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**There Is No Reciprocity
Latin America and Europe –
Unequal Entanglements**

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There Is No Reciprocity: Latin America and Europe – Unequal Entanglements

Marianne Braig

Abstract

This paper presents the transformations of Latin American-European relations over time as an interdependent unequal relationship. These relations have been shaped by exports of commodities, including the enrichment of European foodways with indigenous Latin American crops and the environmentally destructive extraction of natural resources and commercial export agriculture. The transformation under colonialism led not only to the settlement of Europeans in Latin America but also to the Atlantic slave trade. The consequence of these relations of domination even today is a limited acknowledgement of Latin America as being more than an extension of Europe. With the end of European immigration to and from Latin America, the role of the United States has grown instead, and increasingly developments in Latin America have also taken on their own dynamics, decoupled from Europe. In the coming decades, relations with China which have grown rapidly in commerce and commodity exports are likely to transform the role of Europe in the region yet again.

Keywords: Latin America | Europe | commodities | unequal entanglements | silver

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1. Introduction

There are different answers one hears to the question of where Latin America belongs. In the speeches of European politicians at public events, Latin America is assumed to belong to Europe. The same rhetoric is always used: good economic, cultural and political ties between the two world regions and their deep historical roots are emphasized. Spain envisions itself in a special role as the *madre patria* of Hispanic America, while Paris was considered for many decades to be the secret capital of Latin America. But can one simply assume that Latin America “somehow already” belongs to Europe (or to only some parts)? In this view, Latin America appears to be an extension of Europe, and the Eurocentric view that goes along with this obscures the changing diverse transregional entanglements with the Americas and other world regions.

Changes in the relationship between Latin America and Europe became visible already in the rapidly altered global situation in the past decades generated by the “turning point” in Europe in 1989 and accelerated by the rise of Asia, but also in processes of entanglement with other world regions. In this way, China’s economic access to Latin America has pushed Europe into third place among trading partners, behind the United States and China (Dussel Peters 2013). When Europeans however would ever realize the decentering Europe in Latin America that results from this, then it is with the reassuring reference to the fact that Latin America is the region in the world with which we are bound with a long common history. But even a glance at the history of their interrelations, as proposed below, can show that the relations between Europe and Latin America are not changing for the first time, and that other world regions have always been involved.

Without a doubt, historical developments on the American continent and in Europe have been tightly linked for more than 500 years. But these entanglements are and have been diverse and have undergone many transformations during this time. There have been different patterns of relations which have not all changed at the same time or in the same direction. But one thing remains constant: the partners in the geographical subcontinent have never been considered to be equals. Various European actors have exploited Latin America in different phases of globalization and placed it in a structural dependency with Europe, as has been shown in the Latin American *dependencia* approach in the 1960s and 1970s, partly grounded in earlier theories of imperialism (e.g. Frank 1975, Cardoso and Falleto 1984). At the same time, the interrelations have always been subordinate to and today are still subject to major transformations. These are not caused solely by competition among European great powers but also occurred due to changes in global and transregional movements and flows within the Americas

and between the Americas and other world regions, in which non-European global actors were meaningful and have recently regained importance.

This paper presents various dimensions and reconfigurations of these entanglements using examples of selected commodities. Through this, it should become clear that there is not just a bilateral relationship between two world regions that was first produced or changed broadly by their cultural relations. Rather, it will be shown that in these relations, other world regions were directly or indirectly involved, as demonstrated in colonial times by the concept of the Black Atlantic or the global galleon trade between Manila and Acapulco. Through these, complex interconnections arose which encompassed each world region, and in various periods different European states or their economic, political and cultural centers were able to occupy a dominant role. At the same time, though, there were also processes of disentanglement between Latin America and Europe, such as new political entanglements among the newly independent republics in the 19th century and major economic and social entanglements which developed beyond or against Europe in the 20th century.

Furthermore, this article will clarify the asymmetries (and their transformations) which have characterized the different patterns of relations between Latin America and Europe in different phases of globalization. With the annexation of the New World, Europe was able to address fundamental problems which shaped daily life on its own continent, such as the improvement of the nutritional situation of commoners through introduction of a range of crops. At the same time, over centuries the Old World occupied a colonial and later imperial position in the world at the cost of the Caribbean, Central and South America, and as a result of these unequal relations it was able to transform relations with and among other world regions. In this process, the transfer of knowledge and staple food as well as the exploitation of agricultural and mineral commodities, especially silver production, played a central role.

2. Commodity Dependencies and Asymmetries in the Ecosystem

The term “Columbian Exchange” originally coined by Alfred W. Crosby (1972) refers first to the changes in European, American, African and Asian agricultural practices, foodways and lifestyles that came about because of the exchange of animals and plants. Crops (such as potatoes, corn, tomatoes, peppers, etc.) from the colonies that were previously unknown in Europe became irreplaceable staple foods for increasing numbers of people. The potato, which prior to colonial times was completely unknown outside the Andes, is now apparently an integral part of the basic diet in much of Europe and continues to shape the foodways of most Europeans. The history of its

success, however, changed not only European menus, but also its production of scientific knowledge. The introduction of the potato played a very important role in the modernization of agriculture and the development of agronomy, a discipline that was newly created in the 18th century. Dr. Albrecht Daniel Thaer drove the development of rational agriculture in Prussia and the establishment of agronomy on the basis of his study of flora and fauna. Thereby the Andean tuber received a new role in the revolutionizing of farm production in Europe, in that according to scientific instructions, agricultural productivity could be increased by crop rotation between grain and potatoes. At the same time the physician Dr. Thaer also recognized the potato as wholesome nutrition for the domestic population. The introduction of the planting of potatoes in Europe modernized the ways of agricultural production and improved the living conditions for millions of people without being tied any direct negative effect on Andean agriculture. The acquisition of the fruits and knowledge of another culture was, however, important for the further development of Europe.

What happened in many other kinds of agricultural production in the colonies was quite different when after the conquest there were radical changes in the relations of agricultural production and property relations as well as the orientation of a large share of agriculture for export. In fact, using the example of sugar cane originating in Asia, it is possible to show a multilayered confinement through relations of inequalities (Mintz 2007). This changed large parts of the ways of agricultural production and lifestyles by the establishment of plantation production. Along with this came massive interventions in the social stratification in the Americas (through slaves from Africa) and the creation out of this of a concept of different degrees of being human. This legitimized slavery and the separation of people according to race through ideologies such as the “purity of blood” and scientific racism (Martinez-Alier 1974: 6) and shaped inequalities in the New World deeply over the long term (Costa 2007).

Since the 16th century, sugar rose to become the most important agricultural export product of the region and at the same time became a part of the European diet. The introduction of plantation production in the American colonies tied Africa to the Brazilian northeast, the Caribbean islands and the south of what became the United States through the slave trade. In Brazil alone, Portuguese traders sold over three million African slaves and made Portugal the leading nation in the world in the slave trade until well into the 19th century. Brazil prohibited slavery only in 1888 and was the last country to do so. But other European colonial powers – Spain, England, France, the Netherlands, etc. – and their traders also participated in the Atlantic slave trade and the constitution of a Black Atlantic (Gilroy 1993). In total about 11 million people were dragged out of Africa into the American colonies.

It is the countless agricultural commodities produced in Latin America that until today bind the subcontinent with Europe and other world regions. While over the course of the 19th century and early 20th century, rubber, sisal, fertilizer, dyes such as indigo and cochineal were partly or completely replaced especially by European industrial products, and therefore lost their significance in and for Europe, other products such as coffee (originally from southwest Ethiopia) and bananas (originally from subtropical Asia) gained significantly in significance for European and later global consumption. At the same time ever-newer commodities were integrated in global trade and transformed by interaction with industrial processes into global consumer goods.

This also applied for coca leaves which were also previously unknown outside the Andes, their region of origin. There they were traditionally consumed only by indigenous peoples and discredited pejoratively by the elites of South America as “Indian”. Only since the end of the 19th century did the plants become increasingly attractive outside of local consumption, when they entered mass consumption in the USA by the production of Coca Cola, and when they were able to be processed thanks to the German chemical industry into cocaine which was designed for the growing drug consumption in Europe and the USA (Gootenberg 2006). In this case it was above all political decisions which were mostly made in the United States that were responsible for the establishment and deepening of asymmetric relations between Latin America and Europe. These drove the creation of an international prohibition regime which took shape in 1961 with the “Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs” and criminalized consumption not only in the consumer countries but also in most of the commodity chain. However, the international prohibition regime was directed at the end product, cocaine, and its agricultural ingredients, the coca plant. The chemical products required for the production of cocaine were not included. This meant that in the context of the “War on Drugs,” growing was prohibited, for a long time the entire production of coca plants, with no exceptions for local consumption original regions in which it was grown, and small farmers, youth, drug dealers, drug bosses and entire states in Latin America were equally criminalized.

A different form of asymmetric relations is clear at present in soy. This plant originally from Northeast China is among the agricultural products that is currently taking over the production areas of Latin America. Once again, the planting of a foreign crop never before planted locally transformed the relations of production, property, and dependency deep into the lifestyle of the local population. In the past decades the soybean has advanced to count among the most important oilseeds and is spreading in wide areas in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Bolivia. The tropical rainforest and the pampas are especially affected. In 2012 these regions produced over 50% of

global soybean production almost exclusively for export. The harvest went into either meat production in Europe and China or served just as sugar cane did as biomass for the production of “green energy and ecological sustainability” (Burchhardt et al. 2013: 8) even in Europe and the United States. The demand for soy changed quickly the ways of agricultural production in that it pushed the classic livestock production out of the pampas. At the same time the transnational dependency relations within the subcontinent were shifted: more and more small farmers in Paraguay became subcontractors of Brazilian and other foreign agricultural companies. The expansion of monoculture threatened the biodiversity of the region and the pesticide use connected with it damaged the health of agricultural workers but increasingly also the urban population since the fields moved closer to the cities (Rauchecker 2013; Svampa 2013).

What has been transformed is not only the material production. Since a genetically modified transgenic soybean was approved in many countries in Latin America, control of agriculture has been taken over not just by Monsanto, the largest producer and patent holder for genetically manipulated seed stocks, but also by the agricultural chemical industry necessary for agricultural production and their patents. Even research institutes in Europe profit as well through the “unlimited opportunities” in Latin America. Since many European researchers are only able to experiment with genetically modified seeds under conditions regulated by the state, they seek alternatives. One is Brazil where European agricultural research in the context of political deregulation in cooperation with modern large research institutions such as EMBRAPA can be performed at a high technological scientific level. On the one hand, the specific risks connected with new genetically modified agricultural processes can be externalized in this way. But the global valorization of nature in Latin America is more comprehensive. Each kind of risk connected with the extraction of commodities affects Latin America, as the leading global exporter of agricultural and mineral commodities, in special ways and disadvantage the region ecologically in comparison to Europe and other world regions. Both global enterprises and consumers, who are far away from the localities where the burden and risks for people and the environment, and who are separated from the future generations who will bear them, profit from the growing socio-ecological inequalities that are connected with this.

What all commodities have in common is a deep temporal and spatial transformation of the ecosystem. Charles Mann (2011) described the effects that were already produced through logging and deforestation in the early colonial period. In addition to the continuing erosion of soils and contamination of groundwater, the export of raw materials is always linked with irreplaceable loss of nutrients and water. This has the

consequence that Latin America, with its increasing export of raw materials, loses increasing amounts of water and nutrients from areas with water scarcity to areas of relative water abundance, such as Europe (Braig and Göbel 2013). But Europe is no longer alone in the center of these asymmetries. Along with the USA, in recent years China has profited more than others from these asymmetries, China has also contributed significantly to price increases with its enormous demand for raw materials, and thereby drives further their extraction in fragile ecosystems. Finally, even the global players within the region, particularly Brazil, are profiting from the exploitation of resources of neighboring countries.

3. Silver: A Special Medium of Transregional Dependencies

Yet what enabled European dominance over other world regions, particularly Asia, was a mineral resource from Latin America that was simultaneously commodity and money. It was silver that significantly advanced the development of global trade to and from Europe, after the discovery of the largest mines with the highest quality in the world in Potosi (now in Bolivia) and in various places in Mexico, with the use of forced labor of indigenous peoples and mercury from Europe. “Early forms of globalization” or “protoglobalization” can be seen in a special way through this precious metal, because “silver forcibly mined in Mexico and the Andes” became, “the basis of a truly global trading flow already in the 16th century” (Feldbauer and Liedel 2009: 41, own translation). The silver bars and minted silver coins (silver peso) produced in Spanish America were in demand globally from various global and local actors: traders engaged in overseas trade who used silver as a means of exchange and payment; internationally active trading banks for which they served the purposes of collateral and speculation; states which required silver for use as their own currency and for the payment of military expenses, and also raw materials producers who were meeting high international demand (Marichal 2006: 27).

Silver was particularly attractive for European trading houses and states because the production controlled by the Spanish crown provided them with a means to overcome their structural disadvantages relative to Asia. The “detour”, at first as a means of access to Asian goods such as silk, cotton, and spices independent of the Ottoman Empire, allowed them a means of payment to pay for precisely these goods. Europe itself had very few attractive products to offer and for a long time had a trade deficit with countries such as China and India. With silver from Spanish America, by the middle of the 16th century, Europeans managed to obtain “access to the riches of Asia” (Marks 2006: 79). Silver had been along with gold one of the most valued exchange goods globally. The growing production and high and stable quality of the silver from

the colonies reached the hands of other European states and traders via the mother country Spain, and these in turn needed it for trade with China, India, Japan and the Levant, among others. But the demand for silver as a local means of payment only grew rapidly after the demand for silver from China increased, due to a fiscal reform which required Chinese traders, artisans and farmers to pay their taxes in silver (Flynn et al. 2003), and this increase in turn had effects on global demand. “China’s silver-based currency [led] to a growing inflow of this precious metal” from Latin America (Feldbauer and Liedel 2009: 45, own translation).

During the three centuries from 1500 to 1800, “in China about three quarters of the silver production from the New World” was received, in the “largest and most productive economy in the world”, and fed the “motor that drove the majority of the early modern economy with silver from the New World” (Flynn and Giráldez 1999: 23). With the opening of the transpacific sea route between Manila and Acapulco in 1571, direct relations between Spanish America and Asia became possible. In the global galleon trade that arose thereby, which also incorporated South American ports, the transport of silver and the provision of the new Spanish and creole upper classes in colonial centers with silk and other luxury products from Asia played a central role. The new position of New Spain inspired the elites of the time to imagine themselves as the “Heart of the World” (Vallen 2014) distinct from Europe and especially from Spain.

But the heart of the world did not consist of New Spain and its elites; instead, it beat to the rhythm set by the European centers. The great powers in Western Europe were the ones that developed into global financial markets and trading centers with the help of Latin American silver and raw materials from throughout the world. They dominated the world for centuries and divided it among themselves through the use of military force, and on the basis of the industrial revolution. Latin America was limited to the role of supplier of raw materials to an industrializing Europe, a role from which it was able to free itself only partially.

4. Hispanoamerica and Spanish as the Language of the Elites

Along with asymmetries that widened through violent changes in production and ownership relations in Hispanoamerica, asymmetries could also be observed in areas of daily activities. The linguistic differences between the Old World and New World at the time of the violent conquest were deep, and overcoming them happened more slowly than the exchange of disease agents or crops and livestock, but also more slowly than the introduction and spread of slavery or forced labor in the mines. For the European invaders, the first task was to make accessible the languages of the

indigenous population. They sought thereby to secure their conquest and hegemony, and to make local knowledge useful for the assimilation of the New World. There were indigenous persons, such as Malíntzin, among the first translators who already had mastered several indigenous languages, who provided vital support for the soldiers of Cortés in their conquest of central Mexico. But from the beginning, starting with the Franciscan monk Gerónimo de Aguilar who happened to speak Mayan as a result of his imprisonment, it was the representatives of the Catholic Church who went on to learn systematically the various languages and areas of knowledge, and acquired information that was only known to the indigenous peoples, who served as translators, and informants and spies. In the context of missionary work and recorders of events, representatives of the Church from Europe learned the various languages and gathered local knowledge, and played not only a central role as cultural translators of social, political and economic processes, but also shaped the image of the New World in Europe.

Conversely, no one envisioned the spread of the Spanish language to the colonies. The missionaries promoted *lenguas generales* which were prevalent in a region and frequently spoken. Thus the Spanish language, which the Hapsburg Emperor Charles V wanted to establish as the diplomatic language of Europe and as the *lingua franca* with the Pope, was at that time restricted to a few elite circles in the colonies, particularly in the administration and the courts of the viceroys (Nadeau and Barlow 2013: 172). For the great majority of the population, most of their languages remained relevant in everyday life. For a long time, they communicated in their languages, and mixed forms developed out of these for communication with Spanish people, and new forms of communication between the creoles and the growing population groups that resulted from the mixing among diverse ethnic groups. Spanish people in the new world themselves ceased to be Spanish as they had to adjust to the new circumstances, which along with changes in their diet (Alberro 1992) were especially pronounced in their language. The language of the colonized peoples, such as the Nahuatl in central Mexico, left their traces behind by altering the pronunciation and spelling in the Spanish language of the local colonial masters. The attempt during the Bourbon reforms to push back against the *lenguas generales* and to restore the “purity of Spanish” among Spanish people failed despite the dispatch of emissaries from Spain (*peninsulares*, disparagingly referred to as “*gachupines*”) to the administration and courts (Nadeau/Barlow 2013: 184). The cultural division between the elites born in the New World and the *gachupines* had already become irreconcilable and ended in the independence movements of the Creoles.

Only after independence and in the context of mass migration from Europe in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries as well as with the rapidly growing large cities and their urban forms of cultural production (above all the press, universities, literature, song lyrics, theater, radio, cinema, etc.) did the Spanish language expand. As the national language of the republics which had turned away from the mother country, it served not only to build nation states but above all the creation of a Spanish-speaking America. With its literary and artistic output, it went on to become an element of European literature and painting (in the broadest sense) in the 20th century and transformed it at the same time.

The large majority of the local population in many regions of the Andes and Mexico as well as Central America remained shut out of this development of a European/Latin American high culture. Most spoke other languages and for a long time after independence they could neither read nor write in Spanish, even though in all nation-states, with the exception of Paraguay (and Brazil, which is not addressed in this paper), Spanish was the only language recognized as the official language. The rudimentary school system produced a high number of illiterate people, and in addition to excluding women, shut out indigenous people and Afro-Americans directly or indirectly. The latter two groups remain disadvantaged to this day. The school system also has difficulty just as before with the integration of indigenous languages. The inadequate mastery of the Spanish language is on the one hand an expression of legal exclusion (for a long time, the right to vote in the republics of Latin America was linked with mastery of the Spanish language) and the raw social inequalities which characterize the subcontinent until today in comparison to other world regions, particularly Europe (Braig 2012; Braig et al. 2013).

5. Latin America: The Blind Spot of Europe

The European view restricted Latin America not only to being an extension of Europe and the access to raw materials and cheap labor connected with this. At the same time it ignored the transformations in Europe itself and the “‘hybridization’ of the Europeans”, and thus also ignored the insight that its development only became possible “by assimilating other cultures” (Coronil 2002: 192, own translation). For postcolonial historians, the economic and political processes formed the background against which “sometime at the beginning of the 16th century in the middle of a global wave of material and symbolic transformations, [the West] was [produced]”, whereby “a new symbolic order” (Trouillot 2002: 86) emerged. This was based on the “notion of different degrees of humanity” in which the “white man” took the leading position ahead of the Indian peoples. In this understanding, the Indian peoples of the New World counted as

children to be raised and converted to Christianity, and the Africans as people “without souls” and therefore predestined for slavery. In the context of such racist thought, it was neither foreseeable that the colonized peoples would either inscribe themselves in the ideas and developments of the Europeans, nor was it conceivable that they could develop their own conceptions and perspectives that could have effects back in Europe. It was particularly inconceivable in the ideational space of the colonial masters that the colonized people would rise up and that blacks would free themselves from slavery even before the abolition of slavery by the Europeans.

More than 30 years before the Slavery Abolition Act by which all slaves in the British Empire were declared to be freed, and already two years before the French Revolution, free and enslaved blacks fought for freedom and equality. What then occurred under the leadership of Touissant Louverture and ended with the independence of the first country in the Caribbean and Latin America was comprehended by observers at the time only very slowly. The radical changes that the island brought between 1791 and 1804 were beyond the conceptions and possibilities for interpretation of the times. “They posed a sequence of events for which even the extreme political left in France and England had no frame of reference available” (Trouillot 2002: 94). But not only did their contemporaries have difficulties in understanding the revolutionary changes. Diplomats from Europe and the United States also resisted for many years the formal recognition of Haiti which became independent in 1804. By contrast to the Latin American republics which upon independence from Spain in the 1820s were quickly recognized by the United States, Haiti had to wait for Abraham Lincoln. Only when the slaves were freed on its own soil did the United States recognize Haiti as a sovereign state, in 1862, even later than the European powers.

Even until today, social science has had difficulty conceiving of the Haitian Revolution as part of the independence movements of the 19th and 20th centuries. The fight for independence and the founding of republics was initially placed in Mexico, Venezuela, Nuevo Granada, Peru and Chile. In these movements it was again liberals, tradesmen, progressive voices and intellectuals, in other words actors well-known to the Europeans, who (with a few exceptions) were assigned the central role. At least they were assigned the “first Rousseauian impulse” (Morse 1982, cited in Pérez Sáinz 2014: 1), which means that parallels were sought in Latin America that resonated with the conceptions of freedom and equality that had developed in France and the United States. But the large majority of the population still remained excluded from the success of these impulses. The elites of the independent republics did become stronger and transformed the colonial exclusions, asymmetries and inequalities, but still agreed with them in the basic polarization of their thinking, beyond political differences between liberals and

conservatives. The liberal Juan Bautista Alberdi, for example, an Argentinian politician and commentator, denied the indigenous population in the context of independence any affiliation “with our political and civil society” and made a clear distinction between the American-born creoles who were for him Europeans and the others.

In America all that is not European is barbaric: there is only one difference: 1. The indigenous or wild people; 2. The Europeans, that is what we are called, who were born in America, who speak Spanish and who believe in Jesus Christ and not in Pillán (indigenous deity) (Alberdi 1852, cited in Nieden 2013: 98, own translation).

On the one side, European civilization, of which the elites rebelling against Spain in Latin America saw themselves as part, and on the other side, barbarians, into which the “others” (women, indigenous people and former slaves, but also the landless, peasants, and workers) were made, led to stigmatization, sexism, racism, and the naturalization of inequality. These worked as criteria for social exclusion which are the basis upon which Latin America was made into the world region most strongly shaped by inequality.

Later “Rousseauian moments” and efforts to overcome inequalities, such as social policies and extension of the right to vote at the time of populism from the 1930s to the 1960s or social reforms of leftist and social democratic governments in the past decade (Pérez Sáinz 2014), are also closely connected to developments in Europe and in turn had effects on them. In this way the conceptions about political inclusion developed into a tight reciprocal relationship wherein ideas and practices emerged earlier and could be implemented earlier than in Europe. This is illustrated by the right of naturalization in immigrant countries such as Argentina, where at the beginning of the 20th century it was much easier for foreigners to obtain citizenship than in Europe. The extension of the right to vote to women and other social groups also developed partly faster than in many European countries.

The meaning and independent contribution of Latin America to democracy does not only rest in the fact that Latin America was a destination for migrants and in particular many political refugees from Europe. The creation of norms and rights of political inclusion in Latin America has played and still plays an important role with its conceptions of participative democracy and its diverse social movements. Along with the naturalization rights at the beginning of the 20th century, other examples include the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples as laid out in Article 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) (Góngora-Mera 2012), the compensatory welfare for certain ethnic

groups and the practice in many communities of participatory budgeting and accounting. These practices which barely exist in Europe and are mostly unknown there are often overlooked in comparisons of democratic development. What is ignored however is the responsibility of “the West” for the destruction of democratic processes, in the establishment of military dictatorships, in whose repressive practices not only Western institutions but also fugitive Nazis (who often had help from the Vatican and the United States) played a role. But also the actual effects of deregulation and extractivism on the features of the political system are seldom included. Undoubtedly, intellectuals, politicians and civil society actors from Latin America and Europe do share normative conceptions of self-determination, human rights and democracy. There are also fields of resonance between both regions, for example solidarity relations. However these relations are not one-sided, they originate not only in Europe, and not all have been helpful for democracy in Latin America. The meaning of interdependence for the development of actual European and American democracies should not be limited to the measurement of democracy according to a European/North American ideal type, because if such a constriction is applied, then the democracies in Latin America are inevitably labeled as defective.

Along with political exclusion, socio-economic inequalities in Latin America were repeatedly a subject of social concern, particularly in the 20th century, and as in Europe, social movements sought to overcome these. Examples of these include the classic “social question” and the workers’ movement, which not only resulted in the formation of worker’s parties and unions on both sides of the Atlantic, but also in the establishment and articulation of national labor law and social law and the participation in an international order, such as the founding of the ILO in 1919 in which many Latin American republics participated as founding members. Other movements, such as the farmers’ movement, were written into constitutions, as in the case of Mexico in 1917 the context of the Mexican Revolution (1910 – 1920), on the basis of which collective ownership and usage forms such as local community ownership and *ejido* (cooperative) ownership were recognized alongside the protection of private property rights (Beck and Braig 1991). These however had no resonance in Europe or in the international context.

Along with the establishment of a field of resonance for social movements, shaped by European (Rousseauian) ideas, there were also fundamental impulses that certainly had their origins in the Latin American context. These were not, however, received in Europe to the same extent that European ideas were in Latin America. Today it is the movement of the landless, indigenous peoples and Afro-Americans who are speaking up with their own voices in resonance with Europe with their own conceptions and

seek to inscribe these in the international legal regime. Although it is always difficult for Europeans to take these actors and processes seriously and to recognize them, the impulses, experiences, and practices from Latin America have changed the European understanding of violations of human rights. The family-based human rights movements such as the Madres de Plaza de Mayo have sought solidarity relations in Europe to publicize the practice of disappearance of political opponents of military dictatorships in Argentina, Chile and Brazil. They succeeded in this relationship of resonance not only to be heard but also to change the classical European or Western conception of human rights (Fischer Lescano 2005).

6. Europe's Loss of Hegemony

The pattern of relations between the two world regions were and still are subject to frequent new configurations. The creation of the independent republics in the 19th century marked such a new configuration. Although even more European great powers intervened in economic and political relations and Europeans from all countries emigrated or fled from the Old World to Latin America in order to escape economic misery or political and racist oppression, it did not end up as a linear deepening but as a repeated distancing and intensification of the interdependencies and to changes in the patterns of behavior. These were shaped by the interaction of various processes at different levels, which also may have unfolded at different speeds and in various directions.

At first, in the context of the independence movements, new conceptions in the Americas developed that were based on the creation of a space outside of Europe. They considered themselves to be in the Western Hemisphere or in Panamerica, independent from and at a distance to old, feudal Europe. U.S. president James Monroe in 1823 defined two separate political spheres with his Monroe Doctrine: the Old World should no longer intervene in the New World. South of the Rio Grande, this view was shared; the basis for this was the amazement at the freeing of the North American colonies from England in 1776, and particularly for the first president George Washington, as well as the rapid recognition of the newly independent republics by the United States. Efforts were started on this basis to deepen relations in the context of inter-American conferences. Just when these succeeded in 1889, with the convening of the first Pan-American conference in New York, at the same there were tensions that arose out of concern about the expansionist policies of the United States. Many Latin Americans, such as the Cuban José Martí, feared the economic dominance and political and military imperialism of the northern neighbor. Against this background it was difficult for there to be a sphere of interest common to all nations in the Americas.

The New World was divided in two, and Mexico and other states in Central America and the Caribbean were in danger of becoming “America’s backyard” (Braig 2011).

But the New World seemed divided not only from the perspective of the South, and the danger grew of being dominated by the imperial North. From Europe as well, two very different Americas were perceived and the dominance of the North over the South was taken seriously. Alexis de Tocqueville had expressed these during his journey to the Americas. Together with the economist Michel Chevalier, he not only represented the idea of Latin, trans-European cultural zone or a *race latine* which he located also in non-European regions. With his view of the Americas he also linked this to the warning of an expansion of the United States and the danger of conflict across the borders between Latin and Anglo-Saxon America, i.e. on the border between the United States and Mexico. These fears were realized, not only in France, in 1845 with the U.S. annexation of Texas. However, the French foreign minister François Pierre Guillaume Guizot linked these fears to the necessity of protecting the *race latine* not only in Europe but also in America, so that it would not fall under the yoke of the Anglo-Saxons (Ibold 1998: 80). But “Latinness” began to be politicized and linked with geostrategic considerations only during the rule of Napoleon III (1852-1870).

However, with the French intervention in Mexico from January 1862 to March 1867, supported or at least tolerated by other European powers, which ended with the execution of Emperor Maximilian (1867), the construction of the *race latine* ended in a fiasco. The direct reasons for the colonial adventure were the commercial interests of France, such as the collection of debts based on highly dubious grounds. Other French geopolitical motives, however, were aimed clearly at cementing its own sphere of influence in Mexico in a competition with the United States, before the United States could gain hegemony over the entire continent. The opportunity seemed timely: the United States was already mostly immobilized in foreign policy during its Civil War since 1861, and could not have carried out its Monroe Doctrine as formulated by military means against the European Powers even if it had wanted to. The military adventure of Napoleon III was also legitimated by the position of needing to protect a common Latin cultural zone. At the same time efforts were made to promote a stronger integration through economic policy measures. The customs union of Latin countries and the 1865 foundation of the *Union Monétaire Latine* in Paris were, however, just as unsuccessful as the military intervention in Mexico. Well into the 1920s, the hegemonic position relative to the republics south of the Rio Grande were lost to the United States, not only by France, but also by other European great powers.

But even when the 19th century concluded with the failure of the project “Latinness” that was tightly linked to French foreign policy, this was by no means the end of the cultural entanglements. The resonance relationship even deepened, which was expressed in common developments in literature and painting, but also in the spread of shared political ideas and beliefs. In Paris these even received a central location because it was there that after independence, along with the relatives of the upper classes, intellectuals, artists, political activists and dissidents joined to meet together and organize into political clubs such as la Asociación General de Estudiantes Latinamericanos (AGELA). Paris became the capital of “Latin America” in the 19th and early 20th century, the center of Latin American culture and politics, and the destination for intellectuals, fleeing Latin America for various reasons from all countries of South America, who only were able to invent Latin America in communication with each other and in relation to Paris. “Latinness” gained a new meaning in intellectual circles primarily with its related confrontation with the “Anglo-Saxons”, derived from the feelings of superiority of Europeanized intellectuals of Latin America, of the South, over the pragmatic North (Strecker 2013).

By contrast to the cultural and intellectual elites, who oriented themselves to Europe for a long time, the masses south of the Rio Grande looked instead to the United States. Increasing mass migration to the United States in recent years, particularly from Mexico and Central America, has not only fundamentally transformed the border between North and South America but also the work and life worlds on both sides (Maihold 2011). The effects on the composition of the population in the United States are clearly visible: according to the most recent census in 2010, 17% of the population is Hispanic (persons with a Hispano-American background). They are the fastest growing group in the United States and shape not only the border cities and metropolitan areas in the South such as Los Angeles and in the North such as Chicago with their language and culture, but their organizations also influence politics at both the local and national levels (Schütze 2014).

The history of migration between Latin America and Europe contrasts strongly with the creation and intensification of transnational migration entanglements between the Americas. After centuries of migration and flight of Europeans to Latin America, not only did these movements from Europe to Latin America slowed considerably, but Europe also increasingly shut itself off from immigrants from Latin America. This applied particularly for Spain. With its integration into the EU and the implementation of the EU immigration regime (the Schengen Accords), it ended its “special relationship” with Latin America in favor of its own affiliation with the European Union. This retreat became obvious as it made possible the EU Guidelines on Forced Return in 2008,

just at the time when the number of Argentinian people immigrating to Spain was rising during Argentinian financial crisis between 2000 and 2005 and Latin American politicians were objecting to the criminalization of immigration. The Argentinian public took the apparently “lack of reciprocity” to be “a betrayal of the common history” (media discourse cited in Nieden 2013: 10).

From the perspective of a “shared migration history”, the independent republics in the 19th century had opened themselves for European immigration. Many reduced the requirements for immigration and quickly secured citizenship rights and political participation for the immigrants from Europe (Sabato 1999). For the Argentinians, the refusal of reciprocity was especially serious, since they had seen themselves since a long time as Europeans “coming from the ships [from Europe]”, and regarded Argentina, particularly Buenos Aires, as a part of Europe. The European immigrants had brought with them their political concepts and ideological cleavages from the Old World. Not only did they continue to speak various European languages for a long time, but also these were the languages of the newspapers of their organizations and their calls for protests. These entanglements were strengthened by the Spanish Civil War, the persecution of the Jewish people of Europe and the members of critical organizations in all parts of Europe that were occupied by Nazi Germany.

This deepening of entanglements through migration, flight and exile took place in times in which economic relations were characterized rather by a deceleration of the pace of globalization. By contrast, in a time when the pace of globalization is accelerating, the economic entanglements between Europe and Latin America cannot keep up with the speed of other world regions.

Europe cannot keep up with the dynamics of the economic entanglements between Latin America and China (Dussel Peters 2013). There is increasing investment along with exceptionally rapidly growing trade relations, including in research and university education (Aróstica Fernández 2014) and increasing migration from China to Latin America (Alba Villalever 2014). They are also changing the work and life worlds directly, in particular the mass consumption of the majority of Latin Americans, as shown for example by the importance of Chinese consumer goods and trading relations even for the informal market, social organizations and policies in Mexico City (Alba and Braig 2013).

So where does Latin America belong? The subcontinent is again the intersection of diverse transnational entanglements and a hub of globalization between Europe and Asia. Europe will not benefit from this directly, and may even lose in part because

of it. This does not mean that Latin America will remain linked to Europe through diverse entanglement processes. As long as the pattern of relations that underpin these continue to be shaped by asymmetries, and the Latin Americans must learn that they are not recognized as equals by Europeans, it remains only a desire of some Europeans to interact with Latin America “as equals”. Against this the understanding of many Latin Americas that “there is no reciprocity” is more realistic for capturing the state of entanglements between Europe and Latin America.

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