

# Latin American Economic Concepts and Christian Social Philosophy

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*Die Zukunft Lateinamerikas ist voller Chancen, aber auch voller Bedrohungen. Das wirtschaftliche Wachstum in den Ländern ist sehr unterschiedlich, erholt sich aber trotz der internationalen Finanzkrise. Im weltweiten Zusammenhang hat die Bedeutung der Länder Lateinamerikas zugenommen. Die politischen Eliten verändern sich, die Bürger sind besser informiert und erwarten demokratische Rechte und Strukturen. Hauptherausforderungen sind Armut, Arbeitslosigkeit, soziale und Rechtsunsicherheit, Gewalt und mangelnde soziale Teilhabe. Das christlich inspirierte Denken zur Menschenwürde geht auf das 16. Jahrhundert zurück, kam jedoch nach der Unabhängigkeit der lateinamerikanischen Staaten zum Stillstand. Stationen der Implementierung katholischer Soziallehre waren die Aufnahme des Zweiten Vatikanums in der Konferenz von Medellín und die Präzisierung der Theologie der Befreiung durch Johannes Paul II. in Puebla. Die Stagnation sozioethischen Denkens gefährdet trotz des prognostizierten Wirtschaftswachstums die Zukunft der Menschen, die auf neue Perspektiven und Impulse hoffen.*

## **1. Latin America: A Complexity Open to the Future**

Latin America has a total population of slightly over 600 million people and its territory is bigger than China and the United States combined. The average per capita income for this region is \$10,000 dollars (USD). This shows that by taking advantage of both its human and natural resources, Latin America can, undoubtedly, have access to a better standard of living. It is not easy to talk about Latin America, since doing so requires many different nuances. Overall, Latin America is a region with enormous challenges but, at the same time, is filled with possibilities and opportunities to improve in the future; it also has one of the biggest water reserves in the world (the Guarani water bearing in South America), plus very substantial raw material reserves.

Still, during the nineties, there was a very significant reduction of poverty in Latin America. This was rather surprising considering the fact

that the eighties have been named "the lost decade", but figures always help to exemplify better than words, and in the nineties there was not only a recovery, but also an economic growth.

The positive relationship between this economic growth and the democratization of our societies has had a determining role in the reduction of poverty in several countries<sup>1</sup>, but this does not mean that our job is done. Nevertheless, and perhaps because of the constant negative context, there is still some optimism when talking about Latin America. The president of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has estimated that the following decade will be "Latin America's decade".<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) emphasizes on the fact that poverty, inequity, lack of laws and social involvement, plus the tremendous influence that several factual organizations have, are detrimental for the establishment of democracy and the development of fair societies. All in all we face very important and complex issues, both locally and regionally, but we have learned not to be intimidated by them.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) considers that the fragility of the social cohesion in Latin America is responsible for very severe conflicts and tensions in the region. This is evident in many countries in the continent where the polarization, division and discontent has jeopardize the current administration; even though some of them were already weak. Others have been discredited for their performance (cf. President Lugo's administration in Paraguay).

The reality of Latin America is too complex to be optimistic or pessimistic, since in this context of various threats, we stand in a moment in history where we are presented with different opportunities to take actions, to create instead of destroy, to be active in proposing new solutions, even if these are in a counterculture fashion, as long as they are inspired by a Christian social ethic.

1 | Cf. *"Crecimiento y Progreso en América Latina"*, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Brasil 2008, p. 9-10.

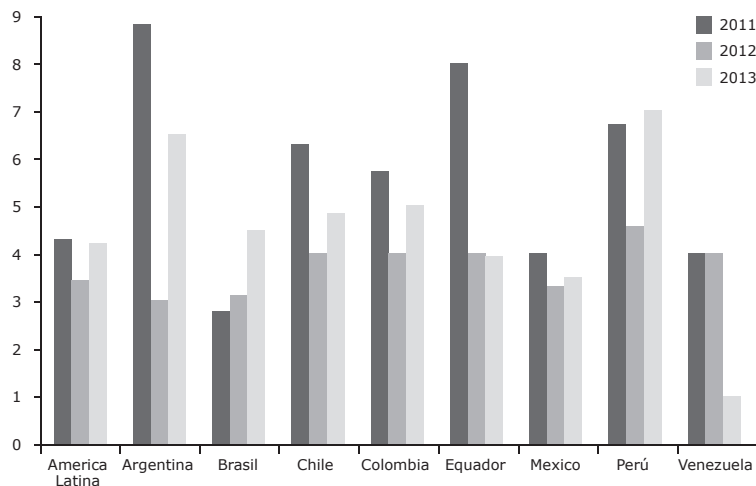
2 | <http://www.latinobarometro.org/latino/LATContenidos.jsp>.

## 2. Information for the Diagnosis of Latin America<sup>3</sup>

Overall, 40% of the whole population of Latin America lives in poverty. Still this region grew 6% in 2010, around 4% in 2011, and this year is showing a growth as well. A negative factor is that the dependence from imports of raw materials is rising. Latin America produces 52% of all the silver in the world, 45% of the copper and 22% of the zinc. The countries that base their economies in these products often lack laws on taxing or royalties, so the benefits for the population are practically non-existent.<sup>4</sup>

Over the last ten years, raw material exports have risen from 27% to 39% in Latin America. This means that this region is, once again, becoming a raw material exporter, with the exception of Mexico – because of her manufactures – yet the oil industry has regained power over public finances in the country, for it sponsors over 33% of the public expenditure.

In contrast, the economic growth of the countries in the region is much unequal, this is why it is hard to study the region as a whole.



3] Pedro Aspe PhD, conference "Situación Económica Actual y sus Perspectivas para 2012", IMDOSOC, February 2012.

4] Cf. Érika González, Pedro Ramiro, "Tres décadas de neoliberalismo en Latinoamérica", in *Noticias Obreras*, Dec. 2007 – Jan. 2008.

The recent development of the economy at an international scale and, particularly, the complexity of the European debt (alongside the rough conditions of the American economy), allow us to perceive that things will get worse. In addition to all of this, a slowdown on intern demand in Latin America lets us see that the situation is extremely volatile.

One of the most challenging – and frequent – circumstances the current administrations have faced is the price increase of the basic products and, especially, in food and fuels. The prices of food around the world face one of the highest price rises ever, especially in Latin America, where food prices are 40% higher than four years ago.

Grain, meat and, on the whole, proteins, have had substantial increases worldwide. The rise on food prices is associated with a higher demand at a worldly scale, especially from countries like China and India, where the middle class has increased. Therefore consumption increases as the population does, but also because of a change in the eating habits. These two countries have registered an increase in meat and milk consumption, which has affected Latin America. Without any doubts high prices in food has a lot to do with the increase of the world's population; according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) there is an annual increase of 80 million people. Another element that has an important role in this food crisis is how the food prices are volatile. Latin America, where most countries are meat and grain importers, has registered the highest increase in the last thirty years.

On the other hand, in a scenario of high international liquidity and an increase of international investments seeking more profitability, plus the appreciation of the eleven currencies facing the American dollar and a higher inflation, has forced the region's central banks to make a priority of the prices stability and to pair them with the competition in the export sectors.

Latin America's economic recovery has been rather efficient in spite of the international fanatical crisis of 2008-2009; however there are still huge doubts on the evolution of the world's economy, which can ultimately affect the region.

### 3. Democracy and Latin-American Emerging Countries<sup>5</sup>

A lot of people still believe that these emerging countries will not achieve the status of developed countries because of an insurmountable barrier that does not allow them to move forwards. But the reality is different. There is information that shows how the importance of the countries as a whole has dramatically changed a decade after 9/11. Brazil seems to have what it takes to become a powerful nation as America's power diminishes, while China's and India's increases. In the meanwhile Europe is starting a takeover with its new partners, leaving aside the 50 year-old post-war stability.

Latin America seems to be ending the process of elite alternation; it includes the indigenous population to the social life as citizens with rights and duties (with the exception of Guatemala and Dominican Republic), it also seeks out to reorganize its societies by a Constitutional reform (as Bolivia and Ecuador), or by public policies (as Brazil with Lula's administration and his predecessor President Dilma Rouseff). Mexico seems to be moving forwards the Constitutional reforms with President Peña Nieto as the head of state and PRI in both the Deputies and Representatives Chambers, to utilize old, yet efficient, political strategies.

Citizenry in Latin America is becoming more informed, receiving more education, and demanding their rights. They are also demanding their governments to be strictly democratic. There is still much to do in those countries where the political system and the democratic institutions are being co-opted by the political parties and their leaders, such as the sad picture of Venezuela. For many observers, the most alarming thing is, at a social level, the dismantling and massive disenchantment of the citizens with politics or from current political systems. Although this is not exclusive in Latin America.

Finally, it is important to point out the urgent necessity – for a few – of consolidating a democracy that also means justice, equality and fairness. There is no such thing as social justice in this region, and this is exemplified by the huge gap between the capital owners and the impoverished by the dominant system, who are the main concern of the

5| Cf. <http://www.latinobarometro.org/latino/LATContenidos.jsp>.

charity and assistance of the Church, the philanthropy of NGOs, or the aid that comes from several populist social programs carried out by governments and all political parties.

Another important element to consider is the fulfillment of justice. Fernando Enrique Cardoso PhD (recently deceased) who was a great ideologist and thinker – less so as President – declared a couple years ago: "We live in a society filled with privileges, where laws do not have the same importance to everybody. From there arises the sense of impunity and corruption. There are, of course, elements of modernity, but also signs of going backwards. Laws in Latin America are unequal, privileges prevail. And for democracy to work there must be fairness, at least in the law."<sup>6</sup>

*A Government Option: Turn to the Center*

The year marked by the "turn to the center" was 2010, because of the victories of the centralist right-wing candidates Sebastián Piñera in Chile and Juan Manuel Santos in Colombia, and the centralist left-wing candidate Dilma Roussef in Brazil. Once more in 2011 Latin America showed its politic heterogeneity, and for this reason there is no dominant ideology in the region, still the vast majority shows its political pragmatism over its "dull" ideology.

Candidates with different politic views and propositions have won, for instance a left-wing candidate in Peru (far more moderate than in 2006): Ollanta Humala; two centralist right-winged candidates, one Otto Pérez Molina in the first round (Guatemala), and Mauricio Macri as the Buenos Aires Prime Minister (Argentina); a left-wing candidate like Cristina Kirchner in Argentina or a "21st Century Socialist" like Rafel Correa (in accordance with the referendum in Ecuador). Plus the recently re-elected Hugo Chávez in Venezuela; and the comeback of PRI, the dominant political party of the 20th Century, with Enrique Peña Nieto in Mexico.

The main challenges for these nations are, without any doubts: poverty, unemployment, social and law security, the reduction of the high

6 | *"Entrevista a Fernando Enrique Cardoso, Las líneas de separación entre izquierda y derecha son otras, pero existen", Nueva Sociedad, Fundación Friedrich Ebert, Argentina (2008).*

level of violence present in all of these countries, and the promotion of social participation to foster democracy. We are not certain that this process will make the political class change their perspective, neither that the citizens are ready to urge the government and produce a change. The education systems of the countries of this region tend to instruct citizens in such a shy and politicized manner that there is not much that can be done.

*To be Resolved:*<sup>7</sup>

Salary inequity, one of the main drawbacks where very little has been done.

For instance, Mexico: in 1994 10% of the wealthiest population earned 44% of the whole income, while 20% of the poorest sector earned only 3.6%. In 2000 10% of the wealthiest population earned 50% of the whole income, while 20% of the poorest sector earned only 2.6%<sup>8</sup>. Nowadays these figures have not changed much.

In a recent survey, Latin-American citizens declared that some of the main characteristics democracy lacks are: a diminishment in corruption (48%), the guaranty of social justice (33%), to increase social involvement (31%), the state openness (31%). Only 13% stated that democracy does not lack anything. Colombia, Argentina, Peru and Paraguay are the countries where more citizens claimed for a diminishment of corruption (60%) whereas, very surprisingly, El Salvador is where less people were concerned about the same matter (29%).

The constant conflicts between governments and the media have to be mentioned when talking about freedom of the press, since it is becoming a recurrent issue from a couple years back, especially in countries like Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and even Mexico, a country that does not escape this tendency; furthermore we cannot ignore the issue of murdered journalists, victims of not only belligerent organizations, or crime organizations, but also – and particularly – of drug trafficking organizations.

7| Cf. <http://www.latinobarometro.org/latino/LATContenidos.jsp>.

8| Cf. Marco A. Velázquez, "México; TLCAN, espejismo y realidad", in *Pueblos*, no. 27, July 2007.

Economic inequity and the practically non-existent development opportunities for millions of Latin Americans are one more drawback. One of the main causes for this reality, is the poor quality of the education system, and its separation from the labor atmosphere, plus the destructive practices that the syndicalized members of this sector perform, and also because governments do not invest proper GDP percentages for education, and, moreover, for investigation.

Some other subjects, which I'm only going to mention briefly, are: violence and organized crime, weapons selling and circulation, mostly coming from America, the debate on the legalization of drugs<sup>9</sup>, the violations of the human rights, the pollution and protection of the environment – in spite the fact that Latin America has around 25% of all forests in the planet – sustainability, child labor, and the current situation of youth in our countries.

#### **4. The Mexican Situation: A Diffident Advance for a Local Leader**

Mexico is, by far, the natural leader of the region. Not only that, it also has slowly been detached – culturally – from the rest of the countries of Central and South America. Its proximity to the United States, has marked it in both good and bad ways; on one hand, it is its main burden, but at the same time, its principal business and trading partner, this proximity also provides with enormous economic resources in culture. In fact, we cannot separate Mexico from the Northern side of the continent because of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

Even with Mexico's potential, and its proximity with the United States, the country faces serious problems that have transformed from endemic and seasonal, to chronic and structural. Here are some figures to help us understand the reality of poverty in Mexico.

The National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL<sup>10</sup>) presented the results for the poverty rate measurement in 2012, for each state, and then the country as a whole, which makes openness and results stronger. Today we know that:

9| *Se recomienda leer el libro: A silent nightmare de Sergio Ferragut, publicado en español en México por el IMDOSOC bajo el título: Una pesadilla silenciada, en el 2010.*

10| <http://www.coneval.gob.mx/cmsconeval/rw/pages/medicion/index.es.do>.



- Between 2008 and 2010 people had more access to health services, social security, basic house quality services, housing spaces and less educational backwardness.
- During the same period, considering the economic crisis, the total income for the families living in urban areas was reduced.
- At the same time, an increase in people without access to a basic diet was registered.
- From this last point, people in poverty conditions grew from 44.5% to 46.2%, which is a growth from 48.8 to 52.0 million people between 2008 and 2010.
- Finally, the same period registered a change in the percentage of people living in extreme poverty conditions, from a 10.6% to a 10.4%, keeping the number at 11.7 million people between 2008 and 2010.

In accordance with the *Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean 2011 of the ECLAC*<sup>11</sup> 36.3% of the Mexican population lives in poverty conditions. From which 32.3% lives in urban areas and 42.9% in rural areas. The homeless population, which is a 13.3% of the total inhabitants, is distributed as follows: 8.5% lives in urban areas, and 21.3% in rural ones. The poorest sector of the population earns 1.6% of the whole income, while the richest sector earns 37.4%.

On the other hand, in accordance with The National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL)<sup>12</sup> Mexico is the eleventh most populated country with a total number of 112 millions 322 thousand inhabitants, from which 47% of the population has a certain degree of poverty. Also 94.3 % of the economically active population has a source of income (this includes temporarily jobs and, more importantly, informal economy). Illiteracy represents a 8.3% of the population, this is 9.3 million people, and 49% does not have access to health care (because lack of affiliation).

All in all, Mexico is a strong country with many possibilities for the future, but first it must get rid of those social and political burdens, produce as much wealth as what is necessary, and believe that "they can play in the major leagues".

11 | <http://www.eclac.cl/cgiin/getProd.asp?xml=/publicaciones/xml/7/45607/P45607.xml&xsl=/deype/tpl/p9f.xsl>.

12 | <http://www.coneval.gob.mx/cmsconeval/rw/pages/medicion/index.es.do>.

## 5. Social Thinking in Latin America

From a very early stage there has been a very important philosophic and humanistic development in Latin America, not just a mere copy of the European philosophical systems. At the peak of the colonial period, an awakening of the critical conscience occurred and with it a first acknowledgement of the town's rights, as well as the dignity of the true inhabitants of these lands.

We must point out some major novo Hispanic thinkers, such as Bartolomé de las Casas, Don Vasco de Quiroga, Fray Alonso de la Veracruz, Fray Tomás del Mercado (16<sup>th</sup> century), Fray Juan de Zapata y Sandoval, Don Juan Palafox y Mendoza or Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora (17<sup>th</sup> Century), Francisco Xavier Clavijero, Francisco Xavier Alegre or Fray Servando Teresa de Mier (18<sup>th</sup> Century), who developed an impressive humanistic thinking which, in several ways, surpassed the European theories on person, their dignity, and their rights.

Dominican Father Mauricio Beuchot, who is a famous philosopher and a scholar, wrote: "opposed to a very accepted opinion, philosophy during the viceroyalty was not an infertile speculation detached from the real problems, or supporter of the injustice and oppression, instead it had many supporters who helped to establish it as a mean to achieve justice, freedom and peace<sup>13</sup>".

The expulsion of the Society of Jesus in 1767 – and later on with the eradication of the Order in 1773 – is the most relevant historical and cultural fact that occurred at the end of the colony. From the Jesuit thinkers of the time, we can point out three that helped to the creation of the Latin American conscience: Landivar, Clavijero and Viscardo.

All of the social movements were accepted by the modern philosophic way of thinking and fostered the freedom movement in the whole of Latin America.

The colony with its own good and bad characteristics was actually most productive in the development of social thinking with a Christian and catholic inspiration. Very little credit has been granted to the thinkers,

13| Mauricio Beuchot, *Filosofía social de los pensadores Novohispanos*, IMDO-SOC, México 2000, p. 6.

however, shortly after the independence of the vast majority of these countries (around the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), this development was brought to a standstill.

Following are what we call "failed or insufficient" attempts, but still is part of what developed in this region. Without pretending to exhaust the subject I present only but a few cases.

*First Attempt: The Church's Contribution to the Social Matter*

The pontificate of Leo XIII (1878-1903) meant a fundamental moment to foster the philosophy of Christian tradition in Latin America. The influence of Leo XIII on the socio-catholic movements between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is most important. Both labor and catholic citizen's organizations generated a social and political movement without precedent, but without the capacity to bear on in a drastic and stable manner through its social, economical and political propositions.

But the main event came with the II Vatican Council, which was fundamental for the development of a social humanism that followed the new necessities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Its announcement, made in 1959 by the newly appointed John XXIII, generated a revolutionary change in the whole Church. The application of the Council in Latin America occurred, first, with the conference of Bishops (CELAM) in Medellín in 1968, and, with it, the explosive and unplanned emergence of theology and the philosophy of Liberation.

In relation to these impulses of critical thinking in the Latin-American context, we can find Fray Gustavo Gutiérrez, op., then a catholic diocesan priest from Peru, and Enrique Dussel PhD, an Argentinean man who studied most of his major at UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), headed a wide wave of thinkers that tried to offer reasonable paths to change the unfair social structures. Also to help the most unfavored and impoverished. This is when the category of "excluded from the system" was originated.

By 1979, in the III Bishop Assembly of Latin America done in Puebla, the newly elected Pope John Paul II, started to clean the impurities of the theology of liberation, with the proposition of a Christian social doctrine. Liberation, yes, class struggle, no, and for a true liberation there is nothing like the gospel. John Paul II, in his opening speech in

the Assembly, declared: "To safeguard the originality of the Christian liberation and the energies which is capable to unfold, it is necessary to avoid reductionisms and ambiguities, as Pope Paul VI told us: 'The Church would loose its most important significance. Its liberation message would lack originality, and would be vulnerable to ideological systems and political parties.' There are many signals which help us detect a Christian liberation and when instead, it feeds on the ideas that take coherence from it with a evangelic vision of man, things and events"<sup>14</sup>.

Furthermore he adds: "We must responsibly trust in this social doctrine, even though some may try to raise doubts and mistrust over it. We must also study it seriously, apply it, teach it, be faithful to it, being a son to this church, as a guaranty of authenticity of our commitment to the delicate and demanding social tasks, and to the efforts to achieve liberation among our brothers. Then, allow me to recommend to this assembly, the urgency to sensitize your church towards this social doctrine.

We must be very careful in the moment of creating a social conscience at all levels and sectors. When unfairness is at its best, and the distance between rich and poor is enlarged, our social doctrine must creatively and openly be the precious instrument to educate and to act. This is of significant importance for laypersons: 'It is the responsibility of layman and woman, although not exclusively, the tasks and clergy dynamisms'<sup>15</sup>.

Unfortunately over the last few decades Christian social thinking in Latin America has not develop in a positive way since *Puebla*, nor it has presented resulting expansive proposals to go along this Christian humanism, maybe because of an exhaustion of the CELAM<sup>16</sup>, or a feeling

14 | Juan Pablo II, *opening speech of the III Conferencia Episcopal Latinoamericana, Puebla, III*, 6.

15 | *Ibid*, III, 7.

16 | *Recientemente los Obispos a nivel regional reflexionaron con cierta seriedad en los problemas sociales, económicos y políticos en dos ocasiones, en el II Congreso de Doctrina Social de la Iglesia, que bajo el título "Imaginar un Continente para todos", fue organizado por el Departamento de Justicia y Solidaridad del CELAM, y realizado del 11 al 15 de septiembre del 2006 en la Ciudad de México, cuyas memorias fueron publicadas en Bogotá en el 2008; y en Aparecida, Brasil, durante su V Asamblea Plenaria, si bien con algunos problemas metodológicos de por medio. Las conclusiones de ambos son una invitación a la reflexión, pero sobre todo a la investigación social.*

of suspicion towards philosophy and theology of liberation in many places<sup>17</sup>, or perhaps because of an atmosphere of mental laziness at centers of Christian thinking like seminars or catholic universities, or Christian-orientated ones, which are more concerned to serve the market and be "politically correct" with their speech. Finally some just walk straight through the Christian orthodoxy of a dogmatic or liturgical willingness, without thinking of the orthopraxis, especially the one referring to society, which is totally unattended. There are serious fears and concerning issues with the church in Latin America.<sup>18</sup>

### *Second Failed Attempt: The Debate of the Underdevelopment and the Dependence Theory*

From the end of the forties, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) alongside a group of economists lead by Raúl Prebisch originated the most scathing systematic critic that has ever been made to traditional theories of foreign trade, and its effects on development. Hence thinking was developed that expanded outside the borders of Latin America, even to try it in Africa, without any results.

Dependence sociology with its "development models" and its "plans for development" ended as soon as any of its theories were put into practice. By the end of the eighties, after several attempts to "bring back to life a death with artificial mechanisms", this theory was put aside, without anything better coming after.

### *Third Deplorable Attempt: Confusion between Left and Right*

Our daily bread of everyday are the intellectual and political vicissitudes that the leaders of both sides have faced, even in this incessant search of keeping an ideological distance from one another, but, who's left and who's right? Nowadays, no one knows.

17| *La muestra más representativa de esto, visto desde arriba, fue la Instrucción Libertatis Nuntius, Instrucción sobre algunos aspectos de la 'Teología de la liberación', de la Congregación para la Doctrina de la Fe, del año 1984.*

18| *El famoso divorcio "fe-vida" ha sido una constante en las reflexiones pastorales de toda América Latina, en lo colectivo o en lo particular. Hoy se ha dejado de usar ante el desgaste inútil de la frase.*

Much has been said about the disappearance of the line separating both stances. Both their ideological representatives, meet in the middle of centralist positions, losing the virtue of opposition and the hope of alternation. Their political leaders are identical in performance and interests, and are only differentiated by the name behind them, keeping them in the political scene and working for the civil power.

Perhaps the most confused are those of the left. Socialist identity has become weaker over the last few decades as the crisis of the post-war "perfect state" increased, and neoliberalism arose anywhere.<sup>19</sup> By the time the Berlin wall was destroyed and the USSR became Russia, and Cuba was fractured in both economic and social matters, and the socialists outbreaks in Latin America were more a testimonial occurrence than anything else.

Political pragmatism dominates the current political way of thinking, both for left and right, is that of electoral victory at any cost; and political utilitarianism resembles to those that before were different or opposed. All of these has facilitated the development of the "politic locust" syndrome, this is, a capacity to "jump" from one political party to the other in search for the next open position, without thinking about any ideological ideas. In Mexico, and I believe that in other countries as well, there are politicians that have been members of even four different political parties, some of them completely opposed to each other.

The lack of an ideological identity in politics will come at a great cost with time. Maybe we are still able to create new ways of thinking, new political identities, and moreover, new leaderships.

#### *Fourth Attempt: Analysis and Diagnosis of the Paralysis*

In recent times an opportunity has been given to institutions and analysis centers of reality, for its diagnosis and analytical instruments, hence they are abundant. But we lack viable proposals that allow, at a regional level, to think in the things that can be different.

United Nations diagnosis (ECLAC for instance) are frequent; also regional and worldwide organizations regarding human rights (IACHR),

19| Cf. Osvaldo Sunkel, "En busca del desarrollo perdido", *Problemas del desarrollo*, no. 147, UNAM, México 2006.

on the private sector universities and NGOs (such as Latinobarometro), have recently created "observatories" of all kinds: social, regarding youth, human rights, ecclesiastical matters (like CELAM in Bogotá) or in economical matters (like the CELADIC with its headquarters in Panama); others regarding media and finally others focused in law matters. Yet, however, diagnosis is insufficient if it is not capable of contributing a cure or a solution even if it is done by trial and error; otherwise the diagnosis is a source for frustration and despair. This happens to us frequently.

## **6. Conclusion**

All in all, Latin-American intellectuality has been too absent facing the necessity to create new ideological political and economical models that present new solutions to endemic issues. Practically no one has been up to the challenge, nor the church, nor the private sector, nor the academies, nor the multilateral organizations, and by no means political parties, besides the absence of true ideologists who lead this generation of solutions is evident.

The deficit is enormous, and in spite of the economic growth that Latin America will surely have in the next few years, with growth rates even higher than those coming from other regions of the world – like Europe and the United States – true social development is at a standstill. New generation's future is being jeopardized and societies are abandoned, and the sufferings of millions of people are there, demanding new points of view, new solutions and new rapprochements.

And yet, we must trust in the future, we must not lose hope. We are capable of much more.