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➲ Constructing and Transgressing Borders Images of Self and Other in the History of the Americas

A border usually signifies a line that separates one country or territorial area from another. In a cultural sense a border also represents difference and constitutes otherness as well as identity. In the case of borders between states, the use of national symbols such as flags and anthems reinforce the concept of otherness. Borders, in this sense, are symbols of power. Yet they also mark out a space between territories, a space where foreigners encounter each other. Thus they establish links and facilitate contacts that are not always under the control of existing power structures. Borders are not only dividing lines between two or more contingent systems, but also contact zones where encounters and exchange become possible.[1]

This article will focus on cognitive and mental borders that find expression in perceptions of the foreign other.[2] Perceptions and mental images demonstrate the exchange function of borders. Borders – whether political or cultural – are constructed on the basis of concepts of alterity. For historians of Latin America, the main pole of alterity has been Europe; historians have traditionally concentrated on processes of perception in relation to the "Old World".[3] From a European perspective, America – at the point of its discovery – constituted a monolithic "New World". Only in the course of the colonial period did a terminological differentiation of the Americas emerge. Since the nineteenth century the emergence of categories such as "North" and "South" or "Anglo" and "Latin" has often concealed the differences between the many Americas. According to European observers, there were fundamental differences between the two parts. The idea of a dichotomy of the Americas has survived in the vernacular up until the present day. Frequently, it implies evaluations which move far beyond mere cultural or geographical classification.

To a degree, the European perspective on the Americas has been reproduced within the region. Two distinct processes are responsible for the ever-increasing importance of

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1 For recent interdisciplinary approaches see Bieswanger et al. (2003).

2 For the context of historical research on perceptions see König/Rinke (1998).

3 Compare Todorov (1985); König (1992 and 1998); and Pagden (1993).

the way the "North" and the "South" have perceived each other since the end of the colonial period: on the one hand the widening development gap, and on the other hand the increasing number of contact situations. The construction of mental borders between what was seen as the two parts of the New World became an important fundament for the construction of American identities. These identities have been in perpetual flux because they are the result of symbolic and real encounters in contact zones. Images of the "American other" have constantly shaped images of the self. In addition, the construction of mental borders took place in a context of asymmetrical power relations within the Americas. After independence, these relations were marked by the U.S. claim to hegemony and by U.S. interventionism. This power structure heavily influenced perceptions.

As a result of the various historical experiences of violent contact which have characterized relations between Latin America and the United States, the concept of two diametrically opposed spheres separated by an insurmountable border has been reinforced. This notion has heavily influenced research on historical perceptions. Scholars have either concentrated on Latin American perceptions of the United States or they have focused on U.S. images of Latin America.[4] The interactions between the two spheres of perceptions, however, have rarely been the subject of observation. These interactions take place at borders in real or symbolic situations of contact. It is common knowledge that images of the "Anglo" contribute to the formation of images of the self in Latin America and vice versa.[5] Yet, Latin images of the self are also the result of those images of the self and the other that Anglos are supposed to have.

The interaction between these images in the context of relations between the Americas in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, particularly in the period between independence and 1945, is the central theme of this study. The article is based on textual as well as visual sources such as historical caricatures, which allow insights into collective emotions and concepts of an ideal world. Caricatures capture the stereotypes, perceptions and basic beliefs of a certain period in lasting form (Rinke 2004b: 248-249). The article aims at a synthesis that reconstructs and presents fragments of perceptions. The object of study here will not be the images in their totality, but rather recurring elements which stand out from the great mass of information.

During the colonial period, the Americas usually looked to Europe for their frame of reference. First contacts and interactions between "North" and "South" took place in the northern frontier areas of New Spain and in the Caribbean. In these regions conflict between Spaniards and their European rivals was ongoing. At the same time, these areas were characterized by largely unofficial and illegal interactions and exchange. Smuggling was an important part of the Iberian colonial system and Anglo-American traders increasingly participated in this during the course of the eighteenth century.

These merchants were often prejudiced and harbored beliefs that stemmed either from the "black legend", from the British wartime propaganda against Spain or from

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4 For the Latin American perspective see Rama (1981) and Reid (1977). For the U.S. perspective see Pike (1992) and Park (1995).

5 In the following, terms like "Anglo" or "Latin" are used without quotation marks for stylistic reasons only and do not imply the homogeneity of the Americas.

negative experiences with the Spanish coastguards (Duffy 1986: 130-141). A central element in these negative perceptions was denominational antagonism. Since the time of Sir Walter Raleigh, the rejection of Roman Catholicism and the idea of liberating indigenous peoples from its yoke had been a legitimating device for English expansionism in the southern parts of the Americas. In the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, New England puritans even developed the idea of constructing a theocratic "new Jerusalem" in New Spain (de Onís 1952: 14-20). Until the second half of the eighteenth century, however, images of the American other remained rather nebulous and irrelevant.

This was to change in the era of the Atlantic revolutions. Political and commercial interaction between the Americas increased in extent and importance until 1825. Spain supported the North American struggle for independence even though it was a dangerous development for the Spanish colonial sphere of power. Almost parallel to these international developments, the Spanish crown reformed and liberalized the trade system in America. These measures led to an increasing number of encounters, usually among transnational actors in border areas such as port cities (Linebaugh/Rediker 2000).[6] Intellectual elites played a major role in this context, with freemasons acting as the vanguard of transnational contacts (Rinke 2001: 105). Despite their many differences, these elites had a common belief in popular sovereignty and human rights. They also developed a Creole identity that shared a common denominator in its delimitation from Europe. Thus Latin Americans like Francisco de Miranda followed events in the English colonies with great interest and sympathy (Racine 2003). Leading personalities like George Washington, Benjamin Franklin or Thomas Jefferson were as highly esteemed as the republican institutions they had created (Rama 1981: 12-19). With the onset of the age of Atlantic revolutions, the Americas began to form impressions of each other.

From the beginning, however, there were negative elements in the images of the United States in Latin America. Contemporary travel books are important sources for this. These books contain critical reflections on the allegedly limitless democratization of Anglo America, which from the point of view of many Latin observers went too far and undermined social hierarchies. The stereotype of Anglo American materialism is one of the earliest examples of this critical reflection. Religious tolerance in the United States was seen as even more of a cause for concern and conservative voyagers evaluated it as a clear sign of moral decay (Reid 1977: 16-31).

The transgression of boundaries through travel did not automatically lead to a better understanding between the Americas. Rather it promoted the tendency to delimitate spheres of the self, which were usually defined in cultural terms. In the course of the nineteenth century this process gained in importance. When Simón Bolívar presented his ideas on a constitution to the Congress of Angostura in 1819, he pointed out that the new Latin American states had to be different from the United States. Although the northern neighbor was marked by its "political abilities and moral power" and clearly served as a model, Bolívar rejected the idea of imitating the U.S. political system (Bolívar 1984: 50). According to Bolívar, the construction of different political institutions was necessary because of the fundamental differences between the north and the south. He promoted a centralist system with a strong executive.

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6 See also the rich collection of sources in Bernstein (1945).

Opposition towards the United States was closely connected to the initial experiences of U.S. expansionism. The westward expansion of the colonial period now continued in the south. Expansion started in 1803 with the purchase of Louisiana and soon included large territories in Florida and northern New Spain. At the same time, U.S. interest in Cuba and Puerto Rico became obvious. It therefore seemed logically consistent that the United States should voice a claim of superiority in the Americas by formulating the Monroe Doctrine. From the Anglo American perspective this was delimitation in two respects: first, against Europe and Old World monarchies, and second, against the latecomer republics in the south of the Americas. The United States' southern neighbors were expected to accept the model character of the U.S. in what was defined as a special "hemisphere" of the world with a specific system of government.

This claim to political preponderance was closely connected to images of Latin America that were markedly negative despite the formation of sister republics. The political chaos caused by the long wars of independence contributed to an increase in the longstanding prejudice against the new states and their inhabitants. Denominational antagonism remained the basis from which to construct fundamental differences in the "character" of Anglo and Latin America. In a letter to Alexander von Humboldt, Thomas Jefferson wrote of Latin Americans who "bow the neck to their priests, and persevere in intolerantism" (Jefferson 1984: 1248). Early U.S. envoys to Latin America corroborated this perception by reporting the anarchy they encountered. From their point of view, Latin America's Iberian heritage was responsible for the general tendency towards dishonor and criminality in the region. The reports demonstrate a high degree of ethnocentrism and bias against the southern republics in U.S. elites of the time (Schoultz 1998: 13).

U.S. claims and prejudices did not remain unknown in Latin America. Leading politicians, Bolívar especially, expressed apprehension about these perceptions and included them in their political projects. Bolívar's original plan for a congress in Panama reflected this concern and excluded the United States from what was projected as a confederation of American states. Bolívar had pointed out already at Angostura: "Let us face the fact that our people is neither European nor North American; it is rather a mixture of Africa and America than an emanation of Europe" (Bolívar 1984: 52). This perception of a border towards the foreign American other was crucial for the further development of alterity discourse in the Americas.

In the period before 1825 only relatively few elites were able to cross the boundaries between the Americas and influence images of the other. This was to change, however, in the course of the nineteenth century, when an increasing number of people began to participate in the encounter. The main reason for this was the growing interest of the United States in its southern neighbors. The extension of commerce and travel brought more people of different social groups into contact with each other. In the U.S., more balanced commentators stressed the positive aspects of Latin American images and emphasized the affection that many Latin Americans held for the United States.

More important, however, was U.S. expansionism, which in this period was directed against its immediate neighbors. Since the end of the wars of independence, U.S. policy towards Latin America had been marked by repeated interventions carried out by different agents and with different methods. Aside from a quasi-doctrinal drive to expand, the struggle for free access to the promising markets of the region became a major incentive. The U.S. government secured privileges via treaties weighted heavily in its favour – with

Nicaragua, for example, and later with Colombia – thus securing control over strategic systems of communication. At the same time, protecting U.S. investors in Latin America became increasingly important. U.S. investment often provoked domestic political strife and the first instances of intervention to protect U.S. property and citizens were carried out in this period. Interventions of this sort and the use of diplomatic and military force were to become typical of Washington's policy towards Latin America (König 1988). This reached a climax in the war against Mexico (1846-48), which led to huge territorial losses for the United States' southern neighbor (Vázquez de Knauth 1977). U.S. claims to leadership in the "hemisphere" were not, however, directed against European interventionism in Latin America – as some readers of the Monroe Doctrine might have hoped. Rather, Latin American requests for support against European violations of their sovereignty were largely ignored until the 1860s.

U.S. expansionism was ideologically rooted in the idea of "Manifest Destiny" – a belief in the divine mission of the (North) American people to sweep aside not only the indigenous peoples of North America but also the allegedly "backward" Latin Americans.[7] In Anglo American perceptions of Latin America the notion of a direct opposition between self and other came to the fore. Anglos who had spent some time in Latin America compared what they saw and experienced with what they were familiar with at home, and usually came to negative conclusions. In the second half of the nineteenth century, U.S. images of the American other developed facets that were to remain central for over a century. Elements of these images included the assumption of Latin ignorance, immorality, unreliability, and even maliciousness. Cowardice, laziness, and weakness were also integrated into the long list of Latin American deficiencies perceived by U.S. observers. These character traits were often gendered in that they were interpreted as unmanly and effeminate (Pike 1992: 47-52).

When U.S. expansionism reached another border in the course of the nineteenth century and military conflict was in the offing, these "deficiencies" were emphasized over and over again. These negative images served to legitimate the conflicts. The alleged weakness of Latin America was used to construct contrasts which culminated in the antithesis of civilization and barbarity and were seemingly upheld by fashionable theories of race. The "superiority" of the United States and its drive for conquest thus took on the character of a natural law. Yet in some instances these ideas were also responsible for restricting the urge to expand. Racist arguments were an important element in rejecting the demand for a complete annexation of Mexico in the war of 1846-48. Through annexation, Mexicans would have gained U.S. nationality – an idea that racists in the United States resolutely rejected (Schoultz 1998: 34).[8] From their perspective the border to Mexico had to remain a permanent one. Thus the conflict about the territorial border between Mexico and the United States went hand in hand with the hardening of mental borders between the two spheres.

U.S. expansionism provoked protest in Latin America. In Mexico – the main victim of this policy – the first visual depictions were published during the war against the U.S.. They were intended to mobilize resistance against the U.S. invasion. Illustration 1 is

7 On this topic see Stephanson (1995).

8 On the problem of nationality in the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) see Holden/Zolov (2000: 32).

taken from the Mexican magazine *El Calavera*. It represents the invader in an abstract and schematic manner as a greedy creeping monster confronted by the courageous Mexican *Calavera* – here probably for the first time used as a symbol of Mexico with the national flag in hand.

Ill. 1: Mexico and the U.S. Invasion, 1847
Source: *El Calavera* N° 30, Mexico, 7 May 1847 (Barajas 2000: 157).

Not only in Mexico, but in other Latin American countries too, educated elites formed a defensive front against U.S. interventionism, which after 1850 was directed especially towards Central America and the region's strategic importance for a future interoceanic canal. Bolívar's concept of a Pan-American confederation excluding the United States lived on and was discussed in several unsuccessful congresses. An important voice in the chorus demanding Latin American solidarity was that of the Chilean writer

Francisco Bilbao. In his criticism of U.S. expansionism, Bilbao emphasized that the Anglos had a "different intellect", a disposition that had profited from historical development while Latin America had to carry the heavy burden of its Iberian heritage. The Chilean stressed that the United States had created a constitution that was of global importance; yet in the course of the nineteenth century it had deviated from the path of idealism and had transformed itself from a model into a danger for Latin America. Bilbao felt that the U.S. had mutated from "American to Yankee" (Bilbao 1941: 42). Bilbao and his Latin American peers were embittered by the prejudice and arrogance of the Anglo Americans. Through travels to the United States, a growing number of Latin Americans were able to learn firsthand of the existence and circulation of these stereotypes. Inspired by these negative experiences, Bilbao developed the notion of a Latin America that was to be diametrically opposed to what he defined as typical Anglo American character traits such as individualism and materialism. His own Latin world was to excel in humanity, hospitality, art, and poetry instead.

Yet even critics of the United States did not condemn their northern neighbor completely. After all, it remained a model republic, especially from the point of view of many Latin American liberals who appreciated that ideals like equality and freedom were not only talked about but also realized in daily life. Moreover, from the perspective of many Latin Americans, the United States became a land of prosperity and progress in the second half of the nineteenth century. This perception was connected to imagery elements such as civilization and virile power, which in fact reflected Anglo American stereotypes of Latin Americans. Writers such as the later Argentine president Domingo Faustino Sarmiento propagated views such as these through travel books. For Sarmiento it was crucial to adopt the positive aspects of what the Anglo Americans had to offer and to use them for Latin American development. This seemed a necessary part of defending Latin America against the expected U.S. onslaught of the future (Miller 1999: 174-175).

The "Yankee threat" took on a new dimension in the era of imperialism. In the Americas of the late nineteenth century this threat came in a modern disguise: as the new Pan Americanism under U.S. leadership. The economic interests of the United States were the main motive for this change in policy. The intensification of commerce and communications and the increase in investment by U.S. transnational enterprises in the region were the most visible signs of this process. It was reinforced by a multiplication of cultural contacts, which increasingly moved in both directions. Protestant missionaries from the United States went to Latin America, while Latin American students joined U.S. colleges. The contacts and the rhetoric of Pan Americanism did not help reduce the fundamental distrust which existed in many Latin American countries as a result of continuing U.S. expansionism. From the Latin American point of view the claim to hegemony as expressed in the idea of Manifest Destiny remained a threat that was heightened by the gradual and unilateral extension of the Monroe Doctrine.

The extension of the theoretical claims of U.S. hegemony was accompanied by a new wave of interventionism that reached its peak in the period between 1890 and 1930. Once again, a war accelerated this process. Contemporary observers evaluated the 1898/99 war against Spain for control of Cuba as an important parting of the ways.[9] The

[9] See the articles in Bernecker (1998). On the global context see Schoonover (2003).

war and its aftermath clearly demonstrated the extent of U.S. preponderance in Latin America. The formal takeover of Puerto Rico, the guaranteed right to intervene in Cuba, the later interventions in Central America and the Caribbean, and the establishment of informal control in many other countries of the region characterized U.S. policy towards Latin America in this period. The hold of the "Western hemisphere" was the basis for "the Americanization of the World", which the British journalist William T. Stead proclaimed to be the "trend of the twentieth century" (Stead 1902).[10]

Interventionism and the missionary spirit heavily influenced the images of Latin America that circulated in the United States in this period. Elements such as "barbarity", "weakness" and "dependence" corresponded to an image of the self that was characterized by a sense of power and predominance. The construction of Latin American inferiority fulfilled an important function in the necessary change of identity of a country like the United States, which had rapidly gained the status of a world power. These stereotypes had been represented in an increasing number of visual depictions in the press since the turn of the nineteenth century. These stereotypes were best encapsulated in caricatures. Illustration 2 presents an example from 1905. The caricatures show Uncle Sam holding a "civilized" child – Puerto Rico – by the hand. The black and rebellious child – Cuba – is the antithesis. In both cases Latin Americans are mere children who naturally need the protection and education granted by Uncle Sam. They are not able to live their lives independently. Caricatures like this one often referred to specific conflicts but there were also many generalized images of Latin America. The images had a common denominator in that the United States' southern neighbors were represented over and over again as naïve young women, weak children or as impudent and rebellious blacks.

A caricature such as this one reflects a U.S. self-image that defined imperialism not as a freely chosen and actively pursued policy but rather as a "white man's burden", imposed upon the United States by fate. This was a burden that the United States had to carry in order to promote civilization and tame barbarity. This discourse placed the United States on an equal and even superior level with Europe, which had taken up this alleged "duty" in Africa and Asia. Yet in contrast to the European quest for power, Anglo Americans were convinced that their handling of the "burden" was preferable in that it – normally – avoided formal colonial possessions. In this manner the United States emphasized their claim to moral leadership (Rinke 2002: 67). U.S. images of Latin America were a crucial element in upholding the idea of ethical superiority. In these images the American other had been transformed from a denigrated but serious antagonist – a position held until about the 1850s – to a barbaric child that needed protection.

U.S. delimitation from the "barbaric" America in the south and the resulting colonialist polarity of north and south provoked reactions that also needed stereotypical representations of the other in order to construct the self. Concerned by the War of 1898/99, many Latin American intellectuals warned their compatriots about the "Yankee danger"[11]. In these years, writers such as José Martí, José Enrique Rodó or Rubén Darío "rediscovered" their Anglo American neighbor in their attempts to create a concept of

[10] On the context of North Americanization see Rinke (2004a: 37).

[11] The Argentine writer Manuel Ugarte used the term "el peligro yanqui" in 1901 as the title for a widely read article (Ugarte 1978: xviii).

Ill. 2: Uncle Sam and his "children", 1905
Source: "Uncle Sam to Porto Rico", in *Chicago Inter Ocean*, 1905 (Johnson 1980: 127).

Latin American identity. In many respects their arguments resembled the rhetoric that had been voiced fifty years earlier in the context of the U.S.-Mexican War – by Bilbao, for example. The main target of criticism remained U.S. civilization, which was juxtaposed with a genuine Latin American identity. There were different conceptions of what this identity was to be built upon: some proposed the region's Latin heritage, others wanted a return to Spanish roots, and a minority started to suggest indigenous or even African elements as a basis for the construction of the Latin American self. Most were in agreement that, in contrast to the United States, Latin America was the embodiment of idealism, ethical conduct, and humanity.

After the First World War, when U.S. interventionism in the region was at a height, anti-imperialism became an important ingredient in the Latin American intellectual renaissance. This situation led to the image of the greedy Uncle Sam, the global symbol of the United States, whose aim was to violate and enslave Latin America. This image circulated in the mass media via caricatures and other visual representations. Illustration 3 is an example taken from the Chilean cartoon magazine *Sucesos*. It presents the clash

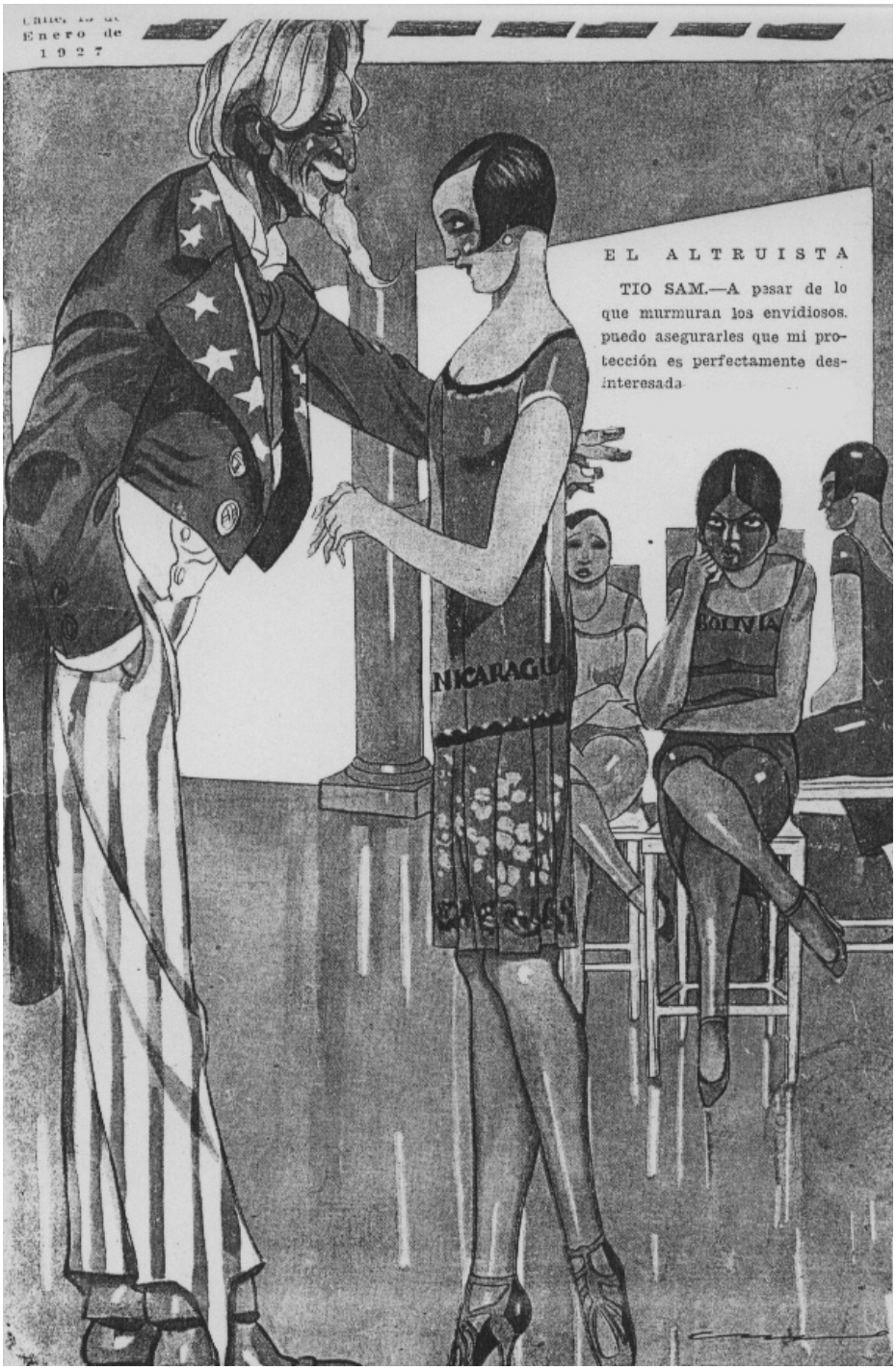
with Uncle Sam from a gendered perspective. Uncle Sam appears as an old sexual offender. Interestingly, the republics of Nicaragua and Bolivia are represented here as young women. While the first – Miss Bolivia, blushing with shame – has already learnt what the uncle's protection implies, the second – Miss Nicaragua – is about to fall for the charm of her suitor. Latin American self-portrayals as helpless young women or children, or as naïve fairytale creatures like Little Red Riding Hood, were found frequently in this period when relations with the United States were being discussed. These self-images corresponded to U.S. perceptions of Latin America.

Criticism of the "peaceful penetration" of Latin America by direct investment and dollar loans from its Anglo American neighbor was accompanied by the increasing circulation of U.S. style popular culture. In some places in Latin America – in the context of urbanization and the rise of the middle classes – borrowed prosperity led to close interaction with a variety of products from the United States. The number of contact situations and border crossings – the enjoyment of U.S. jazz music or Hollywood movies for example – reached previously unknown proportions and increased constantly. Elements in Latin American images of the United States now came to the fore which historical scholarship has neglected because of its traditional concentration on the discourse of anti-imperialism (Rinke 2004a). Thus even the War of 1898/99 produced more than mere anti-American sentiments. The cartoonist of the Mexican magazine *El Hijo del Ahuizote* portrayed the expulsion of the Spaniards by an Uncle Sam armed with a stick bearing the label "America for the Americans" in a rather positive light. In this image, Uncle Sam is placed in the tradition of the Mexican freedom fighter Miguel Hildago and his *Grito de Dolores* of 1810 (illustration 4). The United States is represented here as the force of fulfillment of American liberation.[12]

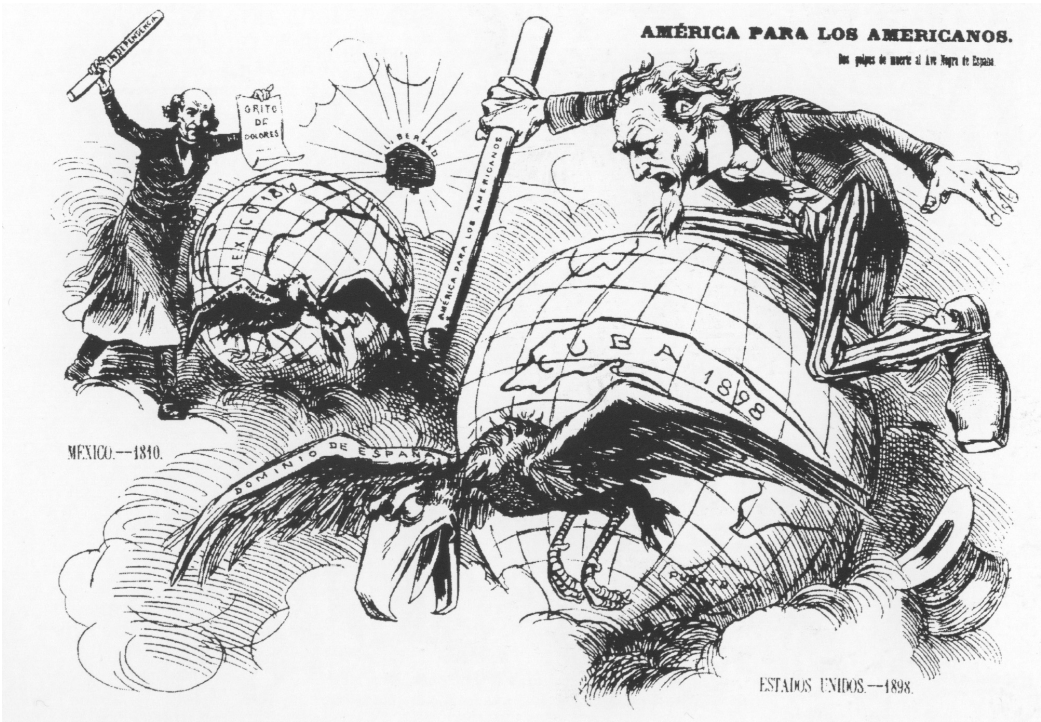
Even Martí and Rodó – often quoted as staunch anti-imperialists – did not hesitate to emphasize their admiration for the constructive and progressive elements of U.S. civilization. Martí especially rejected any kind of racist generalization and stressed the many positive aspects of Anglo Americans. Like Bilbao before them, Martí and Rodó accepted the necessity of initiating a critical dialogue with the United States. The many liberal reformers who followed in their footsteps saw development as successful adaptation of the U.S. model.

When the New York stock market crashed in October 1929, it ushered in the deepest depression that the world economy had yet experienced. In the course of the following months, the effects of the economic crisis were felt in the most distant corners of the world, including Latin America. In the wake of what soon came to be called the Great Depression, there were severe hardships for millions of people, as well as social unrest, political turmoil and dictatorships, rising international tensions, and eventually catastrophic wars. Moreover, the belief in free market capitalism was shattered. Its primary symbol and leader, the United States, lost its aura of invincibility and its model character quickly dissolved in the course of the early 1930s. The vulnerability of the United States also revealed Latin America's degree of dependency upon its northern neighbor. For

[12] One can of course read this caricature differently. The furious expression on Uncle Sam's face could also imply the threat radiating from the United States' powerful presence to countries such as Mexico who had not been able to accomplish the task of liberation on their own.



Ill. 3: The Greedy Uncle Sam, 1927
Source: "El altruista" (*Sucesos*, 13.1.1927: 1).



Ill. 4: The Expulsion of the Spaniards, 1810 and 1898
Source: "América para los americanos", in *El Hijo del Ahuizote*, 18.9.1898 (Rojas Mix 1998: 85).

most Latin Americans it soon seemed that their countries had been caught up in the spiral of decay emanating from Yanquilandia and reinforced by U.S. protectionism. During the Great Depression, the United States were clearly the scapegoat for all that went wrong in the region. Anti-imperialism gained an explicitly anti-American dimension.[13]

In the United States this growing criticism sparked a process of rethinking its relationship to its southern neighbors. Already in the course of the 1920s, leftist intellectuals had criticized Washington's policy towards Latin America. President-elect Herbert Hoover reacted by creating the term "good neighbor" to describe the future relationship between the Americas during his trip to the region in late 1928. Under his successor Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the idea of the "good neighbor" formed the core of a new policy which was characterized by the termination of military interventionism and by respect for the U.S.'s Latin American neighbors (Gellman 1979: 12). But did the Good Neighbor Policy surmount the fundamental antagonism between the north and the south?

There were, of course, steps in this direction. The first wave of tourists from the United States in the 1920s and 1930s came home enchanted by what they believed was Latin culture. "The enormous vogue of things Mexican" (Delpar 1992) included enthusiasm for dance, folklore, and art from the south. This "vogue", however, remained restricted

13 See O'Brien (1996) for examples of anti-Americanism.

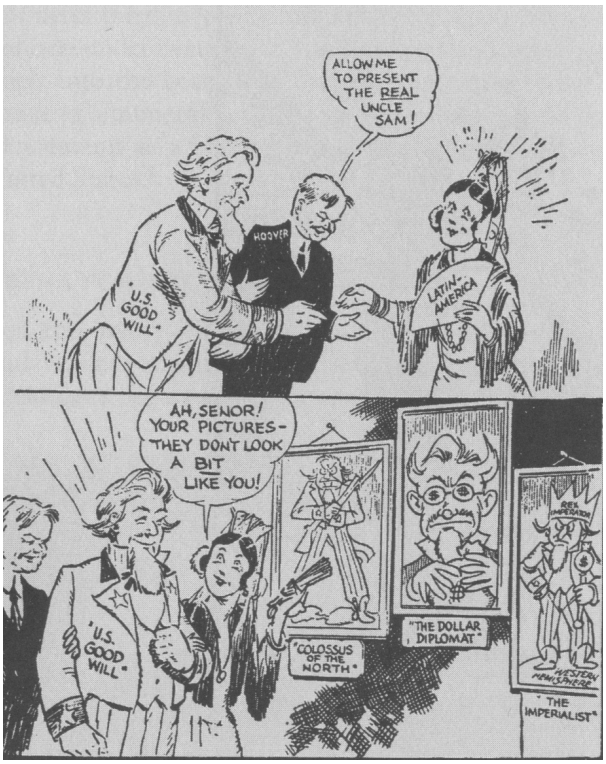
to a liberal and academic environment and seldom left the confines of exotic voyeurism.[14] U.S. tourists looked for "typically Mexican" things, and these trinkets were produced in Mexico to satisfy the expectations of the 'gringos'. The north and the south's images and expectations interacted with and supplemented each other (Pérez Montfort 2004: 251).

After all, the Good Neighbor Policy was not altruistic but has to be seen within the context of U.S. fear of the threat of European fascism. Nazi Germany made headway economically in Latin America. During the Second World War, the United States succeeded in gaining Latin American support by employing economic aid programs. This policy fed hopes for a long-lasting reconciliation of the Americas. The American ideal of a new and better world seemed to be possible and realistic once again. Yet the rhetoric of political equality was accompanied by a strengthening of Latin American economic dependence on the United States. Again, a selection of caricatures demonstrates that the mental borders of Anglo Americans underwent only gradual changes. In illustration 5 from 1934, the character of the Latino has finally grown up. The neighborly "apples of good will" that are distributed by President Roosevelt are symbols of the promise of respect and equality. The image implies, however, that the rich neighbor Roosevelt lets the poor neighbor share in his abundance but that he also expects gratitude in return. In addition, there is a marked difference in size between the two figures – albeit much less pronounced than in the caricature of 1905 (illustration 2). Despite closer contacts the hierarchy between the Americas remains.

Ill. 5: The Good Neighbor, 1934
Source: "Neighborly Call", in *Newark Evening News*, 1934 (Friedman 2003: 51).

14 Delpar (1992) and Oles (1993) consider these issues.

Another caricature from 1928 (illustration 6) demonstrates the expectations connected with the change in U.S. political direction. Here Latin America is an attractive *señorita* who discovers with joy that her suitor Uncle Sam, introduced by Hoover, is much nicer than the images of him that are hanging on her wall. The use of an image within an image is a particularly interesting feature of this example. The portraits of the "colossus of the north", "the dollar diplomat" and the "imperialist" represent perceptions that dominated Latin American discourse in this period. We may conclude that reflections on these kinds of negative external perceptions motivated the reform of the Good Neighbor Policy that was carried out under Roosevelt after 1933.



Ill. 6: The Images Within the Image, 1928
Source: "Not as Bad as Painted", in *Culver Citizen*, 1928 (Friedman 2003: 50).

Again, the Latin American perception of this situation demonstrates many parallels. Cartoonists frequently chose to represent Latin America as a woman. In illustration 7, the young woman is, however, less naïve than the *señorita* in the U.S. newspaper. Here South America is represented by an ambiguous flapper who appears to return Hoover's overtures. It remains open as to what kind of intentions the "old ox" ["buey viejo"] harbors.[15] This caricature also represents Hoover as an old man while the U.S. newspaper portrayed him as an attractive young man. Hoover's massive physical presence in this

15 The precise wording of the Chilean proverb is: "A buey viejo, pasto tierno".

image hints at the fact that despite sympathy for the rhetoric of the good neighbor, there remained a high degree of skepticism regarding the hidden intentions of the Anglo Americans.

Ill. 7: South America's Attractiveness, 1928
Source: "A buey viejo" (*Sucesos*, 20.12.1928).

This caricature above demonstrates the influence of U.S. images of Latin America on Latin American auto-stereotypes. In illustration 8 the relationship is even more obvious. The poster was part of a Mexican advertisement campaign in the United States in 1943. The Mexican agency for tourism had it produced to attract prosperous travelers from the north. The artist Jorge González Camarena portrayed his country as an attractive young woman in an exotic environment with a parrot, carrying bananas and wearing a blouse in "Aztec style", offering not only the fruits of Mexico but also, by implication, herself. Of course these attributes were included to please the eye of the Anglo American observer. Stereotypical ideas about Latin America thus found their way into Latin American visual language as Latin American stereotypes of the Yankee did in the auto-stereotypes of the United States.

The transgression of borders through increasing contact – through travel – or indirect exchange – through U.S. popular culture – apparently led to a radical change in the notion of the polar difference of the two American worlds. Thus after his return from the United States, the Chilean traveler Benjamín Subercaseaux wrote in 1943:

> Only when the peoples get in touch with each other can real understanding between the man in the street and that other man in the street, who did not know each other beforehand, develop. […] Yet it happens that if before we were separated for hardly knowing each other, today we are even further separated for knowing each other too closely (Subercaseaux 1943: 231-232).

It remains doubtful if the two spheres knew each other "too closely" in 1943. Yet the fact remains that despite good will on both sides, it was not possible to overcome antagonism, even at the peak of the Good Neighbor Policy. Latin American skepticism was to prove well founded after the end of World War II. Hopes of economic cooperation with the United States remained unfulfilled because Washington subordinated aid to Latin America to the reconstruction of Europe. Neither did the U.S. promise of support for democracy in the region survive the collapse of the fascist threat. After 1945, Latin America's role as conceived by U.S. foreign policy was that of a subordinated junior. In the fight against communism U.S. leaders did not shy away from cooperating with dictators. In addition, in the 1950s U.S. interventionism was revived with a vengeance and received a new legitimation, albeit one covered by Pan American agreements. There were many reasons for intervention. Frequently, U.S. investors felt threatened by Latin American attempts to reform their societies or nationalize land and mineral resources.

Even formerly well-disposed Latin American intellectuals felt betrayed by U.S. policy after the beginning of the Cold War and later kept their distance. Instead of choosing the U.S. or communist way many looked for a third option. The new social theories were an expression of a novel sensibility in the relationship towards the United States. This factor was an important element in the redefinition of the position of Latin America, which now increasingly defined itself as part of the "Third World". Even the UN Decade of Development (1955-1965) and the closely related U.S. "Alliance for Progress" could not stop this trend.

The perception of a pacific penetration of the world by the "American way of life" led to a broadening of discussions about the United States that transcended the exclusive sphere of intellectual elites. The further growth of the middle classes, increasing urbani-

Ill. 8: Advertising Mexico, 1943
Source: Jorge González Camarena, *Visit Mexico*, Poster 1943 (Suescun Pozas, 1998: 534).

zation and industrialization, the expansion of political participation and the rise of populism in many Latin American states led to a climate in which groups of more heterogeneous social backgrounds came to participate in this discourse. After the Cuban Revolution the construction of binary oppositions intensified. The United States now appeared either as a "paradise on earth" or as a threatening "imperialist octopus". The latter position gai-

ned currency and was propagated by the mass media during the 1950s, as the reactions to the visits of Vice President Richard Nixon in 1958 and special envoy Nelson Rockefeller in 1969 prove.

After 1945, the main theme of Latin American identity discourse was the question of development. A major obstacle on the way towards development was dependence upon the industrialized countries. Eliminating this dependence was seen as the major prerequisite for an authentic course of development. Thus the United States remained at the center of contention. This had always been the case, but important preconditions had now changed. With the rise of the new social sciences the "class" factor displaced the "race" factor as the central category. Instead of Rodo's antithesis of idealism versus materialism, the opposition of poverty and prosperity came to the fore. Yet the dichotomy remained. It was reinforced by negative U.S. images of Latin America, which now increasingly included elements such as economic underdevelopment, political instability, and radicalism, which replaced nineteenth century notions of moral deficiencies or lack of civilization.

Have the dichotomies dissolved in the last 15 years because of the end of the Cold War? Have the Americas learnt to live with their differences? The answer remains ambivalent. At the beginning of the new era in 1989, new interventions further darkened the negative aspects of the image of the United States in Latin America. The action taken against General Manuel Noriega in Panama gave a foretaste of U.S. foreign policies in the twenty-first century. Sanctioned by the United Nations, the intervention in Haiti in 1994 had a different character. It too was problematic, however, because of the historical experience of U.S. interventionism in the Caribbean country. The continuation of the boycott against Cuba has proved to be an even larger bone of contention throughout Latin America. In addition, the restrictive tendencies in U.S. domestic policies against immigrants from Latin America have been a source of criticism in the Americas. Even the "Free Trade of the Americas" project has not been greeted with unanimous enthusiasm (Sangmeister 2003: 34-35). The recent measures taken by the U.S. immigration authorities towards special border controls of Latin Americans entering the United States will not contribute to establishing mutual confidence. Negative images of the Anglo Americans gain relevance in the context of these political developments and strengthen mental borders.

Latin American reactions to the catastrophe of September 11, 2001 demonstrated the problematic effects of this constellation. There were, of course, official expressions of mourning and compassion. Yet these were accompanied by critical and sometimes even spiteful comments about the global hubris of the United States. At the same time, however, the number of contacts between the Americas is growing in leaps and bounds. Migrations of people and capital, the rise of modern communication – in short, the processes we label with the multi-faceted term "globalization" – are continually creating new contact zones. In these zones new hybrid identities will develop. Their effects on images of the American other will be seen in the future.

The ambivalence of borders as lines of separation and contact zones is clearly demonstrated by looking at the images of the other in the Americas. The historical dimensions of border perceptions were rooted in the context of a growing polarity in the construction of the self and the other that started in the age of Atlantic revolutions and later intensified as a reaction to crises in international relations between the Americas.

The basic constellation of denominational and power antagonism between England and Spain during the colonial period set the tone for what was to follow within the colonies and later the independent republics. By constantly upholding stereotypes and continuously reconstructing difference, American polarity gained the status of an apparently unalterable border situation. On both sides of the imagined line the idea of a dichotomy between civilization and barbarity was of central significance. On both sides it implied a hierarchical order.

Since the nineteenth century, Latin Americans of an increasingly heterogeneous social background have associated notions such as progress, prosperity, and freedom with images of the United States. These perceptions painfully demonstrated their own deficiencies and led to feelings of inferiority. In the course of the twentieth century *el Norte* became the point of wishful projection. While this remained utopian in the early decades of that century, it became increasingly real later on as opportunities for migration increased.

The threat of U.S. interventionism meant that the vast majority of the social elites who dominated the public discourse of alterity aimed to uphold a rigid border. At first they tried to reinterpret Latin American deficiencies, turning them into strengths. Later, they looked for delimitation by joining the politically heterogeneous choir of anti-imperialism. But even the most vociferous critics of the United States were in agreement that an intensive debate about the United States was necessary in order to lead Latin America out of the slump.

From the Anglo American perspective Latin America also remained the other. Yet here the images served as a legitimating device for the U.S. claim to world power. In this context admiration for and fears about the United States in Latin America had important effects on U.S. images of the self. Repeating and constantly extending the images of the "under-developed" and "barbaric" Latin American other helped to emphasize domestic progress and power. In comparison to Latin American deficiencies the success of U.S. development shone more brightly and was used to support the claim to natural superiority of the culture, civilization, and "race" of the United States. In the late nineteenth and major parts of the twentieth centuries the discourse of racism built upon images of the American other and strengthened the idea of U.S. singularity and mission in the world. This fundamental conviction remained strong even when the rhetoric of the good neighbor created the impression of a decisive change.

Yet at times the common traits in American identities became visible and images in both spheres reflected these trends. Such moments were reflected in calls for anti-colonial solidarity, in the Good Neighbor Policy, the Alliance for Progress and even in the discussions about NAFTA. The problem was that these initiatives usually originated in the United States and that they were often obviously intended as a means to use Latin America for certain political ends. In the American context, even the call for partnership continues to have a hierarchical dimension.

The binary oppositions, however, were a product of mutual perceptions, which in turn had a decisive influence on political relations. The notion of power or powerlessness, of development or deficiencies, were permanently rooted in what one saw – or believed one saw – beyond the borders, in the territory where the other Americans lived. These images, though, could only emerge on the basis of contacts. In this sense, the borders of imagery have always been contact zones constructed in perpetual interaction.

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