

Foreword

This year marks the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Raúl Prebisch.

ECLAC –the organization Prebisch endowed with its first basic ideas and set in motion in its beginnings– has celebrated this centenary with various events. *CEPAL Review*, which Prebisch set up and directed for its first ten years of life, pays tribute to him in this issue by collecting together in a special section a set of articles by distinguished personalities in the field of social sciences who have helped to shape Latin American thinking.

Raúl Prebisch's vigorous personality left its mark on his own country in critical stages of its development, decisively influenced development ideas and lines of action in Latin America and the Caribbean, and helped in the United Nations' efforts to achieve a more equitable international economic order. There are therefore any number of different ways of honouring his memory. Here, however, we have chosen in particular to follow the evolution of his ideas and the contexts in which they developed, together with their continuing importance for dealing with the current dilemmas of Latin American development.

This set of tributes opens with an unpublished interview which Prebisch gave to his friend and colleague David Pollock in 1985 on his ideas and actions during the period when he was with ECLAC (1948-1963). Professors Kerner and Love edited the material obtained in this interview for its publication among these tributes.

In the contribution by José Antonio Ocampo, the Executive Secretary of ECLAC proposes that the current Latin American development agenda should be enriched by projecting three central elements of Prebisch's thinking –the asymmetrical relations of the centre-periphery system, the need for active endogenous development strategies to overcome structural heterogeneity, and the critically important role of regional integration- onto the present development scenario of the region, and by making an interactive comparison between those elements, the more recent proposals put forward by ECLAC, and the contributions offered by other schools of thought.

Octavio Rodríguez analyses the elements making up Prebisch's structuralist view of Latin American

development –or underdevelopment– and their significance for dealing with the problems of employment and the external bottleneck today.

Arturo O'Connell describes the characteristics of the Argentine economy that Prebisch had before him as an example when he was developing his ideas on peripheral economies, analyses the early stages of the development of those ideas in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and argues that the similarity of the present problems of Latin America to those of that period has given those ideas renewed validity.

Adolfo Gurrieri also deals in particular with the work of the young Prebisch. He shows how, from his earliest work, Prebisch already began to shape the overall scheme of ideas that he was to develop in ECLAC, and he argues that this scheme stems from a perception of the shortcomings of the development pattern that was already in existence before the 1929 crisis.

Roberto Cortés Conde, for his part, highlights the economic circumstances in which Prebisch developed his ideas and applied his actions in the Argentina of the 1920s to 1940s, concentrating on the years when he was in the Government and the role he played in the design and execution of policies which were to be of momentous importance for that country.

Edgar Dosman's article deals with the period between Raul Prebisch's exit from the Argentine Government and his drafting of the "Manifesto" in ECLAC. He provides new material –together with many biographical details– which documents the evolution of Prebisch's ideas during that period, thus helping to enrich the academic literature on the origins of ECLAC's theories.

Finally, Norberto González proposes that the ideas of Prebisch and ECLAC on Latin American industrialization in the period following the war should be compared with the literature analysing the ideas behind the policies applied in two great industrialization processes of the past: those of the United States and Germany.

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