



CRITICAL REVIEW OF AMERICAN HISTORIOGRAPHY OF U.S.–LATIN AMERICAN (CHILEAN) RELATIONS, 1900-1929

HISTORIOGRAFÍA ESTADOUNIDENSE SOBRE DE LAS RELACIONES ENTRE ESTADOS UNIDOS Y LATINOAMÉRICA (CHILE), 1900 – 1929: UNA RESEÑA CRÍTICA

Dra. M. Consuelo León Wöppke

Centro de Estudios Hemisféricos y Polares
Viña del Mar – Chile
consueloleonw@vtr.net

Dr. Jason Kendall Moore

Centro de Estudios Hemisféricos y Polares
Viña del Mar – Chile
jasonkendallmoore@gmail.com

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“De Tacna al Polo Sur: Transición y Cooperación Constructiva en las Políticas Exteriores de Chile y Estados Unidos en Tiempos de Crisis, 1927-1931”

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RESUMEN: La historiografía anglosajona sobre las relaciones entre USA y Latinoamérica representa un excelente punto de partida para cualquier estudio de las relaciones entre Washington y Chile. Se revisaron aproximadamente 70 libros para establecer puntos de convergencia y divergencia entre los autores respecto a diversos temas relacionados con la primera administración de Carlos Ibáñez del Campo y la de su contraparte Herbert Hoover. Antes de asumir el poder en 1929, Hoover había visitado varios países para demostrar su determinación de abandonar las políticas intervencionistas de sus predecesores. Sus esfuerzos lograron gran éxito en lo referente a la larga disputa con Perú sobre las provincias de Tacna y Arica.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Política Latinoamericana de Estados Unidos – Política Exterior Chilena – Antiamericanismo Chileno – Depresión de 1929.

ABSTRACT: English-language historiography of U.S.–Latin American relations provides an essential starting point for any thorough analysis of U.S.–Chilean relations. For this project, approximately seventy books have been reviewed to establish points of convergence and divergence between authors' perspectives of a variety of issues relevant to the first administration of Chilean President Carlos Ibáñez del Campo and that of his U.S. counterpart Herbert Hoover. Prior to assuming office in 1929, Hoover visited numerous Latin American countries to demonstrate his resolve to abandon the interventionist policies of his predecessors. His effort achieved greatest success as regards the long-standing border dispute between Chile and Peru over the provinces of Tacna and Arica.

KEY WORDS: Latinamerican Policy of the USA – Chilean Foreign Policy – Chilean Antiamericanism – Great Depression

1. U.S.–LATIN AMERICAN AND U.S.–CHILEAN RELATIONS

Wiarda¹ opens his study of *The Soul of Latin America* by noting that most U.S. citizens have difficulty appreciating that region. He attributes this to their belief in the superiority of their own institutions to all others, reinforced by exposure to stereotypical representations of Latin Americans in the cartoons of major publications like *The New Yorker*. These aspects of U.S. political culture discouraged many citizens from seeking to broaden their knowledge of a people widely associated with sloth and backwardness. Political culture, he recognizes, defies strict categorization since it incorporates factors that are equally sociological and economic. However qualified, it bears primary responsibility for the negativity that continues to distort attitudes toward the nation's immediate periphery.

Wiarda approaches this issue in a contemporary manner though the issue itself is hardly so. Throughout the previous century, authors recognized the dismissive nature of U.S. attitudes toward Latin America. For example, Lockey² wrote that officials' speeches and press releases usually contained traces of their national superiority complex. The numerous advantages of their society had led them to regard the "other" America as their own backyard, an inviolable sphere of influence to be manipulated or ignored as necessary³. The differences between the two regions were much greater than one might anticipate on the basis of geography. Sweet⁴ noted some viewed the American Republics as having nothing in common except the word American and the word Republic.

The United States had come to represent a system of ideals that Rowe⁵ identified as American in the broadest sense of the term, yet most authors drew a sharp distinction between themselves and Latin Americans, whom they criticized for referring to the United States as the Colossus of the North⁶. Whitaker⁷, Szulc⁸, and Tomlinson⁹ suggested that the "other" Americans had done little to discredit their reputation as "wild Indians" who had permitted their once glorious civilization to be destroyed and failed to build anything substantial in its place. Lodge¹⁰ and Ealy¹¹ elaborated that the region's underdevelopment was due to a lack of motivation in contrast to the discipline that had placed the United States in the leading position within the hemisphere. Criticism of its policies was not always unjustified, Tomlinson¹² accepted, though it served to distract attention from more blatant episodes of violence perpetrated by Latin Americans against each other.

Plaza¹³ attributed the strained nature of hemispheric relations in part to resentment that the North had been blessed with easily accessible raw materials and transportation routes while the South had to contend with tropical jungles and the Andes mountains. He encouraged North Americans to remember how lucky they were and accept that their wealth was a "distant aspiration" for most of the other American republics. Hope for improved relations depended, among other things, on recognition that the United States' population was nearly as diverse as that of Latin America and included a substantial number of Latinos. Education provided another means of promoting a more nuanced appreciation of the disparity between U.S. ideals and policies.¹⁴

Despite the sincerity of such prescriptions, hemispheric solidarity would fail to crystallize. U.S. intervention in Latin America declined substantially during the Hoover administration, helping to produce the Good Neighbor Policy, the proverbial Golden Age of U.S.–Latin American relations which finally succumbed to a new wave of intervention in pursuit of Cold War objectives¹⁵. Contemporary authors have continued to suggest that the two peoples are fundamentally

incompatible¹⁶. Their analysis is undeniably more sophisticated and their use of documentation much more thorough. While they approach the same issues in new ways, their conclusions are no more optimistic, and indeed they cannot be given the persistence of “Yankee phobia” resulting from either intervention or neglect.¹⁷

By supporting Latin American independence movements in 1810–1824 era, and becoming the first to recognize the newly created governments, the United States had helped to counteract fears that someday it would seek to dominate the hemisphere¹⁸. Chile was an exception from this trend as from the beginning it viewed the United States as unfriendly¹⁹. U.S. officials postponed recognizing the nation’s independence to avoid antagonizing Spain, and for the same reason they made no attempt to intervene against the Spanish Navy when it later shelled the port city of Valparaíso. When Spain was forced abandon its hope to reclaim its former colony, Chileans felt no sense of gratitude toward North America. As much as they resented its initial lack of support, they resented its later attempt to prevent their acquisition of territory following their victory over Peru and Bolivia in the War of the Pacific²⁰. U.S. interference in favor of Peru reached the point that the Chilean government threatened to send the U.S. fleet to the bottom of the ocean²¹.

Relations between the two nations did not improve in the following century during which the first rose in power and the second declined. Their relations continued to attract scholarly inquiry since among Latin American nations, Chile’s political institutions were most similar to those of the United States, and both nations took part in the arbitration of the Tacna-Arica dispute²². The final treaty of 1929 assigned one province to Peru and the other to Chile, for any other solution might have lead to a recommencement of hostilities. In assuming the role of mediator, the United States had recognized that failure might deal a deathblow to its already low prestige in the hemisphere. What the United States gained in terms of its reputation failed to allay concerns that Chile, like most of Latin America, was increasingly dependent on U.S. private investors who sought to manipulate the government by appealing directly to the Chilean Congress, the State Department, and the Export-Import Bank, among other institutions, and the government often capitulated²³.

There remained several factors that distinguished Chile from its neighbors, and authors pay greater attention to these than might be expected. Unlike others, McClellan²⁴ described one of these with only the faintest praise: “Chile suffers from her gifts. She is in some ways delusive. Her cultured and comfortable facade conceals a hinterland of wretched poverty... [She] gives an impression of remarkable efficiency, and in many respects she is extremely well organized; but in other ways her organic inefficiency is grim to contemplate, and is only worsened by her admirable poise and her pervading complacency”.

According to Rippy²⁵, two more important issues were that Chile had received more white immigrants than any other Latin American nation, and its climate was temperate as those in Europe where “the most orderly, vigorous, and progressive civilizations” had developed. Thus Chile offered its immigrants an environment in which their racial predispositions could flourish in the spheres of business and politics. Rippy admitted that scientists had produced no evidence to substantiate a connection between race and talent or between weather and civilization, but no doubt assumptions to that that effect had contributed to the U.S. superiority complex.

Perceptions of Latin Americans as “wild Indians” offered one explanation for the vast disparity of wealth between the North and South²⁶. Another was that the Spanish form of colonization, aside from being more brutal than that of the English, had encouraged miscegenation and invested poorly in education, precipitating the high rate of illiteracy that would follow²⁷. Chileans had fared well on both counts. Rippy²⁸ praised them for having a “great national university, public libraries in every city and almost every town, some of the best journals to be found anywhere in the world, and a group of intellectuals who would have been a credit to any nation.” Sweet²⁹ writes that the nation’s strong emphasis on education dated all the way back to Founding Father Bernardo O’Higgins, and Chileans had distinguished themselves in the fine arts as well. He and others note the overarching influence of Venezuelan-born Andrés Bello in advancing every form of erudition³⁰.

2. FROM THE MONROE DOCTRINE TO THE SIXTH PAN-AMERICAN CONFERENCE

In 1823 U.S. President James Monroe announced the Doctrine that would forever bear his name. He warned congress of the need to exclude the hemisphere from European influences, any expression of which would have to be considered unfriendly acts and dealt with accordingly³¹. Given the weakness of the U.S. Navy and the vast distances involved –over six thousand miles from Punta Arenas to New York City- Perkins³² considered the Monroe Doctrine nothing less than a fantasy. Nonetheless, it appealed to the concept of Manifest Destiny that many North Americans had internalized due to the remarkable success of their nation³³. Monroe’s vision had been shared, though not publicly articulated, by Thomas Jefferson who had deemed U.S. and Latin American interests synonymous and equally incompatible with those of the Old World³⁴. Graebner³⁵ interprets the Doctrine as having justified territorial expansion as a key component of the nation’s global mission.

While many authors denounce the Monroe Doctrine as a precursor to *Pax Americana*, referring to the height of U.S. power and arrogance following the Second World War³⁶, others are forthrightly illiberal in their analysis. Wilson³⁷ maintains that without the Doctrine, Latin Americans would have retreated to some form of colonialism, permitting their region to become the Western Hemisphere’s equivalent of Africa. He even predicts that they would have reverted to speaking indigenous languages. Whether or not Monroe would have concurred, his Doctrine helped to shape the myths of U.S. policy toward Latin America. Kenworthy³⁸ summarizes these as viewing the hemisphere as a blank slate to be filled with the virtues and institutions that had placed the United States in the vanguard of an inevitable historical process.

Many decades would pass before the Doctrine warranted accusations that it was imperialistic in nature. In the interim the United States did not enforce it against infractions by Britain, France, or Spain that appeared not to seriously imperil the other nations’ sovereignty. As Matthews³⁹ observes, the Doctrine had not been intended to improve U.S.–Latin American relations but to promote European disengagement while the military slowly expanded, preparing to act more assertively at some point in the future, which arrived in 1898. Spain’s violent suppression of the Cuban people’s struggle for independence so offended North Americans that they chose to intervene, and in the process of defeating Spain they gained jurisdiction over its former colonies as far as Guam and the

Philippines. The Colossus of the North had at last substantiated the worst predictions, its appetite being whet by “the taste of empire,” in the words of a *Washington Post* editorial⁴⁰.

In 1904 President Theodore Roosevelt, former second-in-command of a cavalry division sent to Cuba, added amended the Monroe Doctrine to permit the United States to intervene in response to the “wrongdoing or impotence” of Latin American governments. The Spanish-American War had underscored the seriousness of the U.S. commitment to defend the hemisphere from Europe. Now, if Latin Americas were to pursue their own interests at the expense of U.S. interests, they might be judged in violation of the Roosevelt Corollary. A group of Panamanians avoided this by gaining U.S. assistance on the eve of their revolution with the understanding that, once in power, they would permit the construction of an inter-oceanic canal⁴¹. Pastor⁴² writes that the Corollary effectively made the United States the policeman of the hemisphere. Although Roosevelt has been commended for seizing such opportunities to advance the national interest, he is more frequently described using terms such as “adolescent imperialist”⁴³.

With the election of William Howard Taft to the White House, U.S. policy toward Latin America entered a phase of “dollar diplomacy,” a term that Matthews⁴⁴ refers to as one of the most unfortunate ever uttered by a government spokesman. The new president used it in reference to his faith in private investment as a best means of promoting development in the other American Republics. However, the term itself seemed designed to reinforce perceptions of the United States as an overly materialist society incapable of appreciating the more egalitarian ideals to which many Latin American intellectuals aspired⁴⁵. They also had difficulty accepting the legitimacy of U.S.-supervised elections in Cuba, Panama, and Nicaragua, the results of which unsurprisingly consolidated U.S. interests. Coerver⁴⁶ notes that the Taft administration sought to adopt a somewhat more isolationist policy while maintaining the benefits of Roosevelt’s activism.

The ensuing war in Europe strained U.S. relations with the Old World and within the New. Woodrow Wilson, the new president, feared that democratic institutions everywhere might be undermined if the Central powers were to triumph⁴⁷. Though the Allied powers regretted his nation’s delay in joining their cause, its entry was pivotal in securing victory and making the world safe for the political ideals exemplified by the United States. Many Latin Americans remained dissatisfied with how those ideals were being applied to them. Eight of their governments succumbed to U.S. pressure to join the Allies, five severed relations with the Central powers, and the remaining seven insisted on remaining neutral⁴⁸. Chile was among the last group, and Evans⁴⁹ applauds its non-alignment as having been fully consistent with its national interests and gratitude to Germany for having recognized its annexation of the province of Tarapacá after the War of the Pacific—which the United States had opposed.

After the war Wilson actively promoted the League of Nations as a means of preventing future conflicts, yet the congress did not ratify U.S. membership therein due to concern that the nation would become perpetually embroiled in European affairs⁵⁰. The traditional isolationism to which Taft had sought to return, with certain reservations⁵¹, had now gained overwhelming public support—at least in principle. Langley⁵² notes that irony that Wilson, the most idealistic U.S. president to date, also became the most interventionist: “Everywhere in the Caribbean [he] inflicted punishment in the service of laudatory ideals.” His belief in the “civilizing mission” of the United States wrought

havoc in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Cuba, Costa Rica, and Honduras. Langley⁵³ notes that while Roosevelt had treated Latin America with contempt, unlike Wilson, he had made no attempt to reshape their political institutions, as this went beyond “protective imperialism.”

The League of Nations appeared to present an opportunity for Latin Americans to “participate on terms of equality with the great nations of the earth” and gain external support in their quest to reduce U.S. influence over them⁵⁴. Dedicated to upholding the rights of small powers⁵⁵, the League naturally appealed to those whose pride the United States had wounded, whose soil it had violated, and whose blood it had spilled⁵⁶. Eighteen Latin American nations joined the League though their hope that it might help to ameliorate their plight “quickly unraveled when [its] covenant recognized the Monroe Doctrine, effectively leaving the United States with principal responsibility for hemispheric matters”⁵⁷.

After a brief withdrawal, U.S. marines returned to Nicaragua in 1926 as the country teetered on the brink of civil war. President Calvin Coolidge believed it essential to reinforce the conservative government, lest the instability be exploited by the Bolsheviks who had allegedly established a base in Mexico. While some domestic journalists regretted that the mission, however justified, would serve to further antagonize Latin Americans, others embraced it as a means of expanding U.S. commerce to the benefit of all parties. Their European colleagues were unanimously critical. One London reporter referring to the United States of North and Central America while a German scoffed: “This is the government which on every occasion from a high pedestal gives peace sermons to Europe and upholds the American example as ideal”⁵⁸.

Matthews⁵⁹ modestly suggests that the United States’ promulgation of the need to maintain Nicaragua’s stability could not be separated from its own financial considerations. Callcott⁶⁰ reinforces this perspective by noting that the Monroe Doctrine was no longer applicable since the First World War had left European nations in too weak a position to challenge U.S. interests in the hemisphere. The attitude of Graebner⁶¹ is conveyed by his use of subheading “Corrupt dictatorship in Nicaragua threatens American interests.” Neither does he accept the premise that European intervention was beyond fathom, for which reason he believes that the United States had every right to act unilaterally in defense of its own interests. The alternative would have been for it to “sit idly by,” which would not have befitted its status as a great power.

North Americans accepted the discrepancy between their political ideals and aggressive behavior since the lives and property of their fellow citizens had been placed in danger. They also envisioned the Panama Canal being jeopardized if the stability were left unchecked⁶². After dispatching fifteen war vessels and approximately five thousand troops⁶³, U.S. representative brokered a “compromise” between the warring factions in which they agreed to a ceasefire to be followed by U.S.-supervised elections the following year. Only one of the rebel leaders refused to accept these terms: Augusto César Sandino who forces retreated to the jungle and initiated a campaign of guerrilla warfare against U.S. forces⁶⁴. Leinwand⁶⁵ writes that he remains the “outstanding hero” of the twentieth century whose “David-Goliath exploits” continue to inspire songs, ballads, article, biographies, and novels.

Langley⁶⁶ determines that Sandino was a coward since he refused to “stand and fight” in a traditional manner. Instead he attacked only when certain that his forces would enjoy the strategic advantage, and spent the remainder of his time issuing press releases about “the people’s will” and “universal truths he only vaguely [understood].” According to Langley, he appreciated that his legacy would be established by his words, not his action. Sandino exemplified the phenomenon to which Pastor⁶⁷ devotes his survey of U.S. intervention in the Caribbean: after the United States first intervened in Nicaragua in 1909, it found itself trapped in a whirlpool of events that it was unable to pacify and reluctant to abandon. Whether Sandino was responsible for exacerbating the misunderstandings that plagued U.S.–Latin American relations, or the product thereof, he became a hero for many and a model for future insurgents⁶⁸.

Despite assurances that the U.S. concept of Pan-Americanism had “none of the spirit of empire in it” and was dedicated to “the spirit of law and independence and liberty and mutual service”⁶⁹, a tide of “Yankee phobia” had gathered strength throughout Latin America. McPherson⁷⁰ writes that U.S. authors –mostly officials who had been posted in the region- responded to it in a simplistic manner that sought to justify their nation’s policy. They maintained that the phobia reflected: an irrational fear of the progress that US military occupation or investment were forcing on a foolishly reluctant Latin America. Mistrust of U.S. power was, to them, an engrained pathology that must be exposed to be healed. It was to be pitied, even, growing as it allegedly did out of Latin America’s failed culture –its violent Spanish heritage, priest-ridden Catholicism, [and] abiding social inequalities.

In this perspective Germany propaganda was to blame for anti-U.S. sentiment on, which in final analysis reflected hostility to democratic institutions and unwillingness to appreciate that the North American model represented “an inevitable step in the evolution of mankind”⁷¹. De Onis⁷² elaborates that, from the beginning, U.S.–Latin American relations had been deliberately sabotaged by European powers seeking to export their own rivalries to the New World. Matthews⁷³ offers the less conspiratorial explanation that U.S. intervention on behalf of private businessmen had done much to validate the charge of “Yankee imperialism.”

Some of the most fervent Latin American patriots had once admired the U.S. model, and paralleled their own independence struggles to that of the North American colonists. Simón Bolívar, however, had maintained that the U.S. model was no more applicable to Latin America than the English model was to the Spanish. He also correctly anticipated that the United States would eventually seek to “Americanize” the continent. The manner in which it secured the Canal recalled the warning of a Spanish diplomat that the United States intended to spread its dominion “to the Isthmus of Panama and [thereafter] over all the regions of the world”⁷⁴. For this reason, many Latin Americans attempted to dispel the U.S. sense of racial superiority with the argument that miscegenation had enriched them both culturally and politically.

Lockey⁷⁵ writes that Latin Americans’ inability to distinguish “the real from the imaginary” accounted for their obsession with “Yankee imperialism.” He grants that the United States was not “free from the evils associated with imperialism,” though this did not mean that it was truly imperialistic. Like Lockey⁷⁶ he blames European powers for having propagating the fear of “imperialism” in hope of deterring prospects for hemisphere unity, the fruition of which would have

been contrary to their interests, whereas the fear of “imperialism” encouraged Latin Americans to align themselves with Europe. According to Berle⁷⁷ this response was extremely counterproductive as it discouraged U.S. congressmen from supporting the financial assistance upon which their economies depended.

In 1928 Latin American delegates arrived to the Sixth Pan-American Conference in Havana, Cuba, without great optimism. Since its commercially oriented inception in the late nineteenth century⁷⁸, the Pan-American system had been criticized for being a tool of U.S. foreign policy. Not only was the headquarters located in Washington; the U.S. secretary of state presided over the meetings. Evans⁷⁹ writes that for the first time even, delegates openly displayed their hostility toward U.S. domination. So harsh were the diatribes that European journalists predicted the demise of the Pan-American system. The *Times* of London attributed the discord to Washington’s “lofty language of idealism” as much as the presence of its marines: “Everybody knows that behind the facade of democracy and representative institutions there frequently exists a parody so grotesque that the parodists have no claim to be respected”⁸⁰. Thirteen of the twenty-one nations pressed for a declaration against intervention, but given firm U.S. opposition it was postponed until the next conference⁸¹.

3. THE HOOVER AND IBÁÑEZ ADMINISTRATIONS

The reviewed literature does not indicate that Herbert Hoover, as secretary of commerce from 1921 to 1928, had opposed military intervention in the other American republics. There is agreement as regards his belief that economic cooperation provided a more durable form of interaction. After winning the presidential election of 1928, he sought to expedite the withdrawal of troops from Nicaragua and the Caribbean⁸². The Great Depression limited his ability to use economic cooperation as a means of improving U.S.–Latin American relations, although his refusal to enforce “dollar diplomacy” against the will of other nations was greeted with a long-awaited sense of relief⁸³. He was the antithesis to Wilson and other “crusaders” whose policies had been motivated by the desire to correct governments’ moral shortcomings, an objective which the British, among others, had regarded as nothing less than insane⁸⁴.

Some authors credit Hoover with having initiated the Good Neighbor Policy more widely associated with his successor, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Less controversial is the assertion that Hoover set in motion policies that would later flourish⁸⁵. While drastically reducing the number of marines in Nicaragua, he was unable to withdraw all of them by the end of his term⁸⁶. Graber⁸⁷, though an apologist for U.S. intervention, recognizes that events there held great sway over the future of Pan-American relations. The standard portrayal of Hoover as a “do-nothing” president did not apply within the hemispheric context since therein less action, at least militarily, represented a major shift at a time when anti-U.S. sentiment had reached a pinnacle⁸⁸. The principle of no longer attempting to impose North American standards of democracy grew all the more reasonable after the stock market crash severely limited U.S. resources and tempered citizens’ faith that their system necessarily warranted exportation.

Officials had begun to question the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine shortly before Hoover took office. The White House had ordered a review its stance toward Latin American, and a Department of State specialist produced the a memorandum determining that the Corollary had improperly expanded the Doctrine beyond the purpose of guarding against European intervention, in the process transforming Latin Americans into the “victims” rather than the “beneficiaries.” Roosevelt’s justification of his Corollary in terms of U.S. self-preservation had been both exaggerated and unnecessary, according to the memorandum, since that was an intrinsic objective shared by all nations⁸⁹. Since President Coolidge disagreed with this interpretation, he withheld it from the public. One of Hoover’s first decisions as president was to publish the memorandum with assurances that he would restore the Doctrine to its original intent⁹⁰.

Hoover’s transformation of hemispheric relations was foreshadowed by his pre-presidential trip to Latin American nations, which led many citizens at home and abroad to believe that a new era was dawning. The president-elect was so confident of this that he discussed the Tacna-Arica dispute with Chilean and Peruvian officials in hope of reinvigorating the U.S.-led mediation that had commenced earlier in the decade but made very little progress⁹¹. According to Callcott⁹², Peruvian officials encouraged him to exert more pressure on their neighbors to reach a viable compromise, but he declined since that might be considered a form of intervention. His presence nonetheless assured all parties of his sincerity. Department of State archives do not support the portrayal of Chileans as being “lukewarm” toward Hoover due to their concern that the U.S. might support Bolivia’s demand for an outlet to the Pacific Ocean. The U.S. ambassador in Santiago reported that everyone he met was left with a sense of optimism for the future.⁹³

Several authors have described Tacna-Arica dispute as the most controversial as well as the most important of the era⁹⁴. The failure of the U.S.-led mediation well might have led to a recommencement of war between the neighbors. At very least, it would not have been detrimental to Hoover’s efforts to improve hemispheric relations. The dispute had grown out of the War of Pacific, after which U.S. officials had unsuccessfully attempted to prevent Chile from annexing Peruvian territory consistent with its rights as the victor⁹⁵. The future of the provinces of Tacna and Arica was to be determined by a plebiscite which the Peruvians claimed their neighbors sought to indefinitely postpone. To the dismay of Chileans, U.S. officials involved with the negotiations concurred⁹⁶, though they supported the final resolution of 1929 which Tacna to the Peruvians and Arica to Chile without consulting the local residents.

Skuban⁹⁷ writes that the Chileans had emphasized the greater prosperity that the provinces had enjoyed under their occupation, whereas the Peruvians had dwelled their stronger cultural and ethnic ties. One of the thesis of his thought-provoking study is that the identity of the local residents was shaped by factors that went beyond the concept of nation-statehood, such as tribal affiliation and hunting grounds. While this issue remains extraneous to the current research project, it suggests that the people in question were much closer to “wild Indians” than the South Americans who determined their fate. Typical North Americans might have viewed them all as such, though it seems this was not the case of those involved in the mediation process. Hoover’s trip to Latin American had convinced him of the need to improve the quality of embassy personnel in the region⁹⁸. Presumably he also did so in relation to those involved with the Tacna-Arica dispute, the successful resolution of which drew praise from all nations except Bolivia⁹⁹.

The reviewed literature raises other questions whose answers might yet be found among official documents. Evans¹⁰⁰ writes that Peru severed relations with Germany during the First World War in hope of gaining U.S. sympathy in the Tacna-Arica mediation, and for the same reason it referred to the disputed provinces as “the Alsace-Lorraine of South America.” While a certain similarity cannot be denied as both cases involved territorial expansion, the U.S. annexation of former Spanish colonies might have been deemed equally illegitimate. This point would have been in keeping with the anti-Yankee sentiments voiced at the 1928 Pan-American Conference in Havana, Cuba. It should be hoped that ongoing archival research will indicate if Chilean officials had contemplated making such a point. Perhaps they refrained due to avoid exacerbating the U.S. bias against them in the mediation process.

Another question would be why South American appeals to involve the League of Nations did not succeed. The fact that the United States had not joined presumably diminished its sway over the organization’s agenda, and European powers might have viewed the Tacna-Arica dispute as an ideal opportunity to gain influence in the Western Hemisphere while diminishing that of the United States. According to Evans¹⁰¹, Chile had threatened to involve the League as an indirect means of challenging U.S. leadership; Coever¹⁰², on the other hand, writes that Peru had done so, which would have been at odds with its attempts to gain North American sympathy. Whichever nation was responsible, the League’s non-involvement warrants further attention to substantiate or disprove the hypothesis of Callcott¹⁰³ that its members chose that path to avoid antagonizing the United States.

The success of the mediation is all the more remarkable considering that it transpired during the administration of Carlos Ibáñez del Campo whose leadership style was anathema to the ideals that Washington had previously sought to export. Though nominally elected, Ibáñez was a professional soldier often referred to as the Mussolini of Chile¹⁰⁴. Not only did he publicize his disdain for congress; he arbitrarily deported many of its members who dared to challenge him¹⁰⁵. In short he was the proverbial man on horseback that Latin Americans had found appealing since the days of independence when Simon Bolívar had glorified authoritarianism and disparaged the U.S. model¹⁰⁶.

Nunn¹⁰⁷ refers to Ibáñez as having “produced a fork in the historical road of Chile.” Many Chileans sympathized with his insistence on the need for an apolitical government to act firmly against the communist-led labor strikes that threatened to paralyze the nation’s economy¹⁰⁸. In late 1926 all other members of the cabinet resigned in tacit recognition of their inability to meet the challenges before them; Ibáñez maintained his post as Minister of War while rumors circulated that he was planning a coup. In the midst of growing social unrest, *El Mercurio* warned that the nation faced only two alternatives: communism or military dictatorship. The following year the cabinet again resigned, and President Emilio Figueroa gave Ibáñez the responsibility of appointing a new one. Shortly thereafter the president himself resigned and called for a special election that allowed Ibáñez to continue in his place¹⁰⁹.

It is no surprise that Ibáñez has been portrayed as a dictator. Nunn¹¹⁰ credits himself, among others, with having demonstrated otherwise. By his account, although civil-military relations shifted heavily in favor of the latter, the administration remained democratic since it left legislative and judicial institutions in place. Not only had Ibáñez been delegated authority by a civilian leader;

thereafter he himself had won an election. Nunn concedes that the results had been predictable since the only other candidate had been the unpopular leader of the Communist Party. At the same time, Ibáñez did gain support from across the entire political spectrum and attempted to govern on behalf of all Chileans, who were generally impressed by his sincerity, honesty, and fairness. Perceived abuses of executive authority were committed for the larger good of promoting “national pride, social solidarity, work, and duty as substitutes for liberal democracy.”

Loveman¹¹¹ assumes the contrary perspective that there was no excuse for Ibañez’s violations of civil liberties, press freedoms, and political dissent, which exemplified the traditional Hispanic disdain for individual rights and the more specifically Latin American glorification of military ideologies. While acknowledging many justified criticisms of the Chilean president, Hickman¹¹² concurs with Nunn¹¹³ that he did enjoy wide popular support, and it was inconceivable that anyone could have defeated him in the election of 1927. Monteón¹¹⁴ proposes that he should be considered “an autocratic liberal” rather than a dictator since many of his supporters truly believed in many ideals which he seemed to oppose, yet they saw no alternative to the preservation of national stability and order.

Debate over Ibáñez is as intense as that over Nicaraguan Augusto Sandino, though far less voluminous. The two leaders represented extremes as opposed to each other as to the political ideals cherished by most North Americans. However, as Monteón¹¹⁵ observes, the Chilean president accepted the need to cooperate with the “imperialists.” He might not have chosen to do so if the Hoover administration had made an issue of his style of leadership. Instead, it followed a pragmatic course and sought to maximize common interests. The reviewed books and archival materials do not reveal the presidents’ perceptions of each other or how this might have influenced the shape of U.S.–Chilean relations. This remains an issue worthy of further consideration due to its own merit as well as its possible bearing upon the current research project’s stated objectives.

4. CONCLUSION

The Hoover administration’s policy toward Latin American was one component of its global non-intervention, which disappointed idealists. Bartlett¹¹⁶ writes of the furor ignited by Japan’s annexation of the Chinese province of Manchuria in 1931, a blatant indication that the hope to abolish of war enshrined in the Kellogg-Briand Pact had been falsely optimistic. Hoover resisted the State Department’s advice to issue a statement warning Japan not to jeopardize U.S. interests in that part of the world. Those who favored such a course recognized that it might lead to an armed confrontation, and accepted that risk as necessary to deter future aggression. Hoover viewed it as an attempt to establish the United States as a global policeman, in this case when its interests were not directly involved. Likewise he granted recognition to non-democratic governments in Argentina, Peru, and Bolivia, for example, “without asking too many questions”¹¹⁷.

While some historians have portrayed him as a weak leader, since he did not seek to expand his authority even after the stock market crashed in late 1929, others have described him as “unquestionably one of the truly activist presidents of our time”¹¹⁸. Louri¹¹⁹ shares that perspective, describing the president’s leadership style as vital and dynamic. Stronger compliments and

denunciations have been paid to Ibáñez. The U.S. ambassador at the time was more objective in his assessment than many historians. According to him, Ibáñez's policies had been efficient and largely successful: the living standard had risen, public works had expanded as never before, and protectionist economic policies had postponed the effects of the Great Depression. The reason for his demise was his inability to secure further international loans, an inability that would have been shared by anyone in his position¹²⁰. Both Hoover and Ibáñez had been elected with widespread public support and left office tremendously unpopular¹²¹.

Fukuyama¹²² writes that in 1700 per capita income in Latin America was approximately the same as in what would become the United States, yet by the mid-twentieth century it had fallen to approximately one-quarter. He observes that the non-Latin American contributors to *Falling Behind: Explaining the Development Gap between Latin America and the United States* generally attribute the inequality to internal factors, such as the regions' different colonial experiences, while the Latin American contributors generally attribute it to the bias of international financial institutions, especially those controlled by the United States. Pike¹²³ observes that in Chile "economic nationalism [became] almost indistinguishable from anti-Yankeeism." In the decade before the Great Depression, the latter phenomenon appeared to be more closely linked to U.S. military intervention since the nation's total investment in Latin America had nearly doubled in the same period¹²⁴.

In 1928 the Rotary Club in Santiago considered extending honorary membership to the president since he was actively encouraging U.S. investment. Indeed the "man on horseback" attempted to reconcile his nationalism and a degree of pro-Yankeeism nurtured by Hoover's policies. Monteón¹²⁵ notes that Chile's economic policies remained inextricably linked to dependency on the United States, and this would promote more extreme forms of nationalism, such as the Chilean variety of "Nazism" later popularized by Ibáñez, among others.

Some of the forms of nationalism that already existed in the nineteen twenties appeared to substantiate concerns that European powers were promoting anti-Yankeeism in Latin America¹²⁶. The following passage from Ugarte¹²⁷ warrants reproduction due to its poetic nature, as well as to provide further contrast with Ibáñez: Europe is sick and tormented; but she constitutes a formidable mass capable of counterbalancing, if only in part, the influences which decide our fate... Our Latin America ought never to let herself be separated from Europe, either in the economic order or from the cultural point of view; for in Europe lies her only support in the conflicts which await her.

The Chilean president was likely to have appreciated "the North American peril," as Sweet¹²⁸ refers to it, but determined there was no alternative to cooperating with the "imperialists." The considered authors agree that the First World War greatly reduced Europe's ability and desire to intervene in Latin America. While Ugarte¹²⁹ glorified the non-materialistic virtues of Spain, including its impracticality, national leaders were unable to meet the demands of their electorate with rhetoric alone. The theme of anti-Yankeeism provides one of the most intriguing directions for the current research project, and it should be hoped that archival materials will demonstrate its influence on U.S.–Chilean relations during this pivotal era.

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