
This book confirms the reviewer's belief that history is the art of politics and that ideology always limits scholarly objectivity. Despite my limitations, and my disagreement with the author's world view, I find much to appreciate in his primer on United States–Latin American relations.

Gaspar sees Latin America facing a choice between cultural and economic ties to the West, or political leadership in the Third World. His strength lies in an ability to analyze Anglo–Latin cultural differences, and he notes how elitist Latin thinkers underrate U.S. cultural achievements while exalting their own. The writer depicts the race for wealth which left Latin America economically and politically dependent on the United States and also attributes the region's lack of development to an excess of institutional rigidity. He comprehends the effects of dependencia, but rejects the cultural and social implications of dependency theories. The author presents considerable evidence for U.S. withdrawal from Latin America, but believes in U.S. primacy in the hemisphere. He praises the doctrine of non-intervention, points out where the United States has breached it, and shows that the Rostow economic model has failed south of the Río Grande.

Gaspar illustrates the pervasive emotional opposition of Latin Americans to U.S. hegemony and perceptively examines the shortcomings of the OAS wherein Latin states increasingly bypass consultation with the United States. He suggests reforms designed to forge a more mature partnership to permit Latin America to receive more rights and responsibilities, to allow Cuba to reenter the inter-American system, and to enable the United States to exercise hemispheric leadership through more subtle diplomacy.

Like other policy analyses sponsored by the Hoover Institution and the American Enterprise Institute, this one proceeds from fear and misperceptions of socialism. For example, Gaspar refers to the Peruvian government established in 1968 as socialist (p. 82), rather than state-capitalist. His presentation of the left as monolithic and his conception of how it views the role of the United States in Latin America indicates a lack of understanding of the diverse schools of Marxist thought and how they assess capitalism.

University of Akron

SHELDON B. LISS