

RYSZARD STEMPOWSKI

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## Introduction

What is the actual condition of the state in Latin America? Each contributor to this volume has been invited to answer this question by writing an interpretative essay from a specifically suggested angle: the origins of the state; government and society; economic growth; society and economy; nation-building; the indigenous population; political culture; international relations etc. It was the contributors' decision which particular states to focus on in order to best illuminate the issues involved.

Our main focus in the volume is on outlining some of the processes concerning the state now, two hundred years since the first declarations of independence. Along the way, we tackle both theoretical and normative issues. All the contributors to this volume share a long cultivated multidisciplinary research interest in Latin America but the volume also reflects our disagreement on what we take the state to be as well as over the prevailing situation in Latin America.

Each chapter reflects the views of its author all the way down to his choice of British or American English. As a result all chapters reflect the authors' views on the contemporary state of the State in Latin America, as well as – why not say it – the authors' identities.

The book is aimed primarily at academics and students of the humanities and social sciences. The opening essay by Horst Pietschmann, “**On the Origins of the Latin American States**”, begins by examining the validity of the notion of “Latin America”, an issue that each and every author in this book had to face. Pietschmann delves deep into the core of the matter by pointing out that the usage of the term in the traditional historiography was based upon several premises: (1) the nineteenth century concept of the nation and a vision of a common history treating “colonization” as a self-contained whole or an analytical unit, followed by the common struggle for independence, thus resulting in a parallel concept of the nation embedded in the sharing of the revolutionary-liberal ideals of the independence period. (2) The rejection of

the colonial past linked up in the most simple way possible with the experience of the “heroic” period of aspirations for independence, one confined to the period of Carlos III since 1759, identifying it as the epoch of the allegedly first manifestations of the opposition to the Spanish-Portuguese regime. Accepting these premises meant forgetting the corporative – statist – ethnic traditions of the colonial past which survived and continued for a long time after independence. It also allowed the local elites to largely disregard the tensions and conflicts between the ancient traditions and the new ideals of the revolutionary period that grounded the new constitutions in Spanish America. It took numerous constitutional amendments, from 1811 onwards, to introduce changes in legislation to resolve some of these tensions and conflicts in public policies, both with respect to external relations (e.g. in accepting the principle of *uti possidetis* or interdict for the purpose of retaining possession of a territory, granted to one who, at the time of contesting suit, was in possession of a territory in order that he might be declared the legal possessor) and home regulation (e.g. with regard to individual rights, private property, the state monopoly of law-implementation). The establishment and delineation of international borders (as resulting from *uti possidetis*) were in general based upon colonial antecedents, and had been achieved much earlier than the “colonization” and “civilization” of the interior by the new states, the other way round than in Europe. And so, within the old borders of the new “nations” it was still possible to speak about the non-integrated population as “barbarians”, as the ancient criteria of legally-fixed social differentiation became social-economic criteria, with the antagonism between the city and the countryside built into the system.

This state of affairs became increasingly challenged since the second half the nineteenth century both at home and from abroad. New concepts of ethnic minorities (the science of anthropology), as well as environmental protection concerning transnational areas (e.g. the rainforest), came from abroad and gained gradual acceptance at home. At the same time internal colonization was inducing migrations and other phenomena that were spreading across international borders and creating tensions over the control of resources, etc. These processes were in effect undermining the solidarity of Latin American states while intensifying communication among them. Also, a re-ethnification of some minorities was gradually emerging, which, in turn, led to attempts at redefining the nation in terms of its own ancient traditions and/or re-adapting to the ‘national’ traditions of the past with the help of traditional concepts of the Left. In the face of these tendencies, the big states of the region have intensified

their efforts at modernization, spilling their presence over their international borders (Brazil vis-à-vis some of its neighbouring countries, Mexico vis-à-vis Central America).

Pietschmann makes it clear that this approach results from a reinterpretation of the Iberian colonial expansion. It focuses on the historic significance of three centres of colonial control: Mexico (city), Lima and Bahia (the last centre later relocating itself to Rio de Janeiro). The centres converted themselves into sub-metropolises or sub-empires under a loose European supervision. Each of them was a seat of the institutional power and maintained control over local resources, and, in the case of Mexico and Lima, also over cultural activities (universities, printing houses, secondary education). These colonial systems of Central and Southern America, as existing at the end of the XVI century, resemble, argues Pietschmann, the system of domination of the Roman Empire of the late epoch with its various capitals and methods of extracting a surplus. This kind of imperial system was characterised by contradictions and conflicts among the centres, peripheries and the frontier zones, the phenomenon of intermittent conflict and exchange displacing itself more and more towards the interior. At the same time the indigenous peoples in Mexico and Peru, who in the pre-colonial times were highly culturally and politically developed, quickly redefined their identity along catholic-statist lines, thus obtaining a legal status within the new system of domination.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the European metropolises began to introduce mercantilism and this required a new system of direct territorial governance. What we call now the "second conquest" by Spain and Portugal was started by introducing privileged metropolitan companies and radical fiscal and administrative reforms. In the process the sub-empire of Lima was dismantled, and the Mexican one was considerably reduced in its competences. In Brazil, a new centre emerged in the shape of Rio de Janeiro owing to the gold discoveries in the South, and it is to this centre that even the Portuguese Court moved from Europe (1818). More and more, the ancient legitimacy established in the colonial type relationship between the Europeans and the Americans appeared wrecked, and the political idiom in use on the two shores of the Atlantic was becoming different. Conflicts emerged between those born in Europe, and the Americans (where the division between the Conservatives and the Liberals emerged as a new sign and premise of change). In the end Napoleon Bonaparte destroyed what remained of monarchic legitimacy in Spanish America thus inducing not just the independence of the already more or less solidly formed state entities but also giving rise to even wider issues concerning

the legitimacy of the (new) state and nation. Things were different in Brazil since independence was granted by a monarchical executive act thus assuring a long period of stability and internal expansion and creating some of the conditions for establishing Brazil as a regional power.

Lawrence S. Graham writes about "**Government and Society in the Latin American States**", and provides an overview of consecutive governments together with his assessment of prevailing trends. We learn from his essay that in order to understand the distinctiveness of the Latin American state system in a global setting, one always needs to keep in mind that government and society in Latin America are inseparably linked to two factors: (1) the choices made by governing elites at the time of independence, as well as (2) the institutional framework that evolved in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries at differential rates throughout the region. The author takes Brazil and the Southern Cone countries as the point of departure for his analysis. This is because, as he argues, the further south one goes the easier it is to discern these two significant factors: (1) the importance of the different decisions made by governing elites in the regions where movements emerged to create independent national states in Latin America, and (2) the different degrees to which governing elites in these countries were able to consolidate both the state and the nation on the basis of their relative autonomy from external interventions and influence. The southern regions of the Western Hemisphere had to contend much less with external actors, namely the European Powers and the United States, as primary factors affecting nation-state formation. As one proceeds northward in South America and into the circum-Caribbean basin, the role of external agents becomes more important in determining the outcomes of nation-state formation. From this base, then, one is in a better position to explain comparatively the diversity to be found among these states, all of which have adopted presidential forms of rule rather than parliamentary options.

Graham examines seven country cases, beginning with Brazil as the largest and the most unique Latin American state and ending with Uruguay, a very small country, which has done the greatest amount of experimentation in correcting for the weaknesses of presidential rule in consolidating its democratic system. The other cases are introduced to call attention to a peculiar set of properties of Latin American politics in the twentieth – 21<sup>st</sup> centuries: the failure to incorporate effectively the masses into democratic rule and the outcomes produced by populist politics (Argentina); the importance of democratic values and the skillful use of national resources, both physical and human, by governing elites and their diffusion into mass politics (Chile); the problem of

incorporating indigenous peoples into national societies shaped by Western concepts of democratic practices, the state and the nation (Peru); the reappearance of populism in new forms and the breakdown of middle and upper-class democracy (Venezuela); the consolidation of limited democracy in the face of elite dissensus and enormous geographical disparities in a single country which makes consolidation of a mass-based democracy difficult (Colombia); and the difficulties of consolidating both the state and nation and making democratic presidentialism work when a country borders a Great Power, such as the United States, or falls within its sphere of influence (Mexico).

Colin M. Lewis writes about **“The State and Economic Growth in Latin America”**. Reviewing the experience of the last century or so, he addresses several key issues. These include: the relationship between economic growth and nation-state formation; the nature of connections between particular patterns of economic growth and state configurations; the ideology and policies associated with specific periods of economic and social change. The author explores these themes by addressing individual phases or cycles, and seeks to challenge a number of conventional assumptions. Lewis argues that state legitimacy has been determined by the provision of public goods, the supply of which underpinned economic growth as well as political order. The main findings of the paper are that since the late nineteenth century successive state ‘models’ have sought to embed the market. In the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth century this was done through external economic opening and pragmatic government intervention in domestic markets. Insertion in the world economy during the first age of globalisation made the state and partially formed the market. Between the 1910s and 1930s, state formations changed, driven as much by internal forces as external events. State structures, though often subject to profound challenges, proved to be fairly resilient, partly due to a growth in the outreach of the state represented by an increasing emphasis on the provision of social services as economic infrastructure. Public goods of various forms thereby became more widely available. Although, after the 1940s, the state became ‘larger’ and governments virtually everywhere intervened in the economy, the argument here is that the emphasis remained that of embedding enterprise. The extent to which such efforts succeeded in creating national capitalism, when states ‘retreated’ and economies ‘opened’ after the 1980s, remains a subject of sharp controversy. Yet the ideologies and strategies associated with the neo-populist-business alliance regimes of the 1990s and the market-friendly governments of the democratic left of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century have, as their principal policy objective, the facilitation

of market-capitalism. Hence Lewis maintains that from the oligarchic states of the late nineteenth century, to the post-Washington Consensus regimes of the early twenty-first, an enduring feature of the political economy of Latin America has been the quest to form and facilitate markets, a process intrinsic to state legitimacy.

Patricio Valdivieso writes about **“The State and the National Economy”**. He inclines towards the view that the present situation in Latin America may be best seen as resulting from a combination of the following two factors: the legacy of development that took place between independence and the 1970s (hence the restricted autonomy, instability, poverty, inequalities, marginalization and social exclusion) and neoliberal policies (which resulted in the opening of markets, a strengthening of the private sector and a remaking of the relation between the state and the national economy through deregulation). Owing to the neoliberal spur, Latin America inserted itself more securely into the world economy, but at a high social cost, and while preserving unfavourable conditions of development. This situation, argues the author, needs to be overcome. There is a broad consensus regarding how to do this among political actors, governments, international organizations (the United Nations, specially ECLAC, PNUD, and programmes such as the UN Millenium Development Goals, or global governance as promoted by the World Bank, etc.) and the participants of conferences such as UNCTAD, and scholars in general. At the same time, different countries may face different priorities. Valdivieso zealously argues that to improve the situation or overcome mistakes requires integrating the economic and the social, and setting up as the key goals of policy making human development and institutional stability. The main task of the state in Latin America should be to stimulate economic growth under conditions of globalization, and to develop a social and institutional order according to generally accepted principles of justice (commutative, legalistic, and distributive). The author stimulates the debate on how to convert the stated goals into goals achieved.

Tadeusz Paleczny writes on **“The State and Nation-forming Processes in Latin America”**, against the background of what he calls a general theory of social development in Latin America. Specifically, he examines the main theoretical models of nation-building processes with reference to their political, economic, and cultural distinctiveness. The most important phases of development in Latin American nation-building processes are listed and discussed. Paleczny believes that successive historical periods, which he lists as the colonial, postcolonial, republican, modernist and post modernist, ensured unique

conditions for social integration and national assimilation; conditions that were present only in the countries of Latin America. One section of his article focuses on the role and significance of civic ties and the state in the shaping of the national consciousness of Latin American societies. Besides language, religion, and cultural heritage (all resulting from colonial and migratory tradition), the state has been the most important factor in the growth of national integration. Nation-building processes in Latin America lead towards syncretism, hybridisation, transcultural reality, and the emergence of a Latin American civilisational area. The author provides a description of the Brazilian nation-building processes, turning his attention to the roles played by religion, race, and ethnicity in the context of a multicultural, pluralistic civil society. He concludes that Brazil – much like Mexico – is a complex, multicultural civic society with traits that are characteristic of both a nation and a civilisation.

Aleksander Posern-Zieliński writes about **“The State and the Indigenous Peoples in Latin America”**, and more specifically, countries with a large share of indigenous (“Indian”) people (the Mesoamerican and Andean regions). These relationships – between the state and the indigenous peoples – are situated in specific economic, social, racial and cultural circumstances. In turn these circumstances should be analysed from two perspectives: the ethnopolitics of the state towards the indigenous citizens and the Indians’ ethnostrategy towards the state.

The relationships in question were from the very beginning antagonistic, and they continue to be so perceived by the autochthonous population. The contemporary state – shaped by the Creole, Mestizo, and immigrant (from Europe and Asia) elites – has until recently ignored the actual needs of the autochthonous population. It did not represent the interests of the indigenous population, even though at times it would disguise this fact by calling to life a variety of institutions formally charged with taking care of these peoples. In fact, the attitude towards the indigenous people of both the dominant sections of society and the apparatus of the state was (and still is) strongly permeated with racial prejudice, a sense of cultural superiority, and civilisational and missionary paternalism, i.e. the ideas that have legitimised the social and economic domination of the Creole-Mestizo sector over the indigenous groups. These features categorically point to the postcolonial character of ethical and social relations. They also explain, to some extent, the contemporary postulates of the indigenous groups and individuals in defence of their rights and for the improvement of their lives, all aimed at the liquidation of the continuing structures of endocolonialist domination visible in the economic (exploitation), so-

cial (exclusion), civic (lack of subjectivity), and cultural (acculturation) realms. These relationships between the state and indigenous peoples became increasingly questioned thanks to the progress of democratisation. The newly established indigenous organisations and their leaders, as well as “friends of Indians” gathered in NGOs, formulated a position critical towards the earlier relations. This is how the phenomenon of indigenous activism came to be. Its manifestation is a network of organisations from the local self-government level up to national and international federations, ranging also from ethnic parties to the indigenous peoples’ representatives in parliaments and governments. Posern-Zieliński argues that the contemporary indigenous movement in Latin America owes much to the economic development that triggered the modernisation of the life of the indigenous population by breaking their former isolation. On the grounds of these changes, the idea of ethnodevelopment (*etnodesarollo*) took shape. It highlights strongly the need for the advancement of the indigenous population, while preserving their separate identity. A view was also becoming widespread, outside of the indigenous population, that the state should also serve the interests of the population in question, and do this by ensuring its active participation as citizens. This is how a new idea of a pluralist state in the ethnic sense began to take shape in Latin America. It is obvious that this new model of the state should lay the foundations for a new type of national and political community. It would incorporate the indigenous population – with full rights – into the main current of the country’s life. The consequences of the complex processes described by Posern-Zieliński are enormous, and the current Bolivian experiment may turn out to be even more important than the Cuban one.

In my own chapter on “**States and Political Cultures in Latin America**”, I use some considerations on political culture as a method for throwing some light on the state. Therefore I begin by defining the notion of the political culture of a society in a given state and time as a set of widespread and relatively stable and respected beliefs (a) related to the identity of the society as a political nation that is the constitutionally defined sovereign, (b) expressed in public discourse, and (c) referring to the state as the institutional correlate of that identity, and especially to the constitutional system of policy-making. It helps me to provide a concise review of the literature on the concept of political culture, thus identifying various perspectives of looking at the state. I focus on such aspects of the connection between the state and political culture as public discourse, policy-making, democratisation, and collective (national) identity in the state. The results are tentative at best. The lingering uncertainties about the



state as such are not much weakened by the rather dispiriting vagueness of all of the conceptualizations of political culture, and even more so by the variety, scarcity and inconclusiveness of the actual empirical data and findings. The connection between the state and political culture naturally exists, yet the results of seeking a specific cause-and-effect connection allow us to speak of no more than a probability. This is all the more so since the dearth of studies by Latin Americanists of the state and political culture combines here with a shortage of such research in Latin America. On top of that, the parallelism between thinking about “the cultural” and “the political” is manifested – on the one hand – in the inconsistently controlled Eurocentrism of many works, which in turn is accompanied on the other hand by the eagerness to accentuate the non-European uniqueness and supposition that, if the European observer does not understand something in Latin America, it is because this “something” carries within itself *ex definitione* a deepness of meaning. Despite all of these problems, discussion of these ties helps us in thinking about the state – both as an institution and as the specific type of organisation of a society, functioning thanks to the systemic connection of norms (the building material for institutions) with a population living in a natural environment within a specific territory, that is about the nation state. Yet before one will be able to say something more revealing about a state from the point of view of political culture, accounting both for continuity and social change, before one will actually be able to clarify the issues and the questions about the state through the discussion of political culture, there is a huge amount of research to be done.

Carlos Escudé writes in Spanish about the “**Iberoamerican civilization and its international relations**”, rather than just the international relations of the Latin American states. His essay starts with the premise that the main actor in so-called inter-“national” relations is not the state, but what has been dubbed the “state/society complex”. This concept reminds us that, rather than the product of grand geopolitical objectives, foreign policy, in the middle and long-term, tends to be conditioned heavily by domestic economic, social and cultural factors. Escudé’s position can be read as supporting the thesis that policy-making is a domain in which foreign policy-making is whatever concerns foreign subjects. That is, foreign policy-making is understood more broadly than it often has been in the literature.

Rather than cataloguing events and treaties, Escudé’s chapter elucidates the causes that explain the peculiar place occupied by Latin American countries in the international relations of today’s world. He digs into the historical processes that led to their emergence as nation-states, in order to find clues for the

understanding of present-day phenomena. The author points to the peculiarities which differentiate Latin America as a region from the rest of the world. Among these are: (1) The unique commonality among this family of nations which, in the case of the Spanish-speaking countries, ranks by far as the world's most extensive contiguous land mass sharing a single language; (2) the uniquely low levels of massive violence, both at the interstate and intrastate levels, which Iberian America has been blessed with during its two centuries of independent life; (3) the inapplicability, in the region, of the bellicose model of state formation; (4) the notably weak states with which the region has been cursed, incapable both of progressive taxation and of mass mobilization for war; (5) the trend toward the capture of these weak states by crony bourgeoisies, both local and foreign, generating the world's greatest inequality of income, engendering poverty, and making populism almost inevitable in most countries once electoral democracy was consolidated, and 6) the trend toward the establishment of zero-sum domestic political games, in which the politician that proposes short-term sacrifices for long-term societal gains almost inevitably is the loser in the competition for an impoverished and poorly-educated electorate.

In this context, the use of the Gramsci-inspired "state/society complex" concept leads to unconventional formulations. The issue of narcotics in Mexico or Colombia, for example, is not dealt with by Escudé so much as an issue of law and order that impinges on state-to-state relations, but is treated instead as a phenomenon involving conflicting stimuli: (a) the demand for narcotics, say, in the United States; (b) the supply, say, in Mexico, which is largely generated by foreign demand; (c) the American state that has declared a "war on drugs", but which emphasizes the repression of the supply side of the trade in order to limit the quantum of violence at home; (d) the Mexican state that sometimes cooperates as fully as it can with the American state, i.e. the United States, in which case it engages in violent conflict with the segment of its own economy that responds to the United States' demand for narcotics, while it sometimes drags its feet as much as it can (in which case it engages in a confrontation with the American state). In other words, the international side of the Mexican narcotics issue is not dealt with as a problem involving simply the two states, but as one in which a segment of the (US) American and Mexican societies are partners, while the relations between the two states fluctuate between conflict and cooperation.

In conclusion to this introduction, I think that having read through the book the reader will discover that the states in Latin America have evolved into

organizations that are similar to the highly developed and democratic states in Europe and North America. But the fact that they are similar – just similar – to those states means that they are also explicitly different. Quite a lot of the similarities and differences can be explained in terms of the prevailing global system. A good deal of the issues can be understood in terms of the sociology of government and/or of political culture. Furthermore, the deliberations on the status of the descendants of the original population, and of the African slaves, help to reveal nation-building as a societal process of identity construction. More difficult to understand is the feed-back between the state and the collective identity as expressed by the nation as a social group which is politically organized. Here we have as many points of views as there are contributors to the volume. All in all, the state as an organization (including the notion of the state as an institution or a set of rules) is developing. However, in most countries of Latin America, the democratic state ruled by law, and universally accepted and treated as a common good by the citizens, seems to be still a constitutional ideal to be pursued, rather than an accomplished fact of life.

If we look at democracy in a wider context we can see that perhaps it is not so much democratic procedures or the possibility of making choice as such that is the most important object of the pretty much universal desire for democracy. Rather, it is what the state delivers in terms of meeting the needs of its people that matters first of all. Above a certain threshold of satisfaction people do not risk a conflict for fear of losing what they already have. Below this threshold, however, even a relatively minor reason may spark off a major confrontation since people do not have much to lose. The exorbitant inequalities in Latin America are a fertile ground for confrontation. But it is not clear how to change this situation and to avoid a catastrophe; even eradicating the most extreme poverty is difficult. If the degree of identification of the population, including the power elite and the lowest classes, with the nation-state is high, it is easier to harmonize conflicting interest in a peaceful way. How can such an identification be increased without recourse to inventing a foreign foe, stimulating chauvinistic nationalism and the like? In other words, neither in the strictly material sphere of life nor in the realm of political culture do we find simple and direct incentives for a social compromise strong enough to prevail. And in the countries with a strong indigenous component, the ideal of mutual acceptance in a bi-cultural society of equals is merely a concept, a design, even if a constitutional one.

Nevertheless, had we dealt with the state in Latin America forty or even thirty years ago, the tone would have been less encouraging. Democratization

in Latin America has become a visible phenomenon and it bodes well. When democracy in the Latin American states strikes deeper roots, as we may hope one day it will, the next classical problem will have arisen: disillusionment with democracy. May the Latin Americans face this problem as soon as possible. One side-effect will be a better understanding of the dynamic relationship between the cultural and the political dimensions of a democratic society.

The approaching Bicentenary offers itself as one more reason to think about the state in Latin America. That is why I was unable to resist the temptation when **Dr. Klemens Budzowski**, Chancellor of the new and rapidly developing **Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski University in Cracow**, invited me to "write or edit for us a book on Latin America". Not everything is that bad in the realm of publishing in Latin American studies in these days of the Second World Depression, not even in publishing edited volumes.

Thanks are due to the people who were involved in publishing this first book of this University Press in a foreign language. The Director of Publications, **Tomasz Dalowski**, worked incessantly to see the project through. **Piotr Krasnowolski** has translated the three essays from Polish, and waded through the texts in English as a copy-editor, together with **Benjamin Koschalka** and **Christopher Reeves**, while the essay in German was translated by **Piotr Krasnowolski** and **Lesław Michalus**. The Publishers' external reviewer Professor **Michał Chmara** (The Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań) gave his comments on the earlier version of the manuscript. **Halina Baszak-Jaroń** oversaw the lay-out editing of the book.

Kraków, 25 May, 2009 –

On the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the primer grito libertario de América