

LATIN AMERICA, THE U.S.,  
AND DIPLOMACY:  
New Books, Old Problems

- FRONTIERS IN THE AMERICAS: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE.* By JORGE MAÑACH. Translated by PHILIP H. PHENIX. (New York and London: Columbia University, Teachers College Press, 1975, Pp. 108. \$8.50.)
- THE POLITICS OF ATTRACTION: FOUR MIDDLE POWERS AND THE UNITED STATES.* By ANNETTE BAKER FOX. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977. Pp. 371. \$15.00.)
- THE UNITED STATES AND THE ANDEAN REPUBLICS: PERU, BOLIVIA, AND ECUADOR.* By FREDERICK B. PIKE. (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1977. Pp. 493. \$25.00.)
- DIPLOMAT OF THE AMERICAS: A BIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM I. BUCHANAN, 1825–1909.* By HAROLD F. PETERSON. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977. Pp. 458. \$40.00.)
- LATIN AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC HISTORY: AN INTRODUCTION.* By HAROLD EUGENE DAVIS, JOHN J. FINAN, F. TAYLOR PECK. (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1977. Pp. 301. \$15.00.)

Descriptions and studies of U.S.–Latin American relations are legion. Less attention has been paid to comparisons of the two ways of development in the Americas, and very little, indeed, has been written on images of Latin America in the United States and vice versa. One interesting contribution to this last problem is a series of lectures given by Jorge Mañach at the University of Puerto Rico in 1961–62, now available in English.

Mañach's writings can be approached in at least three ways. First, as essays on the study of the "frontier," they do not bring anything particularly startling or original. Some influence of earlier writers—above all Bolton and Bowman—is discernible, though the author makes no reference to them. Second, a Puerto Rican theme is present. There is a somewhat Kennedyesque quality to deliberations on this point, though Mañach refrains from stating openly where Puerto Rico's *new frontiers* will run. The third aspect of his writing is the most important: the lectures merit most attention as source material for studies of the Latin American *pensadores'* mind. In this respect we are provided with a really savory piece; the Spanish original is even more so.

In modern Spanish, *frontera* has a narrower range of meaning than "frontier" in English (see Turner and related literature). One may speculate on the relationship between frontier and *conquista*, but Mañach gives no serious consideration to the issue, his claims to a theoretician's mantle notwithstanding (his excellent translator tries to save him by changing the original title: *Teoría de la frontera*). The most rewarding part is provided by his deliberations on the cul-

tural frontier. For Mañach, culture is a value, and it is subject to gradation. The pensador focuses his attention on the frontier between the U.S. and Latin America ("the unbalanced frontier"), but his lecturing (yes) is also interesting when it touches upon the European experience, e.g., the relationship of culture and Nazism. That he is unable to grasp the nature of that relationship is only too clear. In any case, Mañach's political thinking is rather naive and abounds in banalities and stereotypes. The very lack of originality and its classical character, however, seems to substantiate the thesis that we deal here with a representative sample.

In his preface, the translator compares Mañach to Martí, and Concha Melendez, in the introduction to the original publication, also emphasizes the importance of the pensador. Why, then, has the translation not been critically edited? It would greatly have upgraded the value of such a source, and it would have contributed even more to the declared aim of fostering U.S.-Latin American dialog.

The *problematica* of a dialog has been taken up by Annette Baker Fox. While her book is neither a theoretical essay on international relations, nor a history of U.S. foreign policy, nor an evaluation of the contemporary state of the United States' relations with what she calls the friendly middle powers, it comprises some aspects of all the above-mentioned approaches. The book is based on printed sources and the author's aim was presumably to give a new interpretation of already familiar facts. The interpretation begins with the formulation of the topic. She writes about the United States and four friendly middle powers, including the United States' neighbors, during the period from the Second World War to the seventies. That almost inevitably led to a study of relations with Canada, Mexico, Australia, and Brazil, attention being centered on the first two.

The United States' relations with these countries are evaluated here in terms of military matters, economics (trade and investments), political affairs (global issues of foreign policy), and matters related to neighborhood affairs. However, what precisely is the political attraction? The main question posed by the author is the following: "To what extent and in what ways did one country respond to the needs of the other, and how did the policies of one country affect those of the other?" (p. vii). The reader is soon disappointed, however, as he realizes that, from the author's point of view, all these countries are peopled almost exclusively by members of government and administration, businessmen, trade union leaders, "nationalists," and marginal milieux such as illegal immigrants from Mexico, or U.S. citizens refusing to serve in Vietnam. You would search in vain for a discussion of the image of Mexico in the United States, or that of the United States in Brazilian society, or any society for that matter, even among the people mentioned above. About mass media and politics we are told virtually nothing, neither are we informed of prejudices and stereotypes influencing the formation of social attitudes, if only of those interested in policymaking. (But is that really so? The author ascertains the existence of "cultural distance"; anti-Yankee groups are simply "nationalists"; Brazil is "more tropical" than Mexico; conditions that make it possible for U.S. investors to

exploit an underdeveloped country are called "a hospitable economic climate," etc.)

As might have been expected, the author asserts that relations between the U.S. and Canada are the closest. Quite rightly so, and it is not without satisfaction seasoned with a pinch of maliciousness that the author writes: "The Canadians and Americans do not have to spend their energies arguing about the scope, methods, and goals of nonexistent formal organizations, as do those in the European Community" (p. 291). Relations between the U.S. and Australia look similar, although in this case "Spontaneity of response is hindered by the fact that it is right in one place when it is day in the other" (p. 292).

The situation is different as concerns relations with Mexico (cultural distance, economic distance, historical traditions) and Brazil. However, one may seriously doubt the viability of such categories as cultural distance, differences in stages of development, interdependence, etc., with reference to the relationship between the capitalist super power and underdeveloped countries. One gets the impression that the author professes an early version of the "theory" of modernization. One also cannot help reflecting upon the way the notion of domestic policy is conceived here. After all, is not the super power both an external and internal factor vis-à-vis the government of an underdeveloped country? Furthermore, I think, the author owes the readers some explanation when she states categorically that "Geographical proximity to the United States stimulates and enables a middle power to conduct a more independent global foreign policy than that of more distant middle powers attracted to the United States" (p. 295). It is the author's view that her generalizations as far as management of influence and attraction is concerned may be applied mainly to cases where, *inter alia*, the expectation of violence and/or coercion is absent. Yet, would not a more careful analysis lead to the conclusion that coercion may take on rather sophisticated, and by no means less efficient, forms as part and parcel of the domination/dependency relationship? Consequently, those generalizations would hardly apply to relations of the United States with the three American countries.

The title of Frederic Pike's book may suggest similarity in topic with that of Fox. In fact, it is an attempt at historical synthesis that correlates the experiences of three Andean countries with that of the United States (inter-American relations are only one aspect of the problem). In all respects it is a successful formula (Pike already tried it out in his book on Chile and the United States). As all well-designed syntheses, Pike's book is written *à thèse*. He maintains that corporatism is the key to understanding historical processes in the Andean region. The corporatism of these societies is contrasted with the individualistic values of the ideology prevailing in the United States. Pike also maintains that the corporatism of the Andean societies helps them meet the requirements of modernization. Pike incorporates the notion of modernization into a corporatist model, highlighting the latter and lining it up with capitalism and socialism. Should we accept this as the way towards the identification of a "third position"? After all, no corporatist mode of production really exists. One may understand

that his awareness of the world capitalist center's crisis induces the author to question individualism prevalent in, and natural to, the United States (though I dare say that some Europeans who visit the United States may find a growing degree of uniformity there). The very existence of complex social structures in the Andean region does not necessarily imply that capitalism has not been the dominant factor there.

Pike's book, based on secondary sources related to various aspects and currents of history and historiography, may be considered as an essay in political history. But for his corporatist thesis to be true, it should draw upon a wide scope of analyses in social and economic history, which it does not. To be sure, the author's task was by no means simple, as shown by the example that though research on East and Central European history is more advanced than that on Latin American history, the picture of the historical processes here is far from satisfactory. Both regions display considerable similarities as dependent sub-systems, but it is doubtful whether such complex and multifaceted structures and processes may find their explanation simply in a single concept, be it corporatism, or the class struggle category as extracted from the Marxian context.

We are faced with different problems in the case of Buchanan's biography. The source base for the book is impressive, indeed, and particularly so in the domain of manuscripts. By using Buchanan's early letters, Peterson was able to draw a very convincing picture of the man's personality and surroundings. Unfortunately, however, either Buchanan stopped writing letters, or the presumably existing collections of papers are incomplete or were unsurveyed. Whichever is the case, the fact remains that we are not told enough about what that intelligent observer thought of Latin American societies and his opposite numbers there. As the narrative develops, we get to know more and more about the situations Buchanan was involved in, and less and less about his thinking.

Peterson presents a self-made-man's career as a diplomatic trouble-shooter in the Latin American sphere of U.S. interests, in the era of U.S. expansionism. He keeps presenting Buchanan as a successful diplomat. However, how are we to reconcile this view of Buchanan (a true one, no doubt) with that of him as a Good Neighbor pioneer? "Imperialism" falls into the category of expressions that are rarely used in this book, whereas "Good Neighbor" appears often. And let us just think of the fact that Buchanan's diplomatic career spans the years 1894–1909 and concerns also Panama and Venezuela.

With the 450-page biography of a diplomat out of the way, one is relieved to reach for a single volume of nearly 300 pages on Latin American diplomatic history since colonial times. A book on this subject has been long awaited, and should be welcomed, the more so that the authors promise to look at the problem from the Latin American angle. The book is composed of relatively autonomous chapters by different authors who tell the reader *what* happened in the past; but can we afford to disregard the remaining questions—*why* and *how*? This unsatisfied feeling relates, first of all, to the treatment of twentieth-century processes. One glaring example is supplied by the chapter entitled "Foreign Relations in the 1930s: Effects of the Great Depression." Its author fails even to

point to the essence of the causality he suggested in his very title, while in fact that epoch provides excellent material for a panorama of the structural basis for foreign policy, and of the interaction of local and international factors.

At the same time, we should be careful not to accept unreservedly the description of what did take place. As the authors address their book to "the serious reader and student," one example on "student" affairs will be illuminating. The book says that Latin American student unions were courted by international organizations—on the one hand by the International Union of Students (IUS), "Communist-oriented in Czechoslovakia, and on the other hand [by] the non-Communist World Assembly of Youth, in Holland. Meetings of each of the international organizations [were] frequently held in exotic places" (p. 246). From an ethnocentric perspective, places like Cairo, Auckland, or Ulan Bator must certainly seem "exotic"; perhaps some European cities deserve that qualification as well. Anyway, to judge simply by the bibliography, in which the writings of European historians are almost nonexistent, one is inclined to suspect that too much is being written here, on this continent, in languages seemingly too exotic for anyone to know. In this respect, the book is typical of Anglo-Saxon Latin Americanists.

Back to the quotation. The rival of the IUS was not the World Assembly of Youth (which should be compared, rather, to the Bucharest-based World Federation of Democratic Youth) but the International Student Conference (ISC). Whereas the ISC was openly anticommunist (even if ostensibly apolitical and based on the student-as-such formula), it is a gross oversimplification to define the IUS as Communist oriented, if only because the IUS was a grouping of dozens of national student unions from all over the world. True, the IUS is of an anti-imperialist and anticolonialist orientation, hence a sufficient basis for domination therein of a loose coalition of national organizations from Third World and socialist countries. It would be interesting to find out in what way, if any, the international student movement contributed to the emergence of a Third World consciousness in Latin America, and to what extent the ideas of *reforma universitaria* influenced European movements for democratization of education in the sixties, but then answers to these questions can be expected neither from historians of diplomacy, nor from a book of such a general introductory nature. And in any case, this book should be quite a success on the market.

In sum, the five books make interesting reading and every university library should be able to offer them to a Latin Americanist.

RYSZARD STEMPLOWSKI

*Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw*