

IN SEARCH OF A DISCIPLINE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN MEXICO

ALFREDO ROMERO CASTILLA

SINCE World War I there has been an increasing interest in international relations as an academic field of study and large numbers of courses, textbooks, and academic journals devoted to this discipline have appeared everywhere. This activity clearly shows that the study of international relations has blossomed into one of the most productive fields of academic inquiry in the world. However, the development of this discipline reveals that despite the large amount of serious scholarship published on this subject it is still far from being a well-established academic discipline among the social sciences.

During the last few decades the study of international relations has evolved from a traditional perspective marked by a scattered amount of relevant disciplinary knowledge, such as international law, diplomatic history, foreign policy, international organization, international economics, strategical studies, and political geography, to a scientific stage that has attempted to establish the boundaries of a particular discipline by offering a more or less comprehensive overview of the theoretical basis of the field. Though the present amount of descriptive and analytical works is remarkable, this last stage remains to be completed. The various conceptual frameworks suggested for the study of international relations have made clear the need for a systematic knowledge of international phenomena, but have not yet assured the significance of considering this study as an independent field of inquiry in its own right.

This preliminary background permits the understanding of the trends that have taken place in the study of international relations as a discipline in Mexico. Although it is a relatively new field of research everywhere in the world, in the case of Mexico it is most strictly a recent one. Its history goes back to 1951 when the College of Political and Social Sciences was founded at the National University of Mexico (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México: UNAM). This was the beginning of a social sciences' tradition where historians and lawyers frequently did most, if not all, of the academic studies on social phenomena. A new generation of scholars began to be trained in the scientific knowledge of sociology and political science. International relations was primarily thought of as "diplomacy," a name which reflected the historic and juridical orientation that can be identified with the traditional perspective mentioned before. It has only been very recently that some of the professional students of the field have undertaken the task of searching for a more systematic approach to conduct the study of international relations as a discipline independent of the other social sciences.

The purpose of this paper is to review the trends surrounding the development of the field of international relations in Mexico, and to specifically focus on the group of scholars who have attempted to determine a more scientific foundation for the discipline. Any classification of scholarly works necessarily includes an element of arbitrariness. Therefore, it must be mentioned that this is not an exhaustive bibliographic essay of relevant works on international studies in Mexico,¹ but rather a limited selection of those works which meet the disciplinary criteria in their analysis and share a common aspiration: the building of a scientific explanation of international problems.

This paper is divided into two parts. The first describes the general process that generated the need for the building of a social sciences' tradition in Mexico, which, in turn, led to the academic establishment of sociology and political science as independent disciplines. It consequently stressed the necessity of constructing a special discipline dedicated to the search for a systematic body of knowledge concerning the field of international relations. The second part discusses the substantive findings, generalizations, and propositions about the nature of this vast field found in current scholarly literature.

I

There is a conspicuous shortage of works devoted to the development of social sciences in Mexico. This subject has been all but totally ignored by Mexican scholars throughout the last twenty-five years. The most recent publications on the subject amount to two collections of essays since 1979: *Ciencias sociales en México: desarrollo y perspectiva*, edited by the Colegio de México [13], and *Sociología y ciencia política en México (un balance de veinticinco años)*, published by UNAM. The reason for this scarcity of publications is not hard to discern. During the last fifty years the academic activity in Mexico has passed from the random publishing of juridical studies and philosophical essays, to the use of adequate methods and tools for the scientific explanation of social reality. Most professional students were absorbed in concentrating their efforts in the building of their own scholarly career within certain disciplines to the degree that they set aside studies on the history of this process.

The two above-mentioned books display a quasi-consensus in asserting the lack of publication on this subject. Both of them underline the importance of conducting such a task for a better understanding of the current trends in Mexico regarding the disciplinary construction and professional work of the social sciences.

¹ In this regard, the existing literature is not small: see Daniel Cosío Villegas, *Cuestiones internacionales de México, una bibliografía* [14] (this book lists more than ten thousand entries); Héctor Aguilar Camín et al., *El poder en México: balance y perspectivas de la historiografía política en México, 1951-1972* [1] (this book lists six hundred major works); and Lorenzo Meyer and Manuel Camacho's survey on "Las relaciones internacionales," included in "La ciencia política en México," in *Sociología y ciencia política en México (un balance de veinticinco años)* [25] (this work lists the latest studies; most of the titles are official documents, historic and juridical monographies, and political works discussing Mexican relations with the United States, Europe, and Latin America, and general works on Mexican foreign policy).

One of the major points raised by the writers of these essays is the important support provided by an institutional infrastructure which has sustained academic work in these fields since the early founding of the Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales in 1939, and later, the Escuela de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales (ENCPS) in 1951. Regarding the founding of ENCPS, one author notes:

In this college regular courses were offered for the first time in four disciplines: sociology, political science, diplomacy, and journalism. Later on, the latter two became international relations and communication science, respectively. Public administration was added to the academic curriculum during the 1960s. . . . It is relevant to note that within a few years the ENCPS became the main breeding place of social scientists in this country. . . . [28, pp. 45-46]

These two books deal primarily with sociology and political science. The collection, edited by the Colegio de México, also contains essays on demography, history, anthropology, and urbanology. It is significant to note that international relations is only slightly broached in the essay on political science, where Lorenzo Meyer and Manuel Camacho assert:

In Mexico, the study of international relations tends to be considered as a field separated from political science, while in some other countries it is simply a subject belonging to the general world of political phenomena. This is the interpretation we will give for the purpose of the present essay. [25, p. 92]

This statement clearly represents a narrow conception of international relations, focusing on relations among governments and very seldom taking into account the large amount of complex factors that generate international problems. This attitude is even more apparent in the type of works listed in this essay: historical monographies dealing with relations with France, United States, and Latin America; the role played by Mexico in international organizations; and some particular aspects of foreign policy-making in contemporary Mexico. Furthermore, limited definitions such as the one suggested above ignore the fact that, not only in Mexico, but in other countries as well, there have been scholars belonging to different schools of thought who have attempted to develop the idea of international relations into an independent field of study. This is certainly a crucial problem which has produced notable amount of academic material.²

At least one important conclusion has arisen from the ensuing academic discussions regarding the nature of international relations as an independent discipline:

² In France, Marcel Merle, *Sociologie des relations internationales* [23]. In Rumania, Silviu Brucan, *The Dissolution of Power* [8] and *The Dialectic of World Politics* [9]. In Spain, Manuel Medina, *La teoría de las relaciones internacionales* [22]; Roberto Mesa, *Teoría y práctica de relaciones internacionales* [24]; and Antonio Truyol y Serra, *Introducción al estudio de las relaciones internacionales* [33]. In the United States, Quincy Wright, *The Study of International Relations* [35]; Frederick S. Dunn, "The Scope of International Relations" [16, pp. 142-43]; Kenneth Thompson, "The Study of International Politics: A Survey of Trends and Developments" [32, p. 433]; and Robert W. Tucker, "The Study of International Politics" [34, pp. 644-45]. In Venezuela, Hans Joachim Leu, "Introducción al estudio de las relaciones internacionales" [20].

International relations can be distinguished from other studies by the nature of the general subject it investigates. No other study seems to be concerned concurrently with the interactions between whole societies (or some analytic aspect of the whole such as the legal, the political or the economic) and the relevant separate actions issuing from each of these societies under circumstances of no superior human control system. Hence there is a perpetual problem of understanding and explaining the effect and impact of the "domestic" in an endlessly intertwined two-way traffic. There seems to be no perfectly simple way to state this "first idea" of the study of international relations, but it occurs, in one version or another, in almost all definitions and descriptions of the subject. [21, p. 306]

International relations therefore appears to be a totality of mutual interactions and connections in which the whole is different from each one of its components and no one of them alone is decisive or determinant. This is the perspective of international relations that justifies its existence as a separate field of knowledge.

If this is so, why then did Mexican scholars adopt such a one-sided view toward international relations? Three possible answers can be discerned:

(1) Jorge Castañeda has alluded to the lack of academic tradition in the field of international relations in Mexico as the natural consequence of a consensus among politicians and scholars that Mexico was living an epoch of intense nationalism, characterized by the promotion of both political and economic development, and did not have specific interests of a political, territorial, or strategic nature, beyond its borders [12, pp. 3, 6].

(2) Along the same line, some recent reviewers have explained that both Mexican and Latin American social scientists have shared a common concern toward the problem of underdevelopment. From this, the main trend of research has been understanding the causes of internal processes and problems of social change [7]. This partly explains the reason for the improvement of the academic status of the fields of sociology and political science.

(3) The academic study of international relations has been conducted in the most traditional fashion, emphasizing diplomatic history and international law. Moreover, the fact that the discipline was originally closely associated with *diplomacy* and emphasized the training of foreign service personnel, left no room for scholarly studies. Most of the literature on this subject has been produced by the historian or the jurist. These are usually either historical chronicles with lists of treaties, or high quality monographs that offer detailed treatments of isolated events. Very recently there have been efforts to use more accurate concepts and methods developed by the social sciences. But even in this regard, some of the writers who have attempted a more systematic analysis of international relations have identified it merely as the political processes defined by the actions of statesmen and diplomats.

This somewhat anachronistic approach to the study of international relations can no longer be justly maintained in contemporary Mexico. During the last thirty years the academic circle of this profession has grown considerably. In the early fifties the Universidad Femenina de México and the UNAM were the only universities that offered courses on this subject. In 1961, the Colegio de

México opened the Centro de Estudios Internacionales. Later, in 1971, the Centro de Relaciones Internacionales at UNAM began conducting research and, in 1974, courses on international relations were offered at the newly established campuses in Acatlán and Aragón. Even more recently the University of the Americas has started its own teaching program on this discipline.

Academic publications will also tend to increase in the near future. In addition to *Foro internacional* and *Relaciones internacionales*, new academic journals and books are more likely to appear from the recently established universities and institutions such as the Universidad Metropolitana (UAM), the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económica (CIDE), and the Centro de Estudios Económicos y Sociales del Tercer Mundo (CEESTEM).

All these developments support the adoption of an updated manner of analyzing international reality, which might provide a new, more scientific perspective. The second part of this essay will attempt to introduce the efforts already made toward accomplishing this goal.

II

The current situation regarding the analytic study of international relations in Mexico can be broadly described as a scholarly search for identification. This requires an understanding of a variety of questions related to the nature and elements that make international relations a distinctive discipline, different from other social sciences, and therefore subject to its own disciplinary study.

The scope and significance of these efforts can be classified into three groups: (1) essays that delineate the history of building a theory of international relations; (2) articles oriented toward particular theoretical formulation; and (3) essays that have confined their purpose to the setting of what might be considered the "principles" of the field. These works provide the basis for further discussion on the study of international relations in Mexico.

(1) The two main works dealing with the historical development of an international relations theory are: "The Road to a Theory of International Relations" and "The Evolution of International Relations as a Scientific Discipline since World War II," written by Emilio Cárdenas Elorduy [11] and Víctor Batta and Rosendo Casasola [6], respectively.

The first essay presents a discussion of the various perspectives and techniques involved in developing a theory of international relations. Cárdenas is largely concerned with identifying the main trends that characterize this intellectual process: from an emphasis on diplomatic history, to normative studies, to a political science perspective, and, finally, to a theoretical debate in which the most significant approaches are systematically weighed one against the next.

According to Cárdenas, the first stage, of equating international relations with diplomatic history, is very old. It dates back to Thucydides in ancient Greece, who wrote the first objective analysis of relations among states which, in turn, initiated further studies on treaties, war, statesmen, and diplomatic affairs. From

this it would appear as though the study of international relations is no different, in its fundamental aspects, from the study of history. But the historian's results are neither adequate nor necessarily relevant for the creation of a discipline which has to deal with the combination of factors that the term "international relations" implies.

The next emphasis, on normative studies, came from the efforts in the post-World War I period directed at remedying problems in the international situation. Students and observers who have written about norms in international society had the purpose of "discovering the ends and objective international society should pursue." The answers were found in the notion of creating an effective international organization. The fact that the League of Nations failed to prevent World War II caused normative thinking to lose some of its significance as a feature for the study of international relations.

As the directions of these scholars were not scientifically oriented, it became necessary to discover viable theories and concepts that might bring some organization to the study of such a complex subject. The new emphasis was on the analysis of "relations among states from a political perspective, or more clearly, the study of the 'political' element of these relations. . . ." This perspective established the concepts of "power" and "interest" as the basic elements of a developing systematic body of knowledge concerning the field of international relations. Professor H. J. Morgenthau is the best-known exponent of this view.

Finally, Emilio Cárdenas identifies "theoretical debate" as the process in which the theory of international relations finally became the object of widespread study and review in the United States and other countries. In this regard, Morgenthau's views produced several reactions which engendered new schools of thought: a systemic approach which included behavioral, theoretical, historical, political, and sociological viewpoints. Authors such as Morton Kaplan, Stanley Hoffmann, Raymond Aron, and Karl Deutsch, among others, have provided ideas that have finally contributed to what in future will be the "true science" of international relations.

Batta and Casasola, in the second essay mentioned earlier, have taken up this theme by pointing to the same trends but adding new items that enlarge the discussion. One new addition includes the Marxist school of thought as a newcomer in the field of international relations through the books of two Soviet scholars: G. Arbatov and D. Tomashevski (cf. Goormaghtigh [17]). This perspective appears to differ from that of the "bourgeois" theories already reviewed. These two authors base their statements on Lenin's assumption that there are material elements which characterize the relations "not only among classes, but among peoples, nations, and states."

Another important item in this essay is the listing of academic writings which appeared in different countries by a group of scholars concerned specifically with the disciplinary study of international relations: Hans Joachim Leu in Venezuela, Antonio Truyol y Serra, Manuel Medina, and Roberto Mesa in Spain, and Mario Ojeda and Héctor Cuadra in Mexico.

Batta and Casasola's final remarks attempt to criticize these views on the

study of international relations and they make an interesting suggestion for dealing with this subject in a more proper way. Their approach bears some resemblance to what Stanley Hoffmann and Raymond Aron have called "historical sociology" [18]. According to Batta and Casasola, the best way for understanding international relations as a body of organized principles is to take history as the point of departure. They propose that the construction of a theory that might distinguish different types of foreign policies and international relations can be better developed by using a Marxist theory and methodology that take into account social structure and class interests. Though these authors are aware of the fact that up to now there is no generally accepted Marxist theory of international relations, they rationalize that it is more than likely to be developed in the near future.

(2) In the second group of essays, discussing particular theoretical formulations, there are four articles: Mario Ojeda's "Basic Problems in the Study of International Relations" [26]; Graciela Arroyo's "The Basic Factors of International Relations" [3]; the introduction of the Spanish translation of J. W. Burton's *General Theory of International Relations* by Héctor Cuadra [15, pp. 11-13]; and Sergio Aguilera Beteta's "The Real Perspective of International Relations" [12].

Mario Ojeda's essay is the first work ever to discuss the problem of international relations theory in Mexico (1964). According to Ojeda, many problems have arisen since World War I that have justified the need for scholarly clarification on the issue. The old diplomatic methods must be discarded before international relations can become an autonomous discipline. Two tendencies have been evident: on the one hand, it is thought that this discipline must study international affairs from every possible angle; on the other, only the political aspects are to be studied.

Ojeda upholds that what is needed before anything else is a theoretical basis for international relations, but that "any general theory" is, in itself, "utopian." One should, therefore, fall back upon "working assumptions" or "theoretical patterns of analysis." Using the notion of "power" as the basis connecting the various relevant topics could be easily adapted to the needs of theory. There might be a danger of ignoring factors other than political ones, but it could be useful to consider "power" as a conceptual pattern which may serve as a guide for theoretical analysis.

To maintain objectivity one must clearly distinguish between doctrine, political action, and science when developing a theory on international relations. It is necessary to develop a series of postulates on universal values, and guard against abusive generalizations. The best way of understanding international problems, according to Ojeda, is to keep in mind the indissoluble union of economic, political, social, cultural, and other relevant phenomena. When two points of view appear to be irreconcilable, the formation of teams of specialists and "interdisciplinary experts" who coordinate their research and theoretical approaches would provide the field with a workable solution. If one examines the great

works on international relations, the lack of coordination due to the absence of a common basis is most conspicuous. This, however, does not deny the importance of the individual studies that have contributed to the creation of a theoretical structure in international relations.

This "utopian" effort to create a theory of international relations is viewed by Graciela Arroyo in a broader fashion as proceeding from the formulation of the concept of *forces profondes*, elaborated on by Pierre Renouvin and J. B. Duroselle [27]. According to Arroyo, the problem of the study of international relations is certainly a difficult one, but its increasing development by social sciences offers many clues for making it a more coherent corps of knowledge.

She stresses, above all, the need for adopting a new approach, different from the traditional methods. While Duroselle describes international relations as a subject of study related to all forms of political, economic, social, demographic, cultural, and psychological relations among nations, Arroyo points out that this subject is not merely the study of everything falling under this broad topic, but, rather, the selection of the most relevant elements that underline these relations.

She defines these elements as "basic factors." What are these factors and why are they basic? According to Arroyo, they are all those elements from the international milieu which generate any result. In other words they are structural elements whose components characterize a system in which a process related with other systems finally gives birth to certain types of relations, situations, problems, or phenomena of international importance. These factors are considered basic in the sense that they are the fundamentals or points of factual support in the final production of international developments and problems. These structural elements include: geographic, demographic, economic, social, cultural, and historical factors, natural resources, the political structure (both domestic and external), and the overriding value system. The integration of all these elements characterizes different kinds of systems: a nation, a region, a coalition, or even the whole international system.

Finally, Arroyo suggests that when selecting and categorizing the facts of international relations, it is necessary to apply a method to group facts according to their affinities, on the one hand, and to their dissimilarities that might deduce a structural tendency on the other. What is needed at this point, is neither the construction of general abstractions nor the descriptive character of a monography.

The importance of Arroyo's contribution is her emphasis that theorists must take into account the complexity of factors which produce the basis for the field of international relations. Using this approach, clear criteria for distinguishing the relevant from the irrelevant, and the central from the marginal, can be obtained.

The approach to the problem taken by Héctor Cuadra, the third theorist to be discussed here, is of a different nature. Cuadra emphasizes consideration of the different perspectives involved in developing a theory of international relations. He elaborates on his approach by pointing out that international relations refers both to the facts of international life as well as to the explanation of those facts. In other words, the term "international relations" means both the "science of

international relations" and the "subject of study of this science." According to Cuadra, this latter emphasis has nothing to do with "the real situation of the state's integration." Therefore, when international relations is studied as "a theory of international relations," it should more properly be called "sociology of international politics."

In this regard, Cuadra holds that "the theory of international relations should primarily attempt the analysis and systematic study of international politics." But, he only considers theory meaningful if it makes accurate prediction possible. In other words, he regards theory's main function to be the discovery of regularities in the patterns of interaction among states and in the general tendencies of international society. By using the theory, a social scientist can proceed in formulating important hypothetical frameworks for the scientific analysis of the state's behavior.

Cuadra's view toward the subject matter of international relations is similar to that of such writers as Antonio Truyol [33] and Schwarzenberger [30], in the sense that he sees "international sociology" as the best way to determine the identity and scope of the field of international relations. Through this approach the "facts of international life," whether they be economic, juridic, political, or cultural in nature, can be properly outlined to contribute to a more responsive theory on international relations.

The above three works share in common the concern for building a disciplinary framework for the study of international relations whose boundaries overlap with political science, sociology, or any other relevant social science with an interdisciplinary perspective. Sergio Aguilera's article, the final theoretical formulation to be discussed in this section, demonstrates a different interest in the quest for theory. His aim is to present the nature of international relations as an purely autonomous discipline.

The main purpose of this article is to clarify a set of misconceptions toward the study of international relations that are raised by Professor César Sepúlveda in a Mexico City newspaper [31, p. 7]. Professor Sepúlveda asserted that the discipline of international relations does not exist because it is a vast field without specific content, and furthermore, what is understood as theory in this field is in fact an uncoordinated body of knowledge that is impossible to organize by any coherent method.

Aguilera answers this attack on the discipline, firstly, by pointing out that these types of statements lead only to confusion. The reality of the controversy surrounding the study of international relations is based on two approaches: the "traditional approach" and the "scientific approach." The traditional approach is represented by historians and jurists who closely work with the body of rules and principles of international law. The scientific approach is concerned with the establishment of disciplinary requirements, and seeks to claim an autonomous status for the discipline of international relations. This claim finds justification in the observation that "social relations beyond the state's national borders" need a discipline capable of correctly understanding "the nature of the problem international relations deals with."

As far as theoretical development is concerned, Aguilera points out that there is a theory of international relations which is old and yet very young. It is old in the sense that existing literature encompassing a broad definition of international relations has come from ancient India and China, passing through the European philosophers and historians to the present century. But it is new if one accepts the notion of the systematic study of observable phenomena. All the theoretical efforts up to now have contributed to the building of a "science of international relations." However, it is still difficult to accept that a coherent and integrated view of the discipline has been achieved.

According to Aguilera, the main obstacle for creating a general theory of international relations comes from the almost endless number of variables that have to be taken into account, and the dynamics of international problems that make international relations an ever-changing field. In concluding, he suggests that social scientists concerned with the field of international relations select only the most relevant theoretical propositions in an attempt to build a more advanced perspective that can guarantee the correct application of scientific methods.

There is much to be pleased about in the above cited works. Their effort toward a correct understanding of international relations is especially noteworthy. Despite this positive accomplishment, however, there is little elaboration on the fundamentals of the discipline. The following section specifically deals with this problem and will attempt to raise the main issues that have to be taken into account in building a science of international relations.

(3) This last trend, focusing on the fundamental elements of a scientific study on international relations, is the result of a cooperative intellectual enterprise among students, faculty members, and academic authorities at the Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales at UNAM in 1976. The principal aim was to determine the identity and scope of the field in order to improve the teaching of international relations. The study was concerned not only with the nature of this subject, but with the problems studied by other social sciences. It is assumed that international relations is a social science.

The discussion of these problems appeared in a special issue of *Relaciones internacionales*, a collection of articles written by Alfredo Romero Castilla, María Luisa Cabral, Graciela Arroyo, Jaime Isla, and Víctor Batta.

In these articles, the authors are fully aware of the problems confronting the building of an integrated and systematic procedure for the study of international relations. Romero Castilla [29] focuses on the analysis of the various teaching programs that have existed since the founding of the Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales. His main point is that despite the real aim for integrating social knowledge, the teaching of this subject has remained closely attached to the traditional conception oriented toward diplomatic history and international law. Therefore, international relations must first free itself from both disciplines, and attempt its disciplinary construction by assuming that its own special field of inquiry only needs various elements from other social sciences for the sake of clarification.

María Luisa Cabral [10] also attempts to clarify the meaning of international relations, and its real position as a social science. She deals with the ambiguity of the term international relations which can refer to either a science or a part of international reality. She identifies the complex character of this subject with regard to the problems that occur in "international society," and which are not confined to relations among nation-states. Finally, she asserts that the magnitude of elements that create international phenomena tends to make international relations a discipline of synthesis, that can only be understood properly through an interdisciplinary approach capable of integrating the different aspects of international reality as a whole.

The work of Graciela Arroyo [4] seeks to investigate with the most relevant disciplinary criteria the requirements of a discipline of international relations. She discusses the various forms of knowledge that overlap with the teaching of international relations. Her statements are original and helpful. In addition to broadening the discussion on the problems of identifying the "subject of study," the "field of the study," and the process of an interdisciplinary approach, she also expresses a particular interest in searching for more effective techniques of research, analysis, and teaching to be used to integrate a suitable methodology for such a study. She concludes by proposing a so-called disciplinary approach, which would delineate the various elements of ontologic nature that might comprise a scientific explanation of international relations.

Finally, Jaime Isla and Víctor Batta [19], in assuming the unity of the field of study, suggest a view specially devoted to the problem of university teaching. The training of specialists in international relations requires not only a correct understanding of the subject, its theory, and method, but also the development of more effective teaching methods for improved instruction. The basic step is to design a plan of study that would coherently integrate the relationship between what is to be learned and how it is to be taught, as the best way of teaching international relations.

The problems arising from a systematic analysis of international relations have produced a fair amount of intellectual dissatisfaction, because most of what has thus far been considered "theory" in this field remains to be worked out. In this respect, any serious effort that might contribute to improving the knowledge in this field should be welcomed regardless of the country or school of thought from which these formulations proceed.

The importance of the Mexican experience lies in the fact that, after three decades of scholarly training, specialists have finally started to think of international relations in terms of a distinct social science. However, the problem of establishing its exact nature remains. The question of whether or not this discipline is fully independent, a sub-division of other disciplines, or a science of synthesis, has not yet been solved. What is basic for one scholar is not always relevant for another. Furthermore the discussion does not even involve all the scholars belonging to the profession.

One thing, at least, seems clear. Most of the works briefly reviewed here, though representing a variety of different literature, offer valuable insights into the state of the field and the way it is understood. The majority have marked

similarities regarding the subject matter of international relations and the essentials of the field, viewing social reality as a whole and social sciences as a unified area of academic exploration.

However, it would be inadequate to attempt the understanding of this reality without using particular disciplinary views in order to comprehend it. This assumption is indispensable for outlining what Roberto Mesa has called "an implicit model" for the study of each one of the sciences. In the case of sociology or political science, it refers to the notion of "integrated society" [24, p. 247], but in international relations it is impossible to deal with such a society. If one just looks at the traditional understanding of the subject found in the relations among nation-states, it is obvious that the latter form a set of independent political unities that question the applicability of the notion of *integrated society*. The scope in which international relations is located can be identified as the whole set of relations among international social groups that can only be studied through a particular perspective, an independent science of international relations. In other words, the specific character of international relations, in both the subject matter and the field as a whole, should attempt to answer the different series of questions related to international phenomena which, since World War II, have become more complex. This has been the main concern of the authors working in the present stage of the study of international relations in Mexico.

The combined insights of these authors clearly suggest the essential elements that require consideration in any serious disciplinary study of international relations. In moving toward a more coherent disciplinary study of this field one can discern four specific problem areas.

(i) The Name of the Discipline

From the very beginning, the term international relations has been an ambiguous expression. Its present usage refers to both the name of the subject of study and the name of the discipline. Quincy Wright has concluded that it is a matter of convenience to accept the term international relations as a means of designating either "the relations between groups of major importance in the life of the world at any period of history, and particularly relations among territorially organized Nation States" or "...the studies or disciplines describing, explaining, evaluating, or assessing the conduct of those relations" [35, p. 8].

Such statements have not enjoyed general acceptance mostly because of the confusion that has prevailed surrounding the usage of the term. Several authors, in an attempt to clarify the issue, have preferred substitute terms such as "international studies," "foreign policy," or "international politics." However these terms are equally indistinct in meaning. International studies is so broad an expression that it makes it difficult to identify the various parts of the social reality it seeks to study. The term foreign policy clearly implies one nation's official perspective toward all the others, while international politics merely refers to a general set of actions (and reactions) that take place between the nations of the world. Therefore, the term international relations is the best one for describing the united body of phenomena, ties, actions, and interactions, that take place

among the various components of international society, be they states, international organizations, social and economic organizations, corporations, or individuals.³

(ii) The Subject of Study

The adoption of a name such as international relations also suggests other problems. What exactly will be the subject of study or the material covered by international relations? According to Graciela Arroyo, two points must be distinguished, namely, " 'subject' in the general sense, called *international reality*, and 'subject' in the strict sense, the *international facts* that are mutually related in the production of international phenomena" [4, p. 30].

Out of these elements it is possible to draft a definition of international reality as the "group of phenomena, relations, actions, interactions, institutions, and processes that go beyond the state's borders and form the dynamics of international society" [4, p. 30]. On the other hand, "*international facts* are all those agents that produce a phenomenon, or that give birth to a process in international society. . . . From the interactions of these facts, or *real things*, come international phenomena, international relation's disciplinary subject of study" [4, p. 30].

(iii) The Notion of International Society

One of the most difficult problems in the study of international relations is to distinguish the part of social reality in which social relations occur. The most commonly accepted view identifies the study of governments and their foreign relations as the key subject in the study of international relations. Such statements leave out the fact that the real scope of international relations is within the limits of the so-called international society, formed by states, international organizations, and other social groups, as well as individuals.

It is evident that the states and international organizations are easily identified as agents of international phenomena, but according to María Luisa Cabral, the other, more individualistic social organizations, also form a part of international society because of their economic, social, and cultural actions. Something similar happens with individuals "when, because of their position, power, function, or influence, they commit actions relevant to the rest of international society" [10, pp. 19-20].

(iv) Interdisciplinary Integration

Generally speaking, scholars who have understood the wide complexity of problems with which the discipline of international relations must deal, have referred to this field as interdisciplinary, in the sense that it represents a synthesis and not merely a juxtaposition of subjects. This is perhaps the "most ambitious effort toward identifying the real position of the scientific study of international relations. . . ." This process is characterized by "the interaction among certain disciplines such as diplomatic history, economic and political geography, inter-

³ This is the preliminary conclusion reached by the research team from the Centro de Relaciones Internacionales at UNAM while attempting to develop a conception of an introductory textbook for the study of international relations.

national law, political economy, sociological theory, political science, and others. The coherent organization of the various elements of these disciplines have contributed to the integration of a new discipline, international relations. This discipline seeks the analysis of global international problems through a systematic process that will organize the concepts, categories, and interpretative views of the various and complex international phenomena" [4, p. 31].

Viewed in this light, the interdisciplinary process will contribute to the establishing of the proper nature of international relations as a social science. Graciela Arroyo states that the correct application of this interdisciplinary perspective "has to be considered not only as a factual reality, but as a form of approaching the problems of contemporary society; a method that allows at the same time the application of the intelligence to the apprehension of the reality, subject to study both as a *unity* and a *whole*, to confront not only the ephemeral needs of the present, but the rapid changes that might occur within that reality" [4, p. 31].

I have focused in the foregoing discussion on the study of international relations in Mexico by emphasizing the need to consider this field of study as a single body of knowledge. In principle, this statement is indisputable, but the complexity and dynamism inherent in the reality with which international relations deals, has inevitably led to the fragmentation of the field. Therefore, it is important to stress the need for systematic and articulated work, limited neither by disciplines nor competing views.

A fuller and more meaningful discussion of the theoretical and methodological issues raised here, will be possible as long as further developments come from the various research projects (textbooks, dissertations, etc.) currently in preparation. The most recent work of Graciela Arroyo's [5] is an interpretation of the theory and practice of international relations in the Soviet Union, Rumania, China, and Yugoslavia, a doctoral dissertation that seeks to articulate the theoretical issues discussed in the last part of this paper, as it applies to Socialist doctrine.

The evaluation of the possible merits of the above scholarship is a task that overflows the limits of this essay. Being myself a member of the profession, it would seem unfair for me to praise the academic labors of my colleagues. However I would like to say that I hope that the studies presented here will mark an important step in the direction of familiarizing foreign scholars with the insights that have characterized the process of passing from the traditional perspective to the scientific approach in the study of international relations in Mexico.

REFERENCES

1. AGUILAR CAMIN, H., et al. *El poder en México: balance y perspectivas de la historiografía política en México, 1951-1972* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1974).

2. AGUILERA BETETA, S. "La perspectiva real de las relaciones internacionales," *Relaciones internacionales*, No. 3 (October–December 1973).
3. ARROYO, G. "Los factores básicos de las relaciones internacionales," *Estudios internacionales I*, Cuadernos del Centro de Relaciones Internacionales, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales (Mexico City, 1971).
4. ————. "El carácter disciplinario de las relaciones internacionales y su estructura dentro del nuevo plan de estudios," *Relaciones internacionales*, No. 16 (January–March 1977).
5. ————. "La conception des relations internationales dans la pensée socialiste" (Ph.D. diss., Faculty of Law and Political and Social Sciences, University of Bordeaux, 1981).
6. BATA, V., and CASASOLA, R. "La evolución de las relaciones internacionales como disciplina científica desde la segunda guerra mundial," in *El estudio científico de las relaciones internacionales*, by M. Merle, J. W. Burton, B. M. Russett, O. Pellicer, G. Arroyo et al. (Mexico City: UNAM, 1978).
7. BOILS MORALES, G., and MURGA FRASSINETTI, A. *Las ciencias sociales en América Latina* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1979).
8. BRUCAN, S. *The Dissolution of Power* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971).
9. ————. *The Dialectic of World Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1978).
10. CABRAL, M. L. "El estudio de las relaciones internacionales," *Relaciones internacionales*, No. 16 (January–March 1977).
11. CÁRDENAS ELORDUY, E. "El camino hacia la teoría de las relaciones internacionales," *Revista Mexicana de ciencia política* (UNAM, FCPS), No. 63 (January–March 1971).
12. CASTAÑEDA, J. *México y el orden internacional* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1956); English version: *Mexico and the United Nations* (New York: Manhattan Publishing Co., 1958).
13. El Colegio de México, ed. *Ciencias sociales en México: desarrollo y perspectiva* (Mexico City, 1979).
14. COSIO VILLEGAS, D. *Cuestiones internacionales de México, una bibliografía* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 1966).
15. CUADRA, H. "Estudio preliminar sobre la teoría de las relaciones internacionales," Introduction to *Teoría general de las relaciones internacionales*, by J. W. Burton, trans. Héctor Cuadra (Mexico City: UNAM, 1973).
16. DUNN, F. S. "The Scope of International Relations," *World Politics*, Vol. 1 (1948).
17. GOORMAGHTIGH, J. "International Relations as a Field of Study in the Soviet Union," in *The Year Book of World Affairs, 1974* (London: Stevens & Sons, 1974).
18. HOFFMANN, S., ed. *Contemporary Theory in International Relations* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1960).
19. ISLA, J., and BATA, V. "Planes de estudio por objetivos de aprendizaje: el caso de relaciones internacionales," *Relaciones internacionales*, No. 16 (January–March 1977).
20. LEU, H. J. "Introducción al estudio de las relaciones internacionales," *Politeia* (Instituto de Estudios Políticos, Caracas), No. 1 (1972).
21. MCCLELLAND, C. A. "The Function of Theory in International Relations," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (September 1959).
22. MEDINA, M. *La teoría de las relaciones internacionales* (Madrid: Seminarios y Ediciones, 1973).
23. MERLE, M. *Sociologie des relations internationales* (Paris: Jurisprudence Dalloz/Marcel Merle, 1976).
24. MESA, R. *Teoría y práctica de relaciones internacionales* (Madrid: Taurus, Ediciones, 1977).
25. MEYER, L., and CAMACHO, M. "La ciencia política en México," in *Sociología y ciencia política en México (un balance de veinticinco años)* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1979).
26. OJEDA GOMEZ, M. "Problemas básicos en el estudio de las relaciones internacionales," *Foro internacional* (El Colegio de México), No. 17 (July–September 1964).

27. RENOUVIN, P., and DUROSELLE, J. B. *Introduction à l'histoire des relations internationales* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1964).
28. REYNA, J. L. "La investigación sociológica en México," in *Sociología y ciencia política en México (un balance de veinticinco años)* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1979).
29. ROMERO CASTILLA, A. "Notas sobre la evolución de la enseñanza de las relaciones internacionales en la Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales," *Relaciones internacionales*, No. 16 (January-March 1977).
30. SCHWARZENBERGER, G. *Power Politics: A Study of International Society*, 3rd ed. (London: Stevens & Sons, 1964).
31. SEPÚLVEDA, C. "Mensaje de aliento: la política internacional, vocación," *Excelsior* (Mexico City), July 17, 1973.
32. THOMPSON, K. "The Study of International Politics: A Survey of Trends and Developments," *Review of Politics*, Vol. 14 (1952).
33. TRUYOL Y SERRA, A. *Introducción al estudio de las relaciones internacionales* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1963).
34. TUCKER, R. W. "The Study of International Politics," *World Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (July 1958).
35. WRIGHT, Q. *The Study of International Relations* (New York: Apleton Century-Crofts, 1955).