

## SANDINISTA REVOLUTION: A POSTCOLONIAL APPROACH TO USA INTERVENTIONISM

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### Abstract

*The Sandinista Revolution was a watershed moment in Nicaraguan history that forever altered the course of the country's history. First, it dismantled the Somoza family's dynasty, which had ruled for 43 years, not all of them consecutively, and established a political system dependent on their despotic regime. Second, and more significantly for international relations, the Sadinistas' denunciation of the neo-colonialism committed by the leader of the western democracies was a direct attack on US interventionism in Central America. Unfortunately, it was also the point at which the FSLN established its roots in Nicaraguan society and transitioned from a socialist movement to an authoritarian regime under Daniel Ortega.*

*In order to analyse these evolutions of events I propose a postcolonial theoretical approach. The fact that postcolonialism is a relatively new addition to the international relations theory that first appeared in literature is one of the primary justifications for why this theoretical approach relies on information from native authors. This theory mainly focuses on the former colonies and criticises how the colonial past and present interactions with the former colonists have an impact on*

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*how those colonies have developed. I will examine the key ideas of these approaches in the international arena with respect to the particular case of the Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua.*

**Keywords:** Latin America, postcolonialism, Sandinista Revolution, discourse analysis, United States of America.

## **Research Design**

Taking into consideration that I look in depth at the case of United States interventionism in Nicaragua from the perspective of postcolonialism, the first research question is: "Is the American rhetoric that has been directed at Nicaragua over the years a sort of neo-colonialism?". The rationale for this initial question serves as the thesis statement for my paper because it is crucial to first demonstrate that Nicaragua qualifies as a "colony," or more precisely, a "neo-colony," of the United States of America. Now let's go on to the second question, which examines the origins of the Sandinista National Liberation Front: "How did the United States of America's post-colonial worldview contribute to the emergence of the Sandinista movement?". The goal of this research question is to determine when Carlos Fonseca founded this internal political body in Nicaragua and whether the USA's involvement in the Central American nation was a significant influence in the FSLN's establishment.

The final question in my paper concerns the aftermath of the revolutions and their effects on the current status quo in Nicaragua. "Is neo-colonialism being eradicated in Nicaragua as a result of the acts of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, or has the United States played a significant role in the country's development?". I aim to understand more about the modifications made after the Sandinista revolution and how they affected contemporary Nicaraguan society by posing this last query. Examining the USA's current meddling in Nicaragua's internal affairs is the subject of the second section of the question.

## Post-Colonialism as an International Theory

As mentioned in the introduction of this paper, post-colonialism is a reflectivist theory and a very recent approach in international relations that started to gain the attention of international relations theory only in 1990, a bit later than feminist and post-structuralist theory. It emerged as part of the reflectivist side of International Relations studies as a result of the failure of the central theories in this domain to predict the extremely drastic changes in the twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> The struggle to decolonize is an important change and a focal point for post-colonialism.

The innovative aspect of this theoretical approach is that variables are examined from a bottom-up viewpoint as opposed to a realistic viewpoint, with the emphasis on a top-down viewpoint that examines the anarchical structure of international relations.<sup>2</sup> This different analytical perspective offered the chance for scholars to perceive two very important facts. First, they gave former colonies more prominence, which in rational theories like liberalism or realism were primarily considered as secondary actors in the emergence of the international order. In a similar way as other reflectivist theories or even socio-constructivism pay more attention to societies and particularly the identities of the individuals that comprise state populations, it moves beyond the traditional state approach.

Post-colonialism makes significant contributions because it introduces a slew of new variables into our analysis of IR studies. On the first, suggest a historical examination of the interactions between former colonies and colonial powers in order to comprehend their significance in the sphere of international relations. On the other side, it allows the colonised people a platform to share their opinions and original beliefs

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<sup>1</sup> Christine Sylvester, "Post-colonialism" in John Baylis, Steve Smith, Patricia Owens (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations 6<sup>th</sup> edition*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2014, pp. 185-186.

<sup>2</sup> Sanjay Seth, "Postcolonial theory and critique of International Relations" in Sanjay Seth (ed.), *Postcolonial Theory and International Relations A critical introduction*, Routledge: New York, 2013, pp. 15-21.

concerning the time of colonialism. The use of literature in the form of novels, journals, poems, and testimony as a useful source of information since it is considered as a vehicle for the people to convey their colonial past may be the last, and possibly the most contentious, because it lacks empirical validity.<sup>3</sup>

The expression of a new timeline, which brings us to the next key tenet of this theory, is that we are currently experiencing the status quo.

Even though the colonial era is past, if we remove the hyphen from the phrase, postcolonialism refers to the racial, gender, and class disparities that still exist today.<sup>4</sup> The western discourse promotes the idea that colonial relations are not a problem of the present, but rather a problem of the past that obligates them to assist their former colonies. To recognise these interactions and comprehend their nature in light of colonial history is precisely the goal of post-colonialism. The goal is then to create an opportunity for citizens to denounce cases where relations – or, more accurately, a neo-colonial relationship – represent a significant problem in the development of former colonies and their interdependence with colonial empires.<sup>5</sup>

The decolonization process that took place after World War II is a key factor in post-colonialism and one that is crucial for this theoretical approach. The procedure that should be followed by the former colonies to obtain independence so they can begin their own growth without having to contribute to the development of the colonial powers. The indirect conflict in the emerging Cold War bipolar system between the western bloc of the United States of America and the communist bloc of the USSR had a considerable impact on this process. The former colonies mainly had two choices: either they were used as fronts for proxies in conflicts like those in Korea and Vietnam, or they had to choose a side in the conflict and become

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<sup>3</sup> Sylvester, *op. cit.*, pp. 187-190.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 191-194.

<sup>5</sup> E. San Juan Jr., *"Beyond Postcolonial Theory"*, Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 1998, pp. 53-92.

satellite nations ruled by the two big powers. By forming the "Non-Associated Movement," an international organisation whose principal purpose is for its member countries to not be openly aligned with or against any major power bloc, the "third world countries" have attempted to respond to this international reality. The majority of the countries were former colonies, and even after gaining independence, they felt obligated to maintain ties with their former colonial powers by supporting their bloc in the Cold War.<sup>6</sup>

We have two very significant writers when it comes to the early works that influenced post-colonial thought: Frantz Fanon and Edward Said. Fanon gave the Algerian revolution against the French Republic very particular attention. In his book "Black Skin, White Masks", he examines the colonists' methods of control.<sup>7</sup> One of his main points was that the colonial imposed itself not only through the power of arms and economic dominance, but also through a discursive act in which France justified its involvement in Algeria as necessary and legitimate, and also attempted to present the differences toward native people through language. Edward Said preferred to put more emphasis on the literature and look at the way it was used to describe the societies and realities of the former colonies. Said's book "Orientalism" was one of the most influential books for the beginning of post-colonialism, particularly in the relationship between theory and literature.<sup>8</sup> He examined how Western literature portrayed the Middle East and Asia as a land of pleasure and mystery where they could come to enjoy and control these cultures.

Christine Sylvester, Sanjay Seth, and E. San Juan Jr. have written about the present and international relations in postcolonialism. All of them made an effort in their writing to include post-colonialism as a critical perspective on Euro-American politics in the study of international relations.

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<sup>6</sup> Seth, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-32

<sup>7</sup> Frantz Fanon, "*Black Skin, White Masks*", Pluto Press: London, 2008, pp. 8-27.

<sup>8</sup> Edward Said, "*Orientalism*", Penguin: London, 2019, pp. 43-58.

By defining this objective, they aimed to criticise the western-centric rhetoric that dominates international relations and the neo-colonialist perspective that downplays the importance of those who are harmed by it.

At the conclusion of this section, it is crucial to comprehend the theoretical constraints and carefully consider the primary criticisms levelled at this methodology.<sup>9</sup> The primary objection raised relates to the nature of this theory, which is thought to be overly preoccupied with colonialism's past and to pay insufficient attention to the current issues in these relationships. Another point raised by critics is the exaggeration of the former colonies' reliance on the West, while not enough credit is given to the Third World countries' poor governance in the status quo. The last point is the theoretical approach's esoteric nature, as it relies heavily on literature and makes a plea for assistance for those it defends.

### **Sandinista Revolution: A Movement that Opposed the Interventionism of USA**

Although the Sandinista movement was established in 1961, it is important to grasp the larger historical background that it shaped before talking about this political force in Nicaragua. The US occupation, the passing of Augusto Sandino, and the Somoza dynasty were a number of reasons that contributed to the formation of the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

US military occupation that began in 1912 and continued until 1933. When José Santos Zelaya became president, he started to promote his ambitious geopolitical agenda.<sup>10</sup> From domestic matters, such as the complete integration of the Mosquito Coast, to the lofty goal of elevating Nicaragua's regional influence with the financial assistance of the Nicaraguan Canal. The USA began to oppose Zeledon policy and its authoritarian rule, beginning

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<sup>9</sup> Bart Moore-Gilbert, *“Postcolonial Theory Contexts, Practices, Politics”*, Verso: New York, 1997, pp. 152-183.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas W. Walker and Christine J. Wade, *“Nicaragua: Living in the Shadow of the Eagle”*, Westview Press: Boulder, 2011, pp. 13-18

to encourage revolutionaries and conservators. Zelaya killed 500 revolutionaries who were protesting against its administration, and two of them were American citizens. Based on that, America intervened with the Marines at the borders of Nicaragua to protect its citizens' lives and rights.<sup>11</sup> General Mena launched an uprising against the newly elected president in 1912 when Zelaya lost his position as leader. Adolfo Diaz, the president, requested US intervention to restore order, but the occupation was far trickier than that and lasted until 1933.<sup>12</sup>

The US occupation gave birth to another fundamental factor of FSLN, the historical figure of Augusto Sandino. Augusto César Sandino was a revolutionary and guerrilla war soldier, started a campaign against the conservative government and, more significantly, against American interventionism.<sup>13</sup> Even after the occupation was over, the US established the Guardia Nacional, an army and police organisation under the command of Anastasio Somoza Garcia that was given American training and equipment and was intended to uphold American interests. In spite of President Juan Bautista Sacasa's efforts to negotiate with Sadino, Somoza's National Guard assassinated Sadino's rival after growing hostility between the two groups. Sadino, a national hero and martyr of the Nicaraguan fight against interventionism, was assassinated by National Guard soldiers in 1934 as he was leaving the President's House after signing a peace pact.

The end of the US occupation could only be considered *de jure*, because *de facto* they were still present in a metaphorical sense thanks to their close relationship with the National Guard and Somoza's family.<sup>14</sup> We need to look at the first head of the Somoza family to understand this change from US occupation to a dynasty that lasted 43 non-consecutive years that was the last key factor in the foundation of Sandinistas

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 18-24

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 38-40

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 40-44

<sup>14</sup> Dan La Botz, *What Went Wrong? The Nicaraguan Revolution: A Marxist Analysis*, Haymarket Books: Leiden, 2018, pp. 74-76

movement.<sup>15</sup> The first member of his family to serve as president of Nicaragua was Anastasio Somoza García, who also founded the National Guard. He gained the presidency of Nicaragua from 1937 until 1947, establishing a despotic authoritarian dictatorship, using the social influence of his military organisation and US outside support. In 1950, he was elected president once more, and in 1956, a revolutionary called Rigoberto López Pérez assassinated him.

His oldest son, Luis Somoza Debayle, was elected president but passed away in 1963 from a heart attack. Anastasio Somoza Debayle, the youngest son of Garcia, maintained the Somoza Dynasty in 1967 by holding the presidency from 1967 to 1972 and from 1974 to 1979, when he was deposed by the Sandinista Revolution.<sup>16</sup> It is significant to remember that this dynasty was a part of the political system and that their autocratic rule sparked a number of revolutions. Regarding the first claim, it is crucial to make clear that the other presidents of the time were largely puppets of the dictatorship, and even when they made attempts to bring down the system, it was too reliant on the despotic relationships within the Somoza family.

The second sentence alludes to a string of revolutions that took place between 1960 and 1980 and persisted even after the Sandinistas came to power. Talking about all the revolutionary organisations is quite difficult, but they were all hostile to the Somoza family and had the overthrow of the Somoza rule as their primary objective.

We will present just one that is the most relevant in the research purpose of this essay. Sandinista National Liberation Front was the main political actor responsible for overturn the power in Nicaraguan society.

Before explaining the way in which they achieved the power we need to understand the fundamental principles of this political movement.

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 76-97

<sup>16</sup> Dan La Boltz, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-107



Founded in 1961 by Carlos Fonseca as a socialist political party and inspired by historical figure of Sandino.<sup>17</sup> Their ideology was a socialist one but clearly not inclined toward communism or the totalitarian ideas because there was no proved collaboration between them and USSR. Rather they were a specific revolutionary movement from Central America that opposed the neo-colonialism of USA. This idea of fighting American interventionism was highly inspired by the figure of Sandino as his death was seen by the FSLN as martyr gesture that needed to be continued by them in Nicaragua's dream of escaping from the "American periphery". It became a national movement later in 1972 after the earthquake from 1972 and mostly because their more and more popular discourse against Somoza's corruption. In 1974 they tried to kidnap the US ambassador and killed the minister of Agriculture and because of this strategy were labelled by the American administration as a terrorist movement and a potential threat to the security of United States.<sup>18</sup>

Their apogee was in 1979 when they ousted Somoza and took forcefully the power in Nicaragua and installed their own government.<sup>19</sup>

They ended the Somoza Dynasty and were trying to reduce significantly the influence of America in their own state. However, they were also seen as a controversial movement because of their profound socialist and traditionalistic ideology. Moreover the "communist approach" was attributed to them because they came in power by a coup d'état. As a response to their success, rebel groups were formed to oppose the new government. These groups and other guerrilla war fighters were backed by the Reagan administration with the infamous contras. The goal of the Contras was the involvement of the CIA and support for the groups in their fight against Sandinistas and trying to portray them as a communist

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<sup>17</sup> Matilde Zimmermann, *"Sandinista: Carlos Fonseca and the Nicaraguan Revolution"*, Duke University Press: London, 2000, pp. 69-88.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 162-185

<sup>19</sup> Robert J. Sierakowski, *"Sandinistas: A Moral History"*, University of Notre Dame Press: South Bend, 2019, pp. 210-238.

regime. Both sides of this confrontation were accused of human rights violations in their direct and also indirect combats. Finally in 1984, elections were held to establish a democratic government and because the lack of a real opposition to Sandinistas, FSLN won the elections and Daniel Ortega became president for the first time.<sup>20</sup>

### **How is the Sandinista Revolution Explained by Postcolonialism?**

It is crucial to explain why I opted to speak about the colonial connections between Nicaragua and the United States of America before going into the theory itself in the context of the Sandinista revolution. The expected case for Nicaragua would have been Spain if we take into account the post-colonial specifications, where we examine the influence of the colonial past and current issues in the relations of power between the colonial power and its former colony. Nicaragua is a former colony of the Spanish Empire and was part of it for 300 years from 1522 until 1821.<sup>21</sup> The first encounter was in 1522, when the González Dávila expedition ventured to the area that later became the Rivas Department of Nicaragua.

Conquistador Francisco Hernández de Córdoba, who created Granada and Leon, two of Nicaragua's major towns, founded the first Spanish settlements in 1524. Following that, a conflict broke out between Córdoba and Pedro Arias Dávila's Spanish forces, who ultimately prevailed and was appointed the region's first governor in 1527. From that time on, colonial rule began to adopt the tragic traditions of a colonial rule: from early exploration of the area, gathering of gold, and interaction with indigenous tribes, through slavery, oppression of the workers, and segregation of the colonial power and local inhabitants.

Even with Spain's colonial past, the US's involvement in domestic politics was noticeably more extensive, especially in modern history. Rather than a colonial power, the United States of America is regarded as a

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 239-253.

<sup>21</sup> Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-30.

neo-colonial power in the region, wielding influence through soft power mechanisms such as the economy and public diplomacy as well as hard power through military interventions.<sup>22</sup> To determine the point at which the United States expanded its influence in Latin America, particularly through interventionism in Nicaragua, we must first understand America's regional foreign policy. When we consider the US in the region, it is without a doubt the most powerful and significant actor. This dominance actually started out more as a protective stance on the part of the former colonies of Europe, especially in the case of Nicaragua. The "Monroe Doctrine," which was mostly written by the future president John Quincy Adams but stated by President James Monroe, served as the foundation for this decision.<sup>23</sup> The doctrine, which fought European colonialism and was at the heart of American foreign policy in the 19th and 20th centuries, brought an end to the country's period of isolationism, but it has since been denounced, reinstated, or reinterpreted.

In the post-colonialism chapter, I discussed the importance of Frantz Fanon's book "*Black Skin, White Masks*" and how it examined the justifications used by the colonial power to meddle in the internal affairs of the colony through language and discourse.<sup>24</sup> The presidency of Theodore Roosevelt provided a pretext for American action in Latin America. The "Roosevelt Corollary" was a significant reworking of the Monroe Doctrine that was essential to how the USA positioned itself towards Nicaragua and Latin America in general.<sup>25</sup> Theodore Roosevelt revised the Monroe

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<sup>22</sup> Luis Alfredo Intersimone, "Neocolonialism in Latin America" in *The Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies*, January 2016, pp. 1-6, doi:

<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119076506.wbeps271>, accessed in 10 January 2023.

<sup>23</sup> Mark T Gilderhus, "The Monroe Doctrine: Meanings and Implications" in *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Volume 36, Issue 1, 2006, pp. 5-16, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5705.2006.00282.x>, accessed in 10 January 2023.

<sup>24</sup> Fanon, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-27.

<sup>25</sup> Serge Ricard, "The Roosevelt Corollary" in *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Volume 36, Issue 1, 2006, pp. 17-26, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-5705.2006.00282.x>, accessed in 10 January 2023.

Doctrine by asserting that the US may interfere in Latin American internal affairs if those nations engaged in egregious and persistent misconduct.

According to his ideology, the US is an "international police force" with the authority to engage in "Big Stick Diplomacy". It is a blatant example of neo-colonialism, in which the USA elevates norms found in Euro-American societies while imposing western democratic values on nations in its periphery. The first time America used this justification to interfere in Nicaragua was during the US occupation from 1912 until 1933, when the Marines occupied the Republic of Nicaragua in order to stop the military coup d'état. One may argue that President Adolfo Diaz asked for American assistance, but it is obvious that this explanation covered more than a 20-year military occupation. Additionally, the US's close support for the Somoza family is an obvious indicator of too much interference in Nicaragua's internal affairs, but it is also a contentious issue because they invaded the Central American nation to prevent an authoritarian military regime but later indirectly supported a Somoza family dynasty based on what was unmistakably a despotic and authoritarian regime.

In "Orientalism"<sup>26</sup> by Edward Said, he explained the idea of constructing the image of colonised societies from the colonist perspective. Even though Said's attention was primarily on literature, where he described how Oriental civilizations appeared arcane and enigmatic in works of western literature, we may extend this concept of forming an image to the public's perception. The Sandinistas were characterised by the Reagan administration as a dangerous communist regime in the region, which made them a threat to American security.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Said, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-58.

<sup>27</sup> James M. Scott, "Interbranch Rivalry and the Reagan Doctrine in Nicaragua" in *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 112, No. 2 (Summer, 1997), pp. 237-260, doi: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2657940>, accessed in 15 January 2023.

The fight against communism in Central America was highly influenced by the internal Red Scare Movement in 1940's and 1950's.<sup>28</sup> Anything that had a potential partnership with the Soviets was labelled as communist even if in the case of Nicaragua there was no clear evidence, and they had a different ideology at the base of their movement. In this case we can use the post-colonial theory analyse the situation of small states in the context of the Cold War as they were obliged to take a side in the context of indirect confrontation of the two diametral systems.<sup>29</sup> Nicaragua was seen in this narrative as a potential threat, and this is why US fought harshly against the rule of the Sandinista National Liberation Front even if they were part of the Non-Alignment Movement that decided to not be involved in the indirect confrontation between USA and USSR.<sup>30</sup>

Looking at one of the variables used in post-colonialism analysis, we can see how the history of relations between Nicaragua and the United States of America has influenced the Central American state's development.<sup>31</sup> The United States has maintained a largely permanent involvement in the internal affairs of this state ever since the marines began their occupation in Nicaragua in 1912. Indirectly, the US was present by supporting the Somoza Dynasty and, later, rebel groups in the Contra Wars in opposition to the Sandinista government. In accordance with the Roosevelt concept, the United States was justified in interfering when nations like Nicaragua committed "wrongdoings," but a crucial question is: who determines when this interference is required? Unfortunately for Nicaraguans, the US

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<sup>28</sup> Red Scare", History, 28 February 2020, <https://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/red-scare>, accessed in 15 January 2023.

<sup>29</sup> William Pietz, "The "Post-Colonialism" of Cold War Discourse" in *Social Text*, No. 19/20, 1988, pp. 55-75, doi: <https://doi.org/10.2307/466178>, accessed in 16 January 2023.

<sup>30</sup> Michael J Schroeder, "Bandits and blanket thieves, communists and terrorists: the politics of naming Sandinistas in Nicaragua, 1927-36 and 1979-90" in *Third World Quarterly*, Volume 26, Issue 1, 2005, pp. 67-86, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0143659042000322919>, accessed in 15 January 2023.

<sup>31</sup> Sanjay Seth, "Postcolonial Theory and the Critique of International Relations" in *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, Volume 40, Issue 1, pp. 167-183, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829811412325>, accessed in 16 January 2023.

continued to be the main judge over when an intervention was appropriate. Due to these historical ties, the future of Nicaragua as a nation-state hinged for a long time on US foreign policy and its "Big Stick Diplomacy."<sup>32</sup>

We now go on to another significant factor in the understanding of the post-colonial approach: the development of a platform for voice-expression of the colonized. During a specific period in the FSLN's history, there existed a movement that was strikingly comparable to this style of platform. The fact that they overthrew the Somoza family's dictatorial rule should be the first thing we examine when evaluating this claim. This was a crucial turning point for potential democratic transformation and a distinct break from American neo-colonialism. The second was the democratic elections in 1984, when their political agenda was validated by the people of Nicaragua by winning the elections. The Sandinista National Liberation Front has made it clear that they want American interventionism to end, and by winning democratic elections, they have demonstrated to the US that the Nicaraguan people want them to leave the country. The last thing we need to look at is the elections in 1990, when the Sandinistas lost the election, accepted the democratic will of the people, and left power to the opposition. Accepting their democratic loss and becoming an opposition party in the country's internal politics for the next 15 years, they demonstrate once more that they are not a so-called "soviet style" of ruling a country.<sup>33</sup>

The analysis of the literature is the final significant factor and the one that is most relevant to post-colonialism. Since this is not the primary goal of this research work, we won't look in-depth at Nicaraguan literature.

But in order to comprehend the perspective of Nicaraguans and one approach to creating the national identity of this Latin American state, we shall examine the writings of Augusto Sandino, taking into account the

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<sup>32</sup> David Ryan, "Americanisation and anti-Americanism at the periphery Nicaragua and the Sandinistas" in *European Journal of American Culture*, Volume 23 Number 2, 2004, pp. 111-124, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1386/ejac.23.2.111/0>, accessed in 17 January 2023.

<sup>33</sup> Salvador Martí i Puig, "The Adaptation of the FSLN: Daniel Ortega's Leadership and Democracy in Nicaragua" in *Latin American Politics and Society*, Volume 52, Issue 4, 2010, pp. 79 – 106, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-2456.2010.00099.x>, accessed in 18 January 2023.

expectations of a post-colonial analysis. He discussed American imperialism and the need to unite the masses into a movement that challenges this hegemonic worldview in his writings from 1926 to 1934. Because the American military occupation would overwhelm Nicaragua's army, Sandino also talked of a guerrilla warfare plan in an effort to forge a stronger national identity for his country. Inspired by Sandino's literature, Carlos Fonseca tried to carry on his writings and, most importantly, his goal to oppose American interventionism. By examining this work of literature, we can see how many of the FSLN's themes had already been covered in Sandino's novels.<sup>34</sup>

Finally, it is critical to note that we did not attempt to mitigate the impact of the actual authoritarian regime or even the human rights violations committed by the Sandinistas during their revolution. The goal of this research study was to examine several factors that would suggest that American interventionism was hurting Nicaragua's development while also taking a critical stance toward the United States' neo-colonial attitude toward that country.

Furthermore it is very important to determine whether anti-Americanism exists in Nicaragua. Taking into account a series of historical events in which the United States of America interfered with Nicaragua's internal affairs, we have a clear anti-Americanism that is opposed to interventionism. The first form we can identify is the "Legacy Anti-Americanism" that is existing in Nicaragua as a result of interfering in the development of the nation-state of Nicaragua like case of the Walker Affair but mostly the attacks on the Zelaya's Zeledon and ending with the US occupation.<sup>35</sup> This creates a legacy in Nicaragua against American culture of Manifest Destiny and an image of and hostile regional actor in the North America.

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<sup>34</sup> Zimmermann, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-161.

<sup>35</sup> Lester Langley, "Anti-Americanism in Central America" in *The American Academy of Political & Social Science*, Volume 497, Issue 1, 2016, pp. 77-88, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716288497001007>, accessed in 13.01.2022.

Another type of anti-Americanism that targets the bourgeoisie and cosmopolitanism of America is cultural anti-Americanism. Nicaragua's antibourgeois spirit mirrored the reactionary nationalism espoused by upper classes throughout Latin America during the Roaring Twenties. A form of opposition to modernity that was one of the fundamental principles of Sandino movement in 1927-1933 and also the strong presence of conservatives in political life of Nicaragua. When José Coronel Urtecho wrote the manifesto "Against the Bourgeois Spirit," calling for a "war" against the "bourgeoisie" and its modernising "spirit," this mentality was evident in his work.<sup>36</sup>

Historical anti-Americanism is the final type of anti-Americanism I discussed in my paper based on encounters between the two nations.<sup>37</sup> This sentiment criticized the American expansionism and also the impact colonialization in the process of development of former colonies and founded in Nicaragua based on the occupation by the US marines and later the close relationship of USA to Somoza Family as a power structure in Nicaragua to the Contra Wars. All these events fuelled the Anti-American discourse from Augusto Sandino's movement to the Sandinistas revolution.

When considering the current state of affairs in Nicaragua, it is clear that President Daniel Ortega uses anti-American sentiment as a tool of populism. There are now no diplomatic ties between the two nations as a result of Ortega's rejection of Hugo Rodríguez as Washington's ambassador. The Nicaraguan president cited Rodríguez's remarks about the state of human rights in his nation as the primary justification.<sup>38</sup> His aversion to

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<sup>36</sup> Michel Gobat, *Confronting the American Dream Nicaragua under U.S. Imperial Rule*, Duke University press: London, 2005, pp. 175-202, EPUB format.

<sup>37</sup> David Ryan, "Americanisation and anti-Americanism at the periphery Nicaragua and the Sandinistas" in *European Journal of American Culture*, Volume 23 Number 2, 2004, pp. 111-124, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1386/ejac.23.2.111/0>, accessed in 13 January 2023.

<sup>38</sup> Wilfredo Miranda, "Nicaragua's Daniel Ortega escalates diplomatic crisis with US and Europe", *El País*, 3 October 2022, <https://english.elpais.com/international/2022-10-03/nicaraguas-daniel-ortega-escalates-diplomatic-crisis-with-us-and-europe.html>, accessed in 15 January 2023.



interventionism and a neo-colonial attitude is another aspect of Ortega's discourse towards the United States of America. In multiple talks, he discusses savage capitalism, the US's supremacy as a western nation, and the hegemonic thinking in the area.<sup>39</sup>

The final query regarding the anti-American sentiment in Nicaragua is whether there is any kind of Americanism to balance the unfavourable outlook. The first factor to take into account are organisations that received backing from the Contras but are too tiny to be categorised as a national movement or more indicative of Nicaraguans as a whole. Other opportunities existed between 1990 and 2005, but regrettably the US's interest in Nicaragua was waning as a result of the Sandinistas' reduction to a smaller party and US perceptions that they no longer posed a danger.

For example, in 1991, Chamorro requested assistance, but the response was inadequate to the needs of a Nicaragua devastated by the Contras.<sup>40</sup> After the FSLN lost, there was a general lack of concern about Nicaragua, which made it nearly impossible to temper the anti-American feeling. This became even more evident in 2005, when Ortega and the FSLN were re-elected.

## Conclusions

We can see how the United States of America's foreign strategy could be seen as a blatant example of neo-colonialism using the principles of post-colonial theory. The US had a significant role in the internal politics of Nicaragua and made a lot of effort to exert its influence over the choices made by the various entities that govern the Central American state. The United States intervened through both soft and hard mechanisms, ranging from indirect support for a despotic regime that served their regional interests to military involvement through the Contras War strategy of the CIA.

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<sup>39</sup> Salvador Martí i Puig, "The Adaptation of the FSLN: Daniel Ortega's Leadership and Democracy in Nicaragua" in *Latin American Politics and Society*, Volume 52, Issue 4, 2010, pp. 79 – 106, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-2456.2010.00099.x>, accessed in 15 January 2023.

<sup>40</sup> Thomas W. Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-93.

Even though the Sandinista National Liberation Front and Daniel Ortega's government are directly responsible for Nicaragua's current state of underdevelopment, it is crucial to recognise the role that the US had in the formation of this group. The presence of American interventionism in Nicaraguan culture had an impact on Sandino's war and Carlos Fonseca's decision to create the FSLN, and both men used rhetorical opposition against it. As a result, the authoritarian regime of Ortega is currently the main problem in Nicaragua, but this situation has been aided to some extent by the anti-Americanism sentiment that arose following the first encounter under US occupation.

The US's place in the region played a significant role in the development in Nicaraguan society. Additionally, America's neo-colonial strategy had an impact on Nicaragua's stability of development over the years and was a factor in the formation of the FSLN as well as the actual rhetoric of the party's leader. By studying the historical relationships between Nicaragua and the United States of America, the voice of the colonized, and even the literature in Sandino's movement, I was able to see how all of these factors contributed to the current political situation and the lack of long-term democratic reform and development. Post-colonialism not only helped us understand the history of colonial relations, but it may also represent the first steps we need to take in rebuilding former colonies' trust and properly integrating them into international relations.

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