

SOCIAL SCIENCE IN CHILE
The Institute of International Studies
of the University of Chile

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The Institute of International Studies (IIS) of the University of Chile was founded in 1966 by professor Claudio Véliz, with the cooperation of the Royal Institute of International Affairs of London. The IIS has been affected by the changes that have occurred in both the domestic and international contexts, but, despite some temporary crises, the Institute has been able to maintain the generally high level of scholarship and objectivity that typically characterized it. Today, the IIS is a research and teaching center in the field of international relations, covering the political, juridical, economic, social and historical dimensions.

The Institute is an autonomous academic unit that depends administratively upon the Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs of the University of Chile. For a short period (1974–75) it was transformed into a Department of the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences of the University; but in 1976, the Institute regained its original name and status. The IIS has a relatively small academic staff of ten full-time and four half-time professor-researchers, and three research assistants; in addition, there are ten part-time researchers. On the administrative side there are thirteen functionaries, including two professionals in charge of the Institute's library.

One of the principal features of the Institute is its interdisciplinary orientation. International relations is seen as an autonomous social science field which, due to its breadth and complexity, cannot be studied adequately within merely one discipline. Therefore, the regular staff of the IIS includes political scientists, sociologists, economists, historians and lawyers. In terms of academic background, there is a predominance of political scientists and lawyers.

In the literature on international relations one can distinguish roughly two principal currents of theory that generally coincide with two different sets of concerns: those of the center and those of the periphery. Theoretical approaches that have emerged in the core include, for example, balance-of-power theories, conflict resolution works, decision-making models, and game theory. The common denominator of these approaches is a preoccupation with questions of *peace and war* among nation-states. Explicitly or implicitly, a concern is expressed for the national security of advanced industrialized countries and the stability of the international system. On the other hand, theoretical perspectives that have originated in the periphery, such as international stratification and dependency

theory, focus on problems of development or underdevelopment, and equality or inequality both among nation-states and classes. In this case the critical emphasis is on the issue of *development*.¹

Research projects at the IIS reflect this latter concern of periphery scholars.² Major themes of analysis include: regional economic integration, dependency problems, New International Economic Order issues, law of the sea, north-south negotiations, natural resources, etc. Of course, more conventional "center-oriented" subjects, like "balance of power in the southern cone," are also investigated, but often in the perspective of their significance for development options facing the Latin American region.

A fundamental characteristic of the Institute is its Latin Americanist orientation; studies or seminars have been conducted on Andean integration, Latin America's insertion in the present world political economy, Latin America as a middle class of nations, human rights in Latin America, regional energy problems, etc. There is a particular stress on Latin America's foreign relations. In 1978, the IIS began a special research project conducted by three different study groups with the purpose of analyzing in depth the relations between Latin America and three critical geographical regions. The groups refer to the relations between Latin America, the United States and Western Europe; the relations between Latin America and the Asia-Pacific region; and the relations among Latin American countries. Each study group is composed of selected scholars from the Institute and elsewhere, including several foreign researchers. The project, funded by The Tinker Foundation of New York, will culminate with the publication of three separate volumes incorporating the work of each study group.

An important dimension of the Institute is its graduate program leading to the Magister (M.A.) in International Studies. The program was started in 1978 and it aims at forming professionals with a comprehensive social science vision of contemporary international affairs. The program is divided into three parts, each of which lasts one semester: a basic cycle, an advanced cycle, and a seminars and workshops cycle. Although the "Magister" is just entering its third year, it has attracted many Chilean students, as well as a good number of applicants from the Latin American region and the United States.

Francisco Orrego Vicuña, the present director of the Institute, has contributed noticeably to the development of international conferences and extension courses. Largely at his initiative, the IIS has organized and sponsored major conferences on: "Science and Technology in the Pacific Basin," "Ocean Policy," "Economic Integration and Cooperation in Latin America," "The Development of the Antarctic," "World Scarcity of Raw Materials," "International Dimensions of Nuclear Policy," "Human Rights and International Relations," and "Latin America—Middle Class of Nations?" These conferences often have been organized in conjunction with other private or governmental entities (i.e., Instituto Chileno de Estudios Humanísticos, Comisión Chilena de Energía Nuclear), and have brought together significant numbers of distinguished international experts. The fundamental objectives of these conferences have been to develop systematic, scientific *explanations* of important international events, and

to outline the alternative *policy options* available to Latin American countries and organizations. Extension courses have aimed at informing the general public on issues of significance to the region. Courses have been given on "Inter-American System," "Conflict and Cooperation in the International System," and "The Struggle for World Power in the Twentieth Century."

The Institute publishes the quarterly journal *Estudios Internacionales*, which has become an important Latin American publication on world affairs and international development questions. The IIS also publishes the International Studies Collection, a number of books produced and edited by the Institute, and the Special Document Series, occasional monographs authored by Institute and guest scholars.

The IIS places stress on cooperative links with national and foreign academic institutions, governmental agencies, and international organizations.³ At the national level, the Institute has contacts with CEPAL, FLACSO, Instituto Chileno de Estudios Humanísticos, CIEPLAN, Academia Diplomática Andrés Bello, and some academic units of the University of Chile and the Catholic University. Internationally, the Institute is a member of RIAL, a regional association of academic centers interested in the study of Latin America's role in the New International Economic Order. The IIS also has an accord with the Fulbright Commission involving the designation of U.S. scholars as visiting professors at the Institute. During 1978 the Fulbright professor was a political scientist from the University of Texas at Austin and, in 1979, the visiting professor was an economist from the Graduate School of International Studies of the University of Denver. Presently, conversations are being held between the IIS and the Graduate School of International Studies to establish a comprehensive exchange agreement that would include exchanges of faculty and students, joint sponsorships of international conferences, and joint publications, both in Spanish and English. Last, the Institute has academic accords with the Instituto de Estudios Superiores de la Administración para la Integración of Venezuela and the Sociedad Internacional para el Desarrollo (SID).

Owing to the continuous research efforts in critical issue areas, the high academic standards, and the climate of intellectual pluralism prevailing at the Institute—within a restrained social science context—its programs have received significant support from private and public institutions such as The Tinker Foundation of New York, the Instituto para la Integración de América Latina (INTAL) of the Inter-American Development Bank, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Oficina de Planificación Nacional (ODEPLAN), the Konrad Adenauer Foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany, and the Banco Español de Chile. It must be noted, however, that the situation at IIS is unique, and contrasts sharply with the state of other social science departments at publicly supported institutions of higher learning in Chile. For the most part, social science in Chile subsists outside of the universities.

NOTES

1. See Heraldo Muñoz, "El desarrollo de los estudios internacionales como especialidad académica en América Latina: problemas metodológicos, sustantivos y contextuales, Paper presented at "Primer Panel sobre el Estado de la Disciplina de las Relaciones Internacionales en Chile y América Latina," AEMEI, Santiago, 2 June 1979.
2. More detailed information on research topics can be found in Instituto de Estudios Internacionales de la Universidad de Chile, *Año Académico 1979 e Informe de Actividades Correspondiente al Año Académico 1978* (Santiago: Imprenta Libertad, 1979)
3. See Francisco Orrego Vicuña, "Una década al servicio de las relaciones internacionales." Speech by the Director of the Institute of International Studies of the University of Chile on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the creation of the IIS, 20 October 1976.