central and South America, the military coups in Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, and Argentina, and the response through political-subversive formulas.

In Chapter 7 “*Fuera el imperialismo yanqui de América Latina. Viva la Revolución Cubana*”: *Uruguayan anti-imperialist students and Eisenhower’s visit in 1960*, Roberto García Ferreira studies the projection of the Cuban Revolution in Uruguay between 1959 and 1964 through anti-imperialist demonstrations during Dwight Eisenhower’s visit to Montevideo in March 1960. He considered that there was a revolutionary Caribbean message that did not exclude physical violence on the part of both the police and the demonstrators and that from that moment on there would be an “anti-Castro” and “anti-Cuban” radicalization of Uruguayan police intelligence. In this way, defying the efforts of the Uruguayan state to contain the protests, a period of conflict opened up within Uruguayan society, as in most societies on the continent.

In Chapter 8 *Between love and hate: Latin America versus Spain*, Rafael Martín Rodríguez demonstrates the role of Spain in its relationship with Latin America, different from the rest of the E.U. countries. This “special” diplomatic relationship with Latin America, especially since the end of World War II, is unraveled by the author who explains this issue by listing some specific issues: a refuge for those who lost the Spanish civil war, recognition in the face of post-war isolation, and external projection during the transition to democracy.

In Chapter 9 *A Century of Conflicts between Cuba and the United States of America*, András Lénárt highlights the most important events and processes that shaped the strategies of political, social, and diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States in the 20th century. The author maintains that although the future of the relations between both depends on both parts, as has been demonstrated in the last decades, it mainly corresponds to the United States to determine the direction of diplomacy. The new policy towards Cuba of U.S. President Donald Trump indicates a visible distancing from the previous administration of Barak Obama. It is a return to the hard-line of international policy typical of the 1960s and 1970s.

In Chapter 10 *Dreams of revolution: the regional impact of the Bolivarian wave*, Ángel Damaso Luis León points out that after a decade of development of neoliberal models and right-wing orientation (the 1990s), the turn of the century modified the dominant trend in the region. In its different versions, the left was, little by little, taking power in various countries of the region, thanks to the “chavismo” that had acceded to the government in Venezuela in 1999, promoting profound changes in the general Latin American reality.

In Chapter 11 *Border Politics in UNASUR: Lessons from the Triple Andean Frontier*, Loreto Correa and Simón Yantani address the issue of the triple frontier from the perspectives of Bolivia, Chile, and Peru, considering the internal policies of each of these countries at different levels and depths. They highlight UNASUR’s attempt to mediate the regional conflicts of the triple frontier, although with little success, which

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