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Introduction: (Geo-)Political Imaginaries in the Americas

Abstract

This article serves as an introduction to the special *fiar*-issue "From Ideas to Concepts: (Geo) Political Imaginaries". It draws attention to the use of imaginaries in the Americas, explores the ways in which research on imaginaries has evolved and outlines still existing research gaps. By exemplifying the significance of imaginaries in the field of *Geopolitics* this article highlights particularly the potential imaginaries have with regard to the construction of places and spaces.

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Nuestro Norte es el Sur – The Americas from Different Perspectives

> In the twelfth century, the official geographer of the kingdom of Sicily, al-Idrisi, drew a map of the world, the world that Europe knew about, with south on top and north on the bottom. That was common in mapmaking back then. And that's how the map of South America was drawn eight centuries later, with south on top, by Uruguayan painter Joaquín Torres Garcia. 'Our north is south' [*Nuestro norte es el sur*], he said. 'To go north, our ships go down, not up.'
>
> If the world is upside down the way it is now, wouldn't we have to turn it over again to get it to stand up straight? (Galeano 337)

The author of these lines, the Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano, has often been described as the voice of Latin America (e.g. Kassam/Jones 2015; Friera 2015). In these lines he expresses the struggle of Latin America against being treated like the backyard in the South of the United States and against being the poor neighbor of the place where wealth is concentrated like nowhere else on earth. Galeano challenges us to think differently about a naturalized way of understanding the world: geography, expressed most prominently through cartography. Thereby, Galeano perceives cartographic representation of space as powerful instruments to enforce political and social order. Maps thus shape our perception of the world as they "divide the world up into distinct places and zones" (Dodds 10), which is why the production of maps has also often led to political disputes (e.g. among Chile and Argentina with regard to the Southern Patagonian Ice Field). Thus, maps can be seen as social constructions and are clear expressions of power relations on various scales (e.g., Crampton 2001).

As Galeano's example of Torres García already indicates, geographic assumptions of the Americas are powerful factors in the way we think of this double-continent and of its global position. This dossier emphasizes the need to study geopolitical imaginaries such as the one presented in Galeano's example in order to better understand the dynamics and power relations within the Americas. As will be exemplified by the different contributions in this special issue, we argue that imaginaries constitute lenses which serve to describe and interpret the world.

The authors of the articles in this issue focus particularly on the Americas. Eric Selbin looks at the importance of certain spaces and places for revolutionary imaginaries in Latin America. Joaquín Aldao, Nicolás Damín and Dario Dawyd describe how the focus and attitudes of Argentine syndicalism shifted from Europe to an inter-American dimension and Klaus Weinhauer compares the imaginaries of urban threat in in the USA and Argentina. Within the double-continent, it is possible to observe how imaginaries circulate and expand, how they form part of narratives in different places and spaces and thereby also create entanglements within the American hemisphere, which are often ignored by scholars (Kaltmeier 175). To look at these entanglements means to take the shared and divided

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history (Conrad and Randeria 17) of certain places and places into consideration and to focus on their often conflictive histories with each other. By choosing a specific regional focus, the authors included in this dossier, however, do not neglect that imaginaries are also formed through interrelations with other regions. This is shown especially in Angelika Epple's and Kirsten Kramer's article, in which they depict geopolitical imaginaries as spatial configurations that represent not only concrete geographical or topographical places but also systems and relations, which are firmly embedded within global power structures.

With this special issue on (geo-)political imaginaries we aim at

- contributing to the debate on the construction and significance of imaginaries;

- providing examples that illustrate the power of imaginaries in the context of geopolitics and beyond;

- expanding the theoretical and methodological instruments for the analysis of imaginaries in a more profound and systematic manner.

Before introducing the different contributions of which this special issue is composed, we will first briefly relate to the evolvement of the term and the ideas behind *imaginaries*. Secondly, we will outline the significance of imaginaries in the field of geopolitics. We thereby concentrate on the discussions on imaginaries in scholarly works across various disciplines, especially related to the field of critical geopolitics.

Imaginaries

The term *imaginary*, as we use it here, is influenced by theoretical approaches from different disciplines ranging from History, Literary Science, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology and Social-Anthropology. However, similar to the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor (25) we do not believe that we can adequately explain imaginaries in terms of a conclusive theory because of their largely unstructured, unlimited, and indefinite nature. Instead, we propose to analyze them as *lenses* in a double sense; first, as lenses people use unconsciously to look at and interpret certain phenomena and second, as products of a conscious political strategy. Thereby, the perspective that lenses offer can change. For instance they allow one to refocus and defocus on certain phenomena and thus help to understand how imaginaries change over time and through reproduction by others.

The study of imaginaries stems from a French intellectual tradition subsequent to the sociologist Émile Durkheim that investigated the patterns with which society tries to generate meaning as their principal target. The book *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (the French original is from 1975) by the Greek-French Philosopher Cornelius Castoriadis is often

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regarded as one of the most important works stemming from this tradition. For Castoriadis, an imaginary is "something 'invented' – whether this refers to a sheer invention ('a story entirely dreamed up'), or a slippage, a shift of meaning in which available symbols are invested with other significations than their 'normal' or canonical significations […]" (127). Castoriadis' work presents a critical reading of rationalizing assumptions of modernity. For him, although the modern world has presented itself as the product of rationalization, despising the imaginary representations of previous societies, it is precisely this extreme rationalization which makes life in the modern world "just as dependent on the imaginary as any archaic or historical culture" (156). In his argumentation, Castoriadis notes that societies, together with their laws and legalizations, are founded upon a basic conception of the world and the place of the human beings in it. Traditional societies had elaborated imaginaries, expressed through various creation myths, by which they explained how the world came to be and how it is sustained. The same was done in the context of capitalism, appealing to this mythic imaginary of rationalization or pure reason.

The work of Castoriadis is an important foundation to understand the importance of imaginaries in so-called modern societies. A work which relates to the invented character of the most prominent modern organizing principle, the nation, is *Imagined Communities,* a book by the historian Benedict Anderson published in 1983. He points out that nation-states are not a product of the rational principles of a political organization, but the result of subjective processes originated by emergence of the printing press under a capitalist system. For him, the convergence of capitalism and print technology created unified fields of exchange and communication below Latin and above the spoken vernaculars. Thus, speakers of each European vernacular language became capable of comprehending one another via print and paper. In this process, "they gradually became aware of hundreds of thousands of people in their particular language-field" (Anderson 44). Those fellow-readers formed the nationally imagined community or the members of nations, who "will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them," but were able to have in their minds "the image of their communion" (6).

A concept of imaginaries closely connected to Anderson's work is developed by Charles Taylor in his book *Modern Social Imaginaries (2004).* Taylor's focus is on certain social forms which modern Western societies are based on. Those are, in his view, the market economy, the public sphere and the self-governing people—all them related to the constructed nations which Anderson described. These principles constitute Western modernity's *social imaginaries*, that is to say "the ways people imagine their social existence" and their living together with others (Taylor 23).

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In contrast to Anderson and Taylor, the philosopher Chiara Bottici draws upon Castoriadis' approach. In her book *Imaginal Politics: Images beyond Imagination and the Imaginary* (2014), she develops a theory of the *imaginal*. According to this theory, she considers images as a starting point for the formation of imaginaries and argues that "without images, there can be neither a world for us nor a subject for the world," and consequently "human beings are not only rational animals but also, and even prior to that, imaginal animals" (6). Thereby, Bottici addresses an important additional dimension in the study of imaginaries and draws attention to the power of images, which she also regards as main drivers of contemporary politics (11).

A work which uses a combination of these approaches is the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's *Modernity at Large*, first published in 1996. For him, the world we live in today is characterized by a new role for imagination in social life and to grasp this new role, we need to take into account the old idea of images, especially mechanically produced images and the political nature of imagination (according to the Frankfurt School), the idea of imagined communities (Anderson), and the French idea of imaginary (Castoriadis) as a constructed conception or landscape of collective aspirations (31). Further, he argues that there is something critical and new in global cultural processes: The imagination has become an organized field of social practices, a form of work (in the sense of both labor and culturally organized practice), and a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility (31). This is a reason to argue that people today do not simply live in imagined communities, but also in "imagined worlds…that is, the multiple worlds that are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe […]" (33).

Appadurai's work and his notion of "imagined worlds" goes beyond what the other aforementioned authors offer us and leads us towards the specific interest of this introduction, which is the explanation of *geopolitical* imaginaries. Nonetheless, some basic ideas for the amplifications of the view on imaginaries are already present in Anderson's and Taylor' work. As Anderson points out, nations define themselves in relation to other nations, and they are imagined as limited because of the existence of these other communities (7). But it is not only the limit itself which has to be considered in the study of imaginaries, but also the relation to what exists beyond the border. This crucial idea is present in Taylors' work, who, in more general terms, indicates that imaginaries hint at a "wider perspective on where we stand in space and time" (27). This means to take into considerations "our relations to other nations and peoples (e.g., to external models of democratic life we are trying to imitate, or of tyranny we are trying to distance ourselves from) and also where we stand in our history […]" (27).

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How such a positioning in space and time can take place is very well described in *Orientalism* (1978) by literary theorist Edward Said. He argues that there is a source of inaccurate cultural representations that are the foundation of Western thought towards the Middle East. His thesis is the existence of a Eurocentric prejudice against Arabo-Islamic peoples and their culture, which has its roots in Western culture's long tradition of (re)producing false and romanticized images of Asia in general and the Middle East in particular. For him, such perceptions, and the consequent cultural representations, have served as implicit justifications for the colonial and imperialist ambitions of the European powers and of the United States. Literary theorist Walter Mignolo adds that there cannot be a construction of "an Orient, as the other, without the Occident as the same" (51). That is to say that at the beginning of the modern world system, there took place what the Iberian colonizers thought of as the extension of Europe to the Americas, the construction of the Occident. This "overarching geopolitical imaginary of the modern/colonial world system," which Mignolo calls Occidentalism, existed prior to Orientalism and coincides with the shift of power towards Great Britain and France and the conquest of its colonies in Asia and Africa (59).

In our perception, the term imaginaries as coined by Castoriadis and others offers a good starting point to emphazise the importance of the creation of meaning for societies. What one has to add is the role of spaces and places as well as their relation to each other along the lines of what can already be found in some remarks in the works of Anderson and Taylor and is more explicitly present in the works of Said and Mignolo. Imaginaries, especially when referring to its often underestimated geopolitical dimension, have to be embedded into something that we might call worldview, weltanschauung, or in Appadurai's wording "imagined world." This is the basis upon which we will explain the function of geopolitical imaginaries.

Geopolitical Imaginaries

Geopolitics constitutes an excellent example of the modern rationalist thinking to which Castoriadis referred because it aims at a complete categorization and hierarchization of the world according to geographical characteristics of regions, states and other entities, such as, for instance, the city. This is why we consider it an important field to which the analysis of imaginaries can contribute.

The term geopolitics was first used by geographers in Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (cf. Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics* 21-55). In this way of thinking, regions, states and other entities are characterized according to their geographical features and

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evaluated by their strategic importance. Geopolitics was a considerable part of imperialist thinking and also present in the ideology of Nazi Germany's expansionist foreign policy. After World War II, the term geopolitics was discredited because of its use in the *Third Reich*. This did not mean that its ideas were absent from political actions. In the 1970s, the term was popularized anew, especially by the then U.S. Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, and was later on adopted by U.S. strategists like Zbigniew Brzezinski ("The Grand Chessboard") and Samuel P. Huntington ("The Clash of Civilizations"). Although the works have been deconstructed academically, they haven't lost influence in contemporary foreign policy making. Especially the post 9/11 cultural clash literature shows how imaginaries are still at work and perpetuated.

The repopularization of the term triggered a new scientific debate, which contested the views of the so-called classical geopolitics. Critical geopolitics as a new school of thought emerged. Taking into account the spatial, linguistic, and postcolonial turn in the humanities, critical geopolitics replace the understanding of geography as naturally given by analyzing it as a social construct (re)produced in discourses, in which a permanent "contest between different ways of envisioning the world" occurs (Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics* 15). This critical approach no longer treats geopolitics as a neutral description of geography, but instead highlights that the characterization of places and spaces always possesses political and ideological implications. Consequentially, "all international politics is also geopolitics as it necessarily involves geographical and spatial assumptions about people and places" (Dodds, Kuus, and Sharp 6).

One of the main tasks of critical geopolitics is to investigate what Edward Said called "imaginative geography," that is to say the "universal practice of designating in one's mind a familiar space which is 'ours' and an unfamiliar space beyond 'ours' which is 'theirs'" (54). With reference to Said, geographer Simon Dalby calls "[t]he exclusion of the Other and the inclusion, incorporation and administration of the Same [...] the essential geopolitical moment" (418). Every temporal identity construction is based on references to something external and thereby the distinction from others (Laclau 32). Dalby makes an important point here. But one should add that not all geopolitical considerations are about the formation of enemy images, which are based on a geographical distinction between "our land" and an alleged barbarian land as representation for the self and the other as described by Said. Sometimes scholars have to investigate constructions that are shaped by more differentiations in the reference to other spaces and places. Be it in a more or less differentiated or complex form, it is about attaining a better idea of what the German historian Jürgen Osterhammel calls "concepts of world order," which is an expression he uses to refer to "perceptions of relatively stable relations of collectives – nations, states, religious communities, civilizations, etc. – among each other" (410).

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Yet geopolitics is not limited to dealing with such large scale entities. It can also be applied to more local phenomena like, for example, urban spaces. In this regard it is also worth investigating in how far the perception and construction of urban spaces works along the same lines as the ones of nations or continents. In research on urban spaces (Huyssen 2008; for Latin America: Huffschmied and Wildner 2013), people's images in particular of the urban space in which they live, work, and play are explored. In this regard, the anthropologist Nestor García Cancline has strongly influenced the usage of the term imaginary in urban research and investigated, for example, how people construct imaginaries while moving through cities and observing different urban districts (García Canclini 109-110).

Apart from this general description of critical geopolitics, it is important to mention two shifts propagated by it. The first shift is the one away from only analyzing state actors in official institutions to a broader view that also takes non-state actors and everyday situations into consideration (Dodds, Kuus, and Sharp 7). Scholarly work in the field of critical geopolitics aims at a comprehension of how particular understandings of place are constructed by political actors (practical geopolitics), strategic institutions (formal geopolitics) and mass media (popular geopolitics) (Ó Tuathail, "Thinking Critically" 8; Dodds 42).

The second shift propagated by critical geopolitics is the de-centering of geopolitical analysis, away from "the Global North as the seemingly natural vantage point" (Dodds, Kuus, and Sharp 8). As geographer John Agnew stresses, "[t]he dominant practices […] constituting the modern geopolitical imagination have been overwhelmingly those of the political élites of the Great Powers" (9). Without denying the impact of these dominant practices, one should take into consideration that beyond these, there are many interpretations, subversions, and variations of them as well as completely different approaches in the so-called peripheries of the world.

By following some of the important ideas within the field of critical geopolitics (the construction of places and spaces in politics, the broadening of actors analyzed and incorporation of the Global South, here: in Latin America and in the Caribbean) and by combining it with the considerations made about the role of imaginaries in societies (giving people a sense of their existence, their relations to others, and the way this is embedded into a space and time), it is possible to bring the terms geopolitics and imaginaries together.

Against this backdrop, for us, studying geopolitical imaginaries means to analyze the way certain places and spaces are constructed, characterized, and embedded into views of the world. When considering imaginaries as lenses, that pool different images/perceptions of the world, we argue that it is important to understand how different imaginaries intersect and hybridize in order to also comprehend the evolution of imaginaries. These lenses that are always composed of limited, subjective interpretations, even if technical innovations (such as satellites and drone photography) seem to provide more objective images. This means

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revealing the underlying political, social, economic, and cultural struggles of seemingly natural geographical assumptions. And perhaps most importantly, it means showing how collectives (or in some cases individuals) understand themselves in relation to others, and how their political decisions are influenced by assumptions about places and spaces.

Further Research

In the research field on geopolitics and beyond there is much room and indeed need to expand the research both with regard to the definition of imaginaries and also with respect to their construction and application:

First, while a certain lack of clarity of the term "imaginary" derives from the broadness of the term in itself and also from its interdisciplinary evolution, it is also the different contexts in which imaginaries matter that make it necessary not only to understand imaginaries as instruments sharing the function to reduce complexity but also to recognize the different logics behind them. Social imaginaries, for instance, are understood by critical theorists as social constructions of the 'other' applied by political communities to distinguish between insiders, who are included, and outsiders, who are excluded, in communities ranging from the level of states, the international community to cultures and thereby manifest systems of exclusion. Historian Olaf Kaltmeier on the other hand points out that geopolitical imaginaries "allow us to understand the articulation of several spatial fragments into a broader concept of space and its representation" (171). Both, the social and geopolitical imaginary thus contribute to identity formations, however, are distinct in their purposes.

Second, although it has been touched upon by Appadurai, especially with regard to concepts like "imagined communities," "images," "the imaginal," and "ideas," the need to define the distinctions between these terms remains. This is important in order to better understand how, for example, images as visual (re)presentations become mental images, fantasies, and illusions—or, as Taylor points out, become imaginaries that constitute and are constituted by society and thereby create new forms of "imagined communities." Chiara Bottici argues that in order to define the difference between the imaginal and the imaginary, it is also necessary to consider the increase in images that now mediate politics as well as how "democratization and mediatization brought about a deep revolution in the nature of politics itself" (1). This also leads to the need to better understand the relation of the imaginary with the symbolic and the "real" dimensions: Jacques Lacan, for instance, introduces this psychoanalytical viewpoint and puts emphasis on the organizational function of language, which "is organized in the symbolic order constituting the unconscious (...), by contrast the imaginary order

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produces a unified image that is at the same time sustained and sabotaged by language" (Mountain 206).

Third, as some political geographers (Dodds 2014; Reuber et al. 2012) have outlined, geopolitical discourses in general and particularly imaginaries (e.g. about Russia) have increased significantly in political communication, media, and the public. Although the concept of critical geopolitics already provides a methodological approach to trace the interplay between popular, practical, and formal geopolitics in the discursive production and/or circulation of imaginaries, there is still a research gap with regard to the intentional and unintentional production and/or circulation of imaginaries in organizations and institutions and on their significance in local, national, or regional contexts.

Fourth, from a methodological point of view, it must be asked if discourse and frame analyses are sufficient to ascertain how imaginaries are constructed, or if other approaches, e.g. actor-network and agent-structure theories, help to better grasp how imaginaries circulate. While discourse analysis makes it possible to identify hegemonic patterns of interpretation and entangled discourses, frame analysis is often applied to organizational research and contributes to better understanding how issues are imported into organizations or social movements, and how institutional forces shape the framing of, for example, a policy debate (Creed et al. 35). If one follows Erving Goffman, who "presents framing as a day-to-day sense-making technique" on which individuals rely "to make sense of daily interactions, conventional rituals, discourse, advertising, and other elements of social experience" (36), the inclusion of Actor-Network Theory (cf. Michel Callon, John Low, Bruno Latour) and Agent-Structure theories (as developed by Georg Simmel, Norbert Elias, Talcott Parsons, Pierre Bourdieu, Anthony Giddens, and others) further help to shed light on actors coining imaginaries and may help to meet epistemological questions relating to processes and social mechanisms leading to the emergence and power of imaginaries.

In sum, a methodological framework is needed that assists in meeting the two principal challenges:

1. to define how imaginaries explicitly contribute to "othering" processes and
2. to identify the actors actively shaping them.

Finally, awareness must also be raised on the deliberate, functional use of "imaginaries" for example in political communication but also to the momentum they can gain on their own - a problem which was also addressed by Castoriadis which includes its own methodological challenge as it remains speculative whether an actor uses the imaginary on purpose as a steering-instrument or whether an actor is determined by an imaginary her or himself. Although Bottici offers a conceptual tool to overcome this dilemma in her theory of the

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imaginal, she emphasizes the centrality of images "rather than the faculty or the context that produces them" (5). This third way between theories of imagination and theories of the imaginary again does not provide a possibility to observe and evince the strategic use of imaginaries by human beings.

Contributions to the Dossier

After explaining the main ideas behind geopolitical imaginaries and our suggestions for further research we present, in this last part of the introduction, the four contributions to this dossier. These contributions represent four different ideas of approaching the topic of geopolitical imaginaries.

The dossier starts with an article about revolutionary imaginaries in Latin America by Eric Selbin (Southwestern University), in which he asks a fundamental question for the studies of imaginaries: What do people desire, what do they consider possible, and what impossible? Selbin proposes to understand imaginaries as "socially, collectively constructed through symbols, songs, tales, rituals, dates, places, memory/ies and more, and enforced and circulated through stories, through which […] we manage the world, our world" (*p. 2*). Selbin examines how imaginaries circulate and takes us on a journey through twentieth-century Latin America, drawing on examples from Mexico and Cuba to illustrate that places and spaces, like jungles or mountains, were of fundamental importance for the way revolutions and attempts at revolution were imagined. These places and spaces helped to subvert the canonical meaning attached to certain cities, countries, and even the Americas as whole. Selbin further points to the significance of human agency and thereby provides a link between imaginaries and the concept of narratives.

Angelika Epple and Kirsten Kramer (Bielefeld University) also emphasize the importance of space in the understanding of geopolitical imaginaries in their article. They offer an analytical reconceptualization of geopolitical imaginaries using Appadurai's approach to the term "imagination" and different forms of image production or reception in the current experience of globalization. According to the authors, Appadurai's understanding of "imagination" results from the intricate interplay of three elements: "images," "the imagined," and "the imaginary." On an analytical level, these three elements point to three dimensions that are pivotal to any consideration about geopolitical imaginaries: the material, the creative, and the social dimensions. In order to develop their argumentations more clearly, they present a brief case study based on the comparison of the different book covers for the two versions of Christopher Bayly's study on globalization: *The Birth of the Modern World* and *El nacimiento del mundo moderno*, published respectively for an English and a Spanish-speaking audience. Both book covers consist of an *image* that is the mechanical reproduction of a

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painting. Each one reflects the historical rise of specific *imagined* spaces closely related to the French Revolution and the emergence of asymmetrical race and gender relations characteristic of the globalized world in Modernity. Finally, the paintings also relate specific *ideoscapes* that epitomize central political ideas associated with the French Nation and the imagination of the modern world as a whole to the aesthetic and visual model of the *imaginary* landscape. Following these argumentations and the examples of the book covers, the authors conclude that geopolitical imaginaries can be an object of investigation and a key analytical tool for cultural and historical studies because they can be understood as culturally and historically situated, socially constructed, and powerful answers to the intertwined globalizing processes of de- and reterritorialization.

Nicolás Damin, Dario Dawyd and Joaquín Aldao (Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas) also provide a journey through the twentieth century, although with a more distinct focus than Eric Selbin. These authors broach the issue of geopolitical imaginaries of the most important Argentine trade union confederation, the *Confedración General del Trabajo* (CGT), in three different periods: from 1900 until 1945, where different ideological views – socialist reformism, communism, syndicalism – were competing among workers and within the committees; from 1945 until 1955 when Juan Domingo Perón made a huge impact on the country and changed the working world completely; and from 1945 until 1990 when disputes about the attitude of trade unions during the Cold War era took place. This article does not follow the illusionary separation between national and international politics and clearly shows how global geopolitical conflicts were reflected in Argentine trade unionism, and maybe even more importantly, how trade unions were involved in the creation of new geopolitical imaginaries.

Klaus Weinhauer (Bielefeld University) examines a related topic by applying a comparative approach to imaginaries of urban threat as they emerged among elites in both the United States and Argentina during the 1960/70s. By putting these imaginaries in their historical context he argues that in both countries the imaginaries of urban threat shared certain similarities but, in some aspects, also were distinct. In both countries, the elites feared urban crowds, which in the US was strongly influenced by imaginaries from the Vietnam War like the "urban jungle" and the "sniper narrative." But while the threat was imagined as racial and local in the US, certain Argentinian elites perceived it as a danger for the "divine order" of society as a whole. It was the very broad and blurry imaginary of "subversion," denounced as a social and cultural thread, against which the Argentinian junta mobilized its murderous oppression.

All four contributions show the enormous importance geopolitical imaginaries can have in very different contexts: revolutions, writing history, trade unionism, and urban conflicts. These are only four different topics, but there is much more to be explored. By proposing the

use geopolitical imaginaries as a scientific lens we hope to encourage more research which will pick up on the concepts presented in this dossier.

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Spaces and Places of (Im)Possibility and Desire:
Transversal Revolutionary Imaginaries in the Twentieth Century Americas

Abstract

This article explores the ways in which twentieth century revolutionaries in Latin America and the Caribbean have created and employed revolutionary imaginaries with particular attention to their deployment of time, place, and space. The tension between urban/city places and spaces and rural/jungle/mountain places and spaces are considered, with specific attention to Mexico at the "beginning" and "end" of the century and Cuba in the 1950s. By positioning the revolutionary imaginary that evolved as acentric (transversal) rather than arboreal or polycentric (rhizomic) it is possible to see how (im)possibilities might abound for people in the region.

Introduction

This article seeks to (re)consider and think through the way(s) Latin America's twentieth century revolutionaries deployed and employed translocal, transnational and transregional imaginaries of spaces and places in which, with apologies for the nineteenth century novel style formulation, revolutions "began", played out, and "ended." Running through these imaginaries are conceptions and formulations of the city, in particular of neighborhoods, of "the jungle", and of the mountain(s), all of them - in several senses of the word - border regions, liminal spaces. To muddy matters further, there are also (often temporary) autonomous zones, both literally and figuratively, which play significant roles in the revolutionary imaginations, revolutionary sentiments, revolutionary situations, and, on rare occasions, actual revolutions that occurred.

"Imaginaries" - social, cultural, technological, psychological, and more - are very much of the moment, reflecting a renewed academic appreciation for human agency, collective action, ideology, cultural, and what has been called the "narrative turn." Specifically, the notion of "imaginary" invoked here is rooted, as most are, in Castoriadis' depiction of the imaginary as the understanding people create in any given historical period of how they live and make meaning of their existence, the narrative that binds a society together and defines what is real. Even more, Taylor's formulation of "social imaginary" as "the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations" (23). It is complicated, it is complex, and it is fundamental.

So these imaginaries are socially, collectively constructed by people in what are essentially daring acts of bricolage, wherein symbols, songs, tales, rituals, dates, places, memory/ies, and more are woven together into a sort of legible, working narrative (Selbin, *Revolution, Rebellion* 75-76), a story of who and what they are, how they came to be, and what they do and will. [1] This should not be surprising. While many matters - cultural, economic, ethnic, political, religious, social bind, and more - may bind us together or drive us apart, it is through stories, including those told in forms just listed, that we manage the world, our world. Didion famously wrote that "we tell ourselves stories in order to live" (11); the poet Muriel Rukeyser goes further: "The Universe is made of stories, not of atoms" (111). [2] It is impossible to understand who we are and what we do (and how) without recourse to story. It is our stories that locate us, situate us, and provide us with the tools (which could as easily be conceived of as weapons) that we need to navigate, mediate, mitigate our world(s), and, hence, defend or foment the change(s) necessary.

One final point: Imaginaries are not imaginary, but as Anderson might suggest, imagined. People's creativity, verve, élan, if you will, imagination, with which they generate, create, maintain, and extend the world(s) in which they live is real. The challenge is for us to access this construct and in

the process resist overwriting it with our narrative(s), our (all to) often self-serving story which serves to justify our story even as it putatively "tells" (through North/Western eyes, an inelegant invocation of Mohanty as well as Said) "theirs"-those people, over there, the ones who need us to tell their story for them, because they are incapable of knowing or doing so. Only we can see their imaginary and interpret it for them. It is a dangerous path and we should tread carefully.

My guides here are a diverse set of scholars bound by their smart work, commitment to pushing boundaries, and demanding much of themselves and us (Buck-Morss; Hardt and Negri; Gaonkar; Lippens; Parker; Seidman; Khasnabish; Gräbner; Haiven and Khasnabish; Guidotti-Hernández; Merrifield; Juris and Khasnabish; Andrews; and Basok). [3] Most all are indebted to Deleuze and Guattari and this article is as well to Tsing's notion of friction and "zones of awkward engagement." All of them, it seems to me, believe that people create their own world(s) and (im)possibilities drawing on what Parker describes as "a totality of symbolic resources available to a society to represent a real world, the entities within it and their mutual relationships" (55, note 6). Imaginaries provide us with a glimpse into these world(s).

Clearing Some Brush, Imaginary and Otherwise

A couple other issues merit attention before turning to matter at hand, with apologies for the often tedious but essential work of definition and context. The first has to do with issues of time and space and place, including what are Latin America and the Caribbean, and when is the twentieth century, a more complicated question than it might seem. Then there is the matter of revolution, never an easy term (as I belabor elsewhere), and the elusive but powerful notion of the transversal. All of these will lead back to space, place, time (redux) and, lo and behold, in finest storytelling fashion, a brief but important return of story.

While many vaguely familiar with Mexico's modern Zapatistas, revolutionaries who on 1 January 1994 rose up against the Mexican state and shocked the world by among other things announcing their lack of interest in seizing control of the state. Perhaps the most internationally famous Zapatista leader then and now is Subcomandante Marcos, a "consummate *performancero*," per Gómez-Peña, who presented himself as "a carefully crafted collage of twentieth-century revolutionary symbols, costumes, and props borrowed from [Mexico's] Zapata, [Nicaragua's] Sandino and Che, and [Palestinian leader] Arafat as well as from celluloid heroes such as Zorro, and Mexico's movie wrestler, El Santo" (90-91). Moreover, Marcos made plain through his writings that he owed as much to Groucho Marx as to Karl, to John Lennon as to V. I. [4] Indeed, Marcos' accouterments - the mask and pipe, the bandoliers resplendent with bright red (photogenic) shotgun shells that did not match the weapon (usually an AK-47, occasionally an M-16, each with

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their own messages to send) in hand - and demeanor are remarkably modern even as, in some sense, they are decidedly pre-modern, meant to evoke some of the region's pre-European cosmologies and resistance to Europe's invasion. This was reinforced by the perspective of the EZLN's "Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle" whose title set their uprising outside of any city and evocatively in the literal and figurative "jungle" and text in a tradition at least 500 years old and with allusions to struggles even older. At the same time, reading their documents and considering their demands, there seems little question that the EZLN are self-consciously a piece with the decidedly modernist sensibilities that their intellectual (and emotional) compatriots espoused in France well over two hundred years ago and which you can find across Latin America's twentieth century revolutions.

Myriad points may be (and have been) gleaned from this, but consider this here: There are different notions of time, space, and place and they merit our attention if we want to understand why revolutions happen here not there, now not then, and among these people and not those. In what may well be an apocryphal story, a reporter is supposed to have asked the late Zapatista Comandante Ramona (an important member of the Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee), as she was leaving a meeting with Mexican officials, how long the Zapatistas were prepared to fight. The diminutive Tzotzil Maya woman shrugged her shoulders and replied to the effect that, they had been struggling for some five hundred years, so if they had to struggle for another five hundred years, then it was not important. [5] This is meant neither to exoticize nor fetishize, but as a salutary reminder that chronological time is not the same as mythological time, whose variants' include what revolutionaries sometimes refer to as "mountain time" or "jungle time" or even spaces and places which might represent "no time" or "outside" of time. Such spaces and places may also be moments of sacralization, making holy.

Latin America and the Caribbean are all the states and assorted other political entities in the Western Hemisphere exclusive of Canada and the Unites States of America. Despite any number of differences large and small, all of the places have shared experiences of colonialism, imperialism, underdevelopment, and various degrees of marginalization. [6] As for the twentieth century in Latin America and the Caribbean, for the purposes of this paper, it was a somewhat short century (though one could argue it began with the USA's 1898 intervention in the Cuban War of Independence) and Mexico looms large for the entire region. The Mexican revolution that begins in 1910 not only ushers in the twentieth century for Latin America and the Caribbean, but is actually globally the first great social upheaval of the twentieth century. Meanwhile, the 1 January 1994 uprising of Mexico's modern-day Zapatistas, predominantly Mayan and named for one of the great heroes of the 1910 revolution seems to signal a fitting end to an era overwhelmingly marked by state repression and, in response, resistance, rebellion, and revolution. In terms of the focus

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here, whether or not the modern Zapatistas were or are the first post-modern revolutionaries, and in some interesting ways you could argue they are if that category has any utility, in important ways they are almost certainly the region's last modern ones. [7]

As recently as a few years ago the concept of revolution was adjudged by Guattari as "broken and worn out…dragged through so many places it's necessary to go back to a basic, albeit elementary definition" (258). If this is not a new concern (see Eckstein; Walton) it may reflect some of the confusion extant. It is an odd moment with regard to matters revolutionary. Not many years ago politicians, pundits, and academics of various perspectives inside the academy and out (Goodwin; Nodia; Snyder; Fukuyama; Castañeda) were pronouncing a somewhat loosely defined "age of revolution" (1789-1989) over, the time, place, and space passed, none too soon and certainly not to be missed. Such quickly proved exaggerated, as seen in Eastern Europe's "revolutions," the "Pink Tide" in Latin America, and persistent revolutionary struggles elsewhere. At least since 2009 in Iran (but also Georgia, Guinea, Iceland, Moldova, and elsewhere), people have been demanding social, political, and economic change in their lives, their worlds.

The uprisings in the Arab world, indignant movements throughout Europe, Chile, and Mexico, the North American Occupy movement, Brazil, Gezi Park in Turkey, Ukraine, and India's Naxalites are reminders that radical socio-political movements for greater participation and social equality persist. Whatever their demands - or no demands - such collective behavior represents a call to be seen and heard, reflecting King's "fierce urgency of now" and the Zapatistas' compelling question: "Is this the democracy you wanted" (234)? [8] People are leaving their homes to claim their private hopes and dreams in public fora. If this is not revolution in the grand scale we conventionally associate with the term, is it revolutionary nonetheless? Thus, the term revolution is once again bandied about, albeit as something dangerously close to an empty signifier, simultaneously maddeningly vague and yet potentially productive.

Opening up revolution to mean a great many more things seems fruitful, but caution is in order: Revolutionary (im)possibilities extending infinitely in every possible direction and dimension all at once risk rendering the concept ever more unhelpful. Telling people that their struggles for justice, for dignity, for revolution, are not meaningful seems unhelpful. Yet, little is gained by defining dumpster diving, nomadic living, or lifestyle anarchy as instances of revolution, though resistance or rebellion they might be and hence may contain elements of revolution. But, if the question is one of understanding and utility: What exactly is a revolution? As I have argued recently, Theda Skocpol's formulation, where state power is sought in pursuit of fast, fundamental transformations of state and class structures to alter societal systems in a contemporaneous and mutually reinforcing fashion remains compelling. Jack Goldstone marries her structuralist approach to the efforts of John Foran and others of us to bring in subjective facets such as culture and ideology. If

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in some cases power may be captured non-violently (Tunisia) and/or electorally (Latin America's Pink Tide), his conception of revolution as the forcible seizure of state power through mass mobilization in the name of social justice and seeking to transform or create new institutions and structures seems well suited to the moment. Whatever the structural conditions or reasons extant, most often people unite around a story that is commonly a heady concoction and concatenation of names (most often heroes and martyrs), dates (Cabrera Infante, "Between History" 1994: 148), places, grievances, and even means and methods, woven together, often in daring acts of bricolage, into some sort of working narrative. It is here where hopes, dreams, and desires; anger, resentment, and grievance; fears, commitments, and passions fire revolutionary imaginations, create revolutionary sentiments, revolutionary situations emerge, and (im)possibilities flow.

The "transversal" was proffered by Guattari as a means or method intended to overcome the dead end of the hierarchical (and patriarchal) control networks and the logic of compulsory horizontal control-so neither arboreal (or centrist) or polycentric models but a-centric constellations "which do not move on the basis of predetermined strands and channels from one point to another, but right through the points in new directions (Raunig 205). In other words, transversals are not at all intended to be connections between multiple centers or points, but rather lines that do not necessarily even cross, lines of flight, ruptures which continuously elude the systems of points and their coordinates." Here again, some care should be exercised. On the one hand this lends itself to notions of no borders and multiple connections (not to mention entrances and exits) as well as the idea of "creating situations in new places rather than familiar, well explored territories" (Raunig 229). Yet it also means that, to borrow a phrase (out of context) from Gleick, "instead of six degrees of separation, we have billions of degrees of connectedness" and need to resist universalizing impulses (9). Tsing's compelling notions are also worth keeping in mind here, both her metaphor of friction for describing the interconnections between processes and actors that interact "across difference and distance" and the concept of "zone of awkward engagement", "where words mean something different across a divide…These zones...are transient; they arise out of encounters and interactions. They reappear in new places with changing events" (xi).

The transversal also has implications with regard to space(s). Theoretical accounts of space are a complicated concept beyond the scope of this article; geographers, historians, physicists, and many others have their versions as may you. For the purposes here, simply note that different activities in our lives are, sometimes by choice, sometimes by necessity, carried out in various and varying locations (Sewell 56-57) and that those locations matter, often shaping the identities and agendas, and for conceptions of what is possible; "spaces are culturally marked as particular kinds of places" Sewell (2001: 64) argues, echoing Schneider's contention that "the spaces in which struggles were concentrated also shaped the identities and agendas of resistors" (798). As a

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result, Sewell points out, "one of the most remarkable effects that protest activities can have on the meanings of places… [is]…their sacralization as sites of transcendent significance" (Sewell 65). When Castro and the revolutionaries who had been training in Mexico returned, they headed for Oriente province and the mountains of the Sierra Maestra, mythic locations from Cuba's nineteenth century wars of independence and understood by Cubans as not just historic places, locales, but as sacralized spaces. While such spaces may be urban areas, [9] a shantytown or specific *barrio* are most often associated with what Schneider calls "uncolonized geographic space", jungles and mountains (790). [10]

With Latin America and the Caribbean set, revolution limned out, and transversal boxed in for the purposes of this paper, one more matter merits attention. As I have argued elsewhere (Selbin 2010), it is our biology that makes us human, but it is our stories that define us as people. We are storytellers. And our stories tell us who we are and, hence, who we were and may well be and are not, how to be and what we should do to get there. People have, for as long as we know, reshaped land, made paths, erected buildings and dams and so on. So, too have they constructed institutions such as systems of justice, information, and healthcare. And in much the same way, people create stories which form and shape their lives and world. We are inclined to connect these in a (mainstream) arboreal sense, seeking seeds and roots, describing how the story tree grows, its branches, and so on. It is almost certainly more useful, however, to construe these stories and the world they weave rhizomically (a la Deleuze and Guattari), and the transversal, with multiple "centers" or "points" or lines of thought that do not necessarily even cross, ruptures which elude easy connections and classifications, may be the most fruitful of all.

Here is where people make, maintain, and extend connections and build community. If stories commonly designated as History are used to support and maintain the status quo by the powerful, they may have a secret life, as competing versions of Zapata do in Mexico. And there are the stories without History's imprimatur that fire people's imaginations and contribute to imaginaries that make meaningful and legitimate people's actions as they struggle for a more just society. People have lacked food and clean water, been immiserated, and have watched their children suffer in many times and places and have not risen up. Structural conditions alone have not initiated or sustained revolutionary processes. Stories and the imaginaries they construct can make that possible. Stories are weapons, albeit not uncomplicated ones; almost one hundred years later the struggle over Zapata's story continues apace as most everyone on every side seeks to claim him as their own. What's critical here is "possibilism" (Darnton 7, 19; on the possibilities inherent in the impossible, see Rabas 1997), when people articulate compelling stories of what others have done, where and when and how, which allow them to imagine.

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Revolution and the Revolutionary Imaginary

What follows is a narrative not a story. There is now wide recognition, if not always the concomitant follow through, that life rarely lends itself to conveniently "coherent stories endowed naturally with central subjects, highly organized plot structures, thematic integrity, and moralizable conclusions" (Graziano 2) akin to a nineteenth century novel with a beginning–middle–end structure describing with a familiar plot and cast of characters (Steinmetz 490). The contention here is that stories are open-ended and a mess, even as they resemble in some ways Swidler's "'tool kit' of symbols, stories, rituals and world-views" (273) people use to make sense out of the world around them and which therefore provide them the basis for among other things what Tilly calls "repertoires of collective action" (143). Writing such an open-ended mess, however aspirational, is beyond the scope of this article. Consequently the chimera of chronology noted earlier will reappear as well. Chronology is devilishly hard to resist, in part because we expect it, prize it, and find it helpful for making sense of "the chaotic and unceasing flow of historical events, personalities, ideas, and movements"; it enables us to "speak confidently about decades…or of centuries as if such entirely artificial constructs conferred some kind of meaning on what happened..." (Bowersock 56). Mea culpa.

If it is little remarked upon in the West, in 1519 on the island of Hispaniola, indigenous chieftain Enriquillo took up arms against his *encomendero* and the colonial authorities (Castro 1999: xv), an act of resistance that inspired people throughout the region and led to years of struggle primarily against the Spanish but also against the Portuguese, the Dutch, the British, and importantly for our purposes, the French [11], back on Hispaniola, in Haiti, arguably the world's most important and most ignored revolution. Haiti oddly presages Mexico: Haiti was the first great social upheaval in the New, at least to Europeans, World and the first great social upheaval of the nineteenth century; it was also the world's first and, to date, only successful slave revolt. Why has the Haitian revolution been "silenced" (Trouillot 98)? Perhaps because it was "unthinkable" (Popkin 2), given that it was led by African slaves, uneducated by Western standards but inspired by France's 1789 revolution and the promise of *liberté*, *égalité*, *fraternité*, who rose up not only to win their independence but defeat all three of the world's great colonial powers - France, Britain, and Spain - to maintain it? This is all beyond the scope of this article. What is of relevance here is that in Haiti there was a clear distinction between the cities and plantations of the colonizers and the rural areas of the revolutionaries', which the colonizers read and understood as impenetrable - a word which carried with it, then as it often does now, hints of exoticism and fear. Despite being silenced, the impact of the Haitian revolution was felt throughout the hemisphere, including the southern USA.

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While there were a number of struggles across the continent during the first half of the nineteenth century and some refugees from both the 1848 "Springtime of the European Peoples" revolutions in Europe [12] and the 1871 Paris Commune, there was little to hint at the revolutionary era to come. But there was a clear pattern in which emerging cities came to be identified with the elite and powerful who identified (deeply) with Europe and were prone to view jungles, mountains, and even rural areas as opaque and even unfathomable, beyond their ken, places to be kept down, brutally so if "necessary." This became particularly clear with the Cuban War of Independence, the last of Cuba's three liberation struggles against Spain (the first two were the 1868-78 Ten Years' War and 1879-80 Little War). Here people neither wealthy nor powerful honed the mythos of the cities as decadent and hostile locales, the provinces of the powerful, in contrast to the purity, the goodness, the decency of the rural poor, ever willing to sacrifice for the cause. In Cuban lore, two of that struggle's heroes, Antonio Maceo and Máximo Gómez, at the behest of Cuba's national hero, José Martí, set fire to the island's profitable sugar cane fields as a signal of commitment, defiance, and the readiness of the Cuban people to sacrifice everything for their independence. Some sixty years later, at a critical juncture and eager to evoke the independence struggle and capture the popular imagination, Fidel Castro paired his most charismatic lieutenants, Che Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos, and had them replicate the "famous" "incendiary march" of 1895; it proved to be a brilliant tactical stroke which succeeded on several levels: militarily, psychologically, and culturally, renewing people's commitment.

The sprawling, multi-act process in Mexico - it is nearly impossible to identify a singular "Mexican Revolution" - moved across boundaries and borders, a constantly shifting kaleidoscope in which different revolutionary groups, literally and figuratively, staked out different ground. If most notable for its agrarian character, there were also town and country liberal bourgeois democratic elements, a small but real urban workers' role, and rural workers in the north, loosely cobbled together in some sort of pro-*campesino*, pro-labor, deeply nationalistic whole with democratic aspirations (Foran 38). As a result, even as the revolution became identified with the rural, agrarian south, revolutionary forms and identities emerged among urban workers in Mexico City, sailors and dock workers of Tampico and Veracruz, indigenous in the southern jungles, the rural workers-miners, lumberjacks, and rail workers - Pancho Villa welded together in the desert north [13], and anarchists in the (seemingly) inhospitable Baja California. One of the most telling moments, in not just Mexico's revolutionary mythos but the region's revolutionary imaginary, occurred in December 1914. With Villa effectively controlling the north, Zapata the south, and Carranza and his most able general, Obregón the center, Zapata and Villa drove the Carranza's "Constitutionalist forces" out of Mexico City and occupied the capital. Neither wished to stay and while Villa famously sat in the president's chair, Zapata demurred; the message seemed clear: they fought neither for power nor

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control of the state, but for freedom and justice. The image, the imaginary, is irresistible in a world where whatever the slogans and promises, people too often succumb to the allure power for the sake of power. Yet, generations of the region's revolutionaries would see different but equally profound messages, or perhaps warnings: on the one hand, fail to seize power when the opportunity avails itself, and the chance may not come again; on the other, power corrupts and, as many would see it, leads to oppression, conservatism, stultifying bureaucracy and inefficiency, and inertia.[14] If many of Mexico's cities had bastions of radicalism (Selbin, *Revolution, Rebellion* 172-174), they quickly collapsed and the revolutionary imagination was firmly located in the agrarian south and rural north.

While Mexico's cities were quickly reclaimed and reimagined as spaces hostile to revolution and revolutionaries, the myth of the jungle and the mountains was deepening elsewhere. In Brazil, there was the epic Prestes Column, a three year (1924-1927) 25,000 kilometer campaign through the jungle and countryside that spanned the entire country and sparked the popular imagination at home and abroad. 1920s Nicaraguan revolutionary Augusto Sandino chose to flee the cities to escape USA air strikes; he was among the first to talk about (and use) "the mountains and tropical terrain as a strategic ally" (Clayton 184) during the struggle he led (1926-1934). From 1934 to 1944, there was relatively little revolutionary activity in the region. [15] But the imaginary was alive and well and soon animated by Guatemala's 1944 democratic elections which heralded the ten year "Guatemalan Spring." Coming out of Costa Rica's complicated 1944-1948 civil war, the Caribbean Legion, a group of democrats, reformists, left radicals, socialists of various stripes, and communists from around the region, announced their efforts to overthrow the region's dictators by force. [16] Somewhat similarly, demobilized Eastern Caribbean soldiers who had fought for the British during the war began to struggle for independence and were not shy about mentioning their experiences, particularly in the jungles of Southeast Asia and Oceania. [17] And it was rural workers, miners in particular, who played the crucial role in Bolivia's 1952 revolution and *campesinos* and rural workers who did the great majority of the fighting and dying in Colombia's ten year *La violencia* (1948-1958).

Whether or not the 1959 Cuban Revolution can be said to bring revolution into the "modern" world (Selbin, *Revolution, Rebellion* 20), it is the process that brings it into the contemporary world. No other instance electrified so many people in so many places all at the same time and the influence lingers yet. The outline, narrative, as it were, is familiar: Led by Fidel Castro, a small band of radicals sought to trigger an uprising to topple Cuba's corrupt and brutal dictator Batista by attacking the Moncada Barracks on 26 July 1953. An abject failure, Castro was captured, but his trial allowed him to offer his famous "History will absolve me" defense. After a brief prison term, he fled to Mexico where he recruited and organized a small group of rebels who would seek to make

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the revolution. In 1956 these men returned as the 26th of July Movement and, after heavy losses, made their way to the mountains, where they were sheltered by and engaged with the *campesinos*, an experience that would fundamentally transform the revolutionaries - and the revolution. As a result, the remaining two years of the struggle would prove to be far more of an ideological struggle than a military struggle. From its earliest days, there was a conscious and intentional effort to construct a revolutionary imaginary which featured the seemingly impossible but also irresistible opportunity to construct in effect a new society in a new place and space, indeed, in a new time. [18] A comparatively minor defeat at a relatively unimportant place at the end of December set in motion the surprisingly swift collapse of the Batista regime and his departure on 1 January 1959 was widely welcomed by people across the country. The "triumph" of the wildly popular revolutionaries, *los barbudos* (the bearded ones), over the dictator and his minions captured the imagination of the region and the world and profoundly shifted the revolutionary imaginary in the region and well beyond.

This clear and compelling narrative erases any number of critical complications and complexities. There were several groups of revolutionaries in action [19] and willfully ignores the crucial role played by urban revolutionaries (Sweig), not least in providing support. Yet the Cuban revolutionary imaginary, locally, regionally, and globally, has a deep investment in the "myth of the Sierra." No one represented this narrative globally more than the revolution's most mythic figure, the asthmatic Argentine doctor Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Che embodied memories of Chile's fleeting three month 1932 Socialist Republic, knowledge of Spain's anti-fascist struggle, abbreviated revolution, and the destruction of democracy there (see endnote 16) and in Guatemala, whose destruction he was present for in 1954. Che, Clayton argues, is where the "potent image of…the guerrilla fighter springing from the tropical bush" [20] comes from, married to the idea that a small band of revolutionaries connected to "the people" and based in "the mountains, jungles and swamps" can and will defeat considerably larger and better equipped regular armed forces; the mountains, the jungles, are almost palpable (181).

This myth and mythos, the imaginary, is deep and powerful. Clayton points out, "In his *Minimanual* for the urban guerrilla, the Brazilian Carlos Marighella (26) argued that to 'leave the enemy bewildered in areas he doesn't know' was not an inherently rural quest. Using urban terrain as an ally also meant knowing 'how to use with intelligence its unevenness, its high and low points, its turns, its irregularities, its regular and its secret passages, abandoned areas, its thickets'" (184). [21] Yet it was clearly the compelling imaginary of the rural regions that shaped the revolutionary processes for the rest of the century. The mountains or jungles were "a particular type of space…on the territorial and symbolic fringes of economic and political oppression" (Clayton 184) that was revolutionary; and not just revolutionary, but unsullied, pure, and true, connected to the

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land (a place) and the people (a space). Thus, Guevara accorded not just predominance but superiority and concomitant legitimacy and authority to the rural and all over the region (and beyond) the role of urban movements - so critical to the success of the Cuban revolution - were downplayed, even denied; with very rare exceptions, those *barrios* deemed sufficiently revolutionary and, more pointedly, sufficiently inaccessible to and by the state, cities were framed as decadent and sites of pacification and state control. The mountains and jungles were valorized as true, pure, powerful places and spaces of revolution. [22]

Inspired, across the continent and around the world, a new generation of revolutionaries emerged, particularly inspired by Che, nowhere more so than in Central America. Nicaragua's Sandinistas, second to none in their veneration, took on the mountains as a core myth, aptly summed up in Comandante Omar Cabezas' book on his evolution from urban youth to a revolutionary committed to the people: *The Mountain is More Than an Immense Green Steppe* (*La montaña es algo más que una inmensa estepa verde*). [23] Despite the essential roles played by Nicaragua's urban revolutionaries, just as in Cuba, the story, the narrative, was told and written as one firmly in the Cuban model and for years many Nicaraguans would wax poetic about heroic guerrillas in the hills and the *campesinos* and rural workers who nurtured them, even as much of the fighting (and dying) was done by the urban poor (Massey 20-21).

As revolutionary struggles continued in Central America and the Andes, the central trope remained one of the mountains and the jungles versus the cities, though in at least some cases, most notably Peru's *Sendero Luminoso*, there was attention to the cities. There was organizing in the urban shantytowns and there were armed strikes. Still, cities were commonly understood as evil places and spaces, essentially anti-revolutionary, which were to be surrounded, choked off, and starved (which could lead to revolutionary uprisings). The *Senderistas*' notion of themselves as in part the intellectual heirs of the levelling egalitarianism of far-left of the French Revolution and somewhat dismissive attitude towards Mao's Cultural Revolution in China, and Pol Pot's Kampuchea (Cambodia), read as having failed to go far enough, led some to speculate they might empty the cities (as the Khmer Rouge had done after their victory in Cambodia) if they won (on both matters, see Selbin, *Modern Latin* 137, especially endnotes 35 and 40, and 146). It is interesting that what small pockets of *Sendero* and Colombia's FARC that remain are in the mountains, jungles, and rural areas and that when they negotiate or surrender, much as with the Central American revolutionaries, it is most commonly framed as a scenario where they are coming in from an earlier era of life in the mountains or jungles and encountering a "new world," awash in globalization, liberal capitalism triumphant and resplendent.

Indeed, it was, in a very real sense, this sort of liberal triumphalism that the Zapatistas so rudely interrupted when they arose, not so much against the Mexican government and state - after all,

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they made no claims on nor evinced any interest in seizing the reins of the state; a move not lost on a population raised on the decision by Zapata and Villa to forgo power. Rather, they made abundantly clear that their struggle, on behalf of the indigenous and the poor, was against neoliberalism and global capital(ism). Mexico's (putatively) modern revolutionaries challenged the post-modernity of globalization which was washing away the past and present.

Yet as noted earlier, these modern or even postmodern revolutionaries were also deeply embedded in traditions hundreds of years old and meant to explicitly reflect the struggles which had come before them and which they hoped would blossom from their actions. Central to their public presentation was the valorization and sacralization not only of the Maya but of the jungle, of the mountains, of animal familiars and cosmologies bespeaking different times and places; this was their home and at some point, presumably, all these Europeans - presumably and predominantly residing in cities (and towns) - would go home and leave them in peace. One European who visited often, a journalist trying to convey to his audience what was distinct about the region, wrote that in Latin America and the Caribbean "fact is mixed with fantasy here, truth with myth, realism with rhetoric" (Kapuściński 152). Perhaps another way to imagine it is that it is all true, all myth or mythical, all real, and that there is no greater fantasy than the notion that one has the right to write their own world and hence to seize the material and ideological conditions of their everyday lives. Such possibilities; imagine imaginaries.

A Few Final Thoughts on Narrative, Imaginaries, and Revolution

The Global North/West narrative has long (re)presented Latin America and the Caribbean as a place where revolutions just happen, much as storms or earthquakes in the natural world, in essence part of the region's "romantic" flora and fauna. [24] And if North American and European "leftist intellectuals have a tendency to romanticize the violent social processes south of the border" (Sánchez Lira and Villarreal 1995), millions in the region have historically succumbed as well, with popular fascination and especially "heroic" (re)presentations of Pancho Villa or Emiliano Zapata, the Cuban revolution and the myth of "Che," a process which almost fifty years after his death continues apace, even at times renewed. Indeed, Mexico's "modern" Zapatistas consciously sought to evoke the romanticism of revolution in choosing their name; it was Zapata, after all, who is credited with declaring that it was "better to die on one's feet than live on one's knees," a phrase rivaled in its romanticization of revolution only by Che's famous proclamation that the "true revolutionary is guided by a great feeling of love." Che is ubiquitous, the global marker of revolution, rebellion, and resistance, omnipresent and dangerously close to an empty signifier, even as he remains integral to the revolutionary imaginary.

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Cubans no longer enamored with the results of the revolutionary process remain proud of what they did and why, and recall the romance of *los barbudos.* Nicaraguans will tell you about heroic guerrillas in the hills and the *campesinos* who nurtured them. [25] And the Zapatistas consciously deploy romanticism, not only in their choice of name but their decision to renounce violence, intentional marketing, for lack of a better word, of Subcomandante Marcos ("El Sub"), Commandante Ramona, and the quasi-mythical Clandestine Revolutionary Committee-General Command (CCRI-GC) whose command they and others operate under, and in their denial of any vanguard party and contention that it is not state power that they seek (although here again they sound positively modernist, calling upon "civil society" to do so). Their vision appears to be one of a "retro-fitted" Mexico, meaning, in Samuels' formulation, one that is "simultaneously modernized and antiqued" (70). If, as some have suggested, the EZLN offers a new and hopeful model of revolutionary change, one which does not seek state power or rely on violent means and methods - at the moment it does not seem so - they certainly offer a tantalizing view of what may be possible and serve to remind that possibilism and imagination are at the heart of any social revolutionary process. The revolutionary imaginary is not short on the hardships or traumas that are inevitably part of the process; in a sense, these provide a degree of drama and excitement, even fear. It is not as if violence is absent or even avoided in the revolutionary imaginary. [26] But the violence is rarely dwelled upon, except perhaps as a precursor to the need to rise up, and indeed, the evocations and invocations of heroes and martyrs often have a celebratory if at times somber aspect.

People envision and share together; they imagine a moment, which will last forever, and an opportunity that is rare, magical, exhilarating, and mythic. What more could people want and wish for than the chance to change their world(s) that they inhabit every day? Instances, however fraught, however fragile, of disorder where people (re)imagine their world and seek their dreams and desires, reimagining, reworking, and reshaping their lives. Such are revolutionary imaginaries, spaces where people imagine a more just society and better world to come, for themselves, their children and grandchildren, and others to come. [27]

With apologies for the reliance on nice, neat, clean, and clear narrative, whenever the twentieth century "began" or came to an "end," here I have opted for 1910-1994 [28], it was an intense period marked by revolutionary imaginations of various sorts (Billington; Parker; Saldaña-Portillo; Khasnabish), the emergence of revolutionary sentiments (Firchow), the rise of revolutionary situations (Tilly), and, on occasion, the making of revolutions. In a time, place, and space redolent with possibilities, people in the region see the fantastic, mythical, and magical nestled with the commonplace and almost everything seems possible, imaginable. The Zapatistas' demanding question - is this the world we wanted? - fits well their most stirring assertion: "It is not necessary to

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conquer the world. It is sufficient with making it new. Us. Today." Marcos' contention that behind the ski masks are different Marcoses and more are coming echoes Tupaq Katari's 1781 promise when the Spanish overlords he fought put him to death: "I die today but will rise again and be millions."

Do people still imagine revolution in Latin America and the Caribbean? If by revolution we mean a process which accords neatly with those that mark the twentieth century - Mexico, Bolivia, Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru - probably not or at least not so much, maybe some around the edges. But there are thousands, maybe millions, in the jungles, mountains, shantytowns, and barrios of Latin America and the Caribbean whose hearts quicken, whose voices change, and whose eyes gleam when they imagine the possibilities extant. Even as they are lead to believe that they do not make history, they imagine that they can and do and will. To do so they tell themselves and each other stories that enmesh them into a community reflecting shared pictures of how the world is and how it ought to be. They unite around certain symbols, themes, and characters that provide recognition, knowledge, and understanding; their common problems may take different forms, but across time and place they find a space of possibility. These stories create an imaginary which can and may provide the catalyst for changing their world. In the face of today's immense and daunting challenges, (re)claiming and (re)animating stories of resistance, rebellion, and revolution is a challenge and possibility.

Writing at an ominous juncture in the late 1930s, Walter Benjamin argued that the "state of emergency" in which they were living was the rule, not the exception, and that people needed to create their own states of emergency to create the possibility for and bring about change (256). If most of us do not live in states constricted and constrained by explicit "states of emergency," such threats are never far away. Indeed, most of us find ourselves in a time and in places of essentially permanent "states of emergency," one event or threat, real or perceived, away from the imposition of security and order to "protect us." Often those providing us with such protection are also those who seek to maintain structures and institutions at the expense of those who are disenfranchised, serving to suppress people's dreams, hopes, desires, and forestall their efforts to bring about meaningful change in their state and society. Even weak states are powerful and the elites and their minions who benefit stop at little to defend the social order. But when people begin to imagine, begin to believe, they can and do create (im)possibilities. Them, now, today, making the world new, not by conquering it, but by reimagining it in new ways.

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Endnotes

[1] But see Khasnabish (2008) and Guidotti-Hernández (2011), both of whom who consider the role of the state in creating imaginaries. On Mexican state claims to Zapata, see Khasnabish (2008) and Selbin (2010).

[2] From biology to physics…and perhaps quantum physicists might not entirely disagree…or, with a tip of the hat to Heisenberg, they well may; I'm, er, not certain.

[3] Gaonker (2002) is a dated but excellent précis of sorts about imaginaries up to that time. Churchill (2010) raises an important question about what is meant by "radical imagination."

[4] Gräbner (2010) offers an interesting analysis of Marcos, especially his various personas.

[5] As I have noted elsewhere (Selbin, *Revolution, Rebellion* 2), this brings to mind Steffens's comment about a purported exchange between British Prime Minister Lloyd George and Italy's Duce, Mussolini: "Authentic? I don't know … Like so many rumors, it was truer than the records … but somebody said it, somebody who understood what it was all about" (809).

[6] Nayak and Selbin (2010) construe Canada and the USA as part of the "Global North/West" while Latin American and Caribbean countries are part of the "Global South," places that "have specific hierarchical power relationships with the so-called North/West"; they do recognize "the need to understand the different kinds of experiences various people might have…different kinds of relationships with the North/West…" (Nayak and Selbin, *Revolution, Rebellion* 167-168, endnote 3).

[7] This ignores the enigma that is Colombia's FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo*; The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army). India's somewhat perplexing and impressively persistent Maoist Naxalites are another case.

[8] This was posed by the Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee General Command (CCRI-CG) in a communiqué sent out January 31, 1994 in which they asked, 'Why is everyone so quiet? Is this the democracy you wanted?' often dated February 4, 1994 in the USA.

[9] Schulzke (2012) proffers a compelling argument for nineteenth century urban revolutionary spaces.

[10] Specifically she invokes "impenetrable jungles, and the soaring Andes mountains" and contends that such spaces facilitate political violence (Schneider 790).

[11] Through Manco Inca's 1536–1572 rebellion, ending with the beheading of his last son, Túpac Amaru, to the 1780 Great Andean Rebellion of Túpac Amaru II and Túpac Katari (often fused in popular memory); the seventy-year slave revolt in Brazil centered on the Republic of Palmares, which by the 1690s had some 20,000 inhabitants (Meltzer 86) and whose leaders in 1696 chose to leap to their deaths in the face of Dutch and Portuguese invaders rather than surrender; Haiti's 1791 slave revolt, often considered the only successful slave uprising, and revolts elsewhere in the Caribbean such as Fedon's Rebellion in Grenada 1795–1796.

[12] The events in Europe inspired activities in Colombia and to a lesser extent Brazil as well.

[13] Knight (65) describes Villa's crew as "semi-proletarians".

[14] Lázaro Cárdenas presidency, 1934-1940, is arguably an exception to this.

[15] A few "evanescent instances" are mentioned in Selbin (177).

[16] The noble if ill-fated Caribbean Legion was trained in part by the former loyalist Spanish Air Force officer Alberto Bayo (Hodges 167-172), who specifically trained the expeditionary forces that sailed against the dictators Somoza in Nicaragua in 1948 and Trujillo in the Dominican Republic in 1949 (Ameringer 1974). Bayo subsequently trained Castro's Cuban exiles in Mexico, where his "star" pupil was Che Guevara. In

Cuba, Bayo, Guevara, and others helped train thousands from all over the world, among them a new generation of Nicaraguan exiles, passing on to them lessons from Spain, Sandino, Guevara's 1954 experiences with the USA's destruction of democracy in Guatemala, and the Cuban experience.

[17] A similar situation existed as World War I wound down and some of the sergeants from the British West Indies Regiment formed the short lived Caribbean League in Italy in 1918.

[18] Even featuring, promised a Che, "a new man," in the sexist language of the time. While some have taken to translating his phrase "*hombre nuevo*" as "new person," reflecting more modern sensibilities, Karen Kampwirth contends that such interpretations let "sexist revolutionaries off the hook too easily. If they had wanted to say '*persona nueva*' or '*ser humano nuevo*' they could have easily done so." K. Kampwirth. Personal communication. (May 1998). My own experiences interviewing revolutionaries inclines me to agree.

[19] For example, by 1958 there was a significant revolutionary force in Cuba's central Sierra Escambray, the rebel force of the student dominated Revolutionary Directorate, and the 26th of July Movement itself was to some extent a loose amalgam constantly subsuming other, small, disparate groups, not always without a fight. It merits mention that only Castro's was in any meaningful sense contemporaneously planning for the whole new state and society.

[20] As Clayton (189, n. 4) points out "the wax model of Guevara in the Museum of Revolution in Havana portrays him this way."

[21] Though one might reasonably note the ways in which his language (presumably consciously) evokes the rural and stakes its claim in claiming a parallel with mountains and jungles.

[22] Clayton (184) astutely notes the critique (one might even imagine, for an urban dweller, lament) of the influential Marxist philosopher Althusser that Guevara and his comrades were "fashioning a spurious spatial binary, with 'the struggle in the hills' valorised as the primary space of revolution and ''life in the cities' deemed the derivative space." For Althusser's (stinging) criticism he cites Althusser's former student, Debray (261–262).

[23] The English title, *Fire from the Mountain: the Making of a Sandinista*, is no less evocative.

[24] The reference to storms and the physical world reflects Thomas Jefferson's deterministic but compelling view, which clearly influenced structuralist explanations of revolution (Skocpol 1979; Goodwin 2001), held "that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical' (93). Powerful examples of Global North/West perceptions can be seen in Dorfman and Mattleart (1971) or Black (1988).

[25] An urban Nicaraguan revolutionary once told me that if every Nicaraguan who claimed to have been in the mountains had been there, there would have been no need for a revolution.

[26] My thanks to an astute reviewer for reminding me of the need to address this issue. Much more could and no doubt should be said.

[27] More compelling than "revolutionary imaginaries" may be the term "imaginaries of insurgency" deployed by Juris and Khasnabish (8); see also Plant (71).

[28] Reasonable cases might be made for 1898, 1905, 1910, 1914, or 1917 as staring points and 1989, 1991, 1994, and 2000 as end points.

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Globalization, Imagination, Social Space:
The Making of Geopolitical Imaginaries

Abstract:

This article conceptualizes the term "geopolitical imaginaries" by offering a critical reading of the description of globalization processes based on theoretical considerations formulated by Arjun Appadurai and a brief case study in form of a comparison between two book covers. Appadurai's understanding of imagination is based on three elements: images, the imagined, and the imaginary. On an analytical level these terms hint at three important dimensions which are crucial for the understanding of geopolitical imaginaries: the material, the creative, and the social. The article highlights the impact of geopolitical imaginaries by comparing the different book covers of the English and the Spanish version of Christopher Baily's *The Birth of the Modern World* (*El nacimiento del mundo moderno*). Both book covers outline a specific geopolitical imaginary which implies the connection between different world regions and historical epochs and builds on the intersection of racial, gendered, and other asymmetrical power relations**.**

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Introduction

The current experience of globalization processes appears to be closely linked to the emergence and stabilization of particular spatial configurations that define both the extension and the inherent limits of contemporary global dynamics. These spatial configurations - such as the Americas, Europe, El Cono Sur, the Global South, or the West – represent not only concrete geographical or topographical places, localities or regions; they also refer to large-scale topological entities, systems and relations as they mark the intersection points of multiple historical developments, overlapping processes of integration, and competing economic, political, social, or cultural networks that operate on a translocal level and are firmly embedded within global power structures. Thus, the articulations of social space obtain an eminently geopolitical dimension, which can be set in relation to the diverging descriptive models of the global world that have been recently developed within scientific and literary discourses [1]: On the one hand, these discourses tend to focus on the constitution of a world community that is generated and sustained by the efficiency and connectivity of technological networks of transport and communication. These discourses appear to play down social differences and contribute to the formation of a homogeneous, universal, and "deterritorialized" human culture marked by the ability to temporarily overcome boundaries of both spacel and time. On the other hand, the world is conceived as a 'reterritorialized' spatial order based on multiple political practices of exclusion and inclusion that create asymmetrical power relations and rely on territorial borders that frequently guarantee and regulate the interactions between global centers and local peripheries. It is broadly accepted now that both processes – deterritorialization and reterritorialization – are inseparably interwoven (Giddens 64, cf. Robertson). This dual face of globalizing processes makes it difficult to conceive of or perceive geographical as well as political entities as fixed container items with clear cut borderlines. Consequently, it becomes obvious that these processes differ markedly with respect to varying and entangled localities. This situation motivates the use of the term 'globalizations' as opposed to 'globalization' (Epple). It is within this set of multi-layered mutual dependencies that recent research in sociology, politics, and anthropology, as well as in literary and cultural studies, has increasingly underscored the importance of image production. As we will see in the following pages, the role of the social imagination with respect to the globalizing processes of re- and deterritorialization, as well as the construction, organization, and distribution of geopolitical spaces has become even more important. Viewed from this perspective, the present world is characterized by the creation of highly varying geopolitical imaginaries produced to describe and sort out the world. In current research then "geopolitical imaginaries" represent both an important analytical concept and the object of ongoing empirical investigation.

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Referring to the central features of geopolitical configurations of space, their persistent oscillation between 'deterritorializing' and 'reterritorializing' dynamics of spatial orders, as well as their interrelation with the imagination and varying forms of image production or reception, the following observations attempt to formulate an analytical (re)conceptualization of geopolitical imaginaries. This reconstruction will begin with a critical reading of the description of globalization processes based on the spatial notion of "scapes", first proposed by the Indian ethnologist Arjun Apppadurai (1996) in his study *Modernity at Large*. The reading will focus in particular on the intricate interplay of three different dimensions of "imagination": the material, the creative, and the social aspects. We systematically examine the close relationship between Appadurai's somewhat allusive account of the imagination and previous sociological descriptions of modernity. We also ask whether there is a link between Appadurai's notion of global space founded primarily in geopolitical types of interaction and complementary "geo-aesthetic" concepts of space, which have been mapped out in current cultural theory and are rooted, in part, in Western traditions of the visual arts. In a second step, we present a brief case study in the form of the comparison of the different book covers for the two versions of Christopher Bayly's study on globalization, *The Birth of the Modern World* (2004) and *El nacimiento del mundo modern* (2010), published for the English and Spanish-speaking worlds, respectively. Both book covers outline a specific 'geopolitical imaginary' that combines different world regions and different epochs, the period of their production around 1800 as well as the present period of their readings, and largely builds on the complex intersection of racial, gendered, and other asymmetrical power relations. It will be argued that both visual representations work well with the different colonial imaginaries to frame and also tone down complex and often chaotic processes of change. Both paintings show how geopolitical imaginaries in the early 19th century helped order the world and stabilize global power structures within what is termed "Western modernity." Of course when reproduced as book covers, the respective geopolitical imaginary of the paintings also changed due to the different audiences. [2]

Re-Conceptualizing Geopolitical Imaginaries

The anthropological account of modern globalizing processes, formulated by Appadurai in *Modernity at Large*, begins by describing the fundamental transformations of the cultural "gravitational field" (Appadurai 28) brought about by the European expansion politics of the early modern period. According to Appadurai, these transformations came with the rise of innovative technologies, new economic practices, and multiple migration processes that occurred in the subsequent centuries. In this view, the present cultural world which emerged out of these social, technical, and economic transformations is essentially marked by two interrelated features. First of

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all, the globalized world reveals itself as a complex transnational spatial order, shaped by the mobility and diasporic forces, by connective "flows" and cultural "disjunctures" (Appadurai 27-47) involving two countermovements that consist of "deterritorialization" and "re-territorialization." In this context, the globalizing world can no longer be interpreted as a homogeneous "global village" as suggested by Marshall McLuhan some decades ago. [3] Secondly, as a result, the continuously changing global system with its need for permanent social (re-)ordering is characterized by an extensive rise of collective self-representations. The emerging self-representations assign a new role to the social imaginary, whose particular cultural manifestations, operations, and functions need to be further clarified.

Three Dimensions of Imagination: Materiality, Creativity, and Sociality

With respect to the theoretical conceptualization of geopolitical imaginaries, it is first important to note that in Appadurai's anthropological description of the present global world imagination plays a fundamental role. We now live in a world, says Appadurai, "in which the imagination has become a collective, social fact" (5). His understanding of "imagination" is not easy to grasp. His basic assumption is that imagination results from the intricate interplay of three elements: "images," "the imagined," and "the imaginary." Unfortunately, Appadurai is not very explicit about the differences between them. We believe, however, that on an analytical level, these three elements point, indeed, to three dimensions that are pivotal to a better understanding of "imagination." Based on this assumption, we would like to suggest a reading of Appadurai that distinguishes three dimensions of "imagination": the material, the creative, and the social dimensions. Even though all three participate in "images," in "the imagined," and in "the social imaginary," analytically speaking, each also highlights a specific dimension of imagination. Let us elaborate on this a little bit more profoundly.

The term "images" points to the material dimension of "imagination" and is strongly grounded in Walter Benjamin's 1935 study on works of art at the time of their reproducibility, "Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit." As a consequence of significant changes in technological reproduction standards and of the increased spatial mobility of images, the social functions of works of art and other visual images also underwent a fundamental change. [4] According to Appadurai's as well as Benjamin's somewhat romantic take on art history, images in early modern or medieval times used to be tied to a specific context of production. In the modern epoch of technical reproducibility, however, images have gained the status of "immutable mobiles" as Bruno Latour (2009) would have it. Why and how have images obtained the ability to combine mobility with immutability? In an industrialized setting, images can be reproduced and thus

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overcome the limits of their primary localization in space and time. The possibilities of technical reproduction lead to the previously unknown mass diffusion of works of art and of forms of knowledge related to them. Due to changes in the technical standards of reproducibility, works of art have not only undergone significant permutations of their physical structure but also gained a notable independence from their original spatial-temporal locations, the "here" and "now" belonging to their originary existence. As a consequence, they have also lost the "aura" ascribed to the uniqueness and authenticity of works of art. [5]

Appadurai does not burden his readers with an overabundance of historical details. He leaves out, for instance, the early modern art market in the Netherlands with its production of roughly 70,000 paintings a year. Copying and the broad diffusion of works of art are not inventions of the late 19th century. He nevertheless makes a good point with respect to globalizing processes in claiming that images, if reproducible, allow for possible deterritorialization from a specific context. We might add that this characteristic of "images" also holds true in premodern times.

What can we derive from this understanding of images for Appardurai's concept of imagination? The political implications inherent in Appadurai's allusions to the cultural functions of mechanically produced images are more obvious still in the context of his observations on the creative force of "the imagined", formulated with explicit reference to Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities" from his 1983 book of the same title. Historically, modern "imagined communities," for which the nation-state provides the paradigmatic model, emerged from a crossing of various social forces and developments. During the 17th century, "imagined communities" initiated the gradual decline of the traditional legitimacy of hierarchical dynastic realms introducing new horizontally structured types of community. As the example of the nation-state clearly shows, these communities were marked by their limited territorial extension within well-defined boundaries. The specific imagined status of these communities resulted from the representations of their members who, as a general rule, neither knew the majority of their fellow-members nor were able to establish a face-to-face communication with them, yet still believed in the communion that existed between them. [6] Thus the concept of "imagined communities," at least in theory, relies on the distinction between different types of immediate social interaction and patterns of experience on the one hand, and the production of imagined self-representations which replace this type of factual empirical experience on the other. However, unlike most theorists in the Marxist tradition, neither Anderson nor Appadurai come to define the social practice of imagination primarily in epistemological terms. Their concept repudiates the distinction between "truth" and "falsity" with respect to representations of social reality. On the contrary, for them, imagination is an inherently creative or constructive force that generates and organizes the entire social field. [7] Appadurai emphasizes that this interaction by no means remains confined to modern nation-states but needs

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to be extended to embrace types of "imagined worlds" which operate on subnational or supra- and multinational levels including different scales of political action and of spatial-temporal extension (32). [8] Explicitly, when it comes to globalization, "imagined communities" or "worlds" are nothing other than the effects of the creative dimension of imagination. The establishment of "imagined communities" can be understood as a countermovement to the deterritorialization processes described above. As a result, the creative dimension of imagination, as outlined here, must be understood as a force to "re-embed" entities. [9] Only the joint dynamic of de- and reterritorialization, or de- and recontextualization, motivates globalizing processes. Imagination brings together, unifies, re-embeds, or re-assembles diverse and somehow unconnected entites. As images point to the material dimension of imagination, "imagined communities" stress the creative side of imaginations.

Although Appadurai has defined imagination as a creative force and a "cultural agent", for him, imagination is not an ability possessed by an individual subject but is instead defined socially. This is where the social "imaginary" comes into play. Different theoretical approaches dedicated to "the (social) imaginary" provide a further frame of reference for Appadurai's conceptualization. These theoretical accounts – as represented notably by Emile Durkheim and Cornelius Castoriadis – do not view the imaginary as a phenomenon related to psychological faculties of the subject; they rather conceive it as a comprehensive cultural agent or force that, furthermore, escapes any strictly ontological definition. Following Durkheim, the imaginary can only be appropriately described within a functionalist framework ascribing to it the status of a true foundational figure that eventually comes to contribute to the constitution, regulation, and legitimization of the social formation as a whole. Thus, Durkheim's sociological approach, on the one hand, presents a positivist explanation of the social field that deliberately takes recourse to methodological assumptions derived from the natural sciences. He posits a strict analogy with classical physics in defining social phenomena as facts deprived of all individual intentionality. On the other, it foregrounds the role of the social imaginary conceived as a coercive force that accounts for the symbolic character of all social action, and articulates itself through multiple images, ideologies, symbols or myths. [10]

According to this view, symbols or images are not to be understood as mere effects or secondary representations of primary social processes but, quite the contrary, every society eventually owes its own existence to the cohesive power and prior activity of the imaginary. The imaginary, by providing beliefs or religious emblems and thus creating forms of social consensus, guarantees both the maintenance of the functional infrastructure of society in the present and its continuity in the future. As is foregrounded notably in Castoriadis' reformulation of social theory, the "radical imaginary" needs to be conceived as a primary creative force through which society ultimately

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comes to institute itself by inventing 'imaginary significations' that result in shared social meanings. [11] Thus the radical imaginary accounts for the original creation of society without positing a human, a divine, or any distinct origin whose existence could be described in terms of the "identitary logic" inherent in Western thought. Although the social imaginary can only be perceived through the secondary imaginary articulations, images or self-representations by way of which every society assembles and institutes itself, these articulations need to be ascribed to the primary creative activity of the imaginary that functions as the foundational force for any social formation, and is held to be responsible for the dynamic making or re-making of social reality itself, including its particular historical practices and political institutions.

The central ambiguities and complexities inherent in previous definitions of the social imaginary have also been taken up by Wolfgang Iser in his work *Das Fiktive und das Imaginäre* (1991) in an attempt to formulate a new aesthetic and anthropological theory of fictionality which firmly integrates the category of the imaginary into a triadic constellation combining it with the real and the fictive. Within literary texts, Iser argues, the real comes to be articulated through acts of fictionalization that select items from social and other extratextual realities and present fictive images or (imagined) worlds which highlight purposes, intentions, and aims that are not part of the realities reproduced. The acts of fictionalization serve to perform a restructuring of referential extratextual fields that corresponds to a process of de-realizing the real while at the same time conferring form and an assumed reality to the imaginary (which founds or institutes the real). They represent modes of a literary or aesthetic "world construction" that comes to create structures that do not pertain to the social, historical, cultural and literary systems, realities, or environments to which they refer, but do have a considerable impact on the understanding and perception of these realities, and therefore assume an important regulatory role in social life.

With respect to the varying theoretical accounts of phenomena related to the imagination conceived as a social agent, it can be concluded that the formation of "geopolitical imaginaries" principally relies on the close connection between "images" produced under conditions of mechanical reproduction and the idea of "imagined communities" or "worlds." The interplay of the materiality of "images," the creativity of "the imagined," and the social groundedness of the "imaginary" creates fictive realities, which at the same time become social facts that institute any given social formation as the imaginary is perceived to provide its central foundational condition of possibility.

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Appadurai's Understanding of Scapes

It is important to note, however, that it is not only the conception of the imaginary as a social practice, but also the question of how social and political spaces are formed, organized, and distributed that gains major significance in Appadurai's account of the emergence of the modern global world. According to Appadurai, although the globalized world constitutes a transnational space extending over the earth, it does not at all represent the allegedly deterritorialized and homogeneous universal culture referred to as the "global village." On the one hand, to be sure, the modern world is profoundly marked by the complex interplay of cultural, economic, or political interactions that follow the rules underlying the contemporary "network society" (Castells). In the global network society, social structures and activities assume the form of interconnected finance or communication flows that are organized around electronically processed technological information networks. On the other hand, however, the new global culture constitutes an utterly heterogeneous order permeated by multiple contradictions, ruptures, or disjunctures that mark the inner functioning of the fields of cultural, social, or economic activities as well as their complex interaction within particular communities.

This intricate interaction of the competing cultural dynamics of flows and disjunctures comes to implement a mobile cultural logic, which Appadurai seeks to account for by introducing the spatial model based on the notion of "scapes." The use of the suffix "scape," and its etymological implications, point to the spatial concept of the landscape. This concept was originally developed within aesthetics and art theory where, traditionally, it is set in close relation (and contrast) to the concept of nature, and thus refers to territorial places or locations. [12] A closer look, however, reveals a strong affinity to the "imagined communities" or "worlds" described by Benedict Anderson. The concept of scapes operates on the level of both small- and large-scale politics, and is subdivided into five types of scapes. The first four types refer to human migration dynamics extending in transnational space (ethnoscapes), to global operations of mechanical and informational technology (technoscapes), to the changing dispositions of transnational capital and national stock exchanges (financescapes) as well as to concatenations of images related to ideologies of states or social movements (ideoscapes). The last type (mediascapes) gains a particular status in that it refers to more than the technical possibilities of producing and disseminating information through contemporary print and electronic visual media or to (realistic or phantastic) images of the world produced by these media. It also comes to provide complex interconnected repertoires of images or narratives which appear to significantly include cultural ethnoscapes. The mediascapes can thus be conceived of as a highly reflexive second-order or metascapes, which register images referring to worlds that possess themselves an inherently imaginary character, and therefore may serve as a vehicle to display the hidden conditions of

emergence of the first-order scapes (such as ethnoscapes) in which the globalized world is organized. Within the current cultural order of spatial scapes, the dynamics of global flows that create mobile relations and connections between the particular scapes or social fields of activity appear to be inextricably linked with the cultural logic of disjunctures. Disjunctures can be at work between ideoscapes and financescapes (as in countries where financial flows influence or transcend national politics) or between ideoscapes, ethnoscapes, and mediascapes (as in world regions where diasporic migration movements or international lifestyles communicated by media transgress national borders), but also define the inner disposition of each scape (as is the case in specific ideoscapes where different ideas of state, notions of national identity or microidentities enter into conflict). [13]

Appadurai's multilayered scape concept implies that "geopolitical imaginaries" work not only within specific scapes, but that they may also point to or even cause conflicts between different scapes. It may thus be concluded that the globalizing processes of de- and reterritorialization call forth the permanent making of ever new "imagined communities" on different scales and thus construct conflictive "geopolitical imaginaries." The current global culture produces complex geopolitical imaginaries marked by multiple disjunctures, inconsistencies, or contradictions, which present the globalized world as a highly heterogeneous assemblage or network of diverging scapes or imagined worlds.

Yet, the spatial order underlying the present global culture and the disjunctive network of geopolitical imaginaries, is marked by another distinctive trait that affects in particular the specific territorial status of social and political spaces. In contrast to Anderson who perceives territorial borders and locations as necessary conditions for the formation of all "imagined communities" (7), Appadurai defines modern scapes at least in part as immaterial sites or networks of cultural and political interaction that obey the potentially deterritorializing logic inherent to the spatial dynamics of global flows.

As mentioned above, the geopolitical concept of scapes, however, evokes a reterritorialized model of space that appears to be closely linked to aesthetic conceptions alluded to by the descriptions of scapes as "imaginary landscapes" and "perspectival constructs" (Appadurai 31, 33). These descriptions do more than illustrate the "historical, linguistic, and political situatedness of different sorts of actors" (such as nation-states, diasporic communities or subnational movements) (33). They surreptitiously refer to the particular point of view adopted by a spectator or observer, and hence to visual categories or aesthetic models of world experience and perception (such as linear perspective or panoramic views) that have recently been explored in the context of contemporary landscape and urban studies or the French discipline of Géocritique. [14] Extending the argument developed by Appadurai, it may be concluded that geopolitical imaginaries can be viewed as

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articulations of a specific concept of imaginary space that rely strongly on the interplay of images and imagined worlds, and document or deploy both a disjunctive logic and reterritorializing dynamics which derive their central cultural impact from a hidden, but highly suggestive heuristic convergence of political and aesthetic foundations and perspectives.

Viewed from this perspective, we understand the respective geopolitical imaginaries as a culturally and historically situated, creative, socially-constructed and powerful concepts developed in response to the interwoven globalizing process of de- and reterritorialization. While de-territorialization tends to dissolve closed entities into flows, the imagination helps to reterritorialize entities within a geographical order.

Let us now look at how these theoretical considerations also help to analyze two paintings that have been taken out of their context of origin around 1800 and affixed on to a recently published book cover. What do we learn when we ask for their respective geopolitical imaginary?

A History Bestseller and its Diverse Book Covers: Christopher Bayly's *Birth of the Modern World* and *El Nacimiento del mundo modern*

With good reason, Christopher Bayly's book *Birth of the Modern World*, first published in 2004, is highly praised. Niall Ferguson describes it as "a masterpiece" as we can read on the cover of the original book in English as well as on that of the 2010 Spanish translation. The visual representations appearing on both covers trace out the making of geopolitical imaginaries, which, as argued above, build on the intricate interplay of images and imagined worlds. In particular, they reflect the historical rise of specific imagined spaces closely related to the French Revolution and the emergence of asymmetrical race and gender relations characteristic of the globalized world in Modernity.

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The painting of the English original is well chosen. Ann Louis Girodet (1767-1824), one of the first romantic French artists, became fairly well known for his portraits, some of which showed members of the Napoléon family. His Portrait of Jean-Baptiste Belley, painted in 1797, illustrates perfectly many of Bayly's main theses, one of which is the growth of global uniformity in respect to bodily practices such as clothing and behaviour during the "long 19th century." Uniformity, of course, stems from "uniform" – usually the indistinguishable clothing of soldiers. And, indeed, the black protagonist in the painting is wearing a uniform – the uniform of the French National Convention. Throughout the book, Bayly only once mentions the cover. He hints at the painting's symbolic power and its expression of the universal intention of the French revolution. By doing so, Bayly illustrates at first sight a particular historical geopolitical imaginary, a specific imagined world corresponding to an ideoscape expressed through the geographical and the political index of the two men: Jean Baptiste Belley, a hero of the Haitian Revolution, was elected to the French National Convention in 1793 for representing St. Domingue. Abbé Raynal, shown as a bust in the background, was one of the most important abolitionists of his time, a French philosopher and a member of the famous encyclopedists. As a matter of course, he represents the European world region with its long tradition of political reasoning, rooted in Greek philosophy, symbolized by the classically-styled sculpture. John Baptiste Belley, in this view, seems to incorporate a more recent development. While his attire also points to Europe, his skin and his attitude, to which we will come back later, clearly symbolize a different world region. From this, one could conclude that the painter of this artefact expresses, willingly or not, a geopolitical imaginary, which relies on the universality and homogeneity of transnational space. Put briefly, this geopolitical imaginary constitutes a particular ideoscape that comprises European born Republican ideas and their diffusion all over the world. Along Christopher Bayly's lines, one could go one step further and claim that the geopolitical imaginary expressed here includes a historical narrative of emancipation that begins in Greece, picked up speed in the French Revolution and will one day win over the entire world. Mapping out a new transnational type of "lineage" based on the traditional notion of translatio, it offers a universalist interpretation which might be the reason the publishing house chose this painting for the cover.

Yet the universalist implications of the picture also become apparent on another level, as they deeply inform the specific strategies of visual representation that characterize the painting. Thus the juxtaposition of a bust (Raynal) and the portrait of a living person (Belley) not only forms a reflexive mediascape that relies on the superposition of two different art forms used to express political issues and thereby points to changes in art itself and the diverging forms of its embeddedness in the field of political action and practices. What seems yet more important to note is that in combining a bust and a physical human body within the same pictorial space and

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presenting both as citizens of the French Nation, instead of reducing the former to a mere attribute illustrating central properties of the portrayed person [15], the painting modifies a widespread tradition of 18th-century portraiture and assembles two actors within the same ideoscape. Due to their heterogeneous mode of being, however, the two are deprived of the possibility of engaging in immediate face-to-face communication. By uniting two persons within the same political space who belong to separate ontological spheres of existence, the painting thus offers an image of the making of the French Nation and the modern world as a universal geopolitical imaginary which, in fact, represents an imagined world or community that suspends any direct interaction between its members.

Finally, the interpretation of the geopolitical imaginary as an all-embracing universal space is also suggested by the representation of the sky and the line of the horizon. The line extends both the contours of the cummerbund worn by Belley and the corresponding line of the bust inscription. As such, the line establishes a close connection between the two representatives of the imaginary political space defining the French Nation and the topographical space of nature that, in the painting, forms the background of the depicted persons symbolizing the sphere of political action.

The striking interconnectedness of human actors and natural environment suggests that the painting relates the specific ideoscape that epitomizes central political ideas associated with the French Nation and the imagination of the modern world as a whole to the aesthetic and visual model of the imaginary landscape. The landscape, according to Appadurai, forms an implicit topographical matrix for the description of political space under conditions of modern globalization, and, as is suggested by the representation of the sky, appears to confer a cosmological dimension upon the depicted political scape. The painting thus maps out a geopolitical imaginary that performs a de-territorializing cosmic expansion of social space. This specific geopolitical imaginary, however, in contrast to traditional cosmological visualizations of political power, does not at all serve to legitimize vertically structured transcendent types of governance (such as sacral monarchy), but undergoes a significant shift in meaning. It now appears to indicate, quite on the contrary, the new claim to horizontally-defined geocultural universality propagated by the political actors of the French Revolution and applied to the extensive diffusion of Republican ideas throughout the entire world. [16]

However, if we take into serious consideration that geopolitical imaginaries are embedded in various power relations involving the intersection of class, race, gender, and the like, we may ask whether this affirmation of universalist geopolitics really is the painting's main concern. Is it really addressing the universal intention of the French Revolution, and does this claim to universality mark "the birth of the modern world?" Let us very briefly challenge this understanding by taking into account the specific historical context of the painting and its method of visualized comparisons. By

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doing so, we can show that this painting does more than point to deterritorializing processes such as universalist geopolitics. While localizing the meaning of the painting within a specific local, cultural, and historical setting, it can be demonstrated that it also points to a reterritorializing process.

Victoria Schmidt-Linsenhoff (2000) has correctly pointed out that Girodet's painting can be read as a comment on the revolutionary debates over race and citizenship. For a better understanding of the painting, we must recall the main questions of these debates as provoked and personalized by the citizen Belley. His arrival in Parisian society in late 18th century hit the mark of the young republic. How inclusive was the "declaration of human rights?" Should a former slave, taken away from Senegal, sold in St. Domingue, a black man who bought his way out of slavery independently and who fought as a Captain of the infantry in the Haitian Revolution; should someone like him represent the French colonies? Could Africans be citizens? If black men were equal to white men, what other changes or subversions would that bring about?

At first glance, Christopher Bayly's short remark on the universal meaning of the picture and its related geopolitical imaginary seems convincing. The painting certainly stresses the universality of emancipation. Belley, adopting a relaxed, but at the same time powerful posture, leans against the bust of the well-known encyclopaedist. He is elegantly dressed and wearing a cummerbund in blue, white, and red – the colours of the Revolution. In Christopher Bayly's reading, Belley appears not only as an emancipated slave in a literal sense, but also as a free man on a symbolic level. Supported by Raynal, one of the most famous abolitionists of the time, Bayly's interpretation suggests that Belley could be part of an emerging public and that he could also represent the new self-confident enlightened (male) subject keen on using his, as the German philosopher of the enlightenment in 1784 would have it, "own understanding" (Kant).

However, could Belley really be a member of an enlightenend society on equal rights? On second glance, doubts arise over this interpretation. The painting can be read as a comparison between the European philosopher Raynal and the Afro-Carribean revolutionist Belley. Comparisons, however, are never neutral (cf. Longxi). Generally speaking, comparisons always play with the relation of the "own" and the "other." Let us very briefly elaborate on this. A comparison not only relates two entities, it is at the same time a triangulation: comparisons include the presumption of similarity and the observation of differences with respect to a tertium comparationis. [17] Even more importantly, comparing is a social practice. This means, in other words, that comparisons are not defined by the characteristics of the entities compared. On the contrary, it is the comparing actors who imagine and thus create while comparing the respective entities to compare. Doing comparisons, we must highlight, is also based on the ability and force of imagination. [18] From there, it does not come as a surprise that comparisons are always situated in a specific historical

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context and that power relations shape them. The emphasis on one out of the three elements - difference, sameness or tertium - depends not only on the historical and cultural context, but also on the specific situation in which a comparison is drawn. Indeed, a closer look at Girodet's painting reveals that the painting does not primarily foreground the similarities between both male individuals but prefers differences. The most obvious contrasts (vivid/dull; black/white) were combined with the construction of different kinds of masculinities and, as we will see, with a different status within the process of civilization. [19] Catherine Hall argues along the same lines in her review of Bayly's book:

> Yet what is so striking about the image is the corporeality of his black body, his sensual energy, the exhibition of his virility with his fingers pointing to his bulging phallus, the idealisation of sexualised black masculinity and its link to the idea of the 'noble savage'.

The observers of the time easily understood this allusion to the 'noble savage' as described in Rousseau's books. Viewed against this background of the enlightened political movement driven by reason instead of sentiments or the body, Raynal represents the "triumph of reason and spirit over matter." Hall (2004) continues:

> Belley may be an emancipated man in European dress, yet his ineradicable vitality legitimates the European rule of reason. But what is mind and reason without body, sexuality, and emotionality? This double portrait, one might suggest, tells us much about modernity, a modernity structured through particular images of masculinity and racial difference.
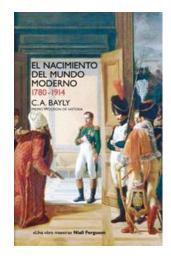
We might add: What makes the double portrait so fascinating is that it not only works with dichotomies, differences, and contrasts, but with comparisons. This means, in other words, the differences and contrasts between the two protagonists come along with the sameness. Both were male citizens. Interestingly enough, what is claimed as tertium is left to the discretion of the observer. Is it humanity? Is it citizenship? The painting fascinatingly fluctuates between highlighting the contrasts and leaving the tertium vague. Depending on the assumed tertium, the implied sameness varies. If we assume "humanity," for instance, then the sameness will include human rights. If we assume citizenship as a set tertium, it will also include political participation. The painting thus symbolizes far more than the universality of the values of the French Revolution. It opens the door for a possible limitation of the range of the universalist values of the French Revolution which now seem to apply exclusively to members of a specific world region and a specific gender, and consequently come along with a geographical and temporal index to help construct world regional hierarchies. European modernity is built on shaky grounds. In a similar vein, Viktoria Schmidt-Linsenhoff has conclusively argued that the construction of masculinity in the double portrait says a great deal about the ambivalences of modernity.

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It is worth pausing for a moment to muse about Viktoria Schmidt-Linsenhoff's and Catherine Hall's interpretations of this portrait more profoundly. Taking a postcolonial approach, the two scholars have delivered thoughtful insights into the male subjectivities constructed along different lines and determined by gender issues and racial difference. Yet, with respect to the formation of the particular geopolitical imaginary mapped out in the painting, it is possible to draw some further conclusions regarding the rise of modernity. For the painting presents itself as the site of emergence of far-reaching political reflections which in addressing issues concerning "race" and "citizenship" ostentatiously display a complex confrontation between ethnoscapes and ideoscapes, that reveal themselves to be built upon highly contradictory and ultimately incompatible political norms and values. The painting quite evidently gains the status of a mediascape, a reflexive second-order scape which not only juxtaposes different art forms expressing issues concerning political representation, but deliberately produces an image of heterogeneous imagined worlds in which the Enlightenment ideoscape and its claim of equality enters into conflict with the colonial ethnoscape and the experience of racial difference. It thereby delineates a heterogeneous geopolitical imaginary that relies neither on the mere homology nor on the simple opposition of competing cultural scapes, but comes to display the complex concatenations or dynamic flows and the contradictions or growing disjunctures that define the particular conditions of their making and re-making in modernity.

We can assume that the ambivalences expressed in Girodet's painting as outlined above were one of the reasons why Christopher Bayly's book appeared with a different cover when it was published in Spanish:

Of course we can only speculate about the motivations that led to changing the cover. However, it seems likely that the Spanish-speaking public in Latin-America would not have appreciated the double portrait of Raynal and Belley. The book *El nacimiento del mundo moderno* came with a painting that originally dates to only a few years later. It shows a different scene, although one that

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also plays with geopolitical imaginaries built on the interplay of images and imagined worlds. François-Henri Mulard (1769-1850) painted a historical scene from which it got its title: "Napoléon reçoit Reza Bey l'ambassadeur de Perse au château de Finkenstein" (1810). Only three years prior, Napoleon had met the Persian envoy at the Prussian castle Finkenstein, where he had his camp during the campaign for Russia. Persia expected help against Russia while Napoleon needed support to conquer British-India. After the Franco-Russian peace of Tilsit (1807), the Alliance quickly lost its importance and Napoleon never arrived in India. [20]

Again we see a painting that is based on contrasts and differences. Napoleon wearing military clothing, and standing in his typical pose with the right hand in his jacket, is presented in full light. The Persian ambassador who approaches Napoleon in a servile manner with a sketchy bow wears a turban and a colourful red robe. What the book cover does not show is that behind the ambassador stand his entourage of six other diplomats in exotic clothing and some officers dressed in European style. The pictorial space of the painting thus functions once more as a reflexive mediascape which, in its visualization techniques, delineates a particular geopolitical imaginary in confronting competing ethno- and ideoscapes whose differences this time are marked by the distribution of light and shadow, and by the presence of a physical threshold that divides the imaginary space into two parts representing two epochs as well as two regions of the world, as the Orientalist world seems to be from another epoch.

At the same time, the second painting reveals more plainly than the first that the depicted scapes represent imagined worlds resembling particular perspectival constructs belonging to the tradition of the visual arts. This is revealed by the representation of Napoleon that builds on a particular distribution of foreground and background that evokes the rules underlying the visual technique of linear perspective. On the one hand, the square pattern marking the floor recalls the "diagrammatic" type of evidence related to the technique of calculating or plotting geometrical points and transferring them on a squared grid used for measuring the exact distances between painted objects. [21] On the other hand, Napoleon is placed behind an open door that resembles the "window to the world," which in Leon Battista Alberti's famous description of perspectiva artificialis, is associated with the constitution of a three-dimensional space of illusion, a truly "imaginary" space which extends behind the two-dimensional surface of the picture and symbolizes the empirical world. [22] The division of pictorial space following the rules of the visualization technique of linear perspective thus foregrounds the artful construction of an imagined world, a genuine geopolitical imaginary within which Napoleon represents the illuminated and enlightened world of modernity that is set in sharp contrast to the antiquated Oriental world epitomized by the Persian ambassador.

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However, the threshold not only serves to divide the imaginary political space, but also comes to symbolize a possible contact zone. Even though the observer cannot be sure that Napoleon would really cross the threshold, the painting appears to deploy a spatial configuration of ethno- and ideoscapes which, in combining different masculinities, different temporalities, and different regions of the world, reveals itself to be both disjunctive and connective and thus points once more to the complexities, inconsistencies, and heterogeneities inherent in the geopolitical imaginaries underlying a modernity which according to both paintings and Bayly's interpretation, has a deeply Eurocentric orientation.

Furthermore, like the first painting, the second also thoroughly reflects the particular visualization strategies that progressively unfold the making of geopolitical imaginaries in modernity. It is significant that the natural landscape (and the cosmological setting) symbolized in the first painting by the sky here is replaced by the representation of history, evoked by the battle painting appearing in the background of the picture. This battle painting, in fact, focuses on the historical context of the depicted scene in that it possibly refers to the Coalition Wars in which Napoleon was still engaged at the time the scene took place. It can thus be concluded that the second work of art suggests a close connection between the 'imaginary world' presented within the painting, and the historical or political world outside the visual representation. It is interesting to note, however, that the battle painting shown within Mulard's work of art has never been part of the collection exhibited at Schloss Finckenstein. [23] As such, there is a striking discrepancy between the visual representation of the historical scene taking place at Finckenstein, and the factual environment of the battle painting. Mulard's painting, which was produced according to Napoleon's memory of the depicted scene, thus displays the fundamental independence of the work of art from its originary spatial-temporal location, from its empirical situatedness in a primary "here" and "now" which, consequently, no longer serves to guarantee the authenticity of its visual representation. It thereby also comes to reflect both its own (mobile) status as a modern work of art produced under conditions of mechanical reproduction (which also accounts for its mass diffusion on the book cover) and its contribution to the making of geopolitical imaginaries in modernity. For, in fusing the visual representation with the political reality of the Coalition Wars, while at the same time inserting these wars into a new empirical environment, the painting performs the simultaneous processes of de-realizing the real and conferring "reality" to the imaginary. Thus the painting constructs once more a highly complex 'geopolitical imaginary' which documents the disjunctures, ambivalences, and contradictions inherent to the political world of modernity. It also reflects the indispensable interplay of "images" and "imagined worlds" that exposes the "imaginary" as an effect of a social practice and the primary cohesive force through which every social community ultimately comes to institute itself.

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Conclusion

"Geopolitical imaginaries" are both an object of investigation and an analytical tool for cultural and historical studies. With the help of Appadurai's conceptualization of the term "imagination" we have shown that imagination has three dimensions, the material, the creative, and the social. By discussing the role of images, the imagined, and the imaginary, we have underscored that these three dimensions work simultaneously when we deal with geopolitical imaginaries. Borrowing a term from Benedict Anderson, we have been illustrating the creative power of the socially defined imaginary with a close interpretation of two paintings from the first decades of the 19th century. Geopolitical imaginaries become even more important because they can be understood as a powerful, culturally and historically situated, creative and socially constructed answer to the intertwined globalizing processes of de- and reterritorialization. While disjunctions and flows tend to dissolve geopolitical and other entities, the culturally shared imaginaries help to reterritorialize them within a geographical order. We can conclude that, in the very same way that "imagined communities" work where social order is concerned, so do geopolitical imaginaries where geopolitical orders are concerned.

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Endnotes

[1] For an extensive account of the descriptive models concerning globalization processes outlined here, see notably: Werber. For an exemplary conceptualization of the global dimension of contemporary literature centered on the Spanish author Ray Loriga, see: Kramer.

[2] Unfortunately, the publishing houses did not answer our question as to why they chose which painting. It becomes obvious, however, why the cover of the English book version seemed to be inconvenient for the market the Spanish translation aimed at.

[3] On the term 'global village' and its cultural and historical connotations, see among others: McLuhan. On the spatial implications inherent in the term 'deterritorialization', see: Deleuze/Guattari 1980, Deleuze/Guattari 1991.

[4] In this perspective, the term 'image' functions as an umbrella term including both 'images' and 'pictures' which, within contemporary art and media theory, are frequently set in contrast; on the systematic distinction between 'images' and 'pictures' see in particular: Mitchell.

[5] On the modern loss of former standards guaranteeing the authenticity or uniqueness of art based on the distinction between 'original' and 'copy', see: Benjamin (437-439).

[6] For a concise account of the imaginary status of 'imagined communities', formulated with respect to the historical model of the nation, see the definition provided by Anderson: "It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (15).

[7] Imagination is at the same time characterized by a relation of strict interdependence linking it with various further cultural, political or economic practices and regulating notably the close interaction between systems of production, styles of governance and technologies of communication or information. On the 'creative' force of the imagination, see notably: Anderson (6); on the definition of the imagination which views it as a "social practice" or an "organized field of social practices", see: Appadurai (31).

[8] However, the need for extending the definition of imagined communities centered on the paradigm of the nation-state is also articulated by Anderson himself (6).

[9] The idea of de- and reterritorializing has been put forward also by other thinkers, even though they named it differently. Anthony Giddens for instance speaks of "re- and deembedding." Bruno Latour calls it the "reassembling of the social."

[10] On the positivist founding of sociology, see in particular: Durkheim; for a suggestive account of Durkheim's sociological approach see also: Sironneau, Maffesoli.

[11] On the conception of the "radical imaginary," see Castoriadis (559-609); for a concise synopsis of Castoriadis's theory of the imaginary, see also: Iser (350-377).

[12] On the significance the concept of 'landscape' assumes within traditional aesthetics and art theory, see notably: Ritter.

[13] For an extensive list of examples illustrating 'disjunctive relationships' that are operating both among and within different scapes, see: Appadurai (39-43).

[14] On the development of contemporary 'landscape' and 'urban studies', with reference to visual dispositives such as linear perspective or panoramic views, see notably: Dorrian/Rose; for a systematic description of "cityscapes" as a visual concept and its significance within contemporary 'urban studies', see: Lindner. On a new aesthetic 'thinking' of landscape and on the premises and implications inherent in the French discipline of Géocritique see Collot 2011, Collot 2014, Westphal.

[15] On Girodet's critical confrontation of the 18th-century tradition of portrait painting, see the concise observations of Viktoria Schmidt-Linsenhoff (91).

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[16] This transfer of meaning regarding cosmological forms of representation confirm Bruno Latour's extension of the concept of the 'cosmos' which he views – in explicit accordance with accounts formulated by the French ethnologist Philippe Descola and the notion of 'cosmopolitics' developed by Isabelle Stengers – as a space of political action accessible through different experimental heuristics that define varying systems of world knowledge and perception throughout the centuries.

[17] See for a definition of comparisons: Heintz.

[18] For a profound discussion on what actors do when they compare, see: Epple/Erhart.

[19] Enlightening insights in the microdynamics of visual comparisons in art history gives Johannes Grave (in: Epple/ Erhart).

[20] Whether Napoleon had concrete plans to attack British-India is still a matter of debate. The British authorities in India, however, took it for granted (Ingram 117).

[21] On the premises underlying the principle of 'diagrammatic evidence', see notably: Schäffner; on the distinction between 'pictorial' and 'diagrammatic' modes of vision see likewise Bogen/Thürlemann; for a pertinent account of the development of the early modern 'perspective science' which is based on the principles of 'rationality' and 'proportionality' rather than on aesthetic effects of illusion, see also: Büttner.

[22] On the significance of Alberti's metaphor of the window and the negation of the picture's material surface implied in it, see the early systematic observations formulated by Erwin Panofsky; see also among others: Belting.

[23] See the information on Mulard's paiting provided by the website of Schloss Finckelstein: "Napoleon hat das Bild später (1820-30) in Paris malen lassen und selbst dem Maler die nötigen Anweisungen aus dem Gedächtnis gemacht. Die Schlachtenbilder an den Wänden des Vorraumes haben aber niemals in Finckenstein gehangen."

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Imaginarios geopolíticos de la Confederación General del Trabajo Argentina

Resumen

En el presente artículo analizaremos las mutaciones de los imaginarios geopolíticos del sindicalismo argentino de la Confederación General del Trabajo, desde su fundación en 1930 hasta inicios del siglo XXI. El contexto nacional e internacional nos permiten comprender estas transformaciones en el cruce de los abordajes de la geopolítica crítica y la sociología histórica-política. Algunas preguntas orientan nuestra indagación. ¿Cómo se desarrolló el proceso social por el cual un sindicalismo masivamente de izquierda internacionalista resignificó sus imaginarios geopolíticos al latinoamericanismo tercermundista? ¿Cuánto de esa sociogénesis anticapitalista aún persiste tras la Guerra Fría, la caída del Muro de Berlín y la hegemonía neoliberal? ¿Hasta qué punto la descolonización potenció determinados horizontes simbólicos regionales en detrimento de otros universales? ¿Cómo se realizaron las circulaciones y transnacionalización de ideas geopolíticas entre Norte-Sur y Sur-Sur?

Keywords: Sindicalismo, Argentina, Imaginarios

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Introducción

El estudio de la construcción y transformación de los *imaginarios geopolíticos* de los actores sociales puede ser una vía privilegiada para distinguir elementos significativos (ideológicos, identitarios y culturales) que los análisis de las relaciones internacionales, centrados en la clásica óptica interestatal, por lo general no consiguen explicar. En el presente artículo, con una base de interpretaciones y fuentes históricas, sociológicas y de ciencia política, daremos cuenta de la constitución y las mutaciones de los *imaginarios geopolíticos* del sindicalismo argentino de la Confederación General del Trabajo (CGT). Estarán presentes en la indagación el contexto histórico nacional e internacional. También, las prácticas y disputas espaciales y simbólicas que se desarrollaron en el país, a través de una descripción y periodización general que permita presentar, a modo de abordaje inicial, el rico y extenso período en estas breves páginas. Algunas preguntas orientan nuestra indagación. ¿Cómo se desarrolló el proceso social por el cual un sindicalismo masivamente de *izquierda internacionalista* resignificó sus imaginarios geopolíticos al *latinoamericanismo tercermundista*? ¿Cuánto de esa sociogénesis anticapitalista aún persiste tras la Guerra Fría, la caída del Muro de Berlín y la hegemonía neoliberal? ¿Hasta qué punto la descolonización potenció determinados horizontes simbólicos regionales en detrimento de otros universales? ¿Cómo se realizaron las circulaciones y transnacionalización de ideas geopolíticas entre Norte-Sur y Sur-Sur? ¿Contribuye el análisis sociohistórico del imaginario geopolítico de la CGT para comprender sus posicionamientos internacionales actuales?

Nuestra perspectiva teórica abreva en una corriente con fuerte impacto en el mundo en las últimas décadas. El concepto de *imaginarios geopolíticos* tiene su raíz en la corriente de la *geopolítica crítica* (*critical geopolitics*) una perspectiva analítica que, a diferencia de la geopolítica tradicional, no agota su mirada en un conjunto determinado de territorios, fronteras o actores, sino en los procesos a través de los que esas categorías se producen (Dodds 7). [1] En este sentido, coincidimos con Agnew (19) en definir a la *geopolítica crítica* como una lectura sobre los numerosos supuestos y esquemas en los que la política mundial se apoya, sobre las formas en que las divisiones geográficas, los planes estratégicos y las imágenes globales influyen en la construcción de políticas internacionales y en la *legitimación popular* de esas políticas.

Si la conformación de un imaginario nacional depende en parte de la existencia de una territorialidad (no siempre tan delimitada y coherente como a veces se presupone), no se agota allí su dimensión *espacial*. Las *prácticas espaciales* no revisten sólo formas territoriales, sino también adquieren formas no-territoriales que es necesario indagar para comprender cómo el poder de las instituciones se produce práctica y discursivamente (Campbell 1998; Kuus/Agnew 2008). Del mismo modo, para no caer en una visión que sólo se preocupe por las instituciones y sus actores,

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es necesario abrir el campo a una dimensión relacional, e indagar en los discursos y las prácticas de los múltiples actores sociales que participan de la formación y transformación de los *imaginarios sociales* (Baczko 1984), a las luchas en un territorio y en una actividad determinada. Las características y transformaciones culturales, la influencia y posición de los medios de comunicación y las organizaciones de la sociedad civil, la tradición intelectual y sus producciones académicas, en suma, los distintos grupos sociales, políticos y económicos que participan activamente en la construcción de los imaginarios, son indispensables para comprender la formación, consolidación y las luchas de ciertos imaginarios geopolíticos por imponerse sobre otros. Los imaginarios geopolíticos portan representaciones de las fronteras nacionales, en algunos casos muy fuertes y determinantes, en otras lábiles o directamente inexistentes, y también de las fronteras internas de las clases o grupos sociales. Estas configuraciones de fronteras internas y externas son claves para ver la dimensión simbólica de la acción social, política y, lo que más nos interesa aquí, de la acción sindical.

Entendido de este modo, el *imaginario geopolítico sindical* se encuentra asociado a una multiplicidad de prácticas con significativa incidencia en disputas (políticas y culturales) que *a priori* podrían definirse como exclusivamente locales y, sin embargo -cuando son vistos desde una perspectiva centrada en los efectos de esas prácticas sobre la espacialidad - influyen de manera sustancial en el modo en que el sindicalismo argentino se percibe, presenta y realiza su acción social. En este contexto, el *discurso* geopolítico, no se puede abordar como una posición discrecional producto de la racionalidad política de un gobierno o de funcionarios determinados, sino como una construcción social compleja en cuanto cristaliza las disputas de sentido sobre las categorías que definen una identidad y, en efecto, el modo en que se representa la posición de ese grupo *ante* y *en* el mundo.

En consecuencia, para un abordaje de *los imaginarios geopolíticos* del sindicalismo argentino no bastaría (lo que de ningún modo implica que se pueda prescindir de ello) con el estudio exhaustivo de los funcionarios, instituciones y políticas explícitas; sino que es necesario un abordaje que incluya las múltiples prácticas (formales e informales) que los diversos actores e instituciones locales y extranjeros desarrollaron para la conformación de los distintos imaginarios en pugna en cada coyuntura histórica. Como anticipamos, dado el extenso período abordado, aquí ensayaremos algunas claves de análisis que consideramos pertinentes para intentar una pionera aproximación al fenómeno sindical en Argentina desde esta promisoria perspectiva.

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Del Internacionalismo a la Tercera Posición Latinoamericanista (1900-1945)

El sindicalismo argentino encuentra sus primeras expresiones a fines del siglo XIX, en consonancia con el importante proceso de inmigración europea que signó el período en Argentina (Cordone). Las actividades por oficio (gráficos, panaderos, carpinteros) junto con los ferroviarios (La Fraternidad de maquinistas y fogoneros) fueron los primeros en constituir organizaciones con relativa cohesión y estabilidad (Íscaro 47). El fuerte proceso inmigratorio que se desarrolla en el país a partir de esta época tiene consecuencias directas sobre la conformación de un imaginario internacionalista en la incipiente organización sindical. Anarquismo, anarco-sindicalismo y socialismo (aunque con especificidades locales) serán las tres tendencias que prevalecen en los sindicatos, federaciones y centrales más importantes.

La relación entre estas organizaciones y sus pares en diversos lugares del mundo será fluida. Por ejemplo, para 1889 ya estaba representado en el Congreso Internacional Obrero Socialista de París el Club Vorwärts de Argentina, principal espacio de difusión del socialismo del momento. Convivían en el interior del partido los parlamentaristas y quienes se inclinaban a la acción gremial, aunque los primeros dominaban en número y poder de decisión. Sin embargo, será luego de la Gran Guerra y la Revolución Rusa, que esta ideología ganará peso y posiciones en los sindicatos más importantes del país.

Por otra parte, la presencia de reconocidos militantes anarquistas que llegan al país – deportados de Italia – colaborará con la difusión de esta corriente, que se transforma en la más importante por su gravitación social hasta la primera década del siglo XX. Confluyen allí trabajadores de oficios artesanales (zapateros, alfareros, etc.), portuarios y un gran número de ferroviarios, sobre todo los empleados de talleres y galpones que trabajan en zonas portuarias, en ciudades como la Capital Federal, Bahía Blanca y Rosario. Los trabajadores que llegaban a Argentina en busca de un futuro mejor, encontraban que las condiciones de vida del proletariado en el nuevo mundo eran similares, a veces peores, que las que habían dejado. Pésimas condiciones laborales y represión policial indiscriminada, a lo que se sumaba la exclusión política y social de los extranjeros en el país y el peligro de extradición a partir de la llamada Ley de Residencia (1904) que permite deportar a los activistas nacidos en el exterior. Estas condiciones contribuyen a la propagación de las prácticas revolucionarias anarquistas y sindicalistas en estas primeras décadas, más que a la conformación de un sindicato socialista que se relacione con el partido. En este sentido, la "Carta de Amiens" (1906), que establecía la "neutralidad" ante la política – argumento central en la corriente del *sindicalismo revolucionario* (Monserrat 105) – fue un slogan más efectivo y se hizo carne en los trabajadores de modo más generalizado. Por el contrario, las consignas de la II Internacional se difundían entre los profesionales y académicos locales, logrando un lugar en la sociedad, la estructura política y la prensa, pero sin penetrar de manera significativa en los

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trabajadores. Como ejemplo ilustrativo, en 1904 el Partido Socialista logra su primera banca legislativa. Sin embargo, no logra orientar ninguna de las centrales sindicales de ese momento.

Desde la Gran Guerra hasta la crisis de Wall Street en 1929, se modifica sensiblemente el imaginario sindical argentino teniendo significativa incidencia en ello la guerra, pero también la modificación de la legislación electoral, que abre parcialmente canales políticos a los sindicatos generando mayor interés por la política local. [2] Simultáneamente con el retorno de muchos europeos a sus tierras para participar de la contienda bélica, en el país gobierna el primer partido en ganar elecciones universales y transparentes, la Unión Cívica Radical (1916-1930). En este período, se consolida la corriente *sindicalista* de la mano de los ferroviarios (Del Campo 27). El gobierno de Hipólito Irigoyen (1916-1922) propone un mecanismo de diálogo directo con algunos sindicatos. La corriente *sindicalista* se hace fuerte en sindicatos con creciente presencia de trabajadores nacidos en el país y que disputan la influencia del socialismo, y logra mejoras significativas en esta época gracias a su estrategia política (Horowitz 276-281). Los sindicatos con liderazgos anarquistas o sindicalistas revolucionarios (como los portuarios), sufren el encarcelamiento o la deportación de sus principales activistas.

También son considerables los cambios en el Partido Socialista y su gravitación en los sindicatos. La disolución de la *II Internacional* y la polémica por el lugar del proletariado en la defensa de los intereses nacionales en la guerra (de fuerte vigencia en Alemania y Rusia) produce la división del Partido Socialista local. El sector del partido que sostiene la visión internacionalista se escinde, dando nacimiento al Partido Socialista Internacional, luego Partido Comunista (Belloni 101-102). Los líderes sindicales comunistas logran arraigarse en los sectores de la industria en franco crecimiento en el período, como la construcción, los frigoríficos y textiles.

En resumen, se configuran tres tendencias sindicales que se consolidan cuando estalla la crisis de Wall Street. Por una parte, una más cercana a la *socialdemocracia*, con afinidad y conexiones con el Partido Socialista, de corte reformista y abocado a la labor parlamentaria (Godio 2000). Por otro, una corriente *sindicalista*, que abandona la lucha revolucionaria y se aboca a la tarea de obtener mejoras económicas, manteniendo una relación directa con gobernantes y ministros para conseguir las reivindicaciones, pero sin establecer relaciones formales con los partidos (Horowitz; del Campo). Por último, el Partido Comunista (PC), identificado con la Revolución Rusa y el comunismo alemán, que se aboca específicamente a ganar la clase obrera, logrando notables resultados en poco tiempo (Camarero).

Si bien hay que ponderar los factores organizativos, políticos y la despiadada represión sobre los grupos anarquistas y sindicalistas revolucionarios, desde la perspectiva de las transformaciones en el imaginario geopolítico sindical, iluminamos otras dimensiones para comprender la pérdida de protagonismo de algunos grupos e ideologías y la emergencia de otros. La nacionalización de la

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clase obrera y la reforma electoral producen – como efecto de las nuevas prácticas expresadas en el grupo *sindicalista* – una novedosa corriente que se preocupa por la relación con la política local. Por otra parte, la Revolución Rusa relocaliza el mito revolucionario, y confiere coordenadas concretas que otorgan otra materialidad a la posibilidad de transformar el orden social. En este contexto, la abstracción del mito anarquista pierde fuerza ante la avasallante materialidad de la vida política local, por un lado, y de la revolución leninista, por otro.

Hasta el año 1930, las centrales sindicales se fragmentan y reorganizan. A la intención de lograr una central nacional fuerte, se interpone el debate ideológico y el conflicto de intereses entre anarquistas, socialistas y sindicalistas. [3] Un factor local fue fundamental para la unificación del movimiento obrero en una única central, el golpe de Estado militar perpetrado en 1930, que intenta instalar sin éxito un estado corporativista inspirado en el fascismo. La Confederación General del Trabajo (CGT) se debate entre la prescindencia o la resistencia a la versión del nacionalismo corporativista local.

Luego del fracaso del experimento corporativista, a partir de 1932 se instala un régimen de fraude institucionalizado informalmente, que proscribe al partido UCR. La CGT perdura en constante tensión [4], y el punto nodal de la disputa se da en torno a la *prescindencia política*, es decir, en cuanto al tipo de relación que el movimiento obrero organizado debía sostener con los partidos políticos, con la clase política y con la figura del estado nacional. Como ya resaltamos, las posturas que cada facción defendía estaban inspiradas en las posiciones de cada tradición ideológica a nivel internacional, especialmente la socialista y la comunista, en donde la primera sostenía una colaboración entre la labor parlamentaria y sindical, pero manteniendo la autonomía de cada sector, y la segunda una relación orgánica entre el partido y las células obreras que responden directamente a aquel. El *sindicalismo* era la corriente con menor compromiso ideológico pero la más preocupada por la política nacional (Íscaro). Sin embargo, el contexto de crisis económica y el sistema político restrictivo – que excluye a la UCR pero no al PS, que aumenta su gravitación parlamentaria- le hará perder poder de negociación, otorgando mayor gravitación a los socialistas y comunistas, que compiten por el liderazgo de la central (Horowitz). Además, en la segunda mitad de la década del treinta, la Guerra Civil Española y la estrategia de "Frente Popular" del PC produce el ingreso de los principales gremios comunistas a la CGT, aumentando la presión contra la dirección sindicalista que lucha por mantener lejos de la central tanto al PS como al PC.

Ante el inicio de la II Guerra Mundial, el combate contra el nazi-fascismo se pone en primer plano en la central obrera. Durante la Guerra Civil Española la CGT promueve la lucha contra el nazi-fascismo y recibe a exiliados españoles. Sin embargo, en el interior de la central son diferentes las posturas ante la guerra. Los comunistas, con el pacto de Hitler con Stalin en 1939, continúan

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pregonando el "antiimperialismo yanqui" y apoyan la neutralidad en la guerra. Luego de 1941, cuando URSS y EEUU están del mismo bando en la guerra, se logra unificar criterios en el alineamiento internacional, la CGT insta a declarar la guerra al Eje y comienza una alianza con los partidos e instituciones civiles que buscan democratizar la política. El combate al nazifascismo es un consenso general.

Pero, a pesar de los acuerdos, la grave crisis sindical y política permanece, evidenciando la emergencia de una realidad que carecía de representación en los términos de la disputa. En 1942 se divide la CGT y, en junio de 1943, se produce un golpe de Estado militar que busca terminar con el sistema político excluyente, y sostener la abstención argentina en la guerra.

La fuerte impronta internacionalista que signa a las principales organizaciones obreras se encuentra con un nuevo panorama nacional que obliga a reconfigurar el imaginario sindical. El carácter exclusivamente agroexportador de la economía argentina, consolidado desde mediados del siglo XIX, colapsa con la crisis internacional de 1929, obligando a un proceso de industrialización por sustitución de importaciones (ISI) que pone al país en una transición hacia la industrialización liviana, aumentando el número y la composición de la clase obrera en las grandes urbes y suburbios argentinos. Además, el cese de la inmigración europea se conjuga con una migración interna (campo-ciudad) y con el nacimiento en el país de los hijos de los inmigrantes extranjeros, produciendo como efecto la nacionalización de la clase obrera argentina. Si bien esta clase aumenta significativamente, la política se mantiene restringida a la pequeña elite agroexportadora y asociada al capital inglés y, de manera incipiente, al norteamericano (Germani 1962). Al nacionalismo anti-liberal y fuertemente corporativista que realiza el golpe militar en 1930, se le opone ahora una corriente intelectual nacionalista que apunta a realzar el carácter colonial de las relaciones comerciales, denuncia los "negociados" de las empresas extranjeras en el país y remarca que es la clase política local la que permite este estado de cosas (Buchrucker). [5]

La disputa entre el fascismo anticomunista y el comunismo antiimperialista se transforma en una pinza para el movimiento obrero, orientando un punto de fuga en una perspectiva nacional y latinoamericana, que tomará inusitada fuerza en Argentina con el peronismo. Hacia el fin de la guerra, la frenética toma de posiciones geopolíticas y la retórica de imaginarios anclados en símbolos e ideologías con centros de difusión ubicados territorialmente en Europa y Estados Unidos, da paso a un incipiente imaginario latinoamericanista, con fuertes elementos nacionalistas, que ve en aquellas expresiones dos modos distintos de dominación extranjera. En ese contexto, será variable la postura que la CGT y el peronismo tengan con los Estados Unidos y con la URSS y dependerá mucho de la evolución del contexto (Petersen).

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La CGT en la irrupción del peronismo y la construcción de un imaginario sindical latinoamericanista (1945-1955)

La formación del peronismo es la expresión cabal de los cambios de orden político, económico y cultural, que nos habilitan a postular la transformación en el imaginario geopolítico, en este caso, en sus bases sindicales. [6] Al proceso económico ISI, la modernización de la legislación laboral [7], el pleno empleo, la expansión del mercado interno y el control de los servicios públicos a través de las nacionalizaciones de las empresas que los brindan; lo completa una fuerte afirmación de la identidad nacional y latinoamericana como elemento legitimador de aquellas transformaciones. Estas innovaciones se conjugan con una retórica política que busca poner de relieve la importancia diametral de la clase trabajadora *y de su organización* en el proceso productivo, reivindicando no sólo la imagen de los trabajadores, sino también al sindicato como forma legítima de organización.

En este proceso, la migración interna nutre las filas de los trabajadores y se constituye en el soporte humano que da cuerpo a la movilización política peronista, otorgando un nuevo carácter espacial y simbólico a la clase trabajadora en la sociedad. El nuevo status político y la carga altamente positiva de la autoimagen que logran los sectores trabajadores durante los años de formación del peronismo, chocan fuertemente con los estándares "racializados" del orden social y cultural imperante entre los habitantes "legítimos" de la ciudad capital. [8] Los nuevos trabajadores industriales, fuertemente estigmatizados por el aspecto mestizo (propio de las poblaciones del "interior" del país), asociado a la pertenencia latinoamericana -en contraposición al aspecto "blanco", europeo, de los habitantes capitalinos e incluso de la clase obrera de raíz europea que predominaba sólo una década antes-, ahora irrumpen modificando la estructura de la espacialidad. [9]

Desde una perspectiva deconstructivista (siguiendo a Albert 1990 y Müller 2013) dilucidar la interrelación entre espacio y sentido requiere una operación de desterritorialización, pero al mismo tiempo de re-territorialización. La irrupción del "otro", excluido en el orden político anterior, rompe con la relación hegemónica entre espacio y sentido [10], obligando a un proceso de re-territorialización que, por un lado, prefigura un imaginario que asocia al país y al sentido nacional con sus raíces hispánicas y latinoamericanas, y por el otro, un imaginario internacionalista asociado a conceptos como libertad y democracia, que ahora mira al país triunfante en la Segunda Guerra Mundial, el norteamericano. El comercio inglés y la cultura francesa, que antes se encontraba en el centro del imaginario geopolítico, ahora quedan relegados a lugares residuales y se recluyen en la elite tradicional argentina.

En el interior del sindicalismo, la mirada hacia ideologías con su centro de difusión en países occidentales (ya sea en los países aliados primero, o la contienda entre comunistas y capitalistas,

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después) se torna una característica excluyente del imaginario naciente. Tanto el comunismo como el liberalismo son rechazados por el nuevo imaginario nacional y latinoamericanista (Bohoslavski/Morresi 28). Sin embargo, casi como un mecanismo de defensa de los actores que adhieren al imaginario internacionalista (ya sea comunista o socialista, que ahora estarán unidos ante el fenómeno peronista) buscan un punto de referencia estable para el desconcertante fenómeno. Las viejas categorías le permiten la estabilidad que no les otorga la realidad, y buscan traducir al peronismo en la experiencia europea inmediata. En consecuencia, este y otros desconcertantes fenómenos políticos latinoamericanos (que luego se denominarán *populistas*) [11] desde la oposición se categorizan como fascismo local.

En el nivel de las bases sociales del sindicalismo, el carácter latinoamericano se configuró en el fragor de la movilización del 17 de octubre de 1945, para luego sistematizarse en las ideas. Portadores del estigma latinoamericanista, pero afirmados en la práctica que subvierte la carga de sentido de cada categoría que "el otro" utilizó despectivamente para definirlo, los trabajadores peronistas se reconocen como "cabecitas negras" y "descamisados", significantes que nutren el sentido de triunfo, del pasaje desde la exclusión hasta el lugar central que ahora ocupan en el orden social y simbólico.

La novedosa gravitación del sindicalismo en el sistema de representación política produce un inusitado protagonismo del movimiento obrero en el país. El debate entre los dos imaginarios polariza el campo sindical y el político, superponiéndose uno a otro debido a la integración política de las organizaciones obreras y de sus representados. Por un lado el naciente peronismo, fuertemente anclado en la particularidad nacional; por el otro una coalición fuertemente apoyada por el embajador norteamericano en el país, Spruille Braden. [12] Al hablar del imaginario geopolítico y su dinámica en Argentina, la sobredeterminación que la significativa injerencia internacional tiene sobre la política y cultura locales permite identificar de manera más directa (por hacerse explícito en el quehacer político cotidiano). El Partido Laborista, que llevan adelante la campaña de los sindicatos a favor de Perón - quienes se introducen a una práctica que les había sido ajena hasta el momento – construye el antagonismo que otorga la fórmula ganadora: "Braden o Perón". En ese contexto, en un manifiesto de noviembre de 1945, la CGT contesta a las acusaciones y perfila sus expectativas:

> Por nuestro fervor democrático fuimos y somos antifascistas y antitotalitarios y por eso luchamos denodadamente contra Hitler y Mussolini, cuando Wall Street (…) alimentaba con sus dineros robados a los sudores y a las necesidades de los proletarios, a la bestia nazifascista (…) Por eso Braden está contra la CGT, y porque teme que la naciente justicia social se expanda desde Argentina (…) por todo el continente americano." (citado en Belloni 92-93)

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El 12 de Febrero de 1946 - doce días antes de las elecciones - el Departamento de Estado de EEUU entrega a 19 países de América el *"Libro Azul"*, el cual se difunde íntegramente en los tres diarios de mayor tirada en Argentina y opuestos al peronismo. [13] El libro, tibiamente solapado como un informe, era un ataque directo al peronismo días antes de las elecciones. El libro continuaba con la idea ya difundida del gobierno militar como pro-nazi y agregaba que, de continuar Perón en el gobierno, existía un plan para dominar Latinoamérica. Esta estrategia es el último acontecimiento de alto impacto en el periodo pre-electoral, intentando asociar al fenómeno político local con el *nazismo*, y logrando instalar con éxito parcial esta idea en el país, y con mayor alcance en el plano internacional, dominado simbólicamente por el país del norte. Pero también, como efecto de este accionar de la embajada de Estados Unidos, se refuerza el imaginario latinoamericanista.

La Tercera Posición y el ATLAS

Una vez consolidado el gobierno peronista se elabora de manera sistemática el lineamiento geopolítico que seguirá la diplomacia argentina, la cual ahora es integrada también por representantes obreros en las embajadas, una novedad institucional que busca reforzar los lazos principalmente entre los sindicatos latinoamericanos, aunque la representación obrera se extiende a embajadas de otros países también. La tarea más importante queda a cargo del Dr. Juan Atilio Bramuglia, quién se desempeñará como Canciller hasta 1949. [14] Desde allí se encargará de difundir la *tercera posición*. [15] La estrategia geopolítica estatal argentina no sólo perseguía mantener cierto nivel de autonomía ante la injerencia de las potencias, sino que además buscaba realizar una alianza estratégica con otros países del mundo, comenzando por los de Latinoamérica.

En el plano sindical, ante la existencia de dos agrupaciones latinoamericanas que representaban las dos posiciones polarizadas de la guerra fría (Congreso de Trabajadores de América Latina CTAL, cercano a la Federación Sindical Mundial FSM y la URSS; y la Federación Latinoamericana del Trabajo, que responde a la Confederación Internacional de Organizaciones Sindicales Libres, CIOSL, cercana a EEUU), la CGT buscará generar un espacio sindical por fuera de estas influencias. [16] A partir de 1948, con la visita de una delegación de obreros de numerosos países de la región (El Obrero Ferroviario 1948:3) se inician los contactos en busca de la creación de un bloque sindical latinoamericano asociado a este imaginario. [17] Los dirigentes sindicales socialistas y comunistas(que aún mantienen algunos gremios en el país) buscan reforzar la asociación del peronismo con el fascismo y desacreditar a los representantes de la CGT ante los organismos internacionales, consiguiendo voz en la FSM (Íscaro 222).

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La creación de la Agrupación de Trabajadores Latinoamericanos Sindicalistas (ATLAS) en 1952, es la cristalización del imaginario geopolítico peronista en el campo sindical latinoamericano y el primer intento de coordinación de la clase obrera sin lineamiento con las potencias occidentales. Participan de la iniciativa del ATLAS sindicatos de 20 países de América [18], impulsados principalmente por la CGT argentina (que representa a más de 4 millones de trabajadores) y varios sindicatos mexicanos, liderados por un dirigente de gran trayectoria y prestigio en la CROM [19], Luis Morones. La experiencia fue muy corta y dificultosa. La asociación del peronismo con el fascismo y la teoría del supuesto expansionismo que buscaba el líder político, versión que se difunde en los gobiernos de Brasil, Chile y – principalmente – Uruguay [20], junto con la influencia de socialistas y comunistas en los grandes sindicatos de los países latinoamericanos, dan por tierra con las expectativas de integración de los sindicatos que componen el ATLAS, dificultando las reuniones y la permanencia de los agregados obreros.

Sin embargo, el imaginario sindical latinoamericano logra consolidarse en Argentina. La experiencia del peronismo modifica el modo de concebir la nación y la espacialidad de la misma en el plano internacional. La primacía de un imaginario internacionalista, en el que los trabajadores y sindicatos nacionales debían acoplarse a las tendencias revolucionarias con centros de difusión en Europa pierde terreno; aunque lejos de desaparecer, permanecerá en la disputa aprovechando humores internos y externos. Pero ahora debe enfrentar un nuevo y vigoroso imaginario, que pone de relieve la particularidad nacional y regional por sobre aquellos caminos ya trazados; y más importante aún, modifica la espacialidad asignando un rol protagónico a la experiencia nacional en la creación de una alternativa regional, autónoma de los polos que comienzan a prefigurarse como instancias de dominación mundial. Estas huellas simbólicas, esta re-territorialización que permite la centralidad de la nación en la difusión de un nuevo sentido latinoamericano, continuarán su curso más allá de los gobiernos peronistas.

Disputas por el imaginario geopolítico de la CGT durante la Guerra Fría (1955-1990)

Entre mediados de los años cincuenta y mediados de los setentas, tres grandes organizaciones obreras internacionales buscaron hegemonizar el sindicalismo mundial. Ellas eran Federación Sindical Mundial (FSM), la Confederación Internacional de Organizaciones Sindicales Libres (CIOSL) y la Confederación Internacional de Sindicatos Cristianos (CISC). La FSM había surgido para unir las experiencias sindicales de los países del bloque triunfante en la Segunda Guerra Mundial, pero no llegó a consolidarse, en tanto en el marco de la incipiente Guerra Fría los sindicatos de países capitalistas retiraron a sus sindicatos en 1949 y formaron la CIOSL, quedando la FSM para los del bloque socialista y centrales de países capitalistas lideradas por

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corrientes de izquierda. La CIOSL se formó con sindicatos de orientación social demócrata, se organizó por regiones. La ORIT se constituyó para América Latina. La CISC, a pesar de ser la más antigua, no congregaba tantas afiliaciones como las otras dos; surgida después de la primera guerra mundial, en 1919, buscaba representar a corrientes cercanas a la Doctrina Social de la Iglesia Católica (Mallimaci), y casi medio siglo más tarde, a quienes adherían a los principios posconciliares; su regional para América Latina era la CLASC. [21]

Durante el período de la segunda posguerra, la CGT fue disputada por la CIOSL y por la CISC. Si esta última tenía para ofrecer nuevos marcos de crítica al imperialismo estadounidense como horizonte de sentido y mito movilizador, en búsqueda de representar al emergente Tercer Mundo, la CIOSL ganaba en ayudas económicas para los sindicatos argentinos, en formas de becas de formación, viviendas, cursos, y para muchos, por su poderío internacional era la más adecuada para la CGT, la central obrera más importante de todo el continente. No obstante, ni la CGT ni los agrupamientos sindicales más importantes, adhirieron a ninguna de las centrales sindicales internacionales (Fernández 1988: 166).

Después del golpe de Estado contra el gobierno de Perón en 1955, el sindicalismo peronista, desde la CGT, permaneció aislado de aquellas centrales sindicales internacionales, más ligado a su imaginario geopolítico latinoamericanista, de corte tercermundista y crítico de los Estados Unidos y de la Unión Soviética. [22] Por otro lado, comenzó una búsqueda de reposicionarse en el orden gremial de parte del sindicalismo que no ingresó al peronismo, así como el intento de parte de CIOSL y la ORIT por "retomar el contacto perdido con el movimiento sindical argentino" (Basualdo 2013 210). [23] Sin embargo, hasta mediados de los años sesentas, la CIOSL y la ORIT sólo pudieron acercarse a los grupos cada vez menos representativos del sindicalismo antiperonista, nucleados en los 32 Gremios Democráticos [24]; sin embargo, como la ORIT permitía la afiliación por sindicatos individuales a través de organizaciones profesionales, pudo contar también con las importantes organizaciones de bancarios y la Confederación General de Empleados de Comercio (asociada vía la Federación Internacional de Empleados y Técnicos).

Esto fue posible dado que, tras el golpe de Estado de 1955 y la intervención de la CGT, durante la década siguiente convivieron en la central (desde los comienzos de su normalización hacia fines de aquella década) diversas tendencias sindicales, cada una de ellas portadora de un imaginario geopolítico distintivo. Peronistas, radicales, socialistas, independientes, formaron parte de una CGT que se mantuvo al margen de los agrupamientos internacionales. La vinculación a ellos se dio a partir de afiliaciones individuales, de cada sindicato u organizaciones profesionales, a tono con los imaginarios geopolíticos de los grupos dirigentes de cada uno de ellos.

De esta manera, hasta los mediados de la década de 1970, la CGT permaneció alejada de las centrales mundiales. Por otro lado, los sindicatos, individualmente o por grandes tendencias,

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fueron aumentando su acercamiento con aquellas. Aquí podríamos distinguir diferentes acercamientos producto de los diversos imaginarios que dividían al sindicalismo argentino. Algunos sindicatos liderados por dirigentes peronistas de tendencia negociadora o denominada participacionista, se fueron acercando a la ORIT vía becas, cursos, financiamiento para la construcción de viviendas, y otras prebendas en búsqueda de mayor aceptación del sindicalismo norteamericano, que se autodenominaba "libre". Ciertos sectores combativos del peronismo, especialmente aquellos vinculados con los postulados postconciliares de la Iglesia, vieron acercárseles y recibieron apoyos de la CLASC. [25]

En aquellos casos podemos ver un cambio de actitud respecto de las relaciones de cooperación sindical internacional, que ciframos en modificaciones del imaginario geopolítico. En tanto ciertas experiencias sindicales locales percibían la fortaleza numérica y de recursos de la CIOSL, y se relacionaban con aquella mediante herramientas educativas y financieras, otras experiencias más combativas buscaron situar sus luchas en el marco de las luchas más generales contra el capitalismo que, sin vincularse al internacionalismo de izquierda, les permitiera participar del imaginario sindical tercermundista. De acuerdo con Fernández el sindicalismo nacional-popular de América Latina se acercó a la CIOSL socialdemócrata (Fernández 1988: 46), conformando en varios países del continente "tres Centrales o líneas sindicales, a veces impulsadas artificialmente por las burocracias internaciones" (Fernández 1988: 168).

Cuando hacia finales de la década de 1960 el sindicalismo se reagrupa en torno de grandes tendencias conocidas como *participacionistas* y *combativos* (Dawyd 2011), en función de su aceptación o no de los gobiernos militares, la vinculación internacional de cada uno de ellos se tornará más transparente; los primeros, acercándose cada vez más al "sindicalismo libre", mientras que los *combativos* tejieron nuevas redes, fundamentalmente en torno de la central sindical que lograron hegemonizar, conocida como CGT de los Argentinos. [26]

El sindicalismo peronista, que rechazaba desde la CGT la adhesión a una central sindical internacional, comenzaba a establecer lazos individuales desde sus sindicatos más importantes con las redes internacionales, que les permitió situar las demandas, objetivos, luchas y propósitos en un ámbito geopolítico más extenso que el nacional, por ejemplo, en los boicots internacionales ante los golpes de Estado.

Buena parte de ese rechazo general podría relacionarse con el rechazo que el propio Juan Perón, jefe del movimiento político, hacía de las centrales internacionales. En ese sentido, es relevante que la adscripción de la CGT a la CIOSL se produjera al año siguiente de la muerte de aquél, en 1975. Más allá de la experiencia de ATLAS, Perón siguió durante todos estos años condenando la injerencia internacional; en su difundido La hora de los pueblos (1968) dedicó un apartado al "copamiento de las organizaciones sindicales":

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> No ha pasado inadvertida para el imperialismo la existencia en nuestro país de una organización sindical, tan importante por su cohesión y organización, que ha pasado a ser un 'factor de poder' en la comunidad argentina. Por eso no desean dejar a este sector, tan importante, sin intentar por lo menos coparlo como han venido haciendo con todas las demás fuerzas. […] Hasta ahora habían tropezado con la impenetrabilidad de nuestras organizaciones, conducidas por dirigentes honestos y capacitados. Buscando vencer ese obstáculo, en los últimos tiempos han puesto en marcha distintos organismos como el Banco Interamericano de Fomento, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo, Agregado Obrero Norteamericano a la Embajada yanqui de Buenos Aires, distintos organismos de O.E.A., creados precisamente con designios desconocidos pero sospechosos y otros expedientes diversos. (69-70).

Todos esos instrumentos solo sirvieron para "sobornar" a los "dirigentes venales" que cedieron a "la tentación", pero "frente a una masa adoctrinada y politizada convenientemente, es probable que lo único que consigan sea la destrucción de esos dirigentes, con lo que le harán aún un bien a las organizaciones" (70). [27] Estas palabras de Perón fueron retomadas en 1975 (cuando tras su fallecimiento la CGT se adhiere a la CIOSL) por quienes desde el sindicalismo combativo buscaban mantener el imaginario tercermundista, en disputa por el nuevo realineamiento internacional:

> La estrategia de los directivos de la CGT se va cumpliendo paso a paso: aceptaron primero un cargo en el consejo de administración de la OIT (Organización Internacional del Trabajo), luego la vicepresidencia de la CIOSL y finalmente hacerse cargo de organizar una federación sindical en América Latina que reemplace a la ORIT […] su proyecto internacional y latinoamericano que busca destruir el sindicalismo combativo y fiel a los intereses de los trabajadores (El Auténtico tapa).

La lucha por el imaginario geopolítico entre los grupos sindicales que adherían a la CGT será constante durante los años de la Guerra Fría, en los cuales, el *tercermundismo* y su modelo de socialismo nacional autogestivo, y el *internacionalista pro-norteamericano*, con su horizonte de movilización en la Alianza del Progreso u otras iniciativas *desarrollistas*, se afianzarán como hegemónicos. Sin embargo, existían grupos menores que también intentaban disputar el sentido geopolítico. Si reconstruyéramos un mapa de los imaginarios en tensión, podríamos encontrar también al *internacionalista pro-soviético* y al *socialdemócrata europeo*, con sus diferentes redes internacionales, la URSS y Cuba y la socialdemocracia europea, y sus diversos imaginarios sobre cómo deberían estar organizadas las relaciones sociales en el país: por un lado, el Modelo Cubano y, por otro, el capitalismo de Estado de Bienestar.

El Golpe de Estado militar de 1976 generó una escalada de represión sindical, con la detención y desaparición de cientos de sindicalistas de la CGT (Dawyd/Lenguita 2013; Basualdo 2006). El gobierno dictatorial intervino la central, encarceló a sus principales dirigentes e intentó, con distintos resultados, cooptar o aislar a las segundas líneas o cuadros sindicales intermedios

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(Damin 2011). De esta forma, los militares buscaban reorganizar la sociedad y la economía y limitar el poder de veto social que tenían los actores sindicales a las iniciativas estatales en contextos democráticos. El ingreso, un año antes, a las redes sindicales europeas, le permitió a la central argentina recibir recursos de la CIOSL y la CMT que fueron vitales para sostener a los sindicalistas exiliados y coordinar acciones condenatorias a la dictadura militar en los foros de la Organización Internacional del Trabajo. Sin embargo, la Federación de sindicatos comunistas no apoyó los reclamos porque el gobierno militar argentino vendía granos a la Unión Soviética, desconociendo el embargo que le habían impuesto otros países occidentales. La nueva transformación del imaginario internacionalista se consolidaba. Sin embargo, la Guerra en 1982 por las Islas Malvinas con el Reino Unido limitaría considerablemente su desarrollo.

En los días iniciales del conflicto bélico, la CGT Brasil publica un comunicado de prensa en el cual anuncian la resolución del viaje de Saúl Ubaldini y Fernando Donaires, secretarios General y Adjunto, a las Islas Malvinas a partir de un ofrecimiento de la Junta Militar. [28] En el mismo se expone la postura ante el conflicto:

> […] 2. No obstante de esta decisión propia de los trabajadores que coincide con el espíritu libertario que hace el devenir histórico de nuestro Pueblo, expresa de forma inequívoca la posición de la CGT de total independencia al gobierno militar.
>
> 3. La CGT ratifica una vez más su concepto de soberanía y advierte que no se agota la misma en la soberanía territorial ya que la auténtica soberanía debe complementarse son la soberanía del pueblo.
>
> 4. Los que ayer fuimos acusados de subversivos por el Señor Ministro del Interior, hoy damos fe de nuestro auténtico contenido nacional y de nuestro principio anticolonialista, a la par que advertimos que no aceptamos ninguna forma de neocolonialismo tanto en territorios reconquistados como en nuestro propio territorio continental, exigiendo que en esta hora histórica, se revierta los rumbos que dividen a los ciudadanos argentinos entre poderosos y desposeídos por imperio de una política económica asumida por las Fuerzas Armadas, que da a nuestro país formas inequívocas de neocolonialismo (Archivo de la CGT Brasil, firmado por el secretario de Prensa, Ricardo Pérez).

La traumática experiencia de la guerra y el apoyo de los países latinoamericanos, incluido Cuba, a la Argentina, reafirmó el imaginario latinoamericanista, que tiene entre sus mitos movilizadores y unificadores, la lucha contra potencias imperiales centrales, caracterizadas de "neocoloniales".

En el contexto de la derrota y del colapso de la dictadura militar, la Iglesia Católica logra posicionarse, por primera vez en su historia, como un aliado central del sindicalismo argentino. Desde su fundación, la CGT tenía una matriz de izquierda anticlerical, potenciada por el apoyo católico al golpe de Estado de 1955 y a los grupos insurgentes que consideraban al sindicalismo como parte del régimen capitalista y, por eso, lo combatían. Sin embargo, la pérdida de sentido por la muerte del líder partidario, la dificultad para forzar una apertura democrática, la crisis social

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por la reorganización económica desindustrializadora y el endurecimiento de la Guerra Fría en América Latina, contribuyeron a que los sindicalistas replanteen su acercamiento al catolicismo. Esta nueva afinidad de sentido (Löwy 101) entre sindicalismo cegetista y catolicismo, se basaba en la legitimación de éste último del gremialismo y de su autonomía del Estado, en una crítica al capitalismo y al comunismo, y en una estrategia internacional latinoamericanista. [29]

La caída del Muro de Berlín y el fin del bloque soviético, con el consecuente influjo del poder neoliberal en, prácticamente, todo el mundo, presionó para que los actores sindicales argentinos replanteen sus imaginarios geopolíticos. Este proceso profundizó la mayor fractura sindical en décadas. Un sector del sindicalismo estatal que rechazó el proceso privatizador, conformó la Central de Trabajadores Argentinos (CTA), con tendencia de izquierda, católica y vinculada, posteriormente, con el Partido de los Trabajadores de Brasil y el Foro de San Pablo.

Cada sector sindical modificó su afiliación sindical internacional e local, pero de forma fragmentada. Sin embargo, todos mantuvieron un horizonte latinoamericanista y de solidaridad con las redes laboristas, socialdemócratas y socialcristianas. El imaginario latinoamericanista aportó a la concreción de la construcción del MERCOSUR (1991), el rechazo, en 2005, a la firma del tratado de libre comercio con los Estados Unidos (conocido como ALCA) y la edificación de la UNASUR, uno de los máximos ámbitos de coordinación de políticas regionales de la historia de América Latina. [30] Los diferentes grupos sindicales argentinos, divididos, en muchas oportunidades en función de la estrategia frente al Estado y los partidos políticos, adhieren en su totalidad a esta estrategia de inserción regional, con un marcado contenido antiimperialista. Esto da cuenta de un imaginario consolidado aún en actores sindicales divididos.

Tras la década de neoliberalismo, con sus efectos en las reformas de Estado, el "giro al mercado", los sindicatos peronistas perdieron gran parte de su caudal de afiliados y se aislaron de otras asociaciones de la sociedad civil (Lee). Con la crisis social en 2001, coyuntura de explosión del modelo neoliberal, y de la revisión de muchas de sus políticas, de los actores sindicales argentinos redefinieron su imaginario latinoamericanista, rebautizado de la Patria Grande (nombre de raíz católica de larga tradición en el subcontinente). En concordancia con el proyecto de integración social y política de los pueblos y acompañando, mayoritariamente, las reformas de bienestar de los gobiernos del "giro a la izquierda" o del "populismo latinoamericano", según los diferentes autores.

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Conclusiones

En este artículo intentamos mostrar cómo las transformaciones en los *imaginarios geopolíticos* del sindicalismo argentino a lo largo del siglo XX impactaron en sus relaciones políticas internas e internacionales y en los horizontes de sentido de su acción social. De esta forma, analizamos un conjunto de "anclajes materiales" de estos imaginarios geopolíticos, a través de textos y discursos de los actores sindicales.

Dimos cuenta, en primer término, del *imaginario internacionalista socialista* de *matriz anarquista*, *socialista* y *comunista*, caracterizado por la participación masiva de sindicalistas y obreros de origen migrante europeo, centrado en un clasismo antiestatal, crítico de la democracia liberal burguesa y partidario del acercamiento a las *Internacionales Socialistas* (en todas sus corrientes internas), hegemónico desde la fundación de los primeros gremios hasta la década del cuarenta. Luego, mostramos como este imaginario fue desplazado y resignificado, aunque sin desvanecerse, por el imaginario peronista de la *Tercera Posición* o *tercermundista*, nacido en la efervescencia colectiva de los últimos meses de la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

Este imaginario, de fuerte matriz latinoamericanista, que orientaba a la participación sindical en la dirección del Estado a través de partidos nacionales-populares y modificaba la espacialidad al constituir la propia nación como espacio catalizador del nuevo imaginario, se constituyó como oposición y competencia ante los grandes imaginarios geopolíticos presentes en el sindicalismo en los inicios de la Guerra Fría: el imaginario internacionalista capitalista o de la democracia liberal y pro-norteamericano, el imaginario internacionalista comunista soviético, el imaginario socialcristiano y el imaginario socialdemócrata, ambos con epicentro en Europa. Cada uno encarnado en las diferentes centrales sindicales internacionales.

El golpe de Estado Argentino de 1955 y la Revolución Cubana marcaron un punto de inflexión para los actores sindicales argentinos, que buscaron en esa nueva variante comunista, pero de fuerte orientación latinoamericana, una posibilidad de construcción de sociedad. Con el recrudecimiento de la Guerra Fría en América Latina y los ciclos autoritarios y de reestructuración productiva, y el desarrollo del proceso de descolonización en África y Asia, el imaginario de la Tercera Posición tomó elementos simbólicos del imaginario geopolítico del tercermundismo, que postulaba también una sociedad con elementos propios de cada particularidad nacional, en el contexto de los ascenso de los nacionalismo populares seculares, la modernización, urbanización e industrialización de los estados periféricos recientemente independientes o buscando una independencia económica y la soberanía política. En el contexto de los años setenta, la socialdemocracia y el socialcristianismo europeo movilizaron redes transnacionales que permitieron a los actores sindicales argentinos resistir a la dictadura militar y forjar nuevas afinidades geopolíticas que impactaron en la transformación de su imaginario geopolítico. La

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Guerra por las Islas Malvinas, debilitó esos horizontes internacionales y dotó de una aún mayor vitalidad al imaginario tercermundista y latinoamericanista, de fuerte contenido antiimperialista. En este contexto, la Iglesia Católica logró afianzar, por primera vez, una afinidad de sentido con actores sindicales.

Estos *Imaginarios geopolíticos*, fuertemente arraigados en América Latina, fueron construidos en una íntima conexión con ideas transnacionalizadas, originadas en el contexto europeo de la industrialización, como el imaginario geopolítico de la internacional socialista, o con profundos intercambios con Asia y África, como el imaginario Tercermundista del movimiento de los no-alineados.

En este artículo buscamos caracterizar los imaginarios geopolíticos presente en los actores sindicales en un país del Hemisferio Sur. Estos imaginarios en tensión, forman parte de dimensiones poco exploradas de los intercambios materiales y simbólicos, y de la internacionalización de ideas políticas y sindicales durante el siglo XX.

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Endnotes

[1] Respecto a los orígenes de la *geopolítica crítica* ver Agnew 2013.

[2] A partir de 1912 se sanciona la ley "Sáenz Peña", que establece el voto universal, secreto y obligatorio (masculino).

[3] La Federación Obrera Regional Argentina (FORA) de orientación anarquista, la Unión Sindical Argentina (USA), en su origen de orientación sindicalista revolucionaria y la Central Obrera Argentina (COA) de orientación sindicalista, pero con presencia de socialistas, son las más importantes hasta la creación de la CGT (Del Campo 2005 [1983])

[4] La CGT sufre importantes divisiones y cambios de liderazgos en 1935 y en 1942.

[5] Las dos corrientes conviven en el grupo de oficiales que realiza el golpe de 1943, el grupo del que participa el Tte. Coronel Juan Domingo Perón adhiere a esta última versión nacionalista.

[6] Sobre el peronismo como un partido de base sindical y sus transformaciones en la segunda mitad del siglo XX ver: Levitsky (2005).

[7] La modernización de la legislación laboral se expresa en la creación de tribunales laborales que equilibra la relación de poder entre sindicatos y empresas, la universalización y centralización administrativa de las jubilaciones y pensiones (que ahora alcanzan a los trabajadores y sus familias), a lo que se suman las vacaciones pagas, facilidades de transporte y alojamiento para realizarlas, implementación del sueldo anual complementario, sanción de la ley conocida como de "Asociaciones Profesionales", que institucionaliza las relaciones y potestades de los sindicatos para realizar convenios colectivos de trabajo que alcanzan a toda la actividad, entre otras reformas. Respeto a estas medidas se pueden ver los trabajos de Matsushita (1986[1983]), Torre (1990[1988]), Del Campo (2005[1983]) y Doyón (2006[1978]).

[8] Respecto a la noción de "racialización de las relaciones de clase" ver Margulis (1999).

[9] Se denomina "interior" del país a todo el territorio nacional excepto la Capital Federal y los suburbios que la rodean (denominados Conurbano bonaerense).

[10] Coincidimos con Müller (2013:52) en que todo significado hegemónico contiene la posibilidad de deconstrucción. A través de invocar lo opuesto al interior, a través de subvertir y contestar el significado primario, a través de mostrar que el opuesto es también posible (y constitutivo del sentido), el significado primario está revelado a ser arbitrario, justamente porque descansa en la exclusión de lo opuesto. En nuestro caso, la irrupción del otro en el espacio político ilustra esta denuncia de la arbitrariedad de aquella hegemonía de sentido asociada a dicha espacialidad, obligando al proceso de re-estructuración imaginaria en ambas instancias del antagonismo político. No sólo nace un nuevo imaginario, sino que su opuesto, antes hegemónico, se transforma.

[11] Para una historia conceptual del populismo ver Aldao y Damin (2013).

[12] Esta coalición agrupa a la tradicional elite terrateniente nucleada en la Sociedad Rural Argentina, la Bolsa de Comercio y la Unión Industrial; además de los partidos UCR, Socialista y Comunista, en una alquimia que se expresó políticamente en el partido denominado Unión Democrática.
Spruille Braden fue embajador por cuatro meses desde mayo de 1945. Sin embargo, su influencia perduró en los primeros años de la Guerra Fría.

[13] Los diarios opuestos a Perón eran *La Nación*, *La Prensa* y *Crítica*.

[14] Respecto a la carrera sindical y política del Dr. Bramuglia, ver Rein 2006.

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[15] En resumen, la *tercera posición* es un sistema de ideas que entiende que posicionarse ante los intereses de las grandes potencias (para la naciente guerra fría las opciones eran el liberalismo que predicaba EEUU o el comunismo soviético) no redundaba en beneficios para el país sino que, por el contrario, implicaba la pérdida de soberanía y libre determinación, no sólo para Argentina sino para el resto de los países de América y el mundo.

[16] Recapitulando las relaciones entre la central argentina y las centrales latinoamericanas e internacionales, desde su creación en 1930 la CGT estará asociada a la Federación Sindical Internacional (Ámsterdam), al igual que lo estaba el sindicato dominante dentro de la misma, la Unión Ferroviaria (UF) desde 1922. Cuando se crea el Congreso de Trabajadores de América Latina (CTAL) en 1938, la CGT participa. Luego de la división de la CGT en 1942 y el golpe militar de junio de 1943 -que interviene los principales sindicatos-la central argentina ya no participará en el segundo congreso de la CTAL (1944). La creación de la Federación Sindical Mundial (FSM) (de la que participa la CTAL) en 1945, aleja definitivamente a la CGT de esta corriente, ya que los dirigentes socialistas y comunistas -desplazados de la CGT en 1943- son los que participan de la misma (Ìscaro, 1973:189). Cuando en 1949 se quiebra la FSM y se alejan los sindicatos ingleses más representativos, la CGT envía algunos delegados -invitados por la Central Regional de Obreros Mexicanos (CROM)- al congreso constituyente de la Confederación Internacional de Organizaciones Sindicales Libres (CIOSL). Sin embargo, en 1951, en el II congreso de la CIOSL, congreso en que se crea la ORIT, la CROM se retira de la CIOSL por el marcado lineamiento pro norteamericano de la misma, descartando también la CGT cualquier posibilidad de participación.

[17] Vale agregar que la inclusión de la Proclama de los Derechos del Trabajador de Argentina en la Carta Internacional de los Derechos del Trabajo de la ONU (noviembre de 1947) también es un factor que se integra a las pretensiones de trascender las fronteras nacionales de este imaginario.

[18] Los Comités locales del ATLAS más importantes fueron los de México, Chile (Santiago y Viña del Mar), Puerto Rico, Colombia, Haití y Perú. Todos tenían local y órganos de difusión propios. Además, existían Comités en Brasil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Ecuador, Bolivia, Panamá, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Venezuela y Canadá (Datos obtenidos de la entrevista a J. R. Garone, nombrado Secretario General de ATLAS en 1954, en Parcero 1987:50)

[19] La relación entre la CROM y una de las centrales que formará en 1930 la CGT se remonta a 1926, cuando la Central Obrera Argentina (COA), integrada casi exclusivamente por los ferroviarios de la UF, adhiere a la FSI (Ámsterdam) y varios representantes argentinos viajan a México a entrevistarse con aquellos (Iscaro 1972:120).

[20] Además del ya mencionado "Libro Azul" que difunde la embajada de EEUU en Argentina, y de la prensa socialista y comunista que excedía las fronteras argentinas y encontraba eco en la FSM, es significativo mencionar un libro que apostaba firmemente a difundir la teoría de pretensiones expansionistas de Perón (Damonte Taborda 1955). El autor había sido diputado nacional durante los años de fraude electoral y director de un periódico antiperonista hasta su clausura en 1946. Aprovechando sus contactos editoriales en poder de las elites de Brasil y Uruguay (también contrarias al peronismo ante la amenaza que podía significar la propagación de esas ideas en el continente) publica el libro en 1954 en Brasil y en 1955 en Uruguay, logrando gran difusión de esta última versión también en Chile. Luego del golpe militar de 1955 se publica el libro en Argentina.

[21] Posteriormente la CISC cambiaría su nombre por Confederación Mundial de Trabajadores, CMT, y la CLASC por Central Latinoamericana de Trabajadores, CLAT) (Damin 2014).

[22] Fernández (1988: 168) habla del "predominio del tradicional 'aislacionismo' del sindicalismo peronista, vinculado a sus concepciones nacionalistas y a su ruptura con el internacionalismo anarquista, socialista o comunista" para seguir un rumbo latinoamericanista. En un análisis de larga duración, esta orientación le restó fuerza durante las décadas de esplendor del sindicalismo comunista. Sin embargo, la autonomía latinoamericanista le permitió contar con recursos organizacionales para sobrevivir al colapso de los socialismos reales y la merma de su apoyo internacional, así como a la pérdida de poder del sindicalismo en los países capitalistas.

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[23] La visión de la CIOSL y la ORIT del peronismo como un gobierno totalitario, hizo que aquellas centrales creyeran que tras el golpe de Estado terminaría el sindicalismo peronista. Como esto no fue así, "Intentaron entonces explicar la subsistencia de este alto nivel de apoyo al peronismo incluso después de su derrocamiento y en condiciones de persecución política y represión, sosteniendo que 'debido a las actividades de los dirigentes sindicales subordinados a Perón, los trabajadores fueron completamente desorientados en cuanto a la verdadera naturaleza del régimen'" (Basualdo 2013: 211).

[24] "El grupo sindical más importante respaldado por estas organizaciones en el período fue el denominado los "32 gremios democráticos", un grupo que, aunque tuvo cierta importancia al comienzo del período, luego perdió relevancia" (Basualdo 2013: 213).

[25] "La CIOSL intentaba responder a un proceso de creciente radicalización de distintos sectores de la clase trabajadora argentina que siguió profundizándose en la segunda mitad de los años 60. En particular, los líderes de la CIOSL/ORIT tenían una gran preocupación por la creciente consolidación e importancia de los líderes sindicales 'combativos' o 'clasistas', los cuales en 1968 fundaron la CGT de los Argentinos, central sindical que agrupó a varios sindicatos importantes (Basualdo 2013: 216)."

[26] Su secretario general, Raimundo Ongaro, fue claro en este aspecto: "creo que fui el primer secretario general de una organización sindical en la Argentina (la Federación Gráfica Bonaerense, el primer sindicato del país, formado en 1857) y sobre todo como secretario general de la CGT de los Argentinos que durante su mandato comienza a invitar masivamente a representantes sindicales de otros países. No conozco en la historia gremial argentina de las últimas tres décadas y media – salvo en el tiempo en que Perón propició la creación de Atlas, con la que sale a recorrer Latinoamérica – una iniciativa como la mía, porque luego se produce un vacío de comunicación con el sindicalismo internacional. Creo que ese fue uno de los defectos que hemos tenido los argentinos y también uno de los errores que no hemos corregido razonablemente. A mí me pareció que era importante la solidaridad internacional y por eso había invitado a los yugoeslavos, a los árabes, por 2, 3 y 4 veces; les había hecho conocer Buenos Aires y entregado pequeños obsequios de las cosas típicas argentinas (Parcero, Helfgot y Dulce 1985: 115-116).

[27] "Pero lo que resulta inexplicable para los que conocemos el Movimiento Obrero Argentino, es que haya dirigentes que, con la concreción yanqui de la creación de su Escuela de Formación de Dirigentes, hayan hecho desaparecer las antiguas Escuelas Sindicales que cada uno de los gremios tenía, como asimismo la Confederación General del Trabajo. Pero esto no debe preocuparnos mayormente porque la masa observa y vigila. Al final, cada uno tendrá su merecido" (Perón 2002: 70-71).

[28] La postura por aceptar la invitación ganó por un margen muy estrecho. En el viaje también participaron políticos, intelectuales, periodistas, especialistas religiosos de todos los sectores y artistas tradiciones.

[29] Al respecto ver encíclicas papales RerumNovarum (1891), QuadragesimoAnno (1931), Mater et Magistra (1961) y, fundamentalmente, LaboremExercens (1981). Ésta última fue utilizada por actores católicos y sindicales para legitimar la crítica a la dictadura militar y el acercamiento con el sindicalismo polaco de la solidaridad liderado por Lech Walesa.

[30] El proceso de constitución del Mercosur comprende un tratado de libre comercio y un parlamento regional entre Argentina, Brasil, Uruguay, Paraguay y Venezuela (incorporado en 2012). Estos países, juntos a los pertenecientes en la Comunidad Andina de Naciones (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador y Perú) y Chile, Guyana y Surinam, constituyeron en el 2008 el UNASUR (Unión de Naciones Suramericanas), que coordina la integración regional de los doce países.

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Imaginaries of Urban Threat:
Perceptions of Collective Protest and Violence
in the USA and in Argentina during the 20th Century

Abstract

This article studies 1960/70s imaginaries of urban social and cultural threat in their historical roots, and sees imaginaries as an important part of the social order and interprets violence as a pattern of communication. It focuses on imaginaries that state officials in the US and in Argentina formulated when confronted with collective protest and violence. Communism, mass consumer society and its inherent cultural changes (incl. gender relations), and fears of crowds were key imaginaries - in Argentina also among Catholic elites. These quite similar imaginaries did not change significantly during the 1960/70s. What was special in the US was the racialization of imaginaries of urban disorder. The melting together of European and US influences in the imaginaries of subversion and of crowds was a special Argentinean feature. Subversion was instrumental for justifying the military regimes' enforcement of a total monopoly of violence in a cultural counterrevolution. US and French counterinsurgency policies helped to shape this imaginary. The strong presence of the imaginary of historically rooted, threatening urban crowds was an Argentinean legacy of the entanglement with European history, especially with crowd psychology. Finally, the wide scope of crisis that shaped the imaginaries of threat in Argentina stands out. While in the US law and order was mostly only threatened locally, and could thus be restored locally, in Argentina the whole nation seemed to be in decline and substantially endangered, which called for radical and far-reaching countermeasures.

Keywords: cultural counterrevolution, crowds, entanglements, urban disorder, subversion

Introduction

Urban life (and thus urban order) is shaped not only by structures like buildings, roads, and places. Imaginaries [1] also play a highly important role in this context. Following Cornelius Castoriadis and others, imaginaries are much more than just imaginations. They actively influence social life – not only in urban settings (see Castoriadis 2012; Huffschmid/Wildner 2013; García Canclini 2013; Burchard/Kaltmeier/Öhlschläger 2014). As these authors demonstrate, imaginaries do not stand in opposition to a somewhat immutable urban truth. They are an integral part of social order. Imaginaries express something like a "collective subjectivity" (García Canclini, "Zur Metamorphose" 40).The analysis of "imaginarios urbanos" is a vital product of Latin American urban studies (Huffschmid/Wildner 2013; Silva 2013 and 2007; Lindón 2007 and 2013; García Canclini 1997 and 2013). They can bridge the gap between cultural aspects of and the social organization of urban life. They produce and are in turn also a product of urban realities (see Huffschmid 2014; Huffschmid/Wildner, *Stadtforschung* 21; García Canclini, "Zur Metamorphose" 38-41).

19th-century urban imaginaries are often about political and moral decay, although progress and other positive utopias are co-present. The labor movement (mainly its left factions of socialists, communists, or anarchists), youth and related fears of violence but also consumption-induced dangers of cities like movie theatres, fairs, sport events, and drug consumption contributed to these imaginaries of urban social and cultural threats. In the USA, since the Bolsheviki had come to power in Russia in 1917, but especially after the First World War when the radical syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) gained strength and labor strikes intensified, a massive "Red Scare" surfaced, mainly in urban settings. Denunciation became widespread, leftists were politically persecuted or even deported, strikes were violently shattered, and immigration policy became more restrictive (see Gage 2009; Flores 2015). In these years, Latin American countries also saw many strikes, violent upheavals and massive repression against anarchists and syndicalist trade unions (De Laforcade/Shaffer 2014; Rinke 2014 and 2015; Deutsch 1986). During the Cold War struggles of decolonization and the Cuban Revolution imaginaries of threat of communism intensified (Crandall 2014). The same was true for imaginaries related to the morally and socially destructive potentials of (urban) mass consumer societies. The turbulent protest- and violence-ridden 1960s, which were in the eyes of many contemporaries associated with massive social and cultural changes or even far-reaching crises, are a perfect setting to study these imaginaries of threat potentials of communism and of mass consumer society. It also is worthwhile to ask how these imaginaries of threat interacted and have even changed.

In scholarly research collective protest as well as violence have long been understood as exceptional processes indicating that a society is in a somewhat disintegrated or even in a state of emergency. Research on social movements and on social protests is still influenced by these

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conceptions of a somewhat static social order thus struggling with the analytical problem of how to relate collective action to this kind of social order (see as overviews Della Porta/Diani 2011; Fuchs 2003). Recent research on violence, however, has broken new ground. The main intellectual breakthrough in violence research was achieved by studies on political violence and left-wing terrorism. Focusing on physical violence these authors have interpreted violence not as a social or individual pathology but as a pattern of communication (see Schraut/Weinhauer 2014; Weinhauer/Ellerbrock 2013; Weinhauer/Requate 2012). As they put it, violence does not occur out of the blue. Rather, it is connected to previous social actions and to imaginaries (of order and disorder). Violence can create order and it communicates its message not only to victims and their social surroundings but also to third parties (bystanders, media etc.) which are not directly involved. Especially since the breakthrough of media societies in the 19th century, the communicative potentials of violence have become even more obvious.

Imaginaries can easily be integrated in such an analytical setting where violence and protest are demystified and seen primarily as communicative strategies. Thus we can ask how imaginaries of threat become part of this process of communication. In this narrative setting imaginaries lose their touch of irrationality which was often ascribed to them. Moreover, the focus on violence as communication connects violence research to Urban Studies (especially in Latin America) which underline that "communication and the city has been a solid and institutionalized area of study in Latin America since the early 1990s" (García Vargas/Román Velázquez 141).

Globally, the 1960s have become a focus of rich historical research. Student protests, countercultures and alternative milieus have been meticulously studied. Interestingly, these publications mostly were focused on Europe and on the US. Only recently have the "global sixties" in Latin America come under scrutiny (The Americas 2014). Though in this time phase many state institutions were challenged, the imaginaries of threat (as well as the concrete actions) of politicians and especially the uniformed forces have been a neglected field of historical study. Mostly the actions of students, social movements etc. have been analyzed. This neglect might be influenced by the idea that in a time of the Cold War and its dominant anti-communist impulses, the imaginaries of threat derived from these street protests might have been identical globally. In this brief article, I would like to demonstrate that this is only partly true. Although there was a set of shared imaginaries, national peculiarities can be discerned.

This paper is predominantly based on the existing literature and analyzes urban imaginaries of threat among US and Argentinean state officials (politicians, police, military) when they referred to urban collective street protests and street violence. Already a rough summary shows that these imaginaries were about the decline of order (political, family, moral, sexual), the political definition of protestors (communists, insurgents), about uncontrollable crowds, about anti-communism, about

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the threat of a spread of violence, about youth in general, and about the role of drugs. The paper also briefly discusses which actions officials practiced and/or proposed to counter these threats.

The focus this paper puts on Latin America, first, mirrors a lack of such studies, as most authors compare the protests in the US with European developments (e.g., Klimke 2010). Second, it also reflects the fact that since the Cuban Revolution, the US government was gravely concerned about political developments in Latin America, especially in its urban regions. During the Cold War years the repressive domestic policies in Latin American countries were influenced by more or less direct US interventions and intellectual transfers. Cases like the CIA driven coup d'état in Chile that started on September 11, 1973 surely support this. The same is true for the close cooperation of Argentine and US militaries, which started in the early sixties at the latest, and, for the interest articulated by the Pentagon in its "Project Camelot", to generate social science information on revolutionary potentials in Latin American cities and societies in the mid-1960s (Crandall 2014; Pereira 2005; Rohde 2014). It must be warned, however, to ignore continuities in imaginaries related to collective action dating back to the 19th century or to other national influences (Osiel 2001: 132). Third, the main reason for studying Argentina was that it is the Latin American country where during the last military dictatorship (1976-1983) between c. 20,000 and 30,000 people were killed or disappeared (Pereira 21; on the history of *desaparecidos*, see Elsemann 34-88). It is challenging to analyze the imaginaries of social and cultural threat which were instrumental in influencing this violent and bloody repression even when these imaginaries cannot fully explain these actions. Finally, what makes Argentina an interesting case is that it was intellectually influenced not only by the US but for many decades had developed strong and vital mental connections to Europe. This point deserves special attention as many studies only look at US influences in Latin America and forget the links to other world regions.

Imaginaries of Urban Threat in the United States of America

In the US in the mid and late 1960s law and order had become the dominant topic of domestic politics (Flamm 2005). Thus imaginaries about crime, violence (mainly committed by youth gangs), drug use, and collective street protests were discursively nearly omnipresent. Taking Chicago as a case study can help to demonstrate this. On the one hand, some very good studies exist on whose findings I can draw. On the other hand, Chicago saw two famous confrontations in 1968: the urban riots in April and the protests against the convention of the Democratic Party in August. Moreover, Chicago is not only the birthplace of US sociology (at least of its urban research branch) but it also had in the early 20th century already developed a fairly rough reputation. Above other US cities, it fueled imaginaries of being "First in Violence, Deepest in Dirt" (Adler 2006).

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During the early/mid 1960s the wave of urban unrest [2] shook US cities (Abu-Lughod 2007). As a consequence of these riots, President Lyndon B. Johnson in July 1967 put together a *National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* which in March 1968 published its results and came to be known as the *Kerner Report* (named after its chairman the Governor of Illinois Otto Kerner). Its basic findings cumulated in the famous phrase: "Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal" (*Report* 1) [3].

Chicago was massively affected by the consequences of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. on 3 April 1968. Protests started at public schools and quickly changed their location to the West Side districts of the city. Mostly "black" people lived here, while the local political leadership was dominantly white and only a few civil society organizations existed (see as summary Seligman 2005; Farber 1988; Warren 1968/69). From April 7-11, 1968 some 16,000 police officers, National Guard and army troops were present in Chicago. At the end of the riots, 11 rioters were dead and 48 people had been shot by the police. 90 police officers were injured, and 3,350 people, among them 1200 juveniles (males under 17 and females under 18) had been arrested (Warren 473, 477). In the early phases of the unrest, policemen were paralyzed in their actions as their tactics could not successfully benefit from the established interpretation of street crowds. In general, they perceived crowds as a single irrational entity, which was potentially dangerous to the established order especially when these crowds were stirred up by politically-oriented ringleaders (mostly communists) (Leach 1993; Warren 481). The West Side riots, however, in the beginning mixed political aims with actions that can be interpreted as expressions of a wish to extend the participation in mass consumer society. White clothing shops were looted, the clothes freely distributed among those who were present on the streets. Sometimes the goods were also sold for a cheap price. After these shops were emptied, they were often burned. Later even residential houses were torched with Molotov cocktails.

The Chicago police did not know how to act against the street protests. One the one hand policemen had to realize that ringleaders could hardly be found; instead a carnival-esque atmosphere turned these collective actions into spontaneous street happenings with looting and burning as central events. Or, as one policeman put it, "people were everywhere" and it was not discernible who was a looter and who not, thus no symbolic arrests were possible. On the other hand, as the policy of symbolically arresting ringleaders failed, some police officers formulated what was in their view a more efficient measure for sweeping the streets: "I believe one good crack on the head does more good. If you give them a headache they go home and usually stay there" (Warren 481). With such individualized actions, however, these protests could not be handled. In this regard, the use of violence by the Chicago police can be interpreted as a failed communication attempt (by the means of brute force) with the people on the street.

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After the urban riots of April 1968, it became obvious that the established imaginaries of threat resurfaced and new ones were spread. Policemen were still sure to know that the situation in the "black ghettos" had "gotten completely out of hand" (Warren 1968/69: 481). In their racialization of these urban spaces, many Chicago policemen returned to the established wisdom: Civil Rights leaders, most of them deemed to be communists, together with white liberals and the press, had done everything in their power to make a policemen's normal job in these "ghetto" areas impossible to perform. As I have indicated above, in policing the "ghetto" they often were prone to abandon any soft intervention tactics. Another imaginary, mainly among conservative politicians, was that the riots were planned in advance and orchestrated by communist leaders. For the conservative *Chicago Tribune* riots that involved "blacks" were part of a plot of international communism (Farber 138). But even the official riot report underlined that "there was no conspiracy" (Abu-Lughod 100).

After the riots a set of countermeasures were immediately put into practice. New federal laws were created (conspiracy to cause a riot), each police car became equipped with a shotgun, riot helmets, and improved tear gas aerosol dispensers were ordered. The notoriously anti-communist intelligence unit (named Red Squad) of the Chicago Police was congratulated for their effective search for the ringleaders of the riots (Farber 147, 159). Black political leaders were openly surveilled by the Red Squad [4]. Moreover, federal money was spent to support local housing initiatives and social welfare measures in "black" neighborhoods were intensified.

The main reason protestors came to Chicago in August 1968 was to articulate their anti-Vietnam war protests at a time when the national convention of the Democratic Party convened to nominate the candidate for the next US presidential elections. This event would also grant their collective actions good media coverage as the protestors aimed at creating a "visual image of the state in action" (Farber 250). It came to violent confrontations between the predominantly white middle class protestors and the police. In essence the mass media were part of these actions, with NBC Morning News cutting "back and forth, back and forth, from the terror in the streets to the festivities that followed Hubert Humphrey's victory" (Farber 251). This underscores the latest findings in research on political violence (see above) which sees media society as an integral part of this process of communication with and about violence. In the end, and when compared to the April riots, during the August protests, which were dominated by members of the white middle class elite, no one was killed. 192 policemen were injured, c. 700 protestors arrested and some 100 injured (Abu-Lughod 107f.).

When the *Kerner Report* published its findings about the role of white racism, it met strong opposition both in the political establishment and in the police of Chicago. They wanted local issues to remain on the local level, and insisted they did not mirror any global problems or deserve

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international attention. Chicago policemen like their comrades in other cities mostly had a working-class background. They followed conservative political and social norms. In the Chicago police department, there was even an active cell of the Ku Klux Clan, which was discovered in late 1967 (Farber 130). Riots—police and local politicians were sure to know—were planned in advance by communist agitators whose aim it was to turn the protestors into followers. These 'communists' not only disturbed public order but could in the future also organize the masses of Chicago's "black" ghetto dwellers. As in April, the conservative *Chicago Tribune* spread news about communist conspiracies going on inside the Civil Rights movement (*Chicago Tribune*, 1 April 1968). For state officials it was clear: if local turbulences occurred, they came from the outside not from Chicago citizens. All in all, as David Farber has put in: "Nobody in Chicago wanted any advice from national commissions or liberal university professors" (Farber 136).

During the protests policemen saw the student protestors and the press as visible signs of what was wrong in their small world. To them "all the demonstrators, short-haired and long-haired, were dumb, un-American hippies who didn't respect the way real people lived their daily lives." While policemen played out "their well-developed anger and bitterness" against unruly hippie youth, they still kept a localized perspective on the protests. For the protestors, however, in their efforts for political change (for some this meant revolution), Chicago was a next step to take back democracy in a direct confrontation with the "war makers" (Farber xiv f., all quotes). These clashes between localized and global perspectives not only added a special tension to the confrontations in Chicago, it also impeded a meaningful communication between the opponents.

In Chicago local problems had to be solved locally. Following this line of reasoning the imaginaries of threat formulated in Chicago in 1968 were not primarily about the decay of the whole nation. These local problems were motivated mainly, especially in the eyes of conservative politicians, by the inability and incompetence of the (liberal democratic) federal government to stop all this. Although conservative politicians who in the mid-1960s helped shape a new political agenda in the US, "in which nightmares of criminal chaos replaced dreams of a Great Society" (Flamm 180), their critique was mainly directed towards a remote central bureaucracy of the federal state. As in other US-American cities, the conservatives put their hopes on the local community with its tight social networks and their local security forces which should successfully handle crime and other social problems. In these local spaces, however, and here they were very close to local democratic politicians like the Chicago mayor Richard J. Daley, only (mostly white) local residents had the right to get active, but not the activists of the (trans)national social movements. For Daley, the mainly non-local student protestors of August 1968, whom he named terrorists, were "pushing their bodies into spaces in which they did not belong" (Farber 250).

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Moreover, the Vietnam War left its traces in urban imaginaries of threat. On the one hand in the police and military reports of the urban unrests of 1967/68 (also in Chicago) the central imaginaries of threat (communism and mass consumer society) became interwoven with a sniper narrative. This new narrative postulated that snipers were massively present thus making it nearly impossible for the fire brigade to quell the flames and for policemen to quickly restore order (Warren 470). In Chicago, however, there was only one incident in which a fireman was shot in the legs by an unknown person. But this single event was retold again and again. In the end the official Chicago reports stated, this case was "grossly overstated" (Warren 470). Rumors about snipers, racialization of protestors and other actions contributed strongly to the construction of urban imaginaries of threat. It did not matter whether such rumors were 'true' nor 'not true' (see Young/Pinkerton/Dodds 2014).

On the other hand Vietnam was not only present through sniper narratives. The US urban riots of the 1960s had also ignited a debate about the relationship between the jungle aspect of the war in Vietnam and the war in "figurative 'jungles'" (Flamm 105) in US cities. In these debates many US citizens came to realize that law and order at home and abroad were closely connected. This led to a militarization of riot control, training, and intelligence. The military had in Virginia in early 1968 not only convened a series of conferences to discuss the coordination of anti-riot actions in the biggest US cities (Flamm 120). The military also borrowed heavily from its Vietnam experience and worked hard to establish – legally not unproblematic - close ties to local urban law enforcement. Some commanders even claimed that US cities were about to face "years of guerilla warfare" (Flamm 115f.).

As we have seen, the communication with violence on the side of the protestors was completely different to the localized imaginaries politicians, police, and militaries articulated about these collective actions. It was as if walls separated these parties. One communicated about better housing, extended participation in mass consumer society and political change, while the other was busy searching for ringleaders and criminals and talking about crowds and communism which threatened local order. Only when they talked about revolution could the protestors be sure that state officials would use the same word, which had for them, however, a completely different meaning.

Imaginaries of Urban Threat in Argentina

Similar to the US 1960s, Latin America (and with it Argentina) saw multifold expressions of change. While mass consumer society was expanding, hedonistic youth cultures emerged, often combined with new musical expressions (like rock music) and drug use. Established social, family, and

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sexual norms were questioned, and transnationally connected protest movements and guerilla organizations spread. At the same time, however, military dictatorships emerged which tried to fight these social and cultural changes (see as overview Pereira 2005).

Argentina was the Latin American country which already since the 1940s, during the rule of Juan Domingo Peron (1946-1955, 1973/4), had seen many urban mass mobilizations and collective actions, especially in Buenos Aires and in other urban centers. In the following Buenos Aires will be the main focus of analysis, mainly because it is, similar to Chicago, a relatively well-studied setting. Moreover, it is the nation's capital, and in the long run the center of protest actions and of imaginaries of threat. In the wake of the military coup against the rule of Juan Domingo Peron in 1955, many hopes were projected on the youth that was expected build a new country. This was markedly different to the situation in the US, where during the 1950s youth culture became a challenge to society and its norms and values. As a recent book on youth in Argentina puts it, this phase "was marked by longing for, and fears of, the new" (Manzano, *The Age* 4).

When Lieutenant-General Juan Carlos Onganía came to power in 1966, this military coup not only ended some short-lived reform efforts but also signaled the intention of the military "to remain in power indefinitely" (Pereira 56). Since the early 1960s, peaking in the phase from c. 1969-1972, student protests and strikes evolved in Argentina with university activists often seeking alliances with the working classes. The military regimes tried to stop student political activism by closing some universities and with intensified police repression (Robben, *Political Violence* 39). Even when compared to earlier phases of military rule since the mid-1960s, in Argentina domestic security issues became increasingly militarized and reaching any political consensus was impossible. As was the case in other countries, these police actions, however, played an important role in radicalizing political activists. In May 1969, militant labor protests especially in Cordoba, the second biggest city of the country, mobilized the hopes of protestors while fueling fears of revolution in the middle classes, of conservative politicians, of the church, and especially in the military (see Brennan 1994; Brennan/Gordillo 1994). For the latter, the massive collective protest in Cordoba, the *Cordobazo*, was "military doctrine come true" (Robben, *Political Violence* 51), since it concurred with their assessments [5].

In Argentina, 1969 marked a double caesura. On the one hand, it intensified the imaginary of threat among state officials and members of the armed forces. On the other hand, the activities of guerilla organizations grew and massive strikes and decentralized street protests occurred. Moreover, a "subculture of violence" (Waldmann 338f.) in urban milieus became established. This violence, to a great extent sparked by the repressive actions and killings committed by the military and its paramilitary supporters, in turn intensified the imaginaries of social and cultural threat. By 1975,

many guerilla forces and the military were sure that the whole country was "on the brink of civil war" (Robben, "Combat Motivation" 360).

In March 1976 a military junta, headed by General Jorge Rafael Videla, overthrew government and remained in power until December 1983. In these years, the military embarked on a massive campaign to kill, torture, and intimidate "subversives" of which thousands were disappeared in mass graves, were thrown into the ocean, or dropped from helicopters. Three interrelated imaginaries of social and cultural threat guided the actions of Argentinean militaries: subversion, mass consumer society and crowds.

The military summarized all contemporary evils under the key term "subversion" (Elsemann 47-64). Eradicating "subversion", often seen as a disease or a cancer of society that could be lurking anywhere, was instrumental for the Argentine military. Virtually everybody could be a subversive. When compared with other Latin American countries this term played a much more crucial role in Argentina as a guideline for massive repression against a vaguely defined other. Against the background of a strong influence of European crowd psychology (more details below), the training by US and French militaries and also the influence of regional exchanges, led Argentinean armed forces to turn subversion into a universal imaginary of social and cultural threat (Elsemann 61f.). The influences of these European and US-American colonial counterinsurgency strategies contributed strongly to fortifying the pre-existing anti-communism of the Argentinean militaries. All this made subversion a category which "was as broad as it was blurry." It was not only used against members of militant left-wing organizations. A person was a "subversive criminal" because "he or she was 'active' in student centers, in neighborhoods, or in the internal commissions of labor unions, or because he or she was found to participate in what the intelligence services called 'insurgent activities,' political acts such as painting slogans, [or] throwing leaflets" (Aguila 172; how far the middle class was affected is discussed in Carassai 2014; see also Sheinin 2013).

Already in 1975, the military had started to re-map the whole country. Five zones were created, each subdivided into several sub-zones (Robben, *Political Violence* 193f., 396; Osiel 2001), where local commanders were granted complete freedom to fulfill their tasks [6]. The c. 350 detention centers, many of them in the heart of the urban centers, were also measures to reclaim urban territories. Religion played a much greater role in the anti-subversive actions in Argentina than in other Latin American countries (Osiel 119, 128, 158). Transcendental Catholic culture in Argentina promoted by militaries and the church in the mid-1960s was opposed to consumerism and its democratic potentialities (Podalsky 207). These ultra conservative members of the Catholic Church greatly helped to broaden the military's concept of the enemy. The imaginary of a threat of subversion was not only related to the working-class but also (sometimes even predominantly) to universities, culture industry (consumption), mass media, and liberals (Osiel 128). In the early

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1970s, the conservative and military leaders began to finally associate youth with drugs, sex orgies, and subversive action. Moreover, the "overtly oppositional questioning of the hegemonic construction of masculinity" (Manzano, "'Rock Nacional'" 251), widespread among 1960/70s youth, incited an intense homophobic reaction, which was exploited by the military. A thorough reconstitution of society was pressing before the nation finally dissolved (Manzano, "'Rock Nacional'" 221).

Mercilessly the new rulers fought what they thought would be a massive spread of 'factory soviets' in the companies all over the country but they also raided nightclubs in order to fight consumption driven moral decay (Aguila 178, footnotes 20, 23). In this setting, however, the fight against international communism was less motivated by the strength of the communist party in Argentina, all the more, as the Soviet Union was an important trading partner of Argentina during some parts of the 1970s (Osiel 131). Rather, the military saw itself at the forefront of a historic, final struggle against communism. In their understanding of history, communism advanced "through the cunning of history, behind the backs of those who unwittingly contribute to its triumph" (Osiel 134f.). This important reference to history can also be seen in the 1970s the military named their own project the "Process of National Reorganization" (short: El *Proceso*), thus referring to the 19th-century National Organization, the foundational phase of the country.

As it has already become obvious, besides fighting subversives the military also aimed at eradicating the detrimental effects of consumer society. The breakthrough of mass consumer society in Argentina was strongly influenced by Peron's social political improvements for the working-class (Milanesio 2013). Moreover, young people, often also from working-class backgrounds, had been the vanguard in wearing US-produced jeans since the late 1950s (Manzano, "The Blue" 660). In Buenos Aires such women and men and others, who through their clothing were deemed to represent modernity, stood at the center of public actions that attempted to prevent Buenos Aires society from sliding into communism and immorality (Manzano, "Sexualizing Youth" 455). At the end of the 1960s, for the militaries, conservatives and radical rightwing Catholics it had become obvious that this danger of sliding over to communism was not only true for working class juveniles as they also saw the youth of the middle classes affected (458). In these years, the nightmare of conservative elites had in their view come true: Not only in Buenos Aires, but seemingly everywhere communism and political radicalization had taken hold among the majority of middle class youth. Where drugs were consumed, bombs would also be produced (Manzano, "'Rock Nacional'" 420f.). Hand in hand with this went imaginaries of threatened gender relations implying an erosion of the ideal of domesticity with the inherent male breadwinner model, spreading homosexuality and the redefinition of dominant models of masculinity. Other issues of youth culture such as rock music, liberal sexual norms, and drug use

had since the mid-1960s been instrumental in raising conservative fears of a society in turmoil and decline.

Fighting crowds was also an important task for the conservative and military state authorities in Argentina. Collective mass action performed by 'crowds' (a term which was often used in a derogatory sense) in public spaces were a feature of Argentinean history. Thus in fighting crowds the military aimed at eradicating a central democratic element of Argentinean political culture. In mid-19th-century Buenos Aires, the public sphere had become a place of mediation between political machines and civil society for some years. It was here where competing groups raised their claims driven by a "culture of mobilization" (Sábato 168). Between the 1860s and 1880s collective actions on the streets and plazas served to unite an otherwise heterogeneous civil society. This tradition, which was destroyed by political changes in the late 19th century, could be taken up under the first Peronist rule (1946-1955) for employing strategies of mass mobilization. When analyzing collective street actions and related imaginaries of threat during the 1960/70s in Buenos Aires, for example, the improved transportation system during the Peronist rule (1946-55) was used for mobilizing for demonstrations (Podalsky 3). This extended mobility fed feelings of anxiety and estrangement among the middle classes since workers could now easily reach all city regions including the wealthier quarters. One author concluded that Peronism "had indelibly changed the city by exercising control over the visual imaginary against which many sectors would struggle in subsequent years" (Podalsky 47).

In general, Argentine military and police perceived crowds similarly to the way armed forces in other countries did (53f, 83; Weinhauer 2008). Crowds were irrational and potentially dangerous to the established order. Argentine military field manuals described crowds as a collective entity orchestrated by revolutionary leaders. Among the armed military and paramilitary forces in Argentina, however, some special features of these crowd-related imaginaries of threat can be discerned. First, the phase of democratic street actions of the 1860/70s given, it cannot come as a surprise that in Argentina crowd psychology had gained a strong and lasting influence on intellectuals, elites, politicians, and militaries. Since the late 19th century, Buenos Aires for many years was named the world capital of psychoanalysis (Riekenberg 205). The most relevant feature of this legacy was, as the anthropologist Antonius Robben has put it, that the militaries believed the Argentine people had an "inbred tendency toward crowd mobilization" (Robben, *Political Violence* 43). Especially after 1945, street crowds became deeply rooted in Argentine political imaginaries. They seemed all the more threatening to the ruling elites when rapprochements of young working-class activists, Peronists, and university students intensified starting in the late 1950s. Second, and related to the former at least theoretically, Argentina's elites were also extremely fascinated by crowds and their cohesion. The militaries and police were keen to ride this tiger (85). Based on a

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central aspect of the dominant militarist masculinity, these crowds had at same time to be given the opportunity to act, which in turn would give the militaries an opportunity to dominate these collective entities. Third, the fierce fight Argentinean state actors fought against crowds can be better explained when crowds are understood as situational forms of civil society organizations. As organization of civil society were strongly repressed by the military regimes, in Argentina crowds acted as a substitute for this lack of civil organization. Their fluidity made crowds all the more suspicious to the state authorities [7].

Overall, the military in Argentina believed that social order was an expression of a divine will (Robben, *Political Violence* 84) and thus did not need any additional civil organizations. Moreover, mass consumption, crowds, communists, and other subversives subverted this order. Thus their power had to be broken for the good of the nation, and the military had to uphold authority and reproduce the hierarchical values of this natural divine society. They profoundly believed themselves genuine patriots who had to save their country from "imminent destruction at the hands of the Antichrist" (Osiel 144).

Taken together, these factors (subversion, mass consumer society, and crowds) motivated the military to embark on an all-encompassing campaign of social engineering. This violence ridden process was not merely an act of state terror (Riekenberg 204-208) [8] or a Dirty War: Wars have a beginning and an end. Wars also involve more or less clearly recognizable war parties. What was executed in Argentina, starting in the early 1970s, was a "cultural counterrevolution" (Osiel 139) aimed at fighting (and winning) the final fight between good and evil. In this cultural counterrevolution the military aimed at altering people´s sociality away from a "unifying gregariousness towards obedience, discipline, respect for God, and awe of the nation`s military leaders who had saved the country from a communist revolution and the loss of its Western, Christian civilization" (Robben, *Political Violence* 85). The preservation of Argentina's cultural heritage was at stake: paternal authority, private property, catholic values and traditions, and the nuclear family. The military imagined a future where authority "at the state and at the family levels would reinforce each other" (Manzano, *The Age of Youth* 235).

In order to achieve this, the militaries aimed at the physical, psychological, and social destruction of subversives. With their violence-laden cultural counterrevolution, they communicated that torture and other forms of violence had to be brought to the enemies' minds, selves, bodies, and families. As it was not sufficient to kill the subversives, torture became an integral part of this strategy: "Torture was to complete the victory on the ground into the minds and selves of the defeated" (Robben, *Political Violence* 212). Although the strategy of forced disappearances (desaparición forzada) was not unique to Argentinean militaries, they used this strategy intensively. As long as there were officially no dead people, nobody (families, media) could ask questions. For families of

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the victims this strategy made it much harder to formulate their claims against the military. It must be mentioned that these tactics, however, in 1977 also gave rise to a very important family-based protest movement in Buenos Aires, the *Madres de Plaza de Mayo*, who mostly silently but effectively protested against the disappearance of family members (see Elsemann 60ff.).

In the eyes of the Argentine military, French and US-American counterinsurgency practices had been too strongly focused on military actions at the neglect of social, political, psychological, and cultural aspects (for details see Elsemann 45f). As a consequence, both colonial powers had given too little attention to the decisive actions of subversives - defined in the broadest sense. In the 1970s, the Argentine military was so desirous of victory that they crossed moral borders other had hesitated to cross. It is still discussed whether the massive violence of the cultural counterrevolution practiced by the Argentinean military regimes can also be termed 'genocide' (Feierstein 2006 and 2014).

Conclusion

In this paper urban imaginaries of social and cultural threats have been analyzed in a conceptual setting which merges two innovative strands of thought. First, imaginaries are seen as an important part of social order, which could help bridge the gap between street action and countermeasures of the forces of order. Second, seeing violence as a pattern of communication contributes to understanding the violence state officials have used to restore order.

When it comes to imaginaries of social and cultural threats, US and Argentinean state officials (politicians, policemen, militaries) identified similar threats in the 1960/70s: communism, mass consumer society and its inherent cultural changes, and fears of crowds that were omnipresent. In Argentina, this was also true for the powerful Catholic elites. These imaginaries were not only quite similar in both countries they also did not change significantly during the time period considered here. These stable imaginaries of threat through communism and mass consumer society even served as nuclei around which new narratives (about snipers and urban jungle wars) could be constructed.

What is special in the US case was the racialization of imaginaries of urban social disorder. While in North America the military was only temporarily able to gain ground in public order issues, the military in Argentina defined the profile of and countermeasures against social and cultural threats for decades. This continuity of military rule made Argentinean anticommunism much more radical and also immune to any changes in the perception of its enemies. The melting together of European and US influences in the imaginaries of subversion and of crowds is a feature special to Argentinean case. Against the background of a strong commitment to anticommunism, subversion

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was instrumental for justifying the military regimes' merciless cultural counterrevolution. The reception of US and French counterinsurgency policies not only fortified the anticommunism of the Argentinean military, it also helped to shape their imaginary of the decisive role of broadly defined subversives.

Against the background of this fortified anticommunism, the strong presence of the imaginary of threatening urban crowds was infused by a double legacy. First, there were lasting memories of mid-19th-century collective street actions. These actions had not only played an important role in Argentina's early democracy but had also shaped fears of underclass street actions. Second, the fears of crowds were also an underestimated legacy of the entanglement with European history, especially with crowd psychology (see Borch 2012; Robben 2005 and 2012). Crowd psychological interpretations, mainly formulated in France and Italy, had made their way to Argentina via intellectual and personal transfers since the last third of the 19th century.

Finally, the wide scope of crisis that shaped the imaginaries of threat in Argentina stands out. While in the US law and order was only threatened locally and could thus be restored locally, in Argentina the whole nation seemed to be in decline and substantially endangered. Although the imaginaries of crisis were similar (perils of mass consumer society like crime, rock music, drug use, promiscuity, and communist inspired political radicalization), the envisaged solutions were extremely different. In the US the social movements, protests, and violence of the mid-1960s were also countered violently but also with counter insurgency programs and disinformation campaigns. Moreover, police forces were reinforced, better trained, and the cooperation between army, police and the National Guard intensified. There were also urban renewal projects and decentralized funding of citizens' initiatives.

As the threat was deemed to be of national (not only local) scope, in Argentina much more radical options were chosen for social engineering. A cultural counterrevolution was launched aiming at rebuilding a divine family based on Christian ideals. In doing this, the Argentinean militaries were willing to impose a total monopoly of violence on the minds, the bodies, and the social relations (esp. the family) of all those subversives who had already contributed to social and cultural destruction of the national order or on those who were suspected to do this in the future.

Endnotes

[1] In this article I will use the term imaginaries instead of imaginations. The differences between imaginations and imaginaries are a bit similar to those between the emotions "fear" and "anxiety". Imagination is more an individual expression where often the object to imagine (holiday at the beach) is more or less clearly identifiable, while imaginary is more a collective pattern related to abstract social and cultural entities (international communism). Both processes are, however, not forever fixed. They are influenced by and are part of power relations and labeling processes. Thus they could also change over time (see on fear/anxiety: Bourke 2003). It is debatable whether urban imaginaries could be added or how they are related to the three "modern social imaginaries" described by Charles Taylor (2004): economy, public sphere, self-governance.

[2] It is not the space here to discuss the interesting question of how to best name these collective actions: Civil unrests, riots, protests, upheavals? Such typologies should be seen as efforts to gain control over the interpretation of violence. See on this problem Brass 1996.

[3] The Chicago riot of 5-7 April 1968 was not included but is analyzed in: *Report of the Chicago Riot Study Commission to the Hon. Richard J. Daley* (1 August 1968), Daley Library, Chicago.

[4] In the meantime, the files of the Red Squad have been transferred to the Chicago History Museum.

[5] From 30 June 1969 to 26 May 1973 the state of siege was declared (Robben, *Political Violence* 559).

[6] See for details http://www.desaparecidos.org/nuncamas/web/english/library/nevagain/nevagain_001.htm

(10 Mar 2015).

[7] The differentiation made by Riekenberg (205) is interesting: between state terror directed against indigenous population in Central America (Guatemala) and state terror directed against urban militants (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay) from working-class and trade union background.

[8] Further studies should test this hypothesis whether crowds in Argentina acted as a fluid substitute for organizations of civil society.

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