

**Latin American regionalism in the early twentieth century:
Identity affirmation or hegemonic submission?**

Patrícia R. Barros¹

ABSTRACT

Despite some previous contributions, the early twentieth century witnessed the theorization and systematization of a Latin American perspective of International Law. The emergence of this regional tradition of thought resulted mainly from the theoretical debate between the Brazilian diplomat Manoel A. de S. Sá Vianna (1860-1924) and the Argentine internationalist Alejandro Álvarez (1868-1960) about the existence of a Latin American International Law. Álvarez was responsible to develop and to advocate this thesis, along many years, not just in the region, but also in European academic circles. Even being considered a scholar from periphery, his life and work were at the forefront of the most important issues and institutions of international law in the first half of the twentieth century. On the other side, Álvarez has been criticized for some scholars of having used his non-European voice to reach a place in Parisian society. In this context, one can ask what did mean a regional approach to International Law in Latin America? Did it represent a process of an identity affirmation or it was a submission to the hegemonic thinking? Could this Latin American perspective being considered as a turning point in the regional legal thought? This paper intends to investigate if the regional perspective of International Law headed by Álvarez was a rupture with the legal consciousness and represented a movement of identity affirmation and/or an insurgency against the Eurocentric legacy of the discipline. The main argument is that the ideas of the most renowned Latin American international legal scholar of the twentieth century were aligned with the classic legal thought. The proposed regionalism was more a submission to the hegemonic thinking than an exercise of identity affirmation.

¹ PhD in Law Candidate at University of Brasilia (UnB), Master in Law and State (2017), at University of Brasilia (UnB), Brazil; Member of Research Group “Critique and International Law”; Researcher of the Project “History of International Law in Brazil: between universalism, localism and identities”, coordinated by Professor George Rodrigo Bandeira Galindo, Volunteer Professor at University of Brasilia (UnB).