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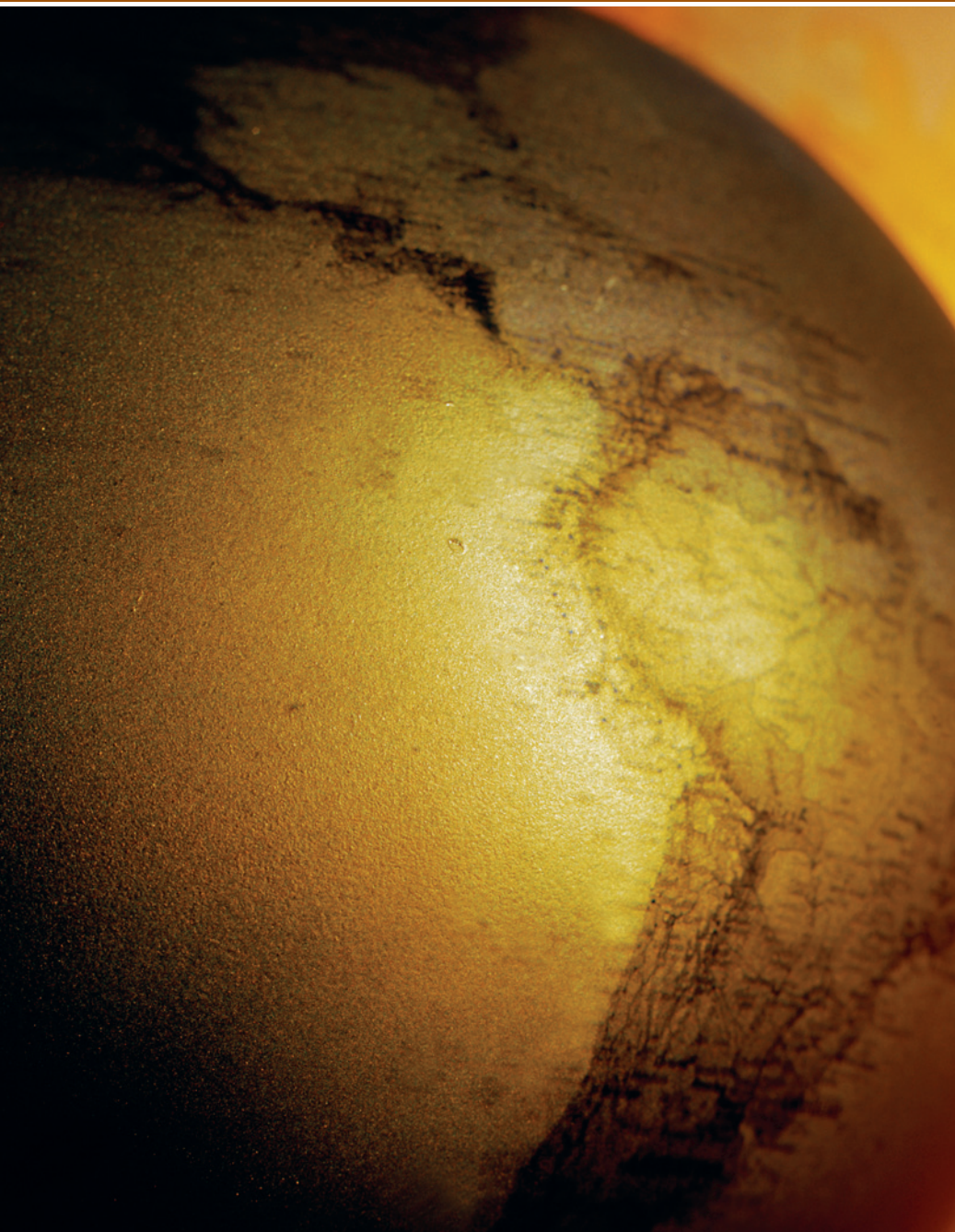


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President's Report

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We just celebrated the highly successful 2012 LASA Congress and are already in full swing planning for the next one. The 2013 Congress in Washington, DC, will be the first one on an annual schedule, so the entire planning process is based on tighter deadlines. The Secretariat has the new planning process all worked out, but we shall need everybody's cooperation in observing deadlines in order to achieve a smooth transition to the new schedule. The deadline for submitting proposals is **September 1, 2012**.

The decision to experiment with an annual instead of the traditional 18-months schedule was taken after the Congress in Rio, where we had over 5800 participants. It is extremely difficult to find that much space for a Congress, and even if the space is there (as it was in Rio), we face the problem of concurrent sessions of interest to the same participants. In Toronto we had fewer participants and conference rooms than in Rio, but San Francisco attracted a large number of submissions again that far exceeded the available space capacity. A conference day running from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. without a lunch break left no room for increasing the number of sessions by lengthening the day. The result was that the rejection rate had to go up, to roughly one quarter of proposals, which understandably left those unhappy whose proposals were rejected.

Contrary to some interpretations, no Executive Council or Program Committee ever took a decision to make the process of acceptance to Congress participation more selective. Every Program Committee has tried to accommodate as many proposals as possible, given the time and space available. The math is simple: with the total number of available panel slots limited by space and time constraints, the rejection rate has to go up in direct relation

to the number of submissions that surpass the total number of slots available.

One potential remedy that the Executive Council decided to try is precisely the transition to an annual schedule. The assumption is that some people will decide to participate in the Congress every other year, or twice in three years, and that accordingly the number of submissions will go down. Or, if this assumption turns out to be inaccurate, at least would-be participants whose proposals get rejected will have the chance to resubmit within a year.

A second major innovation in Congress planning that has taken place in the aftermath of Rio is the explicit preference given to submissions of proposals for entire panels over proposals for individual papers. Rio saw a record of 3200 individual paper proposals and 962 panel proposals. Evaluating those 3200 individual paper proposals and grouping them into panels was a monumental task for the track chairs and program chairs. Despite their best efforts, the result was often far from satisfactory in terms of the coherence of the panels.

The balance for Toronto was much better, with 663 individual paper proposals and 744 panel proposals. It was not quite as favorable for San Francisco, with 1362 individual paper proposals and 1020 panel proposals. We would prefer to tip the balance further towards panel proposals and encourage all LASA members to make use of the LASA website to identify potential panel participants. The incentive is that panel proposals will have a higher probability of being accepted than individual paper proposals.

One issue that caused concern was the denial of visas to ten Cuban scholars who



were to participate in the San Francisco Congress. The great majority of Cuban visa requests were granted (75 granted, 10 rejected), but the arbitrary nature of the visa denials is cause for concern. Among those whose visas were denied are some of the best known Cuban scholars with extensive previous stays in the United States. In a joint venture between outgoing and incoming LASA Presidents, Maria Hermínia Tavares de Almeida and I wrote a letter of protest to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on behalf of the Association. This letter is posted on the LASA website. Before the next Congress, we shall contact the State Department to request visa approvals for all Cuban scholars accepted as participants.

The *Debates* section in this issue of the *Forum* links directly to the theme of the next Congress, as described in the Call for Papers. The section addresses one of the most fundamental problems faced by Latin America—the high degree of inequality—and its development over the past decade. Inequality has decreased in many countries, in some of them to a remarkable degree, in part due to economic growth and in part due to innovation in social policies. The authors are exploring the underlying causes of these changes and their implications for the well-being of the citizens of Latin American countries. At the next Congress, we want to explore whether these gains might be preserved through a new social contract, or whether they are likely to be lost in the course of economic reversals. ■

Report of the Outgoing President

por MARIA HERMÍNIA TAVARES DE ALMEIDA | Universidade de São Paulo | mhbtldalm@usp.br

It was a great pleasure to preside over LASA's Thirtieth Congress in San Francisco—a meeting that was notable in several ways. Most important, LASA2012 represented the Congress's return to the United States after a long absence during which it traveled from Canada (Montréal) to Brazil (Rio) and back to Canada (Toronto), meeting wherever LASA members could freely cross international borders without fear of a last-minute visa denial.

Second, LASA 2012 inaugurated a new era of annual spring Congresses. The new co-chairs Gwen Kirkpatrick and Kenneth M. Roberts have already begun to organize the May 2013 Congress in Washington DC.

Third, returning to the United States through San Francisco proved to be a happy decision. The very special atmosphere of the "Sanctuary City," at once vibrant and easygoing, seemed to energize us as we went about our work. The Congress was a huge success. Around 4,800 participants attended the panels, special sessions, film festival and other featured events that took place over the three hectic and intense days of the conference—and they did so with comfort and ease.

A LASA Congress is a collective achievement, making it difficult to single out individual contributions. Nevertheless, I cannot fail to mention some of the outstanding people who made LASA2012 happen: The Congress co-chairs, Timothy Power and Gabrielle Nouzeilles, worked with 68 track and section chairs selecting papers and panels, and also helped organize some of the presidential panels and featured sessions with extraordinary competence, dedication and good humor. Claudia Ferman has now turned LASA's film festival into an important international

documentary film event. And, last but not least, we must pay tribute to the brave LASA staff and the student volunteers from local universities, who worked under the direction of Milagros Pereyra and Sandra Klinzing, two incredible organizers and problem solvers.

This is my last report as LASA president. Several people have asked me how tough it was to carry out the duties of the presidency. To be honest, I must say that it has been a most fascinating and enriching academic experience, made easier by the professionalism of officers and staff, by the competence of LASA Forum Associate Editor, Fred Rosen, and by the support I had from the Executive Council, from the two past presidents Eric Hershberg and John Coatsworth and, especially, from the incoming president Evelyne Huber, an exceptionally distinguished scholar and an incredible colleague. LASA is now in her competent hands. ■



Declining Economic Inequalities and Political Challenges

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During the past ten years, Latin America has witnessed notable political and economic change. Specifically, the region has enjoyed relatively strong and stable economic growth, thanks in part to the commodity boom. Moreover, most states have experienced slight decreases in levels of income inequality. On the political front, several countries in the region have undergone a much-touted “shift to the left,” and governments on both sides of the ideological spectrum have implemented equity-enhancing policies. The following four contributions to the *LASA Forum* examine the underpinnings of these phenomena and what they portend for the future wellbeing of the people in the region.

The first article, by Luis F. López-Calva and Nora Lustig, charts the decline in income inequality that most countries in the region have experienced during the past decade and attributes it to a reduction in earnings inequality and increased public and private income transfers. Giovanni Andrea Cornia, Juan Carlos Gómez-Sabaini and Bruno Martorano focus on government revenues, outlining recent tax policy innovations, their effects on income inequality, and the politics surrounding the policies. Wendy Hunter and Natasha Borges Sugiyama focus on government expenditures, particularly conditional cash transfer (CCT) programs and their effects on decreased inequality. The authors underscore several strengths of CCT policies, but stress that benefits continue to be small, thereby inhibiting their redistributive effect. The final contribution, by Ken Roberts, analyzes how politics and party competition have encouraged the promotion of equity-enhancing social policies.

Overall, while inequalities remain high by comparative standards (the Gini coefficient in 2009 was .53 for Latin America while it was .30 for the European Union), the direction is positive and bodes well for the poor as well as the rich, for whom the externalities produced by high inequality and poverty can also reduce the quality of life. The challenge now is to build on the achievements of the past decade to foster a virtuous cycle of accountability, efficiency and equity. ■

DEBATES

The Decline in Inequality in Latin America: The Role of Markets and the State

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Inequality is a distinctive feature of Latin America and the Caribbean, due both to its high level and its persistence¹. However, after a period of rising inequality in the 1990s, income inequality in the region has been falling. For the region as a whole, the Gini coefficient declined from an average of 0.529 in 2000 to 0.509 in 2009. The decline has been widespread, its order of magnitude is non-trivial and, in the majority of cases, it is statistically significant. Based on the SEDLAC-World Bank data, the inequality fell in thirteen out of seventeen countries for which comparable data are available (see Figure 1). The average decline for the 13 countries is -0.94 percent a year. Interestingly, this trend occurred when inequality was growing in other parts of the world.²

Why has inequality declined? An in-depth analysis for Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Peru, a representative sample of the region's

diversity in terms of initial inequality, political regimes, international trade patterns and economic growth, suggests that both a decline in earnings inequality and non-labor income inequality contributed to the fall in overall inequality. In both cases—as we shall see below—state action, through educational policies and more progressive transfers, has played an important role.

Before we turn to the next section, a caveat is in order. A well-known fact is that household surveys do not capture incomes accurately at the top of the income distribution. This can be due to limitations in the representativeness of the sample or non-sampling errors such as under-reporting of incomes on the part of rich households, particularly non-wage income. However, these limitations do not mean that what we learn from the rest of the distribution is irrelevant. As we shall see,

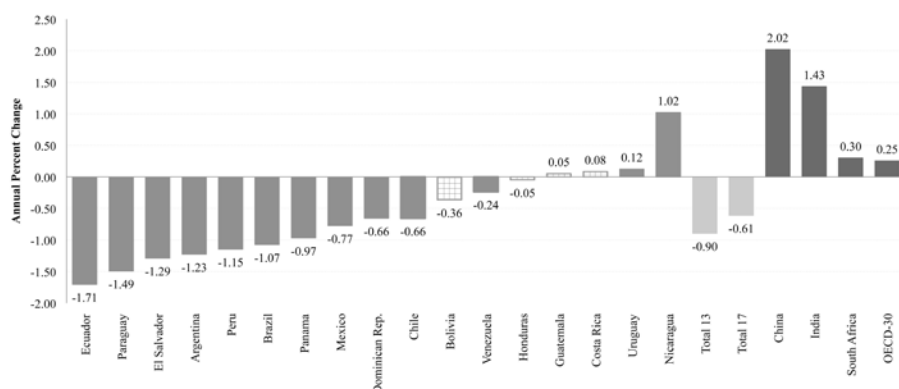
in the last decade new trends have emerged that are worth documenting and analyzing.

Declining Earnings Inequality

What accounts for the decline in earnings inequality? The evidence suggests that the driving force was a reduction in the hourly wage gap for workers with more years of education (or skills) vis-à-vis less educated (or low-skilled) workers. In the 2000s—and in contrast to the previous decade—the skill premium fell and this factor was present in all four countries. So, then, what was behind the decline in the wage gap?

In economics we like to distinguish between the role of market forces (demand and supply of labor by skill) and institutional factors (especially minimum wages and the unionization rate). In the 2000s, the relative supply of workers with tertiary education increased, and the returns to tertiary education declined in all four countries. Conversely, the relative supply of workers with incomplete primary or no education declined and their wages rose over the same period. It is tempting to conclude, therefore, that we are seeing a simple case in which the growth in supply outpaced the growth in demand for skilled labor. However, even if both demand and supply had grown at the same rate (or even if demand outpaced supply), institutional factors could have changed to favor wages of low-skilled workers to such an extent that the wage scale compressed. Campos, Esquivel and Lustig (2012) show that in Mexico neither the minimum wage nor the unionization rate changed during the period of declining wage inequality. Thus, in Mexico market forces appear to have been predominant. The same might be said for Peru. In contrast, in Argentina and Brazil, both market forces and institutional factors contributed to the decline in wage

FIGURE 1
Declining Inequality in Latin America by Country: 2000-2009
Annual Percentage Change in Gini



Source: Lustig, N., Lopez-Calva, L.F. and Ortiz-Juarez, E. (2011), "The Decline in Inequality in Latin America: How Much, Since When and Why," Working Paper 1118, Tulane University.

inequality. In both countries the minimum wage rose significantly and the government took a more pro-union stance in the 2000s. In the case of Argentina, this translated into mandated increases in wages, which might have benefited workers at the lower end of the income scale relatively more. However, in the two countries changes in growth patterns must have resulted in a rise in demand for low-skilled workers. (It is interesting to note that this happened in spite of slow GDP growth both in Brazil and in Mexico).

The observed changes in the composition of labor supply are the result of a significant increase in the coverage of basic education (and in some countries beyond that), a “push” that gained momentum in the 1990s, especially in Brazil and Mexico. Hence, public policy was an underlying force in shaping the dynamics that materialized in the labor market as an interaction between demand and supply.

In addition, demographic changes were an underlying determinant of the overall decline in inequality. The direct effect of lower birth rates appeared in the form of lower dependency ratios (number of children or elderly per adult), especially for poorer households. A sharp increase in the participation of women in the labor force raised the ratio of working adults to total adults, especially for poorer households. Lower population growth among poorer households implied a slower increase in the supply of low-skilled workers than in the past. And lower population growth made it easier for the government to expand the coverage of education. Thus, behind the labor market dynamics are some deeper structural processes that have to do with changing values and behavior and, in particular, with the role of women and their ability to exercise more choice in terms of the number of children, their

education and their participation in the labor force as remunerated workers.

Declining Inequality in Non-labor Income

The reduction in the inequality of non-labor income was also an important factor behind the fall in overall inequality. Non-labor income includes quite disparate income sources: (1) returns to physical and financial capital (interests, profits and rents), (2) private transfers (for example, remittances) and (3) public transfers (monetary, and in the case of Peru, some transfers in kind). As mentioned above, household surveys are not particularly good at capturing income from capital. Nevertheless, the evidence shows that the contribution of changes in returns to physical and financial capital tended to be small and regressive. In terms of private transfers, remittances were particularly relevant in the case of Mexico. They proved to be equalizing and became even more so in the 2000s, because they closed the gap between rural and urban household per capita incomes.

The new phenomenon in Latin America was the significant rise in importance of the equalizing contribution of public transfers in the 2000s. A trend that was present in the four countries analyzed here is that government spending on transfers (monetary and non-monetary) became more progressive in the 2000s. This trend went beyond targeted cash transfers. Spending on health, education, nutrition and basic infrastructure (electricity and water and sanitation, for example) became more progressive—that is, more pro-poor. The analysis of the contribution of cash transfers in Brazil and Mexico shows its remarkable power in reducing inequality. In Brazil, the *Benefício de Prestação Continuada* and *Bolsa Família* explain

more than 20 percent of the decline in household income inequality. In Mexico, *Oportunidades* accounts for 18 percent of the change in the pre/post-transfers difference in the Gini coefficient. Government spending on transfers became more progressive in the 2000s, but this trend went beyond targeted cash transfers: spending on health, education, nutrition and basic infrastructure also became more pro-poor. In Argentina, the *Moratoria Previsional* and *Asignación Universal por Hijo* reduce inequality and poverty by leaps and bounds. In Peru, *Juntos*—though a much more modest cash transfer program than those in the other three countries—together with transfers in kind has become more progressive and accounts for a significant portion of the decline in inequality in Peru.³

The Future

Will the equalizing momentum in labor markets continue in the future? If it depends on the pace of educational upgrading, there are reasons to be less optimistic. First, it is still hard for many young people in Latin America to be able to afford to go on to post-secondary schooling, especially because of the opportunity cost of giving up earnings in order to study. Perhaps more importantly, because the quality of education in Latin America is low (especially for low-income groups), many high school graduates are not “college ready” and will not be admitted to good quality universities (public or private). If the state wants to continue to strengthen its current method of equalizing the distribution of income—equalizing opportunities through education—addressing the inequality in the quality of basic education and finding ways to compensate for the high opportunity cost of attending tertiary education for

poor children must take priority in the public policy agenda.

The results suggest that the region has been moving, for the most part, in the right redistributive direction. In particular, governments have been making a greater effort to correct for inequality in the distribution of opportunities. Moreover, governments have actively reduced poverty through direct transfers to the poor, making distributive outcomes, and not just opportunities, more equal. At the same time, however, the detailed analyses of government spending and revenue collection reveal that a large share of public spending is still neutral or not progressive enough from the distributive point of view. It also reveals that taxes, in particular personal income taxes, are severely underutilized as an instrument of redistribution in a region characterized by the presence of a substantial number of ultra-high net worth (i.e. super rich) individuals. A lot of work is still pending in the redistributive agenda of the state.

Endnotes

¹ This article is based on Lopez-Calva, Luis F. and Nora Lustig (2010) *Declining Inequality in Latin America: a Decade of Progress?* (Brookings Institution and UNDP) and Lustig, Nora, Luis F. Lopez-Calva and Eduardo Ortiz-Juarez (2011), "The Decline in Inequality in Latin America: How Much, Since When and Why", Working Paper 1118, Tulane University. The authors are grateful to Emily Travis for her editorial suggestions.

² These results are robust even if we use the data presented by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC or CEPAL). The ranking of the countries may vary but not the overall conclusion.

³ For more details on the specific programs and the incidence of government spending see Lustig (2012), coordinator, "Taxes, Transfers and Redistribution in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico and Peru" (Team: *Argentina* (Carola Pessino); *Bolivia* (George Gray-Molina, Wilson Jimenez, Veronica Paz and Ernesto Yañez); *Brazil* (Claudiney Pereira and Sean Higgins); *Mexico* (John Scott); and *Peru* (Miguel Jaramillo), background paper for Corporación Andina de Fomento (CAF) *Fiscal Policy for Development: Improving the Nexus between Revenues and Spending/Política Fiscal para el Desarrollo: Mejorando la Conexión entre Ingresos y Gastos*. 2012. ■

Tax Policy Changes and Income Inequality in Latin America: Evidence from the Last Decade

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Taxation Approaches During the 1980s and 1990s

During the 1980s and 1990s, the many neoliberal regimes that ruled Latin America introduced important tax policy changes focusing on the reduction or abolition of direct taxation and the replacement of taxes on international trade with domestic consumption taxes. As a result of these and other policies, and of the crisis that affected the region during this period, the average tax/GDP ratio fell markedly (Figure 1) while GDP growth and inequality worsened (Cornia 2010). Since the late 1990s, however, and particularly since 2002, new policies started to be adopted in the field of taxation. These new measures assigned a greater role to direct and other forms of progressive taxation, reduced regressive excises and, thanks also to improved growth conditions and higher export prices, generated a substantial rise in the regional tax/GDP ratio (Figure 1).

Political Shifts and a New Fiscal Pact

Among the factors explaining the recent shift in tax policy, political changes certainly play a key role. The return to democracy during the 1990s did not, by itself, generate better distributive outcomes, as the traditional elites maintained a prominent role at all levels of government thanks to their usual practices of clientelism, personalism and patronage. However, the majority of the population—including a part of the middle class that traditionally supported conservative parties—grew increasingly disappointed with the slow growth, rising inequality and cuts in social spending of those years and shifted its support to leftist parties more sensitive to distributional issues (Panizza 2005). As noted by Roberts (2012), such a shift was less the result of an ideological realignment of the Latin American population than of retrospective, performance-based economic voting. The shift was also helped by the revival of popular movements and social protests in a

number of countries, often with new collective actors—unemployed workers, indigenous groups, and territorially based community organizations—coming to play a far more important role than in the past.

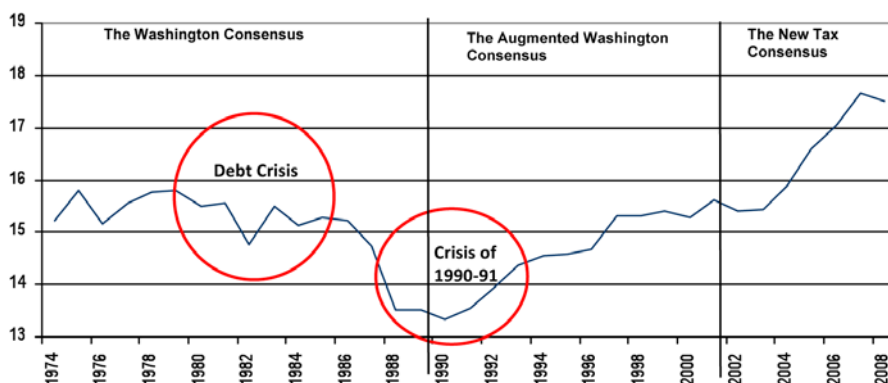
The regimes that have arisen on the left are quite varied. Some of them are social democratic, as is the case of Brazil's Partido dos Trabalhadores, and have their roots in organizations of the working class. They have generally evolved into broad coalitions comprising sectors of business and the middle classes, the urban and rural poor, the unemployed and informal-sector workers. In contrast, radical left-populist regimes, which also favor the redistribution of assets nationally and internationally, now dominate the scene in countries such as Venezuela, Bolivia and Nicaragua.

Generally, while the new leftist governments adopted policies more sensitive to the issues of poverty and inequality, they also emphasized the achievement of orthodox objectives such as macro-stability and low inflation—though these objectives were often reached by means of approaches quite different from the past ones. With respect to fiscal policy, the new governments weakened the vicious cycle linking an excessive concentration of power to a lack of legitimacy in tax collection. The new “fiscal pact” established between the state and its citizens made higher taxation acceptable due to the broadening of the political decision-making process and a substantial improvement in the quantity, quality and progressiveness of social services provided by the state.

Tax Policy Changes During the 2000s

Since the early 2000s, taxation has evolved in a pragmatic way towards greater

FIGURE 1
Trend in the Average Tax/GDP Ratio in Latin America, 1973 to 2009



Source: IMF data and CEPALSTAT.

progressivity and efficiency. Income tax policies, in particular, have undergone a number of changes. For instance, the 2007 Uruguayan tax reform pivoted around a progressive personal income tax. In Ecuador, the 2008 tax reform introduced a progressive income tax, and similar measures were introduced in Peru (in 2009) and other countries. Most governments also eliminated or reduced a long list of tax deductions and tax holidays that were found to produce minimal benefits while causing substantial revenue losses.

As these measures hardly affected the informal sector, new forms of politically feasible taxation were introduced, including a simplified presumptive taxation (as in the case of Brazil's *Simples*), which replaced several taxes and was levied on an estimate of taxable income made on the basis of the level of economic activity. Several countries (including Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico and Argentina) also introduced a surrogate tax on financial transactions as a second-best tool to improve revenue collection on assets and rents, which would otherwise remain untaxed. No changes were introduced in the field of trade taxes, property taxation or in the VAT. However, several governments made a greater use of progressive indirect taxes, as in the case of Ecuador's *Impuesto a los Consumos Especiales*, a tax on luxury items introduced in 2008, and reliance on highly regressive excises diminished.

Lastly, many countries adopted reforms to lower the cost of tax collection, reduce evasion, and ensure greater accountability and independence of revenue authorities. These objectives were achieved through a functional rationalization, standardization and specialization of tax administration, and the creation of semi-autonomous revenue authorities. Moreover, special units were created for large and small

taxpayers, while standardized withholding was implemented more broadly; the equipment was modernized and the staff was increasingly selected on the basis of merit criteria.

Impact of the Recent Tax Changes

The tax changes introduced during the last decade affected economic growth by improving macroeconomic stability, equity and the provision of public goods. Indeed, the three percent average increase in the tax/GDP ratio achieved over 2002-2009 (Figure 1) appears to have raised the growth rate of GDP by between 0.3 and one percent, contradicting in this way the claims about the supposed efficiency costs of taxation (Cornia et al. 2011). In addition, although taxation in Latin America played a modest or even negative equalizing role until recently, the new tax policies directly affected the distribution of post-tax, pre-transfer income by reducing income inequality by almost one Gini point. It did this while generating precious revenue to increase public expenditure on human capital. Indeed, the Reynolds-Smolensky index, which measures the redistributive impact of tax systems, improved significantly in all countries with available data, though taxation remained regressive in El Salvador, Colombia, Honduras and the Dominican Republic (Cornia et al. 2011).

Limitations of the Recent Tax Reforms and Options for Further Action

While important, the recent tax policy changes need to be intensified in the years ahead, as taxation remains inadequate and regressive, especially in Central America. First of all, in twelve out of eighteen countries of the region the effective tax/

GDP ratio is considerably lower than the potential one. Thus, raising the effective tax/GDP ratio to its potential level would generate an important revenue increase in most of the region. Second, making taxation more equitable requires strengthening direct taxation, while reducing the weight of the indirect taxes which still dominate revenue collection. A comparison with other regions suggests there is further room for doing so (Cornia et al. 2011, Figure 11). The increase in direct taxation needs to focus specifically on personal incomes, as at the moment only 10 to 15 percent of the population pays such tax. Reducing this imbalance depends, of course, on the expansion of the formal sector, but also requires ad hoc measures to reduce tax exemptions on capital incomes, and greater use of indirect methods to ascertain the taxable incomes of relatively well-off informal sector and independent workers.

Third, a sizeable reduction in tax evasion constitutes an obvious element of any approach aiming at improving tax equity. A first step in this regard consists in reducing further the exemptions granted during the 1980s and 1990s to attract foreign investments. A second step consists in promoting the registration of informal firms, introducing special regimes for hard-to-tax activities and VAT collection from large firms. In addition, greater emphasis should be placed on the internal efficiency, effectiveness and staffing of tax administrations. Finally, and most importantly, governments have to further strengthen their legitimacy in tax collection by placing a greater emphasis not only on raising additional revenue but also on an expanded, equitable and high-quality provision of public goods.

Conditional Cash Transfer Programs: Assessing their Achievements and Probing their Promise

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2012, “The Politics of Inequality and Redistribution in Latin America post-Adjustment Era”, UNU/WIDER Working Paper n. 08/2012, Helsinki. ■

Since the mid-1990s, social policies geared at poverty alleviation in Latin America have undergone a significant transformation. Conditional cash transfer (CCT) programs now represent an important pillar in the new paradigm of social protection in the region. Following the widespread enactment of piecemeal safety-net programs that complied with the fiscal austerity of neoliberal economic restructuring, governments in Latin America more recently have adopted strategies aimed at alleviating poverty in the short term and breaking the transmission of intergenerational poverty in the long term. Many countries have also sought to empower women and girls by targeting mothers as program beneficiaries and by allocating greater resources to daughters. In general, CCTs target cash assistance to poor and indigent families provided that their children adhere to behaviors thought to enhance human development, such as attending school regularly and engaging in preventive health care practices, including receiving the core childhood vaccinations. Additional “co-responsibility” requirements vary across the region; some CCTs require parenting classes, prenatal care for mothers, and even breastfeeding.

Mexico’s federal PROGRESA and Brazil’s municipal Bolsa Escola (school grant) were among the first CCTs to be implemented and to win international acclaim for innovative program designs in the mid-1990s. Since then, CCTs have spread throughout Latin America and the Caribbean at a remarkable pace.¹ Eighteen countries have now adopted such programs.² To put this trend in perspective, over twenty-five million families (about 113 million people) or 19 percent of the regional population participates in CCTs.³ Depending on the program, cash transfers represent between roughly eight percent

and 33 percent of household income. The money can be significant enough to put families who live in utter destitution above the level of indigence.⁴ There is, however, great variation in the size, scope, and degree of institutionalization of CCTs across countries. Such programs differ significantly in whether or not they enjoy stable funding, are guided by a national plan with provisions for evaluation, and are constrained by a legal framework that specifies mandates and responsibilities.

There are a number of positive outcomes generally associated with CCTs. Several studies have found that most income-subsidy programs have alleviated poverty, increased school enrollment and attendance, promoted the utilization of health services, and led to better nutritional outcomes.⁵ Some CCTs have even contributed to lowering economic inequality by raising incomes among the poorest segments of society.⁶ An additional downstream benefit concerns the identity documents that such entitlements have motivated many poor people to obtain; these are not only necessary to enroll in CCTs but also confer rights and social protection of other types.⁷ What’s more, CCTs have produced all of these benefits in a very cost-effective fashion. In the context of total social spending, the amounts allocated to CCT programs generally make up a small percentage of GDP—between roughly 0.4 percent and 0.8 percent.⁸ Given the small share of money involved, the positive results associated with CCTs are quite striking. In any event, because most cash transfers are designed to focus resources sharply on the poor, they are widely deemed by economists and development practitioners to be more efficient than many other programs, such as food subsidies.

Notwithstanding their merits, CCTs are not the answer to fundamental and sustained development. Their contributions need to be placed in perspective, and their shortcomings need to be recognized. To begin with, the resources allocated to income subsidies are too modest to ensure a major shift in the regional landscape of poverty and inequality. Moreover, they need to be highly targeted (avoiding errors of both inclusion and exclusion) in order to have a significant impact on the lives of the poor. Also, the potential that CCTs have for encouraging children to attend school and visit medical clinics can only be realized if a reasonable education and health infrastructure is in place to begin with. Moreover, increasing the number of children who seek access to schools and clinics does little or nothing to address the quality of the services provided. Indeed, the most pressing problem in contemporary Latin America is not that too few children attend school but rather that they learn too little once they are there.⁹

Finally, the verdict is still out as to whether and to what extent CCTs empower women. On the one hand, the fact that payments tend to go directly to female heads of household can enhance their autonomy within the family. On the other hand, the lion's share of the burden entailed in fulfilling conditionality requirements generally rests on mothers. This burden is a double-edged sword, however, as entering into contact with school personnel and the public health community can broaden the horizons of socially marginalized individuals, enhance their self-confidence, and induce them to make greater use of public services more broadly.

Another important and fairly recent line of inquiry concerns the promise of CCTs to help create a culture of "citizenship and rights" in a region where social assistance

has historically been delivered as political patronage.¹⁰ This history has caused many poor people to regard social provisioning more as a "favor" handed to them by beneficent politicians than as an obligation of the state. By suppressing people in lower income brackets from making demands, such thinking has effectively contributed to perpetuating the status quo. It is crucial to build a "culture of rights" if citizens are to hold their governments accountable for meeting basic needs and providing decent social services. We contend that CCTs, if well designed and implemented, can contribute to building such a culture. Public information campaigns that stress the bureaucratic rather than political criteria for program enrollment are an important start. The regular and direct nature of the payout reduces opportunities for clientelist intervention. Most of the time the funds come in monthly intervals via ATM cards. The institution of bureaucratic mechanisms to resolve problems with people's applications and payments also reduces the likelihood that political brokers will intervene in exchange for political support. Whether CCTs are promoting a change in perspective among beneficiaries and the mechanisms by which they might be doing so are questions that remain inadequately answered at this point. The path is open for further research on such questions.

Endnotes

¹ On the diffusion of CCT programs in Latin America, see Natasha Borges Sugiyama, "The diffusion of Conditional Cash Transfer programs in the Americas," *Global Social Policy* 11, no. 2/3 (2011).

² The countries that currently have CCTs are Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

³ Simone Cecchini and Aldo Madariaga, "Conditional Cash Transfer Programmes: The recent experience in Latin America and the Caribbean," *Cuadernos de la CEPAL* no. 95 (2011), 7.

⁴ Cecchini and Madariaga, "Conditional Cash Transfer Programmes," 118.

⁵ See, for example, Ariel Fiszbein and Norbert Schady, *Conditional Cash Transfers: A World Bank Policy Research Report* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2009); and Enrique Valencia Lomelí, "Conditional Cash Transfers as Social Policy in Latin America: An Assessment of their Contributions and Limitations," *The Annual Review of Sociology*, 2008.

⁶ On the effects of CCTs on income inequality and poverty, see Cecchini and Madariaga, "Conditional Cash Transfer Programs," 117-136.

⁷ Mía Harbitz and María del Carmen Tamargo, "The Significance of Legal Identity in Situations of Poverty and Social Exclusion," Inter-American Development Bank, Technical Note, 2009; Laura R. Wong and Cassio M. Turra, "O Sub-Registro de Nascimentos no Brasil," Inter-American Development Bank, project ATN/NS-8915-RS.

⁸ Valencia Lomelí, "Conditional Cash Transfers," 476.

⁹ Javier Corrales, *The Politics of Education Reform*, vol 2, no. 1 of Education Reform and Management Series (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1999).

¹⁰ For an example, see Natasha Borges Sugiyama and Wendy Hunter, "Whither Clientelism? Good Governance and Brazil's Bolsa Família," unpublished manuscript. ■

The Politics of Declining Inequality

by KENNETH M. ROBERTS | Cornell University | Kr99@cornell.edu

Although economic inequalities increased in much of the world during the first decade of the twenty-first century, they declined in the world's most inequitable region—Latin America. This paradox should not be dismissed as a statistical artifact of an outlier regressing to the mean, and it cannot be explained by structural or market forces alone. The trend toward declining inequalities started in a number of countries before the commodity boom provided new revenues to be distributed in the middle of the decade, and allegedly market forces like the skill premium for higher education are, in fact, highly influenced by labor market policies (for example, increases in the minimum wage). Consequently, previous research has demonstrated that public policy was decisive in lowering inequalities after 2000. Governments increased taxes and made them more progressive, intervened in labor markets to raise employment and minimum wages, and expanded public spending on human capital and social assistance programs (see Cornia 2012). If public policy mattered, then it behooves researchers to identify the political factors associated with the changing policy environment, both as causes and as effects.

Formal models of distributive politics assume that democratic competition in contexts of high inequality will produce popular majorities with preferences for redistributive policies (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006). Majority preferences, however, cannot be inferred directly from objective material interests; they must be politically constructed, and that process is highly contingent. During the 1980s and 90s, a confluence of events impeded the political construction of popular majorities around redistributive agendas. Statist development models collapsed in the debt crisis, severe inflationary and balance of payments pressures imposed market

constraints on consumption and redistribution, and labor movements entered into a steep decline. Under such conditions, even center-left and populist parties adhered to the technocratic consensus for fiscal austerity and market-based structural adjustment. Indeed, given the devastating effects of hyper-inflation on wages and mass consumption, democratic majorities often supported stabilization and adjustment measures, whatever their longer-term distributive consequences.

The defeat of hyperinflation across the region by the mid-1990s, however, ushered in a new, post-adjustment political era in which market liberalization ceased to dominate the policymaking agenda and social concerns became increasingly salient. Latinobarómetro surveys consistently found that between 75 and 85 percent of region-wide respondents considered the distribution of income in their country to be unjust, with 50 percent calling it “very unjust” (Latinobarómetro 2007: 36). Furthermore, over 80 percent of survey respondents assigned responsibility to the state for primary and higher education, health care, and social security (Latinobarómetro 2008: 38). In this post-adjustment era, then, democratic competition and, in some cases, mass social protest re-politicized the social deficits of market liberalization. In the process, they eroded the technocratic consensus for market orthodoxy and opened new political space for social policy experimentation—space that would only expand once the post-2003 commodity boom relaxed fiscal and foreign exchange constraints.

In this context, the post-adjustment era was characterized by an unprecedented political shift to the left in Latin America, with at least eleven different countries electing a left-of-center president since 1998 (see

Levitsky and Roberts 2011). Naturally, it is tempting to attribute declining inequalities to the election of governments that are, by definition, ideologically committed to reducing them. Several studies have demonstrated empirically that governments of the left have, in fact, reduced inequalities more than non-leftist governments in the region (Cornia 2012; Birdsall, Lustig, and McLeod 2011), reflecting their more aggressive and comprehensive pursuit of the policy initiatives outlined above (which inevitably require a greater willingness to intervene in markets or expand the state's social welfare roles). Declining inequalities, however, have not been the exclusive preserve of leftist governments, such as those of Argentina, Venezuela, Brazil, and Ecuador, where steep declines in Gini indices were recorded. Centrist and conservative governments in countries like Peru, Mexico, and Colombia oversaw healthy reductions as well (see Cornia 2012), suggesting that opportunities exist to craft moderate redistributive or pro-poor policies even within the constraints of macroeconomic orthodoxy. AmericasBarometer surveys, for example, found that 29 percent of Colombian respondents and 19.5 percent of Mexican respondents were recipients of monthly social assistance from government programs (Layton and Smith 2011), indicative of conservative support for conditional cash transfers (CCTs) that have low fiscal costs and few market-distorting effects.

But if governments of the left and right are both able to reduce inequalities, they do not necessarily rely on the same measures to do so, and they do not build the same types of welfare state. Targeted social assistance under conservative governments provides a measure of protection against market insecurities for those lacking the

private resources to compete in a market economy. As such, it conforms to the basic logic of liberal or “residual” welfare states that rely primarily on the market to meet social needs, with the state providing only supplemental support for the most needy or disadvantaged (Esping-Anderson 1990). Governments of the left have also created or expanded CCTs, but they have differentiated themselves from their conservative counterparts and moved beyond residual welfare states in one of two basic ways. First, they have combined targeted social assistance with reforms grounded in universalistic or social democratic principles, such as the efforts in Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina to expand coverage of public pension and health care systems (particularly by extending benefits to women and informal-sector workers). Second, several of the leftist governments have included asset redistribution, such as land reform and nationalizations, within their general package of redistributive reforms. This has been most common in countries with large natural resource-based extractive industries that can generate windfall rents for states (i.e., Venezuela, Ecuador, and Bolivia), and is also characteristic of governments led by populist figures or new leftist movements that grew out of the social backlash against neoliberal reforms in the 1990s.

What, then, are the political effects of these varied models of redistributive politics? Survey research has found that social assistance programs enhance the re-election prospects of incumbent presidents (Layton and Smith 2011). In Brazil, for example, the Bolsa Familia program is widely credited with helping Lula and the PT expand their base of support in impoverished northeast regions where the party was traditionally weak (Hunter and Power 2007). Not surprisingly, then, the broad-ranging redistributive measures

adopted by most of the new left governments have been associated with continued electoral success. To date, in the eleven countries with relatively clear-cut left-leaning presidents, incumbent presidents or their parties have been re-elected eleven out of twelve times since 2000. The only defeat, Chile in 2010, was an artifact of electoral laws that prevented Michelle Bachelet from running for re-election despite approval ratings hovering near 80 percent. Even if the “left turn” is broadened to include the more questionable cases of Hipólito Mejía in the Dominican Republic and Álvaro Colom in Guatemala, incumbent left parties have been re-elected eleven out of fourteen times, a 78.6 percent rate. By comparison, incumbent centrist and conservative parties have been re-elected only nine times out of thirty-two elections since 2000, a 30 percent success rate.

Clearly, the electoral success of leftist parties may diminish if the current highly favorable macroeconomic conditions change and austerity reignites distributive conflicts. Nevertheless, given the historical record, the recent ability of leftist governments to address social needs while maintaining relative macroeconomic and political stability is striking. And as the Chilean case suggests—where Bachelet’s conservative successor, Sebastian Piñera, has faced massive student protests to reform a privatized and highly inegalitarian educational system—social pressures to reduce inequalities are likely here to stay. Indeed, in Latin America’s neoliberal showcase, Piñera has proposed a major tax hike in order to increase educational spending and, he hopes, defuse a protest movement that may otherwise force him to dismantle the third basic pillar of Pinochet’s social model. Meanwhile, in supposedly polarized Venezuela, the opposition to Hugo Chávez has selected a presidential

candidate who is careful to identify with center-left currents and reassure voters that he will maintain the signature social programs of the Chávez regime. In recent years, leftist presidential candidates in countries like El Salvador, Mexico, and Peru tried to reassure wary investors that they would “be like Lula” rather than Chávez, but we may have reached a point where conservatives as well must promise to “be like Lula” in order to win elections.

In a manner reminiscent of early European welfare states, Latin America may thus be in the process of politically consolidating basic forms of social protection—programs that reproduce electoral support for the left, and which conservatives dare not roll back in a competitive democratic arena. Should such a new consensus emerge, it would represent a significant shift in the region’s development trajectory, and a most unexpected denouement of the fractured Washington consensus in the post-adjustment era.

Endnotes

¹ This includes Venezuela, Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Paraguay, El Salvador, and Peru under Ollanta Humala.

² Piñera’s socialist predecessors, Ricardo Lagos and Michelle Bachelet, previously adopted major reforms in the privatized health care and social security systems, respectively, moving in the direction of universal social citizenship. To date, Chile’s democratic regime has made only modest reforms to the labor code, the fourth basic pillar of the neoliberal social model bequeathed by the Pinochet military dictatorship.

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From San Francisco to Washington Looking Ahead to LASA2013

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and KENNETH M. ROBERTS | Cornell University | kr99@cornell.edu

The 2013 LASA Congress, to be held in Washington, DC marks the first time that the Congress will be held on an annual basis. The location in the U.S. capital promises to add to what we hope will be a stimulating debate on the Congress theme *Towards a New Social Contract*?

Towards a New Social Contract? During the first decade of the 21st century, income inequality declined in most Latin American countries, even as it rose in many other parts of the world. Our Congress theme aims to shed new light on this important trend, examining its social, economic, cultural, and political determinants and exploring the prospects for a new social contract in the region. Since the 1990s, various reforms have expanded educational opportunities, increased minimum wages, introduced new social assistance programs, incorporated new political actors (such as indigenous coalitions), and broadened access to health care and social security coverage. Are these trends sustainable, or are they subject to reversal once economic growth rates decline? In what ways are they related to the spread of left-leaning governments in the region, and how do governments vary in the types of social contracts and development strategies they promote? Are once-marginalized groups becoming empowered to defend new forms of social citizenship, and are more privileged groups accepting these expanded rights? Do new social contracts produce corresponding changes in social consciousness and popular culture, and if so, how are these related to emerging technologies, communication strategies, forms of cultural expression, and patterns of political mobilization? How do literature, film, television, art, and historiography adapt to new realities by transforming historical representations and giving voice to new popular subjects? Our Congress will provide the opportunity to

engage in extensive interdisciplinary discussions of this conjuncture in its historical, economic, social, political, and cultural dimensions.

The Congress theme *Towards a New Social Contract?* can only be explored successfully by an interdisciplinary approach. Interdisciplinarity is one of the central goals of LASA. This means having disciplinary fields interact with one another and not just be in close proximity. Achieving this will require a conscious effort on the part of panel organizers and participants to foster reflection among disciplines and to bring together scholars and activists from a wide range of disciplines and endeavors.

Track chairs have been selected for the 2013 Congress. **As in recent years, panel proposals will receive priority over individual proposals.** Past experience shows that favoring panel proposals results in more coherent panels and fewer no-shows.

Pre-Congress workshops have been very successful, and the 2013 Congress program will continue these workshops with themes including “Migration and Immigration,” “Data Sets and Political Institutions,” “Introduction to the Resources of the Library of Congress” (on site), and “The Future of Literature and Cultural Studies.” The two workshops on academic publishing sponsored by LARR will continue in 2013.

Congress location: Washington, DC, is home to the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution’s world-famous museums, the National Archives, and major governmental and cultural institutions. The DC Metro provides efficient travel within DC, so Congress participants will have easy access to the Smithsonian and

other sites of interest. The Congress hotel, Marriott Wardman Park, will be convenient for both participants and their families because it is located adjacent to the Adams Morgan/Woodley Park Metro stop and very close to the National Zoo. The Smithsonian, free and open to the public 364 days a year, includes the National Gallery of Art, The Hirshhorn Sculpture Museum, the American Indian Museum, African Art Museum, Air and Space Museum, the National Zoo, as well as many other museums and resources such as the Vietnam Memorial. In addition to the national museums and monuments, Washington is also home to institutions such as the Phillips Gallery, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Folger Shakespeare Library, the Kennedy Center, and a vibrant theater scene. Old-town Alexandria is accessible by Metro, and other historic landmarks such as Mr. Vernon are nearby. Washington has excellent air, train, and bus systems linking it to other national and international destinations.

The 2013 Congress *Towards a New Social Contract* can be an important experience for participants and the communities these participants serve. We look forward to your suggestions and participation and to a dynamic and meaningful Congress. Please remember that given LASA’s new annual conference schedule, the deadline for submitting paper and panel proposals for LASA 2013 in Washington is coming up very shortly—September 1, 2012. ■

LASA2013 – XXXI INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
WASHINGTON, DC / MAY 29–JUNE 1, 2013

Call for Papers

Towards a New Social Contract?

In the first decade of the 21st century, income inequality has gone down in a substantial number of Latin American countries. This is the first time that inequality has declined on such a broad scale since we have had reasonably reliable data on income distribution. Beginning in the 1990s educational reforms have expanded the percentage of the population with secondary and tertiary education. The governments of the left that came to power after 2000 implemented a number of other reforms to improve life chances for the underprivileged, such as increases in the minimum wage, social assistance programs, and health care coverage. Are these trends likely to continue, or are they conjunctural and easily subject to reversal once economic growth rates decline? Are underprivileged groups becoming empowered to defend these changes as improvements in social rights? Are more privileged groups accepting these changes as necessary for further development? Are governments pursuing economic strategies aimed at upgrading the productive potential of their societies? Can we see corresponding changes in social consciousness and popular culture? How have technological changes and increased access to technology, e.g. the internet and digital media, challenged established media hierarchies? Are new circuits and pathways for cultural expression emerging from the political mobilization of once-marginalized groups? How do literature, the arts, and historiography adapt to new realities by transforming historical representations? Our Congress will provide the opportunity to engage in extensive interdisciplinary discussions of this conjuncture in its historical, economic, social, political, and cultural dimensions.

Evelyne Huber
University of North Carolina
LASA PRESIDENT

Kenneth M. Roberts
Cornell University
PROGRAM CO-CHAIR

Gwen Kirkpatrick
Georgetown University
PROGRAM CO-CHAIR

THE DEADLINE TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS IS SEPTEMBER 1, 2012 *see next page for instructions.*

You are invited to submit a paper or panel proposal addressing either the Congress theme or any topics related to the program tracks. LASA also invites requests for travel grants from proposers residing in Latin America or the Caribbean as well as from students. Visit the LASA website for eligibility criteria. All proposals for papers, panels, and travel grants must be submitted electronically to the LASA Secretariat by **September 1, 2012**.

The deadline to submit proposals is September 1, 2012.

Proposal forms and instructions will be available on the LASA website: <http://lasa.international.pitt.edu>. No submissions by regular mail will be accepted. The Secretariat will send confirmation of the receipt of the proposal via e-mail.

All participants will be required to pre-register for the Congress.

PROGRAM TRACKS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Select the most appropriate track for your proposal from the following list and enter it in the designated place on the form. Names of Program Committee members are provided for information only. Direct your correspondence to the LASA Secretariat ONLY.

Afro-Latin/Indigenous Peoples

Joanne Rappaort, Georgetown University

Agrarian and Rural Life

Wendy Wolford, Cornell University
Leonilde Servolo de Medeiros, Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Biodiversity, Natural Resources and Environment

Mary Finley-Brook, University of Richmond

Children, Youth and Cultures

Gonzalo Saraví, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social

Cities, Planning and Social Services

Ben Goldfrank, Seton Hall University
Egon Montecinos, Universidad de Los Lagos

Citizenship, Rights and Justice

Enrique Peruzzotti, Universidad Torcuato di Tella
Merike Blofield, University of Miami

Civil Society and Social Movements

Aldo Panfichi, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú

Culture, Power and Political Subjectivities

Mirta Antonelli, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba
Ana Wortman, Universidad de Buenos Aires

Defense, Violence and (In)security

Anthony Pereira, King's College London
Leigh Payne, University of Oxford

Democratization

Juan Pablo Luna, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

Economics and Development

Patrice Franko, Colby College
Augusto de la Torre, World Bank

Education, Pedagogy and Educational Policies

Elías García Rosas, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México

Film Studies

Ana Serra, American University

Gender Studies

María Isabel Belausteguigoitia Rius, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Health, Medicine and Body Politics

Marcos Cueto, Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia

History and Historiographies/Historical Processes

Elías Palti, Universidad de Buenos Aires

Human Rights and Memories

Katherine Hite, Vassar College

International Relations

Maxwell Cameron, University of British Columbia
William Stanley, University of New Mexico

Labor Studies and Class Relations

Joel Stillerman, Grand Valley State University

Latino(as) in the United States and Canada

Ben Sifuentes, Rutgers University

Law, Jurisprudence and Society

Catalina Smulovitz, Universidad Torcuato di Tella

Literary Studies: Colonial and 19th Century

Santa Arias, University of Kansas
Mariselle Meléndez, University of Illinois

Literary Studies: Contemporary

Rubí Carreño, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
Paula Miranda, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

Literature and Culture: Interdisciplinary Approaches

Carmen Millán, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana
Eyda Merediz, University of Maryland

Mass Media and Popular Culture

Silvia Ares de Kurlat, Independent Scholar

Migration and Latin American Diasporas

María Amelia Viteri, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, Ecuador

Performance, Art and Architecture: Critical and Historical Perspectives

Lillian Manzor, University of Miami

Political Institutions and Processes

Manuel Alcántara, Universidad de Salamanca
Jorge Lanzaro, Universidad de la República

Politics and Public Policy

Ken Shadlen, London School of Economics and Political Science
Andrew Schrank, University of New Mexico

Religion and Spirituality

Matt Samson, Davidson College

Sexualities and LGBT Studies

Guillermo de los Reyes, University of Houston

States, Markets and Political Economy

Marcus Kurtz, Ohio State University
Sarah Brooks, Ohio State University

Transnationalism and Globalization

Margaret Keck, Johns Hopkins University

Nominations Invited

Nominations Invited for 2013 Slate

Deadline: *September 3, 2012*

LASA members are invited to suggest nominees for Vice President and three members of the Executive Council, for terms beginning June 1, 2013. Criteria for nomination include professional credentials and previous service to LASA. Each candidate must have been a member of the Association in good standing for at least one year prior to nomination. Biographic data and the rationale for nomination must be sent by **September 3, 2012**, to: LASA Executive Director Milagros Pereyra-Rojas <milagros@pitt.edu>.

The winning candidate for Vice President will serve in that capacity from June 1, 2013 until May 31, 2014, as President from June 1, 2014 to May 31, 2015, and as Past President for an additional year. Executive Council members will serve a two-year term from June 1, 2013, to May 31, 2015.

Members of the Nominations Committee are: Robert Kaufman, Rutgers University, Chair; Deborah L. Jakubs, Duke University; Augusto Varas; Susan Eckstein, Boston University; Cynthia Steele, University of Washington, and Maxine D. Molyneux, University of London, who will serve as the liaison with the LASA Executive Council.

Call for Silvert Award Nominations

Deadline: *August 20, 2012*

The Kalman Silvert Award Committee invites nominations of candidates for the year 2013 award. The Silvert Award recognizes senior members of the profession who have made distinguished lifetime contributions to the study of Latin America. The Award is given at each LASA International Congress. Past recipients of the Award were: John J. Johnson (1983); Federico Gil (1985); Albert O. Hirschman (1986); Charles Wagley (1988); Lewis Hanke (1989); Victor L. Urquidi (1991); George Kubler (1992); Osvaldo Sunkel (1994); Richard Fagen (1995); Alain Touraine (1997); Richard Adams (1998); Jean Franco (2000); Thomas Skidmore (2001); Guillermo O'Donnell (2003); June Nash (2004); Miguel León-Portilla (2006); Helen Safa (2007); Alfred Stepan (2009); Edelberto Torres-Rivas (2010); and Julio Cotler (2012).

The selection committee consists of: Maria Hermínia Tavares de Almeida (chair), LASA immediate past president; John Coatsworth and Eric Hershberg, past presidents; Philip Oxhorn, editor of the *Latin American Research Review* and Julio Cotler, 2012 Kalman Silvert awardee. Nominations should be sent to LASA Executive Director Milagros Pereyra-Rojas <milagros@pitt.edu> by **August 20, 2012**. *Please include biographic information and a rationale for each nomination.*

Call for Bryce Wood Book Award Nominations

Deadline: *August 20, 2012*

At each International Congress, the Latin American Studies Association presents the Bryce Wood Book Award to the outstanding book on Latin America in the social sciences and humanities published in English. Eligible books for the 2013 LASA International Congress will be those published between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012. Although no book may compete more than once, translations may be considered. Anthologies of selections by several authors or re-editions of works published previously normally are not in contention for the award. Books will be judged on the quality of the research, analysis, and writing, and the significance of their contribution to Latin American studies. Books may be nominated by authors, LASA members, or publishers. Persons who nominate books are responsible for confirming the publication date and for forwarding one copy directly to each member of the Award Committee, at the expense of the authors or publishers.

All books nominated must reach *each member* of the Award Committee by **August 20, 2012**. By March 1, 2013, the committee will select a winning book. It may also name an honorable mention. The award will be announced at the LASA2013 Welcoming Reception, and the awardee will be publicly honored. LASA membership is not a requirement to receive the award.

Members of the 2013 committee are:

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Pittsburgh, PA 15260
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Call for Premio Iberoamericano Book
Award Nominations

Deadline: *August 20, 2012*

The *Premio Iberoamericano* is presented at each of LASA's International Congresses for the outstanding book on Latin America in the social sciences and humanities published in Spanish or Portuguese in any country. Eligible books for the 2013 award must have been published between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012. No book may compete more than once. Normally not in contention for the award are anthologies of selections by several authors or reprints or re-editions of works published previously. Books will be judged on the quality of the research, analysis, and writing, and the significance of their contribution to Latin American studies. Books may be nominated by authors, LASA members, or publishers. Individuals who nominate books are responsible for confirming the publication date and for forwarding one copy directly to *each member* of the award committee, at the expense of those submitting the books.

All books must reach each member of the committee by **August 20, 2012**. LASA membership is not a requirement for receiving the award. The award will be announced at the 2013 Welcoming Reception, and the awardee will be publicly honored.

Members of the 2013 committee are:

Elizabeth Jelin, Chair
Guatemala 4342
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ARGENTINA

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Latin American Studies Association
Attn: Premio Iberoamericano Book Award
Nominations
University of Pittsburgh
315 South Bellefield Avenue
416 Bellefield Hall
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
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Call for LASA Media Award Nominations

Deadline: *August 20, 2012*

The Latin American Studies Association is pleased to announce its competition for the year 2013 LASA Media Awards for outstanding media coverage of Latin America. These awards are made at every LASA Congress to recognize long-term journalistic contributions to analysis and public debate about Latin America in the United States and in Latin America, as well as breakthrough journalism. Nominations are invited from LASA members and from journalists. Journalists from both the print and electronic media are eligible. The Committee will carefully review each nominee's work and select an award recipient. The award will be announced at the LASA2013 Welcoming Reception, and the awardee will be publicly honored. LASA may invite the awardee to submit materials for possible publication in the *LASA Forum*. Recent recipients of the awards include: José Vales (2012), *El Universal de Mexico*; Carlos Dada, *El Faro* (2010); Mario Osava, *América Latina Inter Press Service* (2009); Hollman Morris, *Colombia* (2007); María Ester Gilio (2006); Julio Scherer, *journalist, Mexico* (2004); Eduardo Anguita, *freelance journalist, Buenos Aires* (2003); Guillermo González Uribe of *Número*, Bogotá (2001); Patricia Verdugo Aguirre of *Conama*, Chile and *Diario 16*, Spain (2000); Gustavo Gorriti of *Caretas*, Lima, Peru (1998).

To make a nomination, please send one copy of the journalist's portfolio of recent relevant work to LASA Executive Director Milagros Pereyra-Rojas <milagros@pitt.edu> by **August 20, 2012**.

Members of the Media Award committee are William LeoGrande, American University, Chair; Alma Guillermoprieto; and Karen DeYoung.

LASA/Oxfam America Martin Diskin Memorial Lectureship

Deadline: *August 20, 2012*

The Martin Diskin Memorial Lectureship is offered at each LASA International Congress to an outstanding individual who combines Professor Diskin's commitment to both activism and scholarship.

This distinguished lectureship is made possible largely by a generous contribution from Oxfam America, an organization committed to grassroots work and one with which Martin Diskin was closely associated. Ricardo Falla, S.J., was the 1998 Diskin Lecturer. Professor Gonzalo Sánchez Gómez of the Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, was the Lecturer in 2000. At LASA2001, Professor Elizabeth Lira Kornfeld, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Santiago, Chile, delivered the Memorial Lecture. In 2003, the Lectureship was shared by Rodolfo Stavenhagen, El Colegio de México, and Rosalva Aída Hernández Castillo, CIESAS, Mexico City. Professor Jonathan Fox, University of California/Santa Cruz was the 2004 Lecturer. Professor William Leogrande, American University, held the Lectureship in 2006; Dr. Orlando Fals Borda delivered the Lecture in 2007; Professor Terry Karl, Stanford University, was selected in 2009; Dr. Carlos Ivan Degregori, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, in 2010; and Dr. Claudia Paz y Paz, Instituto de Estudios Comparados y Ciencias Penales, delivered the 2012 Martin Diskin Memorial Lecture.

Nominations, including self-nominations, are welcome. A nomination should include a statement justifying the nomination, the complete mailing address of the nominee, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address. To nominate a candidate, send these materials no later than **August 20, 2012**, to LASA Executive Director Milagros Pereyra-Rojas <milagros@pitt.edu>.

Members of the 2013 Martin Diskin Memorial Lectureship Committee are: Aldo I. Panfichi Huaman, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Chair; Peter H. Smith, University of California/San Diego; and Richard O. Snyder, Brown University.

LASA/Oxfam America Martin Diskin Dissertation Award

Deadline: *August 20, 2012*

The Martin Diskin Dissertation Award is made possible through the generosity of Oxfam America, LASA, and LASA members. This award is offered at each LASA International Congress to an outstanding junior scholar who combines Professor Diskin's commitment to the creative combination of activism and scholarship. The award will be presented to an advanced doctoral student or recent Ph.D. All advanced Ph.D. candidates must demonstrate that they will complete their dissertation prior to the LASA International Congress. LASA limits recent Ph.D. recipients to those individuals who received their degrees after the LASA Congress prior to the one at which the award is to be received. LASA welcomes dissertations written in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. The Award Committee will employ three criteria in its evaluations: 1) Overall scholarly credentials, based upon the candidate's curriculum vitae; 2) The quality of the dissertation writing, research, and analysis as determined by the dissertation outline and sample chapter submitted; 3) The primary advisor's letter of recommendation. The definition of activist scholarship shall remain broad and pluralist, to be discussed and interpreted by each selection committee.

Applicants should submit a current curriculum vitae; a dissertation abstract of 250 words; the dissertation outline or table of contents; one sample chapter, which exemplifies the author's approach to activist scholarship; and a letter of recommendation from the candidate's primary advisor which focuses explicitly on the candidate's qualifications for the Martin Diskin Dissertation Award.

All application materials must be submitted electronically to <milagros@pitt.edu> and received by **August 20, 2012**. The Martin Diskin Dissertation Award recipient will receive a \$1,000 stipend. LASA encourages wide distribution of this call for nominations to colleagues and students.

The 2013 selection committee consists of Aldo I. Panfichi Huaman, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Chair; Peter H. Smith, University of California/San Diego; and Richard O. Snyder, Brown University.

Charles A. Hale Fellowship for Mexican History

Deadline: *August 20, 2012*

This fellowship will reward excellence in historical research on Mexico at the dissertation level. It will be awarded at each LASA International Congress to a Mexican graduate student in the final phase of his or her doctoral research in Mexican history, broadly defined. Selection will be based on scholarly merit, and on the candidate's potential contribution to the advancement of humanist understanding between Mexico and its global neighbors.

Members of the 2013 selection committee are: Richard Warren, St. Joseph's University, Chair; Laura Gotkowitz, University of Pittsburgh; Eric J. Van Young, University of California/San Diego; and Javier Garcíadiego, El Colegio de México.

A qualified applicant must hold Mexican citizenship and be in the final phase of her/his doctoral program, i.e. finished with coursework and exams, but not yet granted the Ph.D. Applications must be accompanied by 1) verification by the dissertation committee chair of the student's good standing in the doctoral program; 2) one-page (single space) statement that summarizes the dissertation project, in either English or Spanish; 3) brief (two pages maximum) curriculum vitae.

To nominate a candidate, send these materials no later than **August 20, 2012**, to Milagros Pereyra-Rojas, LASA Executive Director <milagros@pitt.edu>.

Call for Luciano Tomassini Latin American International Relations Book Award Nominations

Deadline: *August 20, 2012*

The Luciano Tomassini Latin American International Relations Book Award is presented at each LASA International Congress to the author(s) of an outstanding book on Latin American foreign policies and international relations published in English, Spanish or Portuguese in any country. Eligible books for the 2013 award must have been published between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012. Anthologies of selections by several authors are not eligible. Books will be judged on the originality of the research, the quality of the analysis and writing and the significance of their contribution to the study of Latin America and the Caribbean. Books may be nominated by authors, LASA members, or publishers. A nomination should include a statement justifying the nomination; four copies of the nominated book (one for each member of the award committee); complete mailing address of the nominee, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address. Persons who nominate books are responsible for confirming the publication date and for forwarding one copy directly to each member of the Award Committee, at the expense of the authors or publishers.

All books nominated must reach *each member* of the Award Committee by **August 20, 2012**. By March 1, 2013, the committee will select a winning book. It may also name an honorable mention. The award will be announced at the LASA2013 Welcoming Reception, and the awardee will be publicly honored. LASA membership is not a requirement to receive the award.

Final Report on the 30th International Congress in San Francisco

by GABRIELA NOUZEILLES, Program Co-Chair | Princeton University | gnouzeil@princeton.edu
and TIMOTHY POWER, Program Co-Chair | University of Oxford | timothy.power@lac.ox.ac.uk

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From May 23-26, 2012, some 4,800 LASA members and guests converged on the Marriott Marquis Hotel, San Francisco, for the occasion of the 30th International Congress of our Association. This was the first Congress in the continental United States since 2004 and the first West Coast LASA meeting since Los Angeles in 1992. Over the course of four memorable days, LASA members were treated to over 900 panels, roundtables, and special sessions. Amazingly, these were all held in a single, comfortable, and user-friendly meeting space: the spacious convention center of the Marriott, located right in the heart of the historic city center. The superb quality of these debates kept us mostly glued to our seats, but those who ventured outside were treated to a week of spectacular weather amidst the cultural marvels and culinary delights of the Bay Area.

We have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from those colleagues who were able to join us in San Francisco. But needless to say, any conference of this size is not without its problems. Demand for participation in the 30th LASA far outstripped the available places on the program. This was due partly to limitations of our meeting space, partly to our decision to limit the Congress program to three working days (Thursday, Friday, and Saturday), and partly to the attractiveness of San Francisco as a conference site. Thus, track chairs were unfortunately unable to accommodate some very worthwhile panels and papers. We note that an additional factor here may be strong pent-up demand due to the 18-month meeting cycle that we have observed for decades; as LASA now enters a three-year experiment with annual conferences (a 12-month cycle), we may see supply and demand come more into balance, making the Congress size more manageable. Also, while we were

encouraged that 75 Cuban scholars were able to join us in San Francisco, we were puzzled and disappointed by the denial of visas to ten of their compatriots, several of whom had participated previously in LASA conferences held in the United States. Other than these two issues, the San Francisco conference organization proceeded very smoothly throughout.

LASA learns with every International Congress, and San Francisco was no exception. There are several lessons to be taken away. First is that the massive growth in LASA's membership has led inexorably to rising rejection rates at the recent Congresses, and we will be curious as to whether the experiment with annual conferences will attenuate this problem. A second lesson is that full panel proposals are much more likely to prosper than are individual paper proposals: close to half of all LASA proposals are now fully assembled panels. We encourage members to work together to form full panels in advance, and time is of the essence given the newly shortened calendar for submission (the deadline for Washington 2013 is looming on September 1, 2012). A third lesson is that the thematic Pre-Congress Workshops held on Wednesday afternoon—an innovation of our predecessors for Toronto 2010, Javier Corrales and Nina Gerassi-Navarro—have proven resoundingly popular and are now a new LASA tradition. A fourth lesson pertains to the role of technology. LASA members absolutely raved about the “LASA app,” the real-time conference software that runs on tablets and smartphones. We were delighted with the response to this innovation, and the utility of the App is so great that the days of the hard-cover program book are probably numbered.

Having completed our work for San Francisco 2012, we would like to thank the

LASA Business Meeting

May 25, 2012; 6:30 – 8:15 pm; San Francisco Marriott Marquis

68 Track Co-Chairs (responsible for 34 thematic tracks) who selflessly donated their time and energy to put together a successful program. We would also like to thank outgoing LASA President Maria Hermínia Tavares de Almeida, the members of the LASA Executive Council, and all of the amazing staff of the LASA Secretariat at the University of Pittsburgh, especially Milagros Pereyra-Rojas and Sandy Klinzing. Their vast experience and insight into the conference planning process were indispensable to our work. ■

President's Report

LASA President Maria Hermínia Tavares de Almeida greeted those present and indicated that the Congress was going well. Unfortunately, LASA was not able to benefit from the participation of several scholars from Latin America who were denied visas to enter the United States.

Report of the Secretariat

Executive Director Milagros Pereyra-Rojas reported that in 2011 LASA membership increased 20 percent over the previous year, to over 6600 individual and institutional members. Membership numbers for 2012 currently are lagging slightly behind those for 2011, but it is expected that individuals who either renew at the Congress or become new members here will add to this number.

LASA currently has 91 Life Members, including 79 paid Life Memberships. Complimentary Life Memberships for Kalman Silvert Awardees have been funded by grants from the AVINA Foundation for the past four years.

For LASA2012 the Association was able to secure \$6500 in sponsorships, including \$2,500 for the *Gran Baile*.

The Secretariat is already working hard on preparations for LASA2013 in Washington DC, which will be the first of the Congresses to be held annually. The Call for Papers is in the LASA2012 Program Book.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Cristina Eguizabal reported that LASA has an Endowment overseen by an

Investment Committee consisting of the LASA president, the LASA executive director, the LASA treasurer and four pro bono investment experts. The Endowment is professionally managed by Morgan Stanley Smith Barney. The Endowment's performance has been more robust in previous years than of late. In 2011 the Endowment stood at \$4.1 million and had a return of 6.79 percent; currently it is returning 6.9 percent and stands at \$4.38 million. Thirty percent is invested in Social Responsibility Investment funds (SRI) and 70 percent in traditional instruments such as equities, fixed income, etc.

Report of the XXX Congress Program Committee

Program Co-chairs Gabriella Nouzeilles and Timothy Power reported that this Congress is the second to host pre-conference workshops and that they seem to be going well. The Co-chairs had asked for suggestions for themes related to the main topic of the Congress. They also had traveled to Pittsburgh to physically schedule the sessions in the available rooms to try to avoid problems such as scheduling popular speakers in small rooms. This had seemed to work well. The participants appear to be happy with the hotel as well as its location; meeting room sizes seem ample.

The membership response to the LASA2012 Call for Papers was excellent and the number of proposals submitted had increased 70 percent over the Toronto Congress. The Co-chairs had not been able to secure a keynote speaker although they had attempted to obtain a commitment first from former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet and then from Tabaré Vázquez, former president of Uruguay.

The smart phone application for the Congress program, an innovation of the LASA Executive Director, proved to be excellent. It contains all the information in the program book but is much easier to use, and can be updated in real time. This Congress “app” may end up replacing the printed program book at future Congresses.

An additional good idea was to pair the Welcoming Reception with the Award Ceremony to bring more attention to the award recipients. The close proximity of the site for the social welcome following the “formal” welcome was also very much appreciated.

It was suggested by a member of the audience that a mobile microphone be made available in some of the larger meeting rooms at the hotel.

Vice President’s Report

Evelyne Huber reported on two duties of LASA vice presidents.. One is to chair the Commission on Academic Freedom. The Commission had inherited a complaint concerning the Arizona law on bilingual education and what should/should not be taught. The members of the Commission decided that this was more a matter of educational policy and suggested to the proponents that they instead submit a resolution for consideration. They had chosen not to do so.

A second responsibility of the vice president is to chair the Sub-Committee on Resolutions. The LASA By-laws indicate that proposed resolutions must be received at least 30 days prior to a given Congress and be submitted by at least 30 current members to be valid. Huber noted that three had been received. The Sub-Committee accepted two (one on Obama

Policy and the other on Honduras) for recommendation to the Executive Council (EC) with only minor revisions and made changes to a third resolution regarding the “Cuban Five” detained in the United States. The Sub-Committee proposed a shortened text for that third resolution, and the EC recommended that it go forward with the changes if the proponents accepted them. Huber was able to speak with a spokesperson for the proponents and the changes were accepted. All three resolutions will be presented to the membership for voting. Huber reminded the members at the meeting that according to the By-laws, twenty percent of the membership must vote for a resolution and the majority of those voting must be in favor of a resolution for it to pass.

A question was asked regarding the timeline for the vote on resolutions. Huber responded that LASA must (e)mail the texts of the resolutions and requests for votes no more than 15 days after the Congresses and votes must be received within 60 days of the (e)mailing.

There was a question from the floor about a proposed resolution submitted just today about the denial of visas to Cubans who had been accepted as participants in LASA2012. Huber responded that she and President Tavares de Almeida had written a letter to Secretary Clinton that essentially covers the sentiment expressed in the resolution. The letter will be sent as soon as possible. Several members present in the meeting encouraged faxing of the letter for quick receipt and that it be placed on the LASA website.

In the discussion that ensued, some audience members were of the opinion that Congresses should be held only outside the United States until such time that LASA can be sure that visas for non-U.S.

participants will not be denied. As much pressure as possible should be put on the administration and the State Department to guarantee that denials do not occur, they said. And, if Congresses continued to be held here, it would indicate that LASA accepts visa denials as a matter of course. President Tavares de Almeida responded that there had actually been more visas denied for Toronto than for here in the United States. Because of the size of the Congresses, there are few countries in which LASA is able to host the meeting. It is impossible to assure members that Congresses will be held only in countries for which visas will not be denied. In addition, to be able to adequately evaluate the move to an annual Congress the EC had decided to hold at least three consecutive Congresses in the United States, LASA2013 through LASA2015. At the end of this time the EC will evaluate the effect of the change and decide if the change should be made permanent, she noted.

From the floor it was suggested that there be a contingency plan for Chicago in case visas are denied. Perhaps LASA could move the Congress to Mexico or Canada. Speakers on the dais noted that hotels will not sign contracts allowing clients to break them at any point because of factors internal to the client organizations. And, when contracts are canceled past certain dates, as occurred for LASA2007 when the Association pulled out of Boston, huge penalties apply.

As to an earlier suggestion from the floor that the situation of denial of visas for Cubans is different from that of other Latin American and Caribbean scholars, both Tavares de Almeida and Huber responded that the result is the same: Congress participants are denied the opportunity to hear from, and to interact with, those scholars whose entries are denied.

LASA2012 Awards and Recipients

New Business

Vice President Huber asked those present to remind their colleagues that the deadline for submissions for LASA2013 would be September 1, 2012. As has been done for the last two Congresses, preference will be given to full panel submissions over single paper submissions.

Tavares de Almeida thanked everyone for their recommendations and their participation, and closed the meeting at 8:15 pm. ■

Kalman Silvert Award

Los miembros del Comité fueron Chair John Coatsworth (Columbia University), Eric Herschberg (American University), Charles R. Hale (University of Texas/Austin), Philip Oxhorn (McGill University y Editor del *Latin American Research Review*), y Edelberto Torres Rivas, recipiente del Premio Kalman Silvert 2010.

El Premio Kalman Silvert 2012 fue otorgado a Julio Cotler, Investigador Principal del Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, por la contribución de sus investigaciones al conocimiento de las ciencias sociales de América Latina.

En las palabras de su colega Julio Carrión, “Julio Cotler pertenece a la generación de los 50, cuyos integrantes brillan con luz propia en las diversas disciplinas intelectuales que cultivan... Su generación forma parte de los contingentes de la clase media urbana que pudo acceder a la Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (UNMSM) gracias a la transformación de la universidad oligárquica en una institución relativamente democrática dentro de un país sometido, sin embargo, a la dominación oligárquica y a la dictadura de Odría... Estudió y se graduó como antropólogo en la UNMSM. Pero la profesión que ha ejercido con mayor dedicación y con brillantes resultados es la de sociólogo graduado en la Universidad de Burdeos bajo la dirección del destacado peruanista Francois Bourricaud. Y ha sido principalmente la sociología política la disciplina que mejor ha cultivado y con la que ha producido las contribuciones más importantes en el campo de las ciencias sociales. Desde esta perspectiva ha iluminado diversos temas y problemas con los resultados de sus investigaciones: las élites, los partidos políticos, los

movimientos sociales, la educación, la cultura política, el Estado, las transiciones democráticas, las políticas públicas.

“Julio Cotler no se ha encapsulado en una sola teoría, en sola una doctrina, en una sola perspectiva metodológica. Su inteligencia estuvo siempre abierta a las diversas explicaciones teóricas y a los distintos enfoques metodológicos. Los criterios para optar por determinadas opciones teóricas y metodológicas parecen haber sido la mayor capacidad para explicar determinados fenómenos y procesos y la expectativa de obtener resultados más consistentes en las investigaciones. En sus obras pueden encontrarse influencias marxistas, weberianas y estructural-funcionalistas. Una perspectiva que influyó sobre todos los científicos sociales de América Latina de los 60 y los 70, entre ellos Julio Cotler, fue la de la dependencia en la forma más elaborada que relacionaba en forma compleja los actores, las estructuras y los procesos internos con los externos. Pero más allá de las diferentes perspectivas teóricas y metodológicas, Julio Cotler ha rechazado siempre todo tipo de reduccionismo sea éste economicista, culturalista, o psicologista para buscar las articulaciones complejas y las causaciones circulares que presentan frecuentemente los fenómenos sociales y políticos investigados...

“En ‘La Mecánica de la dominación interna y del cambio social en el Perú’ encontramos algunas claves interpretativas del Perú tradicional en un contexto de cambios y de movilización social. El colonialismo interno más que el dualismo estructural explica la relación entre la costa y la sierra; la estratificación de castas más que la estratificación de clases caracteriza la jerarquización social de la sociedad tradicional; el triángulo sin base, que

articula en forma asimétrica el vértice dominante de los hacendados con los disgregados colonos que disputan los favores de éstos, construyen la forma de dominación básica del gamonalismo. La privatización del poder político es la forma de relación del gamonalismo con el Estado; la incorporación segmentaria es la forma que utiliza la dominación oligárquica para neutralizar a los sectores sociales movilizandos; la ruralización urbana y la urbanización rural y la chofificación constituyen los principales cambios culturales de la sociedad tradicional.

“Julio Cotler no es sólo un académico puro e incontaminado. Como ciudadano e intelectual ha participado y participa en las luchas por la construcción y consolidación de la democracia en el Perú, en la juventud contra la dominación oligárquica y la dictadura de Odría desde las posiciones de la izquierda. Luchó a fines de la década de los 60 y comienzos de los 70 contra la dictadura reformista y populista del general Velasco Alvarado a la que combatió desde las trincheras de la *Revista Sociedad y Política* y del socialismo democrático, lo que le valió la deportación a México. Luchó en los 80 contra el terrorismo y contra la violación de los derechos humanos y en los 90 contra el gobierno autoritario de Alberto Fujimori desde las trincheras del Foro Democrático”.

Bryce Wood Book Award

The members of the Committee were Chair John French (Duke University), Joanne Rappaport (Georgetown University), Mauricio Font (Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies), Santa Arias (University of Kansas), José Antonio Cheibub (University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign), Fiona Macaulay (University of Bradford), Claudio Fuentes (Universidad

Diego Portales) and Joseph Tulchin (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.) The 2012 recipient of the Bryce Wood Book Award is Jody Pavilack for *Mining for the Nation: The Politics of Chile's Coal Communities from the Popular Front to the Cold War*.

This impressively researched book offers an original reinterpretation of the Popular Front in Chile (1938-1947) and the onset of the Cold War in Latin America. Pavilack brings alive the grass roots activism in the coal communities at a micro-historical level and advances a sophisticated macro analysis of the politics of the era. While charting the Communist Party's transition from soldiers of revolution to citizen workers committed to a cross-class project of national development, she shows how these Center-Left governments were marked by a complex weave of collaboration and conflict within an international context of war, democratization, and Cold War repression. The book also revises the Chilean “exceptionalism” thesis—which depicts the country as an “island” of democratic politics—by connecting this episode of coalition politics to the Popular Unity, the 1973 coup, and the Concertación. Deepening our understanding of stability and coalition politics in the Andes, this engaging book will be of broad interest to students of social movements and politics in all disciplines.

A first *honorable mention* went to Kathryn Burns for *Into the Archive: Writing and Power in Colonial Peru*. This book's fine-grained and elegantly written portrayal of notarial practices in colonial Cuzco provides readers with a sense of the life of an important and defining swath of the “lettered city,” teaching us something new about institutions, interests, and knowledge. In lively prose, Burns

problematizes the archive in unexpected ways by highlighting the role of writing in forging power through the creation and manipulation of notarial “truth.” Steeping us in the life stories of notaries and their assistants, she teaches us how they learned and plied their trade while alerting us to the hierarchies of power operating below the radar of colonial officials (or with their benign consent). Rather than taking such materials at face value, she challenges us to grasp how political exigencies, the problem of voice in the legal domain, and the material and tangible realities of writing figure in the making of the notarial documents upon which so much of our knowledge depends. In summary, this is a rigorously researched, intellectually sophisticated, and highly creative book that will travel well across disciplines.

A second *honorable mention* went to James Mahoney for *Colonialism and Development: Spanish America in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press). This ambitious and well-crafted book brings history and social science together to explore the long term development impact of different colonial experiences in Spanish America. Tackling big questions across centuries, Mahoney adopts a theoretically-informed comparative approach that links colonial legacies to development outcomes in fifteen contemporary Spanish American countries, with a brief comparison to Portuguese and British colonial experiences. Trajectories varied, it is argued, due to the differing degrees to which Spanish institutional arrangements were implanted and the timing of the shift of the metropolitan political economy from mercantilist under the Habsburgs to liberal under the Bourbons. Drawing widely on the historical literature, he sharpens debates about theory and history while advancing a new understanding of how the trajectory of

national development in the modern period derived from the transformations of territories and societies by colonialism over the longue durée. Thoughtfully interdisciplinary, this stimulating account will serve as an essential reference for future research across disciplines.

Premio Iberoamericano

The members of the *Premio Iberoamericano* Committee were Chair Evelina Dagnino (Universidade de Campinas, Brazil), Marianne Schmink (Free University of Berlin) and Marta Núñez (Universidad de la Habana).

The 2011 recipient is Alejandro Grimson for *Los Límites de la Cultura. Crítica de las teorías de la identidad*. Siglo XXI, 2010. This ambitious conceptual book addresses the relationship between culture, identity, and politics, articulating an important critique of well-established notions with new ways of thinking about the complexities of that relationship. It presents a careful, clear, well-grounded and well-written discussion and proposes new ideas and concepts, such as “cultural configurations,” that stand to make important contributions to the literature. In a fair-handed and positive critique of post-modernism, calling for moving beyond questions of construction and deconstruction towards better understanding of such questions as: why some narratives and ideas thrive while others wither; how meanings change in specific cultural settings; how ideas may emerge spontaneously rather than imposed from above; and how social constructions, once established, affect people’s actions and perceptions in concrete ways. This book will appeal to a broad range of scholars in anthropology, sociology, history, political science and literature.

The author is Doctor en Antropología (Universidade de Brasília), Investigador del CONICET, Profesor y Decano del Instituto de Altos Estudios Sociales (Universidad de San Martín), and Presidente del Consejo de Decanos de Ciencias Sociales (Argentina). He has researched and published books about Bolivians in Argentina and on the borders of the Southern Cone, and on the relationships between culture and politics in Latin America.

Media Award

Los miembros del comité del Premio Media 2012 fueron Chair Peter Hakim (Inter-American Dialogue), Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro), and Graciela Mochkofsky (Revista Digital *El Puerco Espín*). En las palabras de Graciela Mochkofsky: “Me parece evidente que el candidato más calificado para recibir el premio es José Vales, corresponsal para el Cono Sur de *El Universal de México*, quien tiene una larga y reconocida trayectoria como periodista.

“Además de que ha recibido algunos de los más prestigiosos premios que se otorgan al periodismo latinoamericano—el María Moors Cabot de Columbia University y el español Ortega y Gasset— Vales es un periodista muy respetado por sus colegas en todo el continente.

“En los artículos que envía como ejemplos y en muchos otros que he leído a lo largo de los años, se ve el trabajo serio y paciente del corresponsal latinoamericano, siempre al tanto de lo que ocurre en los países—en sus vidas política, cultural, social, económica—y se palpita el pulso de la actualidad latinoamericana. Quedan pocos especímenes como Vales en esta época de crisis del periodismo: el hombre culto, informado, viajado, que conoce de primera

mano de lo que escribe, y es un apasionado de las noticias.

“Vales ha entrevistado a la mayor parte de los personajes relevantes de la vida política del continente en las últimas dos décadas: presidentes, líderes de la oposición, intelectuales. Y lo ha hecho sin tomar partido, con la neutralidad y la amplitud de mente de un profesional en la mejor tradición del periodismo de hechos y con el encanto y la gracia del cronista viajero.

“Su talento para explicar con claridad y sin prejuicios la realidad de los países de América Latina a públicos de otros países, especialmente al mexicano, para él que escribe desde hace tantos años, es otro gran mérito de su trabajo.

“Vales ha presenciado como testigo directo, desde el lugar de los hechos, los principales acontecimientos de la vida política del continente: elecciones presidenciales, crisis políticas y económicas, tragedias, catástrofes naturales, crisis humanitarias.... Su trabajo tiene el gran valor a futuro, como todo buen trabajo periodístico sobre un tema importante, de ser el primer borrador de la historia, y como tal podrá ser consultado en el futuro.

“Por último, creo que Vales representa lo mejor del periodismo de hechos en que hace su trabajo con dedicación y bajo perfil, sin buscar un protagonismo personal sino con la mirada puesta siempre en su audiencia, sus lectores. Está perfectamente a la altura de los prestigiosos ganadores de los anteriores premios de LASA.”

LASA/Oxfam America Martin Diskin Memorial Lectureship and the Oxfam America/LASA Martin Diskin Dissertation Award

The members of the committee were Chair Jeremy Adelman (Princeton University), Cynthia Arnson (Woodrow Wilson Center), Teresa Valdés (CEDEM), Antônio Sérgio Guimarães (Universidade de São Paulo), and Jonathan Fox (Oxfam America and University of California, Santa Cruz).

The Committee reviewed the materials submitted for the LASA/Oxfam America Martin Diskin Memorial Lectureship, and after careful deliberation, it unanimously selected Guatemala's Attorney General Claudia Paz y Paz. Dr. Paz y Paz holds a BA degree in Social and Juridical Sciences from the Universidad Rafael Landívar de Guatemala; an MA in Criminal Law and Human Rights; and a PhD in Criminal Law and Human Rights from the University of Salamanca, Spain with a specialization in criminology; her dissertation examines "Derecho Penal y Derechos Humanos." She has served as a Professor at the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, Faculty of Law. As a student of the law and armed conflict, the first woman to hold the position of spear-carrier for the first-ever genocide trial in Guatemala, and as a defender of the need to build a democracy premised on accountability everywhere, Dr. Paz y Paz has steadfastly defended the need to augment judicial proceedings against violators of basic human rights. As one committee member noted: "She is a courageous young woman who, against great odds, has pushed the Guatemalan judicial system (to the extent it is worthy of the name) to investigate and prosecute human rights crimes committed by the military. Along with the UN Commission against Impunity (CICIG), she is seen by human rights and democracy

activists within Guatemala and abroad as one of the reasons to be hopeful that Guatemala can make progress in investigating, prosecuting, and ultimately dismantling clandestine structures involved in organized crime and violence against the civilian population." The committee also felt that this choice would honor Martin Diskin's legacy—the love for Central America and the commitment to bridging the world of learning with that of social justice.

The Committee reviewed the multiple nominations for the Oxfam America/LASA Martin Diskin Dissertation Award and, upon reflection and discussion, unanimously agreed that the recipient should be María Cristina Cielo (University of California at Berkeley, 2010). Cielo's work focuses on urban inequalities, struggles to redress them, and the role that neighbors play in new policy structures in Cochabamba, Bolivia. Her subject is a participatory investigation into a local NGO, the Centro Vicente Cañas as a window onto a national program of Poder Local. Along the way, she explores the role of communication and visual media in the making of public policy and civil society—and uses them to reach community leaders and activists as part of her creative research strategy. Her background as a journalist poised her uniquely to bridge the worlds of the academy and activism.

In addition, the committee recommended two *honorable mentions* to some very strong finalists: Óscar Gil-García, (University of California at Santa Barbara, 2010), and Oliver Kaplan (Stanford, 2010). The Committee was also impressed by Gil García's work on Guatemalan transnational forced migrant communities and Kaplan's research on the role of communities in making public security in

Colombia and wishes to recognize their efforts with honorable mentions.

Charles A. Hale Fellowship for Mexican History

The Charles A. Hale Fellowship for Mexican History is offered at each LASA Congress to a Mexican graduate student in the final phase of his/her doctoral research in Mexican history. This Fellowship, created in memory of Charles A. Hale, rewards excellence for a Mexican student in the final stages of his or her doctoral research in history. Alongside the principal criterion of scholarly merit, the committee chose a candidate who would contribute "to the advancement of humanist understanding between Mexico and its global neighbors."

The members of the Committee for 2012 included Chair Mauricio Tenorio (University of Chicago), Javier Garciadiego (El Colegio de Mexico), Alan Knight (Oxford University), Pablo Piccato (Columbia University) and Peter Guardino (Indiana University).

This year's recipient of the Fellowship was Germán Vergara, now completing a dissertation at the University of California, Berkeley under the direction of Margaret Chowning. Vergara holds a licenciatura in Social Anthropology from Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia. Vergara's dissertation examines the ways in which rapid economic growth during the Porfiriato (1876-1910), with its swift industrialization, intensification of commercial agriculture, urbanization, population growth, transportation revolution and massive public works projects changed the environment of the Valley of Mexico. This project, based on archival materials in Germany, the United

States, and Mexico, promises to improve our knowledge of the period by showing how social and economic changes impacted the physical environment and people's relationship to it. The project will also enrich the field of Mexican environmental history, and it will provide background on contemporary ecological problems in the area.

Luciano Tomassini Latin American International Relations Award

The Luciano Tomassini Award in Latin American International Relations, established in 2011 through a generous grant from the Ford Foundation, honors the memory of the noted Chilean thinker, political scientist, analyst, the founder of the *Red de Relaciones Internacionales de América Latina* (RIAL), and a man often described as the founding dean of Latin American IR, Luciano Tomassini.

The 2012 Committee consisted of Chair Jorge Heine (Balsillie School of International Affairs, Canada), Victor Bulmer-Thomas (Institute for the Studies of the Americas, London), Rafael Fernández de Castro (Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México), Monica Hirst (Universidad Torcuato di Tella) and Julia Sweig (Council on Foreign Relations). A total of 54 books published in ten countries, written by authors of sixteen nationalities, in three different languages, were submitted for this first version of the Award.

Keeping in mind the criteria identified in the Award's announcement, that is, the originality of the research, the quality of the analysis and the prose and the significance of its contribution to the study of Latin American international relations, the jury recommended that the winner be Marisa von Bulow for *Building*

Transnational Networks: Civil Society and Politics of Trade in the Americas. Although there was quite a number of fine books submitted for the Award, *Building Transnational Networks* stood out for the following reasons: 1) It (implicitly) asks a big, significant question: Why did the Free Trade of the Americas (FTAA), perhaps the most ambitious hemispheric project of the last two decades, fail? By taking on a hemispheric-wide issue (as opposed to a single country study, or one that looks at a bilateral relation), it expands our disciplinary horizons. It thus pushes the study of Latin American IR precisely in the direction it should go—that is, toward exploring broad, system-or continent-wide questions that further our understanding of the changing role that the region in general and a number of Latin American countries in particular are playing in the newly emerging international system of the 21st century; 2) It is a theoretically sophisticated work that deploys the latest network-analytic techniques and explores the interaction between two spheres that are often examined separately—the action of civil society organizations, on the one hand, and the dynamics of international trade negotiations, on the other; and 3) It is based on fieldwork done in six different countries—Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Peru, the United States and Canada. Its findings throw new light on the nature and implications of transnational collective action, and does so on the basis of abundant empirical evidence. ■

The 2012 Bryce Wood Award Deliberations

by JOHN D. FRENCH | Duke University | jdfrench@duke.edu

LASA's award for "the outstanding book on Latin America in the social sciences and humanities published in English" is named after Dr. Bryce Wood, an outstanding political scientist who studied the rise and fall of the U.S. Good Neighbor Policy. Writing forty years ago, Wood hailed the emergence of "new types of collaborative scholarly relations" including the founding of LASA. "Scholars are often lonely and usually restless," he noted, but have always aspired to an international community of scholarly exchange.¹ In many ways, LASA today—with 7000 members, forty percent of them from the region—mirrors this vision with best book awards for works in English (Bryce Wood) and Latin American languages (*Premio Iberoamericana*) while our outgoing President, Maria Hermínia Tavares de Almeida, is a scholar from Brazil.

Thirty-five books have been honored in the sixteen Bryce Wood competitions through 2012. Selecting those to be honored was difficult even when the award was first offered in 1989, at a time when LASA's membership stood at 3000 (though LASA membership is not required to win the award). The impressive growth in books published in English over the intervening three decades has compounded the challenge. When the submissions process ended for works published between "January 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011," one-hundred and thirty-two scholarly works had been received with history (41 percent) and social sciences (42 percent) virtually tied, with the rest in literature and romance studies (16 percent).

In its earliest years, the Bryce Wood committee was composed of three members although the committee that took up this task in 2011-12 had eight members from five disciplines. In a very real sense, Wood's vision of international scholarly exchange

was exemplified by the fact that our members were from four countries located on three continents. With such a large group, clear procedures and deadlines were essential if we were to maximize the quality and substance of our deliberations while recognizing the limits that all of its members faced in terms of time and energy. To facilitate our deliberations, the committee agreed at the outset to some general guidance: 1) that the book achieves excellence in terms of research; 2) that it demonstrates intellectual sophistication within a given discipline while speaking convincingly to the interdisciplinary field; 3) that it demonstrates creativity, originality, and analytical heft; and 4) that it addresses an issue relevant to LASA's mission statement.

To guarantee a balanced and collaborative process, the committee members were first asked to select the five books they found of greatest interest and wished the committee as a whole to consider. Beyond guaranteeing everyone's input in producing the long list of contenders, this procedure produced a short list of thirty-two books (if the list had been half as large, it would have shown a substantial clustering of opinion around a few key works). The committee's key procedural innovation, however, was the establishment of a private closed Bryce Wood Committee blog in which each book (with its cover) was featured on an individual page with any initial words of nomination by a committee member (reviews, blurbs, and links were also posted).

Rather than a confusing flurry of e-mails and responses, the blog allowed for substantive intellectual exchanges to occur with efficiency and cumulative force. Expertise was shared, ideas were tested, and new insights offered that helped to shape an evolving consensus as to the

work(s) that would be honored above all the other excellent books in contention. Once a consensus became clear, members of the committee were asked to combine elements of the blog comments in the form of a draft prize citation which was edited by the chair and approved by the whole committee. It was just as thrilling as Bryce Wood imagined scholarly exchange to be, and not at all lonely. My thanks to the authors of all of books submitted, to the committee members and to the elected officials of LASA. Latin American Studies is very much alive.

Endnote

- ¹ Bryce Wood, "Scholarly Exchanges between Latin America and the United States." *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science* 30, no. 4 (1972): 123. ■

Managing the first Luciano Tomassini Latin American IR Award

by JORGE HEINE | Wilfrid Laurier University, and University of Konstanz | jheine@cigonline.org

The growing role of Latin America in the world today is one of the great stories of the new century. For LASA, the world's leading professional grouping of Latin Americanists, and one that is especially proud of its global membership, this should be a key topic. Yet, it could well be argued that LASA members have not been paying to it all the attention they should. At LASA 2012, the thirtieth meeting of the Association, a mere 24 panels were part of the IR track, one of the 38 program tracks, thus accounting for 2.4 percent of the total number of 999 special events at the meeting. And even if we were to add related program tracks like Defense, Violence and (In) Security (many of whose 28 panels deal with internal security issues) and Transnationalism and Globalization, with 22 panels, the numbers are still quite low for a meeting that gathered some 4,800 participants in San Francisco this May.

Thus, the 2011 establishment by LASA of the Luciano Tomassini Latin American International Relations Award, generously funded by the Ford Foundation, is especially welcome. In honoring the memory of the noted Chilean thinker, political scientist, and analyst, the founder of the *Red de Relaciones Internacionales de América Latina* (RIAL), and a man often described as the founding dean of Latin American IR, the Association is also stimulating and promoting scholarly work in a field that will be critical in helping Latin America to find its place in the changing 21st century scene.

Several proposals were considered for the establishment of the prize, including the possibility of giving it to a practitioner. Yet, in the end, the notion of recognizing academic contributions to our understanding of the complex challenges faced by the region as it attempts to find its niche in the shifting global architecture

prevailed. This will be done by granting the award to what is considered to be the best book on Latin American IR and/or foreign policies published in the three previous years in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish. Although some valuable work today is the product of collective research projects whose findings are published in edited volumes, it was decided that, to make the exercise more manageable, the prize would be confined to monographs by one (or more) authors, rather than to collective works.

The criteria established by LASA for the award were straightforward. The prize should go to works that excel in the originality of the research, the quality of the analysis and the prose and the significance of its contribution to the study of Latin American international relations. It was with these criteria in mind that the jury appointed by LASA president Maria Herminia Tavares de Almeida (formed by Jorge Heine as chair, and Victor Bulmer-Thomas of University College London, Rafael Fernández de Castro of ITAM, Monica Hirst of the Universidad Torcuato di Tella and Julia Sweig from the Council on Foreign Relations) discharged its duties. Given that the award would be given for the first time at LASA 2012, this task acquired special significance.

A first challenge was to spread the word about the prize and let publishers and authors from around the world know of its existence. The fact that the award was announced in May 2011 with a 1 September 2011 deadline, that is, over the Northern Hemisphere summer, a time when much academic activity changes gears and/or goes into slow motion, made this particularly urgent. The last thing the jury wanted was to receive only a few entries, which is exactly what happened from May to July. To address this, jury members,

working hand in hand with the LASA Secretariat, contacted authors and publishers in Latin America, the United States, Canada and Europe to inform them about the award, something helped by a piece published on the subject in the *LASA Forum* summer 2011 issue. To provide additional time, the deadline for nominations was extended to 15 September 2011.

In the end ("Beware of what you wish for..."), a grand total of 54 titles was submitted for the award, in English, Portuguese and Spanish, a more than reasonable number for the first version of a book award. They included titles published in ten countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, the United Kingdom and the United States); they were written by authors of 14 different nationalities, as far as could be determined (Argentina, 2; Belize, 1; Bolivia, 1; Brazil, 5; Canada, 5; Chile, 7; Colombia, 4; Costa Rica, 2; Italy, 1; Israel, 1; Mexico, 4; Peru, 1; Uruguay, 1; United States, 13); forty-three were authored by men and eleven by women.

A first perusal established that not all the titles submitted complied with the requirements, either because of the subject matter, or for other reasons. For example, one of the books, though published in South America by a South American author, dealt strictly with the rise of China; another had not been published yet, and was submitted in MS form; a third was quite explicitly focused on Latin American comparative politics. The list of 54 titles was thus cut to 36.

On 1 October 2011 the jury established a three-step-evaluation process: a "long list" of ten titles by 10 December; a "short list" of three by 10 January 2012; and a winner by 1 February.. The three-week period from

10 December to 5 January was one marked by an especially intense flow of e-mail and telephone exchanges among jury members, across three continents. On 5 January, the jury met via Skype teleconference call to agree on the short list. The latter ended up being formed by four rather than three titles.

On 18 January, agreement was reached on the winner of the first Luciano Tomassini Latin American International Relations Award. The jury recommended to the LASA Executive Council that it be given to the book by Brazilian political scientist Marisa von Bülow, *Building Transnational Networks: Civil Society and the Politics of Trade in the Americas* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

In its citation, the jury stated:

Although there were quite a number of fine books submitted for the Award, *Building Transnational Networks* stands out for the following reasons:

1) It (implicitly) asks a big, significant question: Why did the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), perhaps the most ambitious hemispheric project of the last two decades, fail? By taking on a hemispheric-wide issue (as opposed to a single-country study or one that looks at a bilateral relation), it expands our disciplinary horizons and pushes the study of Latin American IR precisely in the direction it should go—that is, towards exploring broad, system- or continent-wide questions that further our understanding of the changing role that Latin America in general and Latin American countries in particular are playing in the newly emerging international system of this century.

2) It is a theoretically sophisticated work that deploys the latest network-analytic techniques and explores the interaction between two spheres that are often examined separately: the action of civil society organizations, on the one hand, and the dynamics of international trade negotiations, on the other.

3) It is based on fieldwork done in six different countries—Brazil, Canada, Chile, Mexico, Peru and the United States. Its findings throw new light on the nature and implications of transnational collective action, and does so on the basis of abundant empirical evidence.

4) Despite its being a new prize with a short submission time, the large number of entries from throughout the Americas and Europe, by scholars from very different backgrounds, nationalities and approaches to the study of IR, indicates that the award has tapped into a growing and dynamic field that should benefit from the incentives provided by the Luciano Tomassini Award.

That said, some “lessons learned” from this exercise indicate the following:

- *Do not assume that just because the award has been announced, the entries will start flowing in. A pro-active attitude by the jury, in close coordination with the LASA Secretariat, “to beat the drums” about the award is essential to attract a truly representative set of submissions. The latter is especially true for entries from Latin American publishers.*

- *Keep front and center the three criteria established by LASA, as opposed to some abstract notion of what each of the jury members considers to be*

“quality scholarship”. This was critical to move forward and break potential deadlocks.

- *At least in this particular subfield, at this point in time, there seems to be no necessary, unilinear correlation between such traditional indicators as age, established scholarly reputation and affiliation to major Northern research universities, on the one hand, and quality of output, on the other. Some of the most exciting and innovative work in Latin American IR today is being done by younger scholars, many of them in the region.*

Given the encouraging response by publishers and authors to this first version of the Luciano Tomassini Latin American International Relations Award, the more LASA and its members can do to spread the word about it, the better. ■

LASA2012 Photos of Award Recipients and Various Shots from the Welcoming Reception



Diskin Award recipient Attorney General Claudia Paz y Paz with Committee member Jonathan Fox and LASA President Maria Herminia Tavares



Jody Pavilack, Bryce Wood Award winner, accepts her award from Committee chair John French and Maria Herminia Tavares



Kalman Silvert Award recipient Julio Cotler accepting his award from Committee chair John Coatsworth



The Rev. Robert Pelton, CSC, is honored with a 2012 Merit in Film Award by Film Festival Chair Claudia Ferman and Maria Herminia Tavares



Luciano Tomassini Award recipient Marisa von Bulow with Committee chair Jorge Heine and Maria Herminia Tavares



Gabriela Ippolito, Session Organizer Timothy Power, and the participants of the Guillermo O'Donnell Homenaje.

Scenes from the LASA2012 Welcoming Reception:



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The Latin American Studies Association (LASA) is the largest professional association in the world for individuals and institutions engaged in the study of Latin America. With over 5,500 members, thirty-five percent of whom reside outside the United States, LASA is the one association that brings together experts on Latin America from all disciplines and diverse occupational endeavors, across the globe.

LASA's mission is to foster intellectual discussion, research, and teaching on Latin America, the Caribbean, and its people throughout the Americas, promote the interests of its diverse membership, and encourage civic engagement through network building and public debate.



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