2 Latin America's Violent Peace

Analysts of international conflict tend to ignore Latin America, believing that little military conflict exists and that whatever wars in which these nations may engage are minor.[1] Even those who specialize in the politics of the region, including Latin Americans themselves, tend to perceive interstate conflict as sporadic and generally, a non-issue.[2] This chapter examines the historical record to demonstrate that the use of violence across national boundaries has been a consistent trait of Latin America's international politics. In fact, violence in the region escalates to war in much the same proportion as in the rest of the world, with the exception of the Middle East.

The historical record of military conflict makes the Latin American experience appropriate for evaluating competing explanations for why decisionmakers choose to use force. This chapter serves as a historical overview of the empirical experience analyzed in parts 2 and 3. In the first section, I define the security complex to which Latin America belongs and identify its security *problematique*. A second section quantitatively examines the history of Latin American wars and MIDs, both intra- and inter-regionally. A concluding section examines past and current Latin American efforts to eliminate the use of violence in the region's international politics.

The Latin American Security Complex and Its Problematique

The primary security concerns that tightly link a group of countries in Latin America's security complex arise from both self-perceptions and political competition. These factors link the U.S., Latin America, Belize, Guyana, and Suriname into a security complex,[3] but have historically kept Canada out. Even Canada's decision to join the Organization of American States has not yet effectively incorporated it into the security complex.

Self-perceptions linked the former Spanish and Portuguese colonies with the former British colony that defined itself in opposition to the mother country (the U.S.), but not with the one which never severed those political links (Canada). After independence the idea of a "Western Hemisphere," culturally and politically distinct from Europe, permeated the diplomatic rhetoric, if not actual foreign policy, of these states. The U.S. itself articulated this view, officially in the Monroe Doctrine and popularly when it sided with a Venezuelan dictator against the British in the 1890s.[4] Latin American diplomats even discussed the desirability of developing "American" (i.e., western hemispheric) international law. At various times different Latin American countries tried, unsuccessfully, to make the Monroe Doctrine (promulgated unilaterally by U.S. President James Monroe in 1823) a security policy of the Americas as a whole.[5]

But self-perceptions are usually a deceptive guide to behavior and outcomes when they clash with material interests and power. The U.S. has always opposed multilateralizing the Monroe Doctrine, while in the early nineteenth century Simón Bolívar in Colombia, as well as Argentine leaders, quickly discovered that the U.S. would not jeopardize its relations with Europe to defend other American nations.[6] In the mid-nineteenth century Mexico found to its dismay that South American states were unwilling to play a role in limiting U.S. expansion at the expense of its American neighbors. Further examples of perceptions themselves not defining security complexes abound in the twentieth century. Among the most notable instances were Brazil's frustrated claims to membership in the great power concert in the Council of the League of Nations, Argentine perceptions that it belonged to a British-centered security complex during World War II, and revolutionary Cuba's belief that it could leave the regional security complex.[7]

Central American balance of power dynamics, the Nicaragua-Colombia territorial dispute, and the 1995 war between Ecuador and Peru provide

more contemporary examples of the indirect links among distinct bilateral conflicts. In 1993 Colombia accused Nicaragua of seeking missile boats from North Korea in order to contest Colombian sovereignty over the San Andres Islands. Nicaragua denied the charges, noted that it was downsizing its military establishment in accord with Central American confidence-building measures, and cited the sale of helicopters to Ecuador as an example. These purchases, in turn, increased the operational capacity of the Ecuadorian armed forces and contributed to its provocative behavior in the disputed territory. Peru responded with a full-scale attack on Ecuadorian positions.[8]

The security externalities that combine with self-identification to make "Latin America" a security complex[9] develops from three different arenas: international, regional, and domestic. At the international level, the U.S. is a great power that, irrespective of Latin American wishes, has historically identified all of Latin America as belonging to its unique sphere of influence. U.S. power and geography meant there would be no great power concert or balancing in Latin America. The U.S. has never recognized the right of any other great power to a sphere of influence, yet has insisted on its right to unilaterally pursue and defend its interests anywhere in the Western Hemisphere.[10] U.S. foreign policy has been consistent on its right to regional paramountcy from the Monroe Doctrine in 1823 through the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty (1901), the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (1904), the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (1947), and the invasion of Panama in 1989. The security implication for Latin America has been that U.S. defense interests produce fundamental security externalities for each and every Latin American nation.[11]

A second security externality is a remnant of Spanish colonialism and nation-building after Independence. Latin American interstate conflicts historically have most often revolved around how to resolve the overlapping ecclesiastical, administrative, and military colonial boundaries affecting the territories of national states. One reason why Latin American international politics appears so geared to legal argumentation is because most states have numerous colonial documents supporting expansive claims over territory.

The prevalence of disputed territorial borders in the region means that the method of resolution of a particular conflict, whether diplomatic or military, takes on more general significance. This may explain why some countries, frustrated by their own diplomatic failures to solve territorial dis-

putes, supported Argentina's military seizure of the disputed Malvinas Islands in 1982. For example, Peru, which provided military and diplomatic aid to Argentina, was itself engaged in a long-standing dispute with Ecuador in which the latter rejected Peru's territorial gains by force of arms in 1941.

A domestically rooted externality develops out of the highly stratified social structure in Latin America and the developing nature of its economies. When the social structure in one country is threatened by revolutionary upheaval, elites in the rest of Latin America begin to worry. These Latin American perceptions of threats to regional stability are re-reinforced by the U.S. in two ways. The U.S. attempts to organize regional opposition, and thus engages in rhetorical excesses, if not the actual fabrication of "evidence" of revolutionary internationalism.[12] In addition, the willingness of the U.S. to act militarily in these situations raises the specter of internationalizing domestic conflict (as occurred in Central America during the 1980s).

Transborder spillovers of revolutionary upheaval are not merely perceptual overreactions by Latin American and U.S. elites. Historically, many of those seeking to change the social structure within their country have both appealed for support from and offered assistance to their Latin American brothers and sisters facing the same problems. Sandino's fight against the U.S. intervention in Nicaragua during the 1920s, Cuba's Revolution, Chile's Popular Unity administration, and the Nicaraguan Sandinistas in the 1970–80s all had significant extranational participation.[13] Neofascist agents from Brazil's Estado Novo traveled South America in the 1930s to build a regional front against "Communists," while Perón's Argentine labor movement and Peru's progressive APRA party tried to reproduce themselves elsewhere on the continent. Che Guevara tried to reproduce the Cuban Revolution in the heart of South America. Even Caribbean democrats cooperated loosely in the notorious Caribbean Legion to overthrow dictators.[14]

Note, however, that Latin America's security complex does not include an issue that characterizes developing countries in other regions: the nation itself is not an issue.[15] Political regimes claiming to represent the nation often have legitimacy problems, but in the twentieth century these have not led to separatist movements. Indigenous people, as well as the descendants of Africans brought to the Atlantic coast in Central America, have demanded their rights as citizens, and in cases where communities are split physically by national boundaries, dual citizenship. Not even the recent political movements for varying degrees of autonomy by some of these communities call for full independence.[16]

If Latin America can be thought of as a security complex, what is its security *problematique*? From a Latin American perspective, extracontinental threats largely ceased to be major issues once the U.S. became powerful enough to defend the hemisphere. (Mexico did worry about a Japanese attack during World War II, but neither Brazil nor Argentina was seriously concerned about German aggression; indeed, when the U.S. provided Brazil with equipment and supplies to defend its "bulge" on the Atlantic, the Brazilians chose to focus resources on their southwestern border with Argentina.[17]) Although Germany tried alternately to woo and threaten Mexico, Chile, Argentina, and Brazil, these American states understood that the costs of playing balance of power politics were enormous, the chances of the U.S. accommodating such an alliance small, and the threat from Germany if they did not ally, minor.[18]

Given the forced isolation of the region from great power politics, its security *problematique* arises from the region's own internal characteristics. In a security complex characterized by disputed borders, unequal levels of economic development and broad disparities in the distribution of power, the main security threats for Latin American states revolve around sudden attempts at military resolutions of long-standing border issues, massive movements of migrants, and the spread of revolution. Included in this regional security agenda are the manner and timing of U.S. intervention in the hemisphere. U.S. unilateralism and its inconsistent application (meaning that a country cannot count on U.S. aid if attacked)[19] produce security benefits and costs for Latin American states that are largely beyond their capacity to control. The unpredictability of U.S. behavior thus becomes a security risk.

The History of Militarized Disputes in the Region

Table 2.1 lists the 23 wars in which Latin American nations participated after their wars of Independence, both in the Western Hemisphere as well as in Europe (World War I and World War II) and Asia (World War II and Korea). The standard international relations definition of war, which requires at least 1,000 battlefield related deaths, is quite arbitrary, but accepted in the field. My analysis conforms to standard usage in the interest of developing a study which can be used by researchers outside of the region. In consequence, many of the events that observers of, and participants in, the

TABLE 2.1 Latin American Wars Since Independence

Year	Name	Participants
1825–28	Uruguayan War	Argentina v. Brazil
1836–39	Peruvian Confederation	Chile (Argentina) v. Bolivia, Peru
1841	Peruvian-Bolivian	Peru v. Bolivia
1846–48	Mexican-American War	United States v. Mexico
1851–52	La Plata War	Brazil v. Argentina
1861–67	Franco-Mexican War	France (United Kingdom, Italy) v. Mexico
1864–70	War of the Triple Alliance	Paraguay v. Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay
1863	Ecuadorian-Colombian War	Ecuador v. Colombia
1865–66	Spanish-Chilean War	Spain v. Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia
1876	First Central American War[a]	Guatemala v. El Salvador
1879–84	War of the Pacific	Chile v. Peru, Bolivia
1885	First Central American War[a]	Mexico, El Salvador v. Guatemala
1906	Second Central American War	Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador v. Nicaragua
1907	Third Central American War	Honduras, El Salvador v. Nicaragua
1932–35	Chaco War	Bolivia v. Paraguay
1932	Leticia War[b]	Peru v. Colombia
1939–41	Zarumilla War[c]	Peru v. Ecuador
1969	Soccer War	El Salvador v. Honduras
1982	Malvinas/Falklands War	Argentina v. Great Britain
1995	Cenepa War	Peru v. Ecuador
Latin American Combat Participation in Other Wars[d]		
1918	WWI	Brazil

TABLE 2.1 (*continued*)

Year	Name	Participants
Latin American Combat Participation in Other Wars[d] (*continued*)		
1944	WWII	Brazil, Mexico
1950	Korea	Colombia

[a.] MID labels both the 1876 and 1885 conflicts as "First Central American War"

[b.] 868 battlefield deaths, below the 1,000 COW cutoff. See discussion in text.

[c.] The revised MID set limits deaths to over 500.

[d.] In WWI the Germans sank Brazilian shipping and a Brazilian naval squadron participated in Allied patrolling of the northwest African coast. During WWII Brazil fought in Italy, sustaining 400 dead and capturing 13,000 German and Italian troops; Mexico flew 785 ground attack missions in the Pacific. Colombia sent 4,000 troops to Korea, suffering 120 dead, proportionately equivalent to 1,612 U.S. dead. English, *Armed Forces of Latin America* pp. 101, 109, 318, 171, respectively

Source: MID data base, revised version to 1992"; Osny Duarte Pereira, *La seudo-rivalidad argentino-brasileno* (Buenos Aires: Corregidor, 1975) notes 8,000 Brazilian deaths in the Uruguayan War. On the War of the Peruvian Confederation, St. John, *The Foreign Policy of Peru,* pp. 34–40; Peru-Ecuador 1996 field research.

region call "war" are excluded from this analysis;[20] they are, however, included in the analysis of militarized disputes.

Two exceptions merit comment. The Leticia War in 1932 produced 868 battlefield-related deaths. The 800 Peruvian losses in a population estimated at 5.65 million in 1930 were the equivalent of more than 17,000 losses in a U.S. population estimated at 123 million in 1930 and would be more than 38,000 for a population of 270 million in 1996![21] The 1941 Zarumilla War (a.k.a., The Maranon War) between Ecuador and Peru was downgraded in the revised MID set, with combined battlefield-related deaths of more than 500. Yet in this conflict Ecuador lost 40 percent of the territory it claimed and Peruvian troops penetrated deep into undisputed Ecuadorian territory, which they held until Ecuador signed a peace treaty.[22] It strains credibility not to accept these military clashes as "wars." I include them in the list of Latin American wars, but not in the discussion of wars across regions, since I do not know if other regions had similar "near misses." I have not, however,

included the 1937 attack by Dominican forces on Haitian migrants that killed up to 12,000. Because the Haitian government responded diplomatically, not militarily, the Dominican action produced a "massacre," but not a "war."[23] For similar reasons I do not include the 1999 attack by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on Yugoslavia as a "war."

Of the 23 wars, 17 have been among Latin American nations. Nine of those Latin American wars occurred in the nineteenth century and eight in the twentieth century. The wars of the first 60–80 years of independence had tremendous consequences: states were created, confederations of states ceased to exist, and the position of states in the regional hierarchy was dramatically altered. Uruguay was created by British mediation as a result of the Argentine-Brazilian war of 1825. The creation of Panama in 1903 was partly the result of civil war in Colombia, but the dispatch of U.S. forces to the region to prevent the central government from defeating the secessionist movement was a fundamental determinant. Gran Colombia split into three states, one of which (Ecuador) struggled constantly to keep itself together. The breakup of the United Provinces of Central America led to the establishment of five independent states, and 70 years of war to attempt to re-create it under either Guatemalan or Nicaraguan leadership.

War also had implications for the regional distribution of power: a Central America united under the auspices of one state would make that state a more important player in regional politics. Perhaps the greatest impact of war on the regional hierarchy of states comes from the War of the Peru-Bolivia Confederation (1836–39) and the War of the Triple Alliance (1864–70). Those wars thwarted two powers which appeared poised to create the most powerful states in the region; that Bolivia and Paraguay are today the poorest states by far in South America is testimony to the importance of the stakes of war at the time.

The stakes of international conflict in Latin America declined around the turn of the century (after roughly 1885 in South America and 1907 in Central America). National existence and international hierarchy solidified as national identities took hold, states developed centralized and effective governments, hinterlands were colonized, and military capabilities increased. A threshold was crossed in Latin America's regional relations and we can usefully consider it the end of the "National Period."[24]

It may be tempting to deprecate the significance of Latin America's twentieth-century wars, noting that they fall just over the threshold, with the

exception of the Chaco War (Bolivia and Paraguay sustained approximately 100,000 deaths). In studying the use of violence, however, we should not rigidly adhere to definitions out of context. In the 1969 war Honduras (the poorest country in the region at the time) suffered 2,000–5,000 deaths as a result of the Salvadoran invasion, equivalent to the U.S. today losing approximately 200,000–500,000 people. The U.S. lost "only" 53,000 service people in Vietnam, but few call it an insignificant war. In addition to the loss of human life, the 1969 war effectively interrupted for twenty years the Central American economic integration project that had been progressing rapidly and stimulating strong growth in the region.[25] In the Zarumilla War, Ecuador lost 40 percent of the territory it claimed to Peru. Over the next 42 years there were 20 militarized disputes between the two parties, resulting in another war in 1995.

War may occur in Latin America, but is its frequency significantly less than in other regions? Tables 2.2 and 2.3 use two different conceptions of

TABLE 2.2 War Occurrence by Region
(Among Sovereign States in the International System)

Total Wars 1816–1997 (standard comparison)

Europe	Asia	Africa	Middle East	Latin America
30	22	5	10	21*(23)

20th Century Wars to 1997 (standard comparison)

Europe	Asia	Africa	Middle East	Latin America
15	19	4	9	6*(8)

*Because of our comparative interest here, the Leticia and Zarumilla Wars have not been added since I do not know if other regions have near misses in the battlefield related deaths count.

Source: MID data base, hostility level 5, revised version to 1992, plus author's addition of the following post 1992 wars: Europe two (Croatia-Yugoslavia; Bosnia, with Croat and Serb participation), Latin America one (Ecuador-Peru).

TABLE 2.3 Post World War II Wars, 1945–1997
(security community comparisons)

Area	number
Middle East	9
Europe	4
Southeast Asia	4
Indian Subcontinent	4
Latin America	3
Africa	2
Northeast Asia	1
North America	0

Source: Militarized Interstate Dispute data set, revised edition. For the period after MID II, I have added two European wars (Croatia-Yugoslavia, and Bosnia) and one Latin American war, Ecuador-Peru.

region for thinking comparatively about Latin America's experience with war. Table 2.2 uses the four standard regions in the literature to situate Latin America comparatively. In terms of total international wars since 1816 (the start date for quantitative studies of war) Latin America is not exceptionally peaceful. Europe (30) is by far the most warlike, followed by Asia (22) and Latin America (20, not counting the Leticia and Zarumilla Wars), each of which has significantly more experience with war than the Middle East (10) or Africa (five). Latin America's ranking is not entirely different when we just examine the twentieth century, when virtually all of the African, Asian, and Middle Eastern wars occurred. (The distribution of wars in these regions is a function of the way in which war is coded in the literature. Only conflicts between recognized members of the international state system count as "interstate" wars, the other conflicts are either "colonial" wars or "extrasystemic" wars.) The frequency of Latin American wars (six) in that century keeps the region in the middle of the group: well below Europe (15) and Asia (19), slightly below the Middle East (nine), but above Africa (four).

Table 2.3 focuses on post World War II wars. It organizes the regional categories into groups that actually share immediate security concerns and

interact over security issues (e.g., India and Korea, both in Asia, have few security-related interactions). The new distinctions include a North America category consisting of Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. (The fact that Mexico is in two regions, North and Latin America, does not affect the tallies since the country has been involved in no post World War II wars.) Viewed in this light, the Latin American experience appears even less unusual. In the post World War II period Latin America has experienced more wars (three) than northeast Asia (one) and Africa (two), and just one fewer than Europe, Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent (each with four). Only in comparison with the Middle East's nine wars can we think of Latin America (and the rest of the world!) as being relatively peaceful.

If we turn our attention to interstate disputes in which official military violence is threatened or used without producing war, Latin America appears even more violent. In the twentieth century alone, Latin American states threatened, used military force against each other, or were the subject of threats or actual use of force by non-Latin American countries more than two hundred times. The occurrence of militarized interstate disputes (MIDs) actually increased in the twentieth century.[26]

Latin America's MID behavior also fails to distinguish the region in comparative perspective. The occurrence of MIDs in the international system has increased over time, even taking into account the increase in number of states in the system.[27] Examining the MID behavior of individual nations, we find that of the 21 most dispute prone non–great-power states between 1816–1976, seven are Latin American.[28] Among the 44 enduring rivalries over the period 1816–1992, Latin American states were involved in 10, including the two longest rivalries in the study (Ecuador-Peru more than 100 years, and Chile-Argentina with 112 years).[29] And finally, analysis of dispute behavior between 1816–1976 indicates that the patterns of MID behavior can be generalized across geographic boundaries.[30]

Table 2.4 analyzes the MID data in terms of five categories: total MIDs; average number of years between militarized disputes; the escalation of MIDs to war; total participants; and whether force is used by the initiator of the conflict. Data limitations precluded analyzing the behavior of the target countries in a MID. Also, the data are analyzed only from the end of the National Period through 1992 because my research on MIDs after 1992 did not produce reliable evidence about the initiating action.[31]

From table 2.4 we can see that MIDs occur on average more than once every year (every 0.87 years in South America, every 0.79 years in Central

TABLE 2.4 Latin American Militarized Interstate Disputes (After the National Period)

Total MIDs

	Total MIDs[a]	Years per Dispute	War/MID
South America	127	110/127	3/127
1884–1993		0.87	0.024
Central America	110	87/110	3/110
1907–1993[b]		0.79	0.027

Participation Characteristics

	Total Participants	Force[c] by Initiators	Force[c] by Targets
South America	290	91/147	—[d]
1884–1993		0.62	
Central America	170	51/73	—[d]
1907–1993[b]		0.70	

[a.] Excluding W.W.I, W.W.II and Korea. see explanation in text.

[b.] Includes Central America, Panama, Mexico, Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic

[c.] Force is defined as having a hostility level of 4 or greater in the MID data set (using rather than merely threatening or displaying force).

[d.] Data has too many missing force values to be meaningful.

Source: MID data set

America). Disputes tend to begin with the overt use of force, rather than merely a threat: 62 percent in South America and 70 percent in Central America. Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient data to evaluate the response of the target of such threats. Although disputes do escalate and become militarized, it is extremely rare that they develop into war (1,000 battlefield deaths): only around 2.4 percent for South America and 2.8 percent in Central America. This behavior is well in line with the general finding that disputes involving only non-great powers "have a very high likelihood

of involving the use of force, but the probability of these disputes escalating to war has been quite small."[32]

Contemporary Latin American Disputes

Many analysts, commentators, and policymakers consider serious intra-Latin American disputes, as well as their possible militarization, as belonging to another era, specifically that characterized as pre-redemocratization and Cold War, if not pre-economic liberalization and free trade. Chapters 3 and 4 present quantitative and qualitative analyses over time to dispute the notion that conflict in the region is time bound in any significant way. In this section I simply demonstrate that violent interstate conflict continues in the contemporary period.

The contemporary era can be defined in two ways for an examination of MID behavior in Latin America; alternative dating criteria reflect views about why Latin American states used violence before the contemporary era. For some observers a watershed in Latin American politics began after 1979 with redemocratization (Ecuador started the latest "wave" in 1979), while others are more inclined to utilize 1989, when the fall of the Berlin Wall signaled the end of the Cold War.

Disagreements with other states are inherent in the very nature of sovereignty. The question is not whether disagreements among Latin American states ceased once they re-democratized or the Cold War ended; rather it is whether they stopped using, or significantly decreased the use of military force in their international bargaining over these disputes.

My definition of democracy uses the Polity III rankings up to 1993,[33] with countries scoring 6 or better on the 0–10 democracy scale. For analysts who believe 6 to be too low, we need to remember that Chile in the 1960s scored a 6; few students of Latin America would claim Chile was nondemocratic at the time.[34] By the 1990s most Latin American democracies garner scores in the 8–10 range. I have disagreements with Polity III rankings for El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The first two countries were engaged in serious civil wars in the 1980s, during which human, civil, and political rights were drastically curtailed for large portions of the population. I date their democratic transitions at a later time when their peace agreements were implemented, that is, 1992 and

TABLE 2.5 Contemporary Democracies in Latin America

Haiti 1990–91, 1994–	Dominican Republic 1978–	Cuba–NO
Costa Rica 1948–	Guatemala 1993 (**1997**)	Honduras 1990 (**1986**)
El Salvador 1984–(**1992–**)	Nicaragua 1990–	Panama 1990–
Colombia 1957–	Venezuela 1958–	Guyana 1992–
Ecuador 1979–	Peru 1980–91 (1994–)	Brazil 1985–
Bolivia 1982–	Paraguay 1989–	Chile 1990–
Argentina 1983–	Uruguay 1985–	Mexico–2000

Source: Polity III TO 1993, democracy score of 6 or better; Mares classifications after 1993. Mares revisions in parentheses and discussed in text.

1997, rather than 1984 and 1993, respectively. Honduras began its transition to democracy in 1982 and by the second presidential election in 1986 (rather than its third in 1990) had adopted the institutional and procedural mechanisms to give elections real meaning, as well as promote civil and human rights sufficiently to merit a 6. After 1993 the characterizations are mine and generally follow Polity III, except that I return Peru to democracy in 1994 for reasons explained in chapter 7.

The data in table 2.6 provide information on the intra-Latin American MIDs occurring from 1980–1997. The MID II database terminates in 1992 and the latter years are compiled from my own search carried out with limited funds and therefore likely to understate the true occurrence of MIDs. The highest level of hostility reached in the MID is provided either directly from the MID data base or based on my calculation according to MID criteria. The last column of the table indicates whether or not the countries in the dispute were democratic.

Examination of table 2.6 reveals that there has been no shortage of MIDs among Latin American states after 1979. The period 1990–94 appears to represent a significant decrease in MID activity, but by 1995 Latin America seems to return to its historical pattern of multiple MIDs per year.

The empirical record of the relationship between democracy and the use of military force in foreign policy is particularly interesting in table

TABLE 2.6 Intra-Latin American MIDs 1980–98

Year	Dyad	Hostility Level [a]	Democracy
1980	Colombia/Nicaragua	3	yes/no
	Chile/Argentina	4	no/no
1981	Ecuador/Peru	4	yes/yes
	Nicaragua/Honduras	3	no/yes
	Venezuela/Guyana	3	yes/no
	Chile/Argentina	4	no/no
	Argentina/Chile	4	no/no
1982	Argentina/Great Britain	5	no/yes
	Venezuela/Colombia	4	yes/yes
	Venezuela/Guyana	4	yes/no
	Guatemala/Mexico	2	no/no
1983	Nicaragua/Costa Rica	4	no/yes
	Argentina/Brazil	4	no/no
	Argentina/Chile	3	no/no
	Ecuador/Peru	4	yes/yes
1984	Guatemala/Mexico	4	no/no
	Peru/Ecuador	4	yes/yes
	Argentina/Chile	4	no/no
1985	Honduras/El Salvador	3	yes/no
	Nicaragua/Costa Rica	4	no/yes
	Ecuador/Peru	4	yes/yes
	Ecuador/Peru	4	yes/yes
1986	Dominican Rep/Haiti	3	yes/no
	Nicaragua/Honduras	4	no/yes
	Nicaragua/Costa Rica	4	no/yes
	Venezuela/Colombia	2	yes/yes
1987	Dominican Rep/Haiti	3	yes/no
	Nicaragua/Costa Rica	4	no/yes
	Colombia/Venezuela	4	yes/yes
1988	Honduras/Nicaragua	3	yes/no
	Panama/Costa Rica	4	no/yes
	Colombia/Venezuela	4	yes/yes
	Ecuador/Peru	4	yes/yes
1989	Honduras/Nicaragua	4	yes/no
	El Salvador/Honduras	4	no/yes
	Peru/Ecuador	3	yes/yes
1990	None		

TABLE 2.6 (*continued*)

Year	Dyad	Hostility Level [a]	Democracy
1991	Honduras/Nicaragua	4	yes/yes
	Peru/Ecuador	3	yes/yes
1992	None		
1993	None		
1994	Ecuador-Peru	2	yes/yes
1995	Ecuador/Peru	5	yes/yes
	Ecuador/Peru	4	yes/yes
	Colombia/Venezuela	4	yes/yes
	Nicaragua/Honduras	4	yes/yes
	Nicaragua/Colombia	2	yes/yes
1996	Nicaragua/Honduras	4	yes/yes
	Nicaragua/El Salvador	4	yes/yes
	Honduras/El Salvador	4	yes/yes
1997	Honduras/Nicaragua	4	yes/yes
	Nicaragua/Costa Rica	3	yes/yes
	El Salvador/Honduras	3	yes/yes
	Venezuela/Colombia	4	yes/yes
	Belize/Guatemala	4	yes/yes
1998	Ecuador/Peru	3	yes/yes
	Costa Rica/Nicaragua	3	yes/yes
	Nicaragua/Honduras	3	yes/yes

[a] Hostility Levels: 1 no use; 2 threat; 3 display; 4 use < 1,000 battlefield related deaths; 5 war

Sources: MID II to 1992; 1992; *Keesing's International Archives*; *ChipNews/Santiago Times*; *NotiSur & EcoCentral*; *Hoy* (Quito, Ecuador); and *La Nacion* (San Jose, Costa Rica); democracy classification from Table 2.5

2.6. From 1980–97 there were at least 52 MIDs. Of these MIDs 15 occurred among interstate dyads combining democratic and nondemocratic regimes, 27 MIDs were between democratic pairs, and only 10 MIDs occurred among nondemocratic dyads. Incredibly, after 1990 all of the 16 MIDs occurred between democratic dyads, although table 2.5 indicates that there were still many nondemocratic countries in the region. El Salvador and Guatemala experienced post Cold War MIDs only

after democratizing in 1993 and 1997, respectively. Peru, which shifted back and forth between democracy and authoritarianism in this period, became engaged in militarized disputes only during its democratic years. Even with this incomplete data table 2.6 clearly disputes the arguments that democratic states are absolutely peaceful.

Table 2.6, although incomplete, also provides strong evidence for rejecting the claim that the Cold War means the end of militarized behavior. Since the end of the Cold War there have been 16 MIDs, including one war, between Latin American countries.

What specific issues are associated with the use of interstate violence in Latin America? Table 2.7 lists the 11 major, 4 minor, and 4 latent disputes covering a wide variety of issues which confront the region today. A dispute is classified as major if one side is actively discussing revision of the status quo or a MID has occurred in the current activation of the dispute. A minor but active dispute is one in which disagreements over implementing an agreement occur, but in which no party has utilized military force. A latent dispute is one in which disagreements exist, but neither side raises them for discussion or other action.

Border demarcations dominate the list of current grievances, but competition for fishing and petroleum resources is also significant. Migratory flows add fuel to the tensions generated by border and resource disputes, most significantly between Colombia-Venezuela, El Salvador-Honduras and Costa Rica-Nicaragua. It is a particularly difficult issue between the latter two countries. The crisis of the Nicaraguan economy has produced about a half million illegal migrants (1/7th of the Nicaraguan population) to Costa Rica; the money they send back represents an important source of income for many Nicaraguan families. Costa Rica expelled many undocumented workers, then relented to pressure and declared an amnesty for those entering before November 18, 1999. Despite Nicaraguan concerns, the Costa Rican government has repeatedly reiterated that it will not extend the amnesty.[35]

Even when a dispute has been "officially resolved" at the negotiation or arbitration stage, problems persist in the implementation stage. Many examples exist in the current "peaceful" environment. Although the Hondurans and Salvadorans have accepted the World Court decision delimiting the border between them, there have been military mobilizations and confrontations by vigilante groups on the border. Tempers

TABLE 2.7 Interstate Disputes in Contemporary Latin America

Countries	Issue
Major Disputes	
Guatemala-Belize	Border Demarcation
Honduras-El Salvador	Implementation of Interamerican Court of Justice decision on border demarcation; migration
Honduras-El Salvador-Nicaragua	Maritime demarcation in Gulf of Fonseca; depletion of fisheries
Honduras-Nicaragua	Maritime demarcation in Atlantic; migration
Nicaragua-Costa Rica	Border demarcation; migration; transit rights in San Juan river
Nicaragua-Colombia	Territorial dispute over San Andres & Providencia Islands
Colombia-Venezuela	34 points on border in dispute; migration; guerrillas; contraband, including but not limited to drugs
Venezuela-Trinidad & Tobago	Maritime boundaries; natural resources
Haiti-Dominican Republic	Migration, border demarcation
Ecuador-Peru	Border demarcation (resolved 1998)
Bolivia-Chile	Territorial dispute: outlet to the Pacific
Minor but Active Disputes	
Chile-Peru	Final implementation of 1929 treaty covering Peruvian access to Chilean port at Arica
Panama-Colombia	Guerrilla incursions into Panama
Colombia-Costa Rica	Territorial sea in the Pacific
Latent Disputes	
Venezuela-Guyana	Territorial dispute: Venezuela claims 40% of Guyana

TABLE 2.7 (*continued*)

Countries	Issue
Antarctica (12 countries)	Treaty puts national claims on hold
Argentina-Great Britain	Malvinas/Falklands, Georgias & Sandwich Sur
United States-Cuba	US naval base in Guantanamo

Source: Francisco Rojas Aravena, "America Latina: Alternativeas y Mecanismos de Prevencion en Situaciones vinculadas a la Soberania Territorial," in *Paz y Seguridad en las Americas* October 14, 1997, p. 4; U.S. Department of Defense, *United States Security Strategy for the Americas* Washington, DC September 1995 pp. 12–14 and my own research.

are flaring over whether repatriation of citizens on the "wrong" side of the border should be forcibly carried out, as well as what the compensation should be for the property of those choosing to move.

Ecuador and Peru spent four years negotiating a resolution of their dispute after the 1995 war. Military forces were separated in the immediate area of fighting by a peacekeeping force and a number of secondary issues were soon resolved. But diplomatic negotiations stalled over Ecuadorian insistence on sovereign access to the Amazon. Only after troop mobilizations in August 1998 produced another war crisis were the two countries able to make the concessions necessary for resolution.[36]

The Bolivia-Chile dispute reactivated in 1996 after 20 years of dormancy. During 1976–78 Bolivia was engaged in what appeared to be fruitful negotiations to resolve the issue created by Chilean seizure of Bolivia's Pacific coast province in the 1879 War of the Pacific. By the provisions of a 1929 treaty resolving the Peru-Chile dispute resulting from the same war, however, Peru had to second any Chilean grants of sovereign access to the Pacific for Bolivia which traversed previously Peruvian territory. The Peruvians vehemently protested the 1976–78 negotiations, and a war scare ensued, convincing the Chileans to cease discussions. Bolivia severed full diplomatic relations with Chile in 1978. In 1996 Bolivians began actively discussing the issue and the new government of President Hugo Banzer brought up the issue at the United Nations in the fall of 1997. Although the dispute has not militarized to date, Bolivia has attempted to garner international support by accusing

Chile of maintaining half a million mines on their border. (Chile also maintains mines on its border with Peru and Argentina.)[37]

Latin American Efforts to De-Legitimize the Use of Force

Two centuries of the Latin American experience demonstrate the ubiquity of the use of force in interstate relations. Latin Americans have often been troubled by this frequent use of force. Some of the region's great liberators and statesmen believed that political integration could pacify the region. Political integration would build on cultural and political regime affinities (Spanish American and Liberal Republican), integrate markets, and turn interstate military competition into the politics of federalism.[38] Bolívar himself created Gran Colombia, consisting of present-day Venezuela, Ecuador, and Colombia. Peru and Bolivia became a confederated state, and the Central American communities formed the United Provinces of Central America at independence.

The integrationist approach to common security was defeated throughout Latin America by the force of arms. To avoid civil war, Gran Colombia disbanded in 1830. Chile and Argentina feared the potential of the Peru-Bolivia Confederation. War ensued and although Argentina was defeated, Chile prevailed in 1836–39.[39] The United Provinces of Central American succumbed to civil wars in 1838–42. The independent countries fought over the question of union until 1907, after which the issue was abandoned to the diplomats.[40]

The Latin American experience stands in marked contrast to the U.S. approach. The U.S. perception of security (as well as destiny) lay in incorporating all westward territory to the Pacific Ocean. Rather than reject the use of military force as a path to security, the U.S. embraced it as a legitimate and useful tool to develop continental security if negotiated integration failed. The price, nevertheless, was high for all states involved. Indigenous peoples were herded into reservations, Mexico was despoiled of almost half of its territory, and the U.S. Civil War was the second bloodiest war of the nineteenth century (second to the Napoleonic Wars).

Political integration was not the only means by which Latin American statesmen sought to banish violence from the region. Latin Americans joined with the U.S. in perceiving the Americas as a special place, far from the power politics of Europe. This uniqueness was expected to produce a special

style of international politics. For the U.S., uniqueness meant that it would remake the hemisphere in its own image and be the hemisphere's leader. Latin Americans, however, were generally more interested in delegitimating the use of force (military and otherwise) by powerful states in their disputes with weaker states. "American Law" was expected to protect the sovereignty of all states, rather than give great powers rights to police small power behavior. Hope in an "American system" remained, even when it became clear that this perspective did not prevent the U.S. or even Latin American states from violating the sovereignty of American states, or that not all Latin American states rejected the great power legal international order.[41]

In a rebuke to European practice, Latin American diplomats and jurists formulated the first attempts to legally limit the ability of nations to use force to collect debts owed their national citizens by foreign governments (Calvo and Drago Doctrines). Latin American efforts to limit the use of force extended to the U.S. as well. In the early 1900s the U.S. claimed to be promoting civilization, democracy, and stability by refusing to recognize governments which had come to power in nondemocratic ways. Recognition was critical since the Marines and the Navy were dispatched throughout the world when no "legitimate" government was in place to protect the lives and property of U.S. citizens. In addition, lack of international "legitimacy" of a government helped a domestic opposition to arm itself and call on outside support. The U.S. used this policy on recognition to reward pro-U.S. actors and punish those who sought European connections to balance the U.S.'s growing domination. Many Latin American countries consequently sought to make recognition of governments in power automatic, rather than subject to U.S. scrutiny of their "legitimacy."[42]

Latin Americans also tried to marginalize the use of force among themselves by treaty. Between 1826 and 1889 at least 50 conventions among Latin American states forswore the use of force to resolve disputes.[43] Yet this was the period of the bloodiest wars in the Latin American security complex. Between 1929 and 1936 seven major treaties and protocols forswore the use of force, but none was ratified by every state. Even ratification was often accompanied with reservations; the U.S. itself engaged in this practice. And once again, this was a period of intense interstate violence in the region (the Chaco War, the Leticia War, the Dominican massacre of Haitian migrants, and the build-up to the Zarumilla War in 1941 all occurred at this time).

Mediation and arbitration by both regional and extra-regional actors have also been tried. From 1885–1925 arbitral settlements of interstate conflicts

in Latin America flourished.[44] Their use declined over time, but El Salvador and Honduras and Chile and Argentina arbitrated their border disputes in the 1980s and 1990s. The resolutions by the arbiters have not been easy to implement, and were rejected by Ecuador in 1910 and Argentina in 1978. The Central American countries dragged their feet on the 1992 World Court ruling, but in 1998 agreed to work out the terms of implementation.[45] Chile and Argentina settled thirteen of fourteen border disagreements after 1984, including many which had already escalated to militarized conflict, including a near border war in 1978. Domestic protests of the 1994 arbitral decision favoring Argentina in the Laguna del Desierto controversy initially made Chile reluctant to submit the final disagreement to arbitration, but the government ultimately did so.[46]

In the 1980s South Americans borrowed the Zone of Peace concept from Australia and New Zealand in an effort to keep the Cold War from undermining regional security. The declaration of a South American zone of peace was directed at the superpowers, not the states within the region. The Contadora Initiative for peace in Central America, supported by most South American governments, fit well within this approach to security. The Contadora proposals focused on limiting the two superpowers' military influence in the region and gaining acceptance of Nicaragua's sovereign right to have a one-party state and the size of armed forces it perceived necessary for defense. Since the Zone of Peace approach did not seek to change the manner in which states in the Western Hemisphere themselves managed their disputes it lost relevance with the end of the Cold War.[47]

The Central American presidents, under the leadership of Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, embarked on a different path to end the civil wars and regional tensions of the 1980s. The Esquipulas agreements focused on democratic resolution of civil strife and targeted military establishments as one of the obstacles. They therefore called for a significant reduction in the size of defense establishments, with Arias himself arguing for their abolition. Although the Central American civil wars ended, and initial progress was made in questioning the need for defense establishments, only Panama (and Haiti in the Caribbean) abolished its military.[48] (There is a certain irony in the fact that the governments that abolished their militaries were in power only because the U.S. militarily invaded Panama in 1989 and had used the Navy and Air Force against Haiti in the early 1990s).

Arms control has also been popular in the region. At the turn of the century the British brokered the *Pactos de Mayo* naval arms agreement be-

tween Argentina and Chile. More recently, the treaty of Tlatelolco focused on nuclear nonproliferation in the region.[49] Negotiated force levels in Central America helped diffuse the level of tension in the early 1990s. A ban on bombers was discussed in the 1970s, but Peru's opposition apparently killed it, although Ecuador disposed of its small bomber force (three planes). The Andean Group presidents renounced weapons of mass destruction in December 1991 (Declaration of Cartagena). At the extreme, disarmament itself has been advocated. After achieving parity with Chile for the first time in one hundred years, Peru called for regional disarmament in 1975, but no one seems to have taken the proposal seriously.[50] The OAS is currently attempting to both institutionalize and stimulate the arms control process.[51]

Only in the U.S.-Mexican relationship since the 1930s can we find evidence of a security relationship in which the use of military force is not a factor. Mexico lost half its territory to the U.S. in 1848, suffered a war scare in the 1880s, and experienced two military interventions during the Mexican Revolution (1914 and 1916). But after 1928 both sides began to accommodate each other: Mexico toned down some aspects of its Revolution and the U.S. accepted others, including a socialist-like rhetoric and nationalization of the petroleum industry. Mexicans had come to appreciate that militarizing their relations with the great power could not benefit Mexico and the U.S. came to accept the importance of Mexican domestic stability. While they subsequently had a border demarcation disagreement (in the Chamizal), neither sought to militarize it.

Even in this case, however, the perception that military force is unable to produce security in this complex relationship is increasingly under challenge. Faced with an inward flow of drugs and people the U.S. has been steadily militarizing its southern border in a largely futile attempt to control these new "threats." The U.S. public and their leaders may not believe war is thinkable with Mexico, but they are coming to believe that using military force against Mexico is a legitimate way to address particularly pressing problems.[52]

Conclusion

Contrary to common understanding of the public and scholars alike, the Latin American experience includes its full share of militarized conflict. Review of quantitative data spanning the nineteenth and twentieth centuries

from across the region demonstrates that Latin America is not uniquely shielded from this malaise of nation states. While not as war or violence prone as some regions (notably Europe) it does use force more than others do (mainly North America, Africa, and Northeast Asia). The region is thus not an anomaly for security studies and can provide a data set for evaluating competing arguments about the determinants of the use of military force.

Sporadic efforts to delegitimize the use of force in interstate disputes demonstrate that states in the region understand the benefits of such a principle. A reading of the historical record, nonetheless, demonstrates that American nations have been reluctant to place full confidence in it. The issue of interstate conflict in Latin America was, and continues to be, important. There are many issues which produce tensions in international affairs among Latin American countries as well as with the U.S. That conflict rarely escalates to full-scale war and cooperation often wins out, at least in the short term. The threat to use military force, nevertheless, is ubiquitous, while the actual use of that force occurs too often to see it as aberrant behavior.

Why are militarized posturing and conflict ubiquitous in Latin America? In exploring this question we examine whether factors unique to the region, namely, the dominance of U.S. interests and behavior, illuminate these conflicts; or whether theories of international relations with cross-regional applications provide insights into Latin American behavior as well. If the latter, are models which contrast the foreign policy behavior of democracies and authoritarian regimes useful to further our understanding; is Latin American conflict simply the inexorable result of power confronting power; or are Latin American leaders responding rationally to incentives at the international and domestic levels? Part 2 systematically explores these approaches, ultimately demonstrating the advantages of a militarized bargaining approach for understanding interstate conflict in Latin America.