In any assessment of the research frontiers and demands of Latin American geography in the 1970's, political geography is one topic meriting increased attention. The variety of spatial political patterns and processes existing within individual countries as well as the region reveals ample research topics at both the empirical and the theoretical levels. Yet the results of this kind of research are meager compared with our knowledge of economic, cultural, historical, and settlement geography (Parsons, 1964). That the neglected field of political geography has been included in this collection suggests that Latin Americanist geographers are genuinely interested in seeing this status upgraded. Whether the neglect is the result of political geographers' avoiding the area or Latin Americanists' the topic, the opportunity to improve the body of knowledge in this area prompts this paper.

**Political geography as a neglected field**

That relatively few studies in political geography have been performed by United States and Canadian geographers in Latin America should not be surprising. From 1960 to 1970, only 6 theses and 5 dissertations completed in North American universities contributed to our knowledge of Latin American political geography. During this same period only 8 articles appeared in six major United States and Canadian geography journals. Furthermore, the regional textbooks still do not emphasize the topic.

In examining a neglected field, we can well ask why this neglect exists. Latin American geographers traditionally have been trained in cultural, historical, or economic geography rather than in social, political, and urban geography (Parsons, 1964). This emphasis would hardly contribute to the study of political patterns and processes. The large number of articles, monographs, and research grants and the contents of textbooks that treat Indians, cultural history, and land use can be considered indicative of the present state of the field of geography of Latin America. Traditionally, such topics as political instability and development and voting behavior were outside the realm of man-land geography and hence not of primary importance for research. So, too, with the avoidance of cities, although
we can reasonably predict that in the near future cities will be the major focus for most social science research in Latin America as in other areas.

Political geographers also lacked interest in Latin America because there were no world conflicts in the continent nor severe boundary problems in densely populated areas. The speculative nature of the subject and the use of published data, at times unreliable, plus the fact that such analyses are not amenable to observation may have steered some potential political geographers into other research areas. Further, an important ingredient of political analyses is cooperation from various public officials.

The neglected status must also be attributed to political geographers. Their focus on the major political powers meant that the developing areas were slighted. Their chief concerns were with boundaries, international relations, geopolitics, and the development of nation states (Hartshorne, 1954). While these topics should continue to be investigated by political geographers, there are many other challenging research areas that merit our attention (National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council, 1965; K. Robinson, 1970).

**Political geography studies dealing with Latin America**

Of the large number of references in political geography dealing with Latin America in the Research Catalogue of the American Geographical Society and in Current Geographical Publications, many are written by historians and political scientists. The number written by United States and Canadian geographers is small. These efforts can be grouped according to six major themes.

The major topic, in number of studies, is concerned with boundaries and territorial conflicts and claims. Studies have dealt with the overall status of boundaries in South America (R. R. Platt, 1924), boundary claims in the upper Amazon (R. S. Platt, 1938), the British Guiana-Brazil frontier (H. Smith, 1938), the Tacna-Arica boundary between Peru and Chile (Moore, 1959), British Honduras (Reyner, 1963), and the Guatemala-Honduras border (R. R. Platt, 1929). Several articles and theses have examined the boundary problems between the United States and Mexico such as the Gadsden purchase (Hannon, 1966) and the El Paso and El Chamizal problems associated with the river meanders (Fitton, 1934; Hill, 1965; Wisner, 1965). A recent study treated the international political and economic aspects associated with the Colorado River (Ross, 1965).
The internal relations of countries have been the focus of several studies (R. R. Platt, 1926; Fisher, 1954; Dyer, 1961; Huck, 1962; Bergman and Nelson, 1964; Horst, 1964; Burnett, 1965; Kearns, 1969; and De Blij, in progress). These studies have dealt with the Caribbean, Guatemala, Surinam, Panama, British Honduras, and Jamaica, and most have treated economic developments within a political context; some have emphasized issues of nationhood.

Another group of studies has focused on the general role of Latin America in world affairs (Sauer, 1933; James, 1941; R. S. Platt, 1941; Dyer, 1962). Two studies, by Whittlesey (1922) on Cuba and by Shaw (1947) on Argentina, have treated relations between these countries and the United States.

A fourth major research theme has been the role of alliances, especially the attempts to form the West Indies Federation during the 1950's. Hardy's (1919) study, although dated, illustrates the difficulties in achieving political and economic unity in Latin America. Nine studies have treated various aspects of the Federation: economic aspects (Jordan, 1960; S. Smith, 1955) and selecting a capital (Lowenthal, 1958; Dale, 1961), as well as various views on and the basic rationale for the federation (Stern et al., 1956; Lowenthal, 1962; Emery, 1963; Lusaka, 1964; Ciccole, 1965).

Several investigations have focused on capital cities, especially the unique Brasilia (R. S. Platt, 1954, 1955; Jaynes and Faissol, 1956; Augelli, 1963; Snyder, 1964). In a different vein, Wagner (1962) considered the role of cities in current political and economic strategies in Caribbean countries.

A final major research theme has been the role of the government in economic development. These studies have dealt with the role of the government in the development of the Puerto Rican tourist industry (Mings, 1966, 1968) and the Virgin Islands tourist industry (Orlins, 1969), the industrial development of the Virgin Islands (Oxtoby, 1968, 1970), political aspects of land reform programs in Mexico (Jensen, 1965) and Guatemala (Pearson, 1963) and political considerations affecting Venezuelan immigration and the petroleum industry (Cohen and Rosenthal, 1971). Also the role of the Panamanian government has been discussed with reference to future canal efforts (Reyner, 1970).

The remaining political geography studies include a number of different topics. Aspects of national disunity and instability are treated by James (1939) in Brazil and by Heusinkveld (1967) in the Yucatan. Some early geographical treatments of
revolutions and interventions are discussed with respect to Nicaragua (R. S. Platt, 1927), Mexico (Mexico..., 1917), as well as the recent discussion of political instability and territoriality in the Dominican Republic (Augelli, 1967). Specific studies involving the formation of political culture (Crist, 1937, 1966) voting analyses (Ingalls, 1970) and historical political developments such as in Mexico (Stanislawski, 1947a, 1947b) are only touched. Discussions of political organizations are examined by Rudolph (1929) in Chile and by Ricketson (1939) in Guatemala. A recent study has dealt with Canada's foreign assistance to Latin American countries (Cermakian, 1969). Several of these topics merit increased attention by geographers.

Related Latin American Investigations by other social scientists

Political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, and historians have undertaken numerous research projects related to Latin American political geography (Hopper, 1964; Kling, 1964). Reviewed below are examples of these recent social science studies.

One major research theme broadly encompasses the subject of political development. Recent studies have examined general political and related economic aspects for Latin America as a region (Wolf, 1965; Fitzgibbon, 1967; Kantor, 1969; Ranis, 1968; Rivera, 1969) or for smaller segments such as the Caribbean (Wilgus, 1962, 1967). Cornblit et al. (1968) devised a mathematical simulation model to measure the regional political and social change. At a smaller scale political development has been treated in specific countries: for example, the role of ethnic pluralism in Surinam (Dodge, 1966), Brazil's national development (Jaguribe, 1967), the effect of United States aid on Brazil (Tuthill, 1969), political communication linkages in Trinidad (Kroll, 1967), political change in Mexico (Needler, 1968), and the recent developments in Cuba (O'Conner, 1968) and Puerto Rico (Wells, 1969).

Discussions involving the elements of instability and stability have included the impact of the military, dictatorships, violence, and coups d'etat on a country's political development (Needler, 1966, 1968; Fossum, 1967; Midlarsky and Tanter, 1967; Bwy, 1968; Juznic, 1968; Passos, 1968). Several of these studies have measured instability analytically and statistically (Bwy, 1968; and Passos, 1968). The relation between revolutions and violence and political instability has also been treated (Hauberg, 1968; Horowitz et al., 1969).
Several political scientists have studied the role various classes play in the evolving political scene. These analyses include the role of the emerging middle class (Wagley, 1964), the intellectuals (Bonilla, 1968), the student population (Scott, 1968) and the military (Ropp, 1970; Rozman, 1970). The studies by Glassman (1969), Petras (1969), and Snow (1969) have examined the new and traditional social classes and their impact on new alliances and party alignments in the context of the total political development as well as within cities.

Several studies have focused on elections within countries such as Chile (Cope, 1968; Francis, 1967; Hamblin, 1967), Brazil (Jaguribe, 1964), Colombia (McDonald, 1967b), El Salvador (McDonald, 1969b), and Guatemala (Sloan, 1968). Although most examine election results more in a political than an areal framework, geographic considerations are frequently treated. The role elections play in eventual governmental programs and even political instability has been examined (McDonald, 1967a). Several voting studies have focused on cities as a whole in Latin America (Horowitz, 1967; McDonald, 1969a) and on specific cities such as Bogota (Flinn and Camacho, 1969). A related study treated the effect of reapportionment on the urban elections and politics of Santiago, Chile (McDonald, 1969a).

The role of cities in Latin American political development has been approached in several ways, including their effect on political instability (Rabinovitz, 1967; Cornelius, 1969; McDonald, 1969c) as well as the power structure and importance of social classes and political parties within cities (Woodward, 1962; Whitten, 1965; Roberts, 1968). The effects of urban migration on forming political attitudes and cultures has been examined in Argentina (Andujar, 1966), Brazil (Siegel, 1957), and Mexico (Butterworth, 1962).

Political integration, with its economic tie-ins, has been another theme important to political science and sociology, and the raison d'être of such integration has been treated with respect to Central America (Hildebrand, 1967; Cochrane, 1969) and Latin America (R. Alexander, 1968; Lagos, 1968). Reinton (1967) measured integration by including such elements as participation at meetings, negotiations, and international conflicts as well as trade.

Several themes have not been treated thoroughly but merit the attention of political geographers interested in Latin America. One is the role of mini-states in the West Indies (Demas, 1968; O'Loughlin, 1968; Schroeder and Haverstock, 1969) and attempts at federation (Bobb, 1966). Another is perception studies that
consider the influence of the United States-Mexico border on political integration, attitudes, and group conflict (D'Antonio and Form, 1959; Form and Rivera, 1959) and Latin American students' perception of political development and power (Schwartzman, 1966). Even the topic of political attributes involved in the formation of national character merits consideration; for example, are studies in Brazil (Freyre, 1967) and Mexico (Maccoby, 1967). Recent political anthropology studies examining the role of the Chilean government in handling Indian reservations (Faron, 1967) and the impact of technology on the political awareness in a Mexican village (Friedrich, 1966) are examples that geographers could follow.

**Research challenges for political geography in Latin America**

Any presentation of research priorities and challenging research topics for geography in the 1970's is certain to reflect the authors' personal interests and biases, their interpretation of the current status and trends in political geography as well as geography generally, both in content and in methods, and their evaluation of developments in related social and behavioral sciences that are certain to become increasingly important (National Academy of Sciences-Social Science Research Council, 1969). Nevertheless, most political geography research in the 1970's will probably fall into the five divisions recently set forth by Kasper and Minghi (1969): heritage, structure, process, behavior, and environment.

In the light of previous investigations and the current status of political geography and geography, we can list twelve major themes for research on political geography in Latin America. Some of these topics have been treated in Latin America, Africa, and Asia as well as North America by geographers and other researchers. It is hoped that, by examining on a Latin American context some of these research topics that have been studied in the developed world or other parts of the developing world, meaningful comparisons can be made. The list below, of course, does not exhaust all possible topics.

1. Geographic Aspects of National and International Law. Studies of this nature are needed in view of the rising nationalistic tendencies and the impact of international and regional organizations on political decisions. Such issues as the nationalization schemes in Peru, the limits and legal enforcement of the territorial sea (L. Alexander, 1968), and the political impact of air space (White, 1969) are cases in point. Even the impact and enforcement of the embargo on Cuban goods
illustrate diverse spatial linkages among the Latin American countries. Also the effectiveness of international organizations in settling issues such as the Bolivia-Chile boundary dispute (Tomasek, 1967) and preventing the massacre of Amazon Indians (Lewis, 1970) would make worthwhile geographic studies.

2. Geography and Political Development: International, National, and Urban. This topic could be considered in several ways in a Latin American context (Schmitter, 1969). Countries could be examined by means of multivariate analyses to identify and classify levels of political development. These studies could consider economic and social characteristics as well as levels of violence and political instability (Cutright, 1963; Rummel, 1963, 1969; Russet, 1967; Sawyer, 1967; Singer, 1968). Another approach would be to examine the degree to which economic and political development are achieved together (Johnson, 1958; Lipset, 1959).

Another study might focus on areal patterns of instability and disunity in Latin America (Masur, 1966). That there are stress points and conflict zones in Latin America such as northeast Brazil, the Venezuela-Guyana borderlands, and squatter settlements around Caracas suggests spatial aspects that merit attention (Koch et al., 1960; Tanter, 1965; Fierabend and Fierabend, 1966; Ake, 1967; Bwy, 1968). The significance of borders, elements of border conflict, territoriality, and nationalism are important to an understanding of the geographic variation in political stability (Odesalchi, 1966; Nystuen, 1967; Smoker, 1969).

The increasing political power of cities, their impact on smaller urban centers and rural areas, and the evolving political strength within cities themselves (Nelson, 1969; Rabinovitz, 1967; Goldrich et al., 1970) await investigation in Latin America. In the process of political development in East Africa, the capital and major cities exhibited spatial linkages (Witthuhn, 1968; Gould, 1970). Similar studies focusing on the spatial linkages of the Rio de Janeiro-São Paulo complex would facilitate an understanding of the regional development of the country. A wealth of related literature on Latin American cities by various social scientists would aid in studying such topics. (Brunn, in progress).

The role of the national governments in economic development endeavors is an additional theme meriting investigation. Studies similar to those of the role of the Puerto Rican government in advancing the tourist industry (Mings, 1966, 1968; Orlins, 1969) and the Virgin Islands industrialization schemes (Oxtoby, 1968, 1970) could be examples to follow. The role of the government could be
examined in other areas such as the relationship between successful land reform schemes and levels of instability (Russett, 1964).

A final topic concerned with political development would include studies that measure the areal patterns of international financial assistance to developing countries. For example, how much aid has come to Latin America from West Germany, Japan, France, and the United States? What countries received it? For what programs (population control, military, housing)? A geographical analysis of the spending by the Alliance for Progress would be a case in point. Cermakian's studies (1969) are logical points of departure.

3. Regional Political and Economic Integration. The success of the LAFTA and CACM efforts suggests that forms of political integration may be in the offing. Also the rise of CARIFTA over the defunct West Indies Federation may again raise the question of Caribbean integration. Regional political and economic integration would seem logical for the Caribbean; however, ample political, economic, and cultural diversity often prevent successful integration for this and other segments of the region (Lambert, 1967; Cochrane, 1969; Segal, 1969; Ginsburgs and Stahnke, 1970). A study measuring various transactions such as trade, diplomatic exchange, and shared memberships in regional and international organizations might attempt to observe what political integration exists (Brams, 1966) and whether countries of similar backgrounds or in proximity are achieving closer ties or being separated, the latter a situation found in East Africa (Soja, 1968).

4. Role of Interest Groups. The political development of the Latin American region is tied closely to the influence of various segments of the society. The often conflicting and/or collaboration of the military, business, church, university and government leaders are reflected in the degree of internal social-political modernization and the external trade and military policies. The occurrence of coups d'etat, the success of land reform schemes, the formation of workers' alliances, the establishment of trade relations, the amount of subversion and the purchasing of military weapons is often dependent on the particular groups exercising political authority at that time (Bell, 1964; Pike, 1964; Powell, 1965; Wolf, 1965b; Lipset and Solari, 1967; Nunn, 1970; Ropp, 1970; Rozman, 1970 and Vernes, 1970). The political geographer might do well to investigate the role such interest groups play in the Latin American scene.

5. Political Geography of Mini-States. The role that these countries play in
regional, hemispheric, and world relations is an exciting topic awaiting geographic investigation (E. Robinson, 1960; Blair, 1967; Benedict, 1967). Their importance in political developments of small and large countries, attempts at political and economic integration, and the emergence of nationalism and black power (Black Power..., 1969) is disproportionate to their size. The establishment of Cuba as a communist base in the Caribbean, the British invasion of Anguilla, and the Argentine claim to the British Falkland Islands are examples of mini-state developments that caused world reaction.

6. Geography of Revolutionary Activities. This intriguing topic, a recent addition to geography, has been dealt with by McColl (19671, 1969) and Collins (1969), who have considered Cuba and Colombia as well as other countries. The writings of such Latin American peasant organizers and guerrilla fighters as Francisco Juliao (Barreto 1963; Juliao, 1961), Guevara (1961), Camilo Torres (Torres R., 1961; Guzman Campos, 1967), and Debray (1967) elaborate on the salient location characteristics associated with anti-government activities and attempts to "control the countryside." Even the role of cities in revolutionary movements merits more attention by geographers than it has received to date (Wagner, 1962; Jenkins, 1967). With the continued guerrilla warfare in such countries as Guatemala, Bolivia, and Colombia, a geographic analysis of such actions could facilitate our understanding of a country's political development (Lodge, 1966; Blaiser, 1967; Petras, 1967).

7. Geography of Imperialism. A major reason for revolutionary activities and nationalization programs is the effect foreign countries exert on political and economic developments in Latin American countries. The United States strategy to invade Cuba, the embargo placed on Cuban goods, the 1965 Marine landing in the Dominican Republic, and the Panama flag incident of 1964, not to mention exploitative business actions, can all be considered examples of imperialism. A geographical analysis of these and other imperialistic actions over time and space as well as the reactions Latin American countries take on regional issues may shed light on the current variations in United States-Latin American relations. The surface of this topic has only been touched by geographers (Meinig, 1969).

8. Electoral Geography: International, National, and Urban. Investigations might focus on social, economic, and political characteristics associated with voting patterns in a city such as Buenos Aires, a country such as Costa Rica (Ingalls, 1970) or Guatemala (Ford, 1970), or possibly the strength of an individual political candidate, (Reynolds, 1969) or the role of a group such as the poor in the
political system (Nelson, 1969; Finifter, 1970). The effect of urban voting on political thought and government development (McDonald, 1969c) would merit geographical consideration. An examination of the areal patterns of party strength in cities may reveal future political issues in developing countries, e.g., the large cities in Puerto Rico favored statehood in the 1967 plebiscite (Mings and Brunn, in progress). Whether referendums should be held on political integration, the role of cities, rural areas, regional political thought, and leading personalities would merit investigation. The voting records of Latin American countries in the United Nations (Vincent, 1969) or in the Organization of American States may facilitate our understanding of these countries (large and small and rich and poor) on issues facing the hemisphere and the developing world.

9. Political Behavior. Studies that consider individual and group attitudes of political parties, flows of political information, political leaders, and general political development seem warranted (e.g., Kasperson, in progress). The effect of political boundaries on social, political and economic behavior has been given scant treatment (Mackey, 1955; Form and Rivera, 1959; Reynolds and McNulty, 1968). A related topic would be the images people have about their own country and others (Schwartzman, 1966; Imhoof, 1968; Graber, 1969; Alcock and Newcombe, 1970). At another level it would be interesting to study the image Latin American countries have of themselves in regional and in world affairs (Neft, 1961; Kristof, 1968; Ginsburg, 1969). The variation in newspaper coverage of Latin American events and analyses of editorials from different cities in the United States may shed light on regional attitudes toward Latin America or specific countries (Meyers, 1968).

10. Political Implications of National Character. Even though the topic of national character is a major area of concern of social scientists (D. Smith, 1966; Weede, 1970), defining and measuring political aspects of national character are difficult and may be impossible because of urban-rural, social class, and occupation variations. It is very unlikely that the "national" character would be the same for a St. Vincent peasant, an Argentine farmer or a Puerto Rican urban resident (Epstein, 1967).

11. Political-Environment Issues. Although the importance of this topic to governments probably varies directly with their degree of political and economic advancement, it does provide a way to measure the influence the various levels of
government exert on various environmental issues. Political geographers have only scratched the surface of this general topic in developing areas (De Blij and Capone, 1969). An example of a political-environment issue in Latin America is the acknowledged potential of the Amazon Basin by the Brazilian government and outsiders which has contributed to the establishment of an Indian reservation, Xingú National Park, ostensibly to preserve native Indian culture in the vast region (Worsnop, 1969). Another example is the government role of Eastern Caribbean Islands and outside financial assistance to preserve unique natural areas and historic sites (Carlozzi and Carlozzi, 1968). An urban example that commands political attention is the suburban sprawl into Mayan sites in Guatemala City.

12. Geography of Peace. While volumes have been written on the wars, revolutions and political instability which have historically plagued the Latin American scene, little effort has been made by social scientists to tackle the problem of peace in the region. Systematic studies are needed that deal with the distribution of United States military assistance to Latin American states and the distribution of military and economic power throughout the region. Also such topics as variations in the economic impact of disarmament, the advantage and disadvantages of disarmament, inter-government and inter-peoples perception of hostility and peace, and the potentials for political integration merit geographical considerations (Benoit, 1964; Stotberg, 1965; Cooper, 1966). It is a sad commentary on man in general and the academic community in particular that the subject of conflict and conflict potential has won more attention than the subject of peace potential, particularly in such a strife-torn region as Latin America.

Summary

To remedy the present weak status of political geography research in Latin America is the responsibility of both political geographers trained in this systematic field and all Latin Americanist geographers. Both are in a position to help fill the existing gaps in our knowledge of the political and social geography of Latin America and thereby offer it as a meaningful challenge for graduate and professional study. With his interests and training in various political patterns and processes, whether in the United States, Europe, or Africa, the political geographer is in an excellent position to test some of the same ideas, theories, and models in a Latin America setting. In carrying out these studies the political geographers will need training and familiarity with the content and methods of political science, political sociology, political anthropology, and psychology. Latin
American geographers with their training and interest in anthropology, economics, sociology, demography, and history are in a position to perform research on political-related topics. Should both the geographers with political and social interests and those with Latin American interests attempt to bridge the existing gap by actively contributing to our knowledge of the political geography of Latin America, the profession may not have to consider political geography a neglected field in the future.

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