

LATIN
AMERICA:
A
POLITICAL
DICTIONARY

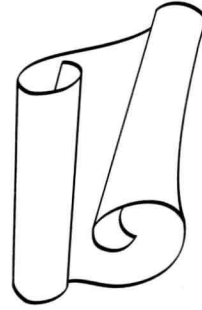
Ernest E. Rossi
and
Jack C. Plano

Latin

America:

A Political

Dictionary



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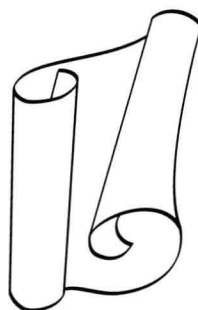
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Latin America



Preface



Latin America was not immune from the effects of momentous events that occurred throughout the world during the 1980s and early 1990s. To cite several examples pertaining to the region, in 1980 most Latin American nations were under some form of military rule, but by 1990 military governments had been set aside in favor of civilian ones; the foreign debt crisis drove many states to the edge of bankruptcy; a revolutionary government in Nicaragua was replaced with a conservative one by free elections; and state socialist and corporatist economic policies began to give way to free market policies and the sale of public enterprises to the private sector. These and other dramatic changes encouraged us to write a new edition of the previously entitled *Latin American Political Dictionary*, with many changes and additions. There are about 50 new major entries, an increase of over 20 percent from the first edition. Most entries, except for a few historical ones, have been expanded and updated using the most recent information. Many new individuals, political parties, organizations, and concepts have been identified or defined within major entries. These items may be quickly located by using the comprehensive index. While being selective, we have tried to incorporate important topics, issues, persons, and organizations so that this book can remain the useful teaching tool, learning tool, and reference source that was first published in 1980. It will continue to serve as a guide to the technical language for the Latin American region as well as a guide to the operation of Latin American political systems.

Precision in the use of language is the primary scientific tool of every intellectual discipline. This was, in both editions, our first consideration. Other objectives included producing a work that would enable students of Latin American politics, economics, sociology, geography, and history to acquire, easily and accurately, a knowledge of some of the most useful concepts that relate to that region of the world. The book concentrates on the Latin nations in the Americas and how the United States relates to them. We

would like to emphasize, however, that efforts to include all terms were not exhaustive. Rather, we selected those concepts, events, institutions, strategies and theories that are most applicable to achieving an understanding of the Latin American region. The book thus places a major emphasis on helping students learn the basics, with the assumption that an ability to communicate in the technical language of Latin American politics will aid students in searching for knowledge in the field.

Several special features of this book are aimed at achieving these objectives. First, the entries have been systematically selected to complement the subject matter found in various textbooks that focus on Latin America. Second, a subject-matter chapter format makes the book useful as a teaching and learning tool. The topical organization of the chapters in the dictionary dovetail with those found in many books in the field so assignments can be coordinated by the instructor. Third, each entry, in addition to including an up-to-date definition, contains a paragraph entitled *Significance* wherein the term's historical importance and its current relevance are discussed and analyzed. Fourth, the book contains extensive cross-references that offer the reader access to additional information pertaining to a subject. A comprehensive index makes the book an effective reference tool as well as an effective teaching and learning device.

Politics and the field of political science probably suffer more than most disciplines from semantic confusion. This is especially true when students begin studies that focus on foreign regions generally unfamiliar to them. Providing help to those undertaking a first course in Latin American studies was one of our prime motivations. Comments from students and faculty about the book are greatly appreciated, and past comments have contributed to changes found in this new edition. We accept full responsibility, however, for any errors of commission as well as omission.

Latin America: A Political Dictionary is organized so that entries and supplementary data can be located in several ways. Entries are arranged alphabetically within subject-matter chapters. Terms relating to regional arrangements like the "Organization of American States" can be found under the rubric "Inter-American System" in the chapter "International Law and Organization." When doubtful about the appropriate chapter or rubric, consult the general index. Entry numbers for terms appear in the index in bold type; subsidiary concepts discussed within entries can be found in the index identified by entry numbers in regular type. For study purposes, numerous entries have also been subsumed under major topical headings in the index, giving the reader access to broad classes of related information.

The reader can also more fully explore a topic by using the extensive cross-references provided in most entries. These may lead to materials in the same chapter or may refer to other chapters. Entry numbers have been included in all cross-references for the convenience of the reader. A few concepts can be found as entries in more than one chapter, but in each case the definition and significance of the item is related to the subject matter of that chapter in which the entry appears.

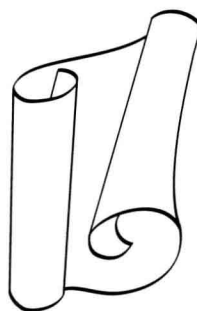
The authors have designed the unique format of this book to offer the reader a variety of useful applications in the quest for information. These include its use as (1) a dictionary and reference guide to the language of the field of Latin American studies; (2) a study guide for the introductory course in Latin American politics; (3) a supplement to the *textbook* in such courses; (4) a source of review material for the student enrolled in advanced courses; and

(5) a social science aid for use in cognate fields such as international relations and international economics.

We acknowledge the important role of the many scholars whose articles and books have contributed to the enrichment of the language and illuminated the theories of the field of Latin American studies, but the special character of this work does not permit us to cite their contributions. We are grateful to and we also thank our students who have challenged and excited us over the years in a manner that contributed to the value of this work. Also, we express our thanks and appreciation to Jean E. Rossi who completed the computer typing of the manuscript with skill, dispatch, and good humor.

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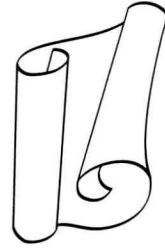
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Latin

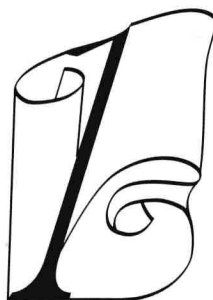
America:

A Political

Dictionary



Geography, Population, and Social Structure



Creole (Criollo)

1

In the colonial period, a person of full Spanish ancestry born in the Americas. Creoles are distinguished from peninsulars (*peninsulares*), or Spaniards who were born in the Iberian peninsula. Most important governmental, ecclesiastical, and military positions during the colonial period were held by peninsulars. For example, of the 170 viceroys, only 4 were creoles; of the 602 captains-general, governors, and presidents, only 14 were creoles; of the 606 archbishops and bishops, 105 were creoles. Many creoles were well educated and trained in the professions; some were wealthy large landholders or mine owners. They resented the special privileges, wealth, and social snobbery of the peninsulars, and they were embittered by the economic and political restrictions placed on them by colonial administrators. In Brazil, the situation was essentially the same as in Spanish America, except that Brazilian-born whites were

known as *mazombos* and whites born in Portugal were known as *reinois*. See also CRÉOLE (62); PENINSULAR (15).

Significance

By the end of the eighteenth century, many creoles saw themselves as *americanos* rather than as Spaniards. They were attracted to the ideas of political independence, republicanism, and natural rights, and their hatred of the peninsulars united them politically. The municipal councils (*cabildos*) were dominated by creoles, and they used this position to support a break with Spain and to govern the colonies during the Wars of Independence. Creoles came into power after independence and, although they split into factions, they remained basically conservative in their approach to social reform. Creoles then replaced the peninsulars as the upper social class, and they used their power to increase their wealth and solidify their position against Indians and *mestizos*.

Demographic Cycle

2

The sequence of changes in the size and composition of a society's population as it is affected by technological change. The demographic cycle evolves through three stages. The first stage is characterized by a preindustrial base, with a near equilibrium between births and deaths producing a relatively stable population. Both birth and death rates are very high, the infant mortality rate is high, life expectancy is about 30 years, and population increase is slow but steady. The second stage of the demographic cycle is transitional and involves continued high birth rates, a sharp decline in death rates and, as a result, a veritable population explosion. In this stage, infant mortality rates fall dramatically, resulting in a biologically young population. The third stage of the demographic cycle is ushered in as industrialization and technological advancements tend to substantially reduce the birthrate while the death rate continues its decline begun during the second stage. *See also* POPULATION (17).

Significance

The impact of the demographic cycle on Latin America is probably greater than on any other region in the world. Most Latin states have moved into the second stage and are caught up with the greatest population surge ever experienced on the globe. Some societies, for example, have doubled their populations during the brief span of 17 years. Countries with the highest growth rates include Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela, all of which have had annual rates of growth that exceeded 3 percent. Argentina, Cuba, and Uruguay have the lowest growth rates in Latin America and have annual growth rates of considerably less than 2 percent. Because indus-

trial development and general modernization proceed at an uneven pace within states, most Latin countries have geographical areas or regions that reflect all three of the major stages of the demographic cycle. Areas that still typify the first stage of extremely high birth and death rates, however, are becoming rare. Although the population growth rate for the region has declined in recent years, the population explosion has tended to create a major problem: Evidence from developed countries indicates that industrialization tends to bring the high growth rate under control, but achieving major economic growth in societies where populations are doubling in several decades remains an unfulfilled challenge for most Latin societies.

3

Ejido

An agricultural landholding community in Mexico. Ejidos were originally communal lands of Mexican Indian villages; a few of these still remain. Most ejidos, however, were created by the great land reforms enacted since the mid-1930s. In a typical *ejido*, woodland and meadows are used in common, but cropland is divided into parcels and distributed to the *ejidatarios* (members of an *ejido*). A few *ejidos* are operated as cooperatives in which the cropland is farmed jointly and profits are shared by the *ejidatarios*. An *ejido* differs from a state farm in that the land is nationalized in state farms and peasants become agricultural laborers who work for a wage. An *ejido* that has been parceled among its members differs from a privately owned family farm because, although *ejido* parcels are worked by families and may be inherited, *ejido* land may not be sold, mortgaged, leased, or alienated in any way. Most *ejidos* operated as cooperatives have not been successful, and the *ejidatarios*

have suffered from state policies and corrupt *ejido* managers. Some parceled *ejidos* are more productive than traditional haciendas, but generally *ejido* plots are small, poor techniques are used, mechanization has not been adopted, and production is low. For the most part, *ejido* peasants practice subsistence agriculture. See also LAND REFORM (10); MEXICAN REVOLUTION (37).

Significance

Over 45 million hectares, or almost 50 percent of Mexican croplands, are in the *ejido* system, and about a third of the population depends on it for its livelihood. Although production is not satisfactory, the *ejido* system is one of the major social achievements of the Mexican Revolution, and any attempt to change it by forced consolidations would undoubtedly disturb the political stability of the nation. Since the 1940s, the Mexican government has favored the medium-sized, privately owned farm because it is more productive. Despite the great land reforms that have taken place in Mexico since the 1930s, a population explosion has produced more landless peasants today than there were in 1910. Pressures on the government to break up large farms sometimes take the form of squatters (called *paracaidistas*, or parachutists) who invade and occupy desirable croplands. These attempts have usually been repulsed by the Mexican government, which finds itself faced by a dilemma. As the leader of the continuing Mexican Revolution, the government must defend and support the revolutionary principle of land reform. On the other hand, government leaders believe that if most of the remaining privately held farms were redistributed to *ejidos*, agricultural production would fall and the revolutionary goals of national development and economic independence would be set back.

Élite

The upper social class in Haiti that historically governed the nation. The *élite*, who constitute about 5 percent of the population of Haiti, are mulattoes and a few wealthy blacks. They live in Port-au-Prince, speak French, practice Catholicism, value French culture and style, are well educated and wealthy, and display an elegant deportment. The *élite* are sharply differentiated from the illiterate rural masses, almost 90 percent of the people, who live in abject poverty, speak *Créole*, and practice Voodoo. The small urban working class (about 6 percent) is similar to the peasants in these matters. The new urban middle class (from 2 to 4 percent) is black, educated, and French speaking. It has been affected by black nationalist and black consciousness movements, but it is not cohesive, however, and is uncertain of its position in Haitian society. See also CRÉOLE (62).

Significance

The *élite* were the dominant part of the unofficial two-caste system that developed in Haiti after independence was achieved in 1804. Unlike the traditional upper class of Spanish America, the *élite* were not a landed gentry and have always lived in urban areas. Following independence and the freeing of the slaves, all farmland was divided into small plots and given to former slaves. The *élite* inherited the social and psychological position of the French colonials. They were attracted to the professions, looked down on manual labor, and avoided industry and commerce. Their political and economic position declined after the black middle-class physician, François Duvalier, took power in 1957. Although his son, Jean-Claude Duvalier, who succeeded him in 1971, married a mulatto woman from the business community, he failed to reconcile the interests of the mulatto *élite* and black

4

groups. Military interventions, political violence, and unstable governments that followed his overthrow in 1986 have reinforced the uncertain position of the *élite*.

Geographical Factors: Climate

5

The impact of weather conditions on the political, economic, social, and military power of nations. In Latin America, climate changes dramatically from east to west, from north to south, and between lower and higher altitudes. The Andes mountain range, which runs the length of the South American continent from Venezuela to the southern tip of Chile, has a substantial impact on weather conditions for most of the continental countries. The west coast changes from lush growth supported by heavy rains north of the equator to desert land in Peru and Chile south of the equator. The Andes, cold and snowcapped, support life in a few valleys protected by surrounding peaks and in the Altiplano (high plateau) in Bolivia. Proceeding east from the Andes along the Amazon's headwaters from Colombia to Bolivia is la montaña, the forested eastern border valleys of the Andes and the eastern plains. The Amazon Basin is a vast jungle, and its climate is determined by the fact that it is barely above sea level. The high temperatures in the Amazon Basin and heavy rains in the region inhibit agriculture and make it mostly unfit for human habitation. Farther south, a vast treeless plain known as the pampa stretches across southern Brazil and most of Argentina, enjoying moderate temperatures and rainfall sufficient to support large-scale ranching operations. *See also* GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS: LOCATION (6); GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS: TOPOGRAPHY (7).

Significance

The climatic conditions of a state or region are determined mainly by its

temperature, topography, precipitation, location, and wind patterns. Moderate or temperate climatic conditions typically encourage developments that strengthen national power, such as those found in Argentina and in southern Brazil. Adverse conditions can be overcome, but a greater investment in human effort and resources is required, which makes developmental progress more difficult to achieve. The South American continent's great climatic diversity results not only from its topographical features but also from its vastness, stretching about 4,500 miles from north to south and 3,000 miles from east to west. Because the equator traverses the northern portion of the continent, encompassing snowcapped peaks and humid lowlands, Latin culture is influenced by the immediacy of climatic changes. Most of South America lies within the equatorial zone—from a latitude of 30 degrees north of the equator to 30 degrees south. Thus, it more closely resembles sub-Saharan Africa climatically than the United States or Europe. Climate is one of the most important geographical factors because it directly affects growing food and performing work. For example, the highland Indians over the centuries made blood and lung physiological adaptations to living in the thin air of the mountains. When they were transported by the Spaniards to work on plantations in the humid tropical coastal lowlands, they could not perform effectively and thousands died. Subsequently Africans were imported as slaves to work on the coastal plantations.

Geographical Factors: Location

6

The relationship between physical position on the globe and a nation's or region's economic, political, social, and military power. The location of Latin America in the Western Hemisphere has meant closer and more

direct ties with the United States than with Europe after the colonies gained independence. The Panama Canal has promoted closer relationships by providing a more proximate linking of the great cities of the eastern and western coastal regions of the two continents. Mexico and the Caribbean countries, which include the island nations, Central America, and Venezuela, have tended to be subject to greater external pressures than the rest of the continental countries, especially because of political, economic, and military pressures emanating from the United States. Those states located in the southern portions of the continent—Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay—are particularly affected by the great distances to both Europe and the United States. The policies and actions of many smaller Latin states are also influenced because of their location next to powerful neighbors, such as the case of the states of Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay that are located proximate to Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. *See also* GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS: CLIMATE (5); GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS: TOPOGRAPHY (7).

Significance

The location of Latin America has been a powerful geographical factor influencing and often determining political and economic outcomes. Independence was secured and maintained in part because of the great distance between Europe and South America. The efforts of the United States to establish hegemony and its interventions in Mexico and the Caribbean region were encouraged by the factor of location. The great distance separating the southern states of the continent from the United States and Europe has encouraged attitudes and policies promoting economic, political, and military independence. Also, the great distance over which primary commodities must be shipped to reach the markets

of the industrialized states of Europe and Asia has reduced the competitiveness of Latin American products and encouraged closer economic ties with the United States. Development programs have suffered as a result of high transportation costs. The strategic connection between location and foreign policy has increasingly given rise to geopolitical considerations of policy on the part of Latin decision makers. Location, however, does not create power but it does facilitate or, conversely, tend to discourage its growth and use. For example, Brazil has the capacity to become a great power on the global political/military scene because of its size, large population, resources, and economic potential, but its location tends to militate against this occurring.

Geographical Factors: Topography

7

The effect of the physical features of a state or a region on its economic, political, social, and military power. Topography includes such elements as mountain ranges, plains, river systems, rainforests, deserts, and marshlands. Latin America includes a great variety of topographical features, all of which tend to affect or influence the power position of the states involved. The most impressive feature is the mountain chain (*cordillera*) that extends from northern Mexico to the southernmost regions of Argentina and Chile, with peaks ranging up to 23,000 feet. Another mountain chain runs along much of the eastern coastal area. The South American continent has four major river systems: the Amazon (Brazil), the Rio de la Plata (Argentina), the Orinoco (Venezuela), and the Rio Magdalena (Colombia). The Amazon Basin, the largest river system in the world, is a tangled mass of rainforests, impenetrable jungles, and a series of tributary rivers that together cover an area greater than that of the continental United States. Much of

the region from Peru to central Chile is covered by the Atacama Desert, a rainless and barren coastal region. In Argentina, a treeless, flat *pampa* provides grazing lands for cattle, and another treeless plain called the *llanos* is found in the Orinoco valley in Venezuela. Parts of Bolivia, Paraguay, and Argentina are covered by the Gran Chaco, a vast region of plains, savannahs, scrub forests, lakes, and swamps. *See also* GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS: CLIMATE (5); GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS: LOCATION (6); RAINFOREST DILEMMA (19).

Significance

In Latin America as elsewhere, topography has affected the nature and quality of life, the location of concentrations of population, the stability of political boundaries, the level of technology, the type of agriculture, and cultural similarities and differences. For example, topographical features have tended to isolate many communities and have contributed to localism and regionalism in Latin American politics. Military security and fears of attack by neighboring states are often related to topographical features. Since Central America is an isthmus, it has been subjected to much attention by major naval powers and by private businesses interested in building canals and railroads there, especially in Nicaragua and Panama. On the South American continent, many of the major urban areas—Buenos Aires, Callao, Caracas, Guayaquil, Lima, Montevideo, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago, São Paulo, and Valparaíso—are clustered along the eastern and western coasts, mostly where the major river systems reach the sea. Few roads exist in some areas, and in many regions the only access to the interior is by boat. Surrounded by mountains, jungles, and vast river systems, the interior of the continent is mostly unpopulated because ingress and egress is difficult. In the Caribbean area, populations are dispersed on islands and in

a variety of Central American republics. As a result many of the people of Latin America tend to be isolated from the rest of the world and from each other as well.

8

Haciendas

Large estates that constituted the chief economic and social unit that functioned in the rural areas of most Latin American countries until recent times. The typically absentee owners are known as *hacendados*. They often live in the capital city or in Europe, occasionally visiting the hacienda. A manager runs the hacienda, presiding over hundreds of underpaid and often-abused peons. The peasants live with their families in huts on the hacienda and receive minor benefits, such as low pay, credit from the hacienda store, a small plot of ground for their families to work, and, in some cases, a small church or visits from a priest. Most haciendas are engaged in agriculture, but some, especially in Argentina, are largely ranching operations. Haciendas can be distinguished from large plantations that use wage labor to produce cash crops, especially for export, and do not constitute a self-sufficient socioeconomic system as does the hacienda. In Brazil, haciendas are called *fazendas*. *See also* LATIFUNDIA SYSTEM (LATIFUNDISMO) (11).

Significance

The roots of the hacienda originated in colonial times when Spanish royalty endowed their faithful military officers with *encomiendas* or grants that conveyed rights over certain land areas and the Indians living on them. The hacienda system that later evolved has been the main object of land reform in Latin America, but with little success in most cases. The hacienda system is economically inefficient, but it is based on tradition and social unity so that change is difficult. Agricultural experts have often advocated that the haciendas

not be broken up into small plots through land reform but rather turned into cooperatives or state-run enterprises utilizing modern farming methods and machinery. In many Latin countries, the best land remains in the hands of the *hacendados*, and the great majority of the people are essentially landless.

9

Imperial City

A city patterned after the Spanish-Moorish capital cities of the Iberian peninsula that reflect the style, power, and attributes of the political center of an empire. In Latin America, the imperial-style capital city dominates the political, economic, social, and cultural life of most nations. Only a few of these capital cities were built on the ruins of captured Indian communities, such as Mexico City. Most Latin capitals were erected on new sites, laid out in a rectangular plan, and patterned on the empire model, with Lima a prime example. In colonial times, capital cities became the center of political and economic power, high culture, and elegant living. Upper classes viewed the city as the desirable place to live and, by the second century of the conquest, the landed oligarchy had largely moved to the city and adopted its ways and intermarried with the urban elite. Unlike the capital cities of northern Europe and the North American colonies, which were primarily commercial centers dominated by the middle classes, Latin American capital cities reflected the style, grace, power, and values of the upper social classes. This combination of physical setting and socioeconomic power characterized the capital cities of Latin America throughout the colonial period and the first 100 years of independence. In the twentieth century, the population of the capital cities rose dramatically as they became great commercial, industrial, and transportation centers as well.

See also SLUM NEIGHBORHOODS (20); URBANIZATION (22).

Significance

With few exceptions in Latin America, the imperial-style capital city is the largest city in a country. The city is the center of fine arts and higher education, the residence of wealthy and powerful people, the base of intellectual movements, and the leading industrial and commercial center. The political consequences arising from the expansion of capital cities have imposed extra burdens on national governments. The striking contrast between the beauty and elegance of the central core and wealthy residential areas with the backwardness of provincial towns and the abject poverty of peasant villages has provided an additional cause for rural protest movements. The location in a capital of prestigious universities with large and politically active student bodies—often of a radical bent—exacerbates the political problems of conservative governments. The symbolic value of the city as the seat of government makes it a natural target for revolutionary groups. Because of governmental centralization the capture and control of a capital city often marks the successful completion of a revolution against established authority.

10

Land Reform

Major changes in the ownership and utilization of agricultural land. Land reform, also called agrarian reform, is primarily directed at large estates held as private property (*latifundio*), which may be farmed as plantations, by tenant sharecroppers, or as traditional haciendas. In land reform, the land is confiscated or purchased under the authority of public law and then collectivized or redistributed to new owners. Squatters who seize land illegally may force a government to legally recognize their actions. The distributions and institutions created