

# NORWEGIAN SOCIAL THOUGHT ON LATIN AMERICA

**Benedicte Bull**

(Editora)

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Benedicte Bull

## **NORWEGIAN SOCIAL THOUGHT ON LATIN AMERICA**

### **BETWEEN AUTONOMY AND THE 'GEOPOLITICS OF THE WEAK'**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Over the last decade, a number of authors have argued that space matters in the production of knowledge. No knowledge is value-free, and the values and perspectives based on which a researcher seeks new insights rest on a complex set of incentives and institutions that differ across geographical space, and are profoundly influenced by political interests. Thus as argued by Mignolo, knowledge should be looked at spatially and not (only) chronologically (Mignolo, 2002: 34). In the case of the production of knowledge about Latin America, this 'geopolitics of knowledge' has contributed to the creation of 'Latin America' as a study object and influenced the perspectives dominating the study of it, in the interest of the West, but influencing also Latin Americans' own self-conception (Mignolo, 2005). Both the epistemology and ontology of dominating Latin America studies are argued to be a part of a hegemonic project, led by the United States. Indeed, both US and European sciences in general are in essence a part of a modernizing and colonizing project.

The literature by Mignolo and others raise interesting questions related to Norwegian social science on Latin America, including: What does the geographical location at Norwegian academic institutions mean for the perspective that social scientists working on Latin Amer-

ica apply? Is it at all possible to distinguish a particular 'Norwegian approach' to the study of Latin American realities? To what extent and how are Norwegian researchers' perspectives on Latin America affected by the foreign policy and geopolitics of Norway? And why do Norwegian social scientists study those realities at all? Yet, one could also ask: Can one really understand the perspectives of the social scientists from a small European country such as Norway itself was poor and considered 'peripheral' until recently, as well as having been a colony in a not so distant past, through concepts such as the 'coloniality of power' (Quijano, 2000) and 'geopolitics of knowledge'? These are among the questions that we seek to explore in this book.

Norwegian Latin America scholarship does not stand in a position to have a major impact on the general understanding of what Latin America is and is not. Norway does not attract hordes of students from abroad as the universities in the United States or Britain do. Related more specifically to Latin American students, it lacks the cultural attraction of France, the language convenience of Spain, as well as the generous scholarship and strong academic traditions of Germany. With a population size that would place it between Uruguay and El Salvador, Norwegian scholars would be numerically few, even had it had strong Latin America research environments.

Moreover, it is not obvious that it makes sense to include Norwegian social science on Latin America within a US led geopolitical project. Although Norway has been a close foreign policy ally of the United States since the end of the Cold War, and Norwegian social sciences in general have been heavily influenced by US academic traditions, the orientation towards Latin America was often at conflict with general foreign policy and scientific orientations. Indeed, there is something of a legend about Norwegian Latin America policy that it was 'given' to the left-wing of the dominant Norwegian Labor Party and the Socialist Left, in return for not interfering with the general US-oriented foreign policy. The historical accuracy of this might be questioned, but it is clear that the vast majority of Norway based Latin America researchers have been inspired by a counter hegemonic project, rather than a scientific endeavor of seeking general truths based on Western models and methods, or support for Norwegian interests in Latin America. Indeed, Norwegian social science focusing on Latin America did not emerge as a result of any colonial project, but rather as a result of the fascination with grass-roots social movements and revolutionaries, particularly after the Cuban revolution in 1959 (Stølen, 2002: 161). In general, there has been a resistance among researchers to directly support Norwegian economic interests and, sometimes, political interests (Bull, 2010).

After the first wave of ‘solidarity research’, researchers have focused on Latin America for a number of other reasons, ranging from academic theoretical curiosity to a personal acquaintance with the region and the availability of research funding. This book intends to place an analysis of main perspectives and trend in Norwegian Latin America research in the context of changes in both foreign policy, opportunities for exchange with Latin America, Norwegian academic traditions as well as history and culture in a broader sense. Doing so, a number of puzzles and inconsistencies arise. Moreover, analyzing Norwegian perspectives on Latin America, we find as much ‘import’ of concepts and perspectives from Latin America as impositions of such applied by Norwegian researchers to diverse realities in Latin America. And while it is true that foreign policy has influenced Norwegian Latin America research, the opposite is definitely also the case.

What appears is a diverse and dispersed field of scholarship. Nevertheless, in part it can be interpreted within the framework of a Nordic form of *geopolitics of the weak* (Tunander, 2008). In this chapter, I will develop the argument that the dominating trends in Norwegian Latin America studies can be understood by studying the dynamic interplay between the pursuit of the geopolitics of the weak including a desire to purvey a Norwegian vision of society onto other areas, a counter-hegemonic project, researchers adherence to theories, perspectives and standards developed in an international, US-dominated social sciences, and the influence of a number of individual researchers, some from Latin America. The result is a number of contradictory but original contributions to the study of Latin America.

These contributions will be explored in others chapters of this book. In the rest of this introductory chapter, first, I will develop a perspective on knowledge production, and then, I will introduce Norwegian foreign policy. I subsequently consider the evolution of Latin America research in Norway starting in the early 1960s. In this section, I will further relate the changes to developing political priorities and changes in the organization and funding of teaching and research in Norway.

## **2. THE GEOPOLITICS OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE NORWEGIAN LATIN AMERICA STUDIES**

Mignolo’s argument is that the geopolitics of knowledge locates the production of the dominant rationalities and frameworks to understand the realities of geographical distant locations in the core areas (Mignolo, 2002). It is not only the field of Latin America studies, but of social sciences in general, that are based on a rationality that supports the dominant powers (Lander, 2000). Its effect, when imposed on to

the study of peripheral areas such as Latin America is the exclusion of alternative epistemologies and alternative understandings of the reality, and thus also the shaping of the self-understanding of Latin Americans to fit with the interests of the *hegemon*. Thus, the dominant epistemology is linked to a colonial project, of several centuries, producing 'the coloniality of power' (Quijano, 2000: 123).

The geographical 'core' of this project are Europe and the United States, with the latter in a political lead for more than half a century, but still sharing the basic epistemological framework with Europe. The mechanisms for extending this global hegemonic project are various, including global dissemination of knowledge through control over the standards imposed by journals and editorials, 'university rankings', and the attraction of masses of Latin American students to 'core' universities (Canaparo, 2012).

Yet, the 'geopolitics of knowledge' is not only decisive for epistemology but also ontology. Indeed, the very identification of Latin America in the singular as an object of study can be considered an act of power, implying multiple levels of 'disrespect' for diversity, as well as the reproduction of negative stereotypes (Feres Jr., 2008). The main target of the critique has been Latin America studies established in the post-World War II period in the United States, and it has been linked to a series of hegemonic projects evolving along with global orders — from anti-communism to neo-liberalism.

This is indeed a multi-dimensional critique. At one level, it is about the very concept of modernity dominating in the West; that it is assumed to purvey progress and enlightenment, but rests on the construction of a dark underside that is represented by Latin America (Dussel, 1993). It is based on this that modern science is constructed, and thus, studying Latin America through the lenses of modern science is a reproduction of that duality between order and progress and the savage that needs to be controlled. Liberation requires resistance against this dominating discourse and the scientific system that produces it. At another level, it is more concretely on how knowledge production has supported political projects of domination and coloniality expressed over the last decades as neoliberalism (Mignolo, 2003). However, it is also about the 'construction' of Latin America. Both Quijano and Mignolo use actively the term 'Latin America', not just as a device to mobilize resistance against the hegemonic discourse from a variety of countries and nations. However, by doing so, they in effect reproduce the totalizing discourse and deny Latin Americans their claim to diversity.

This is only one of the contradictions that arise from studying the 'geopolitics of knowledge'. What remains is the consideration that no



science is value-free and that geography matters in the evolution of those values. This will be the perspective in the following section that nevertheless will argue that Latin America research in Norway has sometimes accompanied official policy; sometimes has been in stark opposition to it, or attempted to influence it, sometimes (involuntarily) reproducing its basic premises, and sometimes tried to hide from it.

### **3. THE EVOLUTION OF NORWEGIAN LATIN AMERICA POLICY AND THE 'GEOPOLITICS OF THE WEAK'**

#### **3.1 PRINCIPLES AND CONTRADICTIONS IN NORWEGIAN FOREIGN POLICY**

The very idea of a foreign policy rests on the distinction between a foreign and a domestic policy, or an 'outside' and an 'inside' of a state. This distinction is relatively new in historical terms. Neuman (2005) argues that in Norway it dates back to the period around the Napoleonic wars when Norway got its own constitution after 434 years under Danish rule, parallel to the independence of the Latin American countries. Whereas the Danes would sow the seeds of a strong bureaucratic state in Norway, Norway obviously had no diplomacy. Moreover, after 1814, Norway entered into a union with Sweden, in which foreign policy was governed by the Swedish king. Thus, Norway did not develop a foreign policy or a diplomatic corps until the union with Sweden was dissolved in 1905.

Hence, it was still very young as an independent nation when the two World Wars hit Europe, as a result of which its main strategy to ensure its own security has been to ally with the dominant forces. This inclination was followed in the post-World War II era when Norway emerged as a strong ally of the United States resting its main security policy on the NATO alliance. However, over time, as the global context, Norwegian society and Norwegian foreign policy thinking evolved, Norway has developed additional foreign policy orientations. Here I will argue that one may distinguish four such principles in addition to (i) the alliance with the Western powers and the United States. These are (ii) the role as a mediator or 'bridge'; (iii) a politics of moral commitment (*'engasjementspolitikken'*) to a number of social and humanitarian issues; (iv) a strong support for international institutions; and (v) the view of foreign policy as a multi-actor endeavor including NGOs, labor unions, business, and academics.

The mediator-role has been strongly emphasized by consecutive Norwegian governments in the period after World War II. There has been a perception that Norway has some particular advantages in fulfilling this role, based on the fact that it is a small country that is hardly perceived as an immediate threat to anyone. This vision has its

roots in the Cold War when Norway was stuck in a difficult position as a close ally with the United States, but with a 196 kilometers long border with Russia and a strategic location for both great powers. In official discourse, Norway's response to this was to seek to be a neutral mediator between the two great powers, seeking to 'bridge' the abyss. However, in practice it played a rather passive role, intending not to provoke either. This required also a close surveillance of the activities of its own communist groups as a means to avoid upsetting the United States.

The mediator-role later was connected to a broader 'politics of commitment' focusing human rights, humanitarian issues and, increasingly, gender equality, and climate and environmental issues. Many of these issues had become a focus of the development policy that evolved from the early beginnings with development aid to India in the 1950s, justified on a combination of moral, political and 'scientific' grounds. However, it was only after the Cold War that engagement in such issues came to be seen as a key part of Norwegian foreign and security policy, not only development policy. This was related to the introduction of an extended security concept in which it was argued that Norway's global commitment to peace, human rights, humanitarian issues, and crisis resolution were a means to ensure a better global context that would be in its own interest (Regjeringen, 1989). Jan Egeland (later UN special envoy to the failed negotiations in Colombia under Pastrana, 1999-2002) argued in 1988 that Norway had some particular advantage in the pursuit of making the world a more peaceful and just place due to its positive global image, increasing aid budget, few foreign policy interests in conflict with human rights, and a high degree of foreign policy consensus (Egeland, 1988; Skånland, 2009: 324-5). As argued by Tunander, it was no coincidence that this new role was emphasized immediately after the Cold War. It was a period in which 'Political leaders no longer spoke about 'necessities', but instead about 'opportunities' [...], the political discourse became 'what the political leaders made of it', as if they were able to manipulate and reconstruct a ruling discourse according to their own vision' (Tunander, 2008: 165). This was in part affected by academic elites that also entered into political positions, which were inspired simultaneously by constructivism and geopolitics. Particularly, the Swedish geopolitical thinker Rudolf Kjelléns' idea of the *Geopolitik of the weak* became influential. This was far from the *Machtpolitik of the Strong*.<sup>1</sup> It was rather a way of rethinking how small nations

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1 I would like to thank Andrés Rivarola of the University of Stockholm for pointing out this connection.

could expand their '*lebensraum*' through an extension of their own Social Democratic values, as a means to transcend historical East-West conflicts.

The idea of Norway as a peace-builder can be seen as a part of this 'politics of commitment', although the Norwegian peace discourse has longer roots. The discourse of Norway as a particular peaceful nation emerged with the nationalism that emerged in Norway in the late nineteenth century, where it was linked to both independence and the construction of the idea of the Norwegians as peaceful people (Leira, 2005: 137-8). The combination of the peace discourse and the consideration of Norway as a mediator led it to engage itself in a number of peace negotiations in the decades to come, including in South-Sudan, Sri Lanka, and the Middle East. In Latin America, it was a distant supporter of the regionally led Esquipulas peace process in Central America, but played a significant role in the peace negotiations in Guatemala, and later in the peace process in Colombia, starting in October 2012.

While the politics of commitment was formulated in the early post-Cold War era, it evolved significantly during the first coalition government of the Norwegian Labor Party and the Socialist Left (also including the Center Party, traditionally a stronghold of the farmers), lasting through two electoral periods (2005-2009 and 2009-2013) and led by Jens Stoltenberg, the current Secretary General of NATO. Although efforts had been made earlier as well to integrate development policy and general foreign policy, the first Stoltenberg Government attempted to rethink Norwegian foreign policy interests in the context of globalization, emphasizing precisely that a world replete with poverty, unjust distribution of resources, climate changes, war, terrorism and other threats, would be a risky environment for Norway, irrespective of where those threats appeared (Lunde and Thune et al., 2008). While increasing emphasis was placed on making development policy coherent with other policy areas (NOU, 2008: 14), moral commitments were also increasingly considered to serve national interests. This provided the justification for Norway to engage in issues far beyond its geographical borders.

The Stoltenberg Government placed particular emphasis on dialogue as a way of conflict resolution. The most emblematic foreign policy figures were the first Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jonas Gahr Støre (2005-2012), and the first Minister of Development, Erik Solheim (2005-2012). Both placed major emphasis on dialogue as a principle for conducting foreign affairs. Indeed, Gahr Støre made the term 'dialogue' a trademark of his method to the extent that a Norwegian cartoonist made it into a rule to always draw him with a speech bub-

ble saying 'dialogue' (Wig, 2014). Solheim had been a special envoy to Sri Lanka, where he played a controversial role as a mediator, and he continued to insist on dialogue faced with political conflict.

A fourth feature of Norwegian foreign policy is the emphasis on international institutions and organizations. Norway has been staunch supporter of the United Nations and a contributor way disproportional to its population size, and even its economy. This can also be seen as a part of the geopolitics of the weak: acknowledging its small size and need to secure a predictable environment, as well as the recognition that 'going alone' its humanitarian and human rights efforts would be much less efficient than working jointly with other countries. While often being a passive contributor, from the late 1990s, increasing emphasis was placed on being an active player in the multilateral system.

A final feature of Norwegian foreign policy is the inclusion of civil society, including a wide range of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academics, and companies in policymaking. There are long traditions for inviting civil society of all kinds to consultations and committees, and there is a certain circulation of personnel between academic institutions, NGOs, political parties, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad, and to some extent with companies (particularly, consultancy companies and state owned companies).

However, there are many contradictions and inconsistencies between these roles. The most obvious is Norway's allegiance to the United States and NATO, and the active participation in NATO operations in Libya, Afghanistan and elsewhere, while also pledging to be a nation of peace. Norway is among the 20 biggest exporters of weapons, and one of the most eager participants in war outside its territory (Langmyr, 2015). Since 1990, it has participated in several wars.<sup>2</sup>

Another possible contradiction is one between the emphasis on dialogue and principles such as human rights. As shown by Nissen's (2010) study of the peace negotiations in Guatemala, Norway's emphasis on dialogue dampened its critique against the responsible for the worst human rights atrocities. Moreover, Norway was a small country trying to 'punch above its weight', but since it had few power capabilities it was considered a rather weak mediator that had to lure the strongest party — in this case the government — into the agreement, something that gave the guerrilla movement a disadvantage.

One general approach, to the numerous contradictions that exist, has simply been to try to avoid confrontation and continue to ride a

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2 These are: The Gulf-War against Iraq (1991), the invasion in Somalia (1993), the war in Bosnia (1993-95), the Kosovo-crisis (1999), the Afghan war (from 2001 -till today), the Iraqi-war (2003-2011), the war in Libya (2011) and Mali.

number of horses. For example, many of the NGOs that have been invited into consultations have shown to be strong critics of the government. In spite of this, the government has continued to fund them generously. Indeed, the vast majority of Norwegian NGOs have the government as their main source of finance. Or, — as first occurred in the case of Latin America policy — allow it to live its own life on the margins.

### **3.2 LATIN AMERICA: MARGINAL, CONTROVERSIAL AND GRADUALLY LESS AUTONOMOUS**

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, Norwegian Latin America policy developed originally at the margins of the general foreign policy orientation. Historically, the economic ties between Norway and Latin America have been limited, and up until the 1990s, they amounted mainly to some shipping interests, exports of Bacalao, imports of coffee and bananas, limited migration, and later, investments in aluminum and fertilizer production. After the World War II, Norway was generally loyal to US policy and lacked an independent policy towards the region. Indeed, Norway sold weapons to the Batista regime in Cuba, and followed suit when the United States introduced the embargo after the Cuban revolution (Bye, 1997: 408). It was not until opposition against the Vietnam War and US engagement in the 1973 Chile coup gained strength that Norwegian governments started to express disagreements with US involvement in the region, including with the sanctions against Cuba and the military intervention in the Dominican Republic (Stølen, 2002). However, this was an opposition that coexisted with a general policy pleading loyalty to the United States.

Political refugees from Chile, and to a lesser extent from Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay, contributed along with the radicalization of the student movement, to put pressure on Norway for a policy that would distance itself from the United States. However, the Latin Americans never made up a significant, permanent diaspora, in the way they did for example in Sweden.<sup>3</sup> Thus, it did not make up a sustained pressure group.

As will be further elaborated in chapters 3 and 4, Norwegian foreign policy stance to the region changed with the revolution in

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<sup>3</sup> Indeed, in perhaps the only comprehensive study of diasporas in Norwegian foreign policy, Godzimirski does not even discuss Latin Americans. He shows that Chileans make up the 25<sup>th</sup> largest group of immigrants, and the 14<sup>th</sup> largest group of immigrants achieving Norwegian citizenship in the period 1977-2009 (Godzimirski, 2011).



Nicaragua in 1979 and the coup, and the start of the civil war in neighboring El Salvador in 1981. Norway's opposition against US actions in Central America worsened its relationship to the superpower in the decade to come (Bye, 1997). Particularly the situation in Nicaragua caused broad mobilization. For example, it was the solidarity work in Nicaragua that brought into politics the former Prime Minister, and current Secretary General of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg. The presence of Norwegian NGOs in Guatemala after the earthquake in 1976 also contributed to increasing attention to the ongoing civil war there and to conveying a different view of the situation than global mainstream media.

After the 1980s, Latin America slipped out of foreign policy focus until the center-left coalition Government of Jens Stoltenberg took power in 2005. This 'red-green' government launched initiatives not only to rethink foreign policy in general, but also the relationship to Latin America. The latter had several reasons. The first was a sense of political affinity between the center-left governments that had started to emerge in Latin America, and the first coalition government in Norway that included the socialist left. The new Latin American governments were perceived to be able not only to bring the countries forward economically, but also to present solid plans for societal transformations aiming to redistribute power and resources. The newly appointed Minister of Cooperation, Erik Solheim of the Socialist Left party, said to the press in 2006 that 'Latin America is going through a democratic revolution that the Norwegian Government wants to support'.<sup>4</sup> The other factor was a strong increase in Norwegian business interest in the region. By the mid-2000s, Brazil had become the largest recipient of Norwegian investments outside the United States and Europe; and Chile, Venezuela and Argentina were also recipients of investments. The third factor was the increased importance of climate policy that by then had entered as a major foreign policy area, and Latin America with its vast rainforest was of strategic importance to the entire globe (Bull, 2010).

However, none of this would have gotten the impact that it had, if it had not been for the fact that these factors occurred as the general foreign policy approach was reconsidered. The core idea developed was that Norway had direct interests in contributing to improving the humanitarian and environmental situation, peace and human rights anywhere in the world. This can be seen as a continuation of the geopolitics of the weak. However, it considered a broader range of moral issues to be within the realm of self-interest. Moreover, the

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4 Erik Solheim, referred at *Fædrelandsvennen*, August 10, 2006.

Stoltenberg Government emphasized the establishment of new global alliances, particularly with 'likeminded' countries among the 'emerging powers'. There were not too many other candidates for that than Brazil. As argued in the White Paper St.meld 15,

'From a Norwegian perspective, a peaceful, responsible and self-confident Latin America will be positive for the global rule of law and for Norwegian business interests, particularly within the petroleum sector. Considering that Norway generally has coinciding interests with many Latin American countries, a coherent and united Latin America is positive, also as an entry to cooperation with the remaining G77 countries' (2008: 34, my translation).

The new 'Latin America policy' of the Stoltenberg's Government was also in essence a discovery of South America. There was an attempt to rethink also the relation with Central America and move it away from being based on aid, to a relationship between equals based on joint interests.<sup>5</sup> However, the main shift was an increased focus on South America. This was reflected in the aid budget, first with renaming the 'regional allocation' a 'Latin America allocation' as opposed to a 'Central America allocation', and increasing it by 50% in 2007. This was still only 6% of the total budget and only 10% of the allocation for Africa (Bull, 2010). Later the ODA to Latin America should increase multifold, but then from the budget of the Ministry of the Environment and directed exclusively to the Amazon-fund cooperation with Brazil.

The reformulation of Latin American policy within the framework of strategic interests and politics of commitment had the implication of placing increased focus on attempting to communicate and promote Norwegian values and social systems abroad. In order to argue that it is in Norway's self-interest to pursue social justice, peace and human development in far-away countries, also has to argue that these are the 'core values' of the Norwegian society. Besides, the reformulation of foreign policy occurred in a period with unprecedented economic growth in Norway due primarily to the oil-price hike and the rapid expansion of petroleum production in the North Sea. Norway managed to channel this into improvement also on most other indicators of human welfare and wellbeing, and thus it became an attractive 'model' for developing as well as developed countries. Therefore, Norway's own social organization had

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5 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs commissioned a report to investigate what 'strategic interests' Norway really had in Central America. See Bull et al. (2008).

been increasingly used as an 'export' item, and was the basis for new initiatives.

Thus, the Latin America policy under Stoltenberg's governments was on the one hand a continuation of various long standing strategies in the region, including a focus on human rights, indigenous rights, gender equality and the environment — all core elements of the 'politics of commitment', but reframed as 'strategic interests'.

In line with the reorientation, a number of new initiatives, based on new global priorities were added. One was the 'oil for development' program: a technical cooperation program aimed to transfer knowledge about how to manage oil and gas resources in order to serve development purposes, based on Norway's own success in doing so.<sup>6</sup> In Latin America, one such program was established with Bolivia, focusing on management of gas resources. In 2011, a program was established with Cuba. Another example was 'tax for development', focused on improving the tax administration, and consequently tax income in developing countries. This is partly based on broad multilateral cooperation, particularly with the World Bank, the IMF and the OECD, but Norway's strong engagement is undoubtedly also motivated by a willingness to utilize Norway's experience of high taxes used, among others, for high welfare spending in other contexts. While there were no bilateral programs under this with Latin America, the Tax for Development program funds the NGO Publish What You Pay, that has training programs with society organizations, labor organization and media in resource-rich developing countries including Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala and Nicaragua. The program also has a strong research component and channeled significant funds to the Norwegian research community (Norad, 2012). A third example was the focus on inequality. This was an initiative primarily promoted by the Minister of Cooperation, which took over from Erik Solheim. Heikki Holmås from the Socialist Left intended to refocus development policy to attack inequality (Regjeringen, 2012). As a result of this, a three year cooperation program was established with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL) in order to strengthen their work on inequality reduction (see chapter 6).

Finally, several initiatives to promote dialogue were established in Latin America. This included social dialogue aimed at encouraging 'social pacts'. In 2009, a Norwegian-Brazilian forum for social dialogue was established, intending to encourage cooperation between labor unions and employers organizations, with the inclusion of LO-NHO on the Norwegian side, and CUT and CNI on the Brazilian side.

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6 See <<http://www.norad.no/en/front/>>.

Similarly, it supported the Economic and Social Council that was established in El Salvador, to create a consensus between the first left-wing government in El Salvador, and the right-wing entrenched in the country's economic elite. However, Norway also got involved in direct peace negotiations, most importantly in Colombia, as will be discussed in chapter 4.

One effect of this rethink was that Latin America, at least for a while, climbed higher up on the political agenda. A key focus of this newfound Latin America fascination was Brazil. In 2010-2011, the Norwegian Government developed a Brazil strategy with broad participation from NGOs, academics and business as well as a large number of sector Ministries (Regjeringen, 2011). Six ministers participated in the launch in Oslo in March 2011, and both the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jonas Gahr Støre, and the Minister of the Environment and Development, Erik Solheim, traveled to Brazil for its launch in the same month, demonstrating accordingly the high priority given to it.

The Brazil strategy gained broad political support, but concerning the rest of Latin America, the government's policy remained controversial. The right wing opposition consistently argued that the increase of aid to the region was politically motivated and not founded on solid arguments of poverty reduction.<sup>7</sup> This occurred in spite of the fact that Norway kept a low profile related to the most controversial of the left-regimes, Venezuela, but did maintain close, although at times controversial relations with Bolivia.<sup>8</sup> The support to Nicaragua was reduced, but rather since of a long-term process of pulling out of Central America than as a reaction to Daniel Ortega's policy.

Some left-wing groups, on the other hand, thought Norway did not go far enough in supporting new initiatives. One example of that was the Yasuni-ITT that Norway chose not to support. The reasons were both that the Norwegian Government doubted the credibility of the project, and that Norway was itself in the midst of a conflict over the exploitation of petroleum resources in vulnerable areas above the Arctic Circle (Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja). The government was split on the issue, but found it hard to argue for funding a poor country's abstaining from exploiting its resources in biological vulner-

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, the *Storting's* (Parliamentary) comments to the Government's Report 25 (2012-2013) (*Stortinget*, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> Regarding the relationship with Bolivia, this got complicated mainly due to different views on global climate policy. There was significant tension in the run-up to Evo Morales visit to Oslo in May 2010, as Norway was an eager supporter of the REDD-initiative, while Morales came almost directly from the 'People's climate summit' in Cochabamba that explicitly had condemned any kind of market based solution to climate problems, such as the REDD-initiative.

able areas, while there at the point was a significant possibility that it would go ahead with the plans for oil exploration in the North.

As the Stoltenberg's Government started to develop a new strategy towards Latin America in 2006, it convoked a group of academics, businesspeople, and NGO representatives to get advice on where to focus. Among other conclusions, the group found that there was a lack of knowledge about Latin America in Norway (*Utenriksdepartementet*, 2006). Subsequently, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs engaged a consultancy company that with the assistance of two University representatives and one business representative.<sup>9</sup> Their task was to elaborate how a 'permanent environment for Latin America knowledge' could be developed in Norway (Agenda, 2007). The conclusion was that the most efficient would be to create a Latin America network, jointly with funding possibilities and increased academic exchange (Agenda, 2007). This would become the most comprehensive effort to strengthen Latin America research in Norway, after many decades of negligence.

In sum, when it was attempted to elevate Latin America into the foreign policy agenda and incorporated into general priorities that there was an attempt to strengthen Latin America research.

#### **4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LATIN AMERICA RESEARCH AND NORWEGIAN FOREIGN POLICY**

In general, there are a number of linkages between Norwegian political priorities and focus of research, but no linear relations. Funds are allocated to issue areas depending on policy priorities, as a given issue area requires expertise to be used by Norwegian policy makers. In the case of foreign policy, funds are allocated directly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad, but also through a variety of different programs in the Research Council of Norway. Private funding for research is rare in Norway. There are very few private foundations that provide research funding, and to the extent that companies provide research funding at all it is overwhelmingly channeled towards the natural sciences. Universities and more vocationally oriented University Colleges in Norway are public and receive almost all their funding from the state. There are no private universities, but there are private higher education institutions, like the business schools. These are not fully state funded, but do receive significant public funding.<sup>10</sup>

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9 These were Professor Kristi Anne Stølen from the University of Oslo, Professor Ivar Bleiklie from the University of Bergen, and Sissel Dyrhaug from Statoil.

10 The two largest private business schools have approximately 80% of their funds from the state.



The same is true for so-called independent research institutes: they all receive basic funding from the government, in addition to funding directed towards specific research projects.<sup>11</sup>

The fundamental dependence on governmental finance for research implies that the research being conducted to a significant extent depends on governmental willingness to invest money in it. The interest for investing in Latin America research has not been strong in Norway. But early intents to increase funding also ended due to differences within the research community.

The Cuban revolution marked a new era of increased attention to Latin America. However, the new interest for Cuba was easier to align with general foreign policy thinking in the neutral Sweden and Finland than in Norway, which was a close US-ally (NAVF, 1990). In Norway, the main research institute on foreign affairs (NUPI) established in 1959, followed the official Norwegian foreign policy line, and never caught an interest in Latin America. This was rather found at the Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO) initiated by Johan Galtung in 1959 and formally established in 1996. This represented the 'dissident voices' and opposition to the United States, and was also the first home for Latin America researchers (Knutson, 1997; NAVF, 1990).

There was also a new international focus on the importance of research to strengthen policy. This was led by OECD that argued strongly for the governments to support social science and use it actively in policymaking (Stokke, 2010: 503). These ideas found fertile ground in the dominating Norwegian Labor Party that had already for many years argued for using research actively in policymaking (Bennum, 1957). As a means to strengthen that, a committee to support so-called non-European studies was established in the late 1960s. Importantly for a number of future students of Latin America, it was given funds for stipends for students wanting to undertake fieldwork in non-European countries, including Latin America (Reinertsen, 2008).

In 1968, the Nordic Council proposed to establish a Nordic Institute for Latin American Studies. As there was already a Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala in Sweden (established in 1962) and a Nordic Asia Institute in Copenhagen in Denmark (established in 1966), it was proposed that the Latin America institute should be located in Nor-

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11 For example, the Norwegian Institute of Foreign Affairs (NUPI) receives approx. 25% of its income as basic funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs channeled through the Research Council of Norway, and another 68% as money allocated to particular tasks by different governmental institutions. The rest (7%) is funding from foreign sources, the private sector or income generated through sales.

way (Stølen, 2002: 162). However, there were disagreements about whether Norway had the institutional capacity required to host such an institute and it never materialized.

The next attempt occurred in the late 1980s, when a group of researchers was appointed by the Norwegian Research Council to make a report on the state of the art of research and teaching in Norway on Latin America compared with the other Nordic countries (Stølen, 2002: 162). This occurred after strong pressure from a group of researchers associated with the Scandinavian Association for Research on Latin America (NOSALF) (Stølen, 2002: 162) although the success they had must also be related to the heightened attention particularly to Central America of the 1980s.

The report delivered in 1990, documented that the researchers working on Latin America in Norway were scattered around institutions across the country, and that one had not been able to build a critical mass of researchers anywhere. It recommended focusing on two institutions: the University of Oslo and the University of Bergen; and to establish a position as a 'Latin America' coordinator at both institutions (NAVF, 1990).

The committee further proposed a controversial geographical delimitation arguing that one should make fresh research money available for projects focusing on a kind of transcontinental rectangle covering the areas between the equator and 15 degrees south from coasts to coast, and the Andean highlands, Amazonas and Northeast Brazil. In addition to this, projects were invited that focused on Central America to cater to the increasing aid to the region, much of it challenged through Norwegian NGOs (Stølen, 2002: 163). This geographical delimitation was not well received by the research community. As a result of the discrepancies, the research program never materialized, and after a few years, the appointed coordinators went back to their general academic positions.

The 1990s were generally characterized by a strengthening of the ties to different 'developing regions' and increased funding for research. In the White Paper 42 of 1987-88, it was argued for a strengthening of the 'development research' and a transfer of much of the funding responsibility to the Ministry of Research and Education (Regjeringen, 1987). However, funding priorities should still thematically follow closely Norwegian aid priorities. In 1991, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs established cooperation with the universities of funding for cooperation with universities in developing countries. These cooperation programs should have a component of research as well as 'knowledge' transfer and education. This was followed up by a program that placed much more emphasis on knowledge transfer. Indeed, it was called *re-*

*search-aid*. Several countries in Latin America were included, but in the first period, only 1.4% of the funding was channeled to Latin America, and in the second period 7.7% (Stokke, 2010).

During the 1990s, funding for research related to 'the South' increased. Initially it was focused on specific topics of importance to Norwegian aid and foreign policy. However, it gradually got broader, and the large program 'Development in the South' (UTISØR) (1998-2007) focused on general development issues in the context of globalization, in line with the strengthening of the 'politics of commitment' (Stokke, 2010: 528).

There were projects focusing on Latin America also in these programs, as well as in the number of other thematic and disciplinary programs of the RCN. The Norwegian aid agency (Norad), also continued to fund projects directly. Moreover, some research was undertaken both in the department housing the only Latin America studies program in the country, at the University of Bergen, and at various disciplinary institutes, by tenured academic staff that could use their research time independent of external funding. The European Union also funded programs became a possible source of funding for research on Latin America. However, as argued in the most comprehensive overview of the history of Norwegian funding for research in 'the South' 'It took many years until a major initiative to support research on Central and South America appeared' (Stokke, 2010: 533), and there was a general notion that Latin America was given low priority. In spite of identifying 264 researchers having had some research-cooperation or projects focusing on Latin America, the 2007 Agenda report repeated the conclusion of the 1989-report cited above, that research focused on Latin America was scattered around universities and research institutes, but spread too thinly to establish a critical mass of researchers (Agenda, 2007).

The initiative to counteract this came in 2008 as a result of the Stoltenberg's Government emphasis on strengthening relations to Latin America. The so called 'knowledge strategy' that was developed to support this new engagement was aimed to create the conditions for the development of a 'permanent environment for the generation of knowledge on Latin America in Norway' (Agenda, 2007: 1). The motivation was primarily to generate solid knowledge to back up and improve the foreign policy strategy. However, it was also based on recognition that Latin America hosted increasingly strong research communities that Norway should link up with and thus benefit from. Finally, an important aim was to 'educate' the Norwegian public in order to move beyond old stereotypes and generate support for the government's new initiatives.

The knowledge strategy had three main pillars. The first was, as mentioned, the establishment of a network for Latin America research. The Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM) of the University of Oslo won the call that was announced in 2007, and became the host of the Norwegian Network for Latin America Research (NorLARNet) that was operative from August 2008.

The second pillar was a program for funding of Latin America Research in the Research Council of Norway. This was a ten-year program with a budget of 20 million annually. It had a broad focus and called for research proposals on politics and governance; Culture and society; Economy, industry, business and markets; Natural resources: management, exploitation and conservation; and Poverty, inequality and human development (*Forskningsrådet*, 2008). The program differed from earlier research programs that had opened for research on Latin America as it did not focus on Norwegian aid priorities but opened for researching a broad array of issues. Moreover, it did not make any geographical delimitation, although it did mention that Brazil should get priority as this was considered to be of high political and economic interest and there was a scarcity of people with competence on Brazil in Norway. A further difference was that it moved away from an 'aid-focus' in the sense that the primary aim was not to strengthen research communities in Latin America, but rather, to tap in to them and cooperate on an equal basis (NFR, n.d.).

The third pillar was a strengthening of academic and student exchange. This was focused particularly on the so-called ABC countries (Argentina, Brazil, and Chile). It took a while until concrete results appeared from this, but by 2013 a joint program to support academic and student exchange by the Brazilian Federal Agency for Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education (CAPES) and the Norwegian Center for the Internationalization of Education (SIU) was operative. In 2014, an agreement was reached with between the Norwegian Research Council and the Brazilian Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq).

The 'knowledge strategy' clearly had the effect of increasing research focus on Latin America. Under the new research program, 33 large projects were supported between 2009 and 2014. They were directed not only towards researchers with experience from working with Latin America, but also aimed at recruitment of new researchers, and attracting qualified researchers to studying Latin America. Another clear effect was to switch focus of research towards Brazil, as one third of the projects were focused on Brazil.

However, whether we can conclude that Norwegian researchers' approach and priorities can be considered an extension of foreign pol-

icy priorities is still not clear. To start with, the board that was to select research proposals to fund was composed of international experts, most of them academics with long experience in Latin America, but with very limited knowledge of Norwegian foreign policy priorities. In addition, there were one representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and one from the business community. It was a frequent complaint from both of them latter that the majority of the research projects selected was not directly relevant to their interests. Indeed in a very informal analysis of the Norwegian Latin America research community, I have previously argued (Bull, 2010) that one could divide Norwegian Latin America researchers into five categories, and only a few of which would contribute to the implementation of Norwegian business or foreign policy issues:

1. ***The Latin Americanists*** study Latin America largely for the sake of knowledge itself. Most of them have invested a lot of time and resources in acquiring detailed knowledge about language, history, and culture necessary to acquire deeper knowledge on specific topics.
2. ***The development researchers:*** study Latin America with a general development perspective as a starting point. They study different aspects of economic, social, environmental, and political development, from many disciplinary approaches. The purpose is to better understand processes of change, conditions, obstacles, and possible policy interventions for development. This can be used in the development debate at home and in international institutions, as well as for strengthening the Latin American countries own development policies.
3. ***The solidarity researchers*** study Latin America as a part of a general solidarity relation. The purpose is to generate knowledge that can be useful for movements and actor one seeks to support, or bring about knowledge about them as a foundation for further support.
4. ***The aid consultants*** are engaged in Latin America for one out of two reasons: to improve Norwegian aid projects, or as a part of those as suppliers of 'technical cooperation' to actors in Latin America.
5. ***The scientists*** are involved in research related to Latin America on a general basis, in many cases because Latin America holds a phenomenon of general scientific interest (for example, rare biological species in the rainforest, particular institutions



etc.), or because there are very strong research environments in Latin America on particular topics.

It is of course hard to imagine that all of these would all of a sudden respond to governmental strategies in their approaches and choice of topics and areas to study. In the rest of the book, we will keep this in mind when discussing the approaches to different themes, and leave the conclusion to the end.

## **5. CONCLUSION: THE GEOPOLITICS OF KNOWLEDGE SEEN FROM THE PERIPHERAL NORTH**

I have argued that Norway's 'knowledge strategy' towards Latin America, can be understood in the context of the 'geopolitics of the weak' that has led Norway to emphasis a politics of peace and commitment to human rights, humanitarianism and the environment. This was increasingly argued to be based on the 'self-interests of Norway from the mid-2000s. As a part of this strategy, Norway was also increasingly willing to use its own social structure and institutions as a model to project abroad. In this process, also the foreign policy towards Latin America became increasingly framed within a discourse of an extended concept of self-interest: that it was in Norway's self-interest to contribute to a peaceful world, human rights, better environmental policies, poverty reduction, and various other issues considered to be intimately related to the making of a more peaceful world.

Knowledge production had several roles in this. First, researchers were themselves often considered to be 'diplomats' securing links to groups in foreign societies that governments did not have access to. Including researchers directly in foreign policy making was also a long-standing tradition in Norway. Second, and as emphasized particularly in the Latin America knowledge strategy, knowledge was important to better understand foreign societies in their complexities.

Yet, researchers had many motives apart from following the governmental strategies. In the rest of the book researchers that themselves have been closely involved in Latin America research will discuss the principle perspectives emerging in their fields. What becomes clear, is that the ideas underpinning Norwegian Latin America research have evolved in a dynamic inter-relationship between Norwegian foreign policy priorities interpreted within the framework of the 'geopolitics of the weak', a dissident Latin America community often opposing Norwegian official priorities, general, global trends in the social sciences and ideas coming out of Latin America. In the course of the work with this book, particularly, was the strong influence that Latin American ideas have had on the Norwegian social sciences that

have come out strongly. This will be further discussed in the concluding chapter.

The next chapter (2) will discuss the perspectives on Latin America in semi-scholarly studies, before the social sciences were actually firmly established in Norway. Historian Steinar Sæther looks at the work by four early ‘explorers’: ethnographer Carl Lumholtz (1851-1922), historian Anton Mohr (1890-1968), ethnographer and archeologist Ola Apenes (1890-1943), and the more famous, but less academically acknowledged, explorer Thor Heyerdahl (1914-2002). Sæther shows how most of these pursued an interest for Latin America in spite of lack of support for their work from Norway. Lumholtz and Apenes both worked on indigenous communities in Mexico, while Heyerdahl as we know sought to prove that Polynesia originally had been populated by South American migrants. The only one of them that showed an interest for modern Latin America, Anton Mohr, treated it in a highly condescending way.

Political scientist, Vegard Bye’s chapter (3) tells the story of the political background for the emergence of an interest in Latin America from the 1960s on that eventually led to an increased research focus on the region. This chapter explores further the contradictions between Norway’s general foreign policy orientation aligned with the United States and an increasing opposition to that from groups supporting left-wing movements and eventually left-wing governments in Latin America. While the Cuban revolution sparked research interest, the coup in Chile in 1973 was the real wake-up call for Norwegian authorities that it had to re-think its relation to the region. Bye discusses both scholarly and more popular contributions to the debates on the nature, merits, and flaws of the left-wing regimes of Allende in Chile, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and Castro’s Cuba. He also discusses research on the new wave of leftist movements and governments particularly in Venezuela and Brazil in the 2000s.

Roy Krøvel’s chapter (4) discusses Norwegian research on conflict, war, and peacebuilding in Latin America. He looks at how Norway’s efforts to mediate in conflicts in Latin America — Nicaragua, Guatemala, Haiti and Colombia (and elsewhere) — jointly with research on the conflicts, has contributed to the construction of a collective image of Norway as a builder of peace. This has become a central piece in the imagined community of Norwegians, and in turn influenced further research and policy action. Historian Krøvel looks both at the historical foundation for this role, main scholarly contributions and criticism of it.

The following chapter (5) discusses ‘development research’ in a quite traditional understanding of it (in order to avoid overlapping

with other chapters). Bull finds that rather than being based on a 'Norwegian perspective', development research on Latin America in Norway has occurred in a process of amalgamation of Norwegian and Latin American perspectives. The chapter distinguishes between a 'mainstream' line of research that was influenced initially by the cooperation between Raúl Prebisch and the research institute CMI in Norway, but also by the Norwegian 'steering sciences' underpinning the development of Norway in the post-war era. The joint roots in structuralist thinking is most recently reflected in a cooperation project on economic inequality between the University of Oslo and CEPAL. There is also a more radical current — what Bull names the 'dissident stories'. The first starts with the influence of the Latin American *dependentistas* on research at the Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO) founded by Johan Galtung. The more recent is the influence by Latin American post- and de-colonial, and environmentalist thinking, part of which is influenced by Norwegian philosopher Arne Næss' 'deep ecology'.

Biologist and natural resource manager Mariel Aguliar-Støen and anthropologist Kristi-Anne Stølen discuss the evolution of Norwegian agrarian and rural studies in chapter 6. While some work was done in the 1950s (particularly the Chiapas-work by anthropologist Henning Siverts) a main motivation for the start of such studies were the agrarian reforms and the emergence of rural social movements in the 1960s, such as the *ligas agrarias*. The arrival of Argentinean anthropologist Eduardo Archetti at the University of Oslo in the 1970s had a significant influence on further study of this. In the 1980s, gender issues became an integral aspect of the rural studies, while later research has focused on the relationship between peasants (often indigenous) and the state. The most recent contributions focus on major shifts in the rural areas due to technological changes, migration, and natural resources exploitation (oil and mining).

In chapter 7, geographer Jemima García-Godos and political scientist Elin Skaar discuss Norwegian research on human rights and justice in Latin America. While this has been a major priority for Norwegian development cooperation, the authors argue that for Norwegian researchers it has been equally important that in Latin America can be found both the most interesting processes and strongest research communities on issues within this field, such as transitional justice, the new generations of rights, and legal pluralism. The chapter finds that two main issue areas have been in focus: Accountability for past crimes, including trials and amnesties, truth commissions and victims' reparations, and justice, courts, rights protection, and enforcement. The authors find that the field is run by no more than

a handful of senior scholars in Norway but that they work in close cooperation with colleagues in Latin America and elsewhere and have managed to both produce a substantial body of literature and generate significant student interest.

Chapter 8 discusses a Norwegian perspective on Latin America from a quite different angle. The political scientists Einar Berntzen, Marcus Buck and Leiv Marsteintredet uses the ideas of the influential Norwegian scholar Stein Rokkan (1921-1979) to provide a novel interpretation of current political processes in the Andes region. Two main concepts from Rokkan are used to provide a new perspective on why the Andean region turns to the left: cleavages and critical junctures. The term cleavages is used to understand political divisions produced as a part of nation and state building processes that are sometimes overlapping and sometimes reinforcing. These cleavages, as well as the actions taken by the state at 'critical junctures' resulting from institutional crises, contributes to explain apparently contradictory tendencies leading to the major political shifts in the first years after the turn of the millennium in the Andean region.

Chapter 9 also takes a very different take. It is a rather personal story by one of the anthropologists in Norway that have done the most long-term and extensive studies of identity formation and the evolution of systems of governance among the maya k'iches of Totonicapan in Guatemala. Stener Ekern uses the concepts of '*lebenswelt*' and 'subjectivization' to discuss how his situation between different worlds: that of Totonicapan and Norway. He argues that this position has required use of '*etiquettes*' or labels with global ambitions such as 'indigenous peoples', 'human rights' and 'Latin America', as well as linking particular phenomenon to general debates within anthropology, that do not always square with the dynamic and shifting communities that are studied. However, it does generate a constant evolution of the 'self' of the researcher and his / her perspectives on that which is studied.

None of the chapters pretends to give an exhaustive overview of the research on Latin America conducted at Norwegian research institutions. Perhaps least so the last two that have taken a different angle on attempting to answer the question of what a Norwegian perspective on Latin America is. A significant body of research has been developed in Norway both on issues of democracy, democratization, and indigenous peoples, which were not mentioned in this book.

Several contributions to the study of indigenous peoples have been mentioned in other chapters, including those of John Andrew McNeish (see chapters 5, 6, and 7), Kristi-Anne Stølen, and Sara Lund Skar (chapter 6). There is a general tendency that the early studies such as those discussed in chapter 2 were ethnographic studies of

indigenous cultures and communities, later contributions have focused on issues such as gender relations and work (see for example Ødegaard, 2010, 2011) or resistance and social mobilization (see for example Guzmán Gallegos) or democracy and legal plurality (apart from chapter 7, see Leer, 2006).

Certainly, other contributions have not been considered. However, we hope that the following chapters give an idea of some main issues and perspectives in Norway-based Latin America research and how it views Latin America, as well as why and how it has influenced the same context of which it emerges. The concluding chapter (10) seeks to answer the question of whether there is a Norwegian perspective on Latin America. It argues that in spite of the mutual influence of ideas and the significant difference between the contributions from Norway-based researchers, Norwegian researchers have tended to approach Latin America as a dynamic, but divided region. Much Norwegian research has focused on the reasons and nature of the divisions — between indigenous and non-indigenous, between women and men, between rural and urban, between the oppressed and the oppressors, between victim and perpetrator, and between the rich and poor — and how they are or can be bridged. However, the focus of the research has changed over time, in line with a shifting and often conflictive relationship to political priorities and foreign policy orientations. This will be further fleshed out in the concluding chapter where also a quantitative analysis of Master Theses on Latin America at Norwegian academic institutions will be presented.

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Steinar A. Sæther

## **EXPLORING EXOTIC PASTS**

### **NORWEGIAN SCHOLARS' WORK ON LATIN AMERICA BEFORE 1960**

BEFORE 1960, ONLY A HANDFUL of Norwegian scholars had done serious academic work on Latin America. This article thus concerns a small group of four quite exceptional individuals who devoted at least a part of their professional career to the study of Latin America, despite there being hardly any institutionalized incentives for such work in Norway at the time. Carl Lumholtz, Anton Mohr, Ola Apenes, and Thor Heyerdahl sought recognition as scholars and experts on Latin American ethnography, geography, and history; and to some extent also on contemporary Latin American societies, but only to a very limited degree did they succeed in their scholarly endeavours.

Their limited success as Latin Americanists is hardly surprising. As many of the other chapters of this book demonstrate, systematic and continued research on Latin American societies at Norwegian universities and research centres first began following the establishment of anthropology departments and professorial positions in Spanish and Latin American studies at the Universities of Bergen and Oslo in the 1960s and 1970s (Stølen, 2002; Wæhle, n.d.). Unlike in Sweden, Denmark and even Finland where at least some university-based ethnographers and archaeologists had done extensive fieldwork in Latin America and formed part of the professional international academic networks at the time, there were none in Norway before the 1960s.

Furthermore, academic circles were extremely small and socially elitist in Norway. For more than 130 years, after Norway's independence from Denmark in 1814, there was only one university in the entire country. The Royal Fredriks University — founded in 1812 and renamed University of Oslo in 1939 — was the only university until the formation of the University of Bergen in 1946. Those scholars who could realistically aspire to a professorship and who pursued an academic career would at best be naïve to concentrate on Latin American topics. The only Norwegian university was still mainly about teaching law and theology for sons (and a few daughters) of the elite who would enter the state bureaucracy, although the natural sciences including engineering and medicine had expanded somewhat in the late nineteenth century. This explains both why Lumholtz, Mohr, Apenes, and Heyerdahl had no academic background in the study of Latin America before they embarked on their more or less ambitious expeditions and why they could not focus exclusively on the production of scholarly articles and monographs on Latin American topics.

Their work thus shared many characteristics with those explorers, adventurers and travellers who wrote newspaper articles, held public lectures and published travelogues to finance further travel abroad. Lumholtz, Mohr, Apenes, and Heyerdahl were not by any means the only Norwegians who travelled extensively in Latin America and published detailed accounts of their experiences. Especially in the period between the two world wars, a series of Norwegian aspiring authors wrote books about their adventures in Latin America (Sæther, 2016). Indeed, it may be argued that our four 'Latin Americanists' were not primarily scholars, but professional 'explorers' who first and foremost devoted their energy on publishing books for the general public, taking photographs and shooting films of their exotic destinies, which in turn could be used in the public lecture series they held when they returned. However, the four aspiring scholars reviewed here differed from the travel writers since they also published academic texts on Latin American topics and sought scholarly recognition in their fields.

The phenomenon of combining scientific expeditions with publishing travelogues and holding public lectures were of course not unique to Norway. During the nineteenth century, scientific explorers were heralded as national heroes throughout the Western world (Kennedy, 2014). Following the eighteenth century explorers, and the exceptional careers of Alexander Humboldt and Charles Darwin, scientific exploration became a noble, Romantic and selfless enterprise which could yield enormous benefits to individual explorers in terms of prestige, funding but also of insight and knowledge (Bowen,

1981; López-Ocón Cabrera, 1999; Millán-Zaibert, 2004; Pratt, 1992; Sachs, 2003). At least Lumholtz, Apenes, and Heyerdahl fit into the nineteenth century ideal in that they aspired to cross-disciplinary or universal knowledge. They were skeptic of the increasing professionalization of academic disciplines, and they dreaded modernity and found refuge in the study of what was then called ‘primitive man’. In their writings, the theme of the noble savage turns up time and time again as a counterpoint to the brutality and ugliness of modern, urban and industrialized life.

Nineteenth century exploration often served the less noble interest of states and empires. Funding for scientific expeditions was frequently obtained from governments with political or territorial aims (Thomas, 2015). In Norway, especially after the breakup of the union with Sweden in 1905, the government sponsored expeditions to the Arctic and Antarctic, and explorers such as Roald Amundsen and Fridtjof Nansen obtained status as national heroes in Norway. However, the recently independent nation had little economic and political interest in Latin America, and to secure state funding in Norway for the kind of work that Lumholtz, Apenes, and Heyerdahl planned was almost impossible. For these three, academic perseverance implied emigration. To continue their academic work, they had to leave Norway.

Rather than explaining the relative weakness or lack of institutional emphasis on the study of Latin America in Norway, this article will attempt to present some general tendencies which Lumholtz, Mohr, Apenes, and Heyerdahl shared. This presentation thus serves different purposes. It highlights the difficulties of doing serious scholarly work outside of academia and indirectly underscores the importance of institutionalized commitment to regional studies. However, it also exemplifies the interest that especially indigenous prehistory and exploration of ‘exotic’ areas of the world elicited among the general public in Norway, and thus the possibilities — albeit limited — that existed to pursue an academic career which for three of them implied emigrating more or less permanently.

### **CARL LUMHOLTZ (1851-1922)**

Carl Lumholtz became a professional explorer who gained both scholarly prestige and fame during his lifetime, after his expeditions in Australia, Mexico and Borneo. In recent years, his work has been rediscovered and there is a renewed interest particularly in his pioneering ethnographic photography. When the Winter Olympics were held in Lillehammer in 1994, there was an attempt to make his work known again. And in recent years, there has been both a temporary exhibition

of his photographs at the University of Oslo's Museum of Cultural History and a splendid book with high-quality reproductions of his photographs was published last year in the United States, and several articles, which address his work as a pioneer in visual anthropology, have appeared recently (Bowden, 2007; Broyles, 2014; Eek, 2007; Ezcurra, 2007; Klausen and Sørum, 1993; Macías Guzmán, 2011; Sario Rodríguez, 2008). During his lifetime, Lumholtz was a famous person in Norway, and his expeditions received major coverage in the newspapers at the time and even a children's book was written where he was one of the protagonists (Haraldsen, 1905).

However, for a long time his was all but forgotten, at least in Norway, and still today, he remains unknown to most Norwegians despite being a celebrity and one of our most famous explorers at the turn of the twentieth century. One of the reasons why his work was forgotten for so many years was because his ties with academic communities in Norway were negligible after he had become an established scholar.

The year before he died, Lumholtz wrote an autobiographical essay which was published in *Natural History*, and which offers his own take on his academic career (Lumholtz, 1921). His father, a military captain with some economic means, wanted the young Carl to become a priest. At the Royal Fredriks University, Carl Lumholtz studied theology, but with an increasing sense of despair. Although he finally graduated with a degree in theology, he was never ordained; and throughout his time at the university, he followed lectures in botany and zoology. While studying, he pondered the idea of combining his love for nature and being a vicar in a remote parish, perhaps following the model of priest and zoologist Michael Sars. Lumholtz befriended Robert Collett, at the time curator of the University's Museum of Natural History, and later professor of zoology and director of the same museum.

It was Collett who, in 1880, recruited Lumholtz for an expedition to Queensland; an expedition which lasted four years and which resulted in the collection of a large number of new species for the museum. The Australian expedition also pushed Lumholtz in the direction of ethnography, as he became interested in the lives of the aborigines. He published *Blandt mennæske-edere* in Copenhagen in 1888, a popularized account of his experiences during the expedition, which was quickly translated and published as *Among Cannibals; an account of four years' travels in Australia and of camp life with the aborigines of Queensland* in 1889, and a French version was published the same year.

The book must have been quite a success; the title itself surely whetted the appetite of readers hungry for detailed accounts of the

‘primitive man’, and Lumholtz’s first book was not particularly sensitive or sympathetic towards the aborigines of Australia. He also stated that any preconceived ideas anyone would have about noble savages were quickly dispelled in contact with native Australians.

In 1890, Lumholtz was touring the US giving lectures about his experiences in Australia. According to Lumholtz himself, he already in 1887 developed an interest in the cliff dwellers of the American Southwest, and while in the US, he secured funding for a large expedition to northern Mexico to study cave dwellers. An initial hypothesis for his work was that some of the Indigenous groups of the northern Sierra Madre could be descendants of the mythical Anasazi (Klausen and Sørum, 1993).

During the 1890s and early 1900s, Lumholtz conducted five expeditions in Mexico. While the Anasazi connection may have been important at the outset, Lumholtz made no further attempt to argue that the contemporary Indigenous groups of northern Mexico were descendants of the cliff dwellers north of the Rio Grande. Instead, he collected samples of hairs and osseous remains and archaeological objects for American museums, wrote vocabularies of the Tarahumara, Tepehuan, and Tubar languages, conducted anthropological measurements, took hundreds of photographs, recorded traditional melodies, learnt to sing, promoted the use of *peyote* instead of alcohol, and spent large amount of time with the Coras and the Huichols. He was especially interested in their customs, religion, myths and traditions. In Mexico, he developed a more sympathetic view of the native communities:

[...] Indians are very distrustful of the white man, and no wonder, since he has left them little enough and they are therefore forced to guard that little the more vigilantly. I managed, however, to make my entry into their midst and gradually to gain their confidence and friendship, mainly through my ability to sing their native songs and by always treating them justly’ (Lumholtz, 1921).

Gradually he became more interested in the ethnographical present than in the archaeological past. Yet, he still thought that the importance of the work he was doing was partly because they were ‘unknown’ and partly because they had not changed:

‘Especially fruitful in results was my stay with the Huichol Indians. These Indians had been known mainly to a small number of Mexican half-breed traders and I was the first white man to visit them. The country was difficult to access and Mezquitic, the little town from which the tribe is reached, is distant three or four days journey on



mule back. The isolation of these Indians on a tall spur of the Sierra Madre had been their salvation and I found them living practically in the same state of culture as when Cortez put foot on American soil' (Lumholtz, 1921).

Through these expeditions in northern Mexico, Lumholtz acquired a reputation as a fearless explorer, a solid leader of expeditions and a gifted lecturer. He had been able to gather quite large expeditions for his first visits to Mexico, although he soon realized that he was better off alone to earn the trust of the groups he visited. He published some articles on his findings as well as two popular accounts of his Mexican expeditions.

His academic connections with the American and British anthropologists became even stronger as a result of his work in Mexico. However, Lumholtz attempted to maintain bonds with the university in Oslo. Some collections of photographs and artefacts from Mexico were sent to the University's Museum of Cultural History, and when he planned a new expedition to New Guinea between 1914 and 1921, he sought support from Norwegian institutions and private individuals. He also applied for a professorship in Ethnography and director of the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo in 1917, but the Faculty considered his age — he was 66 — to be an obstacle, and a younger candidate was selected (Klausen and Sørum, 1993).

It is tempting to speculate on alternative developments for (Latin) Americanists in Norway, if Lumholtz should have been selected for the position. In Sweden, as we shall see, the situation was quite different. Some of the assistants hired by Lumholtz were Swedish, including the young botanist Carl Vilhelm Hartman who later conducted anthropological expeditions on his own in Central America. He was appointed first curator and then director of the ethnographical section of the Museum of Natural History in Stockholm, a position that he held from 1908 to 1923, greatly enhancing the Museum's collection of Americana. Hartman, along with his academic mentor Hjalmar Stolpe and the Nordenskiöld brothers, succeeded in establishing a younger generation of Americanists in Sweden including Sven Lovén, Karl Gustav Izikowitz, Gösta Montell, Gustaf Bolinder, Alfred Metraux, Stig Rydén, Henry Wassén, and Sigvald Linné who combined extensive fieldwork with archival training and museum work (Brunius, 2003). Thus, from the early 1900s, there existed an institutionalized commitment in Sweden for the study of Latin American ethnography and history, which was completely lacking in Norway. This in turn had important effects on the reception of the work of Mohr, and especially of Apenes and Heyerdahl.

Nevertheless, Lumholtz displayed no ill feelings towards his fatherland. When he attempted to get Norwegian funding for his latest expeditions and failed, he attributed that to the economic crisis following World War I, which had bankrupted many of the ship-owning families of the country. 'It must be said that my countrymen did all that they could to further my purpose in which they are intensely interested, but *'Ultra posse nemo obligatur'*', was his laconic comment in his autobiographical essay. He kept his Norwegian citizenship until his death, and his texts reveal genuine satisfaction with what he achieved as an explorer.

### **ANTON MOHR (1890-1968)**

Anton Mohr differed from Lumholtz in many ways. Son of Conrad Mohr, he was born into one of the wealthiest and politically most influential families in Bergen. Like Lumholtz, he enjoyed travelling. He travelled around the world with his parents in 1913, and he continued to travel extensively including visits to Argentina, Venezuela, Panama and Guatemala in the 1930s.

It would not be fair to call Mohr a Latin Americanist. Although he did publish the first textbook in Norwegian on Latin American (or South American, rather) history and geography, and several shorter articles on the economic situation of individual Latin American countries, his serious academic work was mostly on European and Middle Eastern history (Mohr, 1940; Mohr, 1948). And he wrote a lot, especially after having completed his degree in history and geography at the Royal Fredriks University in Oslo in 1915, and defended his doctorate in history at the same institution in 1923, with a thesis on the Egyptian conflict between 1882 and 1898. He later published more than 30 books, mostly on economic history, but he also published a trilogy of children's' books on the adventures of Arne and Berit in Africa, Asia and America. In addition to writing books, he served as a foreign correspondent for *Aftenposten*, one of the major newspapers in Norway. Supposedly, he published more than 1,300 pieces for *Aftenposten*; the last one was published the day he died (Brunstad, n.d.).

The main reason for including Mohr in this presentation is that he had perhaps the best opportunity to institutionalize the study of Latin America in Norway before 1960.

In Norway, Bergen has been considered for a long time the city of commerce and trade reaching back to Hanseatic League of the Middle Ages. As the principal port on the western coast, the city boasted a long tradition of maritime trade in the Atlantic and beyond. When the idea was launched in Norway to establish a School of Commerce and Economics in the early 1900s, leading Bergen families soon took

the initiative. In 1916 they formed *Foreningen til opprettelse av Norges handelshøiskole i Bergen* (The Association for the Establishment of the Norwegian School of Commerce in Bergen), which soon was able to raise substantial amounts of money and a property for the future school. Because of the Great War and the following economic crisis, the plans were put on hold for several years. The idea of a school of this sort in Bergen gained a new impetus in the late 1920s and a new setback because of the depression. But in 1933, the association appointed Mohr as director of the committee with a contract with a promise of an academic position at the school once it was established (Hansen, n.d.).

This contract complicated matters, as the Ministry of Education required all positions to be appointed following normal academic procedures. When the new positions were announced in 1935, Mohr was travelling in Asia, and the association applied on his behalf. The problem was that there were other more qualified candidates. Although Mohr was a well-known geographer, — and clearly knowledgeable in his fields — he never published any academic articles. The Solomonic solution was to appoint two lecturers in geography; one was offered to Mohr and subsequently changed to a position in economic and colonial history (Hansen, n.d.). Mohr taught at the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH) from 1936 to 1960, first as lecturer and since 1946 as professor.

To my knowledge, Mohr never wrote any scientific articles or monographs about Latin America. However, he did publish short journalistic articles on Latin America in a book called *Jorden rundt på tyve år* [*Around the World in Twenty Years*], and — what is the most remarkable — a textbook on South American history and geography (Mohr, 1948). A large portion of the book concerns the history of the Inca Empire and its conquest by Pizarro, a theme Mohr evidently found very interesting. His treatment of the colonial period was brief, and although it was based on the work of some of the most acknowledged Latin Americanist scholars of his time, neither was it original research nor was it presented as such. It reproduced rather uncritically contemporary notions in northern protestant Europe on the Spanish and Portuguese colonists' appetite for silver and gold, their disdain for manual labour, and their cruel treatment of Indigenous groups. Nevertheless, Mohr was an experienced writer, and the prose is efficient and at times elegant. Mohr's chapter on the wars of independence was just as long as the one on the colonial period and actually not a bad read, at least not compared to other more recent attempts to write textbooks on Latin American history in Scandinavia. The second half of the book is devoted to what Mohr called 'South America today and

brief geographic, political and economic treatments of each republic'. In these chapters, Mohr's arrogance and condescendence is present in nearly every sentence. Although a first-time visitor to South America may easily be impressed by the tall buildings, the wide avenues and impressive monuments, these are to Mohr just shallow attempts to cover the real poverty of its inhabitants. South American politicians are presented as unscrupulous populists or selfish demagogues, and the population too stupid to elect proper leaders. Mohr ascribed many of the problems of the South American republics to racial inferiority of large parts of the population, and as a textbook on contemporary societies, it must have confirmed many of the prejudices Norwegians had at the time.

Fortunately, the book was probably not used much at Norwegian universities. Although Mohr himself was a lecturer and professor first in geography and then in economic history at the Norwegians School of Economics he never taught a course specifically devoted to Latin American history. Former colleagues and students said that he was a very entertaining lecturer, and that he preferred lecturing to supervision and tutoring students in small groups or individually. He reportedly almost never had graduate students work directly with him, and although he continued to travel a lot, his journeys abroad seems to have served mainly the purpose of writing non-academic pieces for the Norwegian press and books for the general public on the Napoleonic Wars and current economic affairs (Brunstad, n.d.).

To some extent it is depressing that Mohr was the only one of the four 'Latin Americanists' discussed here who actually held a permanent position at a Norwegian institution. Readers of his books and articles on Latin America will get a sense that he was rather unsympathetic to the whole region and its inhabitants. Compared to Lumholtz, Apenes, and Heyerdahl, he seems to have lacked a genuine and profound interest both in Latin America and in research. Although he occupied a professional position, which would have made it possible to form groups of students devoted to the study of Latin America, it was not a goal he chose to pursue.

### **OLA APENES (1898-1943)**

Ola Apenes must have had a very different personality. Like the other three, he was born into a traditional bourgeois family of some economic means, although the Apenes in Fredrikstad had experienced an economic setback and they were not as well connected and politically influential as the Mohrs in Bergen. He studied engineering in Germany and moved to Mexico in 1929 to take up a position in Ericsson, the Swedish telephone company, after having worked for a

couple years in New York. He lived and worked in Mexico until the outbreak of the World War II, and during those eleven years, he was extremely productive.

The work of Apenes has recently attracted some attention. The documentary by Flimmer Film on Apenes was shown on Norwegian national broadcast in 2013, a Master Thesis on Apenes' correspondence was written in 2012 in addition to an article by Ricardo Pérez Montfort (Kreken and Chavarria, 2013; Langås, 2012; Pérez Montfort, 2016). The story of Apenes is interesting for a number of reasons, but for the purposes of this article, the focus will be on the 'missing link' to Norwegian institutions both during and after Apenes archaeological and anthropological work in Mexico.

We do not know precisely why he chose to migrate to Mexico, or if there were other motives beside his job offer at the Swedish telephone company. Yet, in fact, he was part of a small stream of intellectuals of different stripes that ended up in post-revolutionary Mexico, and who participated in the development of Indigenista discourse (Neyens, 2015; Pérez Montfort, 2016). In addition to Apenes, who quickly developed a remarkable expertise on Maya and Aztec calendar systems, historical maps of the Central Mexican valley, and the ecological history of the Texcoco lake, Norwegians Gunnar Strømsvik and Erling Nerby also participated in archaeological excavations, composer Halfdan Jebe in Yucatan was deeply engaged in reviving Mayan music with a socialist or radical focus, the Nazi ideologue Per Imerslund developed a profound sympathy for indigenous revindication, and the conservative author Erling Winsnæs wrote several shorter essays on Mexico and at least one book on general political theory while he lived there.

Like Mohr, Ola Apenes also wrote shorter pieces for Norwegian newspapers, particularly before arriving in Mexico and during his first years there. He interviewed Trotsky and wrote an article on his assassination. He also wrote a large number of letters to his mother in Fredrikstad, most of which have been donated to the National Library in Oslo by the Apenes family. He was also a good photographer and filmmaker, and perhaps his most enduring legacy will be his footage from several Mexican villages in the 1930s.

When Ola Apenes started publishing his work on Mexican ethnography and archaeology in the mid-30s, he did not seek out the support of fellow Norwegians either in Mexico or at home. He understandably chose to study Mayan and Nahuatl at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) under the guidance of Professor Alfonso Caso (Pérez Montfort, 2016). And his first articles were published in Stockholm in the first issues of *Ethnos*, whose

general editor was Sigvald Linné, director of the Ethnographic Museum and who had led an expedition to Mexico in 1934 and 1935 (Brunius, 2003).

It seems that Linné had been acquainted with Apenes during the expedition, along with the Danish sisters Bodil Christensen and Helga Larsen, who both also contributed with articles to the first issues of *Ethnos*. Christensen (who continued to do important work on Mexican anthropology for several years), Larsen (who had been the secretary of Professor Sylvanus Morley — director of the excavations of Chichen Itzá), and Apenes were, in fact, all founding members of the Sociedad Mexicana de Antropología. This institution, under the leadership of Alfonso Caso, would be instrumental in forming a generation of professional Mexican archaeologists and anthropologists (Pérez Montfort, 2016). From early on in Mexico, Apenes would spend almost all his spare time to excursions and eventually expeditions around Mexico. Right from the start of his academic career, he was able to publish pieces in Mexican, Swedish, and US journals. Taking advantage of his mathematical and engineering skills, he first mostly concentrated on technical aspects of the study of Mesoamerican calendar systems. At first, he would accompany the Danish sisters, while he later seems to have preferred the company of the American author and folklorist Frances Gillmor. Apenes contributed with illustrations to her first books. He also published articles in Mexico and the United States, and his work on Mexican maps was published posthumously by the UNAM.

According to the documentary by Flimmer Film, Apenes lost patience with academic work following the outbreak of the World War II, partly because he worried about the situation of his family in Norway occupied by Nazi Germany in April 1940, and partly because Frances Gillmor was no longer able to travel to Mexico. He volunteered for the allied forces and moved to Little Norway in Canada in 1943. There, he tragically died following an unsuccessful appendectomy.

During a very short academic career, Apenes was extremely productive. His scholarly writings are detailed, serious, original, and based on extensive reading in addition to archaeological fieldwork, and it continues to be of interest today. Yet in Norway at the time, there was no audience for his work. When substantial amounts of his photographs were returned to the family after the war, his mother attempted to donate them to the University of Oslo. As the University was unwilling to receive them, the collection ended up in the Ethnographic Museum in Stockholm.

As in the case of Lumholtz and Mohr, Apenes was a missed opportunity. Since no institutions existed in Norway with a developed

interest and expertise in Latin American ethnography, archaeology, and history, Apenes work was not appreciated and largely ignored.

### **THOR HEYERDAHL (1914-2002)**

Of the four scholars discussed here, Thor Heyerdahl is by far the most famous. His work has been widely publicized both by himself and by others, in movies, documentaries, newspaper articles, and interviews on radio and television. It is not possible to argue that his work has been ignored, neglected or forgotten. Yet, his largely failed attempt of being recognized as a serious scholar is interesting when seen in the context of Lumholtz, Mohr, and Apenes.

Like them, he came from an upper class family of substantial economic means. His father was the owner of a brewery in Larvik, and financed both Thor's university studies and his first expeditions (Kvam, 2005).

As a student of botany and zoology at the Royal Fredriks University in Oslo, he studied a lot, but he never sat for exams. He was also an atypical scholar in the sense that he had little patience for arguments that ran counter to his main thesis, which was the foundation for most of his expeditions and published work before the 1960s: large portions of Polynesia originally had been settled by Native Americans from South America. In order to substantiate this controversial thesis, he was willing to risk nearly anything, including his life, his marriage(s) and his fortune. He was both a troubled and troublesome person who stirred quite a bit of controversy wherever he set foot. Although few professional scholars in the disciplines of archaeology, ethnography, and history have accepted his theses and conclusions, his work undoubtedly contributed to a much wider public interest in American, Latin American and Oceanian prehistory than what would have been possible without his best-selling books and documentary films.

To call him a Latin Americanist is stretching the term even more than in the case of Lumholtz, Apenes, and Mohr. Although he was well-read in the literature on South American prehistory and this was important for his projects until the 1960s, which all involved arguing for the diffusion of South and North American cultures by migration to the islands of Polynesia and the Eastern parts of the Pacific Ocean, he did not conduct long-term fieldwork on the South American continent before 1960. Still, his theories on cultural diffusion involving South America are so far reaching, that it makes sense to include him among Norwegian scholars who worked on Latin American topics.

His first expedition, conducted with his first wife Liv, was to Fatuhiva in 1936. The purpose of the expedition was somewhat ambiguous. On one level, it was Heyerdahl's fieldwork for a future thesis



on botany at the university supervised by Professor Kristine Bonnevie (Klausen, 2003; Kvam, 2005). It was also a sort of extended honeymoon for the newlywed couple. More secretly, it was an attempt to break away from modern life and find terrestrial paradise on a Pacific island. On these three levels, the expedition was largely a failure. However, during his stay on the island, Heyerdahl was increasingly intrigued by the stories they were told about the original settlement of the island, about myths involving men arriving from the east.

When the couple returned to Norway, Heyerdahl was able to write a book about their stay on the island and held a series of lectures on his experiences. This, in turn, paved the way for plans of a new expedition. The plans were interrupted by war. Nevertheless, when the Heyerdahls spent time in Canada and the US, Thor was almost constantly occupied in finding information, which could substantiate his claims of prehistoric migration from the American continent to Polynesia (Kvam, 2005).

The next major expedition, which catapulted Heyerdahl into international fame, was the Kon-Tiki expedition, from Callao to Rarua, in 1947. Subsequent expeditions led by Heyerdahl to Galápagos (1952) and the Easter Island (1955-56), served essentially the same purpose for Heyerdahl, although not necessarily for the other members of the expedition: to gather evidence to corroborate his thesis of pre-Columbian migration from South America to the Pacific islands (Kvam, 2005).

One of Heyerdahl's exceptional qualities was his ability to create publicity about his expeditions and underlying theories. Even though it is true that many established scholars were skeptical to his work, it is also quite clear that Heyerdahl liked to portray himself as a lone prophet who challenged the conservative dogmas of old-fashioned university professors. Heyerdahl's biographer, Ragnar Kvam Jr., provides a detailed account of the academic reception of each of Heyerdahl's monographs, scientific articles and conference papers. One impression is that most scholars who commented on his work did so rather seriously, even when they disagreed profoundly both with his theories and his methods. In addition, some scholars were impressed by his work, and although they did not necessarily agree with all his conclusions, they found it valuable.

Heyerdahl tended to view any criticism as evidence of the critic's lack of expertise or prejudice, while any positive remark was taken as proof that he had been correct all along. This attitude on part of Heyerdahl was no doubt an important aspect of his public popularity. Here was a man without a university degree who could demonstrate that the scholars were all wrong. Heyerdahl thus epitomizes

the nineteenth century, Romantic explorer. He is Humboldt reborn; a man who patiently collects evidence from the natural world and that through rational logic destroys conventional dogma.

As one of his most severe critics have pointed out recently, part of Heyerdahl's problem was that both his theories and methods were regarded as outdated by many of the most influential ethnographers and anthropologists in the 1940s and 1950s (Klausen, 2003). Diffusionism was not mainstream anthropology anymore (Nielsen, 2003). And gone was the time when individual explorers could be botanists, zoologists, oceanographers, linguists, and ethnographer at once. Reading Heyerdahl's work and those of his critics today, one gets a sense of a fundamental epistemological confusion between them.

We are thus tempted to speculate on counterfactuals: What would have happened to Heyerdahl's academic career if he had had the opportunity to study with trained ethnographers with expertise on American, Latin American or Oceanian cultures before his first expeditions? If Heyerdahl in his younger days at university had been exposed to the training of Lumholtz, Apenes or, even better, a group of scholars like the ones who worked in Stockholm with Sigvald Linné — would it have made a difference? Maybe Heyerdahl, could have learned to use his organization skills, energy, perseverance, and his ability of securing funding and publicity more effectively on the pursuit of knowledge without distancing himself from the academic community? Would he have been able to accept criticism more constructively, perhaps? What if he had had the chance to lecture and supervise students, and thus, to contribute to the forming of future generations of (Latin) Americanists in Norway? We will never know, of course.

The history of the first Norwegian scholars who worked on Latin America is somewhat depressing. For our present academic community in Norway, it reads like a story of missed opportunities. In the future, hopefully, we will be better at recognizing academic potential and stimulate the creation of solid scholarly communities.

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Vegard Bye

## **STUDIES OF THE LATIN AMERICAN LEFT FROM A NORWEGIAN PERSPECTIVE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

As discussed in the introduction, there are many different kinds of 'Latin America researchers' in Norway. Some have explicit political motives, others have more of a 'scientific' point of departure, while yet others are motivated by improving the knowledge foundation for Norwegian development policy. When we talk about research on leftist movements and governments, it is difficult to ignore the political linkages. However, I will argue in this chapter that Norwegian policy towards the leftist governments in Latin America has been more influenced by research and researchers, than vice-versa.

I have, on several occasions, been asked by colleagues in Latin America: how come that Norway, such a loyal US and NATO ally, has become so frequently engaged in leftist politics and academic activities in Latin America? This article is an attempt to provide a response to this question. It shows that reality is not so simple and straightforward as one may imagine when referring to Norway's support to the Sandinista revolution in the 1980s, cooperation with Brazil's Lula or Bolivia's Evo Morales in the 2000s or even a seemingly cosy relationship with Cuba at present. There have been many twists and turns of events during the 55 years since the Cuban revolution that contribute to explain this situation.

The issue I have been asked to discuss in this article at times makes it difficult to distinguish between politics and academia in Norwegian-Latin American relations. In reality, the two are closely associated.

Before proceeding, I should try to determine what is meant by 'the Latin American Left'. Since we look at a phenomenon initiated by the Cuban revolution, we will focus on political phenomena that can broadly be defined as *socialist* (to the left of social democracy) and see themselves as *anti-imperialists* (which in Latin America almost invariably means working against US hegemony). These two trends overlap very often with concepts like *nationalism* and *populism*, which are in themselves not sufficient to be considered as 'leftist' in this article. We shall concentrate on leftist *governments*, (revolutionary Cuba, the Allende Government in Chile, Sandinista Nicaragua, and the new left trend in the 2000s: Brazil and Uruguay and the ALBA countries — Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Cuba — and the FMLN Government in El Salvador since 2009 would also qualify). Emphasis will be on *governments* rather than *movements* or *intergovernmental alliances* (like ALBA).

The article will start with the first of many paradoxes in these relations: Norwegian military exports to Batista approved by a Labour Government right before he was ousted, ending up in the hands of Castro. It will establish some basic criteria to understand the political situation in Norway — and in the social democratic movement in particular — during the Cold War. It goes on to discuss the wake-up call from Chile in 1973, on how the Sandinista revolution moved the Norwegian solidarity movement from a marginal to a mainstream political role, also preparing the stage for Norway's engagement with the leftist wave in South America during the 2000s, including a rather close association with Cuba surviving even after Norway voted a right-of-centre government into power in 2013.

More than anything, the article shows how a series of political paradoxes have dominated this history, perhaps leading to a perception of Norway as more pro-leftist in Latin America than the political reality in Norway should indicate.

### THE CUBAN REVOLUTION IN NORWEGIAN POLITICS

Although as shown in the introduction Fidel Castro's revolutionary movement in Cuba's Sierra Maestra had a long-term impact on Norwegian academia, it was never a big issue in Norwegian media, nor in the academia, let alone in Norwegian political debate. The overarching international political issue in Norway at the time was Norway's position in the Cold War — with its border up north with

the USSR — and the nuclear bomb issue. The Labour Party, with its Communist roots from the 1920s, had been safely in power with a reformist but markedly state capitalist programme since 1935, interrupted by the five-year Nazi occupation (1940-45). The 1949 decision to join NATO put the Labour Party squarely in the US camp of the Cold War although with serious fissures in the party, eventually leading to a split and the establishment of the Socialist People's Party in 1963. But Cuba and Latin America was very far away from mainstream Norwegian politics and academia in those days.

By a strange coincidence, however, this changed with the ultimate battle between Batista and Castro towards the end of 1958, leading to the so-called 'Cuba issue', a very serious scandal for the Labour Government at the time, becoming a much-debated case also among academics but mostly as a domestic political issue.<sup>1</sup> Batista was desperately looking for new weapons, but in the end even his previous ally the US and most other Western nations embarked on a weapon's embargo, in order to stay out of the final battle, perhaps seeing the inevitable outcome and a wish to keep the Castro movement away from Communists domestically, and to cool down Soviet and Chinese ambitions to meddle in the US backyard. In the end, Batista managed to reach a deal with Belgium for the acquisition of FAL automatic weapons, but he also needed ammunition. Norway did produce appropriate ammunition for these guns. Jens Chr. Hauge was the godfather of Norway's not-so-impressive weapon industry, a former resistance leader during the war, later holding several key minister positions and ultimately moving into a quite shadowy role as one of Prime Minister Gerhardsen's closest advisors with close connections to the US intelligence and military community. Nobody knew better than Mr. Hauge that Norway had an absolute ban on the export of weapons to countries in conflict. But he didn't care. Whether his eagerness to export the ammunition for automatic rifles and machine guns, along with hand grenades, was motivated — as he claimed — by a not very convincing argument to save employment at the Raufoss Ammunition Factory, or whether this simply was a service to his close friends in the Eisenhower administration who were pissed off with what they saw as the erroneous decision to cut off arms delivery to a man whom they perceived as a bulwark against Communism, will forever remain an open question. But Mr. Hauge managed to outmanoeuvre foreign

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1 A full account of 'the Cuba Issue', based on thorough research and interviews with a number of primary sources, is given much later in my book (Bye and Hoel, 1998: 227-24). A *hovedfag* Thesis in History was also produced on the issue (Skåttun, 1971).



office resistance, and took advantage of a state visit to India by the Prime and the Foreign Ministers to get a Cabinet decision in favour of the weapon export and send off the shipload across the Caribbean the day before Christmas Eve in 1958. The irony of the matter was that the ship only reached Havana after Batista had fled and Castro was safely in power. What was intended as a helping hand to Batista ended up in the hands of the new revolutionary government, which ideologically must actually have been much closer to the Norwegian government party than the man for whom these weapons were intended. When the case became known to Norwegian media, it created a political storm in Parliament, with — again ironically — the centre-right opposition attacking the Labour Government for breaking Norwegian weapon-export regulations. The PM said he was sorry, but since the Labour government commanded an absolute majority in Parliament, the issue did not have immediate political consequences. However, it may have contributed to give the opposition the necessary self-confidence to relegate the Labour Party from its total hegemony in the country.

Such was the paradoxical distance between the Norwegian and Latin American political reality around 1960.

#### **LEFT AND RIGHT IN NORWAY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

The Norwegian Labour Party belonged to the Communist International up until 1923, when it split into a communist revolutionary faction — what became the Communist Party — and a reformist social democratic majority faction. But the leaders of the later, which gained a hegemonic position in Norwegian politics for thirty years since they were elected into power in 1935, had their political roots in the pro-communist movements, as sympathizers with and admirers of the Great Soviet Revolution. Their most important international solidarity position before the Second World War was their unconditional support to the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War, where a significant number of Norwegians joined the ranks against Franco. A rich literature, both fiction, non-fiction, and journalistic, exists on the Spanish Civil War in Norway (Sæther and Moen, 2011). This issue may in many ways be seen as a prelude to later Norwegian interest in Latin America, simply because some intellectuals from the ‘Spanish Civil War’ generation were still around when the new interest in Latin America started, conveying a message of cultural-political similarities. One of the Norwegian NGOs most active in Latin America, Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA) was actually established in solidarity with the anti-fascist struggle in Spain.

Anti-fascism was a trademark of the labour movement, logically leading it to take a lead position in the resistance movement against

the German occupants from 1940-45. But during the war, Conservatives and Socialists stood together under the symbolic leadership of the King, in the exile government set up in London as well as in the resistance movement at home, sharing their contempt for fascist ideas. One aspect of this situation was that a significant number of Norwegian Nazis, fleeing post-war punishment, ended up in Peron's Argentina and other South American countries. Anti-US sentiments at the time were certainly more common on the ultra-right than among Socialists in Norway, as indeed it was in Spain and perhaps even in Cuba and elsewhere in Latin America.

What triggered anti-US sentiments on the Norwegian left, far into the Labour Party, was the controversial decision to join NATO — when a minority favoured a Nordic defence alliance; the movement against nuclear weapons and their pre-positioning in Norway (which never was permitted); and later the Vietnam War and the NATO alliance with *fascistoide* governments in Greece and Portugal. What was called 'the third way', keeping a distance to both superpowers, became a rallying cry around the time of the highly disputed export of arms to Batista. This movement gradually absorbed protest movements of different brands, against the war in Algeria, in support of anti-colonial struggles elsewhere in Africa, and gradually also encompassing support for Cuba in the conflict with US imperialism and leftist movements — including guerrillas — elsewhere in Latin America. Che Guevara became a familiar rallying figure, both before and after the 1968 movement.

In this situation, the Norwegian Labour Party and Government took up a very interesting position. While the pragmatic domestic political agenda left little space for romanticism, and the NATO alliance tied foreign policy firmly to the US, the Party needed something to fend off its leftist section. The case they found was to initiate foreign aid, first to India and later to a host of African countries. This was a marginal issue for Norwegian mainstream politics, but it gave the left wing of the party something to bother about, so they easier could accept to swallow plenty of political camels (Pharo, 1986). In this way, the left wing — often dominated by the Labour Youth League in alliance with the Socialist People's Party (SF, established in 1963) and other leftist groups — got a relatively free ride to take up anti-imperialism as their favourite political agenda.<sup>2</sup> The tactical decision to launch foreign aid in the early 1950s, and the reasoning

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2 The first SF leader, Finn Gustavsen, had Cuba and Castro as perhaps his favourite political role model, and published the first book on the Cuban revolution in Norwegian (Gustavsen, 1966).

behind it, may explain a lot of what happened subsequently to Norway's relations with Latin America.

### **CHILE BETWEEN ALLENDE AND PINOCHET: THE WAKE-UP CALL FOR A NEW GENERATION**

The election of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1970, the first explicit Marxist elected as President in Latin America, created general sympathy in Norway as elsewhere in Europe. As confrontation mounted inside Chile, with the US increasingly critical to the Allende Government's nationalizations, close links to Cuba and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, again put Norwegian foreign policy in an awkward position.

The Norwegian governments at the time — shifting several times between centre-right and Labour — did not take any explicit position of support to the increasingly threatened Allende Government. This was very different from e.g. Olof Palme's Government in Sweden. Again, like in the case of the Vietnam War, a significant difference emerged between the normally closely linked social democratic parties of the Scandinavian neighbours: Sweden was not part of NATO and could — under its vocal Prime Minister Olof Palme — take a clear position against the US, whereas Norway was bound by its US loyalty. Olof Palme had visited Chile as Minister of Education already in the run-up to Allende's election (in 1969), and established good contacts to the Allende camp. Allende's election was met with quick solidarity reactions from the Palme Government (Prime Minister from October 1969), making Chile an official partner country for development cooperation (along with Cuba the only such partner in Latin America), and even promoting Swedish arms exports to the country. A large contingent of Swedish aid personnel and volunteers were working in Chile during the Allende Government, putting a very strong stamp on Sweden's relations to Latin America — not least in social sciences — in the aftermath (see Camacho Padilla, 2007).

Norway, a country with a tradition for broad political consensus about its pro-NATO and pro-US foreign policy, was unusually politically divided over the election of President Allende and the policies he established. Whereas Norway's main newspaper *Aftenposten*, at the time closely linked to the Conservative Party, expressed strong fears for the 'Communist-leaning' government, the main newspaper belonging to the Labour Party, *Arbeiderbladet*, took a quite opposite and enthusiastic support position. The Norwegian ambassador to Santiago in his political reports gave a very negative picture of the Allende's Government, clearly reflecting the views of the right-wing opposition. The ambassador's view coloured Norway's foreign policy

vis-à-vis this distant country with which there were very limited links during Allende's Government. In strong contrast to Sweden, Norway only took a couple of minor cooperation initiatives with Allende's Chile, that never came off the ground before the 1973 Pinochet coup. Norwegian Governments shifted back and forth between centre-right and Labour during the early 1970s due to the controversial referendum over membership in the EEC. When Allende was elected in September 1970, Norway had a right leaning Conservative foreign minister (Svenn Stray). After two governmental shifts, the Labour Party returned to Government in October 1973. In one of his first statements to Parliament the Labor Government's new foreign minister Knut Frydenlund admitted a political sin for not having engaged with the Allende's Government: 'One lesson to draw from events in Chile, is that our solidarity with democratic and progressive forces should not come too late'.<sup>3</sup>

Labour's slow movement into a position of defending Allende may also have been influenced by a relatively small but vocal group of Norwegian intellectuals who had visited Chile during the Allende period, one of them also acting as *Arbeiderbladet's* stringer correspondent in Chile. Their sympathetic anthology on Allende's socialist strategies, published shortly before the coup, became an important source of inspiration for solidarity workers and academics (Hareide, 1973).

With the 1973 Pinochet and US-supported coup, things started to change. The behaviour of the Norwegian Embassy in Chile contributed in a paradoxical way to this.

Whereas the Swedish Ambassador Edelstamm, acting on direct personal instruction from his friend Prime Minister Palme, opened the gates of the Embassy thus allowing thousands of Allende sympathisers to seek asylum, the recently arrived new Norwegian Ambassador Fleischer seems to have shared the right-wing views of his predecessor and did exactly the opposite of his Swedish colleague: he *closed* the gates. But this provoked an interesting decision when Mr. Frydenlund took over as foreign minister a month after the coup: He rushed off another diplomat, Mr. Frode Nilsen, with a clear mandate to allow those persecuted by the military junta into the Embassy, thus completely side-lining Fleischer. Mr. Nilsen made great efforts to get the most life-threatened prisoners out of Pinochet's jails, opened the Embassy to them, and brought many to Norway as

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3 Quoted in Gilje Buggeland (2010) a Master Thesis in History on the issue of Norway's relations to the 1973 coup d'état in Chile, with emphasis on the refugee policy in the aftermath of the coup. The thesis provides a good discussion of this foreign policy debate.

political refugees. He has ever since been considered a hero among Chileans in Norway (Nilsen, 1993).

Although a much smaller number than in Sweden, the arrival of several hundred Chilean refugees to Norway was the first real boost to the Latin America solidarity movement in Norway. These were highly politicized refugees, generally finding their natural allies on the left of the Norwegian political fauna, fostering a strengthened solidarity and anti-imperialist movement, and also finding allies in academic circles. For many young Norwegians, politically born as part of the 1968 and student movement, Chile along with anti-dictatorship movements in other Latin American countries became a wake-up call. The solidarity movement was organized specifically focusing on Chile, later around the Latin America Groups (LAG), in local chapters all over the country. This movement had support far into the leadership of the Labour Party, by now no longer in a hegemonic position but still by far the largest political party swinging between government and opposition roles.<sup>4</sup> An important role in this regard was played by the Labour Party leader during several years, Reiulf Steen, who married an ex-vice minister in Allende's cabinet, Inés Vargas, and fell in love with both her and her country (Steen, 1988). He legitimized the Chilean and Latin American solidarity movement within his own party and in mainstream Norwegian politics and academia, and made it acceptable to air strong anti-US sentiments as long as Latin America was concerned, as some kind of an exceptional regional case: you could be pro-NATO but still critical to the US on Latin American issues. Reiulf Steen, who never became Prime Minister as normally expected by a Labour Party leader, later went to Chile as Norway's ambassador, enjoying a close relationship with leftist political leaders and cultural personalities — Nobel Prize winner Gabriel García Márquez among them — from all over the continent.

The strong interest in Chile on the political left, and among young intellectuals, was probably the main reason that Latin America came to hold a prominent position in these circles from the early 1970s onward, focusing on leftist political movements in general.

As a result ample space was for example given to Latin America in a major left-intellectual project published between 1978 and 1983, the seven-volume *PaxLeksikon*.<sup>5</sup>

At the same time, a number of important books on Latin America were published in Norwegian (Blakemore, 1966; Gerassi, 1968;

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4 An interesting discussion of the Chile solidarity work in Norway is to be found in Godbolt (2014).

5 *PaxLeksikon* (Oslo: Pax Forlag) 7 Volumes, 1978-1983.

Lindquist, 1969), although, interestingly, classics such as Eduardo Galeano's *Las venas abiertas de América Latina*, originally published in 1971, took more than twenty years to be published in Norwegian.

### A CUBAN INTERLUDE

Compared to the heated intellectual debate about Cuba in other European countries, there was relatively little of this in Norway during the first years of the revolution, apart from the already cited book by Finn Gustavsen (1966). The leading intellectual expert on north-south relations in the Socialist Left Party (SV), Professor Tore Linné Eriksen, was mostly an Africa specialist. Yet, he was the one selected to write an epilogue to the Norwegian edition of the classical international book on the Cuban revolution by Huberman and Sweezy (1972); for the most part a tribute to the revolution but also reflected the increasing intellectual debate about Cuba on the European left wing, particularly after Cuba ended up in defence of the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Support to the Cuban revolution did not gain much sympathy among the mainstream social democrats in Norway (again different from Sweden). However, through a Cuba aid project in the 1970s, a first interesting case emerged of Norwegian development cooperation and foreign policy at the edge between US loyalty and more idealistic motives.

Between September 1970 and March 1972, there was a quite intense political discussion in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norad, and indeed in the Parliament, about a Cuban request for support to development of harbour infrastructure. The request was a response to a general invitation made by Norway in UNCTAD (UNs Conference on Trade and Development) that Norway was positive to consider such projects, partly as a way of avoiding criticism to its quite negative attitude to demands from developing countries to introduce a preferential system for sea transport that could threaten Norway's huge maritime industry. So how to respond when such a request came from a close Soviet ally? A fascinating account of how this now almost forgotten issue went to the core of Norwegian foreign policy principles and contradictions is found in Haakon Schaug's Master Thesis in History (Schaug, 2000).

In this case, loyalties were drawn between the commitment to an invitation given at the UN, along with a general sympathy on the left with Cuba's impressive development accomplishments and confidence in the country's technical capacities, and a quite active US diplomacy to discourage the initiative. Actually, it was the Norwegian side and not the US that initiated the political dialogue about this, for fear of doing

something that would antagonize the Superpower in its backyard. An interesting argument is made by a Norwegian Secretary of State, Mr. Arne Arnesen of the Labour Party: Even the US would hardly be well served if Norway was perceived as a US satellite state; for this reason Norway in certain cases should allow itself to take positions at odds with the US. A leading US diplomat in Oslo allegedly agreed to this.

On this basis, although under serious doubts, the project, seen by the Cubans as both strategically and politically important, was approved.

Nevertheless, the issue did not stop there. On November 13, 1975, two days after Angola had obtained its historical independence from Portugal, a heated discussion emerged in the Norwegian Parliament about continued — and indeed expanded — support to the Cuban harbour project. This occurred in the midst of news reports and accusations from the Conservative Party that Cuba had intervened militarily in Angola. Even the Labour Foreign Minister Frydenlund — like all other parties with the exception of the Socialist Left Party — condemned Cuba's military support to the MPLA. The argument was that Cuba had acted on Soviet instructions to intervene in Angola's civil war, and that under those circumstances Norway could not justify an aid project in Cuba. This claim was strongly denied by the Cuban government and the Norwegian left wing alike, but to no avail. What we know now is that Cuba, rather *in spite* of what the Soviets wanted, quite unilaterally decided to support the Angolan liberation movement MPLA against Apartheid South African and US intervention, with Fidel Castro reacting to a desperate call for help from the MPLA leader Agostinho Neto.<sup>6</sup> Later on, this intervention has been hailed by Nelson Mandela and many others as decisive for the fight not only for de-colonization of Angola, but also for the struggle against apartheid in South Africa and the liberation of Namibia. These were struggles later on strongly supported by Norway, but the government at the time failed to realize the historically important role played by the Cubans.

A centre-left majority decided to continue with the project in spite of this, but rejected a proposal to take it to a second phase, which would imply support to major construction of new harbour facilities in the east of the country that had already been designed in Phase 1. The Angola ghost had become impossible to repress.

The decision to initiate cooperation with Cuba may also be seen in the context of a certain politicization of the Norwegian debate on development cooperation, with the Labour and the left arguing for the

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6 For the most comprehensive historical analysis of this conflict, see: Piero Gleijeses (2007).



importance of working with regimes that stand for ‘socially just development policies’. Cuba was clearly seen as an example of this, while the right-of-centre parties — urged by US protests — argued against this collaboration with a Communist and pro-Soviet regime (Engelsen Ruud and Alsaker Kielland, 2003).

On balance, a left-of-centre coalition in Norway would support a leftist regime in Latin America in spite of US disapproval, but not when major US geo-strategic interests of the US were perceived to be at stake. What we know from Gleijeses’s unique documentation of the international context of the Angola conflict (op. cit., 2007), is that it was State Secretary Henry Kissinger’s very personal decision to engage the US militarily in Angola against the new MPLA government, against all advice from Angola and Africa experts in his own State Department. We also know that the Norwegian Foreign Minister Frydenlund was a very close associate and great admirer of Mr. Kissinger. This is confirmed by a Political Advisor accompanying him in meetings in Washington at the time with Mr. Kissinger.<sup>7</sup> Knowing how passionate Mr. Kissinger was about combating Cuban forces in Angola, he must have made a strong impression on his Norwegian colleague, who under the circumstances saw no other alternative than discontinuing the Cuban project when Phase 1 had been finalized.

## **THE SANDINISTAS AND THE NORWEGIAN SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT: FROM A MARGINAL TO A MAINSTREAM POLITICAL POSITION**

The next upsurge of debate on Latin America in Norwegian politics came with the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua in 1979 and the liberation struggles that followed suit elsewhere in Central America in the 1980s.

Central America was largely unknown to Norway until the earthquake in Guatemala in 1976, which released a comprehensive civil society support to reconstruction.<sup>8</sup> The even more devastating earthquake destroying the Nicaraguan capital Managua in 1972 had not led to any similar reactions.

The author of this chapter was the only Norwegian journalist to cover the actual revolution in Nicaragua, subsequently analysing the peculiarities of the Sandinista Movement and the success of the insurrection (Bye, 1982).

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7 Conversation with Mr. Frydenlund’s political advisor at the time, Mr. Thor Viksveen.

8 I have found only one early reference in Norwegian on Central American political challenges prior to this: Reinton (1969).

Just as in Chile under Allende in the early 1970s, Norway under a Labour Government — unlike Sweden under a right-of-centre regime — failed to react quickly to the Sandinista revolution. Paradoxically, it was only after Labour lost the elections to the Conservatives in 1981 that things started to happen, along two dimensions, as thoroughly documented in my book *Forbidden Peace* (Bye, 1990).

First, the Labour Party, when passing into opposition, saw a need to radicalize its positions on a few foreign policy issues, and particularly the liberation struggles in Southern Africa, Palestine and Central America, in an attempt to attract the support of young people who were active in the solidarity movements. The mood among politically active youth in those days was almost electrically in favour of these liberation causes. The leader of the Party's International Committee, until the election defeat Minister of Defence (and from 1987 Minister of Foreign Affairs), Thorvald Stoltenberg saw very clearly this need to rejuvenate the party, and he was very explicit in this regard. He invited the author of this chapter, then leader of the Solidarity Council for Central America to present some concrete policy proposals regarding Latin America to the Committee. Most youth chapters of political parties (including Labour — where Mr. Stoltenberg's son Jens was prominent and became the National Leader in 1985) were associates of the Solidarity Council. Two concrete proposals were made, and soon after passed by the Labour Party Central Committee: to initiate development cooperation with the Sandinista Government in Nicaragua, and to support the liberation struggle in El Salvador. Cooperation with Nicaragua would become a hot issue in national political debate, while the support to the civilian parts of the liberation struggle in El Salvador was primarily picked up by the Trade Union movement and the Women's League and other sections of the Labour Party. The trade union engagement represented a radical historical break with the tradition of the Norwegian Trade Union Confederation to work in close alliance with the US-dominated international labour movement, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), which in Latin America (and elsewhere) had been in constant conflict with the Communist-oriented World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), obviously under influence from US intelligence services (see Wedin, 1985).<sup>9</sup>

However, the Labour Party was in opposition and could not set the political agenda during five years between 1981 and 1986. The second dimension, therefore, was the increasing engagement in favour of support to leftist forces in Central America among the centrist

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9 This is a good presentation of these conflicts, where again the Swedish unionists took a somewhat more independent stance than their Norwegian comrades.

political parties (Christian People's Party, Center Party and Liberal Party), and their 'hijacking' of this issue through the Foreign Affairs Committee in Parliament. For the first two years after 1981, the Conservative Party formed a minority government, dependent on parliamentary support from the three centrist parties. Through close links to two strong civil society movements committed to work with the liberation forces in Central America, the church movement and the farmers' movement, and also urged by their youth chapters, these parties — with a general policy of providing parliamentary support to the Conservative Government — when it came to Central America allied with Labour to force decisions through Parliament that were heavily resisted by the government. When the three centrist parties joined Cabinet in 1983, they generally maintained the same position, even continuing to let the Foreign Affairs Committee formulate policies at odds with the will of Prime Minister Willoch and his staunch pro-US Foreign Minister, Sverre Strøm, returning to the same position he had had in the early 1970s.

Two elements contributed to this situation: first, that US policy towards Central America during the Reagan regime (supporting the Contras in Nicaragua and the ultra-right forces linked to the death squads in El Salvador) simply was too provocative for peace-loving Norwegian politicians who generally supported social justice. Their sympathy in the Central American conflicts was therefore generally on the side of the enemies of the US. The more pragmatic position taken by the US diplomats in the case of the aid project in Cuba in the early 1970s, under Secretary of State William Rogers, was definitely gone now — a process that started when Henry Kissinger became Secretary of State in 1973. It was substituted by aggressive attempts from US politicians and diplomats to twist the arms of these Norwegian politicians by presenting their case in Central America as a struggle for freedom against Communism. These attempts simply backfired quite dramatically in Norway.

The other element was that the Foreign Affairs Committee visited Central America, passing through Washington on their way home. Having seen things for themselves most members — even Conservatives — concluded with sympathy for the Sandinistas and guerrilla supporters in El Salvador and Guatemala, and a corresponding antipathy for US policies. Some curious twists of events added to this situation. Foreign Minister Strøm made an incredibly awkward statement in Parliament, more or less justifying the US mining of a Nicaraguan harbour, thereby giving the opposition additional ammunition. A climax was reached in 1984, when the Norwegian Government — against strong resistance from the PM — sent a 'Peace Ship' to Nicara-

gua loaded with humanitarian aid but most of all with symbolic solidarity for the Sandinista Government finding itself at undeclared war with the US, an event that caught the attention of the international news media and made the Reaganites even more furious.

In fact, some leading Labour members of the Committee were more hesitant about supporting these leftist forces than the centrist MPs. But when Labour returned to the government offices in 1986, the stage was set to approve the policies defined by the Labour Party in opposition back in 1982, and subsequently embraced by the centrist parties: Nicaragua was made a main partner country for development cooperation, and significant humanitarian support was offered to organizations working closely with the liberation forces elsewhere in Central America.

The development of the aid figures for Nicaragua is quite interesting.<sup>10</sup> From a situation of zero cooperation until the Sandinista revolution, aid increased gradually throughout the decade. In the middle of the 1980s, Nordic aid represented about 30% of all OECD aid to Nicaragua, and in 1989, the last year of Sandinista rule before the electoral defeat; it had increased to an impressive 81%.<sup>11</sup> The increase in Norwegian cooperation was tremendous. In 1985, Norway's share of Nordic cooperation was 19%, quadrupling in total and increasing to 22% in 1988. It is also interesting to note that as much as one third of total Norwegian aid to the entire Central American region during the 1980s was channelled through NGOs, leaving them with a decisive stamp on the direction of this aid in favour of a quite left-leaning civil society. As many as 15 different Norwegian NGOs were involved in aid to Central America by the beginning of the 1990s.

Total Nordic aid to Central America from 1979 to 1990 amounted to 756 million USD, more than half of it provided by Sweden while Norway represented a total of 175 million USD. The bulk of this was given during the second half of the period, when political and indeed military confrontations were at the peak. This was undoubtedly a robust support to progressive forces in the region, almost entirely considered by the US to go against their strategic interests.

Thus, Norway as part of the Nordic community had become an increasingly vital development cooperation partner for the Sandinista Government and other closely associated political projects. Noting this, the Reagan administration officials in charge of his Central

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10 All the following figures are taken from Bye (1992).

11 Yet, COMECON (Soviet bloc including Cuba) aid *commitments* (we do not have figures for actual implementation) were significantly larger.

American policy were furious; they were outraged by what they saw as one of their most loyal and trusted NATO allies going diametrically against one of their most crucial foreign policy cases. This happened just when the Reagan administration was launching 'a great diplomatic and psychological campaign in order to win support (in Europe and Latin America) for our policy' in Nicaragua, according to a secret paper quoted in my 1990 book. Elliott Abrams, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemispheric Affairs and one of the most eager promoters of the Reagan policy in Central America, called it a directly disloyal action by a an allied country, even going against the general Western European trend of reducing aid to Nicaragua. 'We were astounded', said Abrams, 'that the more repressive Nicaragua became, the more money it would get from Norway. And we can still not understand why a democratic country gives its scarce foreign aid to a Communist Government'.<sup>12</sup>

Nicaragua became the big rallying point for the solidarity movement in Norway in the 1980s, with hundreds of young idealists flocking to the country. When another very controversial decision was announced, also intensively countered by the US, to send a Norwegian peace corps to Nicaragua, no less than 1,100 young Norwegians registered as candidates within one week. The Peace Corps had never in its long history experienced anything close to this response.

This enthusiasm was also reflected in a number of Masters Theses and in an anthology edited by Sandved and Skårderud, a collection of articles telling the story of the unique and successful strategy to overthrow a hated dictatorship (Somoza) and the dreams about building a completely different society, 'a Nicaraguan socialism' (Sandved and Skårderud, 1981).

There were of course alternative voices, even in the Norwegian solidarity movement. A prominent dissident who started in the solidarity movement and continued as an academic, was Stener Ekern (author of chapter 9), who became a main critic of the Sandinistas and what he perceived as their increasingly totalitarian policies and rejection of human rights, particularly in their relationship to the Atlantic Coast minorities (Ekern, 1986). Several studies of the human rights situation in the country were made, one of them by a later prominent Labour politician (and UN Under-Secretary General) Jan Egeland, and a prominent Norwegian academic, Professor Bernt Hagtvet (Egeland and Hagtvet, 1986).

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<sup>12</sup> Quoted in Bye (1990: 258), based on a personal interview with Mr. Abrams in Washington DC in 1989.

The situation of the Miskitos and other indigenous groups on the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua attracted great attention in Norway, also academically. One of the most recognized international scholars on this issue, and particularly on the autonomous regime eventually gained on the Atlantic coast is Norwegian social anthropologist Hans Petter Buvollen. The book he co-authored remains as a standard work (Frühling, Gonzales, and Buvollen, 2007).

The foothold gained by Norway in Central America through its active development cooperation, and two symbolically important Nobel Peace prizes awarded to prominent Central American actors (Costa Rican President Oscar Arias in 1987 for brokering the Central American peace agreement, and Maya leader Rigoberta Menchú of Guatemala in 1992 in recognition of the historical struggle of Latin American indigenous populations), propelled Norway into a prominent position when peace agreements were to be negotiated in El Salvador, and particularly in Guatemala. But gradually, as the international media lost interest in Central America when peace was supposedly achieved, the region also started disappearing from the Norwegian political agenda, from Norwegian foreign aid priorities, and indeed from academic Norwegian interest.

### **THE NEW LATIN AMERICAN LEFT IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY AND ITS ENTRY ONTO THE NORWEGIAN POLITICAL AND ACADEMIC STAGE**

With the electoral defeat of the Sandinistas in 1990, and peace agreements at least partially pacifying the rest of the region, the electrical attraction of Central America as a rallying cause for international solidarity started to evaporate.

I myself made the following prognosis about this in the mid-1990s, after concluding that the Labour Party's commitment to Central America in the 1980s, in heavy opposition to US interests, seemed to be an idealistic interlude to its generally pro-US *realpolitik* in foreign affairs:

'We have seen how decisive the development cooperation has been for Norway's general relations to the (Latin American) region over the last fifteen years. If present trends continue, with a strong reduction in development cooperation, it may in the ultimate instance imply that there will be pretty little to write about Norwegian-Latin American relations into the next century' (Bye, 1995).

But I was wrong.

When various South American countries turned to the left at the beginning of the new century — starting with the election of Hugo

Chávez in Venezuela in 1999 — another opportunity for European youth to solidarize with Latin America emerged.<sup>13</sup> And once again, the combination of solidarity movement and politically committed academics in Norway managed — to a considerable extent — to influence foreign policy makers to follow their proposals.

In 2005, there was a historic change in Norwegian political alliances, when the Labour Party for the first time in its history accepted a cohabitation cabinet with other parties, and also for the first time in history gave cabinet seats to the Socialist Left Party (SV), the continuation of the previously mentioned SF. A so-called red-green cabinet was established. Now, SV's former Leader Erik Solheim became Minister of International Cooperation (and later also Minister of Environment). One of the options he saw for making a difference in Norway's foreign policy towards the South was in Latin America. But in his book about this period, he recognizes it took him some time to discover it:

'When I became Minister of Development Cooperation in 2005, I entered with the clear perception that Latin America was a continent I did not need to care much about (...) Vegard Bye, an old expert on Latin America, made me think differently. He asked me to open my eyes' (Solheim, 2013: 295).

He put together a broad commission, mainly of academics, which elaborated a series of policy proposals for Norwegian initiatives in Latin America, many of which were put into practice. This may actually have been one of the clearest examples of a strong academic impact on the formulation of Norwegian foreign policy. Minister Solheim was particularly interested in the new leftist wave on the continent, promoting policies of active public regulation of the economy, and re-distribution of political power and economic resources. Mr. Solheim launched important cooperation programmes with several of the new leftist governments, partly under criticism from the opposition in Parliament who wanted to stick to Norway's traditional concentration of development cooperation in Africa and Asia. During the red-green regime, the regional allocation was extended from Central America to cover the entire Latin America, and the total allocation for Latin America increased by almost 50%. Social policies, human rights, development, democracy, and good governance were

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13 An attempt to summarize the leftist wave in Latin American politics in the new millennium was made in my book: Bye (2010) portraying five of the leftist heads of state in Latin America: Lula of Brazil, Chávez of Venezuela, Correa of Ecuador, Morales of Bolivia, and Lugo of Paraguay. Perhaps the most charismatic of them all was unfortunately left out: Mujica of Uruguay.



among the activities supported. In fact, by initiating the huge Amazon Fund to combat climate change by supporting rainforest protection in the Amazon, together with public co-investments in the energy sector, Brazil actually became Norway's number one development cooperation country.<sup>14</sup> As mentioned in chapter 1, strategy for broader economic, political and even international cooperation with Brazil was drawn up in coordination between no less than five Norwegian ministries with the following vision:

'Brazil and Norway shall develop a strategic partnership on areas where we believe we have particular strength and competencies to offer each other, and where cooperation will be mutually enriching and contribute to positive growth and development in both countries. The cooperation shall have a long-term character, based on knowledge, and be concerned with social, environmental and economic sustainability. Through a close collaboration on international issues, Brazil and Norway shall jointly contribute to find solutions to global challenges' (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011).

The booming Brazilian economy during the first decade of the new century became a magnet also for the Norwegian business sector, and Norway actually became the sixth most important investor country in Brazil. Behind all this political and business interest in Brazil was evidently Lula's slogan, with a particular reference to the way Norway had managed its petroleum revenues: '*O modelo norueguês*'.<sup>15</sup>

Lula's very peculiar interest in Norway may have been sparked by the translation into Portuguese of a classical textbook on Norwegian history covering the decisive formative years of the Norwegian welfare model, based on the historical compromise and tripartite negotiation system between labour, capital, and state in the 1930s, written by Berge Furre (1992). Mr. Furre, originally a Historian but later Professor in Theology at the University of Oslo, was for many years the Leader of the Socialist Left Party. After leaving politics, Professor Furre took up an interest in studying two phenomena in Brazil: charismatic religions and the movement of the landless (MST). A Brazil-

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14 According to the latest available Norad figures, for confirmed disbursements, Brazil in 2012 topped the list of 111 recipient countries with 1.248 million NOK, far ahead of the second recipient, Afghanistan (735 million NOK).

15 This slogan was i.a. repeatedly mentioned in President Lula's televised speech on Independence Day, August 31, 2009, which he described as Brazil's New Independence Day when he announced the new model for exploiting the so-called 'pre-salt' layer of oil and gas off Brazil's coast. An assessment of Lula's political agenda from the outset of his government is presented in Bye (2004).

ian University Professor in international relations, Jorge Barbosa de Oliveira, decided to have this book translated to Portuguese in order to inspire the incoming Lula administration in its search for a Brazilian development model. And the impact of the book seems to have been considerable. One of Lula's closest associates, Tarso Genro, had as his first responsibility after Lula took office in 2003 to set up a Council for economic and social development, based precisely on the tripartite model. He read Professor Furre's history book, and had an impressive and detailed knowledge of how 'the Norwegian model' had emerged. As he told me when I interviewed him in the Brasilia Presidential Palace (*Planalto*) in November 2003:

'I have had the opportunity to study (the Norwegian experience) quite much, and much of this inspires us. The Norwegian model was based on a strong social democratic party and strong movements of workers and peasants. In a period with heavy social agitation, this halted the growth of the Communist Party. The result was an almost magical social compromise laying the foundation for the social welfare model on which the country is still based' (Bye, 2010: 146).

Going on to analyse similarities and differences between Norway in the 1930s and Brazil in the 2000s, he outlined a political strategy for the Lula administration which to a large extent was followed in practice with great success during these two 4-year terms.

Brazil also became a magnet for Norwegian students and academics, partly because of the special preference for Brazil in the Norwegian Research Council's Latin America program (see chapter 1). Particularly the Master Theses (of which there are nine) were focused on Norwegian investments in Brazil. The scholarly work was to a larger extent focused on the strength and strategies of different social forces and institutions that mediate their interaction with the state.

Norwegian political scientist Einar Braathen has researched the PT political strategy, starting out with an interest in 'participatory budgeting', then linking this typically urban governance theme with issues of poverty, social justice and public policy (Braathen, 2003). Working closely with Brazilian social scientists, he has also been trying to introduce the Brazilian experience with participatory budgeting to the Norwegian political reality (Braathen, 2005). Another political scientist, Simon Pahle has worked on Brazilian labour unions and focused on how they have related to international trade regimes and labour clauses, attempting to explain why they have been resisting rules that most view as benefitting labour movements (Pahle, 2014a, 2014b).

Social forces / state interaction were also the focus of research on other parts of Latin America (as for example Bull's work on social movements and the leftist regimes: Bull, 2013). It was also the focus of governmental projects. In Brazil, the Norwegian Government financed a cooperation project between the Norwegian and Brazilian employer's organizations to strengthen social dialogue. It also funded the Social and Economic Council in El Salvador, a body that was set up to strengthen dialogue between employers, the government and other social actors after the entering to power of the FMLN-supported Mauricio Funes Government in 2009.

In its relationship to El Salvador, the government could build on long-term relations between the Socialist Left Party and FMLN. No such historical ties existed with other leftist governments such as that of Venezuela, and the official Norwegian-Venezuelan relations during the Chávez regime remained quite distant apart from the oil sector (with Norwegian state-dominated company Statoil among the few multinationals that stayed in the country as others left). There has also been rather limited academic work on the controversial Bolivarian revolution by Norwegian academics. An exception is the social anthropologist Iselin Åsedotter Strønen's work on the Bolivarian revolution seen from local communities in poor neighbourhoods in Caracas. She argues that the Bolivarian revolution must be considered as an attempt to create a new moral and political social order after the failure of an elitist neoliberal model. She focuses, particularly, on the complex challenges faced by the *consejos comunales* in the implementation of their policies (Strønen, 2014).

Yet, while there was little academic work, Chávez's 'Bolivarian Socialism' attracted considerable attention in the solidarity movement. Two more popular monographs were published on Chavez's project that both caused significant debate. First, a very solid and overall positive documentation of the Chávez's project — as long as it was relatively successful — is presented by Eirik Vold (2013). While Vold had spent ten years studying the project in depth, a quite rare Conservative voice in the Norwegian Latin America literature gave a correspondingly critical analysis of Venezuela under Chávez. This was written by the later national leader of the Young Conservatives, attached to the Conservative think-tank CIVITA, Kristian Tonning Riise (2013). It was based on a quick fieldwork and use of mainly English sources, but in spite of this it generated interest as there were few others that published critically on the increasingly obvious weaknesses of the Bolivarian project.

Another important area of Norwegian relations with Latin America, initiated by the centre-left government in power between

2005 and 2013, has also been maintained by the non-socialist government: along with Cuba acting as a facilitator for the Colombian peace negotiations between the Government and the FARC guerrillas. The fact that these negotiations take place in Havana has added to the quite close association between Cuba and Norway on this matter. The very friendly relationship with Cuba has also had a couple of other important aspects: Norway picking up the bill for the Cuban medical brigade doing a highly appreciated work in post-earthquake Haiti, and also using Cuba as a regional reference country and hub for technical cooperation in natural disaster prevention work. The Norwegian Embassy in Havana is at present (2015) the most important foreign sponsor of cultural events in the country. Academic and institutional cooperation between the University of Oslo and Cuban academic and think-tank institutions is aimed at stimulating alternative thinking about Cuba's troubled future. A still on-going research project headed by the author of this chapter has resulted in a number of publications on the reform process under Raúl Castro (Bye, 2012, 2014a, 2014b, 2015).

Not being restricted by the EU 'common position' that has pushed many European countries out of friendly relations with the quite sensitive Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also helped giving Norway a privileged diplomatic position in Havana, without hiding its criticism of human rights and democratic shortcomings in the country. It is interesting to note that the first Norwegian Foreign Minister — and highest-ranking government representative — ever to visit Cuba was the Conservative Børge Brende in February 2015, coming in the wake of the new dialogue between Havana and Washington. The main reason why the right-of-centre government carried on the same Cuba policy as the one defined by its predecessor is probably that the two countries have the common responsibility for the facilitation of the Colombia peace negotiations. With the US President making the dramatic turnaround in his country's Cuba relations, the Norwegian position in Cuba also lost any controversial character it might have had previously in Norway.

A particular field of Norwegian academic research on Cuba has been in the field of social anthropology. In the 1990s, a considerable number of Master Theses on different aspects of the Cuban society were produced by Norwegian students. These studies have provided valuable insight into a society characterized by informality and often limited access to critical social research and reliable statistics. Cuba is a country where social anthropology offers an especially valuable methodological approach. Probably, more could have been done to systematize the accumulated knowledge produced in these studies.

## AN ATTEMPT TO CONCLUDE

When Latin America entered Norwegian politics in the early 1970s, the Norwegian political and academic landscape was poorly prepared to understand, interpret and respond to political events in such a far away part of the world. This was before backpackers started hiking around on this continent, before Latin American magic-realistic literature became commonplace among book lovers, before Latin American music started warming up Nordic rhythmic sentiments. It was even before Norwegian vacationers started travelling massively to Spain, and very few people spoke Spanish (let alone Portuguese).

Norwegian social democrats were still staunchly pro-NATO and pro-American, and although there was some uneasiness about US interventionism in Latin America it was very hard for them to understand how the US as a beacon of freedom and democracy could be seen as an enemy of progressive political projects. Loyalty to the US — particularly when its self-defined geo-strategic interests were at stake — was the backbone of consensus-based Norwegian foreign policy.

The lack of exposure to the Latin American reality was reflected among at least four different and policy-relevant Norwegian sub-cultures: journalists, diplomats and aid bureaucrats, academics and politicians. There was probably certain sympathy with the Cuban revolution from the outset, but little protest when the US broke with Castro. Che Guevara may have been a symbol among the 1968-generation, but this had very limited impact on mainstream Norwegian politics and academia apart from the student movement. When the Chilean drama unfolded during the Allende regime, there may have been some general sympathy with this project among a group of politicians and social scientists, but no real commitment and very little academic research. Even after the Pinochet coup, which did have an impact on the political and academic culture in Norway, there were very few interpreters to internalize this within any of the mentioned decisive sub-cultures for policy-making. Neighbouring Sweden was different because it had a staunch US critic as Prime Minister (Mr. Palme), and because he launched a cooperation programme that landed hundreds of young Swedes in Chile as Allende sympathizers (vs. only a handful of Norwegians). When they returned to Sweden after the coup, they effectively penetrated all the four mentioned sub-cultures, thus changing political discourse, media coverage, Swedish diplomacy and development cooperation, as well as the academic engagement with Latin America in Sweden in a clearly leftist and US-critical direction.

To focus on the Latin American Left until the 1980s was a marginal political and academic phenomenon. Latin America, however, repeatedly became a test case for the limits to US loyalty; a dividing

line between realism and idealism in foreign policy. This is probably the main reason why interest in Latin America, also among social scientists, has definitely been greater on the political left than on the right.

This was only changed after the Sandinista revolution in 1979, coinciding with similar shifts in political sympathies in South Africa and in the Israel / Palestine conflict. These shifts may also have been influenced by the outcome of the Vietnam War. The *Allende impact* on young Swedish social scientists in the 1970s had a parallel in a *Sandinista impact* in Norway in the 1980s. In a little more than 10 years, all the four mentioned professional groups of relevance for foreign policy-making had undergone a generational shift and changed from general US loyalty to rather US-critical attitudes: the journalists covering international affairs, diplomats moving into more senior positions, and the politicians involved in foreign policy. All these groups had been influenced as students of politics and international relations, and as readers of scholarly articles, by a new generation of academics. The 'solidarity generation', those formed by the Vietnam War and the coup in Chile, had now established a clear hegemony in forming the premises of Norwegian policies towards Latin America (just as the case was with Southern Africa, the Middle East and North-South issues, in general).

The gradual Norwegian distancing from the US, a decade before the Cold War ended, was also caused by a series of paradoxes. The sale of ammunition to Batista Cuba in his last days of battle became a political scandal that weakened the Labour Government and perhaps opened some eyes about problematic aspects of supporting the US side in Latin America. The fact that the Norwegian diplomatic perception of Allende Chile was so right wing produced another political scandal that eventually made Norway a main supporter of the political victims of Pinochet. And the Reagan administration's tremendous efforts to convince Norwegian politicians about the justification of their war against the Sandinistas and more generally against leftist forces in Central America had the opposite effect of what was intended. The fact that Labour was in opposition and wanted to rejuvenate by attracting young idealists, and that Conservatives depended on the Parliamentary support of centrist forces that developed great sympathy with the struggle for social justice in Central America, all contributed to an impressive political confrontation between Norway and the US on this issue. The difference between US and Norwegian perceptions of the Central American conflict is probably — in addition to different geo-strategic interests — also a reflection of recent Norwegian social history, and the general identification across the political spectrum

in Norway with the organized and collective struggle of poor people for socio-economic improvement, rather than the individualistic approach that has been commonplace in the US.

Three political issues of particular prominence in the Norwegian political debate, human rights, indigenous rights and climate change, have clearly left a footprint on Norwegian political and academic interest in Latin America and determined the direction of this interest, often understood as matters closer to the left than to the right (although human rights criticism of leftist regimes have been correspondingly promoted from the right).

As I tried to show in my 1990 book, anti-communism had come to be so narrowly defined by the radical Reagan administration, that it suddenly lost its defining force — as a basis for pro-US attitudes — on Norwegian foreign policy toward Latin America. After this moment, Norway has generally defined its policies in Latin America quite independently of, and in many cases in opposition to, the policies of the United States.

After the turn of the century, starting with another staunchly anti-communist US regime but with the effect of the Cold War gone, it was relatively uncomplicated for a left-of-centre political alliance in Norway to get away with cooperation to the left in Latin America — partly because it also opened the door for a wave of Norwegian investment opportunities at a time when large Norwegian state-dominated corporations were heavily globalized. Actually, today Norwegian-Latin American relations are much more dominated by business than by the solidarity movement.

Academics played an important role in defining this new political agenda, and also picked up on it by engaging in social science research. But here is another paradox: the moment public support to social science research on Latin America had managed to build a solid academic capital, necessary funding to maintain and develop it further is drying up.

In 2015, there may be a situation similar to the one we had back in 1990: that Norwegian academic interest in Latin America has reached a peak, from where there may be a rapid downhill race, and that this coincides with new hard times for the leftist political projects in the region.

Time will show whether the prognosis will be proven truer this time around.

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Roy Krøvel

## **NORWEGIAN IMAGINARIES OF PEACE AND LATIN AMERICA**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Over the last years, a significant share of Norwegian scholarship on Latin America has dealt with issues of war and peace. For various reasons, the choice of themes to study has been closely related to the activities of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and NGOs. Diplomats and social movements have been engaged in efforts to find peaceful solutions to war and conflict many places in Latin America over the last 40 years. The most noteworthy instances are Chile, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and, more recently, Colombia. For the Latin American scholar interested in understanding the many roles played (and not played) by Norwegians in these conflicts, it is necessary to place Norwegian activities in their proper historical and social context. In many ways, these Latin American experiences has contributed, together with experiences in localities as diverse as the Sudan, Sri Lanka, the Middle East, etc., to constructing a 'Norwegian model' for facilitation, mediation and building peace. It has also contributed to building particular understandings of how war and conflict can come to an end.

This chapter looks at how Norwegian scholars have contributed to the understanding of conflicts in Latin America. However, the chapter also aims at reflecting on how Latin American experiences have

contributed to the production of a Norwegian *imagined community* (Anderson, 1991), complete with collective imaginaries (Hall and Lammont, 2013) and meta-narratives (Carr, 1991) on Norway as a builder of peace, which are, at least in part, based on experiences with war and peace in Latin America. In fact, Norway, imagined as a facilitator and builder of peace, has become an important aspect of *collective imaginaries* of Norway, interpreted through, among others, Norwegian scholars. The interplay with Latin America is in this sense dialectical and processual: Latin American experiences contribute to Norwegian collective imaginaries while these collective imaginations continue to be projected onto the world through the mechanisms of development aid, NGOs and peace facilitation in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Colombia, Haiti, and elsewhere.

Understanding some of these processes is necessary, in order to understand how geographical focus and selection of themes are structured in Norwegian research on Latin America. An understanding of these processes is furthermore necessary, in order to interpret the horizons of understanding (Gadamer, Weinsheimer, and Marshall, 2004) underlying Norwegian research on Latin America and link the research causally to Norway as a place and space.

First, the chapter will describe Norwegian research on peace and conflict in Latin America. This section will indicate that a significant part of Norwegian research on Latin America deals with questions of war, violent conflict and peaceful resolution to conflicts. It will also show that this research contributes to a strong geographical focus on a few countries such as Colombia, Guatemala and Nicaragua. The second part of this chapter intends to reflect on how space, in this case Norway, 'matters in the production of knowledge' about Latin America (Bull, 2015; Introduction). This part seeks to explain why this research seems to correlate geographically well with Norwegian development aid and Norwegian NGO activity. It will further explain how this research tradition can be understood in relation to Norwegian history, and particularly with the peasant and labour movements. Finally, the section will use the work of Godbolt to discuss on the role played by Latin American refugees and migrants in building up a solidarity movement with Latin America, which again has produced many a Norwegian Latin Americanist involved in research on war, conflict and peace.

## **NORWEGIAN RESEARCH ON PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES IN LATIN AMERICA**

A substantial portion of Norwegian research on Latin America can be categorized as 'peace and conflict research'. A conservative estimate

would be to say that at least 10% of recent researches (2003-2014) on Master and Ph.D. levels are directly related to peace and conflict studies. Nearly 20% of a total of approximately 50 studies belonging to this category have been produced within the framework of master programs in Peace and Conflict Studies (University of Oslo) and Peace and Conflict Transformation (The Arctic University of Norway), but the majority comes from disciplines or fields of study as varied as Anthropology, History, Latin American Area Studies, Psychology, Economy, Comparative Politics, Social Sciences, Human Rights, and Gender Studies. Similarly, the topics dealt with within this category are rich and diverse, including but not restricted to transitional justice, activism and human rights, refugees, political violence, the role of the US, reintegration, sexual violence, the Cold War, Cuban crisis, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, the media and conflict, civil-military relations, the Zapatistas, social movements, UN and peacebuilding, and last but not least several studies on Norwegian peace mediation or 'facilitation'. Faced with such rich diversity, it is of course futile here to even try to cover more than just some trends in Norwegian research on peace and conflict related issues. However, both the scope and importance of peace and conflict perspectives for Norwegian research on Latin America begs further analysis, particularly because theories and perspectives from peace and conflict studies have had an unquestionable impact on traditional disciplines in Norwegian research on Latin America.

As could be expected, recent research on peace and conflict focus on a few countries: Approximately 50% of recent Master and Ph.D. Theses deals with peace and conflict issues in Colombia, while many of the others deals with Mexico (mainly Chiapas) and Guatemala. We will draw on Colombia first, to get a closer look at some of the topics and perspectives that are typically found in this category of research.

An initial key finding is that peace and conflict studies, as a category, is very broad and varied, and is extremely hard to define and delimit. Norwegian researchers investigate topics related to war and peace from a multiplicity of positions and perspectives, sometimes depending on disciplines, but also on theoretical and philosophical outlooks. The research range from the conducted by peace activists such as Adrian Bergman, who works in El Salvador and has published papers from a clearly pacifist and Gandhian understanding of what 'peace' means, to research that focus narrowly on some particular aspect related to causes or consequences of war in order to statistically evaluate and manipulate the particular contribution of the selected aspect. In Norway, the introduction and standing of the Gandhian perspective on peace is primarily due to the work of renowned scholars



Arne Næss and Johan Galtung. Næss, in particular, has had a strong influence on higher education and research in Norway. Internationally, few have published more on peace research than Johan Galtung (Galtung, Fischer, and Transcend, 2013). Galtung has literally hundreds of publications connected to his name, including several important early works on Gandhian philosophy that contributed to forming Norwegian research perspectives on peace issues (Galtung, 1957). Here, however, for pragmatic reasons, I will use an open and flexible understanding of peace and conflict studies that encompasses almost everything Norwegian researchers have published on issues directly related to war and peace in Latin America.

Over the last few years, many Norwegian researchers have sought to understand issues related to war and peace in Colombia. The diversity found among relevant Master Theses is enlightening. Lid, for instance, explores the evolution of political violence in Colombia and connects it to the exclusionary nature of the Colombian regime that hindered other political expressions to be voiced (Lid, 2007). Social and political exclusion is also a key theme for other studies of violence in Colombia. According to Wærnes, to reach a sustainable peace in Colombia, there ought to be a 'transformation of the conflict to change or eliminate the deep-rooted reasons for conflict', a 'process in which the inclusion, participation and contribution of the civil society is required and invaluable' (Wærnes, 2010). Loe has focused on the role of the US in the demobilization of the paramilitary groups between 2002 and 2005 (Loe, 2008), while Nilsen finds that former paramilitaries continue to affect security in Colombia (Nilsen, 2014). Medina also deals with security issues and internal refugees, and examines to what extent the Colombian transitional justice mechanisms ensure the right to truth and the obligation to search for the disappeared (Medina, 2013). Others have analysed issues related to human rights and violence in Colombia, exclusion, violence and indigenous peoples, reintegration of former guerrillas, and the media and conflict in Colombia.

While this list is far from complete, it is helpful here in the sense that these topics seem to be fairly representative for the overall Norwegian research on peace and conflict in Latin America. The research seem to revolve around issues of human rights, social exclusion, the right to participation, violence against particularly vulnerable groups, indigenous groups and indigenous rights, causes of war, and critiques of US involvement in civil wars or support for authoritarian regimes.

Senior researchers, as for example Garcia-Godos, Sandvik and H. Wiig, have all contributed internationally to a growing body of knowledge relevant for peace and the peace process in Colombia.

Sandvik has published extensively on legal mobilization among displaced women and internally displaced women as knowledge producers. According to these investigations, beneficiaries of humanitarian aid sometimes use participatory research to advance their own ends in the legal and political spaces created around humanitarian crisis, but poverty, violence and local balances of power tend to limit their agency (Sandvik and Lemaitre, 2013). In Sandvik's research, displaced women refuse to be reduced to victims; they have agency (Lemaitre and Sandvik, 2014; Lemaitre and Sandvik, 2015; Sandvik and Lemaitre, 2013). In a series of publications, Garcia-Godos and Wiig explains the importance of land restitution for the more than 5 million of internally displaced people who had to flee due to the internal armed conflict. The researches propose some alternatives that could ease the restitution process and the implications of restitution in relation to ongoing peace negotiations (Garcia-Godos and Wiig, 2014). In a series of publications, Garcia-Godos has explored further the role that victim groups and organizations may have in framing and supporting an accountability agenda, in addition to analysing the link between the demobilisation of illegal armed groups and the rights of the victims (García-Godos, 2013; García-Godos and Lid, 2010). Wiig, meanwhile, has studied economic efficiency in compensation or restitution of land Rights (Wiig, 2009). While this research does not directly discuss peace processes or ongoing-armed conflict, it continues to produce relevant knowledge for those engaged in facilitating peaceful resolution to the Colombian conflict.

While Colombia has been heavily affected by an overt armed conflict for more than a generation, and has therefore attracted much attention among Norwegian scholars, the conflicts between Haiti and the Dominican Republic are of a less violent character. Still, Norwegian NGOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have since 1998 been engaged in various types of activities to build trust and reconciliation. This engagement has spurred a few studies, noteworthy primarily because of the insights they give into the flexible and informal mode of operation used by MNA and Norwegian NGOs. According to one evaluation report, from the outset, the ambitions were limited and neither the Ministry of Foreign Affairs nor the executing agencies did claim to do 'peacebuilding' in Haiti. Instead, the plan was to 'look for ways to contribute in a low-key manner through transparent and extensive consultation to build trust in combination with small-scale seed funding for various initiatives by local actors' (Gervais, 2009). It soon became clear that efforts to build trust and avoid conflict escalation would have to include dialogue with counterparts from the Dominican Republic (Hetland, 2005). In addition, the Norwegian actors

facilitated an 'Oslo Dialogue' between Dominican and Haitian representatives at mid-level, hoping that the dialogue could be continued on a higher level at a later stage. The studies find that the projects did result in establishing friendly relations between some of the participants at mid-level. Deeper, more resilient and lasting results, however, are more difficult to identify. The evaluation finds the Norwegian engagement to be flexible and informal. However, a down side of this flexibility is sometimes manifested in a lack of documentation of decisions and activities, and in relying on improvisation rather than consistent strategies (Gervais, 2009).

Researchers at PRIO, meanwhile, has focused on local models of conflict prevention and insights from marginalized communities (Hauge, Doucet, and Gilles, 2008; Hauge, Gilles, and Doucet, 2012). Hauge in particular has contributed to the knowledge on the role of development and environmental change in conflict escalation, employing Haiti as one of the case studies (Hauge, 2003). In addition, FAFO has published a number of reports on Haiti. Jennings, for example, complements the other perspectives mentioned earlier by investigating the troubling issue of peacekeeping missions and sexual abuse, and presents findings of relevance for policymakers and practitioners alike (Jennings, 2008). The research on Norwegian engagement in Haiti is particularly interesting here since the results point towards aspects of Norwegian engagement with peacebuilding, which will be discussed more in depth later.

## **GEOGRAPHY OF PEACE AND CONFLICT RESEARCH**

Another feature of Norwegian peace and conflict research arises from an analysis of the geographical distribution of the research. Overall, Norwegian research on Latin America follows a somewhat unusual pattern. An outside observer might perhaps expect the research to be distributed between the various Latin American countries according to the size of population or according to Norwegian economic relations with Latin America. As one might expect, Mexico first and Brazil second appears to be the two most prevalent countries in Norwegian research on Latin America, but only marginally ahead of a small state such as Guatemala. Relative to her size, Nicaragua is also remarkably well represented on the list of Master and Ph.D. Theses published between 2003 and 2013. A closer inspection of the list reveal that peace and conflict studies make up a significant proportion of the research directed towards countries such as Guatemala and Nicaragua. Similarly, since the Zapatista uprising in 1994, a relatively large number of master and Ph.D. studies analysing war and peace in Chiapas have added significantly to the growing body of Norwegian literature on Mexico.

While the distribution of Norwegian research on Latin America does not correlate well with Norwegian export to the region or size of populations, it does have much in common with the distribution of Norwegian developmental aid to Latin America in general and Norwegian NGO activity in particular. This can be seen as a strong indication that Norwegian peace and conflict research does not operate in isolation from internal Norwegian social processes. Instead, geographical distribution and theoretical perspectives of Norwegian peace and conflict research should be understood as an integral part of larger processes that involves social movements, NGOs and the Norwegian State.

### **KEY THEMES AND INSIGHTS EMERGING FROM STUDIES OF PEACE AND CONFLICT IN LATIN AMERICA**

Norwegian Master and Ph.D. Theses on war and peace in Latin America engage with the issues from a number of perspectives which ranges from analysis of causes of war and violence on the one hand to documenting the many consequences of war and violence on the other. Many also investigate conditions for peace and peace processes with a particular focus on Norwegian efforts to support peace processes. Among senior researchers, there seems to be a greater degree of specialization on specifically those peace and conflict issues that connect Latin America and Norway, or, in other words, issues that connect Norway as 'place' and 'space' to Latin American issues.

In a fascinating account of Norwegian efforts to help Chilean activists after the coup against Salvador Allende (1973), James Godbolt demonstrates how the inflow of radical Chilean refugees to Norway helped form Norwegian social movements and build a solidarity movement with Latin America. According to Godbolt,

[...] Human Rights, especially the concern for political refugees, came to influence the movement's thinking and praxis. Solidarity work connected to 'establishment' institutions and fell in line with official foreign policy. The profile of the protest as a contentious movement waned. Instead, a new organizational form for solidarity work emerged, the transnational advocacy network, which came to replace the classical protest movement previously characteristic of solidarity movements' (Godbolt, 2014).

Bye, Borchgrevink, Hagene, Krøvel, and others have sought to explain how Norwegian social movements only a few years later succeeded in pushing the Norwegian Government into sending Peace Brigades to Nicaragua during the civil war in the 1980s in spite of vocal US opposition (Barry and Borchgrevink, 1991; Bye, 1985, 1990; Hagene, 1994;

Krøvel, 2013; Leira and Borchgrevink, 2007). It is noteworthy that so many of these researchers do have a background as activists in the social movements (including the author of this chapter).

Further, Hauge, Krøvel (Krøvel, 1999b, 2000), and Nissen (Nissen, 2011) have all looked at how the Norwegian State, pushed on by NGOs and social movements, has engaged with Latin American peace processes and how this engagement has contributed to producing a 'Norwegian model' for peace. This body of research also tends to verify Godbolt's hypothesis that Norwegian social movements activists succeeded in influencing the Norwegian State, while at the same time becoming officially or unofficially part of an extended state apparatus.

According to an evaluation by Hauge from 2004, 'there is strongest consistency in peacebuilding policies — from strategy level down to project level — in countries where Norway has been, or is, highly involved in the peace process'. Hauge, therefore, recommends to 'deepen the focus on peacebuilding also with regard to other Norwegian partner countries [...]' (Hauge, 2004). Later, based on an analysis of the discourse of leftist political leaders of South America, Hauge contends that 'the Latin American model provides alternatives to the hegemonic peacebuilding discourse' (Hauge, 2009). Hauge is an example of the Norwegian researcher who moves between evaluating and investigation Norwegian foreign policy and giving policy advice, on the one hand, and analysing Latin American discourses to find inspiration and valuable insights there, on the other. The remainder of this chapter will focus more narrowly on the processual relationship between Norwegian imaginaries of peace and Latin American experiences.

## **UNDERSTANDING NORWEGIAN PEACE RESEARCH FROM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Understanding the influence that peace perspectives have had on Norwegian Latin American research, calls for some thoughts on the history and background of the idea of Norwegian peace efforts internationally. As the nineteenth century came to an end, the movement for Norwegian independence from the union with Sweden grew in strength. However, for the demand for independence to succeed, Norwegian politicians would have to gain support from leading European powers. Considering Norwegian history, not forgetting the Vikings, it is not difficult to imagine why Norwegian politicians sought to reassure Europeans by re-branding Norway and Norwegians as a very peaceful and tranquil place. According to Prime Minister Johannes Steen (1891-93 and 1898-1902), Norwegians were a particularly peaceful nation. In short, European States would have nothing to fear from an independent Norwegian State, which, indeed, was formed in 1905,

with the support of leading European powers. The collectively imagined community 'Norway' (Anderson, 1991), imagined as a particularly 'peaceful nation', was something of a foundational myth for the young Norwegian State, a product of the collective mind, primed to be projected onto the world. Nonetheless, while Norway supported the League of Nations and other initiatives to find peaceful solutions to potential international conflicts, the idealism also had its limits when Norwegian interests were challenged. Many studies of Norwegian foreign policy have dedicated much time and effort to describe and analyse Norwegian policy vacillating between altruism and egoism. This is a topic, which turns up, in a large portion of the Norwegian research on Norwegian international relations. Tvedt, for instance, has explored how altruism can turn into public relations campaigns that in many ways resemble egoism (Tvedt, 2008, 2009).

In fact, the idea of building up Norwegian development aid was among leading politicians in the Labour Party embraced as a way to steer radical activists towards mostly uncontroversial activities that would not negatively affect Norway's interests as a loyal member of NATO and friend of the USA (Amland, 1993: 10; Pharo, 1986). From the start, a large dose of *realpolitik* did demarcate the limitations and boundaries to Norwegian development aid. Few places has this been more clearly visible than in Norway's engagement with Latin America, as has been particularly salient in analyses of Norwegian engagement with Nicaragua in the 1980s and Guatemala in the 1990. How this is reflected in Norwegian research on Latin America will be discussed in the following sections.

## FROM GUATEMALA TO CHILE AND NICARAGUA

As stated earlier, patterns and structures in the geographical distribution of Norwegian research on Latin America in general, and peace research more specifically, seem to be intimately connected to Norwegian social movements activities and Norwegian developmental aid to Latin America. On the one hand, a substantial number of Norwegian researchers have a background from social movements. On the other hand, funding opportunities are related to Norwegian developmental aid in a myriad of ways. It is therefore necessary to explore the emergence of Norwegian research in tandem with Norwegian social movements and Norwegian international relations from a historical and processual perspective employing Guatemala, Chile and Nicaragua as cases.

In many ways, the CIA organized coup in Guatemala in 1954 is interesting for the lack of Norwegian engagement on all levels. The coup illustrates the dilemmas of idealism versus realism in Norwegian

foreign policy during the first decades after World War II. For this chapter, the coup is relevant to illustrate how the alliance with USA during the first two decades after World War II set clear boundaries for what Norway could and could not do in Latin America.

Very little Norwegian research has been done on this period of Guatemalan history, although later Norwegian studies of war and peace in Guatemala see the overthrow of the elected government as an important cause for the long civil war (Krøvel, 1999a, 2000; Nissen, 2011; Salvesen, 1998). In many ways, these analyses build on Norwegian experiences of social inclusion and equality as foundations for a peaceful society. They see the overthrow of Arbenz as a violent regression to an earlier stage dominated by sharp class and race hierarchies — a time when unfair social exclusion could be based racism. Interpreted from Norwegian horizons of understanding, social exclusion, racism and violence are seen underlying causes which sooner or later would have to surface in the form of social protest and civil war as long as just calls for equality and participation were not heeded.

Seen from the perspective of Norwegian social democracy, a naïve observer might have expected an uproar of protest and solidarity with the democratically elected socialist government of Jacobo Arbenz from the Norwegian Government. After all, both Norway and Guatemala were small states living in the shadow of the military might of neighbouring superpowers. Nevertheless, the Norwegian response to the coup was meek, and very few critical voices were heard. This lack of Norwegian attention at the time, both in terms of social movements, foreign policy and research, needs to be understood in relation to the limitations the Cold War and Norwegian membership of NATO put on Norwegian activism internationally.

Godbolt (Godbolt, 2014) and others (Buggeland, 2010; Tamnes and Jensen, 1997) have convincingly showed the profound effect the coup against Allende's Government in Chile had on Norwegian interest in Latin America. In comparison to the coup against Jacobo Arbenz 20 years earlier, the reactions to the coup in Chile are notable for the much higher level of solidarity demonstrated by the labour movement and leftist political organizations, in addition to parts of the state itself and foreign department. Godbolt explains the much stronger public reactions in Norway mainly as a consequence of the internal Norwegian developments within the Norwegian Labour Party, trade unions and social movements. In the 1960s, radical groups had broken with Labour to form new socialist parties, thus becoming more independent and less willing to adhere to the traditional consensus of avoiding criticism of US military operations. The protests against the war in Vietnam had helped produce a strong undercurrent



of anti-imperialism and anti US sentiment in large sections of Norwegian society, including trade unions and students. Internal Norwegian developments go a long way to explain why concerns over Norwegian security interests were no longer sufficient to subdue popular reactions to US involvement in the coup against the elected government in Chile. These internal causes furthermore help explain why peace and conflict studies gradually came to play such an important role in Norwegian research on Latin America.

The violent events in Chile, however, did not merely stimulate reaction in Norwegian public; it influenced Norwegian engagement with Latin America in other ways as well. According to Godbolt, a relatively large number of Chilean exiles came to Norway and became engaged in radical politics, trade unionism and solidarity committees with Latin America, etc. contributing to a more sustained interest in, and a more knowledgeable, public debate on Latin America in Norway. An organized public outside and often in opposition to hegemonic Norwegian politics emerged, challenging the consensus on foreign policy from the outside. Latin America was not only an object of Norwegian imagination and research, through social movements Latin Americans came to influence Norwegian understandings of Latin America (Frisk, 1979; Godbolt, 2014). These results of the processual relationship between Norwegian research interests and theoretical understandings and Latin American experiences became evident during the civil war in Nicaragua and the peace process in Guatemala.

Bye, Hagene, Krøvel and several others have researched the impact the campaign of the social movements had on Norwegian foreign policy in Latin America after the Sandinista revolution (1979) (Bye, 1990; Hagene, 1994; Krøvel, 2013). The Sandinista revolution was at first welcomed by social activists and media alike. The national daily VG, not known at the time for radicalism, congratulated the Nicaraguan people with removing the hated dictator Somoza. But as the civil war between the Sandinista army and US supported counterrevolutionaries grew more and more violent, the public debate in Norway also grew increasingly polarized. The Conservative Party led government at the time hesitated to criticize US intervention in Nicaragua, although some members, mainly Christian Democrats, the junior partners of government, clearly wanted to be much more outspoken in relation to US actions in Central America. The Labour Party, now in opposition, did not fail to see the opportunity to appease a vocal left wing while at the same time put the government under political pressure. The Labour Party called for Norwegian solidarity with Nicaragua. A weak coalition government under pressure from both within and outside was a promising environment for the emerging Norwe-

gian solidarity movement with Latin America. The solidarity movement organized solidarity brigades to Nicaragua, demonstrations, concerts, published newsletters, and leaflets, petitioned and succeeded in building a broad alliance among NGOs to support the Sandinista Government against perceived US imperialism in Central America.

This particular Norwegian context is necessary to understand why Norwegian research on the conflict in Nicaragua came to develop in counter-hegemonic directions. Bye, for instance, has analysed how Norwegian social movements pressured the government into more and deeper cooperation with the Sandinista Government, against strong opposition from the US. After a long and protracted struggle, and much counterproductive US protest, Norway decided to establish a Norwegian Embassy in Nicaragua and send a Peace Corps to Nicaragua (Bye, 1990; Krøvel, 2013). It did herald an epoch at the end of the 1980s with slightly more leeway for idealism in Norwegian foreign policy, and many Norwegian researchers did emerge from solidarity activities with Nicaragua, including the author of this chapter.

In many ways, sending the Peace Corps to Nicaragua was the first significant step towards establishing the peace motive as a dimension of Norwegian foreign policy. It happened primarily as a consequence of social movement activism, but did have wide-ranging effects, which over time were also felt in the research community. For instance, a number of Norwegian researchers have evaluated the Norwegian Peace Corps in Latin America and elsewhere, while others have been contracted to evaluate and analyse Norwegian engagement with Latin American peace process. As such, researching Latin American peace processes has contributing to financing Norwegian research on Latin America. In addition, the Norwegian Research Council has dedicated financial support to research on war and peace issues, some of it financed by NORAD (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation).

The combined forces of the peace engagement in Norwegian foreign policy and social movement activism have contributed to give Norwegian research on Latin America its geographical distribution and analytical perspectives in other and less visible ways too. The Norwegian Peace Corps, financed directly by the Norwegian Government, continues to finance solidarity brigades sent by the Norwegian Solidarity Committee with Latin America. The solidarity brigade project traces its history back to the solidarity campaigns with the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, and a large number of Master and Ph.D. Theses on Latin America continues to be submitted by former solidarity activists who had their formative experiences with Latin America mediated by the Solidarity Committee.

## NORWEGIAN UNDERSTANDING OF 'PEACE'

Peace has long been well-established *cause* within official Norway: The Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded annually since 1901 by a committee elected by the Norwegian Parliament, and Norway has participated in more than 25 UN peace missions to places such as South Sudan, Cyprus, Lebanon, Afghanistan, etc. (Jakobsen, 2006; Leraand, 2012). With the optimism following the initial success of the Oslo Channel, it became clear that involvement in peace processes could potentially be beneficial for Norway on the international arena. However, anti-war and anti-militarism have much deeper and longer roots in Norwegian social movements. Anti-authoritarian, anti-militarism, and pacifism were widespread among radical small peasants in the 1880s and 1890s, as demonstrated in a number of studies of the milieu connected with the newspaper *Fedraheimen* and the novelist Arne Garborg (Bakken, 1969; Thesen, 1991). Besides, the early radical trade unionism was strongly influenced by anti-militarism and pacifism. All these forms of anti-militarism are clearly distinguishable by anti-authoritarianism and anti-capitalism.

The emerging Norwegian engagement with peace processes in the post-Cold War era could not be based on anti-capitalism or radical critiques of power, as the studies of Norwegian engagement with Nicaragua and Guatemala demonstrates. Godbolt, Krøvel, and Nissen explain how the engagement for peace 'from below' had to merge with perspectives 'from the top' to prevail (Godbolt, 2014; Krøvel, 1999a; Nissen, 2011). A white paper from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1989) employed a realist discourse to explain why an idealist Norway, in an increasingly globalized world, had to intensify the engagement for peace, justice, and equality in places that until then had been seen to be located outside the main focus of Norwegian interest. Globalization was seen to lead to greater inter-dependency, which again required a re-orientation of what Norwegian interests mean, according to the then Labour Government. Particularly interesting for this chapter is another influential academic, activist, and politician, Jan Egeland, who in his thesis argued that a small state, such as Norway, with no colonial history and only minor economic interests in Latin America and Africa, was better positioned to serve as a facilitator for human rights and peace than a superpower (Egeland, 1985). Once again, here personified by Egeland, we observe the intimate relationship between Norwegian social activism, politics, and research.

## A NORWEGIAN PEACE FOR GUATEMALA?

The Norwegian involvement in the Guatemalan peace process has been the subject of at least one major monography, five or six Master

Theses and a few research articles (Ekern, Moncada, and Thue, 1998; Fenne, 2005; Krøvel, 1999a, 2000, 2009, 2011; Nissen, 2011; Sørbø, 1998). Based on these publications, the involvement shows some of the traits that have later become characteristic for Norwegian engagement in peace processes around the world.

Krøvel argues that in the late 1980s, a significant change took place in Norwegian analyses of what should be done to help construct a better future for Guatemala. Earlier, most Norwegian NGOs took a Gandhian inspired perspective, believing that injustice and inequality would have to be resolved before a more peaceful Guatemala could be constructed (Krøvel, 1999a). However, by the end of the 1980s, for many within the NGO sphere it had become clear that the violence in Guatemala was so destructive that it in itself created deeper inequality and injustice, and undermined the attempts made by international NGOs (and others) to improve living conditions for excluded and marginalized groups. Peace, understood as no war, had to be achieved before peace, in a deeper Gandhian understanding, could be built according to sources quoted in Krøvel.

Nissen explores Norwegian diplomatic efforts to support the peace process (Nissen, 2011). Among the traits of the Norwegian peace diplomacy that was first tested in Guatemala, Nissen finds, was the 'back channel' or 'Oslo channel / dialogue' which became better known after the PLO and Israeli negotiators held secret meetings in Oslo during the Oslo process, and has later been employed both in the Haitian and Colombian cases. According to some Norwegian diplomats, meeting in the tranquilly of the forests above Oslo, enjoying the fresh air, the view, listening to the birds singing while socializing by the fire place etc., all contributed to building trust and friendship between the parties, something which the diplomats saw as key ingredients in the recipe for a successful outcome to such peace processes. And indeed, lasting friendships were built between some guerrilla commanders and army officers, according to the sources quoted by Nissen and Krøvel (Krøvel, 1999a; Nissen, 2011).

Another feature of Norwegian engagement in peace processes was also tested in Guatemala, according to this research: Norway was prepared to speak with everyone, including those listed as 'terrorists' by the US or European Union. In addition, Norway supported generously civil society activities related to the peace processes, for instance, meetings and conferences to discuss possible peace accords and visions for a future Guatemala. However, as the talks reached crucial moments, such as the delicate subject of truth and justice, bringing the two armed parties to Oslo had the added

benefit, according to Norwegian diplomats, of shielding them from the interference of civil society with their demands and complaints (Krøvel, 1999a). These findings indicate a growing 'pragmatism' in Norwegian activities to support peace processes. While a Gandhian perspective necessarily would focus on structural violence and social exclusion as causes for war, a more pragmatic view saw silencing the arms as a precondition for developing a more peaceful society.

On the other hand, a substantial number of Master Theses from the last 10-15 years on Guatemala, do illustrate the influence of Gandhian perspectives, if perhaps only indirectly, on the overall thinking on issues related to war and peace in Norwegian academia. Norwegian Master students investigate war and peace through a diversity of issues such as 'cultural survival', 'gendered growth', 'war widows' (Normann, 2014), 'politics as continuation of war' (Jacobsen, 2006), 'strategies for organization and mobilisation' among former guerrillas, 'peacebuilding and democratic consolidation', 'civil-military reforms' (Petersen, 2007) and 'peace and experiences of insecurity' (Berg, 2004). These and others move well beyond the narrow lens of 'war', reduced to mean armed conflict between armies, in the search of root causes of conflict and ways to support local capacity for peace management. Most Norwegian master theses on war and peace in Latin America seem to adhere to Galtung's view that 'positive peace' (Galtung, 1996) include a wide range of collaborations and supportive relationships, although the master students do not necessarily quote Galtung on the difference between 'positive peace' and 'negative peace' (no overt violent conflict).

Internationally, the most renowned Norwegian research on Guatemala from an extended peace perspective would certainly be Stølen's *Guatemalans in the Aftermath of Violence. The Refugees' Return* (Stølen, 2007). Stølen lived among Guatemalan peasants, gathering testimonies of their struggles during and after the Guatemalan army unleashed a scorched-earth campaign against all those assumed of supporting the guerrillas. The refugees, through interaction with the international aid and solidarity community during the years of exile, found ways to reconstruct community and identity. The study of their efforts illustrates how poor and exploited people are able to utilize whatever opportunities they find to improve their living conditions.

## **BUILDING A 'NORWEGIAN MODEL' AND SOME CRITICISMS**

The peace process in Guatemala predates the Oslo Channel and the peace agreement between the PLO and Israel, and thus contributed

significantly to a heightened interest in peace as an aspect of Norwegian Foreign policy. It is no exaggeration to say that the experiences in Chile, Nicaragua and Guatemala contributed to shaping Norwegian collective imaginaries of Norway's role in the world. Today, Norway has a strategy for facilitation of peace processes, a number of organisations, institutions and centres dedicated to peace, including the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights and the Nobel Peace Center. It is fair to say that Norwegian research on peace and conflict in Latin America, through the many works that have been mentioned in this chapter so far, has contributed to producing Norwegian understandings of peace.

The research on Latin America presented here resonates well with research on Norwegian engagement elsewhere, for instance Sørbrø on the peace process in Sri Lanka (Sørbrø, 2011), Henriksen Waage on the Oslo Channel (Waage, 2000, 2004), and Piene on the Sudan (Piene, 2014). These authors share a number of concerns and criticisms, which are also visible in the body of literature on Latin American peace processes — here they will have to be summarized only briefly. First, a perceived need to produce results is often converted into a desire to reach an agreement between the armed parties, sometimes excluding broader civil society at vital moments along the way. Second, the Norwegian strategy of postponing some difficult issues until later, in the hope that a period of cooperation and consolidation would make it easier to find a compromise at a later stage, has proved to be more problematic than expected. Instead, unresolved issues tend to become generative mechanisms for social mobilisation and opposition against new governments. Finally, criticism has been directed towards the Norwegian vision of *dialogue* (Waage, 2013). According to this line of argument, Norway has no possibility of asserting pressure on the armed parties and must depend on being seen as a neutral and disinterested intermediary. This leaves the 'dialogue' open for the military stronger part to dominate and perhaps dictate the terms of an agreement, with the risk of ending producing unjust and one-sided agreements to serve as foundations for building a peaceful society.

### **PEACEBUILDING RESOURCES AND EVERYDAY MANOEUVRES**

The long-standing engagement with peace processes and peacebuilding has led to the establishment of permanent institutions to support peacebuilding around the world. Among those institutions, the Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF) stands out for conducting research and publishing reports on peacebuilding in Latin America. The sheer number and scope of investigation makes it impossible

to sum it up here, but the interested reader will find more information at NOREF's webpage.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the Everyday Manoeuvres project brings together more than 30 researchers to investigate military-civil relationships based on case studies on Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Venezuela, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey. The project places the experiences of the countries into the same analytical, comparative framework, in order to understand how the military are intertwined in and interacts with wider society. These projects continue to produce relevant insights and knowledge about issues related to war and peace in Latin America.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has tried to describe and analyse why peace and conflict studies have had such an impact on Norwegian research on Latin America. It has tried to explain why this is so by analysing the intimate relationship between research, social movements and government agencies in Norway. Further, the chapter has tried to highlight not only research that show Norwegian contributions to peace processes in Latin America, but also how Latin Americans in Norway and Latin American experiences have contributed to shaping Norwegian understandings of Latin America.

For the Latin American reader who tries to make sense of Norwegian engagement in Latin American peace processes and the structure of Norwegian research on Latin America, there are a number of interrelated processes to keep in mind. First, the long historical meta-narrative about the particularly peaceful Norwegian nation, which make it possible to frame (Entman, 1993) information about war and peace processes in Latin America as episodes of a longer culturally embedded narrative (Van Dijk, 1997). Then, there is the competition between different visions of solidarity and peace between realists focusing on Norwegian interests and idealists holding up altruistic goals.

All these interrelated processes need to be mediated and communicated to the great public in Norway. An emerging body of critical literature on Norway's role in the world comes from journalism and media studies. Eide and Simonsen have demonstrated how media coverage systematically produces narratives that adhere to the expectations of a Norwegian audience (Eide and Simonsen, 2004, 2008, 2009). This phenomenon is nicely summed up in the title 'The world is being created from home', indicating the importance of pre-fabricated imaginations, or rather 'prejudices', to employ Gadamer's terminol-

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1 At <<http://www.peacebuilding.no/eng/noref/publications/reports>>.



ogy, is for the information journalists produce from the Global South for a Norwegian audience. This phenomenon is also visible in a number of studies of who are quoted as sources in Norwegian media in reports from Latin America. Typically, are the Norwegian sources that define and explain Latin America to the Norwegian audience groups (Krøvel, 2009, 2011; Sæther, 2007).

Peace perspectives, then, have had a significant and increasing impact on Norwegian research on Latin America over the last 25 to 30 years. At the same time, Latin Americans in Norway and Norwegian research on peace and conflict in Latin America continue to influence Norwegian horizons of understandings of what peace means. This research contributes to producing understandings and narratives on Norwegian engagement with peace in the world. It thus helps explain Norwegian activity to support on-going peace processes in places such as Colombia.

However, research on Norwegian media reporting on war and peace in Latin America also document a strong dependency on Norwegian elite sources to the detriment of indigenous peoples, social movements, labour movement, peasants and vulnerable groups (Krøvel, 2011; Sæther, 2007). From a Gandhian peace perspective, this is a problem that should be researched further in future investigations of war and peace in Latin America — particularly so, as Norwegian imaginaries of peace are being projected onto peace processes in Latin American countries.

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Benedicte Bull

## **DEVELOPMENT STUDIES FROM DEPENDENCY TO INEQUALITY**

### **THE MUTUAL INFLUENCE OF NORWEGIAN AND LATIN AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT THINKING**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Development research in Norway — understood as research on development in the Third World — has never had much of a Latin American focus. Yet, as will be argued here, Latin America has influenced Norwegian development research and thinking to a significant extent. Indeed, in this chapter I will argue that there is a strong affinity between, on the one hand, the thinking that evolved from the 1950s and forward on how to develop *Norway*, and on the other hand, Latin American structuralist development thinking of the kind evolving around the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). This is not entirely a coincidence: There has been cooperation between leading Norwegian development scholars and Latin American researchers including Raúl Prebisch starting in the 1960s. Moreover, as a small, open, peripheral — and initially poor — economy, Norway faced some of the same challenges as the Latin American countries in ensuring national sovereignty, economic growth and improved living conditions.

However, while structuralism had the most long-term influence on Norwegian development studies, the radical dependency theories formulated by, among others, André Gunder Frank and Theotonio dos Santos had an even stronger but more short-lived impact. In-



deed, the popularity of Latin America as a study field in the 1970s and 1980s was highly associated with the influence of radical dependency theory, and when it lost its attraction, so did Latin America for many Norwegian students of development. However, it has partly come back with the increased influence of what may be looked at as a form of continuation of the dependency school, namely Latin American post-development perspectives, of which some have a particular affinity with another strain of Norwegian thinking: the deep ecology of Arne Næss.

Thus, there are two stories to be told about Norwegian development research on Latin America, and how it has been influenced by stemming ideas from Latin America, as well as 'home grown' ideas. First, there is the structuralist story about a close affinity and mutual influence of Norwegian and Latin American structuralism. This started in the 1960s, and has resulted in studies by Norwegian scholars on the possibilities for development oriented coalitions and state policies in Latin America to mediate the potentially detrimental impact of global economic and political structures. The last example of such studies occurred as global attention turned to the issue of inequality in the 2010s.

Second, there is a 'dissident story' that started with the Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung's visits to Chile in the 1960s, and the translation of key dependency thinkers to Norwegian. It was carried forth through Marxist inspired development research during the 1970s and 1980s. As the beliefs in grand theory and revolutions from above diminished, some of the same ideas were carried on to studies of resistance against global capitalism at the local level, as well as alternative forms of development mainly after the turn of the millennium. Here we see a new 'confluence' of ideas: between Norwegian 'deep ecology' and Andean ecologies and anti-extractivism.

The chapter is structured as follows. After a brief section on delimitation and methods, I discuss contributions chronologically, from the early development research and influence by the structuralists in the 1960s, to the Marxism and radical dependency theory of the 1970s. In the 1980s, most attention was focused on the conflicts in Central America, while more theoretically oriented development research was increasingly focused on the international trading and financial system. In this period, the structuralists and dependency-oriented scholars found a meeting point in attempting to reform the international trade and finance systems.

In the 1990s, while neoliberalism took its stronghold in Latin America, and became increasingly influential domestically in Norway as well, Norwegian development research was influenced by

the attempt at ‘bringing the state back in’ to development theory. It was a reaction both against the Marxist focus on social forces, and against the mainstream economists, who at best just assumed the existence of an able state, and at worst wished the state out of development. This focus on the state, I would argue, has stuck with Norwegian development research, something that is quite understandable considering the strong role of the state in Norwegian development. Indeed, I would argue that partly through the study of the realities in Latin America, Norwegian researchers have come to realize the role that the state has played in the development of their own country.

The final sections of the paper discuss development research on Latin America after the increased Norwegian economic engagement in the region, focusing both on the new political economy of increasingly globally integrated business and on the development of alternatives to the new extractivism.

Development research is a difficult category to delimitate. I have defined it elsewhere as a ‘complex, multifaceted and fragmented academic field that aims to clarify the goals, means and driving forces of improvements (or lack of such) in the living conditions for the less privileged of the worlds’ population’ (Bull and Bøås, 2010: ix). However, for the purpose of this chapter I will define it narrower as a *scholarly field that is concerned with the relationship between capital, markets and the state, and the impact of their inter-relations on economic growth, distribution and environmental sustainability*.

The ideas presented here are based on my own experiences as a development researcher the first with a focus on Latin America, for almost 20 years, a thorough literature study, as well as discussions for the purpose of this article with four persons that have been key in the general ‘development research’ environment in Norway from its very beginning: Øyvind Østerud, Helge Hveem, Tore Linné Eriksen, and Kristi Anne Stølen (also co-author of one of the chapters in this book).

## **2. THE 1960S: NORWEGIAN DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH IN ITS INFANCY AND THE ROLE OF THE STRUCTURALISTS**

Although, as pointed out in the introduction, Norwegian attention to Latin America grew after the Cuban revolution in 1959, this was not so much felt in development research. The reason was probably that development research in the 1960s was focused on supporting the incipient Norwegian development cooperation that was heavily focused on Africa and Asia.

However, in the mid-1960s, Latin America was pulled into Norwegian development research in a different way. The first ma-

major program for development research in Norway was elaborated at the Christian Michelsen Institute (CMI) in Bergen in the 1960s. The leading figure in this work was Just Faaland, an economist and former assistant to Ragnar Frisch — University of Oslo's Nobel prize winning economist, founder of the so-called 'Oslo-school' in economics, and probably the most influential economist in the elaboration of Norwegian post-war development policy. Faaland's main orientation was in accordance with what Norwegian historian Rune Slagstad has called the 'Norwegian steering sciences' — a kind of science instrumental to governmental steering of societal development (Slagstad, 1998).

Just Faaland, jointly with Stein Rokkan (see chapter 4), was given the responsibility to develop the program on international economy and comparative politics. They were later joined by Ole David Koth Norbye, an economist with a strong linkage to the Norwegian Labor Party and influenced by the 'steering sciences' as well. After participating in a Harvard-led expert group in the late 1950s, Faaland ensured funding from the Rockefeller Foundation for a development research project that went on for several decades and came to strongly influence Norwegian development thinking. As shown by Reinertsen (2008: 21ff), by the time he elaborated this program, he had become heavily influenced by the ideas of Raúl Prebisch whom he had met through his assignments as an advisor to UNCTAD under Prebisch's leadership. Faaland was, to some extent, true to the ideas of modernization theory and the need for bringing 'backwards areas' up to a higher level of industrialization and modernization. These had also been underlying the programs of development of the Norwegian northern 'periphery'. However, inspired by Prebisch's theory, 'he saw the international trade regime and mainstream economic theory as a barrier to the economic growth of developing countries. As such, he agreed with Prebisch and the ECLAC-school [...]. He wanted to build on Prebisch's analyses from Latin America and attempt to transfer his political solutions to other developing countries' (Reinertsen, 2008: 30). Thus, this became the main tenant for studying particularly countries in Asia and Africa in the years to come.

The idea that the international trade system offered both opportunities and disadvantages, some of which could be alleviated through industrial policy and governmental support, later got resonance among groups that turned to Latin America to study the political foundations of such coalitions. However, for at least a decade and a half, such ideas were sidelined in the study of Latin America, by far more radical ideas.

### 3. THE 1970S AND 1980S: DEPENDENCY THEORY AND MARXIST LATIN AMERICA RESEARCH

In 1959, the Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung co-founded the Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO). Soon after — in the mid-1960s — he went to Chile on an UNESCO assignment where he got familiar with the dependency theories of among others, André Gunder Frank, who lived and worked in Chile at the time. His main work on the structural theory of Imperialism (Galtung, 1971) was clearly inspired by this, and it in turn inspired the first Latin America research environment in Norway, at PRIO.

The PRIO research group published on two main research areas related to Latin America. The first was international cooperation and regional integration. This research area was inspired by Galtung's quantitative work, and sought to scientifically prove the structure of the international system and countries' status in it through quantifying patterns of interaction. Reinton (1967) found, for example, that Latin American countries were divided between low and high status, where low-status countries interacted much less frequently with other Latin American countries and, thus, benefited less from integration schemes.

However, as class conflicts sharpened in Latin America and socialist movements in Norway strengthened, the focus of much Latin America research in Norway turned to class-relations and the extent to which conditions were present for a true people's revolution. For example Egil Fossum, one of the PRIO researchers and a former Young Conservative leader turned Marxist, introduced his book on *Latin America: Between Revolution and Counter-Revolution* as follows: 'This is a book on Latin American politics [...] The main focus is on the political struggle, the class struggle' (Fossum, 1970: 1). Jørgensen (1974) was among the first ones to link class struggle with a study of the catholic movement, a topic further explored in chapter 9.

Class relations and the possibility of a revolution to counteract it are not only the theme of the majority of academic development oriented publications of the 1970s (Fossum, 1970a, 1970b; Eriksen, 1971), but also of a number of more popular books, including text books on Latin America for Norwegian students from junior high school and upwards (Wernström, 1973; Lohman, 1977). The Unidad Popular victory in Chile in 1970 was a further inspiration for Norwegian scholarship on Latin America. As Chile was considered to be less different than Norway than many other Latin American countries, and because Allende's victory occurred within an institutionalized political system, it was viewed as an inspiration also for the

Norwegian socialist movements, the majority of which rejected the option of an armed revolution (Hareide, 1973).

In the early 1970s, also some of the most influential Latin American dependency theory texts were translated to Norwegian and published in the first book in Norwegian on radical development theory (Eriksen, 1974).<sup>1</sup> This generated further interest for those ideas. A significant number of master theses were produced on Latin America, particularly in and around PRIO, based on dependency thinking, including Vegard Bye's study of oil nationalization as a means to counteract dependency in Venezuela (Bye 1977, 1979), Ivar Hippe's work on dependency and democracy in Brazil (Hippe, 1984), and Einar Sandved and Ann Ollestads works on dependency and class relations in Argentina (Sandved, 1982; Ollestad, 1984).

The dependency also influenced general development studies, and perhaps more than anything else did the study of the global trade and financial system and the proposal for the New International Economic Order (NIEO). The demands for a NIEO was promoted by UNCTAD, led by Prebisch at the time, and found support both by those adhering to structuralist thinking and more radical dependency theory. In Norway NIEO found major allies within both the radical left-wing camps and more moderate groups, including in the dominating Norwegian Labor Party (AP) and the Christian People's Party (Krf). A large share of Norwegian development research in the 1970s, thus, focused on the reform of the global trading system, inspired by the ideas of Prebisch.<sup>2</sup> However, it is also noticeable that much of the literature is focused on Norway's own policies in the Third World, as for example the first research based book on Brazil in Norwegian called *Norway in Brazil: military dictatorship, genocide and Norwegian aluminum* that seeks to situate Norwegian investments in Brazilian aluminum into a global economic order based on exploitation and imperialism (Akerø et al., 1979).

In the public debate, the 1980s were characterized by a focus on the Central American countries in conflict. Many of the academic studies at the time were concerned with US policy and the dynamics of the conflicts, and thus they fall outside the scope of this chapter. However, some studies were also focused on the class-relations leading to the conflicts, taking an explicit or implicit Marxist point of departure (for

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1 These were Rodolfo Stavenhagen's *Siete tesis erróneas sobre América Latina* (1965), Theotonio dos Santos' *The Crisis of Development Theory and the Problem of Dependency in Latin America* (1969), and André Gunder Frank's *Development and Underdevelopment* (1966).

2 See, for example Hveem (1976, 1977) and Svendsen (1978).

example, Sandved and Skårderud, 1981; Bye, 1984).<sup>3</sup>

The vast majority of the publications on Central America from Norway were actually not published until the 1990s, perhaps as the access to information improved after the end of the violent 1980s. Then a number of studies were produced that sought to shed light on different aspects of the realities that led to the conflicts, most of which apply a more diversified perspective than those associated with the Marxist related dependency. This included Vegard Bye much read book *Forbuden Fred* from 1990<sup>4</sup> (discussed further in chapter 4), but also a number of master theses (e.g. Konow, 1992; Hortman, 1992) on the socio-economic conditions leading to conflict, and there is even the odd study of it based on mainstream economics (Hagen, 1990).

#### **4. THE 1990S-2000S: NORWEGIAN LATIN AMERICA RESEARCH AGAINST GLOBAL CURRENTS: BRINGING THE STATE AND BUSINESS AS ACTORS BACK IN**

The 1990s presents us with a number of contradictions. In Latin America, it is the decade of both democratization and the neoliberal turn. In development research, it is the decade of the great 'impasse': the crisis in development theory after the fall of the Soviet Union, the end of NIEO and the discrediting of the revolutionary alternative (Hettne, 1990; Schuurman, 1993). In Norwegian development studies, Latin America is clearly slipping out of focus as the dependency theory loses influence. Indeed, there is not a single article published on Latin America in the main Norwegian scholarly development *Journal of Development Studies* in the 1990s.<sup>5</sup> However, Norwegian development research takes three turns of importance for further studies of Latin America. First, after decades of discussing social forces, classes and international structures, states and firms are brought back in as study *objects* rather than as expressions of class forces. Second, there is a renewed interest for how international cooperation between states can act as a buffer against the most detrimental effects of international structures, which are increasingly talked about as *globalization*. Third,

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3 Viewed in hindsight, Sandved and Skårderud's book has an interesting preface. The first lines of the book read as follows: 'The union leader Lula, also called Brazil's Lech Walesa, visited Nicaragua in the summer of 1980 related to the celebration of the revolution's first year. On his way home, he was asked what his impression of the Sandinists' new Nicaragua was. "Great. I have asked my travel companions to shut up for three days and just think". By this, Lula expressed parts of what we would like to say. Nicaragua is unique. One does not have to stay in the country for long before this is confirmed; the key word is enthusiasm' (Sandved and Skårderud, 1981).

4 Translated into Spanish as *La Paz prohibida* (1991).

5 Actually, there are no articles on Latin America between 1989 and 2007.

and clearly related, there is a renewed contact between what are now often called as the neo-structuralists in Latin America, represented by, among others, Osvaldo Sunkel and Celso Furtado, and key Norwegian (and Swedish) development research environments.

If we should venture into a description of the general perspective that develops in Norwegian development research focusing on Latin America in the 1990s, it would be this: based implicitly more than explicitly on the experiences of Norway, it focuses on how states as complex actors can generate growth and welfare faced with potentially detrimental effects of the international or global system. This requires a study of the state apparatus as well as its relationship to social actors, both within and outside national borders. It also requires a study of the private companies, international organizations and non-governmental organizations, assumed to affect the state's willingness and ability to pursue such strategies.

In 1989, a special issue was published of the *Journal of Development Studies* on *The Role of the State in Development*. In this journal, it was argued that the character, background, and functions of the state apparatuses had been an overlooked 'missing link' between global power-relations and the villages (Tvedt, 1989: 122). There is little doubt that this turn was inspired by the publication five years before of the book *Bringing the State Back in* (Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, 1985) that couples a historical sociological and a Weberian approach to development and democracy, partly of course inspired by Rueschemeyer, Stephen, and Stephens (1992) seminal work on Latin American democracy, and Evans study of Brazilian development (Evans, 1979). The focus on the state was well received in Norway that was in the midst of a rapid development process, engineered by a state that combined features of the 'dignitary state' established in the nineteenth century and the social democratic state with significant popular participation, evolving after the World War II.<sup>6</sup>

Most of this renewed interest for the state was channeled towards studying the evolving 'Asian miracle' where the 'developmental state' became the dominating concept for understanding the roots of the speed of growth and industrialization of the 'Asian Tigers'. There were not many obvious success stories to study in Latin America at the moment, as the region struggled to rise from the devastating impact of the debt crisis continued its drift towards privatization and liberalization. However, in my own Ph.D. dissertation I used a study of the historical

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6 Indeed, in the same special issue that argues for the return of the state to development studies, there is also an article on state building in medieval Norway (Bagge, 1989).



evolution of the states in Central America as a starting point for understanding what *kind* of privatization policies that were chosen, and what results they produced, focusing on the impact on state authority and legitimacy and not only 'economic efficiency'. While considering the role of the International Financial Institutions (the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the IMF) in the process, I found the local dynamics between business elites and the state to mediate the outcome of the international pressure (Bull, 2005).<sup>7</sup>

In addition, other studies took a state focused and more long-term perspective of the ongoing structural adjustment processes, attempting to look beyond the liberal a-politicized view of the state as a neutral facilitator of growth and development, but still not being limited by the Marxist theory of the state. One example is Christian Krohn-Hansen's anthropological work on the relationship between state, violence and legitimacy in the building of the Dominican state (Krohn-Hansen, 2005). Moreover, Håvard Haarstad's work on the IMFs Foreign Direct Investment discourse in Bolivia works along those lines when investigating how labor unions and other social actors make use of the 'political spaces' opened to them, as the IMF and other international actors restructured the politics of Bolivia in the 1990s. While he significantly moves beyond the material aspects and place more emphasis on discourses, he similarly problematizes how international impulses shape local agency (Haarstad, 2009).<sup>8</sup>

To a significant extent, the focus on the state also follows the line of thinking of the Cardoso-Faletto model and later the neo-structuralism of Sunkel and others. The Cardoso-Faletto model of 'dependent development' accepted the structural dependence of national economies on a world market, but, at the same time proposed that such dependence, if the social bloc succeeds, may be turned to a source for development (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979). This line of thinking became influential in the perhaps most read textbook in Norwegian on international political economy by political science professor Helge Hveem (Hveem, 1996). Hveem was also influenced by the later neo-structuralism and maintained close contact with the ECLAC-environment in the 1990s. He also participated in the 1991 publication edited by Patricio Meller and Manghus Blomström *Diverging paths: comparing a century of Scandinavian and Latin American development* (Meller

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7 The original thesis was published in 2002. A revised version was published by Edward Elgar (2005) and in Spanish by FLACSO (2007).

8 Of course, this is not to argue that this was an increasing focus in the 1990s, neither to say that studies of the role of the state in development did not exist before. See, for example, Øveraas (1984) on the role of the state in Mexican industrialization.



and Blomstrøm, 1991). A major theme in this book was the political economy of the development process, and how, in Scandinavia, a form of 'Democratic corporatism' produced efficient policy blending the market with a welfare system and strong state facilitation of the market in the interest of productivity growth.

This approach was later followed up in my own work on the incorporation of social movements in democratic development projects in Norway, Bolivia, Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador and Mexico (Bull, 2007, 2013a). Originally based on an assignment by the Inter-American Development Bank it build on the seminal work by the Norwegian economist Karl Ove Moene, and highlighted the important role of the labor movement and the institutionalization of their influence on economic policy making as important explanations for the evolution of the welfare state in Norway. It undertook a comparative study of the state's reaction to pressures from new social movements in Bolivia, Brazil and Argentina, and later extended it to Ecuador and Mexico.

Although being undertaken from a political science perspective, it was complementary to the resurgence of structuralism in the 1990s. The 1993 publication on *Development from within* that sought to counteract the neoconservative resurgence and build on the Latin American ideas of endogenous development. It argued that the market needs the active and dynamic support of the state, and the state has to encourage the quality, flexibility and efficient use of productive resources, adoption of technological developments, etcetera (Sunkel, 1993).

In Norway, this kind of thinking got particularly influential in various departments of geography and at the Centre for Technology, Innovation and Culture (TIK) at the University of Oslo that focused on how states mediated the impact of foreign direct investments (FID). Moreover, it found resonance among the few economists working outside the mainstream economics departments, first and foremost Erik Reinert. Having spent some of his formative years in Peru, Reinert went further away from neo-classical economics than the ECLAC-school of the 1990s, and argued for understanding the process of 'catching up' by third world countries as dependent on technological shifts. Being eventually more influenced by German economists, principally Schumpeter and Lutz, the impulses for his works on evolutionary economics emerged initially from the study of Latin America (Reinert, 1993), and was significantly influenced by his cooperation with the Venezuelan economist Carlota Pérez (Drecshler, Kattel, and Reinert, 2009).

With the increased salience of environmental issues over the course of the 1990s, the focus on state coalitions and active govern-

mental development policies was also combined with the study of environmental impact of different strategies. This required a better understanding of the relationship between environmental practices of local and transnational companies and the states, and the need for moving beyond the structuralist notion of 'business as capital'. This was the focus of the work at the departments of Social Geography at the University of Bergen, focusing on environmental issues in Chilean and Peruvian fisheries, and connections to Norwegian investments (e.g. Barton and Fløysand, 2010), and works on transnational companies' impact on the possibilities of sustainable investments. There are not many works on this by senior researchers, but a number by master students (see, a. o. Midteide, 1996; Wiik, 1999; Stabell, 2003; Delgado, 2003).

The other main consequence of this structural inspiration was a focus on regional integration within the framework of the new regionalism(s). While regional integration was never a big issue in Norway, that had recently (1994) rejected membership in the European Union, there was a focus on how regional integration could be a buffer against globalization and/or serve to promote alternative development projects. Some of the works on this relate closely to the ideas of 'open regionalism' promoted by ECLAC in the mid-1990s. The strongest expression of this was the cooperation project between Norwegian, Swedish and Latin American scholars in the 1990s, resulting in the publication *Globalism and the New Regionalism* (Hettne, Inotai, and Sunkel, 1999). Other researchers posed more open questions, such as Vengbo (2000) that sought to explain the slow speed of the Central American integration process. A third current took a more critical, constructivist approach to study how policies from above and local interactions on the ground construct regions. Within this group, I myself worked on Central American and Meso-American regionalism understanding it as constructed through competing and often conflicting spatial processes, rejecting the geographical demarcations underlying the dominant neo-liberal discourse on 'central' and 'meso' America at the time (Bull, 1999, 2005a).

This was related also to the US-led mega integration projects: NAFTA, DR-CAFTA and the debate over a possible FTAA. A number of master theses were written on the implications of NAFTA to different aspects of the Mexican economy (e.g. Røssaak, 1996; Lunder, 2003). My own research on this took as a starting point what I had observed when I was working on privatization processes: that the local business groups that had transformed with the structural reforms of the 1990s became main actors also in transnational negotiations, and thus acquired a new international political role with the new trade

agreements. Indeed, in the processes of negotiating FTAs, both the divisions between the national and the international, and the public and the private were blurred as alliances were formed across spaces, and business representatives often were given public roles (Bull, 2008; Bull, 2014).

In the 1990s, we also see the contours of a new 'dissident' project related to the developments above. This focused on resistance to the mega projects, the neoliberal trade integration and foreign direct investment.

## **5. THE 2000S: THE SECOND 'DISSIDENT STORY' GAINS GROUND – POST-DEVELOPMENT MEETS DEEP-ECOLOGY**

As in much of the world, the study of resistance movements got a boost in Norway with the launch of the Zapatista war against the Mexican state from the Lacandon-jungle on the day of the entering into effect of NAFTA. Two decades after the 'first' dissidents were inspired by dependency theory to study the conditions for revolution; there was a new generation that became inspired by the increasingly influential ideas of post-colonialism and post-developmentalism. However, they had some common traits with the old generation of dissidents: they searched Latin America for new thinking on development, not only as a solution to the problems of Latin America, but indeed to global problems. The similarity in approach between the two groups is perhaps not so surprising, as indeed Fernando Coronil has argued: 'the dependency school represents one of Latin America's most significant contributions to postcolonial thought' (2004: 223).

The establishment of solidarity brigades from Norway to Chiapas by the Latin America solidarity groups fueled the interest and support for the Zapatista uprising. However, there was also research that sought to problematize the strategies and arguments of representation by the Zapatistas, such as that by Roy Krøvel focusing on the role of the new technologies of resistance (Krøvel, 2010) and problematizing the relationship between indigenous groups and the hierarchical military organizations (Krøvel, 2011).

Nevertheless, for the purpose of development research as defined here, the most interesting result of the study of the diverse processes of local resistance is the work on the new development models proposed by the new social movements. John Andrew McNeish's work in the early 2000s on Bolivian protest movements against neo-liberalism (discussed further in chapter 7) encompassed an attempt to understand the protests not only as a reaction to a policy imposed from above, but also as a process defining alternatives. It discussed the ideas that ultimately would underpin the new political projects: that

all people's efforts should lead to *Suma Qamaña* — to living well or harmony; that balance and reciprocity should be maintained through the union of contraries. This, it was argued, applies to the natural environment, the social relations at the level of households, couples, family and community; and ultimately, in a cosmological sense, in relation to the supernatural world (McNeish, 2006: 235).

Particularly, the development models of Bolivia and Ecuador that envisaged a new relationship between the state, the capital, the people and the environment generated significant interest across the world, including in Norway. For many, these were evidence for the possibility of putting into practice the visions expressed by the post-development and post-colonial perspectives of the 1990s. Arturo Escobar's writings, based to a significant extent on experiences from Colombia, were particularly influential (Escobar, 1995), but also those of Fernando Coronil and others. As this was not only a critique against colonial / developmental / industrial exploitation of people, but also of natural resources, it also played into the increasingly salient environmental debate.

Interestingly, in the works of one of the most vocal opponents to the dominating development strategies, Eduardo Gudynas, we see again a confluence of ideas that also include some originating from Norway. Gudynas' ecology is significantly influenced by his close dialogue with local communities mostly in the Andean region, but also by two main concepts developed abroad: the ideas of 'the ethics of the earth' of Aldo Leopold, and the 'deep ecology' of the Norwegian Philosopher Arne Næss (Gudynas, 2014). The deep ecology calls for a social mobilization for nature based on a clear normative imperative. The idea is not to reduce pollution and over-exploitation of resources as a means to ensure people's long-term ability to continue exploiting them. Rather it is to preserve them for the rights of nature, as a part of our duty to encourage diversity of life in all its aspects. Gudynas got acquainted with Næss in the 1970s, and reestablished contact with Næss' last 'intellectual home', the Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM) at the University of Oslo, in 2010, and was awarded the Arne Næss chair for 2016.<sup>9</sup> Considering Gudynas' active involvement with Ecuadorian social movements participating in the elaboration of the 2008 Constitution, it is perhaps no surprise that the much

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9 The Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM) of the University of Oslo is also the workplace of three authors of this book: Mariel Aguilar-Støen, Kristi Anne Stølen, and I. Næss worked there since its establishment in 1990 until he passed away in 2009. SUM has an 'Arne Næss Library' and his widow Kit-Fai Næss still has an affiliation to the Centre and manages her late husband's works.

celebrated Cuadro 4.1 of Chapter 7 that gives specific rights to nature, is compatible both with the idea of the 'ethics of the earth' of Leopold, and that of Næss' deep ecology (Gudynas, 2014: 77).

The affinity between the deep ecology and Gudynas' influential environmental thought shows the complexity in development thinking in both Norway and Latin America. In the same vein as Næss was never close to the structuralist developmentalism and the 'steering sciences' in Norway, and was indeed a harsh critique of its accompanying 'technology-optimism', Gudynas has been very critical of CEPAL's structuralism, particularly the newer variety (Gudynas, 2009).<sup>10</sup> But while the issues discussed by Næss and Gudynas continued to be debated both in the increasingly natural resources dependent Latin America and in the oil-fueled Norwegian economy, Gudynas inspired Norwegian master-students to study the potentials and setbacks of the *Buen Vivir / Vivir Bien* (Sumak Kawsay) in Latin America (e.g. Andrade, 2009; Oltedal, 2012).

## **6. 2010S: THE NEW INEQUALITIES AND THE RENEWED NORWEGIAN INTEREST FOR LATIN AMERICA**

As discussed in the introduction, from the mid-2000s, there was increased Norwegian economic engagement in Latin America, with a steep surge of investments, chiefly to Brazil and particularly in natural resource extraction sectors. This encouraged a number of studies scrutinizing the social and environmental impact of this engagement. Furthermore, the old issue of inequality acquired renewed global attention and became a new topic of cooperation. Situated at opposite ends of global inequality rankings, Norway and Latin America found new grounds for academic exchange on inequality, partly re-invoking the structuralist thinking from the past. Another phenomenon is worth noticing: In many of the studies, we see that Latin America increasingly emerges as a 'partner' on equal footing. Norway and Latin America are no longer considered to belong to the two different planets called the First and the Third World, but are geographical areas with similar and different challenges and prospects for exchange of experience. And increasingly, the studies are conducted in close cooperation with researchers both from Latin America and Norway.

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<sup>10</sup> It is interesting to note that Gudynas emphasizes that his critics are mainly directed against current ECLAC-thinking. He argues that there are seeds in the Prebisch thinking that both calls for a more profound transformation of capitalism than what has later been argued for, and that he sought to include social, political, and ecological ethical dimensions (Gudynas, 2009: 10).

One example of this is the book by the CMI-based John Andrew McNeish and Owen Logan from 2012: *Flammable Societies*. This starts with a story on the role of the Scandinavian labor movement in the regulation of the oil economy. The transparency and quality of oil governance was not the result of the enlightened ideas of technocrats or some inherent institutional quality, they argue, but rather of politicians' and bureaucrats' constantly need for taking into account the opinions of the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (Logan and McNeish, 2012: 3). This set the stage for a book that from rich anthropological perspectives studies the social regulation of energy in various settings, including Venezuela (Strønen, 2012) and Bolivia (McNeish, 2012). A main motivation is to challenge the dominating resource curse perspective, by re-connecting a study of global structures of the Latin American dependency perspectives with the understanding of local patterns of dominance and the opposition against it.

A group of political scientists, historians and economists focusing on Brazil studied the emergence of a new industrial policy in the petroleum and mining sectors in Brazil, in the project *The 'developmental state' reloaded?* Responding both to Norwegian companies' need for better understanding Brazil, and to Lula and other Brazilian politicians' outspoken desire to follow '*o modelo norueguês*', the project makes clear reference to the developmental state literature referred to above, and the Brazilian structuralist thinking going back to the ECLAC school. Having Norway's main 'oil historian', Helge Ryggvik, onboard, there is also an explicit comparative dimension seeking to understand how many similar policies got very different results implemented in two very different contexts: Norway of the 1970s and Brazil of the 2010s (Botelho and Kasahara, 2015; Ryggvik, 2015). This project also continues the focus on the interplay between different social forces and their incorporation in state practices, more precisely, on the role of labor unions in the Brazilian off-shore industry (Braathen, 2015).

The search for local varieties of global capitalist regulations is also pursued in other projects, but from different perspectives. One group of researchers worked actively with scholars at the University of Havana's Economics Department to elaborate models for a mixed economy in a transition from the current socialist system. The main purpose was to elaborate what long-run development strategy could enable to combine equity and growth objectives in a possible post-embargo scenario (Bye, 2013; Castellacci, 2013).

The search for alternatives to an Anglo-Saxon capitalism was also pursued in a study of Central American business groups in a transnational economy, led by me. This used the 'varieties of capitalism'

approach to study how capitalist dynamics depends on institutional 'complementarities' in different national settings. Studying the Central American elite-family businesses' strategies in a global economy is definitely a sign that the world and Latin America research has moved quite far since the 1980s. The 2014 book on business groups and transnational capitalism in Central America, seeks, in a Norwegian social democratic spirit, to open a space for a debate about the drivers of growth and development in Central America, understanding business groups as possible political actors, but without resorting to the determinism of old Marxist perspectives. It combines quantitative analysis of existing data as well as the 3,000-company database collected for the project, with genealogies of the main elite-families and qualitative interviews of business group leaders. Inspired by the Salvadoran economist Alex Segovia and US-political scientist Ben Ross Schneider, it argues that Central America has become dominated by a transnational, networked hierarchical capitalism in which the sprawling diversified business groups play a key role, cementing a pattern of low productivity growth and sustained structural inequality (Bull, Castellacci, and Kasahara, 2014; Bull, 2013b) .

The study on economic groups tied into the study of elites received increasing focus in development studies in the 2010s (Amsden et al., 2012). Elites have been associated with old oligarchic groups in Latin America, but after having been in power for almost a decade, it became increasingly difficult not also to conceive some of the new, leftist groups as a kind of elite. This was the perspective, pursued by Bull and Aguilar-Støen in a project funded by the European Union's FP7 program as a part of a large collaborative research program on Environmental Governance.<sup>11</sup> The starting point was the observation that the progressive governments pursued equally aggressive extractivist policies as their predecessors, in spite of having grown out of environmental and indigenous movements, in many cases. In seeking the answers, through case studies in eight countries, Bull and Aguilar-Støen (2015) ended up questioning political pluralism's ability to bring about a shift in governance, and they brought back in elite-theory from both the Marxist and institutional school.

This touched on the topic that would become a key focus of Norwegian development cooperation from 2013: inequality. The second decade of the new millennium removed the issue of inequality from the list of taboos in the international development discourse, and it became not only a key topic in development, but also one that linked

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11 This was the ENGOV project, of which CLACSO was also a partner. See Baud, Hogenboom, and Castro (2015).



the North and the South in a new way. It was proven that inequality increased fast in Europe and the United States as well as in some countries of the South, while notably Latin America that started from extremely high levels of inequality, experienced an opposite trend. Having a minister of Development Cooperation from the Socialist left, the Norwegian Government intended to make inequality reduction a new focus for development cooperation, as expressed in the White Paper *Sharing for prosperity* (Meld. St. 25, 2013). The new minister of Cooperation was made aware of new research showing a decline in income inequality in Latin America that was always thought of as the champion of bad distribution. ECLAC was at the time focusing increasingly on inequality and was in the midst of the publication of its flagship 'inequality trilogy' (ECLAC, 2010, 2012, 2014). This made the Norwegian Government and ECLAC to start a three-pillar cooperation program that was initiated focusing on social policy, gender and natural resource management for inequality.

While Norway was interested in Latin America's recent positive experiences, ECLAC was more interested in understanding the root causes of Norway's sustained low levels of income inequality since the 1950s. Thus, a program of cooperation was established with the University of Oslo, including its Center of Excellence on Equality, Social Organization and Performance (ESOP) that focused on exploring the links between equality, social organization and economic performance, both in rich and poor countries. Being located at the same institute as Ragnar Frisch who's student Just Faaland established the first links to ECLAC, ESOP was led by Karl Ove Moene, the one scholar that probably has contributed most to the understanding and the improvement of the Norwegian version of the so-called 'Nordic model' of welfare and prosperity. His main argument is that social policy and labor market coordination have been complementary and absolutely necessary elements in the transformation of the Norwegian economy into a high-growth and high productivity economy. In that process, economic openness to the global market has been an important disciplining mechanism, that with strong labor market institutions in place has served, simultaneously, to keep down the highest wages, reduce inequality and encourage investments in high productivity sectors. Key to the coordination mechanism was solidarity-centralized wage bargaining, established as a result of the hard struggles of the labor unions from the 1920s on. Moene caught a significant interest for the developments in Latin America and sought, jointly with the Indian economist Shabana Mitra and me, to interpret the lessons from Latin America's decade of prosperity and inequality reduction. The purpose was to understand the potentials for a more profound struc-

tural transformation needed to sustain current inequality reduction (Bull, Mitra, and Moene, 2015).

In one sense, the story had come full circle. Norway-style structural economic thinking had re-found the ECLAC schools interest in how national institutions can mediate between domestic social forces and a global capitalism, in order to produce growth and social distribution. Many factors had changed, but Latin America had return as an ally in a struggle to create spaces for welfare and human wellbeing in a global economy that was still considered to produce both prosperity and misery, but above all inequality.

## CONCLUSION

Norwegian development studies have evolved in part as a companion to Norwegian development policies, and in part in opposition to mainstream development thinking. Development studies focusing on Latin America were from the start a part of the work by the 'dissidents': those that wanted a profound transformation of global and national economic and political systems, and not a kind of aid that would serve to cement structures of inequality and exploitation.

However, Latin American development thinking was also from the very beginning a source of inspiration for economists and others close to the Norwegian apparatus for development planning. The structuralism developed by Raúl Prebisch and other ECLAC scholars had important affinities with the Norwegian so called 'steering sciences' seeking to provide a foundation for a state led modernization and development process that sought to regulate and moderate the effect of markets.

Over the decades, both Norwegian and Latin American development thinking have evolved significantly. Norwegian studies on Latin America have become much more globalized in the sense that the authors generally write in English and take part in international academic discussions, and not only in the domestic academic and political debates. In sheer numbers, both master and Ph.D. students and senior scholars have increased, and the number of publications has increased fast.

While sometimes drawing explicitly and implicitly on experiences from Norway, what is most striking is how Norwegian development studies on Latin America are based on a confluence of ideas emerging in the United States and Europe, but significantly also in Latin America. Here I have highlighted three such Latin American bodies of thinking of significant influence: the structuralism of the ECLAC-school, the radical dependency theory, and the Latin American post-colonial / de-colonial thought.

The last years have been marked particularly by studies inspired by the latter, but also by a number of studies seeking to develop alternative models to dominating free-market capitalism. In this, Norway based scholars often use experiences from Norway. However, from my own experience, I would argue that this happen more often on demand from Latin American counterpart than from an explicit desire to 'export' the Norwegian model to the very different contexts of Latin America. What results is a process in which studying Latin America with the help of a blend of Norwegian and Latin American ideas help us reflect on the strengths, weaknesses, and conditions of our own development model, as well as our engagement in far-away countries, such as Latin American ones. The hope would be that our contributions also help Latin Americans to do the same.

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Mariel Aguilar-Støen and Kristi-Anne Stølen

## **RURAL AND AGRARIAN STUDIES**

### **FROM THE LIGAS AGRARIAS TO THE ANTI-EXTRACTIVISM MOVEMENTS\***

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, we review and discuss the Norwegian contributions that have been made to the field of agrarian studies in Latin America. By agrarian studies, we mean those studies that seek to analyze and understand rural life and rural society. This field is interdisciplinary by necessity, and includes both economic and political processes in which the agricultural sector plays an important role. It focuses on social and cultural processes that transform rural societies, including the role of agriculture in these processes. We include research on social structures, institutions, actors, and processes of change in the rural world or which relate to the rural world, as well as research on how the agrarian relations of power are created, understood, and disputed. We have selected some works, although it is not an in-depth review, which allow us to draw four lines that have been recurrent in the Norwegian rural and agrarian studies on Latin America. These lines are: agrarian movements and socio-economic change; gender issues; relations between peasants and the state and; globalization, migration and socio-environmental conflicts.

\* Translated by Eugenia Cervio.

Ongoing processes of change during the last fifty years in Latin America have resulted in profound transformations of the countryside, the agrarian, and the rural. One of the most remarkable changes is the increasing urbanization of many countries in the region. The available data from the Population Division of the United Nations show that Latin America is characterized by high levels of urbanization and persistent urban growth. Latin America is the region with the highest percentage of urban population in the world (80%). The increasing urbanization in the region during the twentieth century is explained in part by the economic growth generated by the agricultural sector, in part by the growth of the population, and in part as a result of the effects of changes in the public policies that drove out a mass of rural people who migrated to the cities in the 1980s and the 1990s. Despite the high rate of urbanization in Latin America, there are still countries with high rates of rural population, such as the cases of Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, and Belize. There are other paradoxes, as in the case of Argentina, with high urbanization (93%) while, at the same time, agricultural production is substantially contributing to the economy.

The last years of the twentieth century and the first years of the twenty-first century brought new changes to rural areas of Latin America. These changes are related to the current capitalist expansion of natural resources extraction such as oil and minerals; the expansion of extractive agriculture (Alonso-Fradejas, 2015); of energy demands, as in the case of hydroelectric power plants; and new forms of commodification of nature (Aguilar-Støen, 2016). The agriculture as an economic activity has been transformed, with profound consequences for rural populations (as abandonment of the countryside, land concentration, and agro-industry), and the new extractive activities represent new challenges in rural areas.

The works referred to in this chapter not only belong to a diversity of disciplines but also include approaches ranging from issues of poverty, livelihoods, justice, conflict, gender, and migration to relations with the state. This diversity reflects the way in which agrarian studies have been transformed not only in Norway but also in the world as a result of the changes occurring in Latin America, as well as by theoretical advances or the conditions of funding and/or policy in Norway.

The works were made by researchers based on Norwegian academic institutions. More than the nationality or the mothertongue of a researcher, what we consider important is the *proper*<sup>1</sup> from where

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1 The term *proper*, that we use here, is inspired by the ideas of M. De Certeau 1984 *The practice of everyday life* (Berkeley: University of California Press). We understand

the research is facilitated and financed, from where the discussions are validated, and consensus and dissent are built. This *proper* — the Norwegian academic community — is in turn influenced by European, American, and Latin American traditions.

## RURAL AND AGRARIAN STUDIES: THE SCOPE OF THIS CHAPTER

Norway, unlike the other Nordic countries, does not have a long tradition regarding Latin American agrarian studies. In the other Nordic countries, natural scientists, ethnologists, and ethnographers have carried out research in this field since the nineteenth century, some internationally recognized. Henning Siverts, social anthropologist at the Ethnographic Museum of Bergen, was a pioneer when he began his fieldwork in Chiapas in 1953. He followed the destiny of indigenous peoples in the municipality of Oxchuc for more than forty years. His work is framed within a classical 'Indigenist' ethnographic tradition, inspired by the Mexican ethnographer Villa Rojas, and refers only briefly to agriculture and other economic activities in his detailed monograph on kinship and social organization in Oxchuc (Siverts, 1969).

Research on agrarian issues in Latin America had its *momentum* in Norway in the 1970s, motivated by the introduction of 'peasant studies' and the influence of Marxism in social sciences, which offered new perspectives to the analysis of the ongoing events in Latin America. 'Peasant studies' emerges as a result of a series of seminars at the University of London, which originated the publication of the *Journal of Peasant Studies*. The objective of the seminars was to stimulate the discussion of agrarian issues that increasingly were considered important in the societies of the third world, but not investigated properly. These issues included, broadly, the peasant social structure, the nature and logic of peasant agriculture, and the peasants and their political struggles. However, few papers written by Norwegian academics have been published in this journal, or in *Journal of Agrarian Change* that resulted from a split in the editorial board of JPS.<sup>2</sup>

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*proper* as a centre of power from which speeches are made and practices are established, that define the course of action of researchers, and from which other areas can be influenced, such as politics and funding policies.

2 In fact, only two papers were published in *Journal of Peasant Studies* between 1979 and 2015, and only one in *Journal of Agrarian Change*. These are: Archetti, E. P. 1979 'Agrarian reform and peasant organisation on the Ecuadorian Coast' in *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 6, 4: 505-507; McNeish, J. A. 2010 'Globalization and the reinvention of Andean tradition: the politics of community and ethnicity in highland Bolivia' in *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 29 (3-4): 228-269; Aguilar-Støen, Taylor, and Castellanos 2014 'Agriculture, land tenure and international migration in rural Guatemala' in *Journal of Agrarian Change* (n.d.).

Studies of peasant societies in Latin America, focusing on processes of change, integration, and economic, social, and cultural differentiation represented an important contribution to the understanding of the complex societies in the third world. The studies of anthropologists such as Robert Redfield, George Foster, Eric Wolf, and Sidney Mintz became sources of inspiration for young students in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Oslo, who wanted to demonstrate through their own research, the usefulness of applying anthropological perspectives to problems of social change and development. The ideas of Eric Wolf on the organization and dynamics of the peasant social structure were formed by his studies in Mexico and, more broadly, in Latin America and the Caribbean. The fieldwork of Mintz was carried out in Puerto Rico, Haiti, and Jamaica; and the fieldwork of Redfield and Foster in Mexico. Afterwards, it is clear that, although the intellectual inspiration came from other European countries and the United States, it was based on fieldwork carried out in peasant societies of Latin America.

Eduardo Archetti was the first Latinamericanist of the Department, and played an important role in channelling the research interests of the students both to Latin American issues and to agrarian studies in complex societies. A graduate of the Sorbonne, where he had studied with Professors such as Godelier, Wolf, and Mintz, he represented a new anthropological current, rather structural and Marxist, in opposition to the Anglo-Saxon one characterized by long-term fieldwork in small and 'primitive' communities (Hervik, 2003). It must be said that at the time the Research Council of Norway granted scholarships to MA students who wanted to pursue studies in 'non-European contexts'. Due to these scholarships, the first fieldworks in Latin America could be made (see Chapter 1).

### **AGRARIAN MOVEMENTS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE**

In the early 1970s in Argentina, the organization and the rapid expansion of the agrarian movement *Ligas Agrarias* (Agrarian Leagues) drew the attention of Eduardo Archetti and Kristi Anne Stølen. They spent almost two years conducting fieldwork among the '*colonos*' or settlers of Friulian origin in the province of Santa Fe, Argentina. These settlers played an important role in the *Ligas Agrarias*. Their studies—first published as a monograph in Spanish in 1975—not only provide a detailed analysis of the immigrant farmers that had previously received scarce attention by social scientists, but also challenged the dominant ideas about the nature and role of the agrarian movements in Latin America (Archetti and Stølen, 1975). The scholars in Argentina tended to identify the *Ligas* with the peasant movements in Peru or

those of the northeast of Brazil, the most active of the period, whose militancy and demands were focused on the injustice related to the access to land and property rights. That was not the case of the *Ligas* studied by Archetti and Stølen. They showed that the settlers were not the typical Latin American peasants nor fully capitalist farmers. These farmers were based on family labour, but at the same time, they used wage labour and accumulated capital. Although the settlers had the property of the land, they suffered due to instability of the agricultural policy and the commercialisation system, which was reflected in their claims. For that reason, the *Ligas* resembled more the agrarian movements in France or Canada than the peasant movements in the rest of Latin America. By participating in the discussions of the 'peasant studies' Archetti and Stølen also contributed to the development of the anthropological study of post-peasant societies (Archetti and Stølen, 1974, 1978). Fifteen years later, Stølen continued her studies among the 'colonos'. By then, her research focus and theoretical approach had changed considerably (Stølen, 1996).

The interest in peasant movements also motivated Marit Melhuus to do research in another area of influence of the *Ligas Agrarias* in Argentina, during the same period (1974-75). Melhuus conducted her fieldwork among poor tobacco producers in the province of Corrientes, but due to the increasing political repression in the country at that time she was forced to change the focus of her research from a policial analysis to an economic one. Through a detailed analysis of the production and commercialisation of black tobacco among these landless peasants, she managed to identify the conditions that structured the agrarian sector and led to political mobilization. In her exhaustive and ethnographically rich monograph based on this research, Melhuus analyzes the peasant condition under the advance of capitalism. She analyzes the ways in which the non-capitalist economic sectors are articulated with, and are subsumed under, capitalism as a dominant mode of production (Melhuus, 1987). The focus was primarily on economic processes and the analytical approach was strongly influenced by Marxism.

Between 1976 and 1977, Harald Skar and Sarah Lund Skar carried out their research on the agrarian reform in Peru, which represented the most radical agrarian transformation of the continent. Unlike others studies of the period, which focused mainly on the Peruvian reform as a macro phenomenon, these anthropologists wanted to explore the impact of the reform on the Quechua peasant culture. They conducted fieldwork in Matapuquio, a community in the Altiplano (Highlands), with Quechua peasants who had gained access to expropriated land from large estates (*latifundia*), where many of them

had previously worked as farmhands. H. Skar explores the process of adaptation of the peasants to the new reality — strongly influenced by agricultural policies formed outside the boundaries of their daily lives — and the changes generated by this adaptation. He combines the analysis of planned change initiated by the state with a systematic examination of the cultural categories and oral narratives of the Quechua social organization. In 1982, he published a monograph in English based on this research (Skar, 1982).

In the case of Lund Skar, what started as a study of a single community continued almost ten years later, between 1984 and 1986, with fieldworks carried out in three different locations. First in Maturquio, the community she had previously studied, and in two locations where immigrants from this community had been settled — one in a new area of colonization, opened in the Eastern foothills of the Andes, and the other in Lima, the coastal capital. She explored the cultural continuity and transformation linked to the fact of being separated from but at the same time part of a broader cultural unity, that of the community of origin. Her rich ethnographic material and important theoretical reflections have been published in English in two monographs and numerous articles in international journals (Skar, 1982; Lund Skar, 1994).

Changes in rural communities caused by the agrarian reform and technological modernization were also the focus of Stølen's research in the Ecuadorian Central Highlands (Sierras), carried out in 1976 and in 1983. During this period, 'Caipi', the place where she did her fieldwork, ceased to be part of a big traditional estate (hacienda) and become a rural parish with 20 smaller estates and nearly 80 family farms. This was the origin of Stølen's continued interest in gender studies in Latin America. What particularly drew her attention was the fact that the peasant woman of Caipi played an important economic role, participating in almost all household and family farm activities as well as in decision making related to agricultural activities. At the same time, she considered herself as subordinate to her husband. She did not eat until he had eaten nor did she leave the house without his permission, she endured insults and beating for what she had not done, and she talked about marriage as something that should be 'suffered with patience'. In her monograph about gender relations in a context of agrarian transformation, which was published in Spanish, Stølen tried to explain these contradictions with reference to the socio-cultural context that she had studied, and with reference to the dominant mestizo gender ideology. The book created a heated debate in Quito regarding the interpretation of gender relations in rural contexts, and in particular with the interpreta-



tion of family violence, which broke with the traditional explanation that this was part of the 'socio-cultural Andean logic' (Stølen, 1987, 1991; Sánchez Parga, 1989).

The research carried out by Archetti, on the social and symbolic meaning of the guinea pig among the peasants in the Ecuadorian sierra, also created an intense debate questioning the agrarian modernization imposed by development programs implemented by the Ecuadorian state. The research was funded by the Ministry of Agriculture of Ecuador as part of the evaluation of a project implemented in several provinces of the country, which aimed to increase the production and marketing of the guinea pig. In an effort to make the guinea pig breeding more efficient, profitable, and hygienic, the 'experts' of the Ministry wanted to move the guinea pig out of the house and put them in hatcheries. The main aim of this research was to find out why the peasants did not use the hatcheries that were built. In a comprehensive and detailed report and a monograph published in Spanish and also translated into English, Archetti explains why the project failed (Archetti, 1992, 2004). The ministry planners had ignored the central role that the guinea pig played in peasants' life and culture, as well as its social and symbolic meaning. The culture of the guinea is profound and sophisticated. The guinea pig is not merely a domestic animal. It belongs to the house / kitchen, it is eaten on special occasions such as family and communal celebrations, it is also used to cure diseases and to predict the future. In addition, Archetti's research includes a detailed social and economic analysis, which shows that the failure is due not only to cultural factors but to marketing problems as well.

The study carried out by the anthropologist Jon Hanssen-Bauer (1982) about the onion market of Ambato in the Central Highlands of Ecuador also provides detailed information on the agrarian change. The aim of his study was to show the importance of the peasant market, characterized by a high number of intermediaries, for the process of agriculture differentiation and modernization.

Common for these studies is that they are based on long-term fieldwork, with the researcher living among the informants and following their day-to-day activities. In this manner, they are able to disclose the actions and perceptions of the social actors, the way in which they interpret their multiple relationships and activities, and how this is reflected in specific behaviours and decisions that affect the global system. The studies have produced very rich and detailed ethnographies, while contributing to theoretical and, to some extent, political debates. Published both in English and in Spanish, these researches have managed to reach an international audience.

## GENDER STUDIES

During the 1980s, the issue of gender relations appears as a central subject in the Norwegian agrarian studies on Latin America. In 1985, the Research Council of Norway launched the research programme 'Women in Development' financed by the Ministry of International Cooperation.<sup>3</sup> Although this program was broad and covered 'the whole developing world', only some of the projects on Latin America got funding. These projects were carried out in agricultural communities.

In Latin America, research on gender was closely linked to the political movements and strongly influenced by structural Marxism (León, 1982; Navarro, 1982; Werlhof, 1982). Often, the Norwegian researchers also were influenced by Marxism, but at the same time, they were challenged by Western feminism and the contrasts between Latin America and the Nordic societies, where the struggle for gender equality was booming in that period. The Nordic researchers were less convinced than many of their Latin American colleagues that the subordination of women would be eliminated through the class struggle and socialist revolution.

Studies conducted by Norwegian researchers were coloured by the fact that the 'pioneers' in this field were female social anthropologists with previous research experience in Latin America. Most of them criticized the 'materialistic' approach for being too narrow. They rather thought that it was necessary to combine culturalists and structuralist approaches, recognizing that the ideas about masculinity and femininity were neither fully independent nor directly derived from the economic relations of production. Most of the studies of gender relations were based on case studies. The impact of socio-economic change has also been a dominant subject in this field of research.

A number of gender studies, focused on how socio-economic changes generate changes in the sexual division of labour and in the responsibilities within the family and the community, leading to formal and informal negotiations about what women and men can or cannot do or be (Stølen and Vaa, 1991; Stølen, 1987, 1996; Melhuus and Stølen, 1996).

The consequences of the lack of recognition of gender relations in the agrarian transformation have been a recurrent theme. This was a central concern in the study of Lund Skar on the impact of land reform among the quechuas in the Peruvian Highlands, referred to

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<sup>3</sup> This program was part of the Strategy for Women in Development Assistance, elaborated by the Norwegian Government presented at the International Women's Conference in Nairobi in 1985.

earlier (Lund Skar, 1982). Although supposedly taking into account the indigenous forms of social organization, reform planners ignored completely the importance of male / female roles and relations for land reform to be successful. When the usufruct rights of land were assigned to the 'male heads of household', the ministry planners ignored the ancient tradition of Quechua women, which implied individual rights to land as well as a very important role in agricultural production and marketing. Therefore, the reform did not empower women, but quite the opposite (Skar, 1980).

A similar process is documented in the studies of Haldis Valestrand, who conducted fieldwork among peasants in Costa Rica in 1986 and 1990. She demonstrates how the introduction of the African Palm — a profitable commercial crop — produced what she calls a 'process housewifization', by which women withdrew from agriculture to become solely mothers and housewives. This is also, to certain extent, what happened to Quechua women in the Peruvian Highlands; but while in the case studied by Lund Skar this implied a rupture with the dominant indigenous values and practices, in the case studied by Valestrand the changes implied a harmonization with the dominant mestizo values — which considered men as providers and women as mothers, housewives, and 'pillars of the home' (Valestrand, 1991, 2007).

The impact of the transition from subsistence production to commercial crops was also the focus of Kari Siverts' studies in Chiapas. In her case, the process was the opposite of what is observed by Valestrand. She demonstrates how, in a context of increasing scarcity of land combined with population growth, the Tzeltal women leave their homes and become wage earners (Siverts, 1985, 1990). These studies show that similar processes may have very different consequences. They draw attention to the importance of understanding the socio-cultural context to predict the impact of processes of innovation and change.

The power in gender relations is an underlying theme in Norwegian research on gender. If gender relations are relations of power, what kind of power are we talking about? Power, as well as gender, is a relational concept; it does not exist outside of relations nor is it something that one simply possess. From a gender perspective the question is not whether the woman or the man have power or not, but how the power is produced in the relations between them. In the 'Women's Studies' of the time, there was a tendency to see the power in gender relations just as a repressive, men oppressing women. We do not deny that this was often the case, but we should not ignore that women often defend and reproduce ideas and practices that subordi-

nate them, that they resist the exercise of male power, or that there also exist friendly relations between men and women.

Several studies have explored the expressions of power in face-to-face relationships in different Latin American contexts. This was a central issue in the research of Stølen in the Ecuadorian sierra mentioned above, as it was in her study of gender relations among the 'colonos' in Argentina in 1988. Stølen explores how changes in the agricultural production and commercialization are historically associated with changes and continuity in gender relations, and with conceptualizations of masculinity and femininity. She observes that certain ideas and practices (such as the association of women with the home and of men with the street, the high valuation of female virginity and chastity, and the sexual control of women) are more resistant to change than others. She suggests that this is because they are deeply rooted in gender ideology, -symbolism, and -practices of Catholicism; which in turn permeate other institutions of the society (for instance, the justice system, education, and the media). Stølen concludes that, when gender ideas are institutionalized in such ways, appear to be particularly resistant to change (Stølen, 1987, 1996).

The role of religion in the construction of gender is also a central issue in the study of social change among mestizo peasants in Central Mexico conducted by Marit Melhuus (1992, 1993). Through the exploration of religious symbolism and practice, she contributes to a deeper understanding of what she calls the 'enigma of gender imaginary in Latin America', a male-dominated society that places its highest value on the feminine. In her reflections on morality, Melhuus draws attention to 'machismo' and 'marianism' and shows that masculinity, as well as femininity, is uncertain. Males or machos are both strong and fragile, while women, who are characterized by their suffering, are at the same time morally superior to men. Melhuus also explores the symbolic imagery of the Virgin of Guadalupe, who represents a collective framework in the Mexican culture.<sup>4</sup>

## RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PEASANTS AND THE STATE

In most of the agricultural studies we have referred to, the relations between peasants and the state is an underlying topic. In some studies, this relations has been discussed more explicitly. Much of the literature on state-society relations is based on an implicit model of the

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4 In 1995, Melhuus and Stølen edited a volume in English (published in Spanish in 2007) about the power of gender imaginary in Latin America. This volume is the product of the collaboration between European and Latin American researchers, and includes both urban and rural case studies.

state and the community as two essential and defined entities opposed to each other. The state is considered as essentially expansive, transformative, and coercive; while the society as essentially conservative and actively resisting any imposed changes. Nevertheless, the state has been rediscovered as an object of study by a variety of disciplines (Hansen and Stepputat, 2001; Krohn-Hansen and Nustad, 2005). They argue that the modern state is in a continuous process of construction, and to understand that it is necessary go beyond the formal institutions and explore the subtle ways of exercise of power and governance through certain practices. This approach suggests exploring how the state authority is constantly challenged, both from below and from above, and how the growing demand of granting rights and the recognition to more and more citizens, organizations, and institutions undermines the idea of the state as a source of social order and the embodiment of popular sovereignty.

The relation between peasants and state is a recurring issue in the studies of the human geographer Jemima García-Godos. Between 1994 and 1995, she conducted a study in Northern Peru on Rondas Campesinas, a peasant organization created as a response to the indifference of the state with regard to the violence and crime committed against the peasants during the period of armed struggle. What had begun with night patrols became a system that included local government functions, administration of justice, and security enforcement. In 1999, García-Godos returned to carry out fieldwork in the Peruvian Highlands, this time in Tambo district, one of the most affected by the armed conflict. In this project, she explores how the relations between peasants and state are articulated in the reconstruction period, after the armed conflict. Her perspective is bottom-up, that of the peasants, about their self-defence practices, their projects of development and reconstruction, the local elections, and their claims to the state (García-Godos, 2006).

The relations between peasants and the state is also one of the topics of the research carried out by Kristi Anne Stølen in 2000-2003 in a peasant community in El Petén, Guatemala. These peasants returned to their country after having spent between 10 and 15 years in refugee camps in Mexico, due to the armed violence in Guatemala. Stølen discusses the complex and contradictory relations between the returnees and the state, and how this relations has changed over time. On the one hand, they conceive of the state as violent and repressive, they reject it and resist it. This is reflected, for instance, in the Peace Agreements, signed in 1996, which granted them exemption from military service and prohibited the entrance of armed officers into their community. Another example is the presence of international staff in

the community during the first years after the return, to monitor compliance with the agreements. This distrust has occurred after decades of repression and exclusion of the indigenous peasant population, before and during the period of exile. On the other hand, the experience of exile and contact with international organizations has taught them that the state can also play a productive and benefactor role. The state can grant rights, represent the will of the people, and can be a service provider. Therefore, these excluded peasants are also struggling to be recognized as citizens, claiming the presence of the state in their community (education and health), and in such doing they seek to be included in the national society (Stølen, 2005, 2007).

The confrontations between the state and the local population in Tarija, Bolivia, are the subject of the most recent research by John McNeish (2012). These confrontations take place in the context of the new Latin American extractivism and the efforts to establish a new social contract between state and citizenship, characterizing the period of Evo Morales as President. McNeish tries to explain the background of peasant blockades, and the underlying dynamics in the campaign for autonomy of the region. The protests in the city of Tarija in 2009 were presented in the media as the work of ambitious peasants looking for handouts or alms, a portrait that resonates well within the moralistic logic of the 'rentist' discourse. McNeish rejects this discourse, demonstrating that the idea of 'sovereignty' (inspired by the work of Hansen and Stepputat, 2001) is more effective to jointly analyze historical claims, territoriality, and the sense of property and valuation that the different groups have in relation to local natural resources. The link between the protests and the autonomy is not limited only to the desire of certain sectors to have a larger share of the hydrocarbon profits and taxes, but also the result of different views and expressions — in conflict — of sovereignty over natural resources. McNeish concludes that a historical and cultural perspective reveals that the protests are due to constantly belated payment of royalties, in an oil community where the historical distinctions between indigenous / mestizos, peasants / land-owners, and highlands / lowlands continue structuring inequalities.

## **GLOBALIZATION, MIGRATION, AND SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL CONFLICTS**

The growing wave of demonstrations and protests against the mining, palm tree, and oil industries, as well as the inherent contradictions to decentralization of the rural public administration, have motivated a series of recent studies. These have been mostly inspired by discussions in geography and anthropology.

In their study of anti-mining protests in Peru, the geographers Håvard Haarstad and Arnt Fløysand (2007) engage in the discussion of the 'politics of scale' that has gained strength within their discipline.<sup>5</sup> In this study, focused on Tambogrande, Peru, Haarstad and Fløysand discuss the way in which the farmers were able to get involved in national and international networks and, thus, to re-articulate their demands (Haarstad and Fløysand, 2007). According to these authors, the case of Tambogrande shows the multidirectionality of globalization and that, in fact, it can open new opposition spaces to the transnational projects within the rural communities. Through these spaces, rural communities contest and re-articulate narratives in hegemonic discourses that marginalize the peasants, such as that of democratization. This occurred through partnerships within networks at various scales, in which they articulated with actors who were proficient in certain political discourses. This work was the predecessor of two new research projects. One of these projects was published as a book titled *New Political Spaces in Latin American Natural Resource Governance*, which presents case studies of how natural resources are governed and disputed in the Andean countries (Haarstad, 2012). It questions the idea that the governance of natural resources in Latin America can be characterized as 'post-neoliberal', and illustrates the obstacles present in the tension between democracy and a 'fair' extraction of resources. The book questions the ideas about the emergence of a 'post-neoliberal' era in the region, and in this way contributes to Latin American debates on models of alternative extraction that would allow pathways to greater social justice (Rodríguez-Garavito et al., 2008). The case studies conducted by anthropologists, geographers, and sociologists, based both in Norway and in other countries, offered nuanced analyses about the relations between states and communities, related to natural resources. They allowed to reach the conclusion that although the efforts for greater social inclusion of the leftist South American governments deserve recognition, it does not seem that they have succeeded in breaking with the historical patterns of dependency to the extraction of natural resources to advance state projects. As a result, 'local' spaces for political participation of rural populations continue to be limited, although for different reasons in each country.

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5 During the last decade, there has been a growing vivid discussion in the geographical literature of a discussion on how different actors create and claim spaces at various scales (local, national, and global) in order to serve their own interests. This alters access to power and resources, and access to processes of decision making with regard to these resources.



In another context, Mariel Aguilar-Støen conducted a case study on mining protests in Guatemala. The focus of the analysis combined notions of environmental governance, elites, and space/scale. Aguilar-Støen demonstrates in her analysis that the mining conflicts can be understood as disputes over the meanings of the rural, in which the aspirations of the economic elite are in opposition to that of peasants and indigenous peoples (Aguilar-Støen, 2015).

The growing concern among Norwegian academics about extractive conflicts is linked to the contradictory role played by their country in this field. On the one hand, the Norwegian government has the purpose of being an international player in the defence of human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Agency for Development Cooperation, NORAD. On the other hand, it expands its investments in oil, mining, and hydroelectric sectors through the state company 'Statoil', the Norwegian Pension Fund, and NORFUND.<sup>6</sup> This contradiction creates conflicts, as in the case of Guatemala, where opposition to the expansion of the extractive industries financed by NORFUND has caused serious conflicts. The conflicts have been portrayed in the Norwegian media as generated by human rights organizations opposed to 'development', thus repeating the discourse of the private sector in Guatemala. Several academics have mobilized against this way of presenting the conflicts, thus contributing to clarify the causes of conflicts and the roles of the actors involved.

The crisis of the coffee sector and its impact on the coffee production system of the peasants in Mexico attracted the attention of two academics in Norway. Mariel Aguilar-Støen conducted fieldwork in Candelaria Loxicha, Oaxaca, between 2005 and 2007, while Anna Milford did so in Chiapas almost in the same period of time. The work of the economist Milford is focused on understanding why coffee growers choose to sell its products through exploitative informal channels (*coyotaje*) a pejorative term used in Central America and Southern Mexico to refer to intermediaries who buy coffee from small producers) when there apparently are 'fairer' alternatives. Milford concludes that the main reason for not using fair trade cooperatives are the cumbersome requirements associated with organic certification, as well as other aspects that are not directly related to production, such as confidence in the cooperative and its payment system (Milford, 2014). Aguilar-Støen in turn, was interested in understanding the persis-

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<sup>6</sup> Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries. The broader objective is to invest in the establishment and development of profitable and sustainable companies in developing countries.



tence of peasant systems of coffee production at adverse events and without historical precedent, as the world coffee crisis in the early 1990s and the adverse effects of climate change to coffee production that had been experienced in Mesoamerica in the 2000s. The work of Aguilar-Støen, inspired by an eclectic combination of ideas from several fields, including geography, human ecology, and agro-ecology, questioned the validity of certain economic and essentialist thinking (for example, the ideas of forest transition studied by Arild Angelsen in Norway). She concludes that the peasant systems persist and endure, despite not representing a viable option to relieve poverty. This is so thanks to the not necessarily intentional combination of institutional factors (in other words: the program of conditioned payments to women, the collective land tenure system), the family organization of work in farming units, and remittances that migrants in the United States send to their relatives (Aguilar-Støen et al., 2009; Aguilar-Støen, Angelsen and Moe, 2011; Aguilar-Støen et al., 2011).

The role of family remittances in the countryside inspired Aguilar-Støen to carry out a new research project in 2009, on the effect of remittances sent by migrants in the United States to their families in rural areas of Guatemala and Chiapas. One of the central elements in the analysis is the change in the land tenure and land use. The research concludes that the processes of globalization open and close, in contradictory ways, the possibilities of continuity of small-scale farming systems, and while remittances can promote processes of redistribution or concentration of land, the effects on the national agrarian structure are minimal (Aguilar-Støen et al., 2014). In a more detailed analysis of a community in Guatemala, Aguilar-Støen shows that the 'crisis' (that is to say, the global coffee crisis) and the restructuring of financial services and communication may result in favourable alternatives for small coffee producers in contexts where international migration has been consolidated (Aguilar-Støen, 2012).

The commodification of nature (Payments for Environmental Services, carbon markets) is an important subject both for the political and the research agenda. Between 2010 and 2012, Aguilar-Støen conducted a case study in Nicaragua, where she examines the possibilities of peasants who received land after the Sandinista agrarian reform to participate in programs of payments for environmental services (Aguilar-Støen, 2014). Her study reveals the alliances that international cooperation agencies established with the private sector, local governments, and peasants to facilitate the establishment of programs for the commodification of nature. Aguilar-Støen concludes that since the asymmetries of power between the actors involved in

these programs do not disappear with the creation of spaces of 'participation', the possibilities for peasants to participate in programs of payments for environmental services are limited, because they have few resources to determine the conditions under which they engage. She also shows that such programs inspired by global ideas about nature conservation may be used to resist government initiatives. However, programs for the commodification of nature require the change of some farming practices (such as those related to production systems and sharecropping arrangements), it eliminate parts of nature that are vital for farming systems, and impose new identities to peasants as 'suppliers of environmental services' while the corporate practices (that is, the expansion of agro-export crops) and their effects on the environment are neither modified nor investigated.

The global programme Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) is another expression of the commodification of nature that is presented as a double gain option to conserve the forests and rural livelihoods (Pacheco et al., 2010). The impact of this program has also been the object of study from Norway, probably because the Norwegian Government is funding a good part of it (Aguilar-Støen et al., 2015). In terms of research funding on REDD, the public contribution in Norway has been limited.

Mariel Aguilar-Støen and Cecilie Hirsch have studied the possibilities that the peasant and indigenous organizations have to participate in and benefit from the REDD program. Their studies demonstrate how the organization of the production and diffusion of knowledge in global networks, in fact, deprive the peasant organizations to participate and advance their interests. Their analysis also point out that the objective of ensuring security of collective ownership of indigenous territories is one of the many factors that motivates peasant and indigenous organizations to position themselves in the regional and global debates regarding REDD (Aguilar-Støen, 2015; Aguilar-Støen and Hirsch, 2015; Aguilar-Støen et al., 2015).

### **IS THERE SOMETHING PARTICULARLY NORWEGIAN IN THE RURAL AND AGRARIAN STUDIES ON LATIN AMERICA?**

As we have seen in this chapter, Norwegian rural and agrarian studies on Latin America have been influenced by discussions and advances in European and North American social sciences, by Latin American ideas as well as by social change and political processes in the region. The social and political processes in Norway and the priorities of the Norwegian Research Council have also played a crucial role for the orientation of the studies. Finally, we should not forget the influence of Latin American researchers in the national academy.

As we will see next, the degree of influence of each of these elements has varied over time and in the different lines of research that we have discussed in this chapter.

Certain events and processes in Latin America, such as the agrarian reforms and the peasant movements of the 1960s and 1970s, appear as the main motivating factors of the first young leftist researchers who thought that their studies could contribute to change the world. They created their projects, influenced by the discussions and progress in social sciences, especially by the 'Peasants Studies' and the Marxist perspectives. The modest scholarships for fieldwork granted by the Research Council of Norway were very important for conducting these studies. A few years later, the agrarian movements had disappeared, after having been oppressed and defeated by military dictatorships or authoritarian governments.

Unlike the former objects of study, gender relations exist regardless of political junctures, but did not emerge as a topic of research on Latin America until the end of the 1980s. Interest in research on gender issues was more inspired by the processes of change in gender policy in Norway and the feminist debates in social sciences than by events and discussions in Latin America. New perspectives developed to understand some phenomenas that had been observed during the previous agricultural research, and to deepen certain topics in the academic and political debates. In some cases, this has resulted in new interpretations and debates in the countries of study. As we have mentioned, several of the female researchers who conducted research on gender in rural areas had previous fieldwork experience from such areas. It is worth mentioning here, that the Research Council had funds specially allocated for gender projects. In addition, it was expected that gender issues were present in all areas supported by the Council, due to their priority position on the political agenda.

The third line of studies that we have examined is focused on the relations between farmers and the state. This relationship also exists independently of political junctures, but with very variable content. Unlike the previous studies, where the relations between peasants and state are present but in an underlying manner, from the year 2000 it is addressed and analyzed explicitly. This coincides with the rediscovery of the state as an object of study by authors who provided new perspectives to understand the role of the state and the relationship between state and citizens (Hansen and Stepputat, 2001). Researchers use these new perspectives to analyze the relations between peasants and state in situations of conflict. To work and live in Norway, where the state plays a fundamental role in the lives of the citizens, also gives some perspectives that have inspired this research.

The more recent studies, especially those that have to do with socio-environmental conflicts, seem to be influenced by events and processes taking place in Latin America. Nevertheless, the international and national debates, and the policies of Norway also play an important role. On the one hand, Norway wants to excel in environmental and climatic issues, and allocate funds for related topics. Moreover, the environment and climate change are on the agenda of many research institutions in the country. The projects focusing on the impacts of REDD schemes, had probably not been accomplished without the existence of REDD, established by a Norwegian initiative. In addition, the dual role that Norway plays internationally, as an advocate for the environment and for human rights on the one hand and as an investor, and in some cases, a destroyer of the same resources, on the other, also influences and motivates researchers. Here, an element of solidarity with the poor and exploited also seems to play an important role.

It is worth mentioning that many of the students and researchers who have worked and are working on Latin America are related to LAG (Latin America Solidarity Group), a solidarity organization with Latin America, which has existed since 1977. The participation in various activities in the region especially in the rural labour brigades, has helped to raise political commitment and academic interest, which in turn has resulted in studies, theses, and publications on rural issues.

### **THE FUTURE OF AGRARIAN AND RURAL STUDIES**

It could be thought that agricultural research is losing relevance, taking into account the degree of urbanization in Latin America that in some countries reaches more than 90%. The fact that the majority of the population live outside rural areas does not mean that the countryside, and all resources it represents, are less important.

Access, tenure, and land-use disputes are recurring topics. Conflicts over land and other natural resources are not new, but their condition is more critical than ever considering the processes of land grabbing and land concentration that are advancing in several countries as the result of the expansion of agro-industries and extractive industries (Borras Jr. and Franco, 2012).

Another important topic is related to protected areas, both the expansion of protected areas that displace local populations, and the elimination of protected areas by the expansion of agro-industries or tourism attractions. These topics require further studies of the region, since they generate serious conflicts (see, for example Aguilar-Støen, 2016).

Food security and sovereignty are also topics that are gaining relevance. Food sovereignty as a state obligation has been included in the

Constitution of several countries of the world, pioneering Venezuela, Ecuador, and Bolivia. Food sovereignty is also a recurring topic in Latin American social movements, especially concerning the struggles against the concentration of land and the introduction of genetically modified organisms. However, it is not clear so far, what the concepts of food security and food sovereignty actually imply in practice. As these notions are negotiated internationally, nationally, and locally by different countries, it is expected that researchers would show some interest in this topic.

These issues, which are of great relevance for the region, are topics that fit well with the interests and competencies of the Norwegian academic community. Social and political processes related to the exploitation and extraction of natural resources are topics that receive considerable attention. A number of projects funded by the Latin America research program,<sup>7</sup> focus on agrarian issues. This is the case of a project at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Oslo, which studies the legitimacy and the moral implications of land claims in Latin America. Another project at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the same University examines the conflicts over water in the Peruvian Andes. A project at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) explores the role of free, prior, and informed consent in Latin American socio-environmental conflicts. Finally, there is the project of Stølen, which is a continuation of her research on agrarian change among the 'colonos' of the province of Santa Fe, Argentina that she started jointly with Eduardo Archetti in 1973. This new project, which studies the expansion of genetically modified soy, will be the last of her studies in the area. Certainly, crop production is higher than ever before, but the 'colono'communities are dying (Stølen, 2015).

In conclusion, we can say that the interest in agrarian and rural studies persists in Norway. As explained above, this interest has been innovative and adjusting to the changes and trends in the region, in our own country, and in the world. The future seems quite promising. Most of the new researchers to be enrolled in the Norwegian academy will be recruited among master's students. Between 2003 and 2014, out of 480 Master theses on Latin America 48 focused on topics related to natural resources and the environment. In fact these topics, covering mining protests, access to water, REDD and forest protection, and environmental policy, are among the most popular considering

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7 This is a program of the Research Council, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, established in 2007 for a period of 10 years. Its goal is promoting knowledge on Latin America through research. It covers a wide range of topics.

the total number of topics. During the same period, 21 Master Thesis were related to agriculture and the rural areas of Latin America. They focused primarily on issues related to land access, to genetically modified organisms and their impact on the organization of agricultural production and on land tenure. This indicates that the interest of the Norwegian academic community in Latin American rural and agrarian studies will continue in the future.

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Elin Skaar and Jemima García-Godos

## **NORWEGIAN RESEARCH ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND JUSTICE IN LATIN AMERICA**

### **INTRODUCTION\***

Norwegian research on human rights and justice in Latin America is a relatively new and modest undertaking, compared to historical or anthropological studies of the region. Nevertheless, this research has arguably contributed in significant ways to national and international scholarly debates on human rights and justice and helped develop strong ties between research communities on both sides of the Atlantic. This chapter provides some reflections on the development of Norway based research on human rights and justice in Latin America from the 1990s to the present,<sup>1</sup> focusing on two lines of research: (1) accountability for past crimes, that is, how countries in Latin America have dealt with human rights violations committed during periods of military dictatorship and/or internal armed conflict; and (2) justice and the role of courts in rights enforcement

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1 We have not come across any MA thesis or published research on the topics examined in this chapter prior to 1990.

and protection. These two areas are the ones most addressed by Norway based scholars on human rights and justice, mostly in the social sciences, but also in legal studies.<sup>2</sup>

Data reviewed in this chapter are drawn from three main sources: a) an overview of social science master and doctoral dissertations related to the themes we have honed in on<sup>3</sup>; b) a review of these authors' publication records after they completed their thesis, in order to see whether their interest in Latin America has persisted, and if so, whether their research focus has shifted over time; and c) research produced by people in our own networks. We have both worked in this field for almost three decades with extensive collaboration in Norway and beyond, and being based in different parts of the country, we jointly have a good knowledge of the relevant research field. Note that we make no claims of an exhaustive review of Norwegian research on human rights and justice from other disciplines and perspectives, such as journalism, the arts and the humanities.

Following this introduction, the chapter briefly discusses the context in which the Norwegian research agenda on human rights and justice has developed and identifies some elements that have influenced this development. We then move on to address the two main lines of research in more detail. The chapter ends with some reflections concerning the prospects of a Norwegian research agenda on human rights and justice.

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2 Closely related to the topics examined in this chapter are peace and conflict resolution; indigenous people's rights; and citizenship and participation, all of which are more explicitly addressed in other chapters in this volume.

3 More specifically, we have sought Master Theses and Ph.D. dissertations that have one or more of the following words in the title, in the abstract, or listed as keywords: Latin America, names of all individual countries in Latin America, human rights, victim rights, trials, truth commissions, reparations, courts, justice, judges, transitional justice, legal reform, and others. We have used a combination of the following databases: ISI Bibsys Ask, MUNIN open research archive and Google Scholar. We found in all 19 MA and/or 3 Doctoral Theses for the period 1994-2015 written on topics relevant to the focus of this chapter. Note that other theses might have escaped our attention due to erratic registration procedures in the various databases. In connection with this book project, the editorial team identified 479 master and doctoral theses on Latin America (issued by Norwegian universities and colleges) after the year 2000. Of these 479, 51 MA theses and Ph.D.s were categorised under the rubrics 'Rule of law and human rights' (28) and 'War, conflict and conflict resolution' (23), i.e. roughly 10 per cent of all theses approved by Norwegian universities and colleges. The countries with the largest number of MA theses in these two fields are Colombia, Mexico and Guatemala. In this chapter, we will refer mainly to the first group of theses. See Appendix at the end of this chapter for details.

## NORWEGIAN RESEARCH ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND JUSTICE IN CONTEXT

While Latin America generally receives relatively scant media attention in Norway, to the extent that Norwegian media reports on human rights in Latin America, the picture conveyed to the Norwegian public is rather bleak.<sup>4</sup> The region is more often than not associated with the absence of human rights protection hand in hand with widespread corruption and impunity. A decade or two ago, many Norwegians associated Latin America with military dictatorships, civil war, and massive human rights violations. ‘Everybody’ had heard of dictator Augusto Pinochet or Las Madres de Plaza de Mayo. Today, the violence in Mexico has caught the public eye. However, for Norway based scholars working on human rights and justice issues, Latin America is a natural region to look at for reasons more positive than those mentioned above. First, Latin America is in many ways a world protagonist in transition justice issues, particularly in terms of truth commissions and criminal prosecutions. Second, it is arguably the region, after Europe, which has developed the strongest regional legal regime for human rights protection. Third, it has two of the most progressive Constitutional Courts in the world in terms of rulings in human rights matters (Colombia and Costa Rica). Fourth, the region is sporting some rather radical legislation on same-sex marriage and abortion matters — perhaps surprisingly so for a continent which has historically been strongly Catholic.<sup>5</sup> Fifth, there has been a rise in the claims from indigenous people and poor and marginalised groups for equal opportunities and recognition, for control of natural resources, for greater autonomy, and for the right to be politically heard in decision making processes on issues that affect their daily lives.

Norwegian research on human rights and justice in Latin America takes place in a context of strong emphasis by the Norwegian Government on support to democratization processes and human rights as an integral part of Norwegian foreign policy and development cooperation since the 1960s.<sup>6</sup> Through different modalities,

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4 We base these conclusions on reviewing the weekly newsletters from *NorLARnet* published over the past three years (2012-15), which provide an overview of all Latin America related news published electronically by all Norwegian newspapers.

5 This pattern is not universal, though. Several Latin American countries such as Chile, Bolivia, Nicaragua, and Paraguay enforce some of the most strict abortion policies in the world, accompanied by criminalisation of those who take abortion (often, young women or victims of rape) or the doctors who carry out abortion.

6 Norwegian development cooperation has traditionally emphasised the African region. For a more detailed analysis of Norwegian foreign policy towards Latin America, see Benedicte Bull's introductory chapter in this book.

Norway has emphasised bilateral and multilateral support to rule of law programming, reconciliation initiatives and peace processes in various regions including Latin America. Norwegian involvement in the signing of the Peace Accords in Guatemala in the 1990s and various attempts of peace talks to put an end to the Colombian armed conflict testify to this commitment. Norwegian development cooperation endorses a rights-based approach, thus supporting initiatives aimed to empower vulnerable groups, such as indigenous peoples and young girls and the protection of their rights to natural resources or reproductive health. Although constituted as an independent body from the Norwegian State, the Nobel Peace Prize committee shares this international concern with human rights, peace and democracy, on the one hand, and its concern with the poor, indigenous rights and women's rights on the other. Latin American Nobel laureates include Argentine human rights activist Adolfo Pérez Esquivel who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980, while Argentina was still under military rule, and Rigoberta Menchú Tum whose 1992 award placed the focus on Guatemala, poverty, and indigenous people's rights.

In spite of this policy orientation in support of democratization and human rights, Norwegian researchers working on human rights, independently of geographical focus, were (and still are) scattered across the country. By the 1990s two main clusters with an explicit focus on human rights had formed: one at the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) in Bergen, the other at the University of Oslo. Yet, funding opportunities remained scarce, and specific regional focus depended as much on the academic interest of individual researchers as on the need of ministries for policy-relevant inputs from the research community.<sup>7</sup> Some researchers were successful in securing independent research grants from the Norwegian Research Council and could undertake research on Latin America without policy commitments from the early 1990s onwards. As discussed in the introduction, in 2006, a new policy towards Latin America brought the region back on the foreign policy and development cooperation agenda in Norway. Strengthening the Norwegian knowledge base on Latin America was part of the new policy, and so in 2008, the

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7 The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) was aware of the need for regional expertise. In 2001, when the then Institute (now Centre) for Human Rights at the University of Oslo was established as Norway's National Human Rights Institution, three research positions were created at the Centre and funded by the MFA with the mandate to promote research on human rights with regional focus, including Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Social anthropologist Stener Ekern was the first researcher to hold the position earmarked for Latin America.

Latin America Research Program was established by the Research Council of Norway (NRC) and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The new program identified politics and governance as one of five pillars for research, and within that, human rights and justice.<sup>8</sup> As we will see, the program has played a pivotal role in the development of Norwegian-based research on human rights and justice in Latin America.

### **(I) RESEARCH ON ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PAST CRIMES**

This line of research has in many ways developed along with political processes unfolding in Latin America. Accordingly, there have been three main research areas carried out at Norwegian institutions, in collaboration with partners in Latin America. These have focused on periods of dictatorship and internal armed conflict; on the role of civil society and NGOs in human rights protection, including assistance to victims and survivors of human rights violations; and on transitional justice, that is, the various ways in which societies that emerge from authoritarian rule and/or armed conflict deal with systematic human rights violations. The latter is possibly the most developed area of research and will be discussed in more detail below. Some research has also been carried out on refugees, internal displacement, and on civil-military relations in conflict situations.

The military dictatorships and civil wars that dominated most of South and Central America in the 1970s and 1980s, and partly also the 1990s, slowly entered the Norwegian political agenda and the minds of Norwegian students and researchers for three main reasons. First, the stream of refugees from Latin America, especially from Chile, to Europe drew attention to the Pinochet regime and the atrocities carried out there in the name of the fight against the ‘red threat’ — communism (see also chapter 3). Second, Norway’s long democratic history of labour politics and a ruling Labour Party in power from just after the World War II till way into the 1980s, probably heightened Norwegians’ indignation over military right-wing regimes targeting left-wing activists and union activists, and killing and torturing thousands of people principally for their political convictions.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Norway accepted more refugees from Chile than from any other Latin American country suffering dictatorship or internal armed conflict. Indeed, Chileans constituted one of the two largest immigrant groups (along with Vietnamese) in the

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<sup>8</sup> For information about the Latin America Programme, see the programme website: <[http://www.forskningssradet.no/prognett-latinamerika/Home\\_page/1224697839456](http://www.forskningssradet.no/prognett-latinamerika/Home_page/1224697839456)>. For a discussion of the programme, see Bull’s chapters in this volume.

1970s. The strong solidarity movement with Chile developed in the 1970s and 80s (not only in Norway, but in Scandinavia in general), ran parallel with other solidarity initiatives in region, such as the youth brigades to Cuba and the coffee brigades to Nicaragua. This period of active political engagement against authoritarianism would later inspire young students to embark in Latin American studies. There are currently around 7,000 Chileans living in Norway,<sup>9</sup> many of whom have intermarried with Norwegians and established families. This direct link in terms of people-to-people is arguably an important reason for why Chile and Argentina initially were popular countries of study for students interested in human rights violations and democratic transition.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps not incidentally, the two first Master theses written by Norwegian students on human rights in Latin America both focussed on human rights violations: one comparing the repression under the military dictatorships in Chile and Argentina (Skaar, 1994) and one comparing political violence in two cases of internal armed conflict: Guatemala and Peru (Rygh, 1994).

The transitions to democracy in Latin America in the 1980s as well as the end of armed conflicts brought new scenarios. Post-authoritarian and post-conflict societies faced numerous challenges, on many fronts, attracting the attention of researchers, master students and doctoral candidates who engaged with various aspects of peace-building and democratic reconstruction. In 1999, the University of Oslo's Human Rights Prize was awarded Chilean psychologist Dr. Paz Rojas for her human rights work and support to victims of the military regime, thus bringing renewed attention to the brutal legacy of the dictatorship in Chile. A first volume on the then nascent field of transitional justice was published in Norwegian in 1998, including a chapter exploring the link between death squads in El Salvador and criminal prosecutions in a post-conflict context (Ekern, 1998). Anthropologist Stener Ekern has analysed in his later works the mass killings and genocide in Central America (Ekern, 2010). The challenges of refugees and internally displaced people's (IDP's) return in post-conflict Guatemala attracted the attention of legal scholar Cecilia Bailliet, who wrote a doctoral dissertation about alternative dispute resolution for

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9 Many Chilean families returned to Chile in the 1990s, through a Norwegian-sponsored program of return. In many cases, only the parents returned and the second generation stayed in Norway.

10 Plus, of course, there is the domino effect: once a person has done work in a country in a language that is accessible to many (such as English, in this case also in Norwegian) the chances that other students pick the same country out for study increases as students typically draw on existing publications and networks.



land conflicts in Guatemala from the perspective of international human rights law (Bailliet, 2002).

One comparative study of Chile and Argentina analyses the quest for civilian supremacy after the return to democratic rule in the 1980s and 1990s (Kvalsøren, 2003). Another Master thesis examines social representations of dictatorship in Chile and Argentina through political activists (Fuentes, 2007). Yet another Master thesis looks at Norway's role in the coup d'état in Chile in 1973 and the unconventional work with respect to refugees that was carried out by Norway through its embassy in Santiago de Chile (Buggeland, 2010). Some students have taken the long-term perspective, comparing the human rights situation during the dictatorship period in Argentina with that of more democratic times (Ryg, 2008). In 2006, a doctoral dissertation on peasant-state relations in the Peruvian armed conflict and in the context of post-conflict reconstruction was defended at the University of Oslo (García-Godos, 2006).

Given Norway's strong NGO sector and tradition of voluntary work, it is perhaps not surprising that another topic of general interest has been the role of NGOs in the transition to democratic rule and in the reconstruction of democracy. One master student compared the different role played by human rights NGOs in Chile and Argentina due to their different profiles (victims and family based in Chile versus having a strong legal profile in Argentina) and their different links to the Catholic Church (Skaar, 1994). The role of civil organisations in peacebuilding and democratic development in Guatemala has been carefully examined by Petersen (2007) and Malling (2002). Again, Norway's active role in the peace process in Guatemala and the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Rigoberta Menchú in 1992 drew extra attention to Guatemala, which is the one Latin American country that has had continued support from Norwegian development cooperation. The boundaries between human rights research and peace research are intricately linked, as seen for example in the work focussing on the role of human rights defenders, more specifically, the Peace Brigades in Colombia (Trolie, 2009).<sup>11</sup>

Bordering the field of human rights and political science, civil-military relations in general (Skaar, 2014), and more specifically in Colombia (McNeish, 2015) have been addressed recently, as part of a larger research project on civil-military relations in Brazil and the Arab world funded by the MFA. Publications on Brazil by senior scholars involved in the project are in the making (D'Araujo, 2014; Samset,

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11 For a more detailed research carried out in the area of peacebuilding — a rapidly growing academic field — see also chapters 1 and 3 in this volume.

2014). Brazil is now revisiting its past through a truth commission. The state supported truth commission published its final report in December 2014; an interesting turn in this huge country's process of democratization which has not escaped scholarly attention. This brings us to the next main topic of research: how to deal with gross human rights violations of the past.

### **TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE IN LATIN AMERICA**

What do democratic governments do about human rights violations committed by prior right-wing military regimes or by state as well as paramilitary forces during internal armed conflict? Several Norwegian and Norway based researchers have over the past two decades contributed quite substantially to the relatively new and rapidly growing research and policy field termed transitional justice. For the past eight years, funding for this line of research has originated from two main sources: First, the Norwegian MFA's Section on Peace and Reconciliation, which provided funds to human rights research with policy relevance, and second, the Latin America Programme in the NRC mentioned above, which awarded funding to several research projects on transitional justice. This has facilitated the building of national as well as international research networks in the transitional justice field.

Importantly, two senior scholars based at the Chr. Michelsen Institute in Bergen and the University of Oslo respectively have joined forces to build up a national milieu on transitional justice. Elin Skaar and Jemima García-Godos have systematically examined, in close collaboration with institutional partners in five Latin American countries and other Latin American scholars, the trajectories from impunity to (more) accountability for past human rights violations in nine Latin American countries: Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru and Colombia (Skaar, García-Godos, and Collins, 2016). This is, to the best knowledge of the authors, the first systematic comparative analysis of transitional justice trajectories in a middle-sized number of countries. The combination of bringing in expert knowledge on the ground (i.e. people who know the country context very well) with an outside perspective has allowed the authors to get into the details of what goes on the ground, without losing sight of the comparative perspective. This research collaboration builds on a handful of different research projects that the two senior scholars have previously undertaken in the field of transitional justice, which we detail next.

In essence, the question is how dealing with past violations through transitional justice mechanisms like truth commissions, tri-

als, reparations, or amnesty laws can enhance peace and help democratic reconstruction. More generally: what kind of societal and institutional impact may these truth and justice-seeking processes have on societies? These are pertinent questions for a continent, which for decades was dominated by military dictatorships or torn apart by internal armed conflict. Now, that the Latin American region has slowly transcended into more peaceful (at least in terms of government-induced violence) and more democratic times, it has been timely to ask how and in which ways dealing with past human rights abuses matter. Existing research has taken different approaches to the question of dealing with a violent past. Central topics of research have been the role of institutions or institutional framework for prosecution of human rights perpetrators; trials and amnesties; truth commissions; reparations and victims' rights; and the impact of transitional justice.

#### **THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR DEALING WITH HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS**

The first doctoral dissertation on transitional justice in Latin America written by a Norwegian scholar focused on the links between judicial reform and heightened judicial independence on the one hand, and on the courts' propensity to prosecute the military for gross human rights violations on the other (Skaar, 2002). This dissertation reflected on the interlinks between two dominant regional trends at the time. First, the impact and importance of the major judicial reforms that had been undertaken in practically every single country in the Latin American region in the 1990s and 2000s — from court reform to legal reform, to prosecutorial reform to police reform. Second, the embryonic tendency at the time of countries with a violent past in trying to prosecute alleged human rights violators in court. This was a trend that started very carefully in Argentina at the turn of the millennium, to be followed by Chile soon after, and a bit later by Uruguay. Skaar has later examined in more detail the nexus between judicial reform/judicial independence and human rights in a series of articles, book chapters and a book — both comparatively (Skaar, 2002, 2011b, 2012) and in the scarcely studied case of Uruguay (Skaar, 2007, 2011a, 2013).

Research on Colombia's Justice and Peace process was started by García-Godos in 2007, originally with seed funding from the MFA and carried out at that Centre for Human Rights (García-Godos and Lid, 2010). Outlining the intricacies of the Justice and Peace process, the research assessed the challenges and opportunities of advancing transitional justice and securing victims' rights *before* the end of an armed conflict. Colombia remains an outlier case in the field of transitional

justice, exactly because measures are being implemented in a context of continuous conflict.

### **TRIALS AND AMNESTIES**

Latin America has advanced the notion of core international crimes and universal jurisdiction for human rights violations, as exemplified through several paradigmatic trials of high-level officials. The most noteworthy trials, nationally and internationally, are the Pinochet trials (first the arrest and extradition from London to Santiago, followed by a series of court action in domestic Chilean courts); the trials of former president Fujimori in Peru; and the trial of former military dictator and head-of-state Rios-Montt in Guatemala (Skaar, García-Godos, and Collins, 2016).

While in trials the focus tends to be on the accused and those being prosecuted, they also have an effect on victims, survivors and witnesses participating in human rights trials. How do victims and their relatives experience the trials? What challenges do they meet? What opportunities and support, if any, do they get? Psychologist Nora Sveaass and sociologist Anne Margrethe Sønneland address these questions in the context of human rights trials in Argentina and Peru; a project funded by the Latin America Programme (Sønneland, 2015; Forthcoming).

Research on the use of amnesties is present in the above-mentioned larger comparative research project on transitional justice in Latin America. Specifically for Colombia, one master student has explored the justification for amnesty for human rights violations, arguing that, paradoxically, an amnesty may also form an integrated element of transitional justice mechanism (Bjørnstad, 2010).

### **TRUTH COMMISSIONS**

Latin America is the region that launched and perfected the notion of a truth commission, i.e. an effort to document and map systematic violations of human rights after the end of conflict. Norwegian research on truth commissions is modest. Nevertheless, David Gairdner's analysis of the political role of truth commissions in political transitions in Chile and El Salvador (Gairdner, 1999) is among the first published in Norway — and indeed among the first published internationally. García-Godos (2008) explores the possibilities and limitation of the victim concept and victim reparations in the work of the Peruvian truth commission; while Barbarino (2013) explores the genealogy of the concept of truth commissions in the United Nations system.

Whereas most international work carried out on truth commissions usually stops with the issuing of the truth commissions report,

the network of Norway based and Latin America based researchers has recently embarked on a comparative study of truth commission recommendations; an understudied topic. In an ongoing research project funded by the NRC Latin America Programme, the team is undertaking a systematic comparative study of the implementation record of the recommendations made by truth commissions in 12 Latin American countries.<sup>12</sup> The truth commissions' recommendations span institutional reform, human rights education, economic and symbolic reparations to victims and their families, among other things.

### REPARATIONS AND VICTIM RIGHTS

One particular aspect of transitional justice that has attracted the attention of Norway based scholars is the rights of victims after the armed conflict has ended. According to international standards, victims of conflict and state abuse have the right to remedy. Much of the international scholarly debate is linked to the importance of material and non-material reparations to victims and their families in reconstructing society and ensuing inclusion and participation in the democratic process. Reparations may be tied to the recommendations made by truth commissions, or they may be granted by the government in a separate process. Usually, reparations are granted after the end of conflict. However, in the case of Colombia, victim rights have been flagged as part of a demobilization process. This rather untypical case, mentioned earlier, has been analysed by García-Godos and Lid (2010), who have continued their research on land restitution in transitional justice. This is a most relevant issue in Colombia, where the armed conflict has led to the internal displacement of millions of people (Lid and García-Godos, 2010).

Based on her post-doctoral research on victim rights and victim reparation programs in Latin America, García-Godos has evaluated how victim rights have evolved according to international standards (Buchanan et al., 2014), and the role that victim rights can play in linking the distributive justice agenda to transitional justice debates (García-Godos, 2013). The latter publication was awarded the Human Rights Review Gary Herbert Award for the best article published in their journal in 2013. Following the establishment and im-

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12 The three years research project (2015-17) entitled 'Beyond Words: Implementing Latin American Truth Commission Recommendations' and funded by the Latin America Programme at the Norwegian Research Council is anchored at the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) in Bergen. It is a collaborative research project undertaken by the University of Oslo, Norway; the University of Little Rock, Arkansas, USA; CELS in Buenos Aires, Argentina; IDEHPUPC in Lima, Peru; and FLACSO in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

plementation of the Victims' Law of 2011, economist Henrik Wiig led a research project funded by the MFA to explore and assess the Colombian restitution program with a particular focus on women rights holders, and to conduct a quantitative survey among displaced families in Colombia. The project is conducted in collaboration with the Observatory of Land Restitution led by Universidad Nacional de Colombia. One of the publications explores the structure and implementation of the Colombian Land Restitution Program, an ambitious national program attempting to address the needs of victims of internal displacement (García-Godos and Wiig, 2014). Two Master theses have explored the related issues of social housing as reparation for IDPs (Sliwa, 2015), and the dilemmas of return and belonging among IDP families (Zamudio, 2015).

Another important aspect of victim reparations is the right to rehabilitation for victims of torture and other gross human rights violations. Rehabilitation after torture can be understood in terms of reparations (as has been laid out in the UN Convention against Torture), but also as a right to health (as defined by other treaties, such as CESCER). Norwegian psychologist Nora Sveaass has worked on these issues since the 1980s, with Chilean refugees who fled the Pinochet regime in the 1970s and 1980s (Sveaass, 1988). In her doctoral dissertation, Sveaass analysed psychosocial interventions in refugee receiving and in post-conflict societies (Sveaass, 2001). Central questions pursued in Sveaass' research include the psychological effects of impunity (Sveaass, 1994) and, further to this, the importance of justice and reconciliation for victims (Sveaass, 2000). In her more recent work, she has discussed rehabilitation of victims as a form of reparation, arguing that the fulfilment of this right is based, among other things, on a multidisciplinary approach (Sveaass, 2013). Importantly, Sveaass in her work draws heavily on Latin American scholars and clinical personnel who have worked with traumatised victims, particularly in Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay. This is a good example of how Norway based scholars not only produce new knowledge about Latin America, but also how they learn from Latin American scholars. The focus on victims and survivor experiences continued in an ongoing study by Anne Margrethe Sønneland and Nora Sveaass. A core question is how victims experience transitional justice mechanisms, in particular when they are presenting testimonies, or bearing witness in a truth commission hearing, or in court hearings.<sup>13</sup>

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13 The four years research project entitled 'Dealing with the past. Victims' experience with transitional justice mechanisms in Peru and Argentina' is funded by the RCN's Latin America Programme.

## THE IMPACT OF TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

After almost three decades of transitional justice efforts in countries across the world, it is pertinent to ask, what difference does transitional justice really make? The dominant trend among scholars working on impact assessment has been either case studies, or the development of large data sets on transitional justice, which try to assess the impact of transitional justice mechanisms on various societal dimensions like violence, human rights protection, the rule of law, peace, democracy, etc. Norway based scholars have entered this debate, but with a new methodological approach. By opting to focus on a medium sized number of countries in their analysis, they have tried to avoid the methodological pitfalls of single case studies (which make generalisation difficult) on the one hand, and on the other hand, statistical analysis (which gives too general, and not context-specific, results). A comparative analysis of two Latin American countries (Uruguay and Peru) and two African countries (Rwanda and Angola), demonstrate that the Latin American region has several contextual factors working in favour of transitional justice processes, which in turn have enhanced the (re)construction of democracy and the establishment of a (lasting) peace. In particular, these include a relatively long trajectory of transitional justice processes and a regional legal framework (consisting of the Inter-American Court for Human Rights and Inter-American Commission for Human Rights) that has been supportive of governments trying to pursue justice for past wrongdoings (Skaar, Gianella Malca and Eide, 2015). The importance of this regional legal framework, in conjunction with a series of other factors, are further explored in the above-mentioned study of the trajectory from impunity to accountability for past human rights violations in nine Latin American countries (Skaar, García-Godos, and Collins, 2016).

To sum up, the research on transitional justice in Norway has been dominated so far by a handful of senior scholars from various disciplines such as political science, human geography, sociology, psychology, and law. Importantly, however, several master students (some under the supervision of one of these senior scholars) have developed their own individual case studies to explore specific aspects of transitional justice. For example, one master student in her thesis explored how victims of political violence experience transitional justice measures. More specifically, she looked into how Argentina's found grandchildren have experienced knowing the truth about their biological origins, and how this may have influenced their identity (Gjærløw, 2012). Another Norway based master student has written her thesis on the right to truth and the issue of the disappeared in the Colombian conflict (Medina, 2013).



## (II) RESEARCH ON JUSTICE, COURTS, AND RIGHTS PROTECTION

Another main area of Latin America research within the social sciences, both internationally and in Norway, has been the role of courts, justice, and rights protection and enforcement more generally, as part of the broader discussion of establishing and developing the rule of law. This should also be seen against the backdrop of the Norwegian Government's concern with justice and a rights-based approach to development, mentioned above. Strengthening courts and the rule of law and generally contributing to 'good governance' in democratizing countries and fragile states has long been a prioritized area in Norwegian foreign policy and aid policy, both bilateral and support given through the UN system.<sup>14</sup>

A substantial amount of research on courts has been undertaken at Norwegian universities and independent research institutions, which we here divide into four separate areas: (i) Judicial reform and judicial independence; (ii) courts and accountability;<sup>15</sup> (iii) legal pluralism; and (iv) courts and rights protection and enforcement.

### JUDICIAL REFORM AND JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE

The Latin American region underwent a string of extensive constitutional and judicial reforms in the 1990s, heavily sponsored by the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. This came in the wake of, or parallel to, the process of democratisation following the dismantling of military dictatorships in South America or the end of civil wars in Central America. The reforms intended to strengthen the judicial branch vis-à-vis the executive and make courts and judges more independent. This was first and foremost intended to benefit foreign direct investments, and thereby speed up lagging economies. However, a novel finding of Elin Skaar's dissertational work was that more independent courts and judges more receptive to human rights claims was one of the side effects of these reforms, which in turn have

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14 In 2004, the Norwegian Ministry of Justice set up a pool of professionals in a working group called 'Styrkebrønnen'. This group consists of legal scholars and judges, to be mobilised on a short notice to where legal professional aid or technical assistance are needed, particularly in weak and fragile states. Personnel assist with questions regarding the rule of law, democracy building, and human rights. Currently, the MFA supports a project in Guatemala providing technical and professional legal assistance to strengthen the courts where the human rights trials against former dictator Rios-Montt and others have taken place.

15 Note that we in this section employ a broader use of the term accountability than the one used in the previous section, which focused more narrowly on accountability for human rights violations.



facilitated the prosecution of alleged human rights perpetrators for military dictatorship crimes or war crimes (Skaar, 2002). We would also like to draw attention to the recent literature on judicial independence and the power of (especially Supreme) courts which Andrea Castagnola, based at the University of Bergen, has carried out in collaboration with a Central Latin American scholar in the field judicial politics, Aníbal Pérez-Liñán (Castagnola and Pérez-Liñán, 2011). Castagnola is currently working on a book on judicial independence in Latin America.

### **COURTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Courts also have an important role to play in terms of holding other state branches to account when they overstep their mandates and abuse their powers — so-called horizontal accountability.<sup>16</sup> This is a central topic in comparative work on the political and social role of courts, undertaken by a team of senior Latin American, US and Norwegian based scholars for more than a decade, co-ordinated and inspired by lead researcher Siri Gloppen (CMI/University of Bergen).<sup>17</sup> The team has examined the accountability function of courts in a number of Latin American countries, compared and contrasted with the experiences of African and Eastern European countries (Gloppen, Gargarella, and Skaar, 2004; Gloppen et al., 2010).

Another group of researchers, also headed by Gloppen, has examined unequal access to justice for poor and marginalised groups — so-called vertical accountability (Gargarella, Domingo, and Roux, 2006; Gloppen, 2006; Gloppen and Sieder, 2007). Cross-regional collaboration has the advantage of combining the experiences from different parts of the world, thus placing the history and development in a particular region into a comparative context. The insights drawn from these NRC funded research projects have become a corner stone in the international research on courts and accountability.

### **LEGAL PLURALISM AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR MARGINALISED GROUPS**

Closely connected to the above theme, a group of senior scholars with close affiliation to the CMI in Bergen, with the aid of master

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16 The term was first launched by Argentine scholar Guillermo O'Donnell (in exile in the USA during the latest Argentine dictatorship), and has been internationally widely adopted (O'Donnell, 1998).

17 Gloppen is an Africanist who has successfully developed a series of larger cross-regional comparative projects, including Latin America, by putting together strong research teams combining thematic expertise with deep country knowledge.

students and Ph.D. scholars at CIESAS in Mexico, have built up a network to examine the role of legal pluralities and their effects on poorer parts of the population (Sieder and McNeish, 2012, 2014). There has been a special focus on indigenous people's rights (Sieder, 2011a) and on women's rights (Sieder and Sierra, 2011). The main geographical focus has been on Guatemala, where the lead researcher, Rachel Sieder, has done ethnographic research over a period of two decades (Sieder, 2011b).<sup>18</sup> The combination of Norway based and Latin America based researchers have drawn in a mix of perspectives that have been particularly fruitful in developing new ways of understanding the importance of legal pluralities — and how this has bearings on the rights of minority groups and women in particular. Other aspects of indigenous rights in a human rights / justice perspective have also been explored by a number of master students who not form part of this larger research network (Camacho Mejia, 2014; Hotvedt, 2005; Oliva Cardenas, 2010; Olsen, 2006), as well as by senior scholars with longstanding expertise from the region (Ekern, 2008, 2011).

#### **COURTS AND RIGHTS PROTECTION: LITIGATING 'SECOND AND THIRD GENERATION' RIGHTS**

Cutting-edge research on the litigation of so-called 'new rights' has recently been produced by a strong international research team coordinated by Gloppen at CMI / the University of Bergen. Courts are not only used for resolving disputes between citizens and citizens, advancing cases for human rights violations, or holding government officials to account. Courts are also increasingly used as an arena for resolving conflicts between citizens and the state. Specifically, there is a growing international trend for people to bring cases to court to claim their rights when the state does not deliver services. In many areas, Latin America has been at the forefront in the judicialisation of politics; that is, resolving rights questions through court action (Sieder, Schjolden, and Angell, 2011). The classic human rights (i.e. physical integrity rights) have been expanded to include a much broader sets of rights, which increasingly have found their way into international conventions, covenants, and treaties. An ever-expanding number of so-called 'new rights' have been the subject of court mobilisation in order to operationalise how these rights should be understood and what legal conse-

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18 Rachel Sieder, professor at CIESAS-Mexico and affiliated senior researcher at the CMI, Bergen, has published extensively on these issues. We just mention a couple of publications here to give a flavour of Sieder's highly respected scholarship.

quences they should have. Here we will mention briefly recent and ongoing research on individual as well as collective socio-economic rights, such as, the right to health, sexual-reproductive rights, the right to food, and the right to clean water.

There is a large network of Norway based and international scholars who have focussed their intellectual attention on the right to health, and on sexual and reproductive rights, exploring a range of issues, such as access to treatment and the health rights of women. The central research question is whether courts can bring justice to health rights — or not (Yamin and Gloppen, 2011). In particular, the exceptionally strong Constitutional Courts in Costa Rica and Colombia have received a lot of scholarly attention, since they have set the legal tone for how health rights can and should be handled by both courts and government bureaucrats. See, for example the work of Camila Gianella on the implementation of the Colombian Constitutional Court's ambitious judgement on health reform, based in part on her dissertational work (Gianella, 2013). She questions whether the Court has in effect has protected, or played a detrimental role, in protecting health rights (Gianella, 2011). In another co-authored journal article she explores how this has affected children's health rights (Gianella, Gloppen, and Fosse, 2013). Gianella, among others, is currently working on reproductive rights, including the right to abortion in Peru, as part of a large comparative project on 'Abortion rights Lawfare in Latin America' based at CMI and directed by Sieder (NFR / Latin America Programme funding 2014-2017). Abortion rights in Nicaragua against the backdrop of international human rights were earlier explored by a master student (Salvesen, 2009).

Norway based or Norway affiliated scholars have also started to pay scholarly attention to the political and legal changes brought about by sexual minority groups (Gianella Malca and Wilson, 2015). The rights of gay people in particular have been extensively researched by a CMI-affiliated senior scholar, Bruce Wilson, in the case of Costa Rica (Wilson, 2007), and LGTB rights in Brazil have been examined by a master student (Itaborahy, 2012). Current Norway based research on sexual and reproductive rights is particularly noteworthy, as this has become a new 'global battlefield' (Gianella et al., 2014). This is explored in a large comparative project on 'Sexual and Reproductive Rights Lawfare: Global Battles' (NFR / Fripro funding 2014-18, based at the Department of Comparative Politics, UiB and directed by Gloppen). A large team of Norway based scholars in close collaboration with senior researchers in number of Latin American countries (Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Peru and Mexico) are currently pursu-

ing mixed methods research to explore the significance and effects of legal mobilization by conservative as well as progressive groups, and have produced some very interesting comparative research (Gianella Malca and Gloppen, 2014).

Access to food is a basic human right, but most poor people have never challenged this right in court. A master student participating in the network led by CMI senior scholars has examined why Guatemalans have not claimed their food rights in court, and found that even though the legal conditions appear to be favourable to right-to-food litigation in Guatemala, such litigation has not taken place (Brandt, 2011). Water rights are also a relatively new topic in international rights research. A Norwegian master student analysed the 'Mendoza case (Acumar)' in Argentina, where a public interest litigation process led to a judgment ordering Argentine authorities to clean the Matanza-Riachuelo River Basin in 2008, arguing that in spite poor implementation, litigation can contribute to solve complex environmental cases (Staveland-Sæter, 2010).

The focus on legal strategies for rights protection has also been present in research done among organisations of internally displaced women in Colombia (Lemaitre and Bergtora Sandvik, 2014), through a project carried out at the Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO) in collaboration with Universidad de los Andes, Colombia.<sup>19</sup>

As with the transitional justice research area, the nucleus of researchers based in Norway who are engaged in the area of justice, courts and rights protection / enforcement is small, but supplemented with a strong international network and the active participation of master students. This collaboration has great potential for further development.

## CONCLUSIONS

Partly as a result of Norwegian policies towards Latin America and partly as a result of scarce funding opportunities, research on human rights and justice in Latin America has only been carried out in Norway for about a quarter of a century, and few scholars work on it full-time. Although there has been a substantial increase in the number of Master thesis written on human rights and justice over

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19 The four years project (2010-2014) entitled 'The Significance of Political Organization and International Law for Displaced Women in Colombia: A Socio-legal study of Liga de Mujeres' was led by legal scholar Kristin Sandvik at PRIO and funded by the RCN's Latin America Programme.

the past 10-15 years,<sup>20</sup> only five persons in Norway have completed a Ph.D. relevant to these topics since 2000.<sup>21</sup> The human rights research scene, thus, is still arguably dominated by a handful of Norwegian based senior scholars. As this chapter has made clear, this in turn has ‘forced’ Norwegian scholars interested in Latin America to develop extensive networks with strong institutional partners in a number of Latin American countries, as well as with scholars from Latin American countries based in the US. These extensive research networks include the top social science research institutions in Latin America: CIESAS in Mexico, De Justicia in Colombia, FLACSO in Guatemala, IDEHPUPC in Peru, and CELS in Argentina, to mention but a few. These institutions have long-standing research agendas and competences, that Norwegian based researchers have greatly benefited working with. The result is exceptionally strong and vibrant research teams that bring in inter disciplinary perspectives from several regions of the world. These cross-regional research teams have managed to secure long-term project funding from the Norwegian Research Council (and other funding institutions in both Norway and other countries), on the merits of the proposed research.

With the NRC Latin America Programme ending in 2017, there will be no funding at all earmarked Latin America research in Norway. Consequently, researchers interested in Latin America need to find other innovative ways of scraping out funds to develop new research projects, such as tailoring their applications to fit thematic research programs, or placing their thematic focus in a wider cross-regional perspective. While this might not be a huge problem for those in permanent university positions, it may certainly affect those working in the institute sector as well as the recruitment of younger scholars and international collaborative projects.

The future prospects of Norwegian research on human rights and justice are, however, in no way bleak. The teams and networks established at the University of Oslo and the CMI are solid, and the number of publications in progress reinforces this trend. The research agenda for the group working on transitional justice issues points in the di-

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20 An interesting observation simply by looking at the names of researchers in Norway working on Latin America is that a substantial number of people have Spanish names, and are most likely of Latin American origin — or Master students from Latin America on exchange programmes. This means, that due to student mobility, the more stable research community working on Latin America in Norway is even smaller than the number of theses submitted at Norwegian universities and colleges would suggest.

21 Nora Sveaass (University of Oslo, 2001), Elin Skaar (University of California Los Angeles, 2002), Cecilia Bailliet (University of Oslo, 2002), Stener Ekern (University of Oslo, 2006), and Jemima García-Godos (University of Oslo, 2006).

rection of the study of truth commission recommendations; land restitution and policies of return for Colombian IDPs; victim groups as political actors; and the complex character of rehabilitation. For the research groups focusing on courts, the litigation of 'new rights' opens a wide research agenda.

Beyond these two fields, and perhaps overlapping with the areas of peacebuilding, security, and the rule of law, it is not hard to envision that the challenges of armed violence and organised crime in Latin America, with their close links to politics and livelihoods and producing thousands of victims across the region, can become a new area of study for Norwegian researchers and students interested in human rights and justice.

## APPENDIX

**Table 1**

Master and Ph.D. theses focusing on human rights, justice, and rights issues - as a total of all theses on Latin America (2000-2015)

Theses on on Latin America research submitted at Norwegian institutions since 2000 <sup>a</sup>	Topic 1. Rule of law and human rights	Topic 2. War, peace and conflict resolution	All topics
<i>Hovedfag</i> Master theses	28	22	466 <sup>b</sup>
Ph.D. theses	0	1	13
Main countries covered by research <sup>c</sup>	Colombia (7) Mexico (6) Nicaragua (3) Peru (2) Argentina (2) Guatemala (2) Haiti (2) Brazil (1) Chile (1) Costa Rica (1) El Salvador (1)	Colombia (10) Guatemala (5) Haiti (2) Peru (2) Cuba (1) Dominican Republic (1) Ecuador (1)	Brazil (57) Mexico (50) Guatemala (40) Argentina (38) Colombia (38) Bolivia (30) Chile (20)
Total	28	23	479

Source: Database developed by Tobias Wilbers based on all MA and Ph.D. theses registered by all Norwegian universities and colleges.

a Note that the table does not cover MA theses and Ph.D. Theses submitted by Norwegian nationals to institutions outside of Norway. Hence, the total number of theses is probably slightly larger than what the table suggests. In particular, we note that only one of the five Ph.D. mentioned in FN 24 has been registered in this particular database. Nevertheless, the table provides a rough overview of core research on Latin America carried out from Norwegian institutions.

b About 90 of these are registered as 'hovedoppgave', which correspond to 'Master Thesis', but were larger pieces of work that mostly required fieldwork.

c Only those countries that have 20 or more hits in the data base covering MA and Ph.D. theses (2000-2015) are included here.

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## **ROKKAN IN THE ANDES**

### **CLEAVAGES, PARTY SYSTEMS AND THE EMERGENCE OF NEW LEFTIST PARTIES\***

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The starting point of this chapter is the model of Stein Rokkan (1921-1979) on cleavages, representation and party systems to analyze the political changes in the Andes since 2000. In particular, the chapter will focus on the so-called left turn that began with the rise of Hugo Chávez as President of Venezuela in 1998, and which has been extended to Bolivia through the coming to power of the MAS and Evo Morales, to Ecuador –first and ephemerally with Lucio Gutiérrez, and then and more durably with Rafael Correa–, and finally to Peru with the arrival of Ollanta Humala to Executive Power.

More precisely, we will use the Rokkan model as a tool of analysis to understand and explain the collapse of the party systems in these countries (dealignment) and the formation of new cleavages, after the change of power and regime, in the above-mentioned countries (realignment). We do not claim that the model of Rokkan is the only or even the best model to analyze this phenomenon, but it represents another model with a classic comparative politics perspective, and a particularly Norwegian model. Thus, we try to contribute not only to the existing debate on the current left(s) in Latin

\* Translation by Eugenia Cervio.

America, but also present perspectives from Norwegian comparative politics to better understand the current socio-political situation in parts of Latin America.

While we argue that the Rokkan model is good mainly to explain the dealignments and realignments in the party systems in the Andes, it leaves us short of explaining why they turn to the left. In the already extensive literature on the new left in Latin America, there are several explanations of the phenomenon that unfolds now, not only in the Andes but in most of South America and also in part of Central America. Levitsky and Roberts (2011) point out two causes, focusing on the inequality in the region and the economic crisis that followed the neoliberal reforms, and argue that the rise of the commodities' prices has extended and strengthened the leftist regimes. The left, whose one of its main political programs is combating poverty and inequality, and had no responsibility for the implementation of the neoliberal reforms, was ready to harvest the lost votes of central and right parties. The condition *sine qua non* of the rise of the left, both the contestatory and the moderate left (Castañeda 2006; Weyland, 2010), was the stabilization of democracies and of inter-party competition after the third democratic wave in Latin America. Moreover, the fall of the Berlin wall had a double effect in the region, since on the one hand it moderated much of the left and, on the other hand, opened the democracies and the United States to accept the left-wing governments. A great debate about the left turn in Latin America has been how to conceptualize the different movements, parties, and governments that have emerged. From the nowadays famous article of Castañeda (2006), which in a quite controversial way distinguished between the modern left (right) and the populist left (wrong), the discussions have been extensive. Although many have criticized Castañeda for a simplistic analysis (for example, Cameron, 2009), few have been the contributions that significantly differ from its first dual division between two lefts. Contributing both to the discussion of the two or more left-wings and the causes of its rise, Swedish scientist Fredrik Uggla (2008) demonstrates how the successful leftist parties, in fact, moved towards the centre as an electoral strategy to reach power. In this chapter, we will focus on the so-called contestatory left (Weyland, 2010) or populist left (Castañeda, 2006). This is the left that has dominated and won power in Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador, not for being perhaps the most radical, but because in these countries, along with the Gana Perú party and President Humala in Peru, the left represents new parties that, on having approached and gained the power, have broken the old party systems and representation channels. For these cases, we understand that the concepts and theories of Rokkan serve as a model of analysis.



The chapter continues with a presentation of the thought of Stein Rokkan and its importance for Norwegian and international comparative politics, with a particular focus on his concept of cleavages to analyze party systems. Second, we present some challenges of using his model of analysis to understand the trajectory and formation of political systems and parties in Latin America. Then, we try to use the Rokkanian key concepts to explain and understand the radical changes in party systems in the Andes and to explain its left turn. Finally, we conclude.

## **2. ROKKAN AND HIS MODEL**

Stein Rokkan (1921-1979) was one of the most important social scientists from the second half of the twentieth century. He was the founder and one of the great masters of comparative politics, and played a prominent and influential role in the history of the social sciences in both Europe and the United States. Today, his research and works are considered as classics in the discipline of comparative politics, and his concepts and theoretical models have become genuine mental categories. Rokkan had an enormous influence on the development and consolidation of the social sciences in the post-war period, as initiator and organizer of institutions for comparative research. His research program laid the groundwork for a comparative and historical macrosociology. The most important scientific contribution of Rokkan lies in the originality of his theoretical models and conceptual maps for the study of the European political development.

He entered the University of Oslo in 1939, where he studied Philology, specialising in French language. Encouraged by the philosopher Arne Næss, he continued with studies in philosophy and graduated in 1948. The work as a research assistant of Arne Næss at the UNESCO project on 'Democracy' awoke his interest in the comparative study of the development of mass politics. In 1951, Rokkan began working at the Institute for Social Research (ISF) in Oslo, and in the framework of the 'Norwegian Electoral Research Programme' hosted by the ISF, began a close collaboration with Henry Valen, another important scholar of electoral processes. In 1958, he joined the Chr. Michelsen Institute in Bergen as Professor and Researcher in Political Science (comparative politics), and in 1966, he was appointed Professor in Comparative Politics at the University of Bergen.

Rokkan became one of the most important promoters of the internationalization of the social sciences. He was an active and tireless creator of Agencies and University structures for comparative research. He considered that the continued efforts of men and institutions were required to develop cross-cultural, cross-societal and

cross-national research. Working at UNESCO enabled him to have contacts with institutions and social scientists of international status. He was Vice-President of the International Sociological Association (ISA) (1966-70), President of the International Political Science Association (IPSA) (1970-73) and of the International Council of Social Sciences at UNESCO (1973-77), as well as President (1970-76) and co-founder of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR). Rokkan was also Secretary of the Committee on Political Sociology (CPS) of the ISA for ten years (1960-70), which was chaired by Seymour Martin Lipset in the same period. Substantially, the CPS became an international network of personal contacts among social scientists who shared with Rokkan the same ambition of analyzing major social changes.

Rokkan had a particular interest in promoting the use of computers and specialized programs for the processing of data in the social sciences of Western Europe. He was one of the first social scientists to understand the academic value of the databases for social sciences. He created the Norwegian Social Science Data Archives (NSD).

The study of the European political development was his preferred study area, as a response to what seemed to him a tendency of the American social scientists to overly generalized theorizing. Rokkan participated in the Committee on Comparative Politics of the US Social Science Research Council, but decided to distance himself from its positions, which tended to accumulate quantitative indicators and develop statistical analyses while neglecting history and institutions. Rokkan had already made clear his preference for region-specific models, or the analysis focused on limited territorial areas, as in the case of the countries of Western Europe –comparable cases by their affinities in accordance with the most similar systems design– focusing his attention especially on socio-historical macro-processes. More than to be interested in the development process, as did most of those who integrated the Committee, Rokkan was intrigued to know why processes of State formation and nation-building, as well of democratization, assumed diverse forms.

In fact, the study of *diversity* or *variations* runs as a thread through the works of Rokkan. Rokkan's research can be divided into four topics or stages: (1) Norwegian Studies from a comparative perspective, with an emphasis on the *variations* in electoral participation and the introduction of new groups into the political arena in the late fifties and early sixties (Rokkan, 1966; 1967); (2) Studies of the small countries of Western Europe, where he focuses on the *variations* in the formation of cleavages and party systems in the late 1960s (Rokkan and Lipset, 1967); (3) Studies of *the variations* in the formation of the

State and nation-building, culminating with his 'conceptual map of Europe' at the beginning of the 1970s (Rokkan, 1975); (4) Studies of the *variations* of territorial identities and the construction of boundaries (exit, voice) in the context of the so-called ETI project (Economy, Territory, and Identity) at the end of the 1970s (Rokkan and Urwin, 1983). In the Rokkanian thinking, the subject and the level of the *explananda* change, but the point of explaining *structural variations* always remains as a constant (Berntzen and Selle, 1990: 132).

The fame of Rokkan in the academic world is based on his comparative studies of the evolution of pluralist democracies in Western Europe. Perhaps, the most widespread and frequently cited of his analytical concepts is that of *cleavages*, which first appeared in a work published along with Seymour Martin Lipset (Rokkan and Lipset, 1967).

The theory of Rokkan on the development of competitive mass politics in Western Europe consists of two separate but intertwined elements of analysis, the organizational and institutional variations of pluralist mass democracies: the cleavages and party system structures, and the model of four institutional thresholds of democratization.

According to the theory of Rokkan, the originating differences in the party systems are in the system of cleavages, which were the product of the processes of state formation and nation building. The cleavages are particularly strong and long divisions or conflicts that lie in the social structure. For Rokkan, the structures of cleavages existed long before the birth of the party system, but 'only after the introduction and the extension of the suffrage, the already existing cleavages are transformed into embryonic party systems' (Rokkan, 1999: 34). The transformation of the structures of cleavages into party systems is a correspondence of structural features that are connected through a model of formation of alliances and oppositions.

The systems of cleavages have at least two dimensions: territorial, which generates the axis of centre-periphery relations; and functional, which produces the economic and cultural axis. In the development of the political systems, the cleavages emerge when the critical junctures are presented, which are periods of radical change that can take different forms: of *limited-duration*, such as civil wars and political or social revolutions; and long-range *structural changes*. The cleavages are then frozen for long periods. In the analysis of Rokkan, there are four fundamental types of cleavages as product of the two major revolutions: the French Revolution –or the National Revolution– and the Industrial Revolution. Two of these cleavages are the direct product of the National Revolution: (I) The *centre-periphery* cleavage is the conflict between the culture of the nation-building

centre and the resistance of the populations of the provinces and the different peripheries, ethnically, linguistically, and religiously differentiated, which see their culture threatened by the attempts of centralization and standardization on the part of national central elites and their bureaucratic apparatus; and (II) the *state-church* cleavage is the conflict between the centralizing, regularizing and mobilizing nation-state and the historically established corporate privileges of the Church. The fundamental conflict between the Church and the state was focused on the control of education. The origin of these two cleavages can be found in the early state formation process and in the variations of the state-church relations during the Reformation (sixteenth-seventeenth centuries). However, the claims of the nation-state, such as popular sovereignty, supreme loyalty and the conformation of culture and territory are a modern phenomenon that began with the French Revolution.

To these older cleavages are added two new ones, product of the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century. (III) The *urban-rural* cleavage refers to conflicts between agricultural interests and emerging classes of commercial and industrial entrepreneurs (commodity market). (IV) The *capital-labour* or class cleavage refers to the conflict between owners and employers on the one hand, and employees and workers on the other hand (labour market).

The latter cleavage, the class one, had a homogenizing effect in the European political systems, gave rise to the worker or socialist parties and trade union movements in every European country, and produced the ideological distinction of the classical left-right division. In contrast, the other three cleavages, having unfolded prior to the class cleavage operated with variations among the cases. The urban-rural cleavage gave rise to the formation of agrarian parties only in the Nordic countries, where the gap between rural territories in the process of industrialization and urban industrial interests could not be framed in a single political movement, as in the case of Great Britain. The state-church cleavage, in turn, was at the origin of the confessional parties for the defence of religion only in the territories of the Counter-Reformation, where tensions between the Catholic Church and the liberal nation-building elites were stronger. The same thing happened in the border areas between the territories of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation: The Netherlands and Germany with its Protestant and Catholic Churches. On the contrary, in the territories of the Reformation, the official national Churches became simply agents of the state and cooperated with the political centre in the nation-building process, and conflicts over control of the educational institutions, which gave rise to confessional political mobiliza-

tion in other countries, were not developed. Finally, the socio-cultural centre-periphery cleavage was manifested with large variations in Europe. The emergence of parties of territorial defence depended on the ethnic-linguistic stratification of each country, the existence of minorities, and the resources that the centre and the periphery were able to mobilize, respectively.

However, the structures of cleavages were not transformed into party systems automatically, but they required the intervention of institutional factors. Rokkan suggests a sequence of four thresholds or barriers in the process of democratization and mobilization of the masses:

- First, the threshold of legitimation refers to the moments in the history of state formation and nation building in which the existence of the political opposition with petition, criticism and protest rights against the Government is legitimized.
- Second, the threshold of incorporation refers to the moments in which the opposition obtained the same rights of political citizenship as their opponents, that is, when the suffrage or the right to participate in representative elections is granted.
- Third, the threshold of representation refers to the moments in which the barriers were reduced to allow that the opposition movements to obtain parliamentary seats more easily. The introduction of the proportional representation electoral system facilitates the passage of this threshold.
- Fourth, the threshold of Executive Power refers to the moments in which the opposition was able to gain legitimate access Executive positions. The introduction of the parliamentary principle facilitates the passage of this threshold (Rokkan and Lipset, 2000).

The first two thresholds laid the groundwork for the emergence of competitive mass politics. The introduction of proportional representation in the final phase of mass mobilization led to the stabilization of the party structures of each country. Rokkan points out that party systems of the 1960s 'reflect, with few but significant exceptions, the cleavage systems of the 1920s' (Rokkan and Lipset, 2000: 266). This stability of party alternatives is manifested in the so-called 'freezing' of the party systems in Europe, expressed particularly by the stability of electoral alignments between 1920 and 1970.

A party system structured around stable cleavages tends to produce phenomena of electoral alignment. The concept of elec-

toral alignments is related to another two derived concepts: electoral realignments and dealignments. An electoral *realignment* means a lasting change of the electoral alignments, which occurs when there are one or more 'critical elections' and results in a new period of stability in the electoral alignments. Finally, the notion of *dealignment* involves the weakening of the affinities between certain political groups and sectors of the citizenry, due to the erosion of the cleavages linked to the alignments of the previous party system. Then, the processes of electoral alignment and dealignment are symptoms that may indicate the change of cleavages and party systems.

In the models of Rokkan, there are elements that cannot be divorced from the European historical context, but it is also true that the models and theories of Rokkan initially depart from general questions and develop, therefore, general concepts. In particular, the concepts contained in the study of the processes of democratization and the model of cleavages to explain the genesis of party systems provide a perspective of analysis to other historical-political experiences, as in the case of the Latin American countries. In this sense, these are concepts that can 'travel'. Hereafter we are going to travel with the Rokkanian concept of cleavages, first to Latin America in general and then to the Andean countries in particular.

In Latin America, democracy was not settled until almost the end of the twentieth century. Processes of democratic transition and consolidation can shed light on the dynamics of the manifestation of cleavages in political systems recently opened to the popular vote. In processes of democratic transition and consolidation, it is possible that some latent cleavages do not have an explicit role in the party system. Despite the existence of a fundamental relationship between the social structure and the party structure, such relationship is neither direct nor automatic. Nor is there an automatic relationship between the territorial structure of the State, the electoral behaviour and the party system. One of the most fruitful contributions of the models of Rokkan is the inclusion of an independent or separate territorial dimension, that is, the centre-periphery of the nation-state. We believe that the territorial dimension in the model-theories of Stein Rokkan has special relevance for Latin America, given the increasing concern about the (re)territorialisation of the party systems in the region (Harbers, 2010).

Then, the following paragraphs are devoted to an analysis of the model of cleavages and party systems in the context of the third wave of democratization in Latin America.

### 3. THE ELECTORAL NEXUS: DEMOCRATIZATION, CLEAVAGES, AND PARTY SYSTEMS

The breakdown of authoritarian regimes in Latin America, Southern and Eastern Europe paved the way for the third wave of democratization (Huntington, 1991; Diamond and Günther, 2001; Puhle, 2005). This process has spawned an increased interest in the works of Stein Rokkan (Barrientos del Monte, 2011). The research focused on transitions between regimes has produced new developments in terms of the relationships between structures and actions (O'Donnell et al., 1986; Karl and Schmitter, 1991; Berglund and Dellenbrant, 1994; Günther et al., 1995; Linz and Stepan, 1996; Berglund and Aarebrot, 2001; Diamandouros and Günther, 2001). As expected, the scholars emphasize the key role of elections in the processes of democratization. After all, free and fair elections are the *sine qua non* elements that constitute the very definition of liberal democracy. However, the elections also *structure* political mobilization, produce *party systems*, and give *legitimacy* to the Governors. In addition, research on democratic *consolidation* underlines the importance of party systems (Toka, 1996).

The political parties in liberal democracy fulfil a range of functions. As intermediate institutions they serve to catch votes, occupy political positions and develop policies (Strøm, 1990). Parties are drivers of social demands and delegates of civil society (Morlino, 1995: 315), and the sole viable providers of political candidates and governments in consolidated liberal democracies (Diamond and Günther, 2001).

Therefore, elections, parties and party systems play fundamental roles in the stabilization and consolidation of liberal democracies (Pridham and Lewis, 1996; Puhle, 2005). However, the functions of elections and parties seem to be contradictory. On the one hand, the consolidation of a regime requires a certain measure of stability, but, on the other hand, no democracy can exist without the explicit possibility of change. Thus, democratization is a complex process that operates on several levels simultaneously. There is a fundamental difference between the overall stability of the system, on the one hand, and changes in the composition of the legislature and the Executive, on the other. When democracy has been consolidated a certain systemic stability is achieved, and the fluctuations in electoral volatility and the stability of the parties have few implications for the democratic system itself (Diamond, 1997; Linz and Stepan, 1996).

Well, one thing is to assert that a certain combination of stability and change is essential for democracy, yet another very different thing is to analyze and verify the relationship between them. In theory, systemic stability could coexist with major and radical changes in the



format of the party system between elections, but such a phenomenon is hardly feasible in practice. Not only would it be extremely costly in terms of time and resources spent by citizens and their representatives, it would also be severely harmful for any long-term political investment. So, a kind of anchor between the electoral behaviour and the structuring of policies in relation to the social context seems to be indispensable for the consolidation of democracy.

Democratic consolidation, therefore, encompasses a multifaceted process related to the *stabilization* of the electoral behaviour and the competition patterns between parties. Relations between citizens and parties will be stabilized and the effective space of electoral competition will be restricted to a part of the electorate only (Morlino, 1995). This process may be based either on a type of 'Downsian' balance or on a 'freezing' of the electoral competition (Downs, 1957; Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967).

In political theory, the relevance of the stabilization process is rooted in the concept of vertical accountability. That is to say, that to some extent the anchoring of the vote is considered paramount to reduce the possibilities for manipulation of the electorate. Comparative studies between Europe and Latin America have argued that the fragile anchors of the vote –that is, personalistic rather than programmatic– are an important dimension in the weak institutionalization of party systems in many Latin American cases (Harbers, 2010; Mainwaring and Scully, 1995; Mainwaring and Torcal, 2004, 2006).

There are two perspectives to explain the ties between the citizens and the party systems: (I) identification with the parties and, (II) identification based on ideological orientations. These identifications are explained based on the theory of social cleavages and/or the theory of the left-right dimension as a cognitive heuristic tool. According to the theory of social cleavages, citizens deposit their ballots in predictable ways, since their respective positions in the social structure vis-à-vis the positions of others, make them identify certain parties as representatives of their interests. The position of the individual in the socio-cultural structure provides support for the political translation into a party system of identities such as 'us' against 'them' (Sartori, 1990; Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). The institutionalization of social divisions by means of a set of manifest cleavages generates a systemic stability, which in turn fosters long-term commitments. Therefore, there is already a range of studies on the (re)emergence of political parties in Latin America in the context of the democratization processes based on the Rokkanian theoretical framework on cleavages (Barrientos del Monte, 2011: 10).



In principle, the theory of the ideological space offers a somewhat different perspective to explain electoral stability. In its original version it is based on the theory of Downs, in which the logic of competition between parties is linked to the ideological positioning of the voters in a way that makes the behaviour of both parties and citizens predictable in rational terms (Downs, 1957). This *predictability* promotes the possibility of reducing the electoral market and thus establishes long-term channels of communication and accountability between the party systems and citizens.

In contrast, in a society in which only a fraction of the citizens are able to locate themselves and the parties on relevant ideological dimensions, electoral cycles tend to be less predictable and, in some cases, pave the way for particularistic and personalistic voting, populism, and electoral manipulation (Harbers, 2010; Mainwaring and Torcal, 2004, 2006).

According to some scholars, the ideological positions work in combination with the social cleavages. As the number of manifest cleavages is limited, they can serve as a cognitive tool for the orientation of the citizens. In fact, some see the left-right dimension as an expression of a combination of political values and social cleavages (Fuchs and Klingemann, 1990; Inglehart, 1979; Inglehart and Klingemann, 1976; Klingemann, 1979; Knutsen, 1997; Van Deth and Geurts, 1989; Anduiza and Bosch, 2004: 181-190).

In short, party systems are stabilized when individuals are linked to parties based on their relative positions in the social structure or cognitive ideological space (Mainwaring and Torcal, 2004). This stabilization, in turn, facilitates vertical accountability in the long-term and thus promotes the creation of confidence in society. It is to say that some kind of stable and reciprocal understanding between voters and parties, in terms of their respective social and ideological orientations, is considered essential for the political parties to be able to carry out their function as creators and preservers of trust in representative democracy (Pizzorno, 1990).

However, this overall assessment does not indicate anything about the cleavages in *which* it is based or *how* the social divisions become the obvious parts of the political system. As new democracies did not emerge in a vacuum, comparative research on the democratization of the third wave has manifested a series of more or less interrelated challenges that these systems have had to face. Apart from establishing democratic procedures, the cases have been engaged in a process of liberalization of the economy that sometimes has occurred simultaneously with the transition of the political regime (Puhle, 2005). Moreover, even the countries that had completed the transition

to a market economy long before the transition to democracy, among them Latin American ones, have been faced with the Neoliberal imperative: the impetus for the reduction of the modern state apparatus. In addition, many of the cases have been involved in a profound process of political and fiscal decentralisation. The variations in the configuration of challenges, and how they have been managed in each case, have served as a basis for comparisons between the third-wave democracies (Linz and Stepan, 1996; Mainwaring and Torcal, 2006).

All of this implies that transitions in the third wave have been marked by some common factors imposed by the *Zeitgeist* — the spirit of the times — on the one hand, and by the specific contexts of each of the States, on the other hand.

Therefore, the variations in the formation of party systems in Latin America will reflect the attempts to deal with the legacies of historical, political and social divisions by means of free and competitive elections. In this process, politicians have a margin of manoeuvre and are, to a certain extent, capable of structuring the social and attitudinal bases of the party system (Enyedi, 2005).

This is what the *electoral nexus* implies: in the process of democratization, the relationship between the management of historical and social challenges of citizen's voting behaviour will be reflected in the logic of mobilisation, stabilization and competition between the parties in accordance with the translation of each of the social divisions into manifest social cleavages. In addition, the nature of this relationship not only varies in temporal terms, but it can also display territorial variations according to the relative importance of divisions in different regions. A simple starting point would be to advance that the more complex the array of challenges presented to the electorate is, the more complex are the electoral competition and the party systems. However, this does not indicate anything about the dimensions of the electoral competition in terms of *direction* and *intensity*; nor does it indicate something specific about *when* and *where* the reduction or restriction of the electoral competition will take place, in a particular case of democratization.

In fact, scholars have tended to dodge deciding *a priori* on the relationship between historical and social divisions, on the one hand, and the logic of the electoral competition, on the other — at least in terms of making predictions. In addition, for the few who have dared to advance in this regard, the effort has proven to be a high-risk adventure.<sup>1</sup>

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1 The case of the state-church cleavage in the Spanish transition to democracy after the death of Franco is instructive. See: Buck (2009: Ch. 2), Montero and Calvo (2000), Calvo and Montero (2002), and Linz (1967).

In general, it should be noted that research has revealed that, despite the existence of a fundamental relationship between the social structure and the structuring party that supports the electoral competition, this relationship is neither direct nor deterministic — nor even reflective (Günther and Montero, 2001). All this only underline the relevance of *action* in the process of translating the structural divisions into a system of manifest cleavages (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967; Sartori, 1990). Therefore, as we have already pointed out above, in the processes of transition and democratic consolidation may be some *latent* cleavages do not form an explicit part of the party system. In the end, there is no *automatic* relationship between social structures and party systems. In addition, as we will see below, neither is there an automatic relationship between the territorial structure of the state, the electoral behaviour and the party system. We believe that the theory of Stein Rokkan in terms of the territorial dimension of politics has special relevance in Latin America, given the increasing concern with the *(re)territorialisation*<sup>2</sup> of the party systems (Harbers, 2010) and the behaviour of Deputies (Calvo and Leiras, 2011).

### 3.1. THE TERRITORIAL DIMENSION OF POLITICS : CENTRE AND PERIPHERY

The major contribution of Rokkan to political analysis was the inclusion of the autonomous territorial dimension of modern states: the centre-periphery axis that connects the institutional architecture of a nation-state to its territorial structure (see: Rokkan, 1987: 347-380; Rokkan, 1999: 108-134; Barrientos del Monte, 2011). We bring the definition of the periphery as an area in which the input and the output are controlled by the exercise of power at the heart of the system. The centre and the periphery constitute a hierarchical and defined network (Bakka, 1998).

The centres and their respective peripheries are connected by military-administrative, judicial-legal, economic and cultural channels. According to Rokkan, the process towards modern democracy implies the formation of the state, the nation, political participation and economic redistribution. Stabilization is only attainable if it is based on political and social rights, institutionalized within a system of sovereign government. Democratization is, thus, a prerequisite for the stability (Hagtvedt, 1993: 96-99, 118-119).

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2 (Re) territorialisation implies that the left-right dimension at the national level based on state-church and capital-labour cleavages loses weight, while the territorial dimension based on the urban-rural and centre-periphery cleavages becomes relevant for the political mobilization.

The model is based supposedly on a methodological collectivism represented by actors that operate at the intermediate level, e.g. political parties, which differentiates it from the macro-approach preferred by classical Parsonian structural-functionalism. That is, that determinism introduced by functionalist elements is supposedly balanced by the fact that it takes into consideration the will of the actors, in the sense of its strategic provisions to be viewed as an important factor to explain a specific process of political mobilization.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the application of the model to a given process of democratization requires a specific analysis of the electoral behaviour of the actors, namely, the political elite and the citizenry.

It should be noted that there are compelling reasons, both empirical and analytical, to make a fundamental distinction between the 'state' and the 'nation' in modern political systems (Nielson, 1985; Linz, 1993; Østerud, 1978; Keating, 2001). The state is seen as a legal concept that binds a government organization to a social group within a limited territory (Tiryakian and Nevitte, 1985; Hoffmann, 1988). The 'nation', on the contrary, is much more difficult to define in both extensive and substantive terms. The nation is more than a series of objective characteristics such as geography, ethnicity, language, culture, etc. The nation is also defined by an expressed will of action. It is a 'daily plebiscite, a living soul, a spiritual principle' (Renan, 1970: 80). Therefore, the nation is a dynamic entity and not a given fact.

The different properties of the state and of the nation make them analytically distinct and, in fact, states that consist of a single national identity, as claimed by the strictest definition of the nation-state, are not a rule but an exception (see Nielson, 1985). Moreover, as any collective distinction can be the basis for political mobilization (Sartori, 1990), differential identities can be used to create political movements. In general, the political movements which define themselves as representatives of 'differential facts'<sup>4</sup> are based on the idea that different cultural identities and/or economic interests linked to the territories have been formed over time.

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3 However, it should be noted that the attempt to combine Parsonian structural theory with the theory of action has not been entirely successful in the works of Rokkan. Although he stressed the strategic action by means of social groups, the meaning of their actions was introduced from the outside, and Rokkan had never conducted any analysis of their ideologies, their resources or their strategic actions. In fact, it can be concluded that the actors would have to be introduced from the outside (Berntzen and Selle, 1988: 253-253).

4 There are several concepts around the same principle, for example, 'nationalities', 'Indian Nations', 'First Nations', and so on.

The subjective dimension designated above implies that it is not necessary to be a separatist to mobilize politically, by referring to the principle of self-determination on behalf of a differential identity (Keating, 2001). The relative weight of culture, ethnicity and geography on national identity has already been debated (Linz, 1985: 203-253; Kellas, 1991: 67). While observers in the past tended to take ethnic identity for granted, research carried out since the 1960s asserts that identity is, to a certain extent, 'invented' and that multiple identities are viable in the modern democratic system (Barth, 1969; Keating, 2001; Martínez-Herrera, 2002).

In the struggle for the vote of the citizenry, the individual is subject to the forces of attraction from different centres of political identification. As noted above, from a Rokkanian perspective the dual concept of centre-periphery is based on the premise that power is distributed in an uneven manner in modern states, not only in social terms but also in geographical terms. The *centre* is a privileged area in the territory of the state, while the *peripheries* are areas that depend on the centre and have minimal resources to protect their properties against external influences (Rokkan and Urwin, 1983: 2-6; Rokkan, 1999: 108-121).

The relations between the forces that act to impose standardization in the name of the state and the forces that act to preserve the particularities of the peripheries are of mutual influence. If the state is relatively ineffective, regional mediators usually emerge between the centre and the peripheries.<sup>5</sup> The dialectics of modernization, regional political mobilization, and state inefficiency are considered fundamental for understanding the variations with regard to the *nationalization* of politics not only among national-states, but also within the territory of a particular state. Thus, in processes of democratization the 'national unity' or the 'nationalization of the policies' identified by Rüstow (1970) and Caramani (2004), respectively, cannot be taken for granted beforehand.

The centre-periphery dimension of the nation-state and the territorial and cultural cleavages may have particular relevance to the Andean countries by the presence of significant indigenous populations, particularly in Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador. Along with Venezuela, these countries are precisely those that have endured the most profound changes in the party systems after the democratic transitions of the

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5 This implies that the central state despite being omnipresent is ineffective, and that installs a system of regional mediators –the so-called *caciques* in Spanish and *coronéis* in Portuguese– with devastating effects on the legitimacy of the central state (Heywood, 1995: 15; Roniger, 1987).

third wave of democratization. In the next section, we use the Rokkanian concepts to explain the changes in the party systems and the political left turn in the Andes.

#### 4. ROKKAN IN THE ANDES: EXPLAINING THE CHANGES IN PARTY SYSTEMS

We believe that the model of Rokkan has special relevance and utility to explain the changes of party systems in the Andes, changes that also facilitated the entry of the new parties (of the left) in the governments, which were originated by the same rise of the new parties representing new cleavages in the societies. In the mid-90s, Mainwaring and Scully (1995) categorized Venezuela and Colombia as institutionalized party systems, and Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru as a rudimentary or inchoate. However, this categorization does not help to explain the radical changes in the party systems that have been observed in the Andean countries given that Venezuela, which was the Latin American example of an institutionalized party system, has been also the country that, since 1998 and the election of Hugo Chávez for the Presidency, has experienced the most radical changes in both levels of party system and politics.

In our opinion, the changes of party systems with the rise to power of Chávez in Venezuela, Morales in Bolivia, Correa in Ecuador, and to a lesser extent Humala in Peru, are manifestations of *critical junctures* in parties and political systems. If we follow the concepts of Rokkan, the critical junctures are processes of dealignment between social structures and party systems that with the access to power of new political actors, which we consider critical elections, create, or may create, electoral realignments based on the new cleavages. That is to say, in the Andean cases new cleavages were produced in societies that the existing parties failed to incorporate and represent. New alternative parties emerged, founded on the new cleavages, which manage to institutionally express and represent the new poles of the new social conflicts. The tremendous fall of the traditional parties, such as AD and MNR in Venezuela and Bolivia, are explained by the fact that the old conflicts and cleavages they had represented, had already ceased to have any weight in society. After the critical junctures and elections, lasting changes in electoral alignments have been created, thus constituting the realignment in the party systems. Although we will not conclude on the nature of the structure of the realignment, we can see that at least in Venezuela this realignment occurred around the cleavage that constitutes the very political regime of Chávez-Maduro, that is, in favour or against the socialism of the XXI century, while in the case of Bolivia, for example, has deepened a cleavage based on territo-

rial and cultural axes which also partially align with a cleavage that constitutes the *pro et contra* of the new regime.

What have been the changes and what constitutes the *critical junctures*? Since 1958, Venezuela had been dominated by two parties that had produced and enjoyed the advantages of the Punto Fijo Pact. AD (*Acción Democrática*, Democratic Action) and COPEI (*Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente*, Independent Political Electoral Organization Committee) represented somehow the two poles of what we call the *functional axis*, representing in some way the left (workers) and the right. The AD and COPEI parties had both taken turns in wielding power in Venezuela from 1958 to 1993. The first change that underwent the party system was the year after the failed military coup led by Hugo Chávez and his cronies, when the former President Rafael Caldera won the Presidency (ex COPEI, President 1969-1974) representing a new party or alliance, Convergence. Although this represented a major change for the party system in Venezuela, however, Caldera represented continuity rather than change. The strike came with the election of Hugo Chávez to the Presidency representing the Fifth Republic Movement, MVR. In 1998, the traditional parties COPEI and AD, which had previously represented up to 90% of the votes, only obtained 40% of the votes (AD did not run with its own candidate for the Presidential election). It was a stunning blow for one of the more stable Latin American party systems, and the boom was not only spectacular for the MVR, but was meteoric since it was the first election in which Chávez and his party competed. During the regimes of Chávez and Maduro, the opposition has joined in the MUD (*Mesa de la Unidad Democrática*, Roundtable of Democratic Unity), thus, institutionally erasing the representation of the old cleavages around the functional axis, and then it has realigned representing a pole in the new axis around the different, polarized opinions on the new regime of Chávez-Maduro.

An equivalent rapid growth can be seen in the cases of Ecuador and Bolivia. In Ecuador, as described by Conaghan (2011), Rafael Correa took advantage of a political vacuum created by the old parties and won the first presidential election overwhelmingly, in which he participated with his party, or rather, alliance or movement (Alianza PAIS). Since his presidential victory, Correa and his supporters produced a new Constitution and a new political regime. Ecuador had been ruled by a series of Presidents of traditional Social-Christian parties, as well as social-democrat leftists and populists. Despite the series of conflicts in the 1980s, 1990s and the 2000s (which caused the interruption of three presidential periods), the traditional parties until Correa's presidency agreed on several of the major economic reforms



in the country (Mejía Acosta, 2006). That is to say, the polarization in the traditional economic cleavage of labour-capital had declined between the traditional parties. While in 2002 the traditional parties (ID, PRE, PSC, PRIAN, and CFP) obtained around 60% of the seats in Parliament, in the first elections just after Correa's investiture, in 2009, the same parties obtained less than 10% of the seats in the new Parliament. Already in 1997, the traditional parties in Ecuador had been challenged from an axis that we could call, according to the Rokkanian scheme, cultural and/or territorial — centre-periphery — by the indigenous movement Pachakutik. By the year 2002, Pachakutik joined the party of the former coup and military Colonel Lucio Gutiérrez (PSP). Another territorial axis of left-wing tint could be added to this new Alliance, that we could define as international centre-periphery, since it opposed the neoliberal policy, the so-called *Washington consensus* and the big banks and international institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank. This axis was coined as a defence of the nation against an international incursion. Regardless of how the cleavages that represented the new covenant are identified, it is distinguished from the old cleavages that lost importance in the society. The traditional parties have completely failed to incorporate and represent these social changes. The Government of Gutierrez and the PSP was a great disappointment to its followers, since politically Gutierrez's decided to follow the neoliberal policy, and the Government was a democratic failure because it took Ecuador to the abyss of a democratic breakdown in its struggle to survive in the Presidential Palace. The old regime of Ecuador was worn out when he was forced out of the Presidency in 2005. Correa was able to manifest and institutionalize the social mobilization around the new cleavages based on the indigenous culture, which both in Ecuador and in Bolivia until the 2000s had been a cleavage and latent conflict, as a new geographic-economic centre-periphery cleavage in which the centre could be understood as Washington D.C., the banks and international funds representing the neoliberal turn in Ecuador and other Latin American countries, and the periphery was represented by the Ecuadorian nation.

The coming to power of the MAS (*Movimiento al Socialismo*, Movement towards Socialism) and Evo Morales have a deeper genesis, which have roots more founded in political and social movements than the cases of Venezuela and Ecuador. However, the arrival of the MAS to power in 2006 was the result of a very quick process; it went up from 20.9% of the votes in the presidential election in 2002, to 53% in 2005. The rise of the MAS was based on the erosion of the old political elite, which included all the traditional parties and their political project based on a neoliberal development. While the projects of



Chávez and Correa could be considered as personalistic, it is often emphasized that Morales based his power and political rise first as head of the coca growers' movement, who then managed to dominate the organization of rural peasants in Bolivia, the CSUTCB (*Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia*, General Trade Union Confederation of Peasant Workers of Bolivia). These organizations, along with the traditional trade union organization, the COB (*Central Obrera Boliviana*, Bolivian Labour Federation), supported Morales and the MAS in their struggle to reach the Presidency. The MAS and Morales organized a fierce opposition since 2002, both in Parliament and in the streets against Sánchez de Lozada's Government and his neoliberal policy, and they managed to overthrow the President in 2003. After the fall of President Mesa in mid-2005, the elections were moved forward, which the MAS won overwhelmingly in the first round. Once more, we consider the rise of new social actors based on new social cleavages that are institutionalized through a new party, the MAS, which joins the top of the political system with Morales Presidency in 2006 as a *critical juncture* for the Bolivian political system and the party system. The rise of the MAS was accompanied by a sharp decline of the traditional parties that received over 60% of the parliamentary seats in 2002. For the 2005 elections, several of the traditional parties no longer competed under their old names, except for the MNR, and got 40% of the seats, which had been reduced to 30% by 2009. The MAS, on the other hand, got 55% of the seats in 2005 and 68% of the seats in 2009.

Although the functional labour-capital axis after the revolution of 1952 had been strong in Bolivia, and with a strong organizational mobilization and left-wing party, organizations representing the functional axis failed to incorporate the cultural elements and struggles based on indigenous cultures. After the democratic transition in 1982, the traditional left was banned by its economic mismanagement during the Presidency of Siles Zuazo (1982-85) and then nominally left-wing parties were equally responsible for implementing neoliberal reforms, and they had come ideologically close to the right-wing parties. There was a rapprochement between the traditional political parties that reduced the social representation of the political parties along the existing social cleavages. This is the dealignment that opened the political space for new actors, such as MAS and Morales in Bolivia.

#### 4.1. THE NEW LEFTS IN THE ANDES ARE NOT LIKE THE OLD LEFT

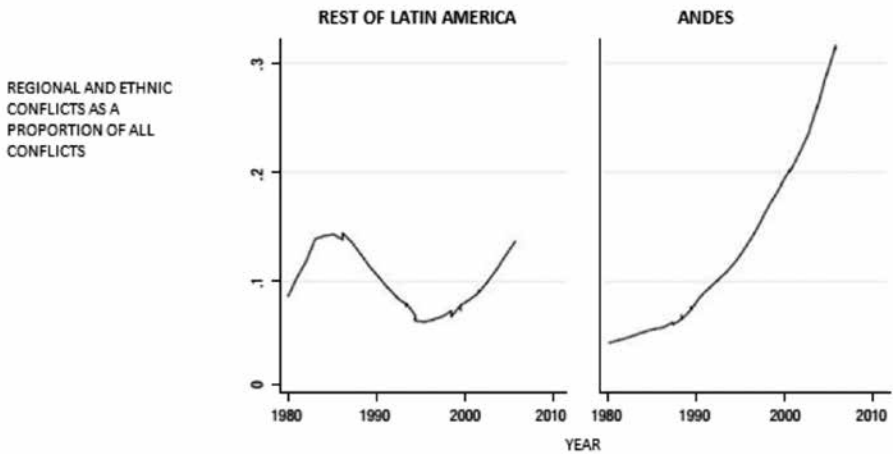
The analysis of the new left in Latin America has focused on a one-dimensional analysis after a left-right cleavage. Although all observers conclude that it is no longer a question of a renaissance of the capital-

labour cleavage, the Rokkanian model of territorial, functional and cultural axes and cleavages helps to differentiate the new left from the old one.

Rokkan helps us understand the contradiction that in Latin America the people has not turned to the left (Seligson, 2007; Arnold and Samuels, 2011) while the governments, at least in the Andes, are considered the most radical in the entire democratic history of these countries. The point is that the old left-right cleavage (capital-labour), which is the basis of the left-right scale that is used in popular polls, has lost its weight and importance and no longer constitutes an essential cleavage. The people considered here have not moved on that scale or axis, but new cleavages that are not easily measurable on the left-right scale have been constituted. This is more evident in Bolivia and Ecuador, where the new left not only represents the traditional capital-labour cleavage. In Bolivia, as in Ecuador, there is a fusion between a territorial (rural-urban) cleavage based on the mobilization of the peasants, a cultural cleavage based on indigenous cultures against the — until then — dominant ‘Spanish’ culture, and an economic-territorial axis against neoliberal economics, considered as a foreign influence. Both in Ecuador and in Bolivia the new political actors were able to conceptualize the leftist pole of this new cleavage replacing the old, decaying parties. Already in power, the new regime is institutionalized as one of the points of a cleavage *pro et contra* the regime and, for example in Bolivia, there has been a strong mobilization on the territorial axis at Santa Cruz de la Sierra for a greater decentralization of power to the regions. The old capital-labour cleavage that lost institutional representation under the old regime, by the rapprochement between all the traditional parties, was shifted. And these new cleavages, although their representatives consider and call themselves a leftist pole, are not part of the same labour-capital functional axis that had dominated before.

The Graph 1 shows the decline in importance of the capital-labour axis, which is greater in the Andes than in other parts of Latin America. It is observed that in the Andes the proportion of street conflicts that are not motivated by questions related to capital-labour aspects (for example, working conditions, salaries, etc.) has been dramatically reduced since the 1990s, and also that the Andes are strongly differentiated from the rest of Latin America. Thus, through the available data on protests, the decline of the old left-right (or capital-labour) cleavage, which constituted an important part of the functional axis in the old party systems, can be noted.

**Graph 1**  
Capital-labour conflicts vs. conflicts based on new cleavages



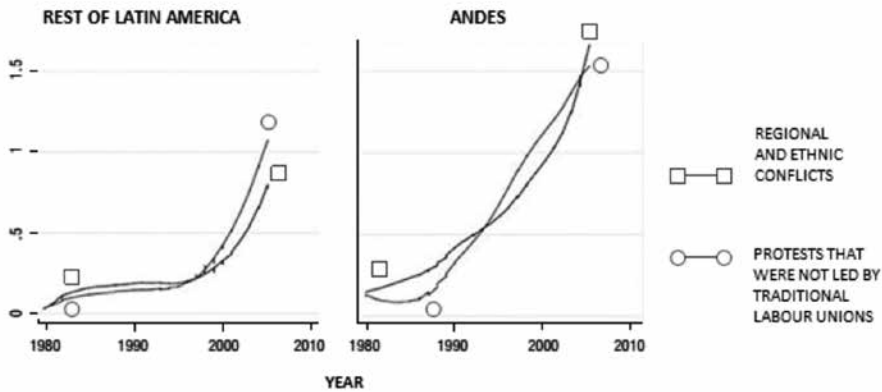
Source: Data retrieved from Marsteintredet (2011).

Note: Conflict and protests refer to political conflicts expressed outside the political institutions, such as protests, demonstrations, strikes, marches, etc. Conflicts are identified in *Latin American Weekly Report*. The Andes include: Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela.

The intensifying conflicts (mostly in Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru) are the ethnic and regional conflicts. That is, a cultural and regional mobilization that differs from the classical capital-labour mobilization. The new left, then, moves on the territorial axis, which quite often coincides with the cultural cleavage or axis. The territorial axis can be understood both nationally and internationally, since rural mobilization in Bolivia, for example, is also a territorial and functional mobilization against an international economic system called neoliberal.

Moreover, if we study the organizations that led the protests we can see in Graph 2 that they are not the old trade unions organizations, but they are mostly new organizations mobilized along the new cleavages. The old organizations, such as CTV (*Confederación de Trabajadores de Venezuela*, Workers' Confederation of Venezuela), are identified with the old system and rather were in opposition to the new social forces representing new cleavages.

**Graph 2**  
Conflicts based on new cleavages and protests led by alternative organizations



Source: *Latin American Weekly Report*. For more details on the operationalization of variables, see Marsteintredet (2011).

Note: The O line represents the annual amount of protests led by alternative organizations (other than traditional Labour Unions), the □ line repeats that of Graph 1.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have taken the model of Stein Rokkan on cleavages and party systems as a starting point for the analysis of the political changes in the Andes, since 2000. Despite the analytical focus on the history of Europe, the cleavage model of explaining the genesis of the party systems is not a strictly European theory, but it represents a set of heuristics concepts that provide an analytical perspective applicable to other historico-political contexts and political systems than the European case. We have used the Rokkanian concepts of *social cleavages* and *critical junctures* as analytical tools to explain the radical changes in the party systems and the left turn in the Andean countries. We have interpreted as critical junctures the arrival to power of Chávez in Venezuela, Morales in Bolivia, Correa in Ecuador and, to a lesser extent, Humala in Peru. In these societies the new cleavages were produced because of these critical junctures, which the existing parties were unable to incorporate and represent. The new cleavages gave rise to a process of *dealignment* between social structures and party systems. The conflicts and cleavages that represented the traditional parties such as AD in Venezuela, and MNR in Bolivia ceased to have weight in the societies. The new cleavages gave rise to new alternative parties, which managed to express and institutionally represent the new dimensions.

The arrival to power of the leaders from the new parties of the radical left has created lasting changes in electoral alignments, thus constituting the *realignment* of the party systems. Already in power, the new regimes have been institutionalized and the regimes themselves have become a cleavage between those who support and those who oppose the regime. In Venezuela, Chávez's MVR swept away the two traditional parties of the functional axis that represented the left (AD) and the right (COPEI) in the 1998 elections. Under the regime of Chávez and Maduro, the opposition has joined in the MUD, representing the other pole around a new cleavage formed by the very political regime of Chávez-Maduro. The polarization of the traditional economic cleavage of capital-labour had also declined in Ecuador. Correa and his Alianza PAIS were able to manifest and institutionalize the social mobilization around the new cleavages based on both the indigenous culture and in a new economic-territorial cleavage of international centre-periphery. In Bolivia, the functional capital-labour cleavage had been strong after the revolution of 1952. However, product of the ideological approach among the leftists parties (MNR) and the right-wing parties and its neoliberal reforms, the capital-labour cleavage lost institutional representation in the old party systems. As in the case of Ecuador, in Bolivia with Morales and the MAS a fusion was produced between a territorial (rural-urban) cleavage based on the mobilization of the peasants, a cultural cleavage based on indigenous cultures against the dominant 'Spanish' culture, and an economic-territorial cleavage of International centre-periphery against neoliberal economics considered as a foreign imposition.

The Rokkanian model of territorial, functional and cultural cleavages has helped us to differentiate the new radical left from the old left. The new radical left does not represent a simple revival of the capital-labour cleavage. We have shown that the decline of the old left-right or capital-labour cleavage, which constituted an important part of the functional axis of the old party system, is more pronounced in the Andean countries than in other parts of Latin America. From the rise of ethnic and regional conflicts (especially in Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru), the new radical left has mobilized on the territorial axis that coincides with the cultural cleavage. The distinction between the Andes and the rest of Latin America helps us to understand why the changes have been more radical in countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela than elsewhere in Latin America.

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Stener Ekern

# **THE ATTRACTIONS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES BEYOND YOUR OWN WORLD?\***

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

What does a Norwegian researcher do among Mayan Indians in the rural areas of Guatemala? Will the fact that the researcher is from Norway have any impact on his work and findings? Moreover, if any data can be established, in which direction will the bias go? In this article, through a retrospective discussion of my nearly 20 years as an anthropologist among the Mayas of Guatemala, I will try to give some answers to these issues. In addition, I will present and discuss the topics of my research since in the social sciences (probably in particular in anthropology) the relations between topics, methodology, and the researcher are per se an object of research. In this way the article also aims at contributing to debates about the relationship between the dispositions of the researcher, the formulated hypothesis, and the findings. In other words, the connections between the 'subjectivity' of the researcher and the results of his work.

In anthropology, the debate around the production of data often involves concepts such as the 'positioning' and 'subjectivity' of the researcher, both derived from phenomenology and its approaches to a consciousness that even at its deepest levels is thought to be immersed

\* Translation by Eugenia Cervio.

in a world of perceptions and partialities. Therefore, I will use of the concept of '*lebenswelt*', or 'life-world', in which 'the totality of lived life' shape the cognitive processes of the individual to approach the influences on my own condition of being 'Norwegian', that is, how I have been subjectivised by my institutional environment.<sup>1</sup> To use an example: when rethinking my first fieldwork in Sandinist Nicaragua (in León, in 1984) it helps me very much to take a step back and consider the relationship between the *lebenswelt* of a child of a Nordic welfare society, walking in the streets of León along with the '*nicas*', children of a society more completely different from what I could even imagine at the time. I think that much of what my past self could not imagine resides precisely in the implicit relationships between my native state/society and myself (my *lebenswelt*) and the state/society of my informants. In this way, an investigation of encounters between the *lebenswelt* involved, by examining the respective processes of subjectivation of the researcher as well as the informants, will be helpful in formulating answers to the initial questions. A brief review of my formation as a Norwegian citizen, contrasted with that of my Latin American informants, indicates clearly that, as a Norwegian, I carry the state within me, it is 'in the blood'; whereas in Latin America the state is, rather, an alien thing.

However, research may not only consist in the search of the external factors that condition perception and performance. I think that the *lebenswelt* is better grasped imagining it as a horizon guiding action than as a set of constraints that shape life, although the first perspective does not exclude the other. In my following fieldwork, carried out among the K'iche' Mayas of Guatemala, I have tried to understand the formation of indigenous K'iche' identity precisely by following the processes of subjectivisation in the communities where they live. In local thinking, the communal life-world –their 'way of life', as they say– is imagined primarily as the result of the actions of their leaders.<sup>2</sup> With this approach they manage to escape (to some extent) fatalism. Perhaps there is a lesson for social sciences in this by claiming that there is a constant feature of life which resides in the relationship between the horizon and the will we mobilise to design a strategy to get there. In other words, in this investigation of my life-world –and those of the K'iche's– I also intend to show that the constant feature of my

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1 This summary of the concept of *lebenswelt* is based on the relevant entries in the Spanish and English versions of Wikipedia.

2 Except for the preliminary results from the current period in the field, all data and observations about Totonicapán and its political processes has been taken from Ekern (2010 and 2015).

career lies in a productive circle, a circuit which links a horizon of career and work opportunities with my curiosity in studying the Mayan version of how humans build their communities. Mayan calendars, pyramids, and writing have fascinated me since childhood.

I submit, then, that beyond categorizations such as ‘Latinamericanist’, ‘specialist in indigenous peoples’ or ‘human rights expert’, there is an agentic self capable of co-forming a life-world. At the same time I will be catalogued as a social scientist, by the public and among those who decide the use of research funds, into one of the boxes mentioned above, with tangible consequences in a society with a large bureaucratized state that determines the use of available funds in accordance with its policy priorities. Through a review of my life as a researcher, we will see how these categorizations –external to my curiosity– appear as conditioning factors. To pursue my ‘destiny’ (as a K’iche’ would say) I have sought support under labels that give access to employment opportunities and funds, such as ‘indigenous peoples’, ‘Latin America’, and ‘human rights’.

Read as a text that seeks to establish general observations about how the social sciences in Norway produce scientific data on indigenous peoples in Latin America, the fundamental hypothesis proposed here is that such data are produced where two different worlds meet, and where the first is the one in which the researcher was formed. By being subjected to a series of conditioning factors in life as a citizen and a researcher, and by being confronted with the opportunities and the limitations offered by the Norwegian nation-state at the time, the production in question is also the result of how Nordic society perceives and supports (or does not support) subjects such as anthropology, Latin America, development cooperation, human rights, and indigenous peoples.

A sub-proposition is the related observation that Norwegian research on the groups now catalogued as ‘indigenous peoples’ usually has been carried out under labels defined by the dominant conceptions about them: as a poor and marginalized group whose human rights are violated. In Norwegian, we say jokingly *‘elendighetsforskning’*, meaning ‘research on misery’ –a term that to a certain extent also catches the moral order under which also domestic social science research in the Nordic welfare state works. We will see how this focus on problematic issues obscures local politics, at the regional Latin American level as well as at the indigenous community level. Topics with similar universal pretensions, such as ‘environment’, ‘gender’, and ‘(violations of) human rights’ defined much Norwegian research on Latin America until 2008 when ‘Latin America’ managed to appear as the subject of a particular program of the Norwegian Research Council.

Another proposition is how in anthropology the K'iche's of Totonicapán –whose society I continue to study as an anthropological subject to satisfy my curiosity– during the same time period (1990-2015) have lost their status as bearers of a specific culture to become a site where precarious identities are produced in a nexus between individual and collective wills as well as opportunity horizons constituted by a multiplicity of factors. To study K'iche's at an academic institution the researcher needs to link with ongoing discussions in a particular discipline.

Finally, another basic assumption: that notwithstanding the contingency of the labels that define the 'allowed spaces' in research and related work opportunities, there is a constant feature which unites the curiosity of the individual and the horizon of his/her life-world, in my case Mesoamerica as the site where I study the construction of human communities.

The first stage of these explorations is a review of my life as a researcher at the crossroads between research on Mayan (or Mesoamerican) cultures, indigenous peoples, and Latin America. I will present the formative impulses of my curiosity, including those that come from society as such, that is, how my curiosity is subjectivized by being Norwegian. I will also highlight how a limited labour market puts the young Norwegian with an interest in Latin America on specific paths. I started my career working in development cooperation for ten years, first as a fund manager and subsequently as a consultant evaluating the uses of the funds.

It is important to mention that when I was about to write my first thesis (on life in a poor Nicaraguan neighbourhood and its ties to the state) it was a professor (a political scientist) in a new research program on human rights who offered me a place to write. At the same time, around 1985, human rights began its boom as a buzzword in Norwegian foreign policy and development cooperation as well as in the circles that prioritize the use of funds in the institutions that finance research in the country. Coupled with the fact that these same circles, which needed this new knowledge in order to execute their policies, just had us from a new generation available. In this way, 'human rights' became the allowed space in which I could place my interest in the Mayas.

I am writing this text in the field, indeed in Totonicapán, with my daily attention focused on the institution through which the indigenous people of the place live and manage their lives, within the state of Guatemala, but at the same time, and to a surprisingly high degree, parallel to it. This means that I am in a unique position to reflect on the contrasts between the Norwegian form of governing and the ways

in which the the communities of Totonicapán govern themselves and coordinate relations with the Guatemalan state. In the last part of the article, I will try to capture the constant feature of an institution that over the last decade –after my first fieldwork in the year 2000– has earned a reputation for being Guatemala’s probably most powerful indigenous organization. In many ways, the Indigenous Mayoralty of Totonicapán, or The 48 Cantons (*Los 48 Cantones*) as the institution is commonly known, is an animal changing shape and colour according to perspective, even if, as is the case with my scientific curiosity, too, there is something perennial.

## 2. THE PATH TO THE ACADEMIC WORLD

During my life as manager and reviewer of development cooperation projects, I have many times had the good fortune of striving to explain the specific nature of my person and my roles as a Norwegian, a European and a representative of a developed, rich, and modern society. On project visits and in joint assessment teams, this has involved exchanges of quite deep reflections on our respective lives as they have been shaped by institutions such as family, school, religion, and the state.

Based on these experiences I have prepared a standard version of my personal story and that of my country, specifically designed to explain the welfare state and the good functioning of Norway’s public administration, as well as the motives for the country’s development cooperation and its priorities. The first chapter is about my background in the national Evangelical-Lutheran Church; I explain that although I consider myself an agnostic, I am ‘a Christian by culture’, which is the case of more than half of the population. Then follow the years in primary and secondary schools, an overwhelming majority of which are state-run, and finally in universities that also are public. These institutions ‘make you all equal in your thinking’, as a K’iche’ with working experience with Scandinavians told me. Then I try to portray a life with daily security provided by a benign state. I strongly emphasize that this is a state that flourishes on high taxes, and that these taxes increased every year during the 1950s and 1960s until oil production became important in the 1970s. Still, the decisive factor is the high degree of confidence that Norwegians have in the state.

In this way the main elements of the narratives that we exchange reside in the contrasts between the state powers of our countries. Today, after 35 years on the road, I explain routinely what a Latin American perceives to be naivety as against the state and in politics. When I began my career in Sandinist Nicaragua I used to put more emphasis on political-ideological contrasts, i.e., the social democratic

ideology of the Nordic Governments. Thanks to the investigative tools previously mentioned, developed to reflect on the relations between individual lives and the grand narratives of the history of the national community, I am now ever more convinced that my subjectivisation depends more on how the state has been internalized through the educational and social protection practices already referred to, and to a lesser extent to the Christian morality and social democratic solidarity voiced by pastors, teachers, and politicians. To use a European metaphor: the state is in the blood of the Nordics.

In the self-presentations of Latin Americans (including indigenous people in Guatemala), the state also plays a key role, along with institutions such as the various churches, the family, and charitable agencies. However, this is a state that as an actor is much more problematic, commonly imagined as a negative force or in the hands of others, and perhaps, primarily as a force alien to everyday life; similar to how the churches and the other institutions mentioned also operate outside of the national public sphere.

Conscious about the virtuous circle created by high taxes and state-provided security and welfare which I embody, the next stage in the discussion is to understand why, for example, Guatemala finds itself in a vicious circle. Rarely do the Latin American explanations that follow not contain references to 'the rich' or 'the oligarchy' in addition to a colonial past. People also frequently refer to how, after all, the power of the rich is maintained by 'imperialism' or 'globalization'. In Norway, it is easy to categorize such narratives as leftist. Moreover, based on a seeming agreement that this is how things really are, links of solidarity between the left of the respective countries are established. However, in this way they also pave the way for a series of false agreements. In the field of social sciences, the effect is that important phenomena fall in the shadows. An example is political clientelism, whose mechanisms are difficult to capture by Scandinavians and almost taken as given by Latin Americans, and vice versa, the fact that the redistributive policies of the Nordic social democracy rest on a foundation of a professional liberal administration is hardly visible from Latin America, and a fact also taken as a given by Nordics.

The externalised position of the state in Latin America can also be read as a process of reproducing 'categorical inequality' (Gootenberg and Reygadas, 2010). Then focus is moved from the contradictions between oligarchy and people to how the generalized solidarity that characterizes Norwegian society emerged. It is precisely at this point the supposedly egalitarian and mutually supportive indigenous society easily emerges as a field of research which points beyond it-



self and towards the grand narratives about the construction of the nation-state.

Following the story of the Norwegian researcher we now come to his entry into the academy. On the one hand, studying at the university in the 1970s amounted to a revelation of new ideas and new ways of thinking, while on the other hand it meant a strong political radicalization. Like many others, I acquiesced to the demands of producing 'politically correct' knowledge, that is, in accordance with the dominant views. We had to contribute to the building of solidarity and of socialist states, at home and abroad. Hence, the rapid identification with the Latin American left in North European countries. Latin American dictatorships served as perfect examples of what one could read in books about class struggles. This radicalization has affected a large share of the generation that precisely during these same years, thanks to the reformist politics of the social democrats and the above-mentioned recurring increases in tax revenues, were able to enter the ranks of public administration as the first from their families.

In such an environment it was unthinkable to become a 'Mayanist' and, for instance, go to the United States to study the origins of human society. Revolutionary Nicaragua had to serve as the starting point in my social studies career. In terms of the original hypothesis, it illustrates how an original fascination for ancient Mesoamerican civilization, and a thematic interest in the construction of the state, was subjected to moralities that only allowed progressive projects, that is, research on misery.

### 3. THE ROAD TO THE FIELD

In terms of population (approx. 141.000) Totonicapán is the fifth largest municipality of Guatemala; also in Norway, the place would be counted among the largest towns of the country. It has a long history, first as an important centre in the K'iche' Kingdom which was conquered by the Spaniards in the 1520s, and then in the Colony, as provincial capital. Located approx. 2,500 meters above sea level in a mountainous and forested landscape with limited agrarian potential, the economy always has revolved around trade, carpentry, and handicrafts. Up to 70% of Guatemalan Mayas are dressed in cloth made in Totonicapán. Since more than 95% of the population is K'iche' and 85% reside in one of the 48 communities, or 'cantons', around the town, the municipality and province of the same name play a much less important role at the national level than what the demographic weight would suggest. Moreover, for all practical purposes, the municipality is divided into 48 small communities, each with its communal authorities, typical surnames (for having a past as alliances of line-

ages), and mixtures of economic activities. It is a large and complex place to conduct anthropological fieldwork.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the civil war of the 1980s did not affect Totonicapán much although the economy did suffer and the atmosphere was marked by fear. In other words, Totonicapán was not the ideal place for research of issues favored by development cooperation.

During my years as a 'dispenser of projects' (as the agents of development cooperation are perceived in the communities), with a state mandate to support indigenous peoples, my curiosity about what was within the communities whose representatives I met kept growing. What also grew was my scepticism of the dominant discourse articulated by the aid sector and among 'progressives' to the effect that indigenous peoples are above all else poor and oppressed, and therefore the natural allies of the revolution. In fact, in Guatemala there was a strong current of indigenous Maya activists — often called 'mayanists' or 'culturalist' — that was critical of the revolutionary left because of its lack of respect for cultural differences, and also because they doubted that socialism would offer a better development. Those who sympathized with the guerrillas, the so-called '*populares*', referred to the former as '*anacronistas*'. Obviously, there were thousands of Mayas who did not consider themselves neither Mayas nor revolutionaries.<sup>4</sup>

In view of this large variation, and with some sympathy for the efforts of the culturalists organizations to build a Mayan organizational logic in opposition to 'Western' or '*ladino*' authoritarian logic,<sup>5</sup> I formulated a research project focused on the encounter between the old community logic — i.e., the ancient Mesoamerican cargo system with alternating stints of public service, of which The 48 Cantons is a variety — and those of the surrounding society. The first meeting with the Board of Directors of The 48 Cantons, in 1999, convinced me that Totonicapán was the place to follow such processes. In subsequent years, on frequent periods of fieldwork since 2000, I have been expanding on the idea of comparing organizational patterns to consider that what can be observed in the 48 communities is a permanent encounter — in

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3 There are also few academic studies specifically about Totonicapán. In a regional perspective, however, several works should be mentioned: Carmack (1995), on the politics and history of the K'iche'; Smith (1990) on the economy; Brintnall (1979) on changes in the systems of authority; Veblen (1975) on the forest; and Dueholm Rasch (2008) for a study of 'Maya modernization' in neighbouring municipalities (Quetzaltenango and Santa María Chiquimula) which complements my own work. Tzaquitzal et al. (2009) presents The 48 Cantons from the perspective of local scholars.

4 See, for example, Cojtí (1997), and Adams and Bastos (2003).

5 In Guatemala, Spanish speakers are often called '*ladinos*'.

fact The 48 is a hybrid institution and thus a privileged site to observe contrasting and contested processes of political formation.

In this discussion about the role of what is specifically Norwegian, it is necessary to mention that my applications for funds to study the political organization of an indigenous society were never approved by the Norwegian Research Council. However, thanks to a director of the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, I was able to conduct fieldwork over a full year in Guatemala with my regular salary. I believe that my applications were turned down because after ten years outside the academy I was not sufficiently up to date in theoretical debates. The general lesson would be that after some years in ordinary jobs a researcher only with difficulty can compete with those who are closer to actual research fronts in the respective disciplines. Norway is a small country and there is only one Research Council. In this way almost all my research has been carried out with funds intended to promote human rights.

On the other hand, it is likely that my approach—locally generated and highly relevant in the region—coupled with many years of working experience in the country were factors that helped me in entering the field. With first-hand knowledge of a number of Mayan organizations, and my old love for Mayan culture, I quickly became a conversation partner for local leaders. In his fieldwork among the Mayan people of Yucatan, Mexico, the Danish anthropologist Peter Hervig (2003) developed the concept of ‘shared reasoning’ to specify how the transmission and exchange of knowledge can take place in a situation where the anthropologist is a participant observer. This is what I have been doing in countless conversations with hundreds of people. By positioning ourselves as almost equal in facing a problem to be solved, we can building an ever better understanding of the challenges.

Returning to the significance of being ‘Norwegian’ in research, it is worth adding that it is precisely through this shared reasoning that I became ever more attentive to the cultural aspect of myself. Moreover, the questioning of our own normalcy with regard to society and state is what opens the way to constructive questions. Just as in Norway there are very few people who have a particular interest in Latin American societies so also in Guatemala few people know where to locate Norway on the map. However, indirectly, my life in a country with a well-functioning state arouses curiosity. Furthermore, the Norwegian nation-state is actually built on the territories of two peoples. The status of the Sami as an indigenous people in Norway is well known among educated Mayans, and whenever I can answer in a positive way the question about whether there are indigenous people

in my country, the probability of starting up an interesting conversation increases.

At the same time, I acknowledge that my subjectivity as a child of a nation-state anchored in a single ethnicity (the vast majority of Norwegians have forgotten their past as subjects in a small European Empire, the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway; and Sami influence is minimal) creates an undue bias in my interpretations of what Mayas tell me about their identity and belonging, easily taking what they say to be aspirations to build the particular kind of national independence of which the ever-changing map of Europe is a reflection. The K'iche's of Totonicapán are also Guatemalans (as are the other Mayan peoples of Guatemala), and Mayan Guatemala represents a kind of bi-nationality or dual citizenship which I do not grasp spontaneously. The Mayas are also Latin Americans, that is, included in a type of supra-nationality that Europe no longer knows. Then, how can I grasp such a different subjectivity?

#### 4. IN THE FIELD

The place where political subjectivities are formed is, in my work, the sites where the K'iche's of Totonicapán cooperate in making their own canton government. The billboard that decorate the headquarters of the 48 Cantons proclaims in large letters that '*Uchuq' Chuwi Meq'enja' Are Ri K' axk'ol'*', that is, the power of the people of Totonicapán resides in the service. This motto accurately summarizes the basics of Mayan political tradition, as it can be traced 2,000 years back: each household, in turn, is obliged to perform one of the required cargos or 'services' in governing a community. As practiced today, it means that the community, through its General Assembly, every year elects a team of authorities headed by a Communal Mayor. Their task is to defend the community assets (communal forest; tubed, potable water; roads and bridges; schools, etc), as well as to organize all necessary maintenance through frequent work activities in which all are obliged to participate and, perhaps primarily, to ensure that the public order is not disturbed by applying the necessary sanctions.

Typically, a canton will have about 3,000 inhabitants and the authority (the 'Communal Mayoralty' or the 'Corporation') will consist of from 15 to 30 people, or even up to 60 if all members of all committee are counted. In addition to the mayor the cargos range from secretary (who protocols (in the *Libro de Actas*) all the activities of the corporation: inspecting the borders with neighbouring communities, decisions taken in managing development projects, as well as mediations in family conflicts), constables, forest rangers, 'plumbers' (i.e., those who supervise the water system), etc. The exact composition varies

greatly from one canton to another, particularly as regards the forms of guarding forest property, that is, whether property rights are joint (in a *parcialidad*) or belong to single families. It also varies in the way the authorities are elected, most importantly in relation to the degree of power that the elders still possess. In any case, the logic and the mystique remain the same: every K'iche' is required to serve at least three times after marriage until the age of 60. Only by taking on these public tasks a K'iche' becomes respectable and able to show respect, in other words subjectivised as a native of Totonicapán.<sup>6</sup>

In this way, compared to the situation in Spanish-speaking Guatemala, Mayas have an important additional tax burden that might be equated with the level of taxes in Norway.

Each communal authority sends its mayor to The 48 Cantons, thus forming a permanent assembly that meets every two weeks in the town centre of Totonicapán. Every year the incoming mayors elect a new Board of Directors whose main task it is to represent the 48 Cantons before the Municipal Mayor and the State with all its dependencies. The 'first order' (*consigna*) of the 48 is to 'defend the interests of the people' and when they perceive that these are threatened, The 48 Cantons, as few other institutions in Guatemala, can mobilize in order to resist. When this happens, the organization appears as the visible manifestation of Mayan Guatemala. First, they send delegations to the President and the Congress of the Republic, but if a solution is not reached they may resort to 'factual steps' (*medidas de hecho*), which means blocking the Pan-American Highway. Then The 48 reaches the front pages in the country's mass media as a combative indigenous people.

It is important to note that some 98 % out of a total of the almost 3,000 man-labour-years which are invested annually in the institution as a whole unfold in the communities. The 48 have little power within each canton. From the communities' point of view, the board member positions (always performed in an honorary capacity) do not involve any visible work, as is the case at the community level, and through which the respect that makes a K'iche' a K'iche' is accumulated. The creativity permitted in the making of a respected K'iche' remains a locally bound phenomenon. In urban centres and in national contexts Mayan identities are more fluid and moreover shaped in conjunction with a series of factors beyond the control of community life, and

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6 In 'the time of the elders' appointees were in fact couples; a cargo also consisted of supplementary female tasks. The modernisation also implies individualization. Today more and more Cantons accept and promote direct participation to elect women to office, but it is a slow process.

perhaps particularly a thing formed in contrast to being *ladino* and 'developed'. Outside of the community the Maya is the subaltern, or put in another way, 'indigenous' in the sense defined by development aid and human rights.

In mass media The 48 Cantons are typically portrayed as an 'expression of ancient traditions'. However, a historical review shows that the various cargos have their origins in state demands as much as in Mayan tradition. For example, the plumber is the local response to the need for maintenance that arose when the cantons built extensive tubed water systems with financial support from aid agencies and the state during the 1970s and 1980s. The cargo of mayor has its roots in a figure known as the 'self-taught' (*empírico*), which dates back to the year 1934 when President Jorge Ubico transferred from the Catholic Church to a new Civil Registry the responsibility for registering all births and deaths. In those days cantonal government was carried out by the principals, or elders, who could appoint a young man who knew how to read and write to meet that demand. As the municipality grew in importance, the *empírico* became the liaison between the elders and the municipal mayor and the term auxiliary mayor (*alcalde auxiliar*) appeared; today the latter term is being replaced by 'communal mayor'. In those past decades it was also the principal of each canton who met in the town centre and embodied the institution known as The 48. As modernity and development unfolded the elders lost power and during the 1990s they were replaced by the mayors. The question of how an institution could fall (people used to talk about 'the fall of the principals', in 1987) and nevertheless re-emerge just ten years later (in 1998) was the catalyst that drove my first fieldwork in the year 2000.

In 2015, my focus is on the process through which increasingly more cantons put their rules and orders in written form. What was once a series of orally transmitted instructions is today put on paper in the form of community statutes (*reglamentos internos*). Before discussing the preliminary results of this current work, it is however appropriate to explain, in few paragraphs, what can be the significance of the concept of 'bi-nationality' with a discussion of what it means to be a Guatemalan citizen in a K'iche' community and, for instance, participating in national elections every four years.

In tandem with the daily task of governing the canton community, as Guatemalans community members participate in a wide range of national institutions such as school, the health system, the national (and international) labour market as well as in public administration. In a formally liberal and multicultural state, Mayas and *ladinos* enjoy equal access to all institutions. However, the vast majority of K'iche's

are at a disadvantage as a result of growing up in a context that in national society is unknown or typically regarded as backward. The adoption of multiculturalism is intended to overcome this discrimination but, just as in Norway, the national institutions are so saturated by formal and informal agreements and ongoing negotiations about the proper way of being that in everyday life the cultural differences are simply not perceived by the dominant groups.

This cultural gap is however quite visible during the elections. From a Nordic perspective, political parties in Guatemala are, for many reasons, little more than a confluence of clients around an ambitious party boss who, with the support of friends and financiers, strives to earn the favor of the people in an agitated campaign marked by the distribution of gifts (Novales Contreras, 2014). This phenomenon is particularly visible in Totonicapán, where the same family has occupied the town hall for 20 years, and through three different parties, so far. The resource that carries them all the way to the capital, as congress representatives is, of course, the votes they received by offering ‘development’, i.e., the aforementioned infrastructure projects, which according to the thinking of the people of the communities is precisely what corresponds to ‘our needs’. By cataloging themselves as Guatemalans the members of the community perceive themselves as poor and undeveloped in comparison with the modern and rich world that Guatemala also is. Having a seat in Congress allow you to channel development funds to your province of origin. My argument is that this voting pattern does not show that the K’iche’s of the communities are ignorant, but that a vote for the good man who brings another 500 metres of paved road is rational in a community context. The fact that the politician in question is putting some 30% or more of the money in his own pockets is an insignificant detail — or an allegation put forward by a rival with a ‘personal agenda’ (*intereses*), and therefore a ‘terrible lie’ (*vil mentira*).

In this way, national elections are an unhappy combination of a world in which politics is about assessing personal qualities and levels of respect, and another in which the point is to have a good relation to a congressperson for ensuring the flow of projects. It is a case of categorical inequality. Therefore, in Totonicapán every day speech the word ‘politics’ is synonymous with what happens in the national context: i.e., immoral and unpredictable — just like the *ladino* himself. What is done when community government is exercised is not politics, but ‘our culture’. The orders by which the community government rule always prohibit participation in party politics while on duty.



## 5. RESEARCHING

With the assertion that the K'iche' possess a kind of dual citizenship I have arrived at the question of why and how the cantonal political order now is in the process of being embodied in written texts. In my work, the general assemblies that pass, article by article, their own norms for living together; the meetings in the statute-making committees that formulate the proposals that are up for voting; the experiences of former mayors and the daily challenges of current authorities, plus the weekly meetings of the government teams where the neighbors come with their everyday concerns; are all accessible and apt arenas for following this transformation at close range.

To analyze this I have in mind, firstly, a general theory from the social sciences which says that 'law' is 'community regulation', and 'politics' is negotiating this regulation, along with the observation that communities in which we participate are various and simultaneous, while in Norway as well as in Guatemala the community is usually imagined as unified for the purposes of law. It is sufficient to imagine how mercantile laws and penal codes regulate and form different yet overlapping communities (Cotterrell, 2006). I also have in mind how this regularization is subject to flows of power, ideas about what is fair and correct, and to what is perceived as useful in a given situation. Finally, I include anthropological ideas about how writing forms and stabilises the flows of information (Goody, 1987).

When asking why they put in writing what amounts to the political constitution of their community, the typical responses are that 'young people have no respect anymore', 'development and population growth require it', 'it is necessary to maintain order and protect us from crime and decadence (*pérdida de valores*)' and furthermore because 'the laws of the Republic are not appropriate here'. At meetings in the communal mayoralty, I can see that the mayor –who perhaps might be compared with a judge in national society– on his desk keeps copies of the Guatemalan Civil and Penal Codes along with ILO Convention 169, as well as the community protocol with briefs of all previous decisions. During his work of interrogating evildoers and mediating between discordant family members or conflicting neighbours, he also consults his companions in the government team and former mayors and elders. I observe how this work is taking place faster and more efficiently by applying written statute books, and how the great majority, in particular young people, spontaneously accepts the text instead of trying to make oblique references to the 'personal agenda' of the mayor. It is futile to fight against a text agreed upon by everyone.



Before proceeding with more ambitious analyzes, some of the more common obstacles on what can be termed the communitarian way to constitutionality should be mentioned. In the first place, fifteen years after the first statutes entered into force, only one-third of the cantons have equipped themselves with this instrument of government. The mayors are the first in realizing that a document of this kind is going to tie their hands, and consequently this reform effort remains blocked year after year. Mayors with ambitions to bring great works to their communities and who therefore depend on maintaining good relations with the political parties regularly follow this line. Another argument –conservative, in the local context– is that to *positivize* (to give the rules the form of written law) Mayan law is violating Mayan culture, since the Mayan legal tradition is situational and relational. However, this last argument, although it poses as progressive in intellectual circles in the capital city, no longer carries much weight in Totonicapán due to the highly visible connection between the desire to enter politics and the need for backroom dealings. In the communities ‘culture’ is what is practiced, it is not a presumed essence.

This observation leads us to the last point which is how to comprehend this legislative activity. Educated mayors suggest seeing the process as a kind of state-making of the community, an imitation of the state practices, a necessary adaptation to an increasingly complex world. In shared reasoning with mayors and other leaders I reach for metaphors such as ‘the constitutionalization of the 48 small republics’, keeping in mind the absolute parochialism of the processes. There is no example of cooperation whatsoever between the communities in these efforts and the average time of the process is about six years because one general assembly is rarely able to approve more than five or six articles out of a total of between 60 and 90.<sup>7</sup> As they say, ‘we all have different ways of being’. From the perspective of a development agency, such a pace is not very efficient. However, if the goal is that this law should enter the blood of the citizens and shape society, the K’iche’ procedure is much more efficient than the ordinary Guatemalan legislative process.

The last step is to dig into my data and assess what they can tell us about how human beings create their communities. Then it strikes me that the portrait of the K’iche’ community that I make here is quite far from the common images of indigenous peoples as small and vulnerable groups –which just confirms that such images primarily are fabricated in the society of the modern nation-state. K’iche’ society is

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7 I keep the statutes of eight communities: Xesacmaljá, Xolsacmaljá, Chuculjuyup, Chuatroj, Paxtocá, Juchanep, Chotacaj, and Cojxac, on file.

neither small nor vulnerable but it is subordinate. Moreover, it is now undergoing extensive and rapid processes of change and demonstrate both will and ability to reform itself. From a legal human rights perspective the K'iche's can be categorized both as an indigenous people and a minority. However, only the former categorization provides legal support for moving forward with the processes discussed above. In an anthropological perspective, in which 'culture' is conceived of as ongoing negotiations about the collective identities of a group, I detect an emerging subjectivity in the discussions at the assemblies. This subjectivity is shaped by a number of factors: the necessity of ordering community life, what was said by the elders, Latin American ideas on how one must legislate in order to bring civilization, as well as a strong desire to become as rich and developed as *ladinos* –not to mention the foreigners from the countries from where development aid comes. K'iche'an culture is the result strategies adopted and negotiated by individuals and communities facing a range of challenges which are interpreted on the horizon that is their life-world.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The above phenomenologically inspired analysis of the research career of a Norwegian in Guatemala has perhaps not succeeded in demonstrating definitively the hypotheses put forward, however, I do believe the use of a subjectivisation perspective has shown its value as an instrument of inquiry. In particular I am thinking about the idea of imagining an interpretative research process to be a gradual meeting between two 'life-worlds' or 'lived experiences', and in which curiosity, or passion for understanding and designing strategies to move forward, plays the role of driving force.

At the same time, it is clear that the horizon around which questions and propositions are formed is not an open arena, but a field constituted by a series of factors and alien powers which in many cases go beyond the individual will. By inserting my career into the specific history of a given society, I think I have managed to identify some of these conditions and evoke their power as well. However, without quantitative data about the careers and works of other members of my cohort it is not possible to do more than indicate the relative importance of the factors discussed here.

The same will be the case for my observations about the formation of K'iche'an subjectivities, and although I can conclude that their communities are becoming institutionalized with the adoption of written statutory instruments into a sort of modernity, it will be difficult to determine at what point such a community may qualify as 'state-grounded'. For similar reasons it is impossible to establish

exactly what constitutes, for instance, K'iche' law in 2015. What the phenomenological approach adopted here shows is that a legal tradition is formed on numerous arenas where the residents of the community participate and negotiate their living together as well as their external relations. On the other hand, I believe that the sub thesis claiming that in Norwegian (and North European) research indigenous peoples are conceptualized as poor and marginalized, is affirmed because they so emerge in the political normalcy defined by the nation-state in these societies. A related observation is how I have some difficulty, as a Norwegian, to comprehend exactly what being Guatemalan means to a K'iche'.

Finally, I believe I have shown that the productive circuit which can be observed in tracing the exchanges of curiosity and opportunities of action on the horizons of a life-world produce a kind of constant feature in the development of the self. It is thanks to this that I have succeeded –to some extent– in leaving the realms of my own state / national / modern subjectivity, and interpreting K'iche' society as something more than merely an indigenous people. If I were K'iche' maybe I would have referred to this faculty as a part of my destiny, my *nawal*.

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Benedicte Bull

## **CONCLUSION**

### **IS THERE A NORWEGIAN PERSPECTIVE ON LATIN AMERICA?**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In this book, we have discussed some main contributions to social research in and on Latin America conducted by Norway-based researchers and tried to situate the choice of topics and perspectives within the context of Norwegian history and current politics, Norwegian foreign policy and strategy towards Latin America as well as in the context of Norwegian academic institutions and systems of funding.

The academic world is made up of individuals that often think of themselves as oblivious to governmental priorities or dominating discourses. Most researchers relate to an increasingly global body of knowledge on specific topics and places. Our lives are filled with frequent travels to places where we collect information, and to conferences where we exchange it. More and more research is done in cooperation with international partners. Moreover, much Norwegian Latin America research has been influenced by theory and ideas emerging in Latin America, rather than the other way around, and are hybrids involving elements from a diversity of places. Can we nevertheless argue that there is a 'Norwegian perspective on Latin America'?

In this concluding chapter I will argue that in spite of hybridization and diversity of topics and perspectives, we can distinguish some features that characterize Norwegian research on Latin America and

the perspectives on the region it is based on. Since the explorations of Anton Mohr in the late 1940s (see chapter 2), Latin America has been approached as a divided region, and much Norwegian research has focused on the reasons and nature of those divisions — between indigenous and non-indigenous, between women and men, between rural and urban, between the oppressed and the oppressors, between victim and perpetrator and between the rich and the poor — and how they are or can be bridged. In this, we can distinguish a tendency to sympathize with the poor and marginalized and a tendency to want to ‘improve’ Latin America — to make it more peaceful, democratic, just and sustainable. This has resulted in a search for a state to channel democratic voices, mediate between interests and distribute goods, or what Ekern (chapter 9) calls an ‘obsession with the State’. However, if we compare to research on other ‘distant regions’, such as Africa, research on Latin America has also been characterized by a focus on actors and agency. Latin America has never been portrayed as a region that should be ‘helped’. Rather, it has been considered a conflict-ridden but dynamic arena of social movements, political parties, communities, insurgencies, and other actors that should be supported or counteracted, both of which require a foundation of knowledge.

It is also important to notice that Norwegian perspectives on Latin America have not been static. There is an evolution in the way in which Latin America has been approached in Norwegian research. First, it passed from appearing as an exotic backwater in the years before the 1960s, to a source of counter-hegemonic thinking and object of solidarity in the 1970s and 1980s. Starting in the 1990s, I would argue that the counter-hegemonic became hegemonic at least within the main circles involved in conducting and funding Latin America research in Norway. Staying relatively marginal, the topics that had been radical in the 1970s — such as gender equality, indigenous rights, environmental issues, human rights, and later inequality and economic redistribution — became central in the focus of cooperation agencies that also set part of the agenda for the research community. This also meant that other topics, which did not fit so well into this discourse, were given very scant attention.

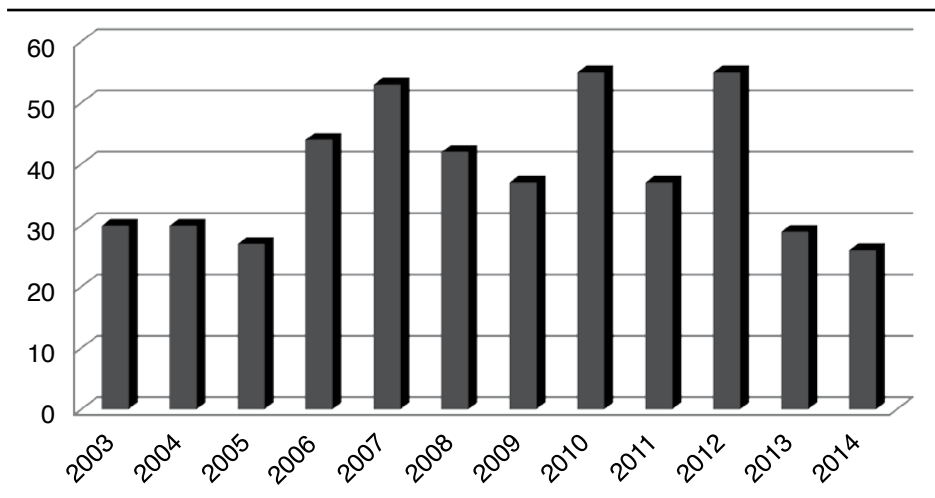
In this conclusion, I will first sum up a quantitative study of the focus of Master Theses written on Latin America in Norway. Thereafter I will discuss in some depth the tendencies sketched above. In the final part, I will address some very recent trends. Both general foreign policy and aid policy in Norway are going through some changes, and so are research priorities by the Norwegian government. In general, development research is given lower priority and so is Latin America research. At the same time, the increasing cracks are visible in the pre-

sumed consensus in Norway, as conflicts and unrest are coming closer to its shores, reducing the willingness to engage, and thus fund research about, issues seemingly far away. The last section discusses what this might mean for the Norwegian research on Latin America in the future.

## 2. NORWEGIAN MASTER THESES ON LATIN AMERICA

As a part of the work with this book, we collected information on the Master Theses written on Latin America at Norwegian Universities since 2003.<sup>1</sup> Although the study cannot claim to have been completely exhaustive, it showed some important tendencies. First, regarding the number of Master Theses, Stølen (2002) found that this increased significantly in the 1990s. By 2002, there were 314 Master Theses and only 37 of them had been written before 1990. Between 2002 and 2014, there were 480 Master Theses written on Latin America. As seen in Figure 10.1 the number of Master Theses on Latin America per year increased steeply between 2003 and 2007. However, this can be explained by a reform of higher education introduced in 2003 that increased the total number of Master Theses in Norway. After the rise in 2006/2006, the number of Master Theses on Latin America has varied quite significantly between years. It slumped in 2013 and 2014, but it is difficult to say yet if this is a part of a general trend.

**Figure 1**  
Master Theses on Latin America by year of completion



1 I would like to thank Tobias Wilbers for conducting this work.

Second, while we had expected there to be a significant coincidence between the choice of geographical focus for the Master Theses and that of senior scholars, as students select research focus in part depending on the expertise of available supervisors, this turns out not to be the case (see Figure 2). The country that has been the subject of the largest number of theses is Mexico, a country that has never played a significant role in Norwegian Latin America policy (as evidenced in chapters 1, 3 and 4). Neither have there ever been many senior scholars focusing on Mexico, at least not in permanent academic positions. This can possibly be interpreted as a result of the attention that the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas in 1994 attracted globally, and also in Norway. As found by Stølen (2002), 20 out of the 24 Master Theses written on Mexico before 2002 were written in the 1990s.

It is far less surprising that Brazil is number two. Not only is it the largest country in Latin America; it has also been the main focus of Norwegian attention to Latin America after around 2008, for both political and economic reasons. There have also been available research money and money for student and staff exchange allocated specifically to cooperation with Brazil. It also comes as no surprise that there has been written a large number of theses on Guatemala. Guatemala has held a special position in Norway, not only due to the Government's engagement in the peace-process in the 1990s, but due to extensive ties between civil society in Guatemala and Norway, ranging from student exchange to 'sister cities programs' and the presence of NGOs. The fact that Colombia is high on the list is clearly associated with its internal conflict and Norway's engagement both in humanitarian work and in peace negotiations. The large number of theses focusing on Peru and Argentina is perhaps more surprising.

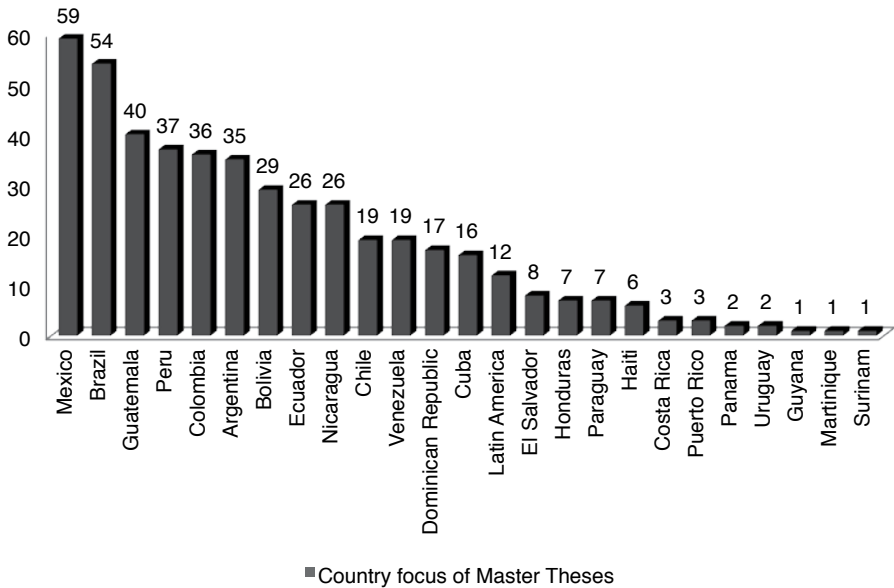
In terms of topics, the distribution is varied and possibly more in tune with the general focus of Latin America researchers in Norway (see Figure 3). An overview like this is, of course, very vulnerable to categorization. Nevertheless, it will provide some information. It comes as no surprise that ethnicity, race and indigenous peoples; gender and family; and environment and natural resources are the categories with most master theses. The fact that the category business and work-life is rather large reflects the recent interest for studying the practices of Norwegian companies in Latin America, particularly their environmental conduct and corporate social responsibility.

Regarding the themes that have received scant attention: international relations and migration, this is interesting and at least in the

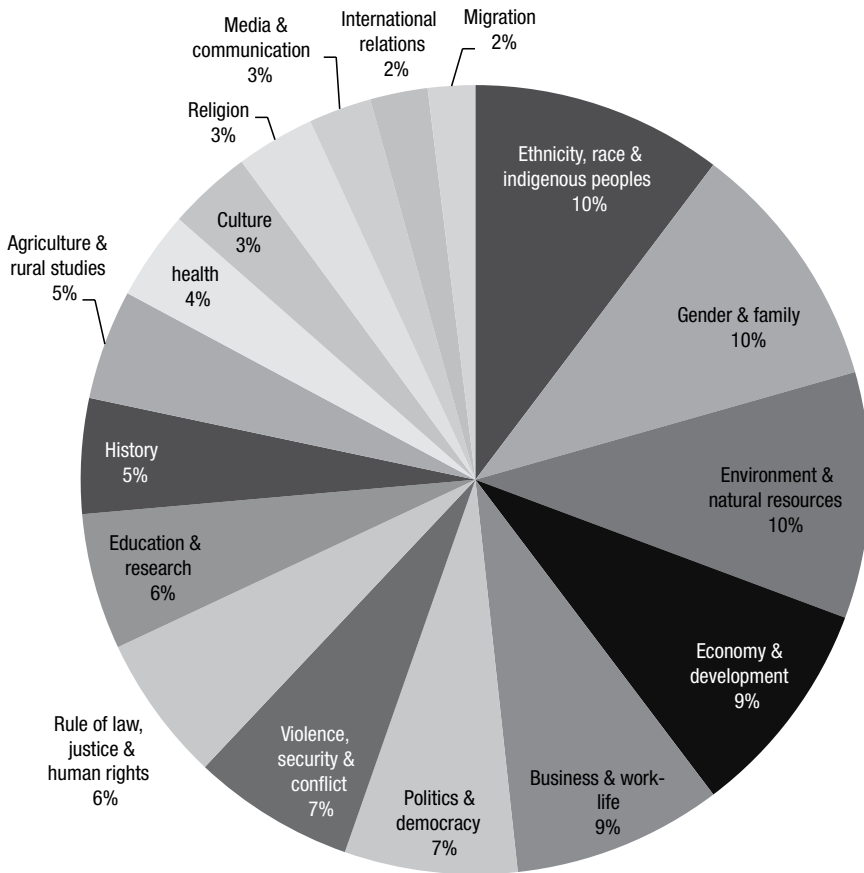


second case, perhaps surprising. Migration is an issue that is often in focus in the media, but has nevertheless received little attention from master students. The fact that international relations has not been of interest to students of Latin America in Norway may seem odd, as relations between Latin America and Norway are international relations. However, considering that the interest in Latin America in Norway to a significant extent has emerged out of an interest rather for the poor and marginalized, it is perhaps not such an oddity that the category relations is left out, an issue I will elaborate further in the followings paragraphs.

**Figure 2**  
Geographical focus of Master Theses



**Figure 3**  
Thematic focus of Master Theses (%)



### 3. RESEARCHERS FROM A HOMOGENOUS COUNTRY APPROACHING A DIVIDED REGION

To some extent, it is easier to identify what has not been in focus for Latin America research in Norway than what unifies the existing contributions. As is the case with the master theses, one topic that has largely been absent is international relations. There is also scant focus on anything related to elites and middle classes as well as economics and business studies, although the latter has increased somewhat

over the last years following the increased Norwegian business engagement.<sup>2</sup> In many ways, the topics that are most associated with traditional relations between countries in different parts of the world are most absent from Norwegian research on Latin America.

Can we thus still say that Norwegian research on Latin America is a part of a “geopolitics of knowledge”? Norwegian social sciences are firmly based on a western scientific tradition; the epistemology is one of many contrasts and ironies. In the context of the geopolitics of the weak (Tunander, 2008), significant research aimed at understanding ‘the other’, search for new frames for viewing the world, and new epistemologies have been funded. There have also been shifting alignments to political projects and shifting epistemologies underpinning the research. Nevertheless, Norwegian social science in general has continued to be published in English language journals, dominated largely by US academic traditions, and it has related to debates originating outside of Latin America.

However, Norwegian social science on Latin America also has its special features. Although admittedly a simplification, one could argue that Norwegian research on Latin America has passed through four phases and is at the verge of entering into a fifth one. In all these periods, Latin America has been considered a divided region, and much research has sought to contribute to overcome such divisions, but in different ways.

### **1960s: LATIN AMERICA AS THE EXOTIC, BUT OPPRESSIVE BACKWATER**

As discussed in chapter 2, before the 1960s, there was very scant scholarly work done on Latin America in Norway. The attention started although very modestly in the beginning, with the simultaneous strengthening of the social sciences in Norway and the political attention to Latin America starting with the Cuban revolution. Most of the attention before the 1960s was focused on Pre-Columbian history and culture, and to the extent that when modern Latin American societies were mentioned it was in a rather derogatory way. Parts of Latin America appeared to Norwegian explorers as wealthy and abundant of resources, an observation that should be understood on the background of Norway’s relative poverty before the World War II. However, the contrasts between the high-rise buildings and life-styles

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2 There are of course several exceptions to this. Eduardo Archetti’s works on tango, football and polo in Argentina relates as much to middle classes as popular classes (Archetti, 1999). Other exceptions are Bull’s work on Central American elites (Bull 2014), and the work by Bull, Kasahara, and Castellacci (2014) on business groups in the same region.

of the rich elite and the poverty of the countryside were also a theme in some of this work, as was the repression of the poor as a means to sustain the differences.

### **1970s-1980s: LATIN AMERICA AS AN EXPLOITED PARTNER IN A COUNTER-HEGEMONIC PROJECT**

As discussed particularly in chapters 1, 2, 3 and 5, Latin America came to the world's attention as a source of counter-hegemonic movements and ideas in the period in which the hegemony of the United States and its Western European allies consolidated. As a NATO member, Norway was a part of that alliance, a choice that was made easier due to the Norwegian labor movements distancing themselves from the Comintern and the Soviet Union already in the 1920s. However, Norway had a significant Marxist-Leninist movement in the 1970s, as well as other leftist dissident groups, that were partly monitored and oppressed and partly given concessions by the governments. As discussed by Bye in chapter 3, one of those concessions was to let the left left-of-center groups in the Labor Party dominate Latin America policy (to the extent that it existed). This led to a policy shift in the relations with Latin America towards support for leftist governments and social movements. This resulted in a number of contradictions and heated debates in Norway. However, these also contributed to mobilizing several generations of researchers that studied Latin American social actors as a means of contributing to changing the world, whether the focus was the '*ligas agrarias*' (Aguilar-Støen and Stølen, chapter 6), the Chilean opposition against Pinochet or the Sandinistas (Bye, chapter 3), or later the Zapatistas (Bull, chapter 5).

### **1990s: LATIN AMERICA AS A REGION OF FRAGILE PROGRESS**

The end of the Cold War and the civil wars in Central America, and the return to democracy the South-American occurred simultaneous to a strengthening of the aid apparatus in Norway, and increased availability of funds for research that should contribute to its efficiency. In the discourse emerging as a result of it, Latin America principally was no longer the home of revolutionary movements, but of fragile, new democracies whose incipient gender policies, inclusion of indigenous groups, justice and human rights institutions and poverty reduction schemes should be supported. While human rights was the discourse of the dissidents in the 1980s, it became a main point of international consensus along with sustainable development, democratic governance gender equality and multiculturalism, all strongly backed by the Norwegian government, civil society and the academic community in the 1990s. These became the new 'hegemonic values', upon which

what were named ‘the geopolitics of the weak’ and the engagement policy as discussed in chapter 1 were based. Research not related to such goals became somewhat marginal, even in periods of right wing governments. As noted by Ekern (chapter 9), it was much easier to acquire funds from Norwegian authorities to study indigenous communities, if framed in the discourse of human rights than if focusing simply on understanding indigenous communities’ institutions and culture. The many divisions within Latin American societies were still in focus, but with a regional consensus on democracy and the end of civil wars, one could at least see the contours of social dialogue and institutionalized solutions to conflicts in line with a Norwegian vision of the ‘normal’ (and implicitly improved) state of affairs. Studying this mobilized new researchers — for example engaged in research on democracy (chapter 8) and human rights and processes of justice (chapter 7).

#### **2000s: THE CONTRADICTIONS OF A VIEW OF LATIN AMERICA AS A GLOBAL ACTOR**

The political shifts towards the left in Latin America coincided with a global geopolitical shift, and the strengthening of the ‘politics of engagement’ in Norway: the idea that Norway had a crucial interest in a peaceful, prosperous world, based on a set of core values, irrespective of geographical location (Egeland, 1988; Lunde and Thune, 2008). Latin America, and particularly Brazil, came to be seen as an important ally in the construction of such a world, with its democracies and socially progressive political projects. The strengthened business interest in Latin America made it easier to ‘sell’ the idea of forming partnerships with left-of center Latin American governments to a broader set of political actors in Norway. Income from the petroleum-activity that increased steeply after 2000s, not only allowed generous aid-budgets but also allocation of research money to a broader set of issues in Latin America, as expressed in the Latin America Program of the Research Council of Norway (RCN, n.d.). Research continued on many of the topics that had been in focus for decades, but increasingly also on new divisions, including global and nationally focused elites (Bull, chapter 4), environmental conflicts (Aguilar-Støen and Stølen, chapter 6), and ways to overcome divisions, including pluricultural democratic and justice institutions (Skaar and García-Godos, chapter 7), new political parties (Berntzen, Buck, and Marsteintredet, chapter 8), and innovative social policy and income inequality reduction (Bull, chapter 4). Yet this presumed consensus as a foundation for a global partnership soon creaked. Not only did some of the left-wing governments in Latin America become increasingly controversial, so

did the foundation underpinning the image of Norway's role in the world as the homogenous, egalitarian and progressive promoter of global peace and human welfare.

#### **4. CONCLUDING REMARKS: TOWARDS A RENEWED PARTNERSHIP OR SLIPPING BACK INTO THE SHADOWLAND?**

On July 22, 2011, occurred the gravest terrorist attack in Norway since the World War II, in which 77 persons were killed, 66 of them at the youth camp of the Labor Party. The perpetrator, a Norwegian white-male, right-wing extremist and racist militant, appeared to have acted single-handedly. While shattering the image of Norway as peaceful, the immediate reaction by the Norwegian Government and political society, reaffirmed its ability to overcome crises through unifying against extremism and exclusion. However, as some analysts pointed out, the attack was not simply the act of a deranged mind but rather the expression of an undercurrent gaining common currency in Norwegian society, and challenging the assumed consensus on a.o. equal rights, citizenship and democratic participation for minorities (Bangstad, 2014). Still at the margins of a crisis-ridden Europe, the attacks were a reminder that Norway's imagined community of a peaceful harmonious nation, as described by Krøvel in chapter 4, was partly out of touch with realities. Moreover, as unrest in Europe increased, it was increasingly obvious that peace, tolerance, inclusion, and equality were not something only to be promoted in distant areas like Latin America, but issues at stake at home and in the European neighborhood.

It could be argued then, that Norway-based researchers are no longer based in a homogenous consensus-country, a matter which may also point out Global integration and the movement towards a more multipolar world, that have unleashed new forces and visions as well as new divisions across regions. The consensus on democracy has been challenged both by practical actions and in theory. Moreover, violence and conflicts erupt across the world, including in Latin America, while the wave of left-wing governments are challenged from below.

In this context, doubts might be raised about the continuation of the 'politics of engagement' including an attempt to secure a more peaceful and just world. Two scenarios seem likely. In the first, Norway's engagement will be minimized where it does not directly serve its core interests. With globalization and strong economic growth, Norway has engaged in increasing outbound foreign direct as well as portfolio investments, also in Latin America and this is likely to continue. However, at the same time, a volatile Europe has brought security threats and a sense of crisis have come closer to

home. Thus, one could see Norway focusing on defending its immediate economic and security interests, while downplaying long-term strategies with more diffuse pay-offs such as involvement in peacebuilding, human rights issues and poverty reduction in distant places. This would lead Latin America back to the foreign policy shadowlands where it was for most of the twentieth century in spite of periods of heightened attention.

Another possible reaction is to accept the existence of global conflicts of values, and seek more explicitly to support a set of norms associated with a desired evolution of global affairs. One could interpret this to justify at least two different roads: one is to seek to export 'Norwegian values' abroad as they are conceived of in our 'imagery', including democracy, equality and human rights. This would not be so different from the kind of US moralism that has justified international interventions, including in Latin America. The other alternative would rather seek parallel critical debate and dialogue domestically and abroad about the kind of democracy, welfare, inclusion, humanitarianism, etc. that we seek to achieve — in Norway, in Europe, and elsewhere in the world. In such an endeavor, Norwegian social science research should not aim to 'aid' Latin America, to 'export' Norwegian values, or to contribute to a falsely conceived of neutral body of knowledge guided by Western standards. Rather, as researchers we should engage in dialogue on standards, values, epistemological principles and political implications of our research in our home countries and abroad. A first step for researchers in such a strategy would be to be open about the political context out of which a certain inclination to research something emerges. This book is an attempted step in that direction.

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What motivates social sciences field researchers in a small, peripheral and distant country as Norway to study social phenomena in Latin America? To what extent can we say that the Norwegian social thought is part of a hegemonic Western knowledge project? The researchers who by birth or (bad) luck do have Norway as geographic base for their academic work, have really something in common? These are some of the questions that we explored in this book. The purpose is to analyze the Norwegian social thought on Latin America in the context of Norwegian geopolitics –interpreted here as ‘the geopolitics of the weak’–, the cooperation and development policies, as well as the different international lines of thought in the academic and ideological fields. This is presented in the chapters of this book which deal, among other subjects, with Norwegian social thought-previous to the social sciences unfolding; studies on social conflicts and peace; studies on leftist Governments; development studies; agrarian studies and rural movements; studies on Justice & Law; studies on Democracy and political cleavages; and indigenous peoples studies. Among the main findings, the most striking are not the characteristics of Norwegian ideas about Latin America, but the influence that Latin American social theories and ideas have had on the Norwegian academic world. This can be seen in various cases, from ECLA’s structuralism to Good Living ideas. Despite the diversity, it can be seen that different Norwegian scholars have approached the study of Latin America as a divided region: between the indigenous and non-indigenous peoples, between women and men, between rural and urban, between oppressed and oppressors, between victims and perpetrators, or between the rich and the poor. Several of the Norwegian investigations have focused on the reasons and the nature of those divisions, and how are –or can be– overcome. This is evident in the search for –and centrality of– the presence of the State, which also reflects the Norwegian confidence in the welfare State.

This book is a fundamental contribution to understand the relationship between these two distant regions, but which cultivate an ever-enriching academic dialogue.



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