4.1. INTRODUCTION

Around the world, the end of the Second World War raised hopes for the rise of a postwar order that would foster international justice and peace. Though not affected by military action, Latin America was no exception to this trend. This chapter will emphasize the contingencies of geopolitical positioning and interrogate the connotations of the concept of “Latin America” in the early postwar years, as it examines how Latin American diplomats constructed the region in the changing geopolitical context of that period. The United Nations, a major element of the postwar order, provided an important arena for such attempts at self-articulation. What is presented here is neither an exhaustive nor a definite account, but a first foray into what an examination of Latin American policy at the UN beyond the strictly political has to offer. I argue for a discernible shift from hopeful aspi-
ration to be scarred "at the banquet of civilization", as the Mexican diplomat and intellectual Alfonso Reyes put it (Reyes, 1936) to a self-identification with the Global South, albeit with Latin America in a leading role. Of course, "Global South" is a term that I use retrospectively, as the parlance at the time was "underdeveloped countries" or "economically underdeveloped countries".

Historians have frequently described the postwar years as an era of hemispheric solidarity, during which short-lived democratic aspirations soon gave way to repressive regimes. The Rio Treaty (Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, 1947) reaffirmed military solidarity and the reorganization of the Pan-American Union into the Organization of the American States implied that Latin America was firmly placed in the US orbit and accepted Cold War politics (Gilderhus, 2000; Rock, 1994). However, under the surface of a US-led front against international communism, a number of Latin American countries attempted to chart their own course (Cornelius, 1961). The UN was one important venue for such independent ventures, especially in matters other than security policy. Positioning Latin America as part of the Global South meant emphasizing the differences with the United States and with Europe and speaking for the less powerful countries. Latin American leaders called on the UN for expanded protection through human rights regimes. They also garnered the support of the UN to examine their economic situations, established the necessary institutions, and gained access to resources otherwise not available to them. More importantly, they questioned the validity of the economic and cultural models that the United States and Europe had tended to impose abroad. This important aspect of Latin American strategies at the UN has long been neglected. Only recently, historians such as Vijay Prades have recognized the openings that these efforts have offered for Asian and African countries and the precedents they set for projects of the "Third World" a number of years later. More research on South–South connections is obviously needed (Prades, 2007, 2008).

After a short sketch of the war period, I will highlight the early debates at the UN that illustrate this new alignment. First, I will discuss the Latin influence on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is testimony for the aspirations and world views of Latin American UN delegates. Second, I will examine the establishment of the Economic Commission on Latin America and the positioning — not only implied, but explicit — of Latin America in the "underdeveloped" world. Though authors like Walter Mignolo (Mignolo 2005) attribute the rise of the notion of a unified "Latin" America to European imperial projects, I see a different mechanism at work here. Pursuing their own political and economic aims, Latin American diplomats contributed to the discursive as well as institutional construction of the "developing world" in an international order that ideally should be responsive to its social and economic needs.

4.2. THE WORLD'S GOOD NEIGHBOR, NOT LATIN AMERICA'S

During the early 1940s, Latin American diplomats were hopeful that the postwar international order might signify a new start and expectantly attended the wartime conferences that established the UN's Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, the Food and Agriculture Organization, or the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (Belaúnde, 1966; Castañeda, 1958; Chile antes las Naciones Unidas, 1956). They avidly participated in the Inter-American Juridical Committee in Rio de Janeiro, which in 1942 passed recommendations for a future international organization. The report\(^1\) reflected long-standing Latin American preoccupations: It

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\(^1\) The report was written by the following members: Brazilian lawyer and diplomat Afrânio de Melo Franco (1870–1943), who had led several delegations to the League of Nations in the 1920s and served as Foreign Minister from 1930–1934; Félix Nieto del Río (1888–1954), a lawyer and career diplomat and Chile's Ambassador to Brazil; the Mexican Pablo Campos Ortíz (1899–1963), a professor of international law before joining the diplomatic service with stations in Madrid, The Hague, Rio de Janeiro, and Washington; the young lawyer Carlos Eduardo Stolk who served as Venezuela's envoy to the UN until 1950, and Charles G. Fenwick (1880–1973), a legal scholar and university professor who was the sole US representative on the team.
called for the repudiation of the use of force and paired an unqualified obligation to arbitration with strong international organizations which had means and instruments to foster economic and social justice while suppressing political and economic imperialism (Preliminary Recommendation, 1943). These recommendations served as a blueprint to the goals that the Latin American delegates were going to pursue at the UN.

Their agenda might have gained in urgency as it became clear over the years that the importance of Latin America for the United States would wane once the war ended. Evidence for this was that the US government excluded Latin American representatives from the Dumbarton Oaks meetings and barely consulted them beforehand. Latin American political circles strongly resented the secrecy surrounding the Dumbarton Oaks proposals. When the United States finally revealed the plans for the new UN, the reactions from Latin America were so critical that the State Department unenthusiastically accepted to meet for an Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace in Mexico City in early 1945 to prevent an éclat at the San Francisco Conference. Opinion makers and political leaders were rather pessimistic about the meeting, which they thought would lead to clashes between the United States and its southern neighbors (Cosio Villegas, 1945). Indeed, the Chapultepec Conference, as it is commonly called, revealed a deep gap between the position of the United States and the aspirations of the Latin Americans.

Latin American diplomats argued that the Dumbarton Oaks plans for a postwar UN accorded too much power to the Big Four (USA, UK, USSR, and China). The delegations from Latin America worked together to draft amendments to the proposed charter. These included the strengthening of the General Assembly vis-à-vis the Security Council, a claim to “adequate representation” of Latin America on the Security Council, an extension of the powers of an International Tribunal as well as provisions for a new agency of intellectual cooperation (Report of the Delegation of the United States, 1946, p. 103). Secretary of State Edward Stettinius, for one, increasingly worried that the “Latin American bloc” would formulate policies unfavorable to the interests of the United States.

He complained that he was having “one hell of a time here holding this Latin American situation together” (Campbell and Herring, 1975, p. 280). Indeed, the Latin American delegations at Chapultepec pushed through a resolution that summarized their critiques of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals and announced that they would pursue them, as representatives of sovereign states, at the San Francisco Conference (Conferencias Internacionales Americanas, 1945–1954). Also with regards to the Pan-American Union, the Latin Americans objected to the custom that the Director General was always an American, elected to an indefinite term. The conference decided to limit terms to 10 years and prohibited succession by a person of the same nationality, which diminished the Americans’ dominance (Manger, 1961).

Apart from concerns about the postwar political order, economic questions were pressing at the Chapultepec conference. The Mexican Foreign Secretary Ezequiel Padilla expected “practical resolutions, resolutions that relieve the misery, the helplessness of a great section of our masses, that satisfy the desire for permanent security and for a peace based on justice”. Raising the standard of living in Latin America took center stage. Latin American governments expected that the United States would support increased industrial investments in Latin America and would give access to US markets for manufactured goods, as they were not willing to cement their wartime position as the provider of raw materials. As Padilla put it, Latin America wanted “to do more than produce raw materials and live in a state of semicolonialism” (FRUS, 1945, pp. 122–125). Chile and Mexico presented detailed plans for industrialization, Peru suggested a new Pan-American Bank of Reconstruction and Development, and Brazil proposed that “the richer American nations recognize their ‘duty’ to promote the development of poorer nations”. The United States did not appreciate such proposals, and countered with a resolution that condemned “economic nationalism”. Instead, the Americans “appeared to regard the economic problems of the regions as essentially internal” (Fitzgerald, 1994, 93). The Conference did issue an Economic Charter that promised an “equitable coordination of all interests” to serve as a “basis for the sound economic development of
the Americas”, but the declaration was little more than a smoke screen hiding the bitter conflict about the direction of economic policy (Pan-American Union, 1945, pp. 39–40, p. 84; Castañeda, 1958, p. 170). Specific talks on thorny questions such as tariffs were put off again and again, as was the next Inter-American Conference planned for October 1945, which finally took place in 1947. As one State Department official put it: “The United States no longer desperately needs Latin America” (Rabe, 1978, p. 284).

The experience of the last war years and, in particular, the slow death of the Rooseveltian Good Neighbor policy, encouraged Latin American diplomats to position themselves as leaders of the Global South. This involved repeated attempts to make the international system more equitable by empowering the “small nations” at the UN. At the San Francisco Conference, the Latin American delegations proposed many changes to the Dumbarton Oaks proposals: to include a declaration of human rights in the charter, to revise the organization of the security council, to give more weight to the UN Assembly, and to strengthen the Economic and Social Council. While substantial reforms of the Security Council were unfeasible, Latin American countries were instrumental in vesting the UN with a new field of action that went far beyond security concerns to include broadly defined human rights with economic and cultural dimensions. Moreover, they attempted to harness the UN as a means to improve economic conditions in Latin America.

4.3. THE HUMAN RIGHTS TRADITIONS OF LATIN AMERICA AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Critics as well as proponents of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) tend to present it as a straightforward document of classic Western political and civil liberties, its immediate precursors being Roosevelt’s four freedoms and the Atlantic Charter. Moreover, the UDHR is frequently pegged as the result of the struggle between Eleanor Roosevelt and a succession of Soviet delegates and viewed as an instrument of US hegemony (Normand and Zaidi, 2008; Morsink, 2000; Evans, 1996). Recent critics of the UDHR seem to be oblivious to the circumstances of its drafting and approval. Many other protagonists, most notably Carlos Romulo from the Philippines, Peng-Chun Chang from China, Charles Malik from Lebanon, and John Humphrey from Canada played key roles. Moreover, the inputs from the Global South had a deep impact on the UDHR. The Latin American delegates to the General Assembly as well as the Latin American members of the UN Commission on Human Rights — especially the Chilean lawyer Hernán Santa Cruz Barceló — successfully fought for the inclusion of social, economic, and cultural rights. To highlight this contribution does not imply a negation of Latin American realities, which were, by all accounts, far from the ideals formulated at the UN. Nor does it detract from the fact that the declaration was neither legally binding nor sustained by an enforcing mechanism. Nonetheless, the anchoring of economic, social, and cultural rights in the UDHR established an ethical standard and opened avenues for future struggles for social justice (Normand and Zaidi, 2008, p. 189).

The active pursuit of economic, social, and cultural human rights by the Latin American delegates had formal regional antecedents. The 1938 Inter-American Conference at Lima had already adopted a resolution that condemned discrimination on racial and religious grounds, and another that called for the expansion of women’s rights. Moreover, the Conference also issued a “Declaration in Defense of Human Rights” that made recourse to international law as well as “human sentiments” to call for the protection of basic rights in the case of war (Conferencias Internacionales Americanas, 1938, pp. 468–471). The importance accorded to human rights was reaffirmed at the Chapultepec Conference in early 1945. As the Dumbarton Oaks proposal did not include much in the way of human rights, the Latin American delegates insisted on commissioning a draft for an American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man which they wanted to discuss at the San Francisco Conference for inclusion in the UN Charter.

At the San Francisco Conference, the Panamanian delegate Ricardo J. Alfaro submitted a draft declaration of human rights and proposed to have it inserted into the UN Charter, a move that was
strongly supported by Cuba, Chile, and Mexico. The Chilean delegation submitted its own proposal, “On human rights and duties”, which had been drafted by the Inter-American Juridical Committee. The representatives of Uruguay, Brazil, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Venezuela, but also of Egypt as well as India, demanded forcefully that a significant commitment to human rights be placed prominently in the Charter. These proposals received a decidedly cold reception by both the United States and the United Kingdom, but continued pressure from the Latin American coalition and allies such as General Carlos Romulo from the Philippines, as well as from civil and labor organizations (Korey, 2001) eventually led to the inclusion of several human rights provisions in the UN Charter. The Charter declared that a major purpose of the UN was to ensure fundamental freedoms, “for all, without distinctions as to race, sex, language, or religion”, and that member states were obliged to fulfill these provisions (Articles 55 and 56 of the UN Charter). The Charter also established the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to promote human rights as well. Indeed, ECOSOC established the Human Rights Commission in June 1946 with the mandate to draft an international bill of rights (Morsink, p. 14).

A number of Latin American drafts circulated when the Human Rights Commission (18 members, among them delegates from Chile, Panamá, and Uruguay) convened in January 1947. The United Kingdom, too, submitted a draft, which ignored anything beyond civil and political rights, and had “little if any influence on the final outcome” (Humphrey, 1983, p. 1412; Glendon, 2001). After deciding the form of the document, the Canadian John Humphrey, the first director of the Human Rights Division of the UN secretariat, was appointed to write a preliminary proposal that would be discussed by a drafting committee of eight (Roosevelt, Chang, Malik, Cassin, Wilson, Koretsky, Santa Cruz). Humphrey relied heavily on

2 The draft was elaborated at the American Law Institute and carried the stamp of the eminent Chilean jurist Alejandro Álvarez. It included the right to education, health care, social security, and work. Shortly afterwards, Álvarez was appointed to the International Court of Justice.

the draft sponsored by Panamá, which he considered “the best of the texts” and added economic, social, and cultural rights from the Chilean draft. These drafts came closest to his own ideal “to combine humanitarian liberalism with social democracy” (Humphrey, 1983, p. 415; Yearbook on Human Rights, 1949).

When the small drafting committee met to discuss Humphrey’s work, the articles concerning economic, social, and cultural rights caused “considerable opposition” (Humphrey, 1983, p. 412). The final inclusion of articles on a person’s right to “just and favorable remuneration, ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection” (Article 23), or the “right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control” (Article 25) were the results of tough negotiations. Opponents preferred to state only “broad principles” in the Declaration, while Santa Cruz maintained that these rights needed to be included in such detail to give any real meaning to the Declaration. Santa Cruz and Humphrey managed to retain these rights in the draft that was presented to the General Assembly in 1948 (Morsink, 2000, p. 131).

By April 1948, the Organization of American States had approved the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, the outcome of the Chapultepec conference. This was the first international human rights instrument and it contained, apart from political and civil rights, the right to the preservation of health and well-being “through sanitary and social measures relating to food, clothing, housing, and medical care, to the extent permitted by public and community resources”, the right to free primary education as well as “equal opportunity” in education, a “right to work and to fair remuneration” as well as social security provisions for old age, disability, and unemployment. Ten articles outlined the duties, which included family duties, duties toward the community (education, work), and toward the state (obey the law, pay taxes, vote, serve the
community and the nation). The preamble to the OAS Declaration made clear that the responsibility for human rights lay not only with the individual states, but also with the international community: “The international protection of the rights of man should be the principal guide of an evolving American law”.

At the UN General Assembly of 1948, the Latin American delegates who had not been involved in the Human Rights Commission were keen on presenting the OAS declaration, which they deemed superior. Santa Cruz worked hard to prevent his Latin American colleagues from demanding a point by point comparison between the Declaration of Bogotá and the Draft UN Declaration (Santa Cruz, 1984, p. 184). But to the dismay of the Human Rights Commission members, the Third Committee, which considered the draft, reopened the discussion on each and every article, which delayed the vote for the declaration considerably while relations between the West and the Soviet bloc were rapidly deteriorating. As expected, the articles on economic, social, and cultural rights were controversial. Delegates like the Mexican Pablo Campo Ortíz and the Cuban Guy Pérez Cisneros, both co-authors of the OAS declaration, or the Uruguayan Jiménez de Arechaga even attempted to amplify them, at times with success (Normand and Zaidi, 2008, p. 190–192). John Humphrey wrote for the public that in the final debates, “it seemed at times that the chief protagonists in the conference room were the Roman Catholics and the communists, with the latter a poor second”. In his private diary, he wished Pérez Cisneros to hell for jeopardizing the declaration through his insistence (Glendon, 2003, p. 37).

These goals of the UDHR were not only entrusted to the respective national governments of UN members, but also made reference to the international order: Article 28 gave a broad scope of action to the UN, as it declared that, “Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized”. Clearly written for the “small countries”, for the underdeveloped, this article made the Declaration more palatable for the Global South. Anchoring economic and social rights in the Declaration of Human Rights and entrusting their vigilance to the international body was one more attempt to protect the interests of the geopolitically disfavored in the new postwar order. Just before the final vote on the declaration in the General Assembly on 10 December 1948, Hernán Santa Cruz pointed to Articles 3, 22, and 28, emphasizing the need “for an effective international cooperation so that people can turn their rights into reality” (Santa Cruz, 1984, p. 198).

But by the early 1950s, the effects of the Cold War had reached the UN. In the discussions about an instrument for implementing the Declaration, the so-called Human Rights Covenant, the support for internationally anchored economic and social rights, began to erode. In the United States, the last holdovers from the Roosevelt administration were marginalized and no Eleanor Roosevelt was there to sway the State Department regarding the “freedom from want”. Though the General Assembly, on petition of seven delegations (among them Chile, Mexico, Peru, and Brazil) had, in 1949, decided that political, civil, economic and social rights should all be included in one covenant, two years later the Assembly reversed itself and opted for two pacts: one on political and civil rights only, the other on economic and social rights. At the 1951 General Assembly, Chile’s representative, Ana Figueroa, a former school director, voiced her disappointment about the weakened covenant in a language that pointed to the deepening schism:

We dare to ask: if the high standard of living in the industrialized countries is not dependent on a low standard of living in other countries, why do the former oppose the aspirations of the latter? If we think in terms of an international division of labor, we would say that the covenant should be divided in two because the liberty of the few is financed by the misery of many. (Quoted in Santa Cruz, 1984, pp. 214–215)

Figueroa put into plain words the divisions between North and South. Yet even within Latin America, the consensus to push economic and social rights even against the resistance of industrialized countries had faltered. Bolivia, Brazil, Uruguay, and the Dominican Republic, for instance, now sided with the United States in wishing
to separate political from economic rights. Even the eminent Charles Malik had difficulties in moving the two covenants forward — they were finally accepted in the General Assembly 18 years after the Declaration, in 1966 (Normand and Zaidi, 2008, pp. 237–242).

Though commentators have frequently discussed these rights as the result of negotiations between the individualistic US and the collectivist Soviet Union, a strong Latin touch is evident, which was not necessarily socialist in its origins (as Morsink, 2000 states) but also stemmed from Catholic social thought (Carrozza, 2003). When the UDHR was voted on, Malik thanked Santa Cruz specifically because he had, “kept alive in our mind the great humane outlook of his Latin American world” (Malik, 2000, pp. 121). This chapter is not the place to discuss in detail the social struggles in which the UDHR and the covenants have served as instruments, but it’s clear that the inclusion of social and economic rights has effects to this day.

### 4.4. THE CREATION OF CEPAL

Part and parcel of the relocation to the Global South was the recognition of the steep social inequalities in Latin American countries and the hope that international organizations such as the UN could contribute to improving living conditions for the broad masses. In short, Latin American delegates and counselors at the UN were interested in “development”. The notion of “development” has been highly controversial in the past 20 years, as it tends to isolate the causes of poverty to the periphery, thereby obscuring the role of (neo-) colonialism in creating these conditions (Sachs, 2007; Cullather, 2000; Escobar, 1994; Sachs, 2002). Its critics imply that leaders of the Third World were coerced into or seduced by developmentalism. However, in Latin America the search for economic progress had a long tradition and the call for development was a modernization of vocabulary that did not imply ignorance of geopolitical factors.

To help implement the economic and social rights he fought to include in the Declaration, Santa Cruz spearheaded another effort at the Economic and Social Council of the UN. In July 1947, he proposed the creation of an Economic Commission on Latin America.

ECOSOC had already instituted such commissions for the European and the Asian regions to coordinate postwar reconstruction. One month later, Santa Cruz was given a chance to make his case and he presented a stark picture of social conditions in the different countries in Latin America — a first at the UN. He highlighted the considerable raw material contributions of Latin America during the war and pointed to the dangers that the high postwar prices for capital goods posed to incipient industrialization. But there were also long-term, structural problems that necessitated intervention. The documentation elaborated for the creation of CEPAL insisted on a “maladjustment” that could only be solved in a regional or even a global context. Santa Cruz pleaded that the great powers were too focused on their own problems and on Europe, and misjudged Latin America as the fortunate region that had not suffered in the war (Santa Cruz, 1995, p. 25). Moreover, the UN charter gave the organization a mandate to improve the living conditions around the world, and for millions in Latin America, these had long been as dire as those in war-torn countries. Alluding to the UN stance on social rights, he commented: “Latin America had the right to demand that the United Nations assist it in the difficult task of raising the standard of living of its inhabitants”. His colleagues from Cuba and Venezuela seconded his statement. Carlos d’Ascoli, a Venezuelan, argued that intervention of international bodies such as the UN was necessary to stabilize prices for raw materials, normalize trade, and contribute to diversification of Latin American economies (Santa Cruz, 1984, pp. 147–148).

The proposal faced the outright rejection by the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and Canada, while the United States staked the discussion by insisting that the Pan-American Union pronounce itself on the matter first. But the proposition also had staunch supporters in ECOSOC: not only Peru, Venezuela, and Cuba put in strong words, but also Lebanon, India, China, and Norway favored the project. Finally, on 11 August, the 18 ECOSOC member nations agreed to appoint an ad hoc committee with representatives of Cuba, Chile, Peru, Venezuela, as well as France, China, Lebanon, the UK, and the US to draw up a recommendation on the matter. The Latin American delegates were given a chance to work out a draft resolution, which

The ad hoc committee met in October and January to write the first UN report on economic conditions in Latin America. The UN secretariat members David Weintraub, an American, and the Briton Harold Caustin fully agreed with the Latin Americans that the reliance on primary exports was the mark of a "semi-colonial economy" (Toye and Toye, 2004, p. 140). The Cuban representative quoted neo-colonialism as the cause of Latin America’s economic problems. The report expanded on Santa Cruz’s basic analysis, pointing out that coordination between countries was necessary to diversify the economies, industrialize and modernize agriculture, and foster commerce and capital accumulation in order to finally lift living standards in the region. The report tried to make the commission more palatable to an international audience by arguing that an economically stronger Latin America could help resolve the economic problems of other continents (Yearbook of the United Nations, 1947–48, p. 537).

The insistence on studying Latin American economic problems in relation to the world economy opened CEPAL’s door to representatives from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Netherlands. This move was hotly contested among the Latin Americans because it smacked of an acceptance of European colonialism. Apparently, the participation of those countries helped to attain the abstention, rather than the rejection, of the United States and the United Kingdom (Santa Cruz, 1984, pp. 149–150).

The last obstacle was an issue that the United States had raised: that CEPAL should not duplicate inter-American institutions. However, led by the Colombian Alberto Lleras Camargo, the Pan-American Union voiced no objection and explicitly recommended the creation of CEPAL. Thus, the Latin American–Middle Eastern–Indian coalition carried the proposal in the General Assembly. On 5 March 1948, the Economic and Social Council established the Economic Commission on Latin America (CEPAL), to be headquartered in Santiago de Chile. Just three days later, the Latin American delegates supported the creation of an analogous commission for the Middle East. As CEPAL was established on a temporary basis for three years at first, the United States tried to undermine it by suggesting that it be merged into the structure of the Organization of American States and moved to Washington. Latin American diplomats as well as the CEPAL community resisted such maneuvers successfully; condemning attempts at US “sabotage” and arguing that they needed the UN umbrella and the location in Santiago to protect them from US pressures (FRUS, 1950, 2, pp. 683–686; Pollock et al., 2001, p. 12).

In Santiago, CEPAL rapidly developed into a think tank for alternative economic models. The 1948 report had identified the problems of the agricultural, non-industrial economies with low living standards, but also called for better coordination within the Latin Americas, for complementarity rather than competition. These ideas were taken up by the Argentine economist Raúl Prebisch, who joined CEPAL in 1949. The commission developed its own critique of current theories of international trade. Prebisch pointed out repeatedly that the “intellectual independence” afforded by the institution, which was far from New York or Washington, was a great asset. Moreover, CEPAL became an institutional anchor for Latin Americans working together to turn the region “in the right direction” (Pollock et al., 2001, p. 13; see also Devés Váldes, 2000). Rejecting the fiction of common economic interests with the United States that was underlying pan-Americanism and the postwar Organization of American States, CEPAL focused on terms of trade, import substitution and cooperation among Latin American countries as venues for economic development (Castañeda, 1958).

“Cepalismo” signified the eruption of a specifically periphery-based approach to economic problems as well as the creation of new school of Latin American economists (Devés Váldes, 2000b; Wood and Morales, 1965). The alternative visions that CEPAL elaborated were still visions of development. But they were clearly cognizant of the geopolitical power relations. Neither the Latin Americans nor the UN could change these relations considerably, but they did establish institutions that generated independent knowledge on the economies of Latin America.
4.5. CONCLUSION

Latin American countries have struggled hard, politically, economically, and culturally, to escape (neo-) colonialism and they have done so in different ways. At the conjuncture of the early postwar period, Latin American leaders reassessed the experience of pan-Americanism in the light of continued neglect by the United States and chose a different tack at the UN. In the early years of the UN, being Latin American meant being postcolonial, poor, and in alignment with the emerging “developing world” that demanded inclusion in the international political order as well as resources to overcome its problems. But Latin Americans did not simply accept “development” as “anti-politics” and were quite aware of geopolitical factors that constrained their options. They attempted to harness the UN and its human rights regime as an additional safeguard. Perhaps there was, as North American diplomats frequently pointed out, an element of “specifying and solemn pronouncements, especially when accompanied by the glamour and spotlight of an international conclave”, and certainly, diplomats also thought of their home audiences when talking about social and economic rights, and questions of development (Rabe, 1978, p. 293). Even so, human rights, economic policy, and development models were matters of concern and became the subject of public discussion. As these attempts did not bring success over the years, the critical attitudes multiplied. As this short chapter on human rights and the creation of CEPAL shows, the Latin Americans could not strike back at Empire, but they could — and did — use the UN to establish norms and institutions that would restrain its power.

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New Transcontinental Configurations: The US Latinos

Yvette Sánchez

5.1. RECONQUERING SPACE

The intensifying pan-Americanization and decolonization processes in the Latin American regions highlighted by various chapters of this volume may be applicable, if we direct our attention north for a moment, to the following issue within hemispheric studies: the strongly growing participation of Latin American immigrants in North American society, who are gradually turning from a minoritarian subculture into a parallel culture with an increasing sense of self-esteem (and claim of self-representation) subsumed under the label Latinos. Up to 200 years of independence from European colonizers have gradually shifted Latin American nations towards new dependencies and asymmetries in their relationship with the US. Now the topic chosen sheds fresh light on the continental role allocation; it is not as much
LATIN AMERICA
1810–2010

Dreams and Legacies

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Imperial College Press