
REVIEW ESSAYS

ASSESSING INTER-AMERICAN RELATIONS

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- THE UNITED STATES AND LATIN AMERICA: THE NEW AGENDA.* Edited by Victor Bulmer-Thomas and James Dunkerley. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999. Pp. 359. \$39.95 cloth, \$24.95 paper.)
- TANGLED DESTINIES: LATIN AMERICA AND THE UNITED STATES.* By Don M. Coerver and Linda B. Hall. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999. Pp. 289. \$39.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper.)
- THE FUTURE OF INTER-AMERICAN RELATIONS.* Edited by Jorge I. Domínguez. (New York: Routledge, 2000. Pp. 317. \$85.00 cloth, \$23.95 paper.)
- THE SECOND CENTURY: U.S.-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS SINCE 1889.* By Mark Gilderhus. (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2000. Pp. 282. \$65.00 cloth, \$21.95 paper.)
- EXITING THE WHIRLPOOL: U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN.* By Robert A. Pastor. (2d ed. Boulder: Westview, 2001. Pp. 334. \$20.00 paper.)
- TALONS OF THE EAGLE: DYNAMICS OF U.S.-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS.* By Peter Smith. (2d ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. Pp. 418. \$24.95 paper.)
- LATIN AMERICA IN THE NEW INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM.* Edited by Joseph S. Tulchin and Ralph H. Espach. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2001. Pp. 235. \$55.00 cloth, \$19.95 paper.)

The seven books reviewed in this essay are concerned with the inter-American system of relations among the states of the Western Hemisphere. They are described and assessed individually and in comparison in terms of intent, content, and analytic approaches.¹

Three of the books under review—Don Coerver and Linda Hall's *Tangled Destinies: Latin America and the United States*, Peter Smith's *Talons of the Eagle: Dynamics of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, and Mark Gilderhus's *The Second Century: U.S.-Latin American Relations Since 1889*—are chronologically organized historical surveys of inter-American phenomena. Coerver and Hall and Smith devote about a third of their attention to post-Cold War matters; Gilderhus closes his analysis with the end of the Cold War. Three books are set in the post-Cold War era, with additional consideration of the prospects for policies and consequences of interactions. Two of the works here—Victor Bulmer-Thomas and James Dunkerley's *The United States and Latin America: The New Agenda* and Jorge Domínguez's *The Future of Inter-American Relations*—are concerned with relations within the inter-American system, while Joseph Tulchin and Ralph Espach's, *Latin America in the New International System*, analyzes inter-American regional elements in the context of the larger international system. Finally, Robert Pastor's *Exiting the Whirlpool: U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Latin America and the Caribbean*, while focusing on U.S. policies from the Carter through the Clinton administrations, analyzes at length Latin American orientations and inter-American environments.²

The authors take up a variety of analytic approaches to and interpretations of inter-American relations and foreign policy orientations. All

1. All of the books examined here were written prior to the inauguration of the Bush presidency in January 2001, with its own foreign policy perceptions and orientations, and the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, which acutely influenced global and inter-American relations. These events especially affect our reading of the authors' identification of current trends and choice of policy prescriptions, which were predicated on conditions observed prior to the new or unanticipated turns of events.

2. Other recent books are of interest to students of inter-American relations: Michael LaRosa and Frank O. Mora, eds., *Neighborly Adversaries: Readings in U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Lanhan, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999), a well-conceived collection of twenty-five documents organized by historical periods designed for use in a college course; Thomas M. Leonard, ed., *United States-Latin American Relations, 1850-1903: Establishing a Relationship* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999), a comprehensive survey of balanced analyses of U.S. relations with thirteen Latin American states; Gordon Mace and Louis Bélanger, eds., *The Americas in Transition: The Contours of Regionalism* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999), an examination of general post-Cold War concepts of regionalism and the formal inter-American regional and sub-regional institutions and the policy strategies of their member states; and David S. Sheinin, ed., *Beyond the Ideal: Pan-Americanism in Inter-American Affairs* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2000), a compilation of thought-provoking and mostly revisionist treatments of a broad range of thematic, institutional, and individual personality considerations.

of the books comment to some degree on the method, theory, or concepts that guide their analyses or interpretations. Smith, Pastor, and Tulchin and Espach are the most explicit in this regard and provide the most extensive commentary.

All of the books pay special attention to the role and policies of the United States as they interact with the rest of the Americas (five of them explicitly indicate this emphasis in their titles). At the same time, they assess, to varying degrees, Latin Americans' perceptions of their own foreign policy interests and values as they engage the United States. Most of the books also address intra-Latin American relations and the region's interactions elsewhere with the world outside. Only Pastor explicitly discusses the unique character of the Commonwealth Caribbean countries, although others address them as part of the inter-American mosaic as the newest states in the region. Canada receives short shrift, other than as a member of NAFTA; the books edited by Bulmer-Tomas and Dunkerley and by Domínguez briefly discuss the revitalization of Canada's inter-American relationships since the latter 1980s.

With respect to post-Cold War issues in inter-American relations, the collective list includes: continuing asymmetry of state power in favor of the United States; promotion of democracy and issues of trade and investment; movements of peoples; intergovernmental organizations (especially the Organization of American States and Inter-American Development Bank, other international financial institutions, subregional political and economic integration organizations, the North American Free Trade Agreement, and the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas); problems of violence and peace-seeking in the region; drug trafficking and transnational crime; and the redefinition of national and international security. Four of the volumes contain individual country-specific analyses. They include, in various settings, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Mexico. Cuba and Mexico are accorded the most attention. While several key Latin American states are provided no such direct consideration, they do figure prominently in specific analytic and empirical contexts.

Coerver and Hall's *Tangled Destinies* concisely synthesizes in relatively traditional diplomatic historical terms interstate power relations between Latin America and the United States. The treatment is broadly informative of the major themes, events, and issues. A substantial chronology, detailed bibliographic essay, and five maps enhance the presentation. The general introduction (awkwardly placed early in the first chapter, itself devoted to the Latin American colonial and early national period) briefly and carefully articulates certain themes and concepts. It emphasizes the continuing long-term historical imbalance of power between the United States and Latin America, and summarizes the historical explanations or fundamental reasons for power asymmetries in

each of the successive eras over the past two centuries. This commentary provides the guiding theses for the subsequent chapters. The blurb on the back cover says that the book studies “how actions and policies of the United States have been interpreted and played out in Latin America” and that it presents “U.S. policies in light of their impact on these countries.” These matters are pursued more by suggestion than direct attention. The blurb also says the book is a “historical overview from both perspectives of the often-troubled and always uneven relationship between the United States and the nations of Latin America.” In fact, the authors emphasize (although not exclusively) the U.S. role throughout the book and address policy prescriptions solely to the United States and primarily for U.S. audiences. Their sharp criticism of those policies is consonant with the evidence and interpretations presented in the narrative. While Latin American perspectives and orientations are adequately observed, a more expansive critique of their foreign policy decisions would have been welcome.

Surveying events from the early nineteenth century to the late 1990s, the authors devote more than half the book to occurrences since the beginning of World War II; the last four of the ten chapters address post-Cold War phenomena. They deal with the Latin American movements for independence through the era of U.S. intervention and imperialism; cover changing U.S. policies in the context of both world power and regional concerns through World War II (pointing out that President Franklin Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor Policy ended direct military intervention but led to the acceptance of dictators and military regimes); analyze the Cold War tensions paralleled by Latin American social revolutions; and tackle the continuing transnational problems of foreign debt, the migration of people, and drug trafficking. An epilogue is devoted to “The Issues Before Us.” Each chapter contains a “vignette”—a brief treatment of a particular occurrence illustrative of the chapter’s subject matter, several of which involve a specific Latin American country.

The authors emphasize the almost continuously uneasy U.S.-Latin American relationships from the early nineteenth century to the end of the Cold War. Serious issues arose over the years from the realities of asymmetric state power and violations of sovereignty; disputes over territory, resources, culture, ideology (most intensely during the Cold War), and security interests; and U.S. ambitions for hemispheric economic and political power and desire for Latin American political and economic stability. They address U.S. debilities and limitations and perceptions of and prejudices toward Latin Americans, and the role of American business interests in the hemisphere. They acknowledge the particular salience of U.S. concerns with Mexico and the Central American-Caribbean area.

Coerver and Hall refer extensively to the Monroe Doctrine, as both a policy rationale and an abstract symbol. They trace the doctrinal twists and turns in U.S. policy statements and actions, as well as the shift in Latin American responses from substantial approval of a unilateral U.S. doctrine seen to offer protection of the Americas from European intervention in the nineteenth century, to widespread resentment and antagonism toward a doctrine viewed as a rationalization for U.S. intervention in Latin American internal affairs in the twentieth century. The authors' concept and interpretation of the changing Monroe Doctrine is effectively presented, although they may place too much reliance on it as an explanation of U.S. policies in the latter part of the Cold War. Revised security thinking in the post-Cold War period, they say, has ended the Monroe Doctrine as the underlying concept of U.S. policy calculations, primarily because of the extensive domestic content of inter-American problems.

The end of the Cold War fundamentally changed inter-American relations in several ways. The fear of communism no longer dominated U.S. policy calculations, and the rise of other issues to top priority required close U.S.-Latin American cooperation (especially trade relations, the drug traffic, and large migration movements). Consequently, the possibility has opened for the United States to shift its policy orientations away from regional dominance toward a more equal and cooperative partnership. Nevertheless, Latin Americans remained sensitive to sovereignty questions. In addition, the nature and extent of the issues compelled the United States to broadly expand its geographic concern beyond the long-standing emphasis on Mexico and the Caribbean basin.

Peter Smith's *Talons of the Eagle* is the second edition (the first appeared in 1996) of an important and provocative work by a leading and prolific senior Latin Americanist historian. A variety of topical and statistical tables and a select bibliography are useful additions to the analysis. Smith seems to have written two books in one, each of real interest but sometimes uneasily coexisting. One portion is decidedly subjective. Smith begins the Preface with "This book is a personal statement," and it is to a large extent a valuable synthesis of years of research and interpretation of the subject as well as an individual appraisal of U.S. policy and policymakers. He goes on to say that the study of inter-American relations, especially when addressed to U.S. audiences, should pay close attention to Latin American viewpoints and not "deteriorate into the study of U.S. foreign policy" (ix-x). He later says that because of the "pervasive and persistent reality" of power asymmetry, "the study of U.S.-Latin American relations becomes a meditation on the character and conduct of the United States" (8), which he undertakes as very much a normative matter. Smith eschews offering policy prescriptions

for the United States, although much of the book is a critique of U.S. policy and policymaking.

But Smith is also resolutely analytic. He further identifies in the Preface the principal assumptions underlying an objective scholarly approach to the study. After stating his belief that "historical perspective is absolutely essential for the comprehension of contemporary international realities," he further commits to interdisciplinary scholarship that blends "insights from political science and international relations with the study of diplomatic, intellectual, cultural, and political history" (which involves "the task of intellectual synthesis, as distinct from original research"). His goal is to offer "a conceptual framework for the comprehension of changing patterns of inter-American relations over a span of nearly two centuries," which emphasizes inter-American systemic structure, continuity, and change. The result is "interpretive history" or "historical political science" (ix-x).

The central concept, adopted from the study of IR, is of an international system of regularized interstate relations characterized by tacit codes of behavior and varying numbers of competing major powers, with capability levels dependent on the resources available to them. Smith divides the history of evolving inter-American systems of relations into three broad periods: the Imperial Era, spanning the nineteenth century and the twentieth to the end of World War II; the Cold War, from the late-1940s through the late 1980s; and the continuing post-Cold War era, which he appropriately denominates the Age of Uncertainty. He identifies the power-systemic structural characteristics and other dynamics of each historical era and their transformations over time, within which he considers U.S. policies, the Latin American responses and their variations, and the resulting patterns of interaction.

I concur with the author's disciplinary assumptions and applaud his ambitious effort to construct a conceptual systemic framework to guide complex multi-faceted historical analysis. But certain elements underlying the analytic framework and its application to inter-American phenomena are problematic. Smith's focus on and detailed exposition of his guiding theory of the international system, and the attention it has attracted among other Latin Americanists in the international field, invite more extended commentary.

Smith elaborates in detail his systems paradigm and the inter-American outcomes in two chapters—the Introduction, subtitled "International Systems and U.S.-Latin American Relations," and the Conclusion, subtitled "Structure and Change in U.S.-Latin American Relations." He plainly adheres to a traditional realist paradigm, with elements of the schismatic neorealist version (also called "structural realism"). Although he does not specifically identify his approach as realist or neorealist, he articulates their fundamental concepts, assumptions, pre-judgments,

and language about the nature of the international system and of the foreign policy process. For example, “the goal of this book is to concentrate on the *structural relationship* [emphasis in the original] between the United States and Latin America” (3), which acknowledges systemic change but emphasizes regularity and continuity in long-term trends, while identifying as the principal characteristics the distribution of interstate power and state actions, and interactions the result of the pursuit of national interests. With regard to foreign policy analysis and the formulation of interests, “My principal concern is with the ultimate content of policy, rather than with struggles over its formation” (7–8). Smith opts for the rational model of decision-making long-advocated by traditional realists: “Within such contexts leaders and decision makers often pursue relatively long-term, consistent policies” based on a grand strategy designed “to protect and promote the interests of nation-states” (4). Formulation of grand strategy entails cost-benefit calculations—the evaluation of losses and gains associated with probable outcomes. Smith acknowledges the role of bureaucratic politics but does not consider decision-making procedures as essential to the adoption of grand strategy. Concerning transnational phenomena (non-state and trans-societal actors and relations), Smith acknowledges that the “role of the state has undergone change . . . and its impact has declined in certain areas,” but argues that states continue to perform the most important functions in international relations and thus “shape the contexts for transnational behavior” (3).

A strictly realist approach proves to be uncertain when applied to an analysis of inter-American relations. Problems arise essentially from the realists’ belittlement of internal political and cognitive and social psychological elements as causal factors in policymaking, and their subordination of transnational phenomena within the state-centric power politics model—matters they consider to be diversions from what really matters in international politics. Smith, in fact, grapples with these problems, but in the process he introduces ideas that alter his initially articulated paradigm and erode some of its essential elements. In addition, intellectual and cultural history (especially ideological matters) are uneasily fitted into the basic realist paradigm.

Smith qualifies his firmly stated primacy of interstate structural determinants of state policy by also asserting the criticality of internal political and psychological factors. For example, in discussing “Analytical Tools” (3–5), he says the following: Since “the definition of strategy depends not only on the objective nature of prevailing conditions, but also upon the subjective perception of those conditions by decision makers,” he places “significant emphasis on the social construction of reality,” and that rationality tends to be “bounded” by ideological and attitudinal factors, which requires “occasional excursions into such fields

as cultural studies and intellectual history.” In the case of Latin Americans:

It is essential to consider the ulterior motivations of policy-making groups within the nation-state and of nonstate actors as well. As often as not, public policy represents the interests of the ruling classes, not the nation as a whole, and policy outcomes reflect the power and effectiveness of dominant alliances. This factor is especially pertinent to Latin America, where patterns of socioeconomic development resulted in wide discrepancies between social classes and their respective interests. (all quotations from pp. 3–5)

Furthermore, Smith’s characterization of anti-communist ideology in U.S. policymaking during the Cold War hardly sounds like rational cost-benefit and grand strategic calculations by which “countries and their leaders tend to behave in reasonable ways” (4). The Cold War, he says, was an “obsession for the United States” and the “anticommunist crusade” pervaded virtually every facet of U.S. policy toward the region; the exaggeration of the danger of Soviet communist expansionism was “a result of anticommunist hysteria,” yet “formed policies in accordance with this sense of purpose” (355, 358).

Until his treatment of the period following the end of the Cold War, Smith pays little attention to transnational matters. He recognizes that U.S. policymakers’ post-Cold War thinking came to emphasize economic matters and the negative social consequences of drug trafficking and illegal immigration, superseding the former geopolitical strategies. In addition, domestic actors and their interests increasingly influenced U.S. foreign policymaking. But such post-Cold War transnational phenomena had not suddenly appeared full blown—the crucial significance of the external business and corporate activities, economic and financial interactions, the drug traffic, and the movement of people, along with the activities of the Holy See, cultural interactions, guerrilla warfare, and other transnational phenomena, were not only long-standing (some dating from the earliest days of inter-American relations) but usually occurred with at most limited state control.³

3. The above (and other) statements imply tacit recognition of the limits of the realist paradigm to effectively encompass important inter-American phenomena and to facilitate the author’s multidisciplinary approach. By extension (and this is my own personal statement) they indicate the necessity for a broader pluralist model of the international system and foreign policymaking for an accurate analysis of essential inter-American phenomena, to include state policymaking with reference to them. It would be utterly foolish to deny the realities of interstate relationships, as it is unrealistic to assert that they are the sum and substance of international relations of any importance and to deny or devalue the criticality of strong and sometimes autonomous transnational phenomena throughout the history of inter-American relations. What is required is recognition of a combined interstate-transnational “international” system, as well as of the importance of internal political and psychological elements of foreign policy analysis. I have explored these matters in Atkins, *Latin America and the Caribbean in the International*

Mark Gilderhus, *The Second Century*, commences his analysis in the last decade of the nineteenth century, as the United States ascended to world power and entered the era of "New Diplomacy" toward Latin America, and continues to the end of the Cold War a century later. The topical narrative history emphasizes the regional and global politics and economics of U.S.-Latin American associations, as the author explores questions of hegemony and dependency in inter-American relations. The analysis stresses two themes throughout: (1) U.S. purposes, strategies, tactics, and capabilities as the hemispheric hegemony (including the limits of U.S. power); and (2) Latin American resistance (often nationalist) to the imposition of external guidance of its affairs and defiance of U.S. efforts to impose its democratic and capitalist values.

In the Introduction, Gilderhus says this about approaches to the analysis of diplomatic history:

Most historians accept the view that international behavior is determined by shifting combinations of security needs, economic interests, domestic politics, pressure groups, ideological and cultural commitments, bureaucratic configurations, personality structures, and psychological states. Some argue that international relations form a system with incentives and deterrents all its own [he cites Peter Smith's *Talons of the Eagle*]. Yet scholars disagree upon the points of emphasis and the overall effects. The ambiguities of historical evidence are often subject to multiple interpretations, compelling historians to regard their discipline as consisting of ongoing debates over the meaning of human experience. (xi)

He summarizes the competing interpretations offered by past and present historians who have particularly influenced the study of inter-American relations. They have tended to focus on the motivations underlying U.S. actions (ranging from benign to strategic to malevolent) within the realities of power asymmetries shaping the nature of inter-American relations. Out of this milieu Gilderhus adopts his own approach. In order to "mitigate any tendency toward national self-centeredness," he says, "this work looks at reciprocal interactions between the two regions, each with distinctive purposes, outlooks, interests, and cultures" (xi). He explores U.S. initiatives "to manage affairs within the Western Hemisphere, often by seeking to arrange for order and predictability" in terms of the "conditions of peace, prosperity, and security" (ibid.) But this does not assume passivity as the Latin American diplomatic response: "Latin Americans reacted, resisted, and pursued their own aims," often based on perceptions of reality different from those of the United States that the former recognized as underlying U.S. efforts to gain control of hemispheric affairs (ibid.).

System, 4th ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999), chapter 1; and Atkins, *Handbook of Research on the International Relations of Latin America and the Caribbean* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2001), 16–23, 28–33.

Gilderhus succeeds in striking a roughly even balance between U.S. and Latin American perspectives in each of the time periods he addresses. The first chapter, "Expansion, Empire, and Intervention, 1889–1913," deals with the New Diplomacy in the United States late in the nineteenth century and its consequences for the rest of the Western Hemisphere until the outbreak of the First World War. Chapter 2, "Revolution, War, and Expansion, 1913–1929," examines inter-American relations in the context of revolution and war during Woodrow Wilson's presidency and the aftermath into the 1920s. The next chapter, "Depression, War, and the Good Neighbor, 1929–1945," explores the era of the Great Depression and the Second World War, focusing on U.S. efforts to enlist Latin Americans in collaborative undertakings. Chapter 4, "Cold War, Dependency, and Change, 1945–1959," looks at the onset of the Cold War and the implications for Latin America. Chapter 5, "Castro, Cuba, and Containment, 1959–1979," observes the impact of the Cuban Revolution on U.S. policy during the 1960s and 1970s. The last chapter, "Since 1979: The Limits of Hegemony?" considers Central American conflicts and U.S. involvement, concluding with a brief summary of the ramifications of the end of the Cold War on inter-American relations as of 1991. A useful select bibliography is appended.

The multi-authored work edited by Victor Bulmer-Thomas and James Dunkerley, *The United States and Latin America*, originated with the organization by the editors of a study group that convened at the Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London. The project arose from the notion that the erratic nature of post-Cold War, inter-American relations and the rise to prominence of new issues raised the question of the extent to which inter-American relations had, in fact, changed. The fifteen contributors include six political scientists, six economists, one historian, one sociologist, and one psychologist. They are broadly multinational in country of origin and place of employment: the United Kingdom, Latin American countries, the United States, and Spain. They collectively provide in their various essays historical context and multiple social science perspectives.

As the editors point out, a variety of perspectives emerge as a consequence of drawing authors from different academic disciplines and countries. Their hope has been realized, in my view, that such a plural approach has added a salutary breadth of analysis that is of particular benefit given the extensive array of phenomena making up "The New Agenda" of issues in the 1990s. At the same time, the editors point out a number of commonly held values and judgments, most prominently "the conviction that the profound asymmetry of power and resources between the United States of America and the rest of the continent does not have to take its current form of a thoroughly inequitable relationship" (311).

The first part of the book provides a three-chapter overview: the history of U.S.-Latin American relations from 1800–1945, by James Dunkerley; those relations during the Cold War and its aftermath, by Jorge Domínguez;⁴ and the role of the European Union and its predecessor structures in the Americas, by Laurence Whitehead. The rest of the volume deals with three categories of the “new agenda,” including four chapters on trade and democracy (contributed by Bulmer-Thomas and Sheila Page, E. V. K. FitzGerald, Rodolfo Cerdas Cruz, and John H. Coatsworth), four chapters on drugs and migration (by Roberto Steiner, Eduardo A. Gamarra, Elizabeth Joyce, and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco), and three chapters on Cuba (by Juan Triana Cordovi, Jorge F. Pérez-López, and Maxine Molyneux). The editors provide a perceptive conclusion drawing together the assortment of contributions. Fifty tables and four lists of figures supply a great deal of useful information on a wide range of subjects.

The editors summarize the principal findings of the “overview” contributions (311–14). The inter-American situation of power asymmetry was decisively established in 1898 by the outcome of the Spanish-American War. Prior to that the relationships of societies and states around the hemisphere were conspicuously less imbalanced (with the prominent exception of the U.S.-Mexican War) and with an important European counter-balancing presence. After World War II, U.S. supremacy in the Americas was founded on a calculation of national interest in terms of anti-communism and global East-West conflict. The Soviet Union, by contrast, stumbled upon an extra-continental role almost by accident in Cuba, while the European presence after 1945 was reduced to an almost marginal status. The end of the Cold War and disappearance of the Soviet Union had critically important consequences for inter-American relations. Latin Americans engaged in a process of transition away from dictatorial governments and militarism. Despite some broadening of the ideological spectrum among Latin American governments, economic globalization accompanied political transformation. As a consequence, most of them adopted policies of capitalist orthodoxy advanced by the United States, to the disadvantage of the poor. Many Latin Americans look to a revival of European economic and political relationships as a way to diversify their relationships and counterbalance the U.S. presence. But they often misconstrue the extent to which Europeans act in concert and the complications and limits of inter-regional relationships. In their concluding remarks, the

4. See also Jorge I. Domínguez, ed., *International Security and Democracy: Latin America and the Caribbean in the Post-Cold War Era* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998), for an examination of inter-Latin American relations in terms of the characteristics of the new era, the use of international force, and changing security relations.

editors note that while governments are not losing their political authority or claims on sovereignty, "the realms of economic efficiency and political legitimacy that were once treated as linked but separate and primarily within the confines of national borders are now widely taken as being inseparable and trans-national in character" (314).

Robert A. Pastor, *Exiting the Whirlpool*, is the second edition of a notable study that first appeared in 1992. It is an imaginative and thoughtful book by a former national security adviser on Latin America to President Carter and a prolific scholar on U.S. policy and inter-American relations. Pastor adopts the metaphor of the whirlpool to characterize the historical pattern of U.S. policies in Latin America and the Caribbean as suddenly becoming obsessed with perceived security threats in the region (drawn into the vortex); and then, when problems seemed to recede, just as abruptly to return to neglect of the region (retire to the edges of the current). Pastor notes that while the book is concerned with the entire Latin American region, consonant with the realities of U.S. policy, it devotes an inordinate degree of attention to the Caribbean Basin. The purpose, however, "is to understand the causes of the periodic obsessions with that closer region so that future policy reflects a longer-term definition of U.S. interests and a more balanced approach to all of Latin America and the Caribbean" (22).

The study provides a detailed overview of the policies of U.S. presidents Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, and Bill Clinton, and the important role of Congress in foreign policy-making. A prior synopsis of the historical background clarifies the precedents for later patterns of behavior. Pastor says that developments since the first edition had validated his original theses that (1) the United States had overemphasized external threats and underestimated internal difficulties in small Caribbean countries, (2) the pattern of alternation between intervention and neglect would not necessarily be broken with the end of the Cold War, and (3) more important than the collapse of the Soviet Union and Communism were the already established hemispheric trends toward democracy and free trade. Pastor seriously questions whether the end of East-West conflict and the dissolution of the Soviet Union have actually freed the United States from the whirlpool syndrome of the past. The end of the Cold War was important for the hemisphere but in itself has not resolved chronic inter-American problems. In order to break the impasse, he advises policy orientations based on multilateralism, the defense of democracy, and the promotion of free trade. Given their transnational nature, something of a redefinition of sovereignty is also required by all parties. Pastor criticizes analysts who assume that, because of inter-American power asymmetry so imbalanced in favor of U.S. power, Latin Americans are dependent and defenseless objects. He acknowledges the persistence of power differentials but argues that Latin

Americans have increasing opportunities to define and pursue their own interests. A permanent exit from the whirlpool is now possible, and Pastor seeks to explain to both sides the choices that are available to them to realize this eventuality, with a sharp focus on the importance of a democratic, prosperous, and peaceful region.

Pastor frames his analysis in a distinctive, somewhat limited yet useful decision-making model. He suggests that scholars seeking to explain causal factors in U.S. foreign policy-making find variables in the realism of geopolitics, governing institutions, democratic politics, or the nature of decision-making.⁵ He reduces these to what he calls conservative and liberal lenses. The main difference between them, he says, is that conservatives tend to see threats more intensely, and liberals attempt to understand and be more responsive to Latin Americans. Furthermore, conservatives focus on a relatively narrower idea of U.S. interests and a military-based definition of power. They believe that the United States should approach problems unilaterally and in a practical and forceful problem-solving manner. Liberals give higher priority to the moral dimension and to co-optive or “soft power,” which derives from the American model. They look at the social and economic causes of the crisis, try to understand the issues from the other’s perspective, and rely on multilateral, diplomatic approaches. It is not that conservatives do not care about morality or Latin American views, or

5. Robert Pastor and Peter Smith, in their respective books under review, represent sharply diverging views on a number of matters. They carry on something of a “footnote war” about the consequences of U.S. power. Pastor directly contrasts his position that Latin Americans possess their own policy recourse to Smith’s judgment that “a study of inter-American relations requires only a ‘meditation on the character and conduct of the United States’ and how it has exercised ‘its perennial predominance’”; he suggests that the title of Smith’s book, *Talons of the Eagle*, unfairly “evokes a rapacious and unforgiving America” (x). Smith criticizes Pastor on the same subject: Because the internal dynamics in inter-American relations result from the “pervasive and persistent reality” of the character and extent of the asymmetry of state power, “it seems wholly implausible to depict U.S. involvement in the region as the result of suction into a ‘whirlpool’, as one leading authority has done” (5) Smith cites Pastor’s *Whirlpool*, 1st ed.). They also disagree, more indirectly, about policy advising. Smith sees futility in making recommendations to U.S. policymakers: “My experience is that advice of this sort tends to fall on deaf ears . . . and that it has a notoriously brief shelf life”; he settles for suggesting “alternative scenarios for eventual relationships between the United States and Latin America” (8). Pastor’s purpose, in contrast, is above all to put forward advice to U.S. decision makers: “My style in this book is to integrate the perspective of the policymaker with the eye of the scholar . . . I am not interested in formulating an abstract theory that provides few lessons for the real world” (xv). On the paradigmatic level, Pastor’s intrasocietal policymaking model is the polar opposite of Smith’s international systemic structuralist approach. Finally, Pastor deals overwhelmingly with transnational phenomena; Smith emphasizes interstate occurrences and subordinates transnational phenomena to interstate concerns.

that liberals do not care about order or protecting U.S. interests, sometimes by force. It is simply that each perspective listens to a different Latin American voice and gives different emphasis to each U.S. interest (29–30).

Pastor also identifies a radical lens, the many variants of which, he says, are more influential in the literature than in policy. While radicals provide a constructive critique of the conservative-liberal debate, they overstate the argument that U.S. exploitation based on economic motives is the essential problem. Even though the three lenses offer differing recommendations, they agree that U.S. foreign policy underlies most inter-American developments. In order to correct the imbalance of the power perspectives of U.S. policy, Pastor adopts an interactive lens, which he says grows out of the idea of asymmetric interdependence.⁶ The interactive perspective presumes that while the United States is trying to sway the Latin American states, they are trying to influence the United States. It acknowledges the vast asymmetry of power but does not assume this automatically means influence or control.

Joseph S. Tulchin and Ralph H. Espach's *Latin America in the New International System* is a relatively brief book that examines the themes of inter-American relations and (to a lesser extent) Latin American-Caribbean subregional matters within the global context. The editors bring together scholars and policymakers from around the Americas. Compelled by the complex interdependence of today's world, the contributors deal with rapidly changing post-Cold War phenomena in the international system, in particular the meaning of economic globalization and of various kinds of international strategic ties for Latin America. They discuss (and debate) the opportunities and dangers, generally warning against any excessive optimism. In an introductory chapter, titled "Latin America in the New International System: A Call for Strategic Thinking," Tulchin and Espach lay out the underlying assumptions of the volume. Within the post-Cold War international system, they see the United States tending to make foreign policy in response to crises and within constraints imposed by domestic politics, Europe too preoccupied with its own integration project and with security issues on its southeastern flank to give Latin America more than casual interest, and most of Latin America unassertive in projecting any importance in the global system beyond economics—all of which help

6. Pastor cites as the developers of this concept Robert Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1977). Keohane and Nye were early leaders advocating a pluralist perspective of the international system, challenging the limitations of the dominant realist state-centric model, and advocating inclusion of transnational phenomena to produce one of a multicentric system of "complex interdependence."

explain why outsiders neglect the region. The contributors, the editors say, explore the kinds of policies that Latin Americans might pursue to change and improve their roles in the international system. To that end, they assert increasing Latin American economic and security importance in both inter-American and world affairs. Inter-American relations will continue to occur in asymmetrical power contexts and the inherent tensions involved must be accommodated by a willingness on the part of all actors to cooperate. But the Latin American response to the opportunity for increased independence of action offered by the end of the Cold War and the U.S. inclination to cooperate on key issues was unassertive and indicative of a lack of confidence or policy innovation. The editors stress that Latin Americans must engage themselves consciously and seriously in strategic planning, and that their political stability and economic advancement will depend on viable and equitable democratic systems.

Tulchin and Espach explore the conceptual debate over the nature of the international system, which they say will shape the perceptions of policymakers. They focus on two competing paradigms during the twentieth century: (1) realist theory (both traditional realist and neorealist), which assumes a state-centric system of competition for power and resources, guided by rational calculations of self-interest, and characterized by conflict; and (2) institutionalist theory, which focuses on the interdependence of states, their shared interests and norms, and the necessity to conduct cooperative relations within formal international institutions so as to mitigate the reality of interstate conflict. The editors also observe the rise of networks of nonstate actors and associated transnational issues and supranational initiatives that challenge traditional notions of state sovereignty. They point out realists' skepticism about institutionalists' idealistic claims.

The distinguished contributing authors of the substantive chapters that follow reflect these debates, as they explore, with reference to specific phenomena, Latin American capabilities, the possible options, and the instruments Latin American policymakers could employ. Peter Smith surveys the possible strategic options for Latin America (within his conceptual perspective reviewed above). Heraldo Muñoz explores the relative decline of U.S. hemispheric dominance, changing economic dependence, and the possibilities for a new inter-American regionalism. Alberto van Klaveren takes on the controversial issues involved for Latin America in redefining sovereignty in light of political globalization. Exploring individual states, Thomaz Guedes da Costa addresses strategies for global insertion on the part of Brazil and its regional partners; Guadalupe González examines Mexico as a case study of foreign policy strategies in a globalized world; and Jorge Domínguez analyzes Cuban foreign policy within the international system. Two

contributors provide brief commentary on the above analyses. Robert O. Keohane, provocatively disagreeing that Latin America forms a regional subsystem within the global international system, proposes ten variables for Latin American foreign policy behavior that, not surprisingly given his premise, challenge (often sharply) the various authors' propositions. Ernest R. May also challenges them by emphasizing their inadequate consideration of the costs and limitations of the proposed strategies; he suggests the need to take a long-term perspective beyond neoliberalism. Tulchin and Espach return in the last chapter to summarize the themes of the book in terms of a call for strategic thinking. They arrive at a detailed list of general and specific conclusions about the possibilities for adopting innovative strategic policies.

Jorge Domínguez's *The Future of Inter-American Relations* is rooted in post-Cold War inter-American phenomena with a view to providing a conceptual and policy guide for the future. Domínguez assembles expert contributors from Latin America and the United States (in roughly equal numbers) who analyze a wide range of transnational inter-American issues and their ramifications for the states and societies involved. The sixteen highly experienced analysts, mostly political scientists and economists, are associated with institutions in the United States (among them are Latin Americans from the Inter-American Development Bank and the Inter-American Dialogue), Mexico, Argentina, and Chile. The title emerges from the purpose of analyzing trends and offering policy advice. In the process, the contributors also provide considerable data and analysis of the specific phenomena they investigate.⁷

In the opening chapter, Domínguez rejects the relevance of the tenets of traditional realism for the future of inter-American relations. He cites the post-World War view of prominent diplomat and realist George F. Kennan that the primacy of U.S. power meant "that we are much less in need of them [Latin Americans] than they are in need of us" (3). This notion led to Kennan's advocacy of U.S. disinterestedness in Latin America's domestic matters and skepticism of multilateralism in inter-American affairs. Domínguez sees this attitude continuing throughout the Cold War, as U.S. attention to the region alternated between "forgetfulness and panic" (4). Even today lingering elements emerge in the thinking of U.S. foreign policy elites in post-Cold War policies regarding relative state power and approaches to the major issues, such as trade, drug trafficking, and migration of people.

7. Of related interest is Albert Fishlow and James Jones, eds., *The United States and the Americas: A Twenty-First Century View* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), an explicit and sophisticated exercise in forecasting for policy prescriptive purposes, with reference to U.S. interests in inter-American relations, it contains eight background readings for participants at the 94th American Assembly at Columbia University in May 1998.

Domínguez's essential argument is that Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States matter to each other. While there is no doubt about the influence of the U.S. presence for Latin Americans, it is also true that Latin America and the Caribbean significantly influence the United States, including the social, cultural, and political elements of migration and economic interactions. As a general, but not exclusive matter, and notwithstanding the centrality of asymmetrical power in inter-American relations, Domínguez argues the efficacy of multilateral diplomacy and institutions for dealing with current problems. Regional and subregional multilateralism, he says, leads to more enduring solutions than unilateralism for the key economic, security, societal, and governance problems. He is particularly concerned with the protection and promotion of democracy in the region and the creation of a viable inter-American civil society.

The book is divided into three parts. In each, the contributors provide expert and realistic assessments of the opportunities, obstacles, and risks involved. Part 1, titled "Risks of Violence. Hopes for Peace," addresses inter-American peace, security, and transnational crime (drug trafficking, guerrillas and terrorism, arms trafficking, and kidnapping). It includes Domínguez's chapter summarized above, which serves as an introduction to the entire book, followed by contributions from David R. Mares, Boris H. Yopo, Ivelaw Griffith, and Mónica Serrano. The second part, "Finance and Trade: Threats from International Shocks and the Search for Growth," looks at international financial institutions, the emerging Free Trade Area of the Americas, and trade and investment issues. The analysts are Wendy Hunter, Pamela K. Starr, Robert Devlin, and Roberto Bouzas. Part 3, "International Civil Society," examines migration and democracy, with contributions from Christopher Mitchell, Rafael Fernández de Castro and Carlos A. Rosales, Anita Isaacs, and Heraldo Muñoz.

In conclusion, the various studies reviewed in this essay reflect the multidisciplinary nature of the study of international relations in general and of Latin America and the Caribbean in particular. Although the numerous authors adopt elements of conceptual and theoretical distinctiveness and competition as well as of commonality, they nevertheless seem to signify the inclination of Latin Americanists who study international relations to be more interdisciplinary, or at least less parochial, than their non-regionalist disciplinary colleagues. Latin Americanists do not agree on all matters of theory or interpretation (which would be an undesirable state of scholarly affairs) and, in fact, may sharply disagree with one another (as pointed out in the above commentary). Nevertheless, the international historians, while interpreting the substance of inter-American phenomena in terms of time, place, themes, and events, refer to or integrate elements of international

relations theory or social science concepts. The political scientists, economists, and other social scientists include (to the extent that it serves their purposes) historical background and settings as well as cross-disciplinary social scientific perspectives. In this sense, at least, the study of inter-American relations is alive and well.