Notes

1. Earlier comparisons were given at the Universidad de las Americas in Puebla, Mexico, and at the Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, China. Earlier publications were William Ratliff, “El Traspaso de Hong Kong: Lecciones Asiáticas para América Latina,” Revista Occidental, no. 3 (1997), and William Ratliff, “Development and Civil Society in Latin America and Asia,” Annals (American Academy of Political and Social Sciences), September 1999. The current study is expanded from an address given at the First Foro Internacional de Participación Social in Cancún, Mexico, on 13 September 2002. Although the focus here is on what Latin American countries can learn from the Asian experience, Asians could learn some important lessons from Latin America as well, but those are matters for a separate article.


3. Of course in the international perspective of “one China,” Hong Kong and Taiwan are part of China and so not “countries” at all. That certainly has been the case with Hong Kong since 1997, though the former British colony retains some significant individual characteristics under Deng Xiaoping’s “one country, two systems” formulation. In all ways but international-political (which is very important), Taiwan is an independent country, indeed one of the most successful in the world.

4. Howard Wiarda, in The Soul of Latin America (New Haven: Yale Univer-
sity Press, 2001), p. 3, explains the differences between the United States and Latin America. “The United States was, to use Louis Hartz’s phrase, ‘born free.’ Unlike Latin America, the North American colonies had no feudal past. . . . In contrast, Latin America, colonized and settled in the sixteenth century, a full hundred years before the North American colonies, was pre-modern and felt the full weight of medievalism in the form of an authoritarian political regime from top to bottom, a feudal landholding system and mercantilism in the economic sphere, a rigid two-class society without a large or solid middle class, an educational system based on rote memorization and deductive, unscientific reasoning, and a religious pattern of absolutism and orthodoxy that buttressed and reinforced the state concept.” See also pp. 74–75. Also see Claudio Vélez, The New World of the Gothic Fox (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).


7. In late 2002, Mexican political analyst Luis Rubio commented on the PRI’s “golden age of the ’50s in which no one moved without party authorization . . . and the people were irrelevant in the important matters of the state which the PRistas dealt with as if they were their own.” Quoted in Mary Anastasia O’Grady, “The PRI’s Old Guard Threatens Mexico’s Future,” Wall Street Journal, 27 September 2002.


9. Wiarda, Soul of Latin America, p. 345, notes that the dominant tradition “of thought and social organization in Latin America should not necessarily be seen as simply an ‘emerging’ or ‘less developed’ version of the United States, fated inevitably to evolve in the American liberal, pluralist, democratic direction; instead, it is an alternative tradition within Western thought, with its own internal logic and political dynamics, often quite at variance with North American values and understandings.”

10. Former U.S. secretary of state George Shultz has written that the provision of universal and quality education enabling every child to “achieve

11. Vested interests include political power and all that comes with it. Some years ago I was deeply puzzled yet marginally hopeful when I learned that Douglass North had been consulting with Venezuelan president Rafael Caldera. Later I learned that North had ticked off a list of things Caldera should do to improve Venezuela’s national economy, to which the president had frankly responded in traditional Latin American terms: “If I were to do all the things you are recommending,” he said, “I would not survive in office long enough to enjoy the benefits.” Quoted in Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Hilton L. Root, “The Political Roots of Poverty,” *National Interest*, no. 68 (summer 2002).


14. For example, Latin American countries historically have tended to rate higher than Asian countries in political rights and civil liberties. See Nelly Stromquist, “Investment in Education and Women in Latin America and East Asia,” in James McGuire, ed., *Rethinking Development in East Asia and Latin America* (Los Angeles: Pacific Council on International Policy, 1997). These have had little impact on developmental policies, however, and have been far from equally shared.
15. David Chapman, *Management and Efficiency in Education: Goals and Strategies* (Manila: Asian Development Bank, 2002), pp. 3, 21. Even the reforming Asian countries would have been more successful if they had had secure property rights, as discussed by Peruvian Hernando de Soto in his book *The Mystery of Capital* (New York: Basic Books, 2001). Just as Latin America is filled with uneducated people who are in many respects “dead” human capital, so the whole “developing world” is filled with “dead” financial capital that impedes economic growth and progress.


17. For a while in the 1990s, Peru under Alberto Fujimori was tentatively called a Latin American “jaguar,” but in 2003 Peru is again sliding downhill.

18. Nancy Birdsall, David Ross, and Richard Sabot, “Education, Growth and Inequality,” in Birdsall and Frederick Jaspersen, eds., *Pathways to Growth: Comparing East Asia and Latin America* (Washington, D.C.: Inter-American Development Bank, 1997), pp. 95ff. Roman Mayorga, in *Closing the Gap* (Manila: Asian Development Bank, 1997), point 17, notes the near universality of primary education in East and Southeast Asia and its absence in South Asia. Another study, Don Adams, *Education and National Development: Priorities, Policies, and Planning* (Manila: Asian Development Bank, 2002), reviews the successes in reforming countries but adds (p. 7) that “not all countries have enjoyed this growth, and there are sharp disparities across the region and within countries.” Indeed, it warns that “the level of prosperity of the high-growth countries may not continue.” The UNESCO Institute of Statistics reported on 29 August 2002 that illiteracy levels in the year 2000 were: East Asian men, 8 percent; Latin American men, 11 percent; Latin American women, 13 percent; and East Asian women, 20 percent. Other regional rates of illiteracy were Sub-Saharan Africa, 40 percent; Arab states and North Africa, 40 percent; and South Asia, 45 percent. I consider these illiteracy figures more suggestive than exact.

19. Since the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, China has undertaken successful economic and other reforms. One of the greatest challenges of the current government, however, has been education and the legacy of Chairman Mao. For example, the first post-Mao census, in 1982, revealed that half the population was illiterate or semiliterate. Deng Xiaoping reportedly acknowledged in 1989 that “our greatest failure in the past ten years was


27. Interview with Ricardo López Murphy, 1 October 2002, in Buenos Aires.


29. Barbara Eyzaguirre and Carmen Le Foulon, “La Calidad de la Educación

31. Different forms of state funding of education have occurred throughout Chilean history. The market reformers of the Pinochet government developed private schools that were funded equally with government schools through a per-student subsidy. See Patricia Matte and Antonio Sancho, “Primary and Secondary Education,” in Cristian Larroulet, ed., Private Solutions to Public Problems (Santiago: Editorial Trineo, 1993). Analysts are not in full agreement as to how successful the promotion of private schools was in advancing quality and equity. Carnoy, in Globalization, is critical, while Matte and Sancho are supportive.


38. See test procedures, scores, and so on, on the TIMSS web site. Also see two detailed Chilean commentaries on the test results: Beyer, “Falencias Institucionales en Educacion” and Eyzaguirre and Le Foulon, “La Calidad de la Educación Chilena.” See also Inter-American Dialogue, *Lagging Behind*, p. 6.


41. Carnoy, *Globalization*, pp. 16, 26–28, notes the strong support for higher education but reports also (p. 46) that “Chile and Argentina are investing heavily in low-performing schools, with positive results.”

42. Ricardo López Murphy commentary in *La Experiencia del Asia Oriental*, p. 16. Also see World Bank, *The East Asian Miracle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 15. In the 2002 interview, López Murphy also noted the extreme difficulty of withdrawing that support for universities once it has been made because of the power of the privileged classes, particularly in Argentina. Often the best a political leader can do at this time is to make it very difficult for universities to increase their funding and focus new spending on basic education for all, including the poor.


44. Calculation from 1988 cited in Birdsall, Ross, and Sabot, “Education, Growth and Inequality,” p. 124, n. 66. Even if the calculation is not exact, it gives a good approximation of the consequence of investing public money more heavily in universities rather than primary schools in developing countries.


47. Ibid., p. 125.

48. Gary S. Becker, in “The Age of Human Capital,” in Lazear, ed., Education, p. 5, comments that investments in human capital are also necessary in poorer nations “if they are to have a chance of growing out of poverty.” See also Hall, “The Value of Education,” pp. 30–31, 38. In late 2002 the Inter-American Development Bank announced the publication of a study entitled How to Cultivate Entrepreneurs, which it said “compares what East Asian and Latin American countries do to encourage the creation of new businesses.” For two months between November 2002 and January 2003, I tried unsuccessfully to get this publication from the IDB web site and IDB offices in Washington, hardly an example of efficiency for developing nations.

49. Declaration of Santiago, Second Summit of the Americas, 18–19 April 1998; Declaration of Quebec, Third Summit of the Americas, 22 April 2001. I was in Santiago during the summit, and it was widely acknowledged off the record that education was the focus only because the Clinton administration could not get “fast track” through Congress, making it impossible to focus mainly on economic expansion in the hemisphere.

50. Carnoy, Globalization, p. 55, argues that, before the 1990 reforms, “pupil performance in low-income municipal schools declined relative to both private schools and higher-income public schools” as a result of decentralization, reduction of central government support, and the promotion of private schools. Matte and Sancho, in “Primary and Secondary Education,” argue that many other factors were involved and that private education plays an essential role in educating the people. Although they are in favor of market economies, they not only accept but encourage public expenditures on private schools. The elimination of all (or virtually all) state support, forcing everyone to pay even a minimal amount, can greatly reduce the number of poor children going to school, as has happened in recent years in China.

51. Birdsall et al., Washington Contentious, p. 31; Birdsall, Graham, and Sabor, eds., Beyond Tradeoffs; IDB, Making Education a Catalyst for Progress, which begins, “This is education’s moment in Latin America and the Caribbean”; Ernesto Schiefelbein, Laurence Wolff, and Paulina Schiefelbein, Cost-Effectiveness of Education Policies in Latin America (Washington, D.C., 1998); The Economist, “Cramming Them In.”

52. In the most colorful language, Argentine humorist and political commen-
tator Enrique Pinti condemns national political leaders of recent years for their stupidity, incompetence, and corruption, but when the audience shouts its agreement, he adds, “But we voted them in, didn’t we?” Enrique Pinti, monologue in “Candombe Nacional,” Teatro Maipo, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 29 September 2002.


54. Ratliff, “Development and Civil Society in Latin America and Asia.”


56. This view harks back to Ariel (1900), the book by Uruguayan José Enrique Rodó that played with the characters from Shakespeare’s The Tempest. Rodó contrasted glorious humanistic Spanish culture, represented by Ariel, to the debased materialism of U.S. culture, represented by Caliban. This is probably the most frequently published and widely read book in Latin American history. The failure of reforms to meet often unrealistic expectations during the 1990s has raised Rodó’s stock once again because many hold the United States responsible for the reforms and their failure.


58. Pinti, “Candombe Nacional.”

59. Whenever Latin American countries swoop into one of their periodic downswings, a perennial joke arises: Father: “Son, what do you want to be when you grow up.” Son: “A foreigner.”

60. In essence this means “getting the politics right” in our analyses, as Bueno de Mesquita and Root discuss in their “Political Roots of Poverty.”