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## South-South Cooperation: Latin American Theoretical Approaches

**Gladys Lechini and María Noel Dussort**



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# South-South Cooperation: Latin American Theoretical Approaches

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## Introduction

Latin American (LA) theoretical approaches have not always been recognised as such by the mainstream international relations scholars and even in the LA region itself. Some of them just do not admit LA theories as a School of Thought, arguing that “it would be absurd to build a theory of international relations based in countries such as Malaysia and Costa Rica” (Waltz, 1979, p. 72 in Frasson-Quenoz, 2016). This statement supports the thinking that a general theory of international politics must necessarily be based on the great powers (Tickner *et al.*, 2012).

Nevertheless, most Latin American scholars, mainly from Argentina and Brazil, recognise that there is a Latin American theoretical approach, conceived to answer to regional issues from a local point of view. “It is not absurd to construct a theoretical, methodological or conceptual framework to support external policies whose purpose is not the struggle for world power, but to overcome underdevelopment and dependence” (Bernal Meza, 2016: 3). Therefore, it is possible to think that the South could face the challenges imposed by global powers and build theories accordingly.

On the other extreme of the spectrum, Cervo (2008, p. 8) argues that epistemic communities in the North attempt to frame Southern voices through the mainstream theories to impose their

own national and global interests. Hence, he proposes the use of interrelated concepts coined in and for the South to organise our own perspectives.

This could explain why Latin American theoretical thinking is the result of contextual domestic situations and systemic conditionings. They are very useful as valuable inputs for the analysis at present times, but they could only be fully understood taking into consideration the context in which they were created and the scholars involved, either from Argentina or Brazil, whose perspectives are followed here.

It is also worth noting that even though the ideas and approaches mentioned above could not be considered explicit theories of SSC, they constitute the basic assumptions of any theoretical approach on SSC, laying the ground for a Southern Latin American thinking.

Within this context, the authors consider that there have been three main waves in LA thought since the 1950s to date. The first one was the Development Theory, coined by Raúl Prebisch (1949; 1976) during the 1950s, when he was the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC/CEPAL). His proposals were a starting point from which the second wave of theories appeared, contesting or complementing his assumptions, like the Dependency Theory, which being born also within ECLAC, flourished during the 1960s and 1970s. The Autonomy Theory, coined in the late 1970s, is considered the third wave and was developed by Argentinean Juan Carlos Puig (1980; 1983; 1984a; 1984b) and Brazilian Helio Jaguaribe (1969; 1982).

The end of the Cold War in the 1990s and with it, the spread of neoliberalism as the best economic model to follow, changed LA scholars' perspective about the role of the region in the international system. In this sense, other concepts and theoretical approaches came into light, as Peripheral Realism by Carlos Escudé (1992; 1995; 1997; 1998) and Relational Autonomy by Roberto Russell

and Juan Tokatlian (2001; 2010). Furthermore, new adjectives were added to traditional concepts - either from the North or from the South - which came into fashion again with new contents and policy implications.

Finally, from 2000 onwards many Latin American scholars have “reused” various concepts coined in the LA theories aforementioned, with some *adjustments* to respond to new realities. They are called post-autonomists or post-developmentalists, even though the authors consider that both groups should be better called “autonomists and developmentalists refurbished” as they have tried to cope with a changing global order doing a fusion between the old and the new.

Consequently, some scholars have been renamed as “post-autonomist” because they continue to consider the issue of autonomy as the core of LA concerns (Bologna 1972; 1987; 2008; 2010; 2012, Colacrai, 2004a; 2004b; 2009; Lechini, 2006; 2007; 2008; 2009; 2010; Simonoff, 2007; 2012; 2013; 2015; Bernal Meza, 2010; 2013; 2014; 2016x; Rapoport, 2005; 2010; 2014; Vigevani, 2007, Cervo, 2008, amongst others).

Others are considered as “post-developmentalists” as they stress economic and sociological aspects. These authors have revisited development in light of the increasing LA dependence on raw materials, wondering whether this wave would help our countries to develop, to grow and to have distributive policies or would keep our people in a state of underdevelopment. These ideas are highlighted by various researchers who, looking at neoliberal or progressive LA governments have concluded that they have all based their state’s economic growth either on an export-led model (Bresser-Pereyra 2007; 2014; 2019; Bresser-Pereyra & Rugitsky, 2018; Ferrer; 1967; 1983; French-Davis, 1979; 2005; 2006; Frenkel & Rapetti, 2012; Frenkel, Damill & Rapetti, 2013) or an extractive model (Svampa; 2012; 2013; Gudynas; 2009; Giarracca & Teubal, 2010; Lander, 2000).

Finally, and although not specifically coming from IR theories, it is worth a short mention to the LA post-colonialist thought, a critical theory coming from intellectuals with a sociological or anthropological perspective (Lander, 2000; Mignolo, 1993; 1995; 2000; Dussel, 2000; Quijano, 2000). They focus on the cultural legacy of colonialism and imperialism and their effects on our societies.

Subsequently, our objective here is to briefly explain the evolution of LA School of Thought since 1950s until the present days.

## **First Wave: Development Theory**

With the end of the Second World War and the split of the World in two clearly separate camps, Latin American countries stayed under US Hegemony within the capitalist system. The North American model of development was spread in the West, promoting a certain pattern of industrialisation and international division of labour. The Latin American region was categorised as a raw material provider.

Being the ECLAC Executive Secretary, Raul Prebisch's vision concerning trade and development laid the basis for the Development Theory, the first Latin American school of thought, and for the foundations of the Dependency theory, which was the result of a thorough debate on his ideas.

As an economist, his main argument was that an unfair international trade between countries producing raw materials and those producing manufactured goods was the cause of the deterioration in terms of trade, and, therefore, underdevelopment in LA.

The antithetic relationship between development and underdevelopment gave birth to three lines of concern in Latin American thinking, namely: the modelling of a systemic structure (core-periphery); the interpretation of development in line with Rostow (1970) -development as a linear process where underdevelopment was a previous stage to development; and the



proposals to overcome the condition of underdevelopment (Bologna, 1987).

Hence three solutions were proposed by Prebisch (CEPAL, 1987), these were: import substitution industrialisation, creation of free trade areas and commodity producers' associations.

- Import substitution industrialisation (ISI). This process started to flourish during the first Perón's government in Argentina (1946-1955) through the promotion of light industry sectors (food and light metal industry, building materials, chemical and power products for the final consumer). Afterwards, from 1958 to 1962, two hundred foreign industries were established in the manufacturing sector, mainly the automotive industry and the petrochemical, deepening the import substitution process in Argentina (Katz and Kosacoff, 1989). It is also the case during Vargas' presidency in Brazil when the import substitution process came into light.
- Creation of regional areas of free trade to broaden the national markets. Within the framework of a so-called "Closed Regionalism", Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Chile established a free trade area in 1960, the Latin America Free Trade Association (LAFTA or ALAC in Spanish). The spirit of this economic integration process was to impose protectionist measures to protect national industries and stimulate intra-regional trade between LAFTA state members.

The Montevideo Treaty (Year 1960) had the commitment to form a free trade area within twelve years. The implementation of this agreement was based on a negotiation process of tariff reductions which should be entirely eliminated at the end of the indicated period. The LAFTA was the product of a post-war international context. Meanwhile economic integration was perhaps one of the most important tools of the European reconstruction, in Latin America it was considered a valid instrument to development.

This project did not prosper for different reasons and in less than ten years it showed clear signs of exhaustion. The causes of this failure could be the rigidity of the deadlines to commit the treaty, the lack of view of the different stages of development of each country and the scarce integrationist will of the Latin American governments at that time.

During 1980, LAFTA became Latin America Integration Association (LAIA or ALADI in Spanish), adjusting its perspectives and objectives to the new times. The integration process aimed at promoting the harmonious and balanced socio-economic development of the region, and its long-term objective was the gradual and progressive establishment of a Latin-American Common Market.

This new scheme proposed more flexible integration instruments. It is worth to mention that the LAIA's treaty is currently in force through the signing of partial economic complementation agreements, a particular mechanism which does not require the initial commitment of all its state parties. Consequently, the MERCOSUR and other sub-regional schemes coexist and converge in LAIA.

- Creation of associations of countries producing commodities to control raw material prices and avoid external influence on the fluctuation of those prices. The launching of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1960 and its relevant role in the 1973 oil shock was the most successful example. Having a much less international impact, some other organisations were created during the 1960s and 1970s, like the Union of Banana Exporting Countries, International Cocoa Organisation, International Rubber Organization, among others. As organizations of producers of non-strategic goods, they did not possess the same capacity for political and economic impact like oil had. Therefore, they could not bear the fall of international prices and many of them had to associate with the importing countries (e.g. International Coffee Organization<sup>1</sup>).

Prebisch's ideas transcended LA frontiers when he was nominated Secretary General of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), from 1964 to 1969. During that period, he was the inspiration for the creation of the Group of 77 (G77) and, therefore, his influence spread along all the Southern developing countries. Prebisch brought forth systemic-structural thinking and provided the basis for the world system theories, further developed by Wallerstein (1979; 1996), by applying his vision of political economy in the construction of a core-periphery model (Bernal-Meza, 2016).

Nevertheless, his innovative proposals received at that time some critics from his ECLAC's colleagues. They argued that his concept of development implied a linear process and that he equalised economic growth with development. Furthermore, they pointed out that he had only seen one dimension of the problem: the economic side, not considering the other dimension: the political one. And this was an important aspect as it was clear that LA countries were under a process of domination exerted by the centre (Bologna, 1987).

## **Second Wave: Dependency Theory**

As was mentioned, this new wave of thought was born from the very core of ECLAC through strong discussions on the political and economic dimensions of underdevelopment in Latin America and the way to overcome it.

During the 1960s, the region was not getting out of underdevelopment. On the contrary, the economic and political dependence from the United States and other developed countries was considered the main obstacle to free the LA states from a situation of subordination and poverty.

The Development Theory was not enough to explain the peripheral situation of the LA countries and bring forward solutions. Something more complex was needed and thus the Dependency Theory was born. The main critiques to the Development Theory were that:

- Development and underdevelopment were not a linear process but the two faces of the same phenomenon, “the two sides of the same coin”.
- As a result of capitalism’s historical expansion there was an international division of labour between an industrialised and internationalised core and an underdeveloped periphery, which was reproduced at the same time into the underdeveloped countries themselves.

In a broad sense, dependence was a situation in which peripheral countries were dominated through the expansion of capital from an internationalised core. This occurred thanks to economic or military aid, direct investment, transfer of technology and cultural values. In other words, dependency was the political expression of the periphery in the international expansion of capitalist production and reproduction.

The Dependency Theory was coined to overcome underdevelopment in the periphery. Nevertheless, all Southern voices did not sing the same tune to the extent that two avenues of thought could be distinguished:

- The Marxist one, with Frank (1966; 1967; 1969) and Dos Santos (1986; 2003).
- The Structuralist one, with Cardoso (1970); Cardoso & Faletto (1975); Furtado (1964; 1977); Sunkel (1972; 1987; 2007); Sunkel & Paz (1973).

Making a broad generalisation it can be said that the main difference between the two aforementioned positions was how they imagine their way out of dependence. For the first group, it was through a socialist revolution. For the second one, it was through a Gramscian approach, a strategy of penetration into the capitalist structure to begin the change and the fight from the inside.

The Marxist approach in the Dependence Theory gained a lot of support in Latin America as a revolutionary way out of domination from the centre, the United States. The Communist revolution in Cuba, led by Castro, was the main example for the Dependency theory with a Marxist approach. On the other side, the government of Salvador Allende in Chile (1970-1973) was considered the Gramscian option, so as to modify the State from the inside. Allende came to power democratically, due to the support of a coalition of left wing political parties. The government's projects and proposals such as the copper's nationalisation or the deepening of the agrarian reform became a motive of concern to the United States, as the process was named "Chilean way to socialism". Allende's presidency was overthrown by a coup d'état backed by US interests.

### **Third Wave: Autonomy Theory**

During the 1970s the international framework was prone to new discussions concerning LA participation in world affairs. At those times the international system was offering, through Détente, new possibilities to rethink the peripheral condition and look for alternatives.

But the domestic situation in most LA countries was far from peaceful as the Cold War moved to the region: various coup d'états occurred and military regimes backed by US were in power fighting against leftist revolutionary groups.<sup>2</sup>

Despite these upheavals, LA scholars did not abandon the difficult enterprise of contributing to find a solution for LA problems. Following the tradition of Argentine and Brazilian scholars to discuss on how LA could get out of a situation of periphery, Puig and Jaguaribe developed their own theories, in parallel time frames, irrespective of the fact that they did not know each other.<sup>3</sup>

Puig (1980; 1984a) coined the 'Autonomy Theory' trying to find a regional way to get out from dependency. Making a good use of the concept of dependency he added the idea of autonomy, a concept

which from those times onwards would never abandon the LA thinking. He understood the autonomy of a State as the maximum capacity of decision that could be achieved, taking into account the objective constraints of the real world.

Dependence and autonomy were two terms to figure the most extreme situations a LA country could be embedded. Consequently he created four ideal types inserted in this continuum: paracolonial dependency; national dependency; heterodox autonomy and secessionist autonomy. These four models had a correlation with concrete cases in Latin America and in the world. From our perspective the case of the heterodox autonomy, with adaptations to the changes in the current world order is the most useful ideal type to work with.

The **Paracolonial dependency** is a situation in which the State formally has a sovereign government but, actually, the elites in power are an “appendix” of another country’s power, generally, the ex-metropolis. South Africa, after becoming an independent nation in 1910, constituted the South African Union with Cabo, Natal, Transvaal and the free state of Orange. Nevertheless, it was not until 1934 when the South African Union’s parliament promulgated the “Status of the Union Act” which finally declared South Africa as a sovereign country, removing the remaining Great Britain’s dominance. Similar situations happened in LA countries during their early independence. The local elites kept a strong relation with the former “boss”.

In the case of **National dependency**, the elites in power are aware of the state of domination but they try to get benefits from the situation by establishing their own “national project” linked to some global interest. As an example, in 1880 Argentina was governed by an elite called the “Eighties Generation” which promoted privileged relations with the hegemon of that time, Great Britain. Argentina’s insertion into the economic international order was as a provider of raw materials. The aforementioned elite in power adhered to economic liberalism but political conservatism, just to maintain

the special relation with London, sharing economic interests in Argentina.

As for the situation of **Heterodox autonomy**, the elites in power have a double standard, taking into consideration the situation of Détente within the global context of the Cold War. They agreed with the strategic dominance of the superpower as their country belonged to its area of influence. Nevertheless, the elites could disagree with three main issues: one, the internal development model; two, the external relations, for they claim certain margins of maneuver with countries belonging to the eastern bloc; and three, the no acceptance of the superpower's national interest when it collided with the own nation's one.

Perón's "third position" in Argentina (1946-1955) is considered as an example of this level of autonomy. The Peronismo came to power with the objective of looking for more leeway in Argentina's foreign policy. As a consequence, during Perón's presidency, Argentina didn't sign the Bretton Woods Agreement in 1945, neither the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT) in 1947.

**Secessionist autonomy** lies in one of the extremes. Under this level of autonomy, the elites in power decide to leave the block or the alliances which meant a linkage with a dependent past and stopped taking into consideration the old master's global strategic interest. In 1959, Fidel Castro led the Communist revolution in Cuba, breaking up its historic bonds with Washington. Nevertheless Cuba fell into the dominance of the other superpower, the Soviet Union, incapable of surviving by itself.

As it was noticed, for Puig, "all autonomist projects required mobilising resources of power"; therefore, cooperation among the countries of the periphery would help them to accumulate power and increase their negotiating capacity. He also stressed the role of national elites who were also responsible for the decisions taken. Furthermore, he was also aware that for the countries to build

alliances, cooperate among themselves and gain leeway (margins of manoeuvre) it was necessary to have a 'flexible' and permissive international system.

Jaguaribe (1969; 1982), from the Brazilian side, also combined a systemic and a domestic condition. The international system should have certain levels of '*permissibility*' - like during the period of Détente- so that the periphery could mobilise its power resources taking into account the existence of elites with a strong *compromise* with an autonomous project. For him, those states should be politically and economically viable. At that time he was possibly thinking on the "independentist wave" which arose in the Caribbean and the Pacific region giving birth to new insular states which were former European protectorates or colonies.<sup>4</sup>

Hence, these two strategies to foster the autonomy for LA states have both promoted the coalition of Southern countries to sum up their influence and negotiating power to have a say in changing the rules for their common benefit.

As was mentioned before, the potential for cooperation among raw materials-producing countries became clear in 1973, after the oil shock, and in 1974, when the UNGA adopted the Declaration for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO) and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

These efforts made the Third World's leaders believe there were and would be many opportunities to change their unfavourable and unfair situation, and that the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) model might be replicated in other arenas. However, this type of cooperation failed because of its loose nature and broad scope: the fallacy of the argument was its basic assumption that all underdeveloped countries had more commonalities than they really had and that all solutions could be applied uniformly to each of them with equal success (Lechini, 2009).



Apart from that, protectionist policies and external financing during the 1970s were the elements that contributed to the macroeconomic imbalance in the 1980s. This situation showed the fatigue of the import substitution model. The macroeconomic imbalance of the 1980s was characterized by the appreciation of the dollar and the contraction of raw material exports and markets for non-traditional exports. All these elements were crucial in Latin American countries' economic growth during the 1950's and the 1960's.

During the 1980s, good and bad news affected Latin America countries. Democracy was recovered, creating lots of expectations. But the possibility of increasing regional cooperation was weakened by serious problems concerning external debt, which affected their development and democratic stability. Although the resulting debt crisis offered a good opportunity to advance cooperative actions, the policies implemented by developing countries together with private creditors undermined the attempts for multilateral cooperation. Nevertheless, Latin American governments still were able to agree around common policies directed to solve the different conflicts affecting the region, such as the Cartagena Consensus, the Contadora Group, the Contadora Support Group, and the Group of Eight (G8).

## **Latin American Thinking During the Globalisation and Neoliberalism Zenith**

### **The Spirit of the Nineties**

For LA countries the Post-Cold War was characterised mainly by the Washington Consensus formula and by an increasing optimistic vision about globalisation. The region was recovering from the "lost decade", the name which was coined to refer to the 1980s, due to the consequences of the debt crisis that Latin American had gone through. The US set up certain principles which every country was supposed to follow to "become part" of that new unipolar international system. Those principles were neoliberalism and

democracy. LA governments elected during this decade became the “disciples” of such postulates, aligning their foreign policy toward the US. During this period LA scholars could not avoid mainstream’s influence, as can be shown by Escudé’s thinking near to realism, or Russell and Tokatlian’s near to liberalism.

Within this neoliberal framework Carlos Escudé carried out a Peripheral Realism approach as a way to propose a path for Argentina’s Foreign Policy during Menem’s administration. Under his postulates, Escudé reached the conclusion that weaker states, such as Argentina, could not seek high degrees of autonomy vis-à-vis the regional hegemonic power without damaging the well-being of their citizenries. Therefore, it was not advisable to confront Washington. In order to illustrate what he was bringing up, Escudé presented the following formula:

*Total foreign policy autonomy = Absolute domestic tyranny.*

In this regard, the concept of autonomy was identified as a “cost” (Schenoni & Escudé, 2016).

According to this assumption, autonomy should be re-conceptualised in terms of capacity and relative costs of confrontation with the hegemonic power. Autonomy was no longer the ability to decide by oneself - as Puig interpreted it - but the relative cost of exercising the ability of confrontation.

Though Escudé was accused to have a neoconservative perspective, his thinking was put into practice by Argentina’s policy makers during the nineties. The close relationship with Washington could be seen as an alignment with the centre in parallel with an abandon of the Non-Aligned Movement during the Ministerial meeting in Accra in 1991. More recently, the author continues sustaining his Peripheral Realism theory, now accepting China as the new hegemon.

Following the 1990s’ spirit, one can also mention the concept of “relational autonomy” coined by Roberto Russell and Juan Gabriel Tokatlian. In an attempt to “re-conceptualize it”, recovering it but in a non confrontational sense, they consider autonomy as a “condition”: the ability to take decisions in an independent way, without following

other states' wishes, preferences or orders. In their analysis, they start from an allegedly strong point: that an increase in the autonomy level of our countries cannot today be the result of domestic or sub-regional policies of isolation, self-sufficiency or opposition. (Colacrai, 2005, p 393).

The possibility of thinking of this kind of "relational autonomy" for Latin America must not be evaluated - as was considered in the 1970s - according to the capacity to confront or oppose the United States, because it does not rule out agreements with the hegemonic power. It entails coordinated work, negotiation in international systems and in the regional dimension, the first circle for its practice being the South American region itself. Autonomy involving the political, economic and military areas is procured by means of internationalisation and regionalisation strategies rather than nationalisation ones, and at this historical moment, it is clearly facilitated by the democratisation of the region and the experimentation of regional integration processes.

It is also possible to pick up concepts aiming in the same direction in a variety of forums and political speeches. In this respect, if one reviews the conceptual and programmatic content expressed in the "Brasilia Communiqué"<sup>5</sup>, it is possible to find at least two axes that help in the construction of a new autonomy design, which it might be advantageous to think about for the region: first, a commitment to integration as a foreign policy objective, incorporated into the national identity of the countries of the area; second, the possibility of facing the globalisation challenges, deepening integration, and acting in a coordinated way and with solidarity in relation to the treatment of the great issues on the international economic and social agenda.

Sharing the same spirit, there is a reassertion of integration objectives at the MERCOSUR Summit in Buenos Aires in July 2002, at the South American Summit of Guayaquil of July 27th of the same year, and in the document signed in 2003 by Presidents Lula da Silva (Brazil) and Néstor Kirchner (Argentina), which came to be known as the "Buenos Aires Consensus". During the first decade of

the 21st century, the ideological coincidence of progressive policies in the governments of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela was called the left turn in Latin America. Thus, there was some regional alignment towards post-Washington Consensus agendas and the recovery of state capacities.

Finally, relational autonomy means “the power of a country to participate and effectively influence world affairs, especially in international organisations and regimes of all types” (Russell and Tokatlian, 2010, p. 136-137). This interpretation was in line with what was pointed out previously by Gerson Fonseca (1998) in Brazil about autonomy for participation or integration.

The so-called “autonomy for integration” has also appeared within official discourses, which according to the description of then Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs Lampreia<sup>6</sup> responded to the new foreign policy design of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the president at that time. It was observed that the old conception of “autonomy” emphasised self-sufficiency and the adoption of confrontational stances. On the contrary, an updated reformulation should not be isolationist, but a way of being articulated with the international environment. His words are eloquent in this sense: “The times of isolation and of self-sufficiency are over. National sovereignty has ceased to be an argument for behaviors that go against fundamental values”. “Autonomy for integration means support for international régimes”. (Colacrai, 2005, p 394)

## **Latin American Thinking within the Framework of Changes and Challenges of the 21st Century**

The 21st century brought a bigger room of manoeuvre to Latin American countries, taking into consideration that the US, as their most important partner, was involved in the global war on terrorism. Within this context, and at the international level, the new LA governments started to diversify their foreign relations,

intensifying contacts with all Southern partners. At the same time, most of these governments came to power with a common objective which was to contest the Washington Consensus results. As it is well-known, the neoliberal measures intensified poverty, unemployment and inequality in the region. To cope with this situation, Brazilian President Lula Da Silva and Argentine President Néstor Kirchner launched in 2003 the Buenos Aires Consensus, based on generating economic growth with social inclusion and social justice policies.

In order to deal with these new political realities, many Latin American scholars have reused concepts coined within the three LA theoretical waves mentioned above, adding adjustments to update them to the new circumstances. As mentioned before, they are called “post-autonomists”.

Just to mention some examples of this approach, Mario Rapoport (2010) went back to Puig’s concept of heterodox autonomy to explain Kirchner’s foreign policy in Argentina during 2003 to 2007. For Rapoport, the concept of autonomy shows the will of submitted people to break down unjust social structures. Therefore, his position is considered a socio-historical inspiration of the concept of autonomy.

Simultaneously, Tullo Vigevani and Gabriel Cepaluni (2007) formulated the concept of “autonomy through diversification” to explain Lula Da Silva’s foreign policy (2003-2011). They proposed South-South cooperation to seek a better balance with the North by making necessary adjustments, like having a greater international role, consolidating necessary changes in the foreign policy agenda and making the country adhere to international principles and standards. All this should be done through South-South and regional alliances and agreements with non-traditional partners from Asia-Pacific, Africa, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East, to reduce asymmetries in foreign relations with powerful countries, and increase national bargaining power.

Within this context Lechini (2009) stated that cooperation among developing countries, i.e. the “South-South Cooperation”, shows that

it is possible to create cooperative awareness from the South, which may enable countries to jointly cope with their common dilemmas in the international arena. In front of situations seen as unfair by Southern countries, cooperation among peers, among those enduring the same dependency situations, would help them underpin their negotiating capacity vis-à-vis the North through cooperative efforts. The main areas of discussion are trade, development, and the new international economic order.

Consequently, the strengthening of SS relations and SSC within LA foreign policies since 2000 was accompanied by a new developmental economic approach at the domestic level. In this sense, the post-autonomist can be also called “autonomous developmentalists”.

Amado Cervo (2003) proposed and analysed five different states’ models in light of Brazilian history (liberal, conservative, developmentalist, normal and logistical). The last model, which could be considered within the autonomous developmentalist group, is described as a state which supports and legitimates the initiatives of other economic and social actors. It involves a number of tasks enabling it to become an economic and political launch pad for public and private actors in the country (Cervo 2003 in Bernal Meza, 2016).

In the same line, in Brazil, Argentina and Chile, some scholars (Bresser-Pereyra 2007; 2014; 2019, Sunkel, Ferrer, 1983; Ffrench-Davis, 2005; 2006; Frenkel & Rapetti, 2012; Frenkel, Damill & Rapetti, 2013, among others) started to identify themselves with what was known as a “new-developmentalism”. Bresser-Pereyra (2007) was the first one to propose this new economic strategy.

To put it briefly, the new-developmental thinking affirms that there are two variables that arose in this new Century. On the one hand, new historical facts have changed world capitalism to a new phase called “globalisation”. On the other hand, medium development countries are no longer marked by infant industries. Within this context, growth rates are smaller and competition among nation-states is far fiercer.

Consequently, to answer to this reality, new developmentalism assumes that medium development countries have already overcome the infant industry stage, requiring firms to be competitive in all industries where they operate and to be particularly competitive in certain ones designed to export.

According to these assumptions, this strategy is not a protectionist one. It assumes that the export-led model is as important as industrial policies, recognising the leading role of the state. This state has to assure the proper operation of the market and provide general conditions for capital accumulation, - such as education, health and transportation, communications, power infrastructures - and promote investment in certain strategic industries (Bresser-Pereira, 2007).

One should remember that the scholars with this point of view also argue that in the 21st Century, both LA's progressive governments (Argentina during Kirchner; Brazil during Lula Da Silva; Ecuador during Correa) or conservative ones (Colombia, Chile and Peru) have based their development models on the extraction of natural resources.

## **Final Remarks**

After a brief overview of the evolution of LA thinking concerning the region and how to cope with underdevelopment and dependence, and therefore improve its place in the world, some useful ideas could be highlighted to advance with a comprehensive Southern perspective which could be a theoretical back up of the practice of SSC.

Latin American theoretical thinking, through the academic productions of authors of the Southern Cone (Argentina, Brasil, Chile and Uruguay) is the result of contextual domestic situations and systemic conditionings. It is also an attempt to create a favourable local ambiance to solve domestic problems, with different recipies that those coming from the mainstream currents of the North.

Concepts like dependence, autonomy, centre and periphery, bargaining power, room of manoeuvre, coalition building could help to build a political narrative for future theory and practise of SSC.

Autonomy and development blends politics and economy and were and still are the clue for the Latin American region to improve its situation in the international system. It is also a driving force to promote South-South Cooperation in a good combination of solidarity and national interests.

South-South cooperation entails coordinated work and negotiation at the local, regional and global level to build multiple coalitions on different areas, according to each country's conditions. The objective is to sum up influence and negotiating power to have a say in changing the rules of the international system for a common benefit.

People in the South should not abandon the idea that the world could be the house of whole humankind and not the paradise of a few.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> See more information [http://www.ico.org/icohistory\\_e.asp](http://www.ico.org/icohistory_e.asp)
- <sup>2</sup> Long-term military governments, with changing leadership in most cases, controlled eleven Latin American nations for significant periods from 1964 to 1990: Ecuador, 1963-1966 and 1972-1978; Guatemala, 1963-1985 (with an interlude from 1966-1969); Brazil, 1964-1985; Bolivia, 1964-1970 and 1971-1982; Argentina, 1966-1973 and 1976-1983; Peru, 1968-1980; Panama, 1968-1989; Honduras, 1963-1966 and 1972-1982; Chile, 1973-1990; and Uruguay, 1973-1984 (Loveman, 2019).
- <sup>3</sup> Personal interview with Prof. Helio Jaguaribe. July 2010, Rio de Janeiro.
- <sup>4</sup> Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia in the Caribbean and Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, among others, in the Pacific
- <sup>5</sup> It includes the results of the First Meeting of Presidents of South America, called by Fernando Henrique Cardoso, then President of Brazil, and held in Brasilia between August 31 and September 1 2000. The following were present: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Surinam, Uruguay and Venezuela.



- <sup>6</sup> See Lampreia, Luiz Felipe (1998) "A Política externa do Governo FHC: continuidade e renovação, in *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, (Brasília), No. 2, page 11

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South-South Cooperation Latin America Theoretical Approaches\*\*

Decade	Waves and Theories	Main Authors	Main Concepts
1950 - 60	<u>First Wave</u> • Development Theory	Raul Prebisch	Core /Periphery Development / Underdevelopment Deteriorating terms of trade Import substitution industrialisation
1960 - 70	<u>Second Wave</u> • Dependency Theory	Frank Dos Santos Cardoso Cardoso & Faletto Furtado Sunkel Sunkel & Paz	Core /Periphery Development / Underdevelopment Dependency Revolution
1970- 80	<u>Third Wave</u> • Autonomy Theory	Puig Jaguaribe	Dependency Autonomy Permissibility Viability
1990	<b>Peripheral Realism theory</b>	Escudé Russell & Tokatlian Fonseca	Periphery Autonomy Cost Relational autonomy
2000	<b>Post-autonomists</b>  Autonomous Developmentalists	Bologna; Cervo; Rapoport; Colacrai; Lechini; Bernal-Meza; Simonoff Lechini Vigevani & Cepaluni Bresser-Pereira; Sunkel; Ffrench-Davis; Frenkel Svampa; Gudynas; Giarraca & Teubal	Autonomy South-South Cooperation Autonomy through diversification (Neo)Development Extractivism / Neo-developmentalism

\*\* This chart does not have the intention to be exhaustive





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