

**Mark T. Berger.** *Under Northern Eyes: Latin American Studies and U.S. Hegemony in the Americas, 1898-1990.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995. xv + 570 pp. \$31.50, cloth, ISBN 978-0-253-31172-6.

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Mark T. Berger's *Under Northern Eyes: Latin American Studies and U.S. Hegemony in the Americas, 1898-1990* appeared shortly after James William Park's *Latin American Underdevelopment: A History of Perspectives in the United States, 1870-1965* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995). Both books examine the relationship between intellectual life in the United States and its economic, cultural, and political power (hegemony) in Latin America, especially in regard to Central America in Berger's book. Berger has acknowledged that the books treat similar material, but he noted "from a very different politico- intellectual position" (Berger's review of Park on H-LatAm). Berger only assessed their comparative approach to academic study of Latin America, when in fact their samples are more distinct. Berger cites only academic, political, diplomatic, and news media writings to analyze power in U.S. views of Latin America, while Park also draws upon popular publications and even books and courses from high schools to look at "cultures" and inter-American relations. Both scholars incorporate the disciplines of history and political science into their study. Berger believes that power was located "in an array of institutional structures which underpin U.S. hegemony, but in the assumptions, categories, and images which shaped the North American study of Latin America" (p. 232). Both books will become staples for

the study of the U.S. role in Latin American societies. We now know much more about the formation and use of U.S. academic work in shaping U.S. relations with Latin America.

Berger examines the history (and historiography) of the terms "imperialism," "colonialism," and "Latin America" to shape his topic and the objectives of his inquiry. He notes that Latin America had been defined commonly in juxtaposition to North America (or the United States). Rings of myth and stereotype surround Latin America. It is viewed at times as exotic, adventurous, and a reservoir of wealth, and at other times America is viewed as "progressive, virtuous, democratic, and developed" versus a Latin America which is "corrupt, immoral, undemocratic, and underdeveloped" (p. 15) Berger argues that both the idealization and the negative representation (and "mytholization") have served U.S. hegemony at different times and in different ways. The racism and ethnocentrism of most Latin American specialists have contributed to their role in fostering U.S. hegemony. 1968 is the key date in the process of breaking down U.S. hegemony, and not just in Latin America, but also in the wider crisis of U.S. world hegemony.

Berger builds his argument on Antonio Gramsci's imperial-state model and his concept of hegemony. He finds modernization theory, dependency, world systems theory, and various other

modes of analyzing U.S.-Latin American relations seriously flawed. Interestingly, Berger draws on a kind of dialectic at times to sum up a position. He notes the political consensus of the 1960s was the product of challenges from "radical and conservative theory and politics" which were subsumed in the "historically liberal structures and discourses" (p. 21) The imperial-state oversees the ties between political, strategic, and economic factors and the internationalization (globalization) of class structure. Berger borrows a discourse concept from Michel Foucault and Edward Said. This use of discourse is not equated with language, discussion, or ideology. It is not concerned with the truth of statements, but draws upon the methods used to produce "truth effects," to claim epistemological validity, to construct meanings, and to consolidate the legitimacy of meanings and of the institutional structures to which the meanings are linked. He considers the liberal and radical objective, "the pursuit of truth," as misleading. The U.S. professionals in Latin American studies have specific links to the foreign policy practices and management of U.S. hegemony. They derive their power and authority from organizations, institutions, and political structure of the hegemonic state. Even the radicals adopted the language and categories of the discourse of those in power; they need to challenge the dominant discourse. Throughout the twentieth century, liberal professional discourse on Latin America was an important contributor to the "diffuse character and resilience of U.S. hegemony in the Americas" (p. 21)

Berger attacks a "powerful liberal teleology which understands history as a progress toward liberal capitalist democracy." He rejects the guiding ideas of U.S. foreign policy, the assumptions that long-term U.S. interests are not significantly in conflict with Latin American interests and that panamericanism rests upon a common history and destiny (p. 231). He finds that the political consensus on U.S. foreign policy in Central America and the rest of Latin America has "occurred in the context of power relations that preclude, and

actively work against, the possibility of an equal exchange" (p. 230).

Prior to World War II, U.S. professional discourse was very close to the U.S. political and diplomatic discourse on Latin America. The ties remained strong through the 1960s. In the 1970s and 1980s, Berger acknowledges, the academic and political discourses were clearly less closely tied together, but, nevertheless, the rise and transformation of Latin American studies were fundamentally linked to U.S. hegemony. The ties included not just institutional structures, but also the assumptions, categories, and images that shaped North American studies of Latin America and which were the source of power behind U.S. hegemony (p. 232).

This book is encyclopedic. There are 232 pages of text loaded with information and interpretation, 144 pages of detailed notes often with more citations, names, and biographical information, and 187 pages of bibliography. The bibliography lists about 3,150 items, many of which are commented on in the text or in the notes. The brief index serves the book inadequately, given the reference work character of the book. It also fails to do justice to Berger's development of the roles of individuals and organizations during the nine decades covered in the book. I opened to random pages, looked for a name of a person or organization that I knew appeared on various occasions and then checked the index. American Enterprise Institute (AEI) was only indexed for page 159, but I quickly found it on pages 189 and 220. Cole Blasier was indexed for pages 137-140, 322, but again a brief search turned up 205, 207-8. Norman Podhoretz is also found on page 159, and Ronald Reagan (Reagan's administration) are also found on pages 206, 208. These four problems were part of a brief search that took less than 10 minutes. One only has to look at the frequent references in the book and the paltry index to recognize the problem. This is more than a minor matter because Berger builds his argument on the

ideas and careers of scholars, journalists, and government officials as they change over decades. These developing ideas and careers can simply not be followed from the index.

Berger's book has enormous value in a wide variety of ways. His narrative is always informative, thorough, and analytical. The enlightening biographical sketches of scholars and public figures who played major roles in forming Latin American studies or building U.S.-Latin American policy are a real strength of Berger's book. Certainly one value of this book for scholars in coming generations will be its description of people, organizations, and publications related to Latin America. He traces scores of organizations, journals, and people who have shaped U.S. education, public information, and the shifting policies and conduct toward Latin America.

Berger's argument is attractive, interesting, and well presented. But in the shadow of his viewpoint lurks the idea that the discourses guided or shaped the activity and conduct of U.S. hegemony. His evidence and argument flow naturally, but then there is the chicken and egg problem. Did U.S. professional discourse shape the "no transfer principle," the Monroe Doctrine, "Manifest Destiny," President Rutherford B. Hayes's description of the isthmus as part of the U.S. coastline, or James G. Blaine's Pan-Americanism, to mention a few of the ideas and policy statements which are usually thought to have contributed in significant and fundamental ways to the formation of U.S. relations with Latin America? How did professional discourse effect the development and implementation of these foundation ideas of U.S. expansion? I suspect that part of Berger's response might be that the meaning of these fundamental concepts of U.S. policy toward Latin America were shaped by professional discourse in the twentieth century, not in the nineteenth century, but I am not sure I am convinced by such a reply.

Anyone even remotely engaged in U.S.-Latin American relations will want to examine this

book. Many will value the well-argued and challenging interpretation. Others will keep it handy as a reference work, with disappointment in the index. For the next few decades at least, graduate students in Latin American history and in U.S. diplomatic history should find Berger's thorough study a basic work for their preparation.

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