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Latin America and Europe in the Twentieth Century: *Looking to The Americas Archives*

ABSTRACT: There is a marked tendency to view Latin America's twentieth-century international history through the lens of US hegemony, and Europe has been particularly impacted by this historiographical trend. On the basis of a review of 41 articles published in *The Americas* over the past 81 years, this essay explores *The Americas*' important role in promoting scholarship on the variety of connections between Latin America and Europe. By bringing together two temporal currents—the chronology of history and the chronology of historiography—it traces how scholarship on Latin America's twentieth-century relationship with the wider world has evolved. During the Cold War years, the majority of articles focused on Latin America as an arena for great power/superpower rivalry, but from the end of the previous century, scholars publishing in the journal made increasing use of different scales of analysis to uncover the multidimensional flows across the Atlantic. Ultimately, work published in *The Americas* on twentieth-century transnational relations has shown that Latin America and Latin Americans are important actors on the global stage with significant agency in drawing upon separate international influences and alliances to best suit their own domestic purposes, sometimes with significant consequences for the wider world.

KEYWORDS: Latin America, Europe, 20th century, international relations, transnational relations

In the inaugural issue of *The Americas* in 1944, then labeled as "A Quarterly Review of Inter-American Cultural History," the editors set out their intentions for the journal. As the original name suggested, the journal was founded to publish research from across the hemisphere on all aspects of regional history, society, and culture as a way to promote inter-American cultural relations. Although not stated explicitly, the move likely responded to a fresh era in regional diplomacy; just over a decade earlier, Franklin D. Roosevelt had announced his Good Neighbor Policy that sought to soften US presence in Latin America. The Second World War seemingly cemented this new multilateralism as the vast majority of American countries joined together to promote hemispheric security and solidarity.

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The founding editorial team of *The Americas* saw their journal as an important contribution to this new era in regional relations. They ended their brief introduction to "Our First Number" with the hope that "this collaboration be fruitful in deeper understanding and mutual respect and amity among all the institutions of learning [. . .] and all thoughtful people of good-will everywhere in the Americas."[1] Yet the emphasis on promoting inter-American exchange, led by academics and institutions in the United States, may have unintentionally contributed to what Tanya Harmer has labeled the "historiographical Monroe Doctrine."[2] Invoking the key tenet of US foreign policy, which declared the Americas closed to further European colonialism, Harmer refers to the overwhelming tendency to view Latin America's twentieth-century international history through the lens of US hegemony. The region's supposedly peripheral status is not limited to histories of its contemporary diplomatic relations. Matthew Brown, for instance, contends that Latin America has been largely ignored by historians in the recent "global turn," while Gabriela de Lima Grecco and Sven Schuster explain how Latin Americanists have been reluctant to embrace an approach that they see as Eurocentric.[3] In this context, studies of the region's relations with other parts of the world have been relatively scarce despite the contention from various scholars of Latin America and the Caribbean that the continent's history as a site of global encounters has made it an area of immense cross-border mobility and connectivity.[4]

Europe has been particularly impacted by this historiographical trend. For very different reasons, both historic US hemispheric policy and contemporary Latin American academics have sought to moderate European influence in the region. However, as this essay will show, frequent references in the literature to divisions within and across Latin America over the meaning and significance of the colonial legacy and debates over who to look to for cultural and political inspiration and immigration policies that sought to "whiten" local populations suggest that European influences remained strong throughout the region. Of course, this does not mean that Latin Americans merely responded to the interests of Europe, or simply imported ideas and people across the Atlantic. Instead, as we shall see, they debated the continued importance of European models for their political, economic, and social plans; chose which aspects were

1. "Inter-American Notes," *The Americas* 1, no.1 (1944): 111.

2. Tanya Harmer, "The ideological origins of the Dirty War: fascism, populism, and dictatorship in twentieth century Argentina," *Cold War History* 15, no. 3 (2015): 419.

3. Brown, Matthew. "The global history of Latin America." *Journal of Global History* 10 (2015): 365–86. de Lima Grecco, Gabriela, and Sven Schuster. "Hacia una historia global descolonizada: una perspectiva Latinoamericana." *Esboços* 30, 55 (2023): 484–502.

4. For example: Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (Grove Press, 1967); Eduardo Galeano, *Las venas abiertas de América Latina* (Siglo XXI Editores, 1971); Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*, (Duke University Press: 2011); Lara Putnam, *Radical Moves: Caribbean Migrants and the Politics of Race in the Jazz Age*, (The University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

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most suited to their domestic agendas; and adapted these to better fit the local context. Similarly, the flows of influence were not unidirectional; in important instances, Latin America provided innovative models and systems for the rest of the world, including Europe. In other words, despite changes in international relations and domestic policies, the transatlantic flow of people and ideas continued throughout the twentieth century.

Perhaps surprisingly given its original focus on inter-American cultural history, *The Americas* has played an important role in publishing scholarship on the variety of connections between Latin America and Europe from its earliest years. Indeed, the July 2012 issue formalized a shift that had already been apparent in the journal's academic output when it launched a new subtitle: "A Quarterly Review of Latin American History." In recognition of this understudied area of the journal's focus, the purpose of this special teaching and research collection is to bring together the multiple essays on transatlantic relations that have been published in the journal during the previous 81 years. I have selected 41 articles that explicitly take flows—of diplomacy, people, ideas, and practices—between Latin America and Europe as their subject of analysis, be they cultural, economic, ideological, military, political, religious, social, or technological. The compilation has an expansive geographic range, looking at various countries across both continents, although there are certain regions that appear more often than others. It also covers the broad twentieth century, understood here as spanning from 1898 (when Spain lost its last remaining colonies, sparking the rise of *Hispanismo* on both sides of the Atlantic) to 1990 (after the end of the Cold War marked a crisis for the communist model across the continent). Collectively, the articles demonstrate how recent conceptual frameworks—in particular, the "transnational turn"—and methodologies such as microhistory have changed the way that historians' study Latin America's relationship with the wider world. By applying such approaches to the region's twentieth-century history, those publishing in *The Americas* have shed increasing light on the multiplicity of transatlantic connections in the postcolonial period.

In this review essay, I will highlight the ways in which these works have engaged with, intervened in, and shaped the historiography on Latin American–European relations in the twentieth century. I argue that, despite the pronounced bias for studies of inter-American affairs in Latin America's international history more broadly, the region's relations with Europe have always been of interest to scholars. Both trends are visible in *The Americas* during the Cold War years, however, the majority focused on Latin America as an arena for great power/superpower rivalry—hence the notion of the "historiographical Monroe Doctrine." From the end of the previous century, influenced by the "transnational turn" and the decolonial project, articles published in the

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journal made increasing use of different scales of analysis to uncover the multidimensional flows across the Atlantic and complicate idea of supposed Latin American "inferiority" vis-à-vis Europe and the United States. Ultimately, in studying twentieth-century transatlantic relations, the authors of these works have shown that Latin America and Latin Americans are important actors on the global stage with significant agency in drawing upon separate international influences and alliances to best suit their own domestic purposes, sometimes with significant consequences for the wider world.

To facilitate current teaching and future research on transatlantic relations between Latin America and Europe in the twentieth century, I have organized my discussion of the selected articles into the five thematic clusters in which they broadly cohere. Two of these clusters cover different approaches (history of international relations and transnational history) and three cover analytical categories (flows of people, ideas, and practices). In making these subjective decisions about what article fits which cluster, my aim is to provide an overview of the main areas of interest for those who have studied the relationship between Latin America and Europe as well as how their understanding of that relationship has changed over time. For each cluster I will primarily draw upon the essays included in this collection, but I will also refer to broader historiographical trends and works published elsewhere to show where *The Americas* has driven the conversation on extra-hemispheric linkages and spotlight areas that may require more attention in the journal.

Latin America as an Arena

The rise of international relations as a discrete field of study in the twentieth century popularized the notion of a power struggle occurring in the global system. Within this theoretical framework, great powers or superpowers compete to exert significant influence on the international arena while smaller powers are relegated to a peripheral status. Latin America's geopolitical relevance, in this context, is analyzed within the scholarship largely in relation to the foreign policies of more powerful nations, particularly its northern neighbor, the United States. This first thematic cluster therefore includes those works where the region appears largely as an arena for great power rivalry (primarily between Britain, Germany, and the United States) during the first half of the twentieth century. It comprises nine articles, all of which were written before 2000. Geographically, the authors analyze Argentina, Central America, and Mexico with a thematic focus on the Monroe Doctrine and major early twentieth-century wars.

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Inspired by Friedrich Katz's groundbreaking study of German relations with Mexico from 1870 to 1920, for example, various historians in the late 1960s and early 1970s began examining this transatlantic relationship in greater detail.[5] Three articles in this collection take up the topic, looking specifically at economic and military relations during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Warren Schiff, in his article "he Germans in Mexican Trade and Industry during the Díaz Period" (1967), gives an overview of the different German industries in Mexico during the *Porfiriato*—the 35-year dictatorship of authoritarian leader General Porfirio Díaz.[6] Thomas Becker's piece "The Arms of the Ypiranga: The German Side" (1973) proffered a German perspective on the *Ypiranga* affair, when a German ship was used to carry weapons for the Mexican revolutionary leader Victoriano Huerta in 1914, thus violating a US-imposed arms embargo.[7] Along the same lines, in "The Mexican-German Conspiracy of 1915" (1966), Michael Meyer explores the German imperial government's provision of financial and moral support to a group of Mexican exiles who had fled to the United States following the overthrow of Victoriano Huerta and were planning to launch a rebellion against the new revolutionary leader Venustiano Carranza.[8] Throughout Katz's book, Mexico emerges as a key battleground for the competing interests of Britain, Germany, and the United States. Equally, the authors in *The Americas* who trace Mexican–German relations during the early twentieth century largely use these as a proxy to interrogate the wider power struggle between Germany and the United States.

Expanding the so-called German threat beyond Mexico, Melvin Small, in his article "The United States and the German 'Threat' to the Hemisphere, 1905–1914" (1972), charts US–German relations in the context of their competing designs for Latin America in the run-up to the First World War.[9] Also taking this conflict as a starting point but making hemispheric relations the object of analysis, Emily Rosenberg's essay on "World War I and 'Continental Solidarity'" (1975) surveys the inter-American negotiations to form a cohesive stance toward the First World War.[10] Stanley Hilton is likewise concerned with regional diplomacy, this time in the context of the Second World War, in "Argentine Neutrality, September, 1939-June, 1940: A Re-Examination" (1966). Here, the author studies Argentina's attempts to get American nations to change their

5. Friedrich Katz, *Deutschland, Díaz und die mexikanische Revolution. Die deutsche Politik im Mexiko 1870-1920* (VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1964).

6. Warren Schiff "The Germans in Mexican Trade and Industry during the Díaz Period," *The Americas* 23, no.3 (1967): 279–296.

7. Thomas Baecker, "The arms of the Ypiranga: the German side," *The Americas* 30, no.1 (1973): 1–17.

8. Michael C. Meyer, "The Mexican-German Conspiracy of 1915," *The Americas* 23, no.1 (1966): 76–89.

9. Melvin Small, "The United States and the German 'threat' to the hemisphere, 1905-1914," *The Americas* 28, no.3 (1972): 252–270.

10. Emily S. Rosenberg, "World War I and 'continental solidarity,'" *The Americas* 31, no.3 (1975): 313–334.

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policy of neutrality to one of "non-belligerence" favorable to the Allies.[11] These articles were produced during the high point of the global Cold War when many in the United States were increasingly questioning their country's foreign policy and scholars sought to explain the origins of the contemporary geopolitical situation. Against this backdrop, the authors provide alternative perspectives on and useful sources to study both intra- and extra-hemispheric affairs, even as the assumption of US superiority as regards its southerly neighbors remains largely unchallenged.

The final three essays in this thematic cluster examine British incursions into Central America during the 1910s and 1920s. Published in the 1990s, the works formed part of a major current in the historiography of twentieth-century international relations that located Britain's replacement by the United States as the predominant global power in those two crucial decades.[12] This renewed interest in Central America and the origins of contemporary regional power relations was clearly driven by the conflicts occurring there during the 1980s and 1990s in which US intervention played no small part. Richard Salisbury, in his first article "Revolution and Recognition: A British Perspective on Isthmian Affairs during the 1920s" (1992), follows British–US relations throughout various political crises in Central America during the 1920s, including the civil uprising that overthrew Guatemalan president Manuel Estrada Cabrera and the civil wars in Honduras and Nicaragua.[13] The "special relationship" also constituted the main subject of analysis in Salisbury's second piece for *The Americas*, "Great Britain, the United States, and the 1909–1910 Nicaraguan Crisis" (1997). The setting for Salisbury's renewed examination of this relationship was now Nicaragua in 1909–1910 when members of the Conservative opposition, backed by the US, launched a rebellion against the Liberal government.[14] In his contribution "Gunboat Diplomacy's Last Fling in the New World: The British Seizure of San Quintin, April 1911" (1996), Lawrence Taylor assesses the background to and consequences of Britain's decision to land a gunboat in the Mexican city of San Quintín during the early revolutionary years.[15] Both authors pinpoint the early 1910s as the moment in which Britain decided that the United States would be the predominant power

11. Stanley E. Hilton, "Argentine neutrality, September, 1939-June, 1940: a re-examination," *The Americas* 22, no.3 (1966): 227–257.

12. For example: Frank Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion: American Political, Economic, and Cultural Relations with Europe, 1919–1933* (University of Cornell Press: 1984). From a Latin American perspective: Victor Bulmer-Thomas (ed.), *Britain and Latin America: A Changing Relationship*, (Cambridge University Press, 1989).

13. Richard V. Salisbury, "Revolution and recognition: a British perspective on Isthmian affairs during the 1920s," *The Americas* 48, no.3 (1992): 331–349.

14. Richard V. Salisbury, "Great Britain, the United States, and the 1909-1910 Nicaraguan crisis," *The Americas* 53, no.3 (1997): 379–394.

15. Lawrence D. Taylor, "Gunboat diplomacy's last fling in the New World: the British seizure of San Quintin, April 1911," *The Americas* 52, no.4 (1996): 521–543.

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in the Caribbean, thus demonstrating how Central America was a key arena for the reconfiguring of the international system. However, by viewing the region's events solely through the lens of British–US struggles to assert their control of certain territories, they largely obscure the agency of local actors.

Despite reinforcing the sense that Latin America remained peripheral on the international stage, these articles nonetheless underscore the importance of understanding the region through more than just its relations with the United States. In examining German documents, for instance, Baeker challenged the contemporary notion that the arms on the *Ypiranga* were part of broader Mexican–German machinations against the United States in the run-up to the First World War. Moreover, despite seeing Latin American interests as secondary to those of Britain, Germany, and the United States, the works nonetheless hint at the important ways in which various political groups attempted to leverage international power struggles for their own benefit. In particular, Meyer contends that the famous Zimmermann telegram that supposedly paved the way for US intervention in the First World War grew out of Mexican exiles' designs to recover territory lost to the United States during the previous century as part of a broader program to overthrow the US-backed Carranza regime. Finally, Hilton's article shows how Latin Americans did not just accept their subordinated position to the United States. Although Argentina was ultimately unsuccessful in its endeavor to influence regional policy because of opposition from the United States, Hilton sheds light on an instance in which leading Argentinian politicians proposed that the region pursue their own course in international affairs.

Global International Relations

In the past two decades, historians of Latin America have embraced global history as a means to overturn previous assumptions of the region's peripherality. Building on the work of postcolonial thinkers who have argued that Latin America and the Caribbean played a crucial role in the emergence of the modern world, these recent histories have sought to emphasize the diverse ways in which regional actors engaged with and shaped global developments at different historical moments.[16] This has also meant a move away from analyzing Latin American international relations through the lens of US imperialism to illuminate a wider variety of diplomatic and transnational networks, including

with Europe. Recent academic production in *The Americas* has been particularly dynamic in this regard.

16. See the works of Fernando Coronil, Maria Lugones, Walter Mignolo, and Anibal Quijano, among others.

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The journal also published important works that challenged Latin America's relegation to the sidelines of international affairs before the twenty-first-century "global turn," three of which deal with the continent's relations with Europe. These important precursors to what has only recently been formalized in a distinct historiographical approach hint at the enduring importance of efforts to place Latin American relations in a global context. The earliest example in *The Americas* was Joe Robert Juárez's "Argentine Neutrality, Mediation, and Asylum during the Spanish Civil War" (1963). Arguing that the various countries of the Hispanophone Atlantic were linked to Spain by "the force of history, race, religion, and language," Juárez shows how these nations (but especially Argentina) were active participants in the international effort to end the conflict on the peninsula even if their attempts were largely unsuccessful.[17] The author's emphasis on historical cultural ties exemplifies why it is important to study transatlantic relations in the twentieth century; even though the United States was doubtless the foreign nation with the largest material impact in Latin America, Europe (and Spain in particular) still held significant emotional import for many in the region. Juárez's article thus prefigured a recent wave of interest in Spanish–Latin American relations during the twentieth century that serves to complement existing studies of US intervention.[18]

Douglas Richmond's article "Confrontation and Reconciliation: Mexicans and Spaniards during the Mexican Revolution, 1910–1920" (1984) suggests another reason why Europe remained relevant long after independence: the presence of large immigrant communities in many Latin American countries. He contends that the growing cooperation between these two countries during the late 1910s was largely the result of Carranza's crackdown on anti-Spanish sentiment and policies in Mexico.[19] Frank McCann takes a similar approach in his piece "Vargas and the Destruction of the Brazilian Integralista and Nazi Parties" (1969). Almost in a mirror image of the Mexican case, McCann finds that Vargas's relations with Germany deteriorated as a result of his measures to curb Nazi influence among Brazil's prominent German population.[20] By grounding their analysis of these transatlantic relationships in the context of Latin American politics, both authors underline the need to comprehend the local conditions that

17. Joe Robert Juárez, "Argentine neutrality, mediation, and asylum during the Spanish Civil War," *The Americas* 19, no.4 (1963): 383–403.

18. Kirsten Weld, "The other door: Spain and the Guatemalan counterrevolution, 1944-54," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 51, no.2 (2019): 307–331; Weld, "The Spanish Civil War and the construction of a reactionary historical consciousness in Augusto Pinochet's Chile," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 98, no.1 (2018): 77–115.

19. Douglas W. Richmond, "Confrontation and reconciliation: Mexicans and Spaniards during the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1920," *The Americas* 41, no.2 (1984): 215–228.

20. Frank D. McCann, "Vargas and the destruction of the Brazilian Integralista and Nazi parties," *The Americas* 26, no.1 (1969): 15–34.

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shape international diplomacy. In so doing, they also make significant contributions to our understanding of Latin America's place in the global political system. Richmond suggests significant moments in which Mexican revolutionary politics inspired movements and policies in Spain, while McCann demonstrates Vargas's independence at a time in which Brazil was accused of being both subservient to the Axis powers and a puppet of the United States.

Over the past 5 years, authors publishing in *The Americas* have explicitly engaged with the methods and concepts of global history to provide a fuller view of Latin America's relationship with the wider world. Four articles in this cluster use this approach to unveil wider transnational and diplomatic ties with Europe than had hitherto been recognized. Pedro Cameselle-Pesce's article "Italian-Uruguayans for Free Italy: Serafino Romualdi's Quest for Transnational Anti-Fascist Networks during World War II" (2020) follows the figure of Serafino Romualdi, a prominent Italian anti-fascist who traveled through the Southern Cone in the early 1940s to drum up support for the antifascist cause. Cameselle-Pesce argues that Romualdi's connections in Latin America made him a key figure for the US government, which was seeking to gather intelligence on Axis influence in the region, thus revealing how the superpower acknowledged the part transatlantic connections could play in fostering support for foreign policy across a region where many were wary of US imperialism.[21] This opportunism ran both ways, with Latin Americans also exploiting the global political system to further their own national, regional, and international aims. In "'El Principal Enemigo Nacional': Revolutionary Guatemala's Response to Allied Policy toward German Presence in Latin America (1944–1952)" (2024), Rodrigo Veliz Estrada explores how Guatemala's reformist president Juan José Arévalo used Allied policy to counter the "Nazi threat" in Latin America as a means to expropriate lands from German-Guatemalans who had been forced to leave the country during the Second World War.[22] By portraying Latin American countries as important and purposeful international actors, these accounts serve as a vital corrective to prior narratives of the region as a mere arena for or passive recipient of US foreign policy.

Moving into the Cold War period, new research in *The Americas* reveals how Latin American leaders cultivated closer ties with European nations to counterbalance superpower influence during the second half of the twentieth century. These articles are representative of a recent body of work that is revisiting this period using a very different approach to that employed during the

21. Pedro Cameselle-Pesce, "Italian-Uruguayans for free Italy: Serafino Romualdi's quest for transnational anti-fascist networks during World War II," *The Americas* 77, no.2 (2020): 247–273.

22. Rodrigo Veliz Estrada, "'El Principal Enemigo Nacional': Revolutionary Guatemala's Response to Allied Policy toward German Presence in Latin America (1944–1952)," *The Americas* 81, no.1 (2024): 93–122.

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Cold War itself. In this way, we can see the interaction of two distinct temporal currents: the chronology of history (from the Spanish Civil War to the Cold War) and the chronology of historiography (traditional diplomatic histories to new global histories). As this thematic cluster suggests, the field has moved away from the interest in the balance of power that characterized both the politics and the scholarship of the Cold War era and toward a more nuanced understanding of the various ways in which different international actors worked outside the bipolar system, sometimes in unexpected ways, to exert influence in specific historical moments. For example, Daniel Kressel's essay "The 'Argentine Franco'?: The Regime of Juan Carlos Onganía and Its Ideological Dialogue with Francoist Spain (1966–1970)" (2021) shows how officials in the two countries worked together in the 1960s to conjure a new version of "modernity" for the Spanish speaking world that offered a "third path" between capitalism and communism.[23] Such exchanges were not limited to right-wing regimes. Eline van Ommen, in her article "The Nicaraguan Revolution's Challenge to the Monroe Doctrine: Sandinistas and Western Europe, 1979–1990" (2021), investigates the Sandinista National Liberation Front's pursuit of alliances with Western European governments to undermine US power in the region and avoid financial dependency on the Soviet Union.[24] Crucially, these two authors depict a more egalitarian relationship between Latin America and Europe, with actors on both continents working together toward shared goals in ways that saw influence flowing both ways across the Atlantic, albeit sometimes unevenly. Van Ommen's work also illustrates how new international histories of twentieth-century Latin America can shed light on European countries that are not traditionally covered in accounts of transnational relations, in this case Holland, Scandinavia, and Greece. Scholars have only recently begun to analyze Latin America's Cold War connections with central and eastern Europe, and this could be a fruitful avenue for further research in *The Americas*.[25]

Flows of People

Though the aforementioned articles have done important work in recentering Latin America in the history of global international relations, their firm location within that field reproduces a tendency to focus on those directly involved in

23. Daniel Kressel, "The 'Argentine Franco'?: the regime of Juan Carlos Onganía and its ideological dialogue with Francoist Spain (1966–1970)," *The Americas* 78, no.1 (2021): 89–117.

24. Eline van Ommen, "The Nicaraguan Revolution's challenge to the Monroe Doctrine: Sandinistas and Western Europe, 1979-1990," *The Americas* 78, no.4 (2021): 639–666.

25. For example: Michael Zourek, "Czechoslovakia and Latin America's guerrilla insurgencies: secret services, training networks, mobility, and transportation," in: Tanya Harmer and Alberto Martín Álvarez (eds.) *Toward a Global History of Latin America's Revolutionary Left* (University of Florida Press: 2021); Tobias Rupprecht, "Latin American tercermundistas in the Soviet Union," in: Thomas C. Field, Stella Krepp, Vanni Pettinà, and Thomas C. Field Jr. (eds.) *Latin America and the Global Cold War* (University of North Carolina Press, 2020).

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statecraft who were largely elite and middle-class men. From the 1990s, prompted by the end of the Cold War and the perceived rise of globalization, historians increasingly embraced transnationalism as a concept to understand the multiple and pluridirectional cross-border flows that have helped shape not only individual nations, but also the wider world. These connections include non-state as well as state actors, meaning that a broader array of historical subjects can be brought to the fore, including those normally ignored in diplomatic histories. *The Americas* has made significant contributions to our knowledge about Latin America's transnational entanglements, publishing a wealth of original research on the wider political, social, and cultural linkages between the region and Europe in the twentieth century. The following three thematic clusters therefore consider the transatlantic flow of people, ideas, and practices during this period.

The most common way in which historians have sought to understand Latin America's twentieth-century relationship with Europe is by analyzing the large groups of migrants who, particularly during the early decades, crossed the Atlantic to settle in the "New World," often encouraged by national governments. At the structural level, the interest in studying European migrants who came to Latin America can reinforce a vision of one-way transfer of influence across the Atlantic. However, the four works in this cluster aptly demonstrate how immigration can be used as a lens to interrogate Latin American state-building projects during the first half of the twentieth century. The articles focus on Brazil (three) and Mexico (one), whose national policies of *mestizaje* and "racial democracy" are the best-known of Latin America's attempts to grapple with its mixed population in an era of racial determinism.[26] In his article "Some Views on Race and Immigration during the Old Republic" (1971), Robert Levine analyses the results of a 1926 poll on attitudes toward immigration in Brazil. He finds that respondents expressed an overwhelming preference for European migrants, demonstrating that the wider public shared the government's view that so-called racial democracy should serve to "whiten" the national population.[27] Newer works nuance the idea of what was understood by elites as "desirable" European immigration by exploring groups from Europe who were not necessarily welcome in Latin America under strict "whitening" initiatives. For example, Jeffrey Lesser's essay "The Immigration and Integration of Polish Jews in Brazil, 1924–1934" (1994) looks at the rise in immigration of a group that was often rejected by Brazilian policymakers but who proved remarkably effective at integrating into national

26. The article on Mexico, not explored in this essay, is Pablo Yankelevich's "Mexico for the Mexicans: immigration, national sovereignty and the promotion of mestizaje," *The Americas* 68, no.3 (2012): 405–436.

27. Robert M. Levine, "Some views on race and immigration during the Old Republic," *The Americas* 27, no.4 (1971): 373–380.

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life.[28] Conversely, in "'Immigrants with Money Are No Use to Us' Race and Ethnicity in the Zona Portuária of Rio de Janeiro, 1903–1912" (2006), Kit McPhee examines the Rio de Janeiro government's attempts to import "undesirable" poor immigrants from southern Europe as a way to marginalize the city's Afro-Brazilian populations.[29] Together, these later articles show that, even as Europe remained the main target for Latin American immigration policies, the "desirable immigrant" was a slippery concept that applied varying combinations of social, ethnic, and cultural criteria in different geographical and temporal contexts. They also allow for an appreciation of the early twentieth century as a period that marked a new and contradictory phase in Brazil's (and, more broadly, Latin America's) history of immigration.

In addition to transatlantic migrants, several groups and individuals also undertook the journey without the intention of settling in their final destination. Here, five articles focus on the cross-border ties forged by those who took these more temporary transatlantic voyages. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the majority of these focus on Europeans who traveled to Latin America. Yet, whereas earlier texts tend not to question why this was the case, more recent works published in *The Americas* recognize structural factors that made it easier for Europeans to travel across, comment on, and intervene in Latin America than vice versa.[30] In particular, Jaime Pensado's article "A History of the 'Pernicious Foreigner': Jean Meyer and the Re-writing of the Mexican Revolution During the Global Sixties" (2024) follows French historian Jean Meyer's trajectory in Mexico during the Global Sixties as a way to illuminate the role that foreign academics played in the shaping of the Global Sixties in Mexico. However, Pensado situates this account within the context of Latin America and the Caribbean's symbolic ascendence among European intellectuals of the New Left during the second half of the twentieth century and recognizes that Meyer was only able to achieve the influence he did because of the "Francophile character" of Mexican academia and the fact that he was a white man.[31]

Ericka Kim Verba's pioneering article "To Paris and Back: Violeta Parra's Transnational Performance of Authenticity" (2013) reverses the direction of

28. Jeffrey Lesser, "The immigration and integration of Polish Jews in Brazil, 1924-1934," *The Americas* 51, no.2 (1994).

29. Kit McPhee, "'Immigrants with money are no use to us' race and ethnicity in the Zona Portuária of Rio de Janeiro, 1903-1912," *The Americas* 62, no.4 (2006): 623–650.

30. For the former: Earl R. Beck, "Colin Ross in South America, 1919-1920," *The Americas* 17, no.1 (1960): 53–63; Lawrence D. Taylor, "The great adventure: mercenaries in the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1915," *The Americas* 43, no.1 (1986): 25–45. For the latter: Stuart McCook, "'Giving plants a civil status': scientific representations of nature and nation in Costa Rica and Venezuela, 1885-1935," *The Americas* 58, no.4 (2002); Jaime Pensado, "A history of the "pernicious foreigner": Jean Meyer and the re-writing of the Mexican Revolution during the Global Sixties," *The Americas* 81, no.4 (2024): 589–622.

31. Pensado, "A history of the 'pernicious foreigner,'" p. 621.

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travel by zooming in on Chilean folk musician Violeta Parra's trip to and reception in Paris during the 1960s. As with Jean Meyer, it was the growth of an anti-colonial movement during the Cold War that facilitated this transatlantic exchange. Here, however, the subject is a Chilean woman who, against this backdrop, gained significant recognition in European artistic circles precisely because her performances displayed a distinctly non-cosmopolitan authenticity.[32] Indeed, by employing an explicitly transnational framework, Verba aptly illustrates how cosmopolitanism and modernity flowed in all directions, thus challenging simplistic binaries of traditional/modern. The article also exemplifies how transnational histories can shed light on the important role that women played in constructing and forging Latin American–European relations.

Flows of Ideas

In addition to human mobility, seven articles published in *The Americas* take transatlantic ideological currents as their subject of analysis. While articulated, and sometimes carried, by groups and individuals, these ideas often experienced different trajectories from those of their creators. The emphasis on less tangible connections also helps illuminate the transnational entanglements of Latin American countries that are not normally covered in histories of twentieth-century diplomatic relations with or immigration from Europe, such as Venezuela. The majority of the articles (7/8) in this cluster focus on political ideologies and racial thought, although one early article explores Spanish novelist Emilia Pardo Bazán's promotion of *Hispanismo* in the aftermath of the "Disaster of 1898."[33] While they still overwhelmingly assume that ideas circulated from Europe to Latin America and not the other way round, the authors do place increasing importance on understanding how groups and individuals within Latin America interpreted ideas from Europe and adapted them to their local and national contexts. In this way, academic production in *The Americas* displays an early interest in what has more recently been conceptualized as "localising the global."[34]

Two articles foreground the local conditions that made different sectors of Latin America society more receptive to European influence in specific historical moments. For instance, Ronald Newton's "Ducini, Prominenti, Antifascisti: Italian Fascism and the Italo-Argentine Collectivity, 1922–1945" (1994) explains the relative strength and longevity of fascism in Argentina in terms of the large Italian community there (the third largest in the world during the

32. Ericka Kim Verba, "To Paris and back: Violeta Parra's transnational performance of authenticity," *The Americas* 70, no.2 (2013): 269–302.

33. Ronald Hilton, "Emilia Pardo-Bazan and the Americas," *The Americas* 9, no.2 (1952): 135–148.

34. Tanya Harmer "Towards a global history of the Unidad Popular," *Radical Americas* 6, no.1 (2021).

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interwar period).[35] In a similar fashion, in his essay "Populist Anxiety: Race and Social Change in the Thought of Romulo Gallegos," Doug Yarrington contends that Venezuelan president Rómulo Gallegos's propagation of European cultural ideals in his literary works responded to elite anxieties about the democratic transformation promised by his populist rhetoric.[36] Into the twenty-first century, authors publishing in *The Americas* have paid closer attention to the agency of Latin Americans across the political and economic spectrum in choosing which foreign ideas to adopt and which to reject. Kirwan Shaffer's article "Freedom Teaching: Anarchism and Education in Early Republican Cuba, 1898–1925" (2003) surveys anarchist educational initiatives in Cuba during the first three decades after independence from Spain. He contends that, though these Cuban anarchists imported the ideas, materials, and personnel of the Spanish *Escuela Moderna* to establish schools that would challenge the religious dogma of Catholic schools and the blind patriotism of the public education system, they adapted these to the realities of Cuba's working-class communities.[37] In "The Chilean Movimiento Nacional Socialista, the German-Chilean Community, and the Third Reich, 1932–1939: Myth and Reality" (2004), Marcus Klein examines the development of this group, established in 1932 by middle-class men from Santiago. He illustrates how the MNS fused fascist ideology with themes from Chile's own authoritarian tradition, concluding that the group's ultimate objective of strengthening the Chilean nation rather than preserving a distinctly German identity led to it breaking with the organization of German–Chilean associations in the late 1930s.[38] By understanding how the global intersects with the local, these articles provide insights into phenomena that do not make sense if we only see Latin America as a passive recipient of foreign influence. In particular, why fascism remained influential in Latin America long after the defeat of Italy and Germany in the Second World War or why the MNS backed the Popular Front in Chile over a year before the Nazi–Soviet Pact of 1939.

Finally, works published in *The Americas* have gone a long way toward highlighting the significant contributions that Latin Americans have made to global intellectuals currents as a result of their innovative adaptations of European thought. In his article "Importing Freud and Lamarck to the Tropics: Arthur Ramos and the Transformation of Brazilian Racial Thought, 1926–1939" (2003), Brad Lange uncovers how the Brazilian psychiatrist melded the

35. Ronald C. Newton, "Ducini, Prominenti, Antifascisti: Italian Fascism and the Italo-Argentine collectivity, 1922-1945," *The Americas* 51, no.1 (1994): 41–66.

36. Doug Yarrington, "Populist anxiety: race and social change in the thought of Romulo Gallegos," *The Americas* 56, no.1 (1999): 65–90.

37. Kirwin R. Shaffer, "Freedom teaching: anarchism and education in early republican Cuba, 1898-1925," *The Americas* 60, no.2 (2003): 151–183.

38. Marcus Klein, "The Chilean Movimiento Nacional Socialista, the German-Chilean community, and the Third Reich, 1932-1939: Myth and Reality," *The Americas* 60, no.4 (2004): 589–616.

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ideas of three prominent European scholars—Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, and Sigmund Freud—to create a distinct methodology that challenged the myth of racial degeneracy.[39] This school of thought, while still equating progress and modernity to whiteness and European culture, played a significant role in facilitating the spread of "cultural uplift" across Latin America in the mid-twentieth century, which distinguished the continent's social policies from those of the United States and parts of Europe.[40] Also seeking to understand how prominent Latin Americans transformed European thought into tangible action, Max Paul Friedman's piece "A Latin American Third Way? Juan José Arévalo's Spiritual Socialism, 1916–1963" (2024) recounts how Arévalo became familiar with the ideas of German philosopher Karl Kristian Frederich Krause during his time in Argentina and attempted to put them into practice in the form of "spiritual socialism" during his presidential term in Guatemala.[41] In uncovering the various ways in which Latin American thinkers and leaders converted the philosophical and scientific musings of sometimes obscure European thinkers into tangible political and social initiatives, these articles invert narratives about "one-way transfer of ideas from Europe to the developing world."[42]

Flows of Practices

From the transnational circulation of people and ideas emerge certain practices that, either purposefully or unwittingly, cultivate a sense of belonging to a larger, global community. The final nine articles in this collection pick up this theme. In interrogating this aspect of the transnational relationship between Latin America and Europe in the twentieth century, the authors of these works introduce a wider variety of connections than the largely political and social entanglements explored in the previous thematic clusters.

In terms of cross-border military relations, Frederick Nunn's overview of the "Latin American Military Establishment" (1971) suggests that to understand the development of the Latin American military and its contemporary sociopolitical role, we have to look at the Europeans who trained them.[43] Given the preponderance of military regimes in twentieth-century Latin America,

39. Brad Lange, "Importing Freud and Lamarck to the tropics: Arthur Ramos and the transformation of Brazilian racial thought, 1926-1939," *The Americas* 65, no.1 (2003): 9–34.

40. For more information see Naney Leys Stepan, "*The Hour of Eugenics*": *Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America* (Cornell University Press: 1991).

41. Max Paul Friedman, "A Latin American third way? Juan José Arévalo's spiritual socialism, 1916–1963," *The Americas* 81, no.1 (2024): 67–91.

42. Friedman, 'A Latin American third way?,' p. 71.

43. Frederick M. Nunn, "The Latin American military establishment: some thoughts on the origins of its socio-political role and an illustrative bibliographical essay," *The Americas* 28, no.2 (1971): 135–151.

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particularly during the Cold War, probing these transatlantic connections and their complex afterlives may help those who are seeking to decenter the United States in the region's international history.[44] Turning to commercial relations, Donna Guy revisits the topic of British informal empire in Latin America with her published CLAH lecture "Harrods Buenos Aires. The Case of the Unwanted Dresses, 1912–1940" (2020). Unlike earlier works that presented Latin America as an empty stage for British commercial imperialism, Guy illustrates how the owners' failure to account for local preferences when opening the Argentinian store meant Harrods Buenos Aires, instead of cultivating a clientele of upper-class women as intended, became a store for the middle classes.[45] In this, she joins a wave of new work that is uncovering how Latin American consumers shaped international business practices.[46]

Argentina is the setting for three more works in this cluster. Firstly, in his essay "The Socialist Press in Turn-of-the-Century Argentina" (1980), Richard Walter analyzes the contributions of Argentina's socialist press to public and political debates around socioeconomic conditions of the working classes in the period before the Mexican and Russian revolutions. This particular collection of newspapers, he suggests, was largely driven by European immigrants who established periodicals to apply the Marxist ideals with which they were familiar to their new surroundings.[47] Also looking at the press industry, Mariano Ben Plotkin's article "Tell Me Your Dreams: Psychoanalysis and Popular Culture in Buenos Aires, 1930–1950" (1999) recounts how cultural magazines in Buenos Aires adapted and popularized Freudian techniques psychoanalysis in the mid-twentieth century. Rather than seeing the process as a mere transplantation of European practices in Argentina, Plotkin makes clear that psychoanalysis was picked up by magazine editors because it melded seamlessly with long-established features, such as dream interpretation, and was enthusiastically received by audiences because it dovetailed with changing cultural norms that facilitated more open discourse on previously taboo topics.[48] Finally, Sandra McGee Deutsch surveys the activities of various communist-led women's solidarity movements that operated in Argentina during the mid-twentieth century in her "The New School Lecture 'An Army of Women'" (2018). These organizations brought together Argentinians and European immigrants from various social strata to raise money and propagandize for the Spanish Republican

44. Weld has done this for the Guatemalan Revolution and Chilean coup in her previously cited articles.

45. Donna Guy, "CLAH Lecture: Harrods Buenos Aires. The case of the unwanted dresses, 1912–1940," *The Americas* 77, no.3 (2020): 351–360.

46. For example: Ana María Otero-Cleves, *Plebeian Consumers: Global Connections, Local Trade, and Foreign Goods in Nineteenth-Century Colombia*, (Cambridge University Press: 2024).

47. Richard J. Walter, "The socialist press in turn-of-the-century Argentina," *The Americas* 37, no.1 (1980): 1–24.

48. Mariano Ben Plotkin, "Tell me your dreams: psychoanalysis and popular culture in Buenos Aires, 1930-1950," *The Americas* 55, no.4 (1999): 601–629.

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and Allied cause.[49] Deutsch therefore brings a welcome gendered perspective to the burgeoning subfield of transnational solidarity that is recentering Latin America as a way to challenge the notion that aid has historically flowed from north to south.[50] In regard to why Argentina is so often the setting for scholars wishing to draw out transnational connections, these three articles suggest that this preference is a result of the country's relatively high population of European immigrants.

Given the global reach of different faiths and the cross-border mobility of their proselytizers, religion is one of the most studied transnational practices among historians. As Catholicism was the predominant religion in twentieth-century Latin America, the remaining three articles in this cluster look at the emergence and development of different Catholic movements throughout the region. Written in the late 1980s, just after the Vatican launched a formal inquiry into the orthodoxy of Liberation Theology, Jeffrey Klaiber's "Prophets and Populists: Liberation Theology, 1968–1988" (1989) assessed its emergence and development. Klaiber contends that, though the first stage of the movement was closely linked to European intellectual and spiritual traditions, the second stage grew out of Latin American realities and therefore challenged the Eurocentrism of religious thinking and practice, hence the inquiry.[51] In the article "'Restoring Christian Social Order': The Mexican Catholic Youth Association (1913–1932)" (2003), David Espinosa explores an earlier example of Catholic attempts to promote social justice. According to Espinosa, the organization, which was established by French Jesuit priest Bernardo Bergöend, played a fundamental role in revitalizing the Catholic Church after the Mexican Revolution until it was marginalized by the centralizing efforts of *Acción Católica* in the aftermath of the Cristero wars.[52] In some ways, Stephen Andes picks up where Espinosa left off in "A Catholic Alternative to Revolution: The Survival of Social Catholicism in Postrevolutionary Mexico" (2012). This piece looks at the broader Catholic social action movement introduced by Jesuit priest Alfredo Méndez Medina following his interactions with *L'Acción Populaire* in France. Andes asserts that the movement was not extinguished by *Acción Católica* but rather was kept alive by Catholic women who traveled to Europe for propaganda and fundraising.[53] The article is therefore a relatively early

49. Sandra McGee Deutsch, "The New School Lecture 'An army of women'," *The Americas* 75, no.1 (2018): 95–125.

50. For example: Jessica Stites Mor (ed.) *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Cold War Latin America* (University of Wisconsin Press: 2013).

51. Jeffrey L. Klaiber, "Prophets and populists: liberation theology, 1968-1988," *The Americas* 46, no.1 (1989): 1–15.

52. David Espinosa, "'Restoring Christian Social Order': The Mexican Catholic Youth Association (1913-1932)," *The Americas* 59, no.4 (2003): 451–474.

53. Stephen J. C. Andes, "A Catholic alternative to revolution: the survival of social Catholicism in postrevolutionary Mexico," *The Americas* 68, no.4 (2012): 529–562.

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contribution to a recent body of scholarship that seeks to bring out the political dimension of women's religious activism.[54] These accounts suggest that women's perceived apoliticism made them particularly effective in keeping marginalized Catholic movements alive, making them key actors in maintaining relations between regions with reduced diplomatic and economic ties. More broadly, all these articles illustrate how ostensibly European Catholic practices took on new life and meaning when adapted to Latin American realities, having significant national and even global impact as a result.

CONCLUSIONS

Although there is no doubt that the English language historiography on twentieth-century Latin America tends to focus on hemispheric relations, a review of articles published in *The Americas* indicates that the region's relationship with Europe has been a recurrent topic of interest. In the journal's earlier years, the main focal point was Latin American diplomatic and economic relations with Europe, and there was a noticeable trend of portraying the region as an arena for great power machinations. The exception that proves the rule were articles on immigration which, while providing important insights into Latin American state building, reinforced the notion that transatlantic flows were largely unidirectional.

More recent works, inspired by the global and transnational turns, reveal a wider variety of cultural, political, and social connections that existed between Latin America and Europe during the twentieth century. The authors of these articles increasingly depict multidimensional relationships that complicate the idea of Latin America's inferiority vis-à-vis Europe as well as its purported subjugation within the global economic system. They recognize the unequal global hierarchies that conditioned internal and external perceptions about the region's place in the world but illustrate how different Latin American nations, groups, and individuals attempted to navigate these for their own benefit (although often to the detriment of others). In this way, work in *The Americas* aptly demonstrates how viewing Latin America's twentieth-century relations with Europe can push our understanding on the region's international history beyond conventional narratives of passive victimhood and US intervention. Indeed, the fact of these articles, which span more than 70 years, suggests that the scholarship has always been more nuanced than the broader cultural imagination would have us believe. Returning to the aims of the

54. For example: Sofía Crespo Reyes, *Entre la filantropía y la práctica política: La Unión de Damas Católicas en la Ciudad de México, 1860-1932* (UNAM, Facultad de Estudios Superiores Acatlán: 2022); Margaret Chowning, *Catholic Women and Mexican Politics, 1750–1940* (Princeton University Press: 2023).

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journal's founders, though the means were perhaps unanticipated, the result has remained true to their original ideas: the promotion of a more equitable approach to inter-American relations.

By moving away from traditional international histories, the articles explored in this collection provide some insight into the ways in which diverse historical actors forged connections to Europe. It is especially apparent that women played a crucial role in establishing social and cultural ties between nations that did not necessarily enjoy the closest diplomatic relations. These transnational histories also highlight the importance of cross-border networks that facilitated the transatlantic circulation of ideas and practices, in particular those created by European migrants, military personnel, and religious communities. Uncovering more transnational communities, such as antifascist organizations and environmental movements, may help shed light on how other groups, particularly Indigenous and Afro-descendant populations, envisioned their relationship with Europe.

The new interest in multifarious transatlantic relations also reveals ties to other countries that are not usually covered in the historiography on the Monroe Doctrine and European immigration, such as Chile, Guatemala, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Yet the majority of essays still focus on Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico, whereas the Andean region is noticeably absent, which points to assumptions about the links between historical immigration flows and contemporary political, social, and cultural ties. In regard to Europe, scholars seemingly posit the western and southern regions as uniquely linked to Latin America. While it is true that Britain and Germany had particular strategic interest in the region during the early twentieth century, and France, Italy, and Spain retained strong social and cultural ties, recent historiographical developments imply that there are more transatlantic relations to be uncovered in *The Americas*. Finally, although this is an essay on Latin American–European connections, it is worth noting that other regions have also been impacted by the tendency to privilege inter-American affairs in the regional historiography. More research on Latin America's twentieth-century linkages with Africa, Asia, and Oceania will help contextualize some of the contemporary shifts in the region's diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations.

Charlotte Eaton is a Fellow in Latin American and Caribbean History at the London School of Economics (LSE), where she completed her PhD in International History in 2025. Her doctoral project examined Colombia's engagement with the Spanish Civil War and its immediate legacies. She received funding from LSE, Universidad del Rosario, Royal Historical Society, Society for Latin American Studies, and American Historical Association to assist with this research and its dissemination. Charlotte also holds an MSc

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in Theory and History of International Relations from LSE and a BA in Spanish from the University of Bristol.

Fellow in Latin American and Caribbean History, London School of Economics and Political Science
London, UK
c.eaton@lse.ac.uk

CHARLOTTE EATON

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