

*Unitas Multiplex Latina: A Study of Latin
Communitarian Civilizationism in the Era of
Neoliberal Globalization*

By

Will Sherman

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Global Liberal Studies Program
New York University
726 Broadway
New York, NY 10003

Este trabajo va dedicado a Alejandro y Guillermo, queridos amigos míos y compañeros en la búsqueda del conocimiento universal.

Abstract

In the words of Peruvian philosopher Salomón Lerner Febres, “there is no doubt that the notion of Latinity is somewhat inaccessible or conceptually vague, despite the fact that it arouses in us, even if only intuitively, awareness of a substantial reality.” If it is vague, then why study it? This thesis explores the construction of identity on a civilizational plane and argues that a pan-Latin identity exists as a unifying force. I employ the term “Latinity” to identify all of Latin Europe, Latin America, and other territories with neo-Latin colonial influence. Furthermore, I examine claims by scholars of Latinity that the destructive influence of neoliberal globalization threatens to disintegrate political structures of Latin origin architected to protect the rights of the republican citizen. In short, political Latinity struggles against the primacy of *homo economicus* over *homo moralis*. In the course of this thesis, I will 1) seed a discussion of alternative forms of representational agency in the post-Westphalian era of globalization, 2) trace the origin of pan-Latinism by recounting the histories of a) antagonism between the Latin and Anglo-Saxon traditions and b) the christening of South America as “Latin,” and 3) explore the “culture” of anti-neoliberal protest in contemporary Latin societies. To develop these discussions, I will draw on a mixture of history, social and political theory, and primary research. Through the voices of historians, theorists, rhetoricians, and Latin *citizens* vindicating their perceived rights, I wish to demonstrate this nuanced way of being Latin in the midst of a globalizing twenty-first century, that is largely unknown to the English-speaking world

Keywords: Latin(ity), civilization(ism), (pan-)Latin(ism), globalization, citizen(ship), (neo)liberalism, communitarianism, Anglo-Saxon.

Introduction

“Parallax”¹ . . . is a derealizing and paralyzing disturbance in the soul—cognitive, metaphysical, intellectual, and ultimately aesthetic. It is not just about displacement or of feeling adrift both in time and space, it is a fundamental misalignment between who we are, might have been, could still be, can’t accept we’ve become, or may never be.²

-André Aciman

I imagine myself in Madrid. It’s nearly four in the morning. Outside a club on a narrow street in the Malsaña neighborhood are nearly fifty Spaniards, smoking rolled cigarettes and drinking one-euro “street” beer. The mountain air is cold, dry, and thin from the altitude. But despite the vacuum-like conditions of the atmosphere, the howling of youth brings texture to the air.

The reckless display of Spaniards in the nighttime is a vindication of life. But it also embraces death and decay. Drinking, smoking, socializing, celebrating—every single night of the week. Why? Why not? There is no doubt that these people feel comfortable in their own skin. But the absence of rules made me and my North American friends uncomfortable. No rules? Of course, every place has rules. Spaniards are more rigorous about following some rules than are we. But in terms of humane qualities—generosity, sensuality, feeling, the right to a stress-free existence—they consider us highly repressed. In their view, we have been taught to take seriously things that should be taken lightly, and likewise to disregard things worthy of serious attention.

¹ **Parallax**: A visual term used to indicate the *apparent* position of an object, due to perspective shift. Aciman references parallax in a figurative sense. If our sensorial subjectivity causes us to feel “adrift in . . . space,” then our social subjectivity has a similar effect on our identity.

² Aciman, André. *Alibis*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux: NY (2011). Print. 189.

Tired, homesick, and overwhelmed by the carnivalesque spectacle before my eyes, I walked away from my group to grab a beer and have a smoke. My friend Alejandro noticed that I had left, and so came over to me.

¿Qué te pasa, bonito? he inquired, with the smell of liquor on his breath.

Estoy cansado, me quiero ir a casa ya, I replied judgingly. In response, he leaned in to comfort me. As a show of frustration, I rolled my eyes and moved away.

¡Boh! he exclaimed, *Los anglosajones sois muy secos. Y además, ¡tenéis muy poco aguante!*³

That night on the street wasn't the first time this exchange came to pass, and it certainly wasn't the last. I often argued playfully with Alejandro. Without fail, these arguments would evanesce into clouds of pretentious abstraction. He would take the side of his birth and cultural upbringing, and I, in response, my own. It became his role to praise and defend the values of his "Latin" universe, which he found so threatened by the naïveté of my Anglo-Saxon civilization.

To be honest, in recounting this story, I'm likely combining memories from three, or four, or thirty different nights, weeks, and months into one *motif*-rich mental image—a collection of faces, words, physical sensations, and emotions that, in retrospect, reflect my current subjective state. This web of memories and associations is vast. I was born in New York City to fifth generation Philadelphia Ashkenazim. I lived for nearly a decade in Columbus, Ohio, and shortly after my eighteenth birthday, I moved to Paris, where I learned to be an adult. In almost every aspect—linguistic, commercial, cultural, transit-wise—I blossomed into independence in the city that Raymond Poincaré once called "the

³ -"What's wrong?"

- "I'm tired. I wanna go home."

- "Aw, come on! You Anglo-Saxons are so boring, and you don't know how to stay out late."

second capital of Latinity,” after Rome.⁴ I then moved to New York and, within nine months time, found myself back in Latin Europe. This time, I wasn’t among the Lutecians, but the Castilians of Roman, Celtic, and Moorish origin in the royal capital of Madrid.

But ultimately, the origin of these mixed signs isn’t important. Aciman iterates the “confusion of signals” between two mechanisms of the brain: memory and imagination. Memory’s supposed function is to retrieve from the past the body’s involuntary acknowledgement of external stimuli. Imagination, on the other hand, is the word we use to describe our internal associations relative to past or present stimuli. To Aciman, this distinction is bunk. Instead, he is “perfectly willing to accept that memory and imagination are twins who live along an artificial border that allows them to lead double lives and smuggle coded messages back and forth.”⁵

What is important, then, is that my brain has preserved and reordered these *motifs*, which now inform my subjective relationship to two identity categories. A self-proclaimed “Latin” called me an “Anglo-Saxon.” I had never thought in these terms. In imposing an Anglo-Saxon identity on me (and likewise implying the existence of a Latin *other*), Alejandro suggested to me a new binary lens with which to navigate the world.

Why have I chosen to write about this binary? Why, in the beginning, did I accept it as valid, as worthy of attention and elaboration? Because as a scholar of culture it is my responsibility to shift my subjective viewpoint in response to critique like Alejandro’s. It is also my instinct as a social being to pay heed to the rationales of others. Especially

⁴ Prefacing then-President of Peru’s book about Latinity in the Americas, Poincaré—President of France during World War I—referred to Paris as the “capital of classical culture.” He projected that Parisians would soon have to relinquish their Latin title to the Latins of Buenos Aires.

Poincaré, Raymond. Preface. *Les démocraties latines de l’Amérique*. Paris: Ernest Flammarion, 1914.

⁵ *Ibid.* 189.

when it seems that these rationales represent a collective sentiment. Aciman elaborates on this social instinct. In order to be an esteemed member of a group, or to relate to other human beings, we perform an exercise of reverse individuation. We reject our intuition—imagining the opposite thought or feeling—in an attempt to relate to others:

You assume you are not quite like others and that to understand others, to be with others, to love others, and to be loved by them, you need to think *other* thoughts than the ones that come naturally. To be with others you must be the opposite of who you are; to read others, you must read the opposite of what you see; to be somewhere, you must suspect you are or could be elsewhere . . . You feel, you imagine, you think, and ultimately write counterfactually, because writing speaks [to] this disturbance, investigates it, because writing also perpetuates and consolidates it and hopes to make sense of it by giving it a form.

For Aciman, this process of relating is an act of displacement—emotional, rational, even geographic. In the case of me—an “Anglo-Saxon” trying to tap into a discourse stemming from the Latin world—the displacement is geopolitical. To enter this discourse is not only to conceive of the “Latin,” but also to conceive of the “Anglo-Saxon,” and to see myself as an Anglo-Saxon *other*. I have come to understand myself as a product of a civilization in relation to other civilizations and their products. And this—understanding myself in relation to *others*—is the stuff *identity* is made of. An identity cannot exist in a vacuum. Its function arises amidst the disorienting web of subjectivities that are part of living as a social being.

In the following chapters of this thesis, I will explore the depth of understanding that this vision has afforded me. A deep understanding of real world matters, yes. But most importantly, a deep understanding of Latin identity construction, and an ever deeper understanding of how this identity informs belief, attitude, and politics on an individual, national, and transnational level.

The so-called Academy of Latinity wishes to establish an “independent moral authority,” through which it may “strengthen solidarity between countries and peoples of Latin culture and reinforce the just presence of Latinity’s contributions in all dominions of civilization.”⁶ Through research, personal anecdote, and my own ethnographic data, I will trace how, through antagonism with the “Anglo-Saxon world,” Latinity has come to be a politicized identity. Then, I will sketch its contemporary form as a communitarian “culture of protest” against neoliberal globalization, and in favor of “Latin” humanism and republican state interventionism.

I will draw from history, cultural studies, postcolonial studies, and globalization studies, as well as from non-traditional sources—such as dictionaries and press articles—in order to highlight disparate trends in subject identification between language and cultural spheres. A smattering of photos from all around the “Latin world” will serve as visual evidence for a “culture” of anti-neoliberal protest. And finally, interviews I conducted in São Paulo, Brazil will elaborate several points I address throughout the thesis, ranging from the boundaries of Latinity to virtues of inter-civilizational dialogue.

⁶ *"[A Academia] tem por objeto constituir uma autoridade moral independente, fortalecendo a solidariedade entre países e povos de cultura latina e reforçando a justa presença das contribuições da Latinidade . . . em todos os domínios da civilização."*
"Quem somos?" Academia da Latinidade. Web. <http://www.alati.com.br/quem_somos_historia.html>.

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Chapter I

Civilizationism as an alternative political project in the era of globalization

Positivism and constructivism in postwar science

In the first half of the twentieth century, overcompensated reactions to the atrocities committed in the name of national difference in the First and Second World Wars inaugurated an era of objectivist rigidity that would profoundly mark—and to a large degree restrict—the social sciences for decades. Positivism, what Backhouse and Fontaine refer to as “the most frequently recurring theme in postwar social science,”⁷ is a term that French philosopher Auguste Comte coined in the nineteenth century to encompass a “diverse spectrum of positions which champion a scientific viewpoint, and insist that knowledge claims . . . should confine themselves to what can be derived from observable phenomena.”⁸ In the context of the social sciences, it originates from the logical positivism of German-speaking Vienna Circle philosophers of the interwar period characterized by “operationalist, quantitative, and statistics-based tendencies in sociology and other human sciences.”⁹

⁷ Fontaine, Philippe. "Contexts of Postwar Social Science." Introduction. *The History of the Social Sciences since 1945*. By Roger Backhouse. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010. 19. Web

⁸ "Positivism." *Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006. Credo Reference. Web.

⁹ *Ibid.*

The years following the resolution of the second of these deadly conflicts in 1945 saw a general attitudinal trend of the “superiority of scientific over lay knowledge, to the point that the latter [was] often seen as no more than a set of ill-conceived preconceptions.”¹⁰ This prejudice manifested itself in both legislation and finance, especially in the United States, where stringent focus on increased industrial production and the fear that investment in social sciences would lead to the social emancipation of blacks ensured the exclusion of the social-scientific disciplines from access to public funding.¹¹ It wasn’t until the 1970s and ‘80s that a handful of French philosophers—namely Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Claude Lévi-Strauss, among others—began to reintroduce hermeneutic thought into mainstream academia. These structuralist¹² thinkers were the contestation to the unyielding positivism of the postwar era, shaped by what French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu would later call the “antagonism between objectivism and subjectivism as modes of knowledge.”¹³

Perhaps most relevant to our discussion of Latinity is United States anthropologist Clifford Geertz who, in his 1975 work *Interpretation of Cultures*, suggested that “culture should be understood not . . . as pertaining to literature and the arts, but to societies in

¹⁰ Fontaine, Philippe. "Contexts of Postwar Social Science." Introduction. *The History of the Social Sciences since 1945*. By Roger Backhouse. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010. 28. Web

¹¹ Miller, Roberta Balstad. "The Social Sciences and the Politics of Science: The 1940s." *The American Sociologist* 17.4 (1982): 205, 208. *JSTOR*. Web.

“Legislatively, the social sciences were effectively excluded from the Foundation in July, 1945, with the Senate passage of the Hart Amendment to the National Science Foundation Bill . . . for many Americans, there was an association between social science research and attempts to improve the status of blacks in America.”

¹² Structuralism is a thought tradition characterizing the postulations of theorists such as Darwin, Marx, and Saussure that views social structure as “being either intentionally or unintentionally created by social agents.” Moore, Paula., "Structuralism." *Encyclopedia of Anthropology*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2005. Credo Reference. Web.

¹³ Fontaine, Philippe. "Contexts of Postwar Social Science." Introduction. *The History of the Social Sciences since 1945*. By Roger Backhouse. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010. 28. Web

general.”¹⁴ But these French (and American) structuralists, although subversive, were not the first to think in such relative terms. United States sociologist and identity politics theorist Benjamin Nelson credits nineteenth and twentieth century French anthropologist/sociologists Émile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss with having begun the first modern discussion of transnational cultural affiliation. That is, they identified a “civilizational level” of culture, or “phenomena which are intersocietal and intercultural . . . languages, religious ideas of a high degree of abstraction, scientific notions, and rules holding between nations,” which they referred to collectively as *ius gentium* or *ius inter gentes*.¹⁵

Russian-American sociologist Pitirim Sorokin, a contemporary of Durkheim and Mauss, posited that each “vast cultural system is based upon some ‘major premise’ . . . ‘philosophical presupposition’ . . . ‘prime symbol,’ or ‘ultimate value,’ which the “super system” or civilization articulates, develops, realizes in all its main compartments . . . in the process of its life-career.”¹⁶ Nelson himself described these “super systems”—societies characterized by what he termed “civilizational complexes”—as being ordered by “cultural logics” and “rationale systems,” which are “structures of reasons, explanations, [and] procedures establishing requirements in respect to truth, virtue, legality, [and] fittingness.”¹⁷

The usage of the word “civilization” may alarm the suspicious ear of postwar positivism to which our collective psyche remains attuned today. Because of our recent history, we are still conditioned to shudder at the idea of cultural classification and to

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 27.

¹⁵ Nelson, Benjamin. “Civilizational Complexes and Intercivilizational Encounters.” *Sociological Analysis* 34.2 (1973): 84. *JSTOR*. Web.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 89.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 89.

brand it as dangerous and essentializing.¹⁸ Indeed, during the modern/colonial era of European domination, the word came to acquire a value of superlative cultural competition, rather than of comparative distinction.¹⁹ But many contemporary sociologists and political scientists have recently argued for the reclamation of its Durkheimian definition.²⁰ Instead, as we will shortly see, we can use—and I use—the word “civilization” to describe underlying cultural structures that transcend the divisions that the existing hegemonic political order imposes on our understanding of ourselves as individuals pertaining to social collectivities.

The Westphalian paradigm and the end of nation-state hegemony

We are undoubtedly subject to the laws, customs, and politics of the countries from which we hail. But the transnational community is so married to the concept of nation-state citizenship that significant cultural, social, civic, linguistic, ideological, and religious differences that do not correspond to the division of sovereign political states are often overlooked. A problem of cultural, linguistic, and religious conflation in some cases (such as China—one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse “countries” on

¹⁸ Essentialism, in the context of cultural studies, refers to the attribution of characteristics to fixed identity categories. It is a poststructuralist accusation, in the sense that it rejects the hegemonic capacity of structuralist systems like language and culture.

¹⁹ *Random House* English dictionary gives the following definitions of “civilization”:

1) an advanced state of human society, in which a high level of culture, science, industry, and government has been reached.

2) those people or nations that have reached such a state.

3) the act or process of civilizing or being civilized: *Rome's civilization of barbaric tribes was admirable.* "Civilization." *Dictionary.com Unabridged*. Random House, Inc. 11 Feb. 2014.

²⁰ Put more simply in *Random House* as:

4) any type of culture, society, etc., of a specific place, time, or group: Greek civilization.

Ibid.

the planet) and of over-distinction in others (such as the respective sovereignty of Argentina and Uruguay, mostly due to questions of colonial Creole territoriality following the struggle for independence from Spain) leads non-experts to confuse modern techniques of political representation (i.e., the erratic formation process of nation-states) with real cultural difference. Political scientists increasingly frame sovereign statehood as an artifact of modernity and its “Culture of Representation,”²¹ whose waning intellectual legitimacy is reinforced by the destabilizing political transformations of globalization, challenging its monopolistic claim to representational hegemony.

Political power formation, according to Italian political scientist Raffaele Marchetti, “refers to the modes in which political power becomes institutionalized, as well as the crucial modes of interpreting and doing politics,”²² specifically with regard to the “debate on the global political deficit” surrounding the “Westphalian paradigm”—or the “[nation]-state as . . . main actor in international relations.” This model takes its name from the Westphalia treaties of 1648, in which “sovereignty and territorial principles [became] the cornerstone of the new international era.”²³

In the Westphalian frame of thought, “[t]he modern state has been central to political science and [international relations] ever since their consolidation as disciplines around the turn of the twentieth century.” But to an increasing degree, political entities

²¹ In her discourse surrounding postmodernity as a rejection of modern principles, Elizabeth Ermarth defines modernity as a set of “assumptions” forming in sum the “Culture of Representation,” which “makes possible the objectivity that we have learned to take for granted, thanks to our familiarity with representational conventions first in art, then in science, then in political systems.”

Ermarth, Elizabeth. “Agency in the Discursive Condition”. *History and Theory* 40.4 (2001): 37-8. *JSTOR*. Web.

²² Marchetti, Raffaele. “Civilizationism and the Political Debate on Globalization.” *Civilizational Dialogue and World Order: The Other Politics of Cultures, Religions, and Civilizations in International Relations*. (2009): 100.

²³ “Westphalian Ideal State.” *International Encyclopedia of Political Science*. 2011. Web.

alternative to the nation-state system, called “non-state actors,” are vying for legitimacy in international relations, inaugurating what has been deemed the “post-Westphalian” era of discursive politics.²⁴ “What non-state actors have in common, according to Marchetti, “is their attempt to go beyond the centrality of the sovereign state toward new forms of political participation that allow new subjects to ‘get into transnational politics’ from which they have been excluded.” These non-state actors range from transnational corporations to civil society campaigns, and from individuals to “civilizations.”²⁵ Later in this chapter we will explore concrete examples of emerging non-state actors. But for now, let us focus on the Durkheimian constructivist concept of “civilization” that I have suggested, in order to, ultimately, better understand the theoretical components of political Latinity and their hypothetical application in the post-Westphalian era.

Constructivism in international relations theory

In the constructivist line of thinking, all aspects of transnational political interaction—“e.g. military power, trade relations, international institutions, or domestic preferences”—are not believed to reflect positivist realities, but instead are considered significant for their implicit social meaning.²⁶ “This meaning is constructed from a complex mix of history, ideas, norms, and beliefs which scholars must understand.”

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Marchetti, Raffaele. “Civilizationism and the Political Debate on Globalization.” *Civilizational Dialogue and World Order: The Other Politics of Cultures, Religions, and Civilizations in International Relations*. (2009): 93.

²⁶ Slaughter, Anne-Marie. “International Relations, Principle Theories.” *Max Planck Encyclopedia of International Law*. Ed. R. Wolfrum. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001. Web.

Many scholars use constructivist international relations theory to understand terrorism as a socially constructed phenomenon.²⁷ Indeed, Krishnaswamy maintains that the “[September 11] attacks emphasized the importance of understanding culture, identity, religion, and ideas through international relations theory.”²⁸ Wendt insists that the idea of terrorism is based on notions of anarchy and criminality, for which different states hold differing concepts. These varying identity-based conceptions will determine how places construct their respective “security dilemmas.”²⁹

Additionally, “[a] focus on the social context in which international relations occur” sets a tone in which “[t]he perception of friends and enemies, in-groups and out-groups, [and] fairness and justice all become key determinant[s]” in explaining the behavior of political bodies on the global stage.³⁰ The fixation on threats to national security in terrorism discourse encourages solidarity and collaboration between political entities of a similar ideological, cultural, political, or religious positioning that share “understanding and collective knowledge of the self and the other.”³¹ This helps to explain allegiances between the United States and the European Union, as well as between Muslim countries of distinct national, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and to a certain

²⁷ Krishnaswamy, Janani. *How Does Terrorism Lend Itself to Constructivist Understanding?* April 2012. TS. Written for Dr. Nicholas Michelsen at King’s College London.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.* From Wendt (1992).

³⁰ Slaughter, Anne-Marie. "International Relations, Principle Theories." *Max Planck Encyclopedia of International Law*. Ed. R. Wolfrum. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001. Web.

³¹ Citing Rousseau and García Retamero (2007), Krishnaswamy explains that “[c]onstructivists believe that ‘states will act differently to friends and enemies,’ based on their ‘threat perceptions.’ Their behaviors will be ‘shaped by their shared understanding and collective knowledge of the self and the other.’ They consider that ‘shared identity decreases threat perception.’”

Krishnaswamy, Janani. *How Does Terrorism Lend Itself to Constructivist Understanding?* April 2012. TS. Written for Dr. Nicholas Michelsen at King’s College London.

extent religious categories in the post-9/11 era. The neo-pan-Islamism³² of this time period can be understood in part as an affirmation of perceived similarities for the sake of political solidarity in the wake of military and political antagonism from the United States and its “Western” allies.

Constructivist thinkers address the importance of non-state actors in transnational politics.³³ A constructivist understanding of the phenomenon of the so-called War on Terror recognizes the interplay between state actors (like the United States) and non-state actors (like al-Qaeda, which, to an extent, could be considered a kind of civil society campaign). If the United States (the state actor) seeks to justify its military and political antagonism toward the concept of Islamist terrorism by likening it to lawless criminality, then al-Qaeda (the non-state actor) “seeks to promote an Islamic ‘identity,’ define the ‘interests’ of all Muslims as necessarily in confrontation with the West, and shape the ‘normative’ environment in which Muslim politics are contested.”³⁴ Al-Qaeda, then, is not simply dismissed by constructivists as a band comprised of misfit criminals, but as an—albeit fringe—identity-producing political entity.

Also underscored in constructivist theory is the role of social norms in transnational political relations, in accordance with its propensity to emphasize subjectivity as a point of departure in geopolitical questions. Of particular interest is the “logic of appropriateness” in the realm of civic decision-making, whereby “rationality is

³² By “neo-pan-Islamism,” I refer to the political solidarity forged between Islamic peoples of the Middle East, Africa, and Asia in direct relation to the events of 9/11 and the United States and its allies’ attitude shift toward the Islamic world as a whole. This term is *not* to be confused with Islamism—or radical political Islam.

³³ “Constructivists looked at terrorism . . . and analyzed different shades of interests and identities of state and non-state (terrorist) actors to understand the interaction between the two.” Krishnaswamy, Janani. *How Does Terrorism Lend Itself to Constructivist Understanding?* April 2012. TS. Written for Dr. Nicholas Michelsen at King’s College London.

³⁴ Cited from Lynch (2006)
Ibid.

heavily mediated by social norms.”³⁵ Krishnaswamy cites the contrasting stances of the United States, Germany, and Japan concerning the WoT³⁶ as an example of the significance of relative social and cultural norms on official policy and attitude. The United States under the Bush Administration took the most extreme stance, deciding that the most suitable was military action and the employment of war rhetoric. Meanwhile, Germany withdrew support for U.S. military engagement (perhaps a reaction to the country’s recent, but by no means insignificant, history of war) and Japan offered its “symbolic support” to its American ally. “[T]he WoT discourse is deeply infused with cultural understandings of the social world,” acknowledges Krishnaswamy. This helps to explain the “stark dissimilarities in German [and] Japanese counter terrorism policies.”³⁷

Huntingtonian civilizationism

Indispensable to our discussion of the constructivist economy of identities is United States political scientist and theorist Samuel Huntington, whose postulations fall unequivocally into the category of constructivist thought. He famously theorized in 1993 that the production, reproduction, and affirmation of “civilizational” identity, as well as the subsequent division along corresponding civilizational lines, would become factors of

³⁵ Slaughter, Anne-Marie. "International Relations, Principle Theories." *Max Planck Encyclopedia of International Law*. Ed. R. Wolfrum. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001. Web.

³⁶ Abbreviation: War on Terror

³⁷ Krishnaswamy, Janani. *How Does Terrorism Lend Itself to Constructivist Understanding?* April 2012. TS. Written for Dr. Nicholas Michelsen at King’s College London.

premiere importance in the worldwide political landscape of the twenty-first century.³⁸

He attributes this prospective shift to the “basic” nature of civilizational differences:

The people of different civilizations have different views on the relations between God and man, the individual and the group, the citizen and the state, parents and children, husband and wife, as well as different views of the relative importance of rights and responsibilities, liberty and authority, equality and hierarchy.³⁹

These “basic” differences are deep-rooted and less susceptible to change over short spans of time, as he claims is the case with such dividing factors as political conviction, ideological affiliation, or material-economic disposition. He asserts that cultural and religious identity, alongside moral-civic persuasion, to be the principle drivers of global conflict—a phenomenon that will only accelerate in response to the politically destabilizing and cultural homogenizing processes of globalization. Because of this central element of friction and discord between cultural systems, and because of the title of the original essay,⁴⁰ his thesis became known as the “clash” theory of civilizations.

Huntington is infamous in the academy for many reasons, especially for his obsessive fixation on the conflict between “the West” and “Islam,” which he claims dates back to the period of Arab-Islamic imperial expansion in the seventh century. The military involvement of the United States in Islamic countries from the end of the twentieth century leading up to the present day is and will continue to be—according to him—the most contentious geopolitical conflict of the contemporary era.⁴¹

³⁸ Huntington, Samuel. “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 27.3 (1993): 27.

³⁹ *Ibid.* 25.

⁴⁰ I.e.: “A Clash of Civilizations?”

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 30-2.

After 9/11, Huntington's "clash" thesis suddenly became the subject of great interest, due to his sinister prediction that civilizational conflict between "Islam" and "the West" would erupt in the years following. In response to the attention his theories began to receive, well-respected academics in the field of cultural studies characterized Huntington's ponderings as regressive. His reckless use of constructivist theorizing to build essentialist narratives more concerned with legacy than with contemporary identity politics sparked both outrage and concerned warning on behalf of his disciplinary colleagues.

In a piece featured in the *The Nation* scarcely a month after the attacks, Edward Saïd accused Huntington of being an ideologue driven to a far greater degree by passion and ethnic fantasy than by unbiased rigor:

Huntington is an ideologist, someone who wants to make "civilizations" and "identities" into what they are not: shut-down, sealed-off entities that have been purged of the myriad currents and countercurrents that animate human history, and that over centuries have made it possible for that history not only to contain wars of religion and imperial conquest but also to be one of exchange, cross-fertilization, and sharing . . . [Certainly he doesn't have] much time to spare for the internal dynamics and plurality of every civilization, or for the fact that the major contest in most modern cultures concerns the definition or interpretation of each culture, or for the unattractive possibility that a great deal of demagoguery and downright ignorance is involved in presuming to speak for a whole religion or civilization.⁴²

Saïd laments Huntington's narrow-sightedness in refusing to acknowledge the plurality and dynamism of the entities he seeks to define. In Saïd's view, neither identities nor civilizations are monolithic or unchanging, and they are certainly not isolated. The essence of collective human life has instead consisted of contact, exchange, evolution,

⁴² Saïd, Edward. "The Clash of Ignorance." *The Nation*. 4 Oct. 2001. Web.

and interpretation. Huntington's narrow concept of human collectivities ignores the life and complexity that characterizes these systems, and his concept of "clash" smears the spirit of inter-societal fellowship that humankind has often displayed. What Saïd finds most offensive is Huntington's presumptuous attempt to "speak for" such general categories of people.

Bengali philosopher and economist Amartya Sen shadows Saïd's critique of Huntington. In a passage from his book *Identity and Violence* adapted for *Slate* magazine's website, Sen expresses his resentment towards "[t]he increasing tendency to overlook the many identities that any human being has," branding the attempt to "to classify individuals according to a single allegedly pre-eminent religious identity" as "an intellectual confusion that can animate dangerous divisiveness."⁴³ He contends that a constructivist understanding of human relations according to categorization along civilizational lines is a simplistic and potentially dangerous fallacy, qualifying Huntington's thesis as a flagrant example of the kind of reductionist and essentialist thinking that can lead to violent conflict:

[The] reductionist view [that the relations between different human beings can somehow be seen, without serious loss of understanding, in terms of relations between different civilizations] is typically combined . . . with a rather foggy perception of world history that overlooks, first, the extent of internal diversities within these civilizational categories, and second, the reach and influence of interactions—intellectual as well as material—that go right across the regional borders of so-called civilizations . . . The world is made much more incendiary by the advocacy and popularity of single-dimensional categorization of human beings, which combines haziness of vision with increased scope for the exploitation of that haze by the champions of violence.⁴⁴

⁴³ Sen, Amartya. "What Clash of Civilizations?" *Identity and Violence*. New York: Norton &, 2007. *Slate*. Web.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Like Saïd, Sen criticizes the constructivist lens through which Huntington views the global political stage as simplistic. For it discounts (or, at the very least, emphasizes to a curtailed degree) the “internal” complexity of and extent of interaction between the cultural systems that he classifies as civilizations. Most worrying to Sen is the constructivist tendency so indiscreet in Huntington’s “clash” to categorize human beings on a “single-dimensional” plane. To imagine humanity in such a manner is to create the preconditions for violent misunderstanding.

But this accusation is unfair. Huntington elaborates his concept of civilizations as entities defined both “by common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people”—insisting that “people can and do redefine their identities and, as a result, the composition and boundaries of civilizations change.”⁴⁵ In the following passage, he specifies his criteria for what can constitute a civilization, stressing the relative nature of such a classification:

Villages, regions, ethnic groups, nationalities, religious groups, all have distinct cultures at different levels of cultural heterogeneity. The culture of a village in southern Italy may be different from that of a village in northern Italy, but both will share a common Italian culture that distinguishes them from German villages. European communities, in turn, will share cultural features that distinguish them from Arab or Chinese communities. Arabs, Chinese and Westerners, however, are not part of any broader cultural entity. They constitute civilizations. A civilization is thus the [most general] cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity . . . [it] may involve a large number of people, as with China, or a very small number of people, such as the Anglophone Caribbean. A civilization may include several nation states, as is the case with Western, Latin American, and Arab civilizations, or only one, as is the case with Japanese civilization.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Huntington, Samuel. “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 72.3 (1993): 24.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 24.

So according to Huntington's definition, the boundaries of civilizations vary according to relative criteria of cultural, geographic, linguistic, and political qualification. This produces instances of overlap, as well as instances of discord in terms of boundary determination.

The ideas I call "overlap" and "discord" in the imaginative construction of civilizational entities are well demonstrated by Huntington in the above passage in the case of the "Anglophone Caribbean." Bertin asserts the existence of a singular "Caribbeanity" marked by a history of European colonial domination, slavery, and the plantation economy, as well as by shared culinary habits and musical traditions, among other cultural curiosities.⁴⁷ But, as Huntington points out, the criteria of delineation of cultural super-systems are often not agreed upon. A specialist more drawn to sociolinguistic questions may find inter-geographical division between the English-, Spanish-, and French-speaking regions of the Caribbean to be appropriate, while a postcolonial theorist will oppose this categorization for its conflation of the autochthonous Caribbean culture with that of the language of its colonial oppressor.⁴⁸

Another of Huntington's postulations is that the production and reproduction of civilizational identities is a process fomented by globalization. "The interactions among peoples of different civilizations enhance the civilization-consciousness of people that, in turn, invigorates differences and animosities stretching or thought to stretch deep back

⁴⁷ "l'homogénéité de la Caraïbe tient à des éléments d'unité plus ou moins forts : c'est ce que l'on appelle le gradient de « *carai béanité* » . . . Ces éléments d'unité sont : l'ambiance géographique des milieux littoraux ; l'histoire à travers la conquête européenne, la colonisation, l'esclavage, l'économie de plantation, les sociétés d'habitation, la culture à travers la musique, les habitudes alimentaires." Bertin, Yvan. "Etude de cas : le bassin caraïbe, une interface américaine, une interface mondiale." *Atlas Caraïbe*. Web.

⁴⁸ Bennett believes "the English-speaking, African-descended population of the New World must be considered as two separate, closely related, cultural nations: the African American and Anglo-Caribbean." Bennett, James C. *The Anglosphere Challenge*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield. 2004. Print. 83.

into history.”⁴⁹ This is a thesis supported largely by social science discourse, which claims that higher inter-civilizational contact inflames tensions, which causes more frequent and intense conflict between civilizations.⁵⁰ This contact contributes to the dynamism of identities, which take on different forms in relation to one another.⁵¹ This concept is exceedingly important in explaining the features of Latin civilizational identity, which as we will see in the following (in terms of antagonism with Anglo-Saxon civilization) and final chapters (in terms of the forging of a communitarian Latin identity in response to United States imperialism in Latin America through neoliberal imperialism), is one of the principle reasons why the concept of Latinity as political identity was created, promoted, and preserved.

Dialogue among civilizations

Though Huntington’s “clash” theory of antagonism is useful for developing a compositional vocabulary for cultural super-systems, it is not the only one that operates according to his definition of “civilization.” To the relief of Huntington’s intellectual adversaries, a handful of political thinkers specializing in international relations have

⁴⁹ Huntington, Samuel. “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 72.3 (1993): 26.

⁵⁰ “[The] process of globalization embraces an ever closer contact with the other, increasing the opportunities of interactions among persons who otherwise would not have experiences and knowledge about each other. This fact, by its turn, counter provokes a constant state of attention, tension, and self-reflection by the actors . . . about the implications of their diverse decisions and actions for the world to come.”

“Otherness.” *Encyclopedia of Global Studies*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2012. Credo Reference. Web.

⁵¹ “As based in the creation and maintenance of a dialogical communicative space between I and other, sharing, disagreement, and tension can promote a reorganization of values, desires, expectations, and symbolic actions, giving birth to novelty.”

Ibid.

produced an impressive body of literature proposing an ideal of political *cooperation* between civilizations.

In 1998, under the guiding influence of then-President of Iran Mohammad Khatami, the United Nations decided unanimously to declare the Year of Dialogue among Civilizations.⁵² As we have briefly explored, the events of 9/11 prompted a serious reexamination of the main “civilizationist” theories that came about in the early 1990s—the first being Huntington’s “clash” thesis, and the second being the “dialogue among civilizations” thesis, which I will refer to in conceptual terms as “dialogism.”⁵³ Dialogism was proposed by Khatami and later elaborated by several international relations theorists in order to contest Huntington’s vision of the future of global politics.⁵⁴ One of the principle distinctions between these two philosophies is that “clash” operates within a “realist” framework, while dialogism operates within an “idealist” framework. While both theses represent a “powerful normative challenge to the contemporary political orthodoxy . . . [calling for] the reopening and re-discussion of the core Western-centric and liberal assumptions upon which the normative structure of the contemporary international society is based,” their goals and fundamental interpretations of global politics are categorically opposed.⁵⁵ On Huntington’s theoretical framework, Italian political philosopher Fabio Petito gripes that:

⁵² Petito, Fabio. “Dialogue of Civilizations as an Alternative Model for World Order.” *Civilizational Dialogue and World Order: The Other Politics of Cultures, Religions, and Civilizations in International Relations*. Ed. Michális S. Michael. New York: Palgrave MacMillan: 2009. 47.

⁵³ **Civilizationism:** A term encapsulating the concept-at-large of forging a civilizational alternative to the extant global political system.

⁵⁴ I.e., Dallymyr (2002), Petito, Michael, etc.

⁵⁵ Petito, Fabio. “Dialogue of Civilizations as an Alternative Model for World Order.” *Civilizational Dialogue and World Order: The Other Politics of Cultures, Religions, and Civilizations in International Relations*. Ed. Michális S. Michael. New York: Palgrave MacMillan: 2009. 50.

Struggle for power is perceived as an unavoidable necessity of politics, which condemns international politics to the realm of conflict *recurrence* and *repetition* that can only be, partially, mitigated by a *consequentialist* ethics of statecraft based on non-interference.⁵⁶

On the other hand, an idealist spirit of cooperation and mutual acknowledgement mark the dialogical interpretation of global politics.

There are three basic tenets to dialogical thinking. The first is to proceed in all political projects with awareness of the *other* on the global stage: “If the normative structure of future global coexistence is to be genuinely universal,” argues Petito, “then it cannot solely be liberal and Western-centric. Genuine universality requires a sharp awareness of the presence of different cultures and civilizations in world affairs.”⁵⁷

Second is an emphasis on recognizing the worth of the *other*. Amidst the “fundamental, ethical, and political crisis linked to the present liberal Western civilization and its expansion,” all dialogue must be based on a “presumption of worth of the other.”⁵⁸ Third is to construct a political philosophy of trans-civilizational communication and cooperation that places all parties on equal standing.

Petito cites the recognition of the non-Western *other* as philosophical basis in political proceedings not only as an anti-hegemonic ideal, but also as a move to common sense in response to a changing geopolitical reality. That is, a reality in which the emerging economies of the global “periphery” in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East progressively dissolve the United States’ monopolistic control of the world’s

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 49.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 50.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 50.

political and economic condition.⁵⁹ Petito cites Belgian political scientist Chantal Mouffe in asserting that the “central [political] problem” facing the global “periphery” is the “impossibility for antagonisms to find legitimate forms of expression.”⁶⁰ This repression, according to Mouffe, causes such antagonisms to emerge—when and if they do—in extreme forms. Thus:

[in order] to effectively face [the] challenge [of defending the plurality of world politics against any imperial temptation] . . . we need to find an exit from the strict grid of choices imposed by the contemporary Western-centric and liberal global order and move toward the construction of multicultural and peaceful world order.⁶¹

In the following passage, Petito summarizes the principle goals of dialogism and reiterates the distinctions between it and Huntington’s thesis in the following passage:

This neo-regionalist, multipolar, and cross-cultural model of *Großräumen*⁶² is different from the Huntingtonian model of multipolar, multicivilizational order as: (1) it is not shaped by civilizational-cultural lines but by a dialogical multiculturalism; (2) its conflicts and disputes are neutralized by a “thick” dialogically constituted normative order (a new cross-cultural *jus gentium*) based on “genuine” and “enriched” universality; and (3) it is committed to a widespread process of “inter-civilizational mutual understanding” at multiple levels.⁶³

This “normative order” replaces the hegemony of a U.S.-dominated political globe, based on the concept of *jus gentium*⁶⁴--a Latin term roughly meaning “law of nations,” which represents the historical configuration of interregional law across the territory under the

⁵⁹ “Periphery” assumes the geographic and political centrality of the United States. Petito cites the following political bodies as examples of the “emerging periphery:” China, India, the European Union, Japan, Russia, Brazil, and Iran, among “others.”

Ibid. 53.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 53.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* 51.

⁶² ***Großräumen***: to be translated roughly as “greater spaces.”

⁶³ *Ibid.* 62.

⁶⁴ “Jus gentium.” *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary of Law*. Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 1996. Web.

jurisdiction of the Roman Empire.⁶⁵ According to Petito, this conception of dialogism would serve to “mitigate the risk of a ‘culturalist’ enclosure in [multipolarity] and to dialogically inscribe plurality in [a new cross-cultural *jus gentium*].”⁶⁶

But dialogism has also been criticized. Sen warns that the intellectual pioneers of dialogism, though perhaps well intentioned, tread in the same dangerous waters as Huntington. For dialogism is based in the same strain of reductionist thought as “clash”—namely one that is keen on exaggerating difference with the effect of ossifying it in the minds of people driven to confront imagined dissimilarities through violent conflict.⁶⁷ Even Petito himself recognizes that many critics have “increasingly labeled civilizational dialogue as idealistic, abstract, rhetorical, and even politically dangerous.”⁶⁸ Despite the onslaught of criticism, he stresses that most important is the need for “new heterodox alliances.” In short, “the promotion of common initiatives (cultural, social, communicative, and political) to build new transversal practices of solidarity, and cooperation and mobilization involving groups from different cultural backgrounds and religious affiliations acting together on the basis of common political aspirations.”⁶⁹

⁶⁵ The derivation of this term is used by Durkheim, meant instead to signify “international” codes of rationality within a given civilizational entity, instead of *between* civilizational entities, as is the case with the Roman definition of the word.

⁶⁶ Petito, Fabio. “Dialogue of Civilizations as an Alternative Model for World Order.” *Civilizational Dialogue and World Order: The Other Politics of Cultures, Religions, and Civilizations in International Relations*. Ed. Michális S. Michael. New York: Palgrave MacMillan: 2009. 60-1.

⁶⁷ The noble and elevating search for amity among people seen as amity between civilizations speedily reduces many-sided human beings to one dimension each and muzzles the variety of involvements that have provided rich and diverse grounds for cross-border interactions over many centuries, including the arts, literature, science, mathematics, games, trade, politics, and other arenas of shared human interest. Well-meaning attempts at pursuing global peace can have very counterproductive consequences when these attempts are founded on a fundamentally illusory understanding of the world of human beings.” Sen, Amartya. “What Clash of Civilizations?” *Identity and Violence*. New York: Norton &, 2007. *Slate*. Web.

⁶⁸ Petito, Fabio. “Dialogue of Civilizations as an Alternative Model for World Order.” *Civilizational Dialogue and World Order: The Other Politics of Cultures, Religions, and Civilizations in International Relations*. Ed. Michális S. Michael. New York: Palgrave MacMillan: 2009. 62.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 63.

Nation-state alternatives

In more general terms, Marchetti juxtaposes civilizationism alongside the three other main post-Westphalian political models widely considered serious non-state alternatives. The first is neoliberalism—the driving force of globalization, characterized by a top-down configuration of political power formation in which international corporations and consumers are the main actors in political play, and the essential bond between all human beings is based on economic interest. The political principles consist of anarchic freedom of competition between self-regulated international firms, and global expansionist fervor that has the effect of homogenizing the world’s cultures.⁷⁰

The second is cosmopolitanism, which is a hypothetical political project based on the concept of a singular global ethic community, in which a basic set of moral standards are shared by all human beings. The basic unit of society is the individual, who participates politically in “federations” of individuals, in order to collectively explore solutions to ethical dilemmas. Cosmopolitanism is essentially based on a spirit of universalism.⁷¹

The third is alter-globalism,⁷² a system of international civic solidarity formed by bottom-up social networks like civil society and grassroots campaigns. Its main political goals are to forge a sense of solidarity through “place-based” political autonomy. This

⁷⁰ Marchetti, Raffaele. “Civilizationism and the Political Debate on Globalization.” *Civilizational Dialogue and World Order: The Other Politics of Cultures, Religions, and Civilizations in International Relations*. 2009. 99.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* 99.

⁷² Also known as alter-globalization, or alternative globalization.

kind of political configuration is based on a social bond between human beings, and poses a “radical alternative” to the homogenizing process of globalization.⁷³

Last, Marchetti characterizes civilizationism as a “macro-regionalist” political project with a “conservative” stance in relation to globalization that aims to defend cultural diversity and promote “respect” and “goodwill” among the world’s civilizations. The formation of political power is top-down cultural elitism⁷⁴—the essential human bond being cultural and religious.⁷⁵ Marchetti himself affirms civilizationism as one of the two main alternatives to the geopolitical status quo. He reiterates its antagonistic character in relation to neoliberal globalization, which he calls “a universalistic and consumerist project of (a-)political transformation,” emphasizing its effect on the emergence of non-state actors that work to decompose the Westphalian paradigm along with its traditional institutional apparatuses.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 99.

⁷⁴ An example of this brand of cultural-religious elitism is the Roman Catholic Church—a conservative religious institution tied to a “Roman” cultural tradition that informs the behavior and sensibilities of many Catholics—practicing as well as non-practicing—around the world.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 99.

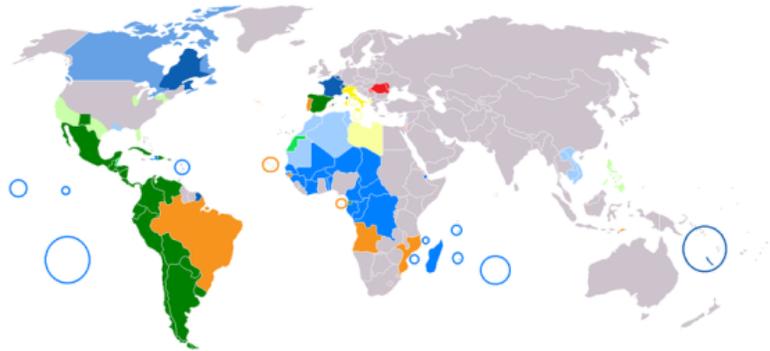
Chapter II

A history of antagonism: The Latin and Anglo-Saxon worlds

The “Latin world” and Latinist political organizations

My objective in this chapter is not to produce an essentializing narrative of the Latin and Anglo-Saxon worlds in conflict by highlighting cultural stereotypes, but to illustrate, through research and personal anecdote, major and indeed conflict-producing differences between two civilizations. The ultimate goal is not only to shed light on this Anglo-Latin antagonism, but to introduce a particular discourse rarely paid substantial attention in the English-speaking tradition.

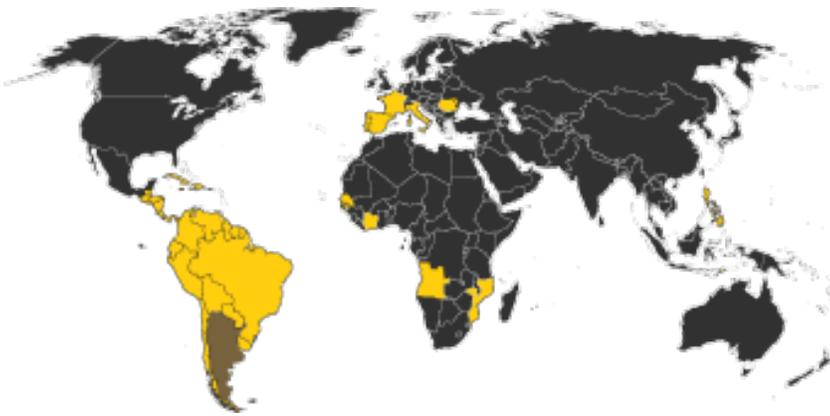
But what is the “Latin” world? I am not referring to Latin America as a cultural region, or as a geopolitical unit, as is the norm. Instead, I mean to refer to all societies with cultural ties to Ancient Roman civilization. In attempting to



The "Latin" countries of the world [1]

explain this project to friends, academics, and fellow researchers alike, I have been forced to confront the challenge of working with an ambivalent vocabulary. When I use “Latin” as a qualifier, most English-speakers will understand it differently than I intend them to here. For the reader’s sake, I will sketch a new lexicon and trace its origins with grounding in literature and conference proceedings.

In the mid-twentieth century, an organization called the Latin Union [Fr. *Union Latine*] was formed in the interest of protecting Latin cultural and linguistic heritage, and strengthening ties of solidarity and exchange between Latin countries. Though headquartered in Paris, the Latin Union was founded in Madrid in 1959. The conditions of membership are based on 1) linguistic criteria, 2) cultural-linguistic criteria, and 3) cultural criteria. In order to be eligible for membership status, a country's official



Member states of the Latin Union [2]

language must be neo-Latin, must instruct in a neo-Latin language in public schooling, and must have a neo-Latin language as principle medium of communication in daily life and in the media. A country must also

have a “significant” tradition of literature in a neo-Latin language. This language must be present in press, television, and radio communications. Most remarkably, member states must possess “direct or indirect” Ancient Roman heritage, “to which [they] demonstrate their loyalty and perpetuate.” Members states can perpetuate Roman heritage by teaching Latin and foreign neo-Latin languages to their students, and by way of cultural exchange with other Latin countries in terms of the “organization of society in a juridical sense.”⁷⁶

The Latin Union organizes conferences, research projects, and youth exchanges. Every few years, the Latin Union's Executive Council stages a major colloquium, where Latin, and Latinist, politicians, writers, and intellectuals congregate to read papers and

⁷⁶ “Conditions d’adhésion.” *Union Latine*. Web. <unilat.org>

discuss issues facing the Latin world.⁷⁷ Most of the Latinist theory I use in this thesis is derived from a 2006 colloquium in Paris called *La Latinité en question*, concerning the challenges posed to Latinity by globalization in the twenty-first century. Another of the Latin Union's functions is to address more practical questions of cultural preservation. An entire committee comprised of research specialists, for instance, is in charge of anticipating and confronting the challenges of the digitalization of Latin literary heritage.⁷⁸

With the funds that it derives from the mandatory contributions of its member states, the Latin Union sponsors the creation of digital language-learning programs to encourage an “inter-linguistic politics of Roman space,” so that the youth of the Latin world have the proper tools to engage in dialogue with one another, and reinforce a tradition of pan-Latin cultural exchange. The Latin Union's emphasis on youth is important to its preservationist ends. “The youth are, in a sense, ‘ambassadors’ of Latinity, and it is up to them to find, beyond an obvious shared linguistic heritage, a new language, new codes of communication, and new way of being Latin in the twenty-first century.”⁷⁹

In the same regard, what is this Anglo-Saxon world? Are Anglo-Saxons not the Isle-dwelling descendants of the Germanic peoples of Saxony? I employ the term “Anglo-Saxon,” similarly to the way that I employ the term “Latin,” intending to signify a series of civic, philosophical, legal, moral, and political traits shared by the natives of English-speaking society worldwide, regardless of ethnic, religious, or “cultural”

⁷⁷ **Latinist:** Refers to the discipline of Panlatin studies. That is, the idea of a Latin civilization that ties all the Latin countries of Europe, America, and parts of Africa and Asia.

⁷⁸ “Patrimoine.” *Union Latine*. Web. <unilat.org>

⁷⁹ “Jeunesse et latinité.” *Union Latine*. Web. <unilat.org>

background. Why not just use “English-speaking,” then? Because in presenting this research, I am tapping into a pre-existing discourse, in which “Anglo-Saxon” is the most commonly used term to refer to the whole of English-speaking society. This is especially true in the Latinist tradition. Indeed, in romance languages, “Anglo-Saxon” is synonymous with *English-speaking* or of an English-speaking culture. Portuguese political essayist Eduardo Lourenço warns of the imperialist dangers of “the American version of Anglo-Saxon culture,”⁸⁰ while Spanish-Colombian journalist Miguel Ángel Bastenier describes Samuel Huntington’s Anglo-centric theories about the cultural and moral legacy of the United States as the “distressed cry of ‘Anglo-Saxonity’ against a Latin American *invasion*.”⁸¹ This usage of Anglo-Saxon is dominant in romance language literature critiquing perceived views, practices, politics, and attitudes of the English-speaking world. Likewise, I employ the phrase “Anglo-Saxon tradition” to signify the way that English-speakers discursively address questions of views, practices, and attitudes on a civilizational level. I employ the phrase “Latin (or Latinist) tradition” in the same way.

The concept of discursive tradition is important to both the scope of ideas in this thesis and to the ultimate objective of the thesis itself as a *nota bene* to the English-speaking world. Perhaps due to its unquestioned global dominance, English-speaking civilization does not nearly as often recognize itself as Anglo-Saxon, as neo-Latin-speaking civilization recognizes itself as Latin. In a similar vein, self-proclaimed Latins are more likely to identify English-speakers as Anglo-Saxons. For instance, it is not as

⁸⁰ “[...] *la culture anglo-saxonne en version américaine*.”

Lourenço, Eduardo. "Digression sur la Latinité." *La Latinité en question*. 132.

⁸¹ “[...] *angustiado grito de anglosajonidad contra la invasión latinoamericana*.”

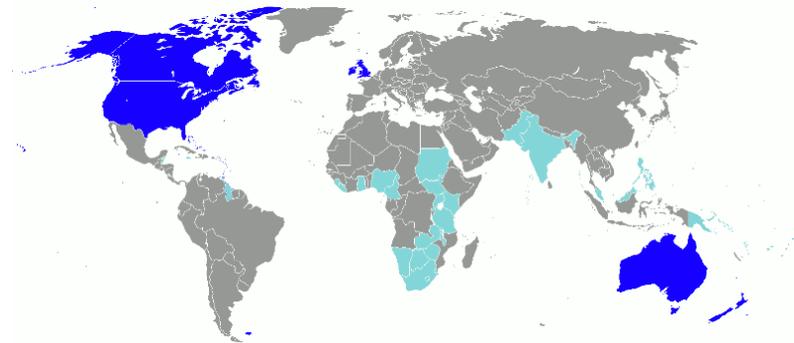
Bastenier, Miguel Ángel. "Motín a la hora del té." *El País* [Madrid] 17 Mar. 2010: 6. Web.

common for an American or an Australian to declare himself as Anglo-Saxon, as it is for an Italian or an Ecuadorian in the Latin tradition to identify an American or an Australian as such. An English-speaker may identify an Ecuadorian as Latin or “Latino,” but not perhaps not an Italian.

But civilizational identification according to language is seeping slowly into the Anglo-Saxon tradition. In a press article featured in the Wall Street Journal in 2013, Daniel Hannan, a Peruvian-born British political scientist, used the term “Anglosphere” to invoke the sum of the world’s “Anglophone” or English-speaking democracies.⁸²

There are several interpretations as to which parts of the world constitute the Anglosphere, though North American businessman James C. Bennett asserts that it “has necessarily imprecise boundaries” as a “network civilization without a corresponding political form.”⁸³ Aside

from the United States and the United Kingdom—the two countries with the highest volume of *native*



The “Anglosphere” [3]

English speakers—Bennett

indicates that Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland, as well as Anglophone Canada and South Africa, are its principal components. The English-speaking parts of the Caribbean, Oceania, Africa, and India are also important “nodes”. Speaking to that which differentiates the Anglosphere from its global counterparts, Hannan notes that:

⁸² Hannan, Daniel. "The World of English Freedoms." *The Wall Street Journal*. 15 Nov. 2013. Web.

⁸³ Bennett, James C. *The Anglosphere Challenge: Why the English-speaking Nations Will Lead the Way in the Twenty-first Century*. 2004. 80.

Foreign visitors through the centuries remarked on a number of peculiar characteristics: the profusion of non-state organizations, clubs, charities and foundations; the cheerful materialism of the population; the strong county institutions, including locally chosen law officers and judges; the easy coexistence of different denominations (religious toleration wasn't unique to the Anglosphere, but religious equality—that is, freedom for every sect to proselytize—was almost unknown in the rest of the world). They were struck by the weakness, in both law and custom, of the extended family, and by the converse emphasis on individualism. They wondered at the stubborn elevation of private property over *raison d'état*, of personal freedom over collective need.⁸⁴

I exercise caution in employing Hannan's theories, as he openly admits to his British exceptionalism and desire to see the Anglosphere expand at the expense of other civilizations. Nevertheless, I believe his observations concerning the distinguishing characteristics of English-speaking societies to be accurate and succinct, as well as unique in the Anglo-Saxon tradition from which he comes.

Hannan's mention of "strong county institutions, including locally chosen law officers and judges," refers to the Anglo-Saxon tradition of common law—or jurisprudence—practiced throughout the entire Anglosphere, including those countries, like India, once forming part of Great Britain's vast colonial Empire. English common law emerged and continues to exist today in opposition to code law or civil law, which has its origin in the Roman legal system. Indeed, in several neo-Latin languages this tradition is still identified as "Roman."⁸⁵ Common law and civil law, excluding Islamic or Sharia law, are the two principal legal traditions observed and practiced in the world. The common law tradition adheres to the principles of *stare decisis*,⁸⁶ which dictate that—

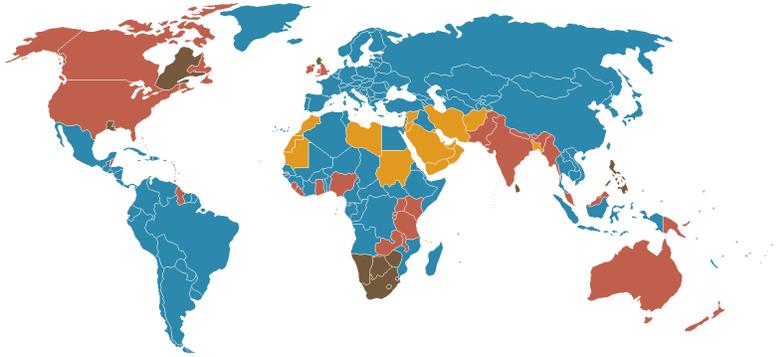
⁸⁴ Hannan, Daniel. "The World of English Freedoms." *The Wall Street Journal*. 15 Nov. 2013. Web.

⁸⁵ I.e. Cat. *dret romà*, Pt. *direito romano*.

⁸⁶ "Common Law." *American Government A to Z: The U.S. Constitution A to Z*. Washington: CQ Press, 2008. *Credo Reference*. Web.

unlike statutory law—cases should be decided based on precedent or past trends in judicial lawmaking.

The civil law system, practiced in the Latin world, as well as in practically all non-Anglo-Saxon and non-Islamic countries, relies on a tradition of statute.⁸⁷



The world's legal systems. In red, the common law tradition; in blue, the civil law tradition; in orange, Islamic law; in brown, a mixture of civil and common law. [4]

Statute is law composed

by an elected legislative body to be studied and enforced by executive and judicial actors.

Jean-Michel Blanquer, political scientist and director of the *Institution des hautes études d'Amérique latine*, comments that the Latin system emphasizes “mixing of the three juridical powers,” or the relative power of the legislative branch in the lawmaking process. The Anglo-Saxon system, meanwhile, with its emphasis on jurisprudence, leaves the ultimate authority to judges to determine legal precedence. According to Blanquer, this difference marks a “truly typological distinction between the Latin and the Anglo-Saxon worlds,”⁸⁸ being one of the most concrete and significant differences.

In qualifying common law and other concepts as Anglo-Saxon, Hannan intends to underscore their presence and legitimacy throughout the Anglosphere and not just in Great Britain. His invocation of “the profusion of nonstate organizations . . . the cheerful materialism of the population . . . the converse emphasis on individualism . . . [and] the

⁸⁷ *Legal Systems of the World*. Digital image. *See image on page 20. **Key**—Blue: Civil/Roman law, Red: Common/Anglo-Saxon law, Yellow: Sharia/Islamic law, Brown: Mixed civil/common tradition.

⁸⁸ Blanquer, Jean-Michel. "L'idée de constitution dans le monde latin." *La Latinité en question*. 296.

stubborn elevation of . . . personal freedom over collective need” is partly in reference to the United States, whose role as an Anglo-Saxon actor in the world is especially remarkable because of its economic, cultural, and military might. One major Latinist critique of Anglo-Saxon civilization is its dogmatic emphasis on individualism. There is unquestionably an individualist strain in the North American—or as Hannan proposes, the Anglo-American—way of thinking that can be traced back to the rationalist currents of thought that arose in Europe during the Renaissance, Enlightenment, and French Revolutionary periods.⁸⁹

José Fernández Santillán—Mexican political philosopher—writes in his preamble to Italian political scientist Ermanno Vitale’s *Liberalism and Multiculturalism* about the political dualism that has always existed between two streams of thought: organicism and individualism. Fernández Santillán defines organicism as a system of societal organization in which the State is *polis* whose parts exist in function of the whole, implying the emphasis of the collective, to which the individual has a subordinate relationship.⁹⁰ Individualism, on the other hand—which arose during the rationalist period of European intellectual development—designates the singular person as point of departure in societal questions. Beforehand, “the *civitas* . . . had rights and its members obligations.” The adoption of individualist values, however, supposed an inversion of this phenomenon and instead “the State and its associations have obligations, while individuals have rights to claim before them.”⁹¹

⁸⁹ Fernández Santillán, José. "Liberalismo, democracia y socialismo." Preface. *Liberalismo y multiculturalismo*. 21.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* 20.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* 21.

Fernández Santillán proposes three branches of individualist thought, namely liberalism, democracy, and socialism. According to this line of thought, liberalism is the theory and practice of the *limitation* of power, while democracy is the theory and practice of the *distribution* of power.⁹² Socialism, then, is the Marxist interpretation of the distribution of power, as power is conceived of in terms of material disposition and access to means of production. Therefore, a liberal “wishes not to be disturbed neither by other individuals nor public authority, in order to devote him or herself to his or her own matters” while the democrat wishes to participate in “an active freedom which is realized through public participation in the organisms of the state.”⁹³

Of course, this conception of liberalism can be further broken down into subcategories—i.e. freedom of thought, expression, association, et cetera. It is in the realm of economic liberalism and the Anglosphere’s inclination to it, however, which the Latin Union takes issue. Just as socialism aims to democratize access to material goods and means of production, economic liberalism looks to remove all centralizing obstacles in this process of acquisition and retention, prioritizing unregulated enterprise on an individual or corporate scale. Indeed, many Latinist thinkers consider the influx of positivist values in the form of economic liberalism to be an eroding force, completely incompatible with Latinity and its legacy. Among other affronts, “the inhuman use of technologies; continuous violations of the law, which is one of the remaining glories of Latinity . . . and the domination of the market in public affairs . . . in short the primacy of

⁹² *Ibid.* 14.

⁹³ Fernández Santillán, José. "Liberalismo, democracia y socialismo." Preface. *Liberalismo y multiculturalismo*. 14-5.

homo economicus over *homo moralis*”⁹⁴ have been cited as the principal collective preoccupations of the Latin Union.

Within the Latinist tradition, the above-mentioned threats of the Anglo-Saxon liberal economic machine have been commonly attributed to the highly polemical contemporary phenomenon termed globalization. It is often compared in the academy to terms like modernization whose function is to identify a “master discourse about the general state of the world.” The particular phenomenon surrounding the “master discourse” of the era of globalization is a process of worldwide market integration driven by free market capitalism, necessitating in its wake the implementation of neoliberal policy reforms.⁹⁵ Neoliberalism is generally defined as a model that favors market-driven economies and discourages government interference in economic affairs.

The tendency to reform policy with an eye to deregulation is what concerns critics of globalization. Spanish political and historical essayist Juan Manuel Lechado comments that “globalization is an economic-financial phenomenon characterized by a fundamental political consequence, which is the loss of national sovereignty due to the marketization of the economic dynamic.”⁹⁶ In other words, the interlinking of the world’s economies produces a condition of global market dependency that alienates governments from their ability to enforce their own economic policies. Latinist scholars perceive this process as a disintegrating agent of finely tuned political institutions (pertaining to the republican state) that, having been developed in France and adopted disproportionately by other Latin countries—as we will see in the following chapter—forms part of the Latin legacy.

⁹⁴ Osio, Bernardino. "Allocution de son excellence l’Ambassadeur Bernardino Osio." *La Latinité en question*. 8.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ Lechado, José Manuel. "Una breve historia de la globalización." *Globalización y gobernanzas*. 2003. 14.

In the case of countries with an interventionist economic model in place—which is true of most of the Latin world—neoliberal reforms are often referred to as “austerity” measures meant to effectuate the transition to a free market model by reducing public expenditure. Many Latinist scholars insist that the primary victim of these measures is the cultural domain, with the “ruthless reduction of university, school, and museum budgets.”⁹⁷ Indeed, the effects of globalization are perceived by some as the imperial imposition of Anglo-Saxon economic and cultural norms on the rest of the world’s societies, both in its forms of expansion and the cultural production distributed so widely by the globalizing powers—and especially the United States. Lechado warns against the dangers of this “Anglo-Saxon cultural colonization,” which he characterizes as a “collateral effect of the globalizing process.”⁹⁸

The Latinist critique of liberalism is varied and transcends the realm of economic policy. Blanquer makes a philosophical distinction between the Latin and Anglo-Saxon legal traditions, insisting that the former is Platonic and the latter Aristotelian. In Raphael’s famous Roman fresco in which the two appear alongside one another, Plato points his finger to the sky, while Aristotle points his toward the ground. In pointing his finger to the sky, Plato expresses interest in “being,” or “that which power represents” in his reflections on political function. Aristotle, on the other hand, looks to the “function of power,” or “that which makes power.” This observation is made in reference to the emphasis placed on legislative authority in the Roman civil tradition, and on judicial authority in the common law tradition; a difference mentioned earlier in this chapter.

⁹⁷ Osio, Bernardino. "Allocution de son excellence l’Ambassadeur Bernardino Osio." *La Latinité en question*. 8.

⁹⁸ Lechado, José Manuel. "Una breve historia de la globalización." *Globalización y gobernanzas*. 2003. 13.

It is not an observation, however, made only for the sake of pointing out technical distinctions between the two traditions. Blanquer intends to point out fundamental philosophical differences and a disparity of values and concerns between Latinity and the Anglo-Saxon world. There is a preoccupation with the universal application of the theoretical in the case of the former, and a fascination with function and positivist understanding of agency in the case of the latter. This is one of the seeming paradoxes of the Latin-Anglo-Saxon discourse. The “longing approximation to the confines of terrestriality” that characterizes the French way of interacting with the physical world could be interpreted as positivist, while the liberal fantasy of American economic opportunity could be conversely interpreted as abstract and idealist. The Anglo-Saxon compulsion to engage in unprecedented enterprise regardless of the material cost, however, is representative of an anxiety to bypass the confines of terrestriality expressed in terms of positivist knowledge and domination of the physical environment. The Latin willingness to patiently engage the earth and proceed according to its natural limits is an attempt to develop a sense of long lasting harmony, to understand things as they should be and not as they can be.

Max Weber, German sociologist and political economist from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was among the first in modern times to seriously comment upon this philosophical tension between Rome and the North. In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber proposes that differences between the respective value systems of the Catholic and Protestant religions create a disparity in economic activity between each religion’s population: “Catholics show a stronger propensity to remain in their crafts . . . whereas the Protestants are attracted to a larger extent into the factories in

order to fill the upper rank's skilled labor and administrative positions."⁹⁹ This disparity, he argues, is due to a philosophical distinction between the respective Catholic and Protestant relationships to earthliness and the physicality of the world: "one might be tempted to express the difference by saying that the greater other-worldliness of Catholicism, the ascetic character of its highest ideals, must have brought up its adherents to a greater indifference toward the good things of this world."¹⁰⁰ Meanwhile, the "materialistic joy of living of Protestantism" explains why "the Protestants of Germany are . . . absorbed in worldly economic life."¹⁰¹ The "conflict between other-worldliness, asceticism, and ecclesiastical piety on the one side, and participation in capitalistic acquisition on the other"¹⁰² that Weber poses, though based on sociological conjecture, reinforces the idea of an economic and philosophical antagonism between Latinity and its Anglo-Saxon counterpart.

How is this so, if Weber distinguishes between the Catholic and the Protestant, and not between the Latin and the Anglo-Saxon? Catholicism, or the "universal" religion as its name signifies in Latin (*catholĭcus*, from Gr. καθολικός, 'universal')¹⁰³ replaced paganism as the official religion of the Roman Empire in the year 330 CE. As all of Rome's peoples were forced to convert to Christianity, the Catholic doctrine became an integral part of Roman identity. The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century represented a rejection of Roman Catholic ideals and practices, and, in a sense, a rejection of Latinity. The term Anglo-Saxon originally represented an ethnic group that

⁹⁹ Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. 7.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* 8.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.* 9.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* 9.

¹⁰³ "católico, ca." *Diccionario de la lengua española*.

inhabited the British Isles, supposedly descended from the Germanic people of Saxony in central Europe; Anglo, of course, is a marker of Englishness. Though not to be confused with the much broader Anglo-Saxon civilization that we have been discussing, the English descendants of the original Anglo-Saxons inherited both the reformed Christianity and worldly, enterprising spirit from their German cousins.

In light of the problematic of a Latin “crisis of technological innovation, [as well as a] a behavioral crisis in response to the ‘American way of life,’”¹⁰⁴ Italian diplomat Maurizio Enrico Serra asks rhetorically if Latinity will be condemned to an increasingly diminished role on the global stage, suggesting “the decadence of cultures too old and too wise.”¹⁰⁵ Léopold Sédar Senghor, poet and ex-president of Senegal, president of the *Académie française*, and important philosopher in post-colonial Africanist thought, likewise reflects melancholically upon the “decadence” of Latin civilization and its intellectual and spiritual excellence in the face of material oblivion. Senegalese writer and philosopher Aloyse Raymond Ndiaye writes about Senghor’s engagement in these questions dating back to the first rationalist debates of European history:

The world that resulted from modern rationalism was constructed on the repression of the body and the oblivion of man. Indeed, Senghor sees in this Cartesian rationalism the first step of the movement that will lead to the *depoeticization* of the world. He attributes this to the “decadence of Latinity.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Serra, Maurizio. "Latinité et modernité: Une interrogation sur l'héritage et sur l'avenir." *La Latinité en question*. 124.

¹⁰⁵ “*la décadence des cultures trop anciennes et trop sages.*”
Ibid. 124.

¹⁰⁶ “[L]e monde qui sera issu du rationalisme moderne se construit sur le refoulement du corps, l’oubli de l’homme. Senghor, en effet, voit dans le rationalisme cartésien, la première impulsion au mouvement qui va conduire à la dépoeétisation du monde. Il en situe la cause réelle et directe dans ce qu’il appelle lui-même « la décadence de la Latinité ».”

Ndiaye, Aloyse Raymond. "Latinité et Africanité." *La Latinité en question*. Bayeux: Imprimerie Moderne de Bayeux, 2004. 114.

The theme of decadence is common amongst Latinist scholars. The majority harken back to a time previous to the era of Anglo-Saxon domination, in which the humanistic values of Latinity retained priority.

Part of the characterization of Latin humanism is its “universality.” Many Latinists use this term to describe Rome’s imperial model of conquering and adopting aspects of local cultural knowledge instead of obliterating it. According to French anthropologist François Zumbiehl, “[Latinity] possesses . . . a culture of openness to the Other that dates back more than a thousand years. It achieves the universal by dialoguing with civilizations from which it, in turn, does not hesitate to draw influence.”¹⁰⁷ Senghor mirrors this idea in *Liberté 3*: “If the old countries of Latinity . . . work so hard . . . to construct the ‘civilization of the universal’ . . . it’s precisely because they are countries of mixture.”¹⁰⁸

This cultural diversity described as universalist, according to Lourenço, is dismissed by a patronizing discourse produced and perpetuated by the Anglo-Saxon tradition. Lourenço uses the English term “latin lover” as an example to demonstrate the dismissive and essentialist effects of how Latin-ness is conceived of in the Anglo-Saxon tradition:

The characterization of Latin and Latinity as a self-contained entity, understood through all kinds of clichés and stereotypes ranging from the culinary to the erotic, from the religious to the political, from the ethical to the aesthetic, finds its origins and perpetuation in an essentially Anglo-Saxon discourse . . . It is from this place . . . dominated politically, economically, and, in part, culturally, in the

¹⁰⁷ “[La Latinité] possède . . . une culture d’ouverture à l’autre tout aussi millénaire, le sens de l’accession à l’universel par le dialogue avec les civilisations dont elle n’hésite pas à se faire l’héritière.” Zumbiehl, François. “Une question d’avenir.” *La Latinité en question*. 14.

¹⁰⁸ “« Si de vieux pays de la Latinité . . . travaillent si puissamment . . . à l’édification de la ‘civilisation de l’universel’ . . . c’est précisément, qu’ils sont pays de métissage ».” Ndiaye, Aloyse Raymond. “Latinité et Africanité.” *La Latinité en question*. 117.

modern era by England . . . that the people of Southern Europe are perceived as Latin.¹⁰⁹

The treatment of Latinity as a monolithic culture, or as a series of ancient associations being passionately vindicated by a group of hot-headed Southerners with a shaky grip on the reality of modernity dismisses Latinity's pretension to universality. This denial, in conjunction with the violence of the global liberal economy necessitates an interest in forging "a sort of Latin cultural nationalism in order to counter the suffocating, tentacular grip . . . of American Anglo-Saxon culture."¹¹⁰

In the perception of economic and cultural violence and in the corresponding necessity to invent a misplaced sense of "cultural nationalism," Latinity asserts itself by *othering* Anglo-Saxon civilization. This antagonism, reflected in the respective Roman and Anglo-Saxon legal traditions, political histories, and economic-philosophical sensibilities, provokes the construction of oppositional identities on a civilizational plane.

¹⁰⁹ "Le caractère ou l'inscription du latin et de la Latinité dans une sphère propre, appréhendée à travers des clichés de toutes sortes, qui vont du comportement culinaire à l'érotique, du religieux au politique, de l'éthique à l'esthétique, a son origine et son emploi dans un discours typiquement anglo-saxon . . . C'est de cet espace . . . dominé politiquement, économiquement et en partie culturellement, à l'époque moderne, par l'Angleterre . . . que les hommes du Sud de l'Europe . . . sont perçus comme latins."

Lourenço, Eduardo. "Digression sur la Latinité." *La Latinité en question*. 131.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* 132.

Chapter III

The Latinization of America

Ambivalence of the term “Latin”

Qu’il soit nom propre, nom commun ou adjectif, qu’il se rapporte à une langue, à un homme, à un peuple, à une religion ou à autre chose, le mot « latin » offre une grande diversité de significations ou d’emplois.

Voici . . . les expressions qu’enregistre le Petit Robert¹¹¹ : Les peuples latins, les Latins, le monde latin, la langue latine; déclinaisons latines, tournure latine, auteurs latins, version latine; Quartier latin; langues latines, nations latines, peuples latins, Amérique latine, esprit, tempérament latin . . . Eglise latine, rite latin, croix latine; voile latine; le latin, latin classique, impérial . . . latin de cuisine, perdre son latin.

La liste pourrait s’allonger : le droit latin, l’Empire latin de Constantinople, l’union latine [sic], le type latin, les oiseaux chantaient dans leur latin, etc.

Whether a proper noun, a common noun, or an adjective, whether referring to a language, a person, a people, a religion, or something else, the word “Latin” affords a great diversity of meanings and usages.

See here . . . the expressions the dictionary lists: “The Latin peoples, the Latins, the Latin world, the Latin language; Latin declinations, Latin flare, Latin authors, Latin version; the Latin Quarter [in Paris]; Latin languages, Latin nations, Latin peoples, Latin America, Latin spirit, Latin temperament . . . the Latin Church, Latin rite, Latin cross, Latin veil, Latin, Classical Latin, Imperial Latin . . . Vulgar Latin, to lose one’s Latin (French expression: to no longer understand something).”

The list goes on: “Latin law, Constantine’s Latin Empire, the Latin Union, Latin stereotype, the birds sang in their Latin (French expression), etc.

Jacques Pohl, “Qui est latin ?”, *La Linguistique* 24.2, 1988¹¹²

A simple Google search will demonstrate Jacques Pohl’s point that the word “Latin” has indeed come to acquire diverse forms, meanings, and usages. On the first page, search results range from SALVI (the North American Institute for Living Latin Studies), to the homepage of CEPAL (the Economic Commission for Latin America and

¹¹¹ Extracted by Pohl from the French dictionary *Le Petit Robert* v° “Latin”, 1973.

¹¹² Pohl, Jacques. “Qui est latin ?” *La Linguistique* 24.2 (1988): 39-73. *JSTOR*. Web.

the Caribbean, to a commercial webpage, intended for the sale of “Latin percussion.” The disparity between these results reflects a deeper ambiguity plaguing the word “Latin.” In its substantive form, it represents the Latin language, originally spoken by inhabitants of the Italic province of Latium and later adopted by the peoples subjected to Roman rule under the Roman Empire (read: Latins). In its adjectival form, however, the concept it communicates is quivery. Is “Latin percussion” “Latin” in the same way that the Latin Quarter of Paris is “Latin,” or in the way that parts of America are “Latin,” or in the way that the Latin speakers of the Roman Empire were “Latin?” This is obviously not the case.

As is often the case with words whose function is to describe, “Latin” possesses a semantic ambiguity that leaves us speakers with the burden of specifying which of its various meanings we intend to invoke. In Europe—where the term originates—“Latin” as an adjective was and, as we will shortly see, largely is, understood to signify the language and civilization of Rome. After the independence struggles of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies in America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the southern portion of the American continent became known the rest of the world as a cultural and geopolitical unit called “Latin” America. In the United States, “Latin” and *latino/a* are used, often interchangeably, to connote a racial ethos ascribed to the American people and cultures south of the United States border.

Who is “Latin?” Latin versus latino

In American English, “Latin” as a descriptor—along with its variants *latino* and Hispanic—has come to represent a racialized image of Spanish-speakers from the Americas, particularly those who reside in the United States as immigrants.¹¹³ The idea of *latino* is fluid and confusing.¹¹⁴ In colloquial speech, it is understood as a collection of traits typically possessed by Caribbean Hispanics: an excitable disposition, a natural inclination to forms of sensual expression like dance, and a set of physical characteristics pertinent to the Caribbean region—i.e., a mixture between various types of European and African ancestries. Because of the U.S.’s proximity to and colonial history in countries like Puerto Rico and Cuba, Caribbean immigrants had the largest initial presence there, and so molded many of the stereotypes that would later be applied erroneously to “Latin” Americans from other parts of the continent.

Another intention of this neo-usage was to invent an inferior “Latin” American race, so as to exclude it. The attitude that dark skinned Spanish- (and Portuguese-) speakers were inferior implied a shift in which “‘Latin’ America, all of the sudden, became a new ‘racial’ category defined not by blood or by skin color but by marginal status in relation to Southern Europeans.”¹¹⁵ Indeed, in matters of public administration and legal enforcement, *latino* is often understood as an ethnic category—alongside white, black, native American, etc.—despite the exceptional genetic diversity of the people it is intended to categorize. A Mexican national, for example, could very well fit into *any* of

¹¹³ ***Latino***: literally, “Latin,” in Spanish and Portuguese.

¹¹⁴ “The *latino*,” i.e., that which is pertinent to concepts of *latino* culture, society, language, and “ethnicity.”

¹¹⁵ Mignolo, Walter. “‘Latin’ America and the First Reordering of the Modern/Colonial World.” *The Idea of Latin America*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2005. 73.

the three above-listed categories in ethnic terms. But she is forced to identify with a racial concept imagined by North Americans that reduces a complex historical process of “Latin” American identity construction. This reduction conflates patterns of ethnic mixing and cultural customs and sensibilities specific to a particular region.

American English speakers’ acceptance and integration of a term that implies the correctness and universality of this racist and stereotyped notion of Caribbean Latin-ness reflects a semantic shift in the word “Latin.” This shift is based on a fundamental ignorance of the word’s original associations in Europe, which are closely related to its employment in the Americas. There is a reason why the peoples of the plantation-based societies of the Spanish and Portuguese ex-colonies call themselves *latinos*. This reason is closely tied to European notions of Latinity, which were essential in the conceptual, political, and geographic formation of “Latin” America as we know it.

The European notion of Latinity is ancient and multi-dimensional. For example, it is often associated with Antiquity—that is, Greco-Roman civilization. If defined rigorously, Latinity technically designates that which derives civilizational inspiration from the people of Latium and their expansive Roman empire. But, in the course of European history, it is, in reality, a term that has been used to build historical and geographical metanarratives.

The classical dichotomy between “civilization” and “barbarism” comes from the Latin distinction between the “civilized” South, and the “barbaric” North.¹¹⁶ According to the Rémi Brague, this Latin-centric seed of orientation has informed European conceptions of geography in three ways. First, there is the North-South divide. This

¹¹⁶ In circles of Latinist discourse, this North-South distinction is very much still alive. In French language texts, the adjective *nordique* (northern) is often juxtaposed with *méridional* (southern), *latin*, or *méditerranéen* (Mediterranean).

division has separated those Europeans of “Latin” or “Greco-Roman” civilization and descent, with those of “Germanic” or “Nordic” civilization and descent.¹¹⁷ The Protestant Reformation and the subsequent period of mechanical-industrial development in the “Nordic” regions of Europe are examples of this psycho-geographical phenomenon stretching past Classical history.¹¹⁸

Second is the distinction between the two Mediterraneans: the “Christian” and the “Muslim.” Though practically all the land surrounding the Mediterranean belonged to Rome during its imperial era, the advance of the Islamic empire into North Africa and the Christianization of Roman Europe led to the division of this sea believed to lie at the “middle of the earth.”¹¹⁹ The idea of a Christian civilization north of the Mediterranean and a Muslim or “oriental” civilization south of it is one that pervades to this day. Third is a distinction stemming from the rupture of the Roman Empire into East and West in the fifth century. The West, explains Brague, is “Latin” and “Catholic, while the East is “Byzantine” and “Orthodox.”¹²⁰ Aside from the religious implications of the era following the Roman schism, this conceptual divide gave birth to the idea of a Western Europe and an Eastern Europe, and eventually, to the idea of the West in general.

A survey conducted in the early 1980s by French sociolinguist Jacques Pohl sheds light on how contemporary Europeans understand Latinity. The common use of the expressions “*Il est bien latin*” and “*C’est un Latin autant qu’on peut l’être*,” he adds, is an indication of the pervasiveness of an idea of Latin-ness in the French-speaking

¹¹⁷ Brague, Rémi. *Europe, la voie romaine*. Vol. 2. Paris: Criterion, 1993. Print. 9.

¹¹⁸ Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* 10.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* 12.

mind.¹²¹ When asked to describe the “average Latin,” a selection of French and Belgian university students answered varyingly. Descriptions ranged from the physical, to the cultural, to the psychological. “*Petit, brun, vif, colérique,*” said one student.¹²² Further comments follow: “*des caractéristiques physiques ou psychologiques typiquement méridionales*” . . . “*tempérament très vivant et très chaud, pas comme les habitants du Nord*” . . . “*un personnage empreint de la civilisation méditerranéenne, d’un esprit plus rêveur et poétique que rigoureux.*”¹²³ Closer to the self-categorization of Latinist scholars, one student remarks that “*psychologiquement il représente . . . un personnage empli de sérieux, de rigueur. Il a un doigté particulièrement spécialisé dans l’emploi des mots et spécialement du français.*”¹²⁴

But Pohl warns us to be wary of these responses. For despite the fact that historians and geographers play a huge role in informing the non-specialist’s understanding of abstract concepts like civilization, they often ascribe secondary importance to linguistic questions.¹²⁵ Subsequently, there is widespread ignorance of the fact that autochthonous languages do not necessarily correspond directly to specific

¹²¹ “*Il est bien latin.*” He’s quite Latin.

“*C’est un Latin autant qu’on peut l’être.*” He’s a Latin if I ever knew one.

Pohl, Jacques. “Qui est latin ?” *La Linguistique* 24.2 (1988): 60.

¹²² “*Petit, brun, vif, colérique.*” Short, brown-haired, lively, excitable.

Ibid. 61.

¹²³ “*des caractéristiques physiques ou psychologiques typiquement méridionales.*” Typically Southern physical and psychological characteristics. “*tempérament très vivant et très chaud, pas comme les habitants du Nord.*” A warm and vibrant temperament, unlike inhabitants of the North. “*un personnage empreint de la civilisation méditerranéenne, d’un esprit plus rêveur et poétique que rigoureux.*” A person belonging to the Mediterranean civilization, possessing a spirit more aspirational and poetic than rigorous.

Ibid. 61-2.

¹²⁴ **Translation:** Psychologically, the Latin stereotype represents someone characterized by seriousness and rigor. Someone who has a way with words, and especially in French.

Ibid. 62.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.* 41.

cultures, populations, or ethnicities.¹²⁶ Notwithstanding, “one cannot doubt the ‘Romanity’ of the creole (neo-Latin) languages engendered by the Roman colonization of Europe.”¹²⁷

Pohl is principally interested in drawing the map of Latinity in linguistic terms. Of intrigue and relevance is not the idea of Rome, but instead the idea of *Romania* or *Romanophonie*.¹²⁸ That is, the Romanophone or neo-Latin-speaking world.¹²⁹ Naturally, his criteria for determining who is and who is not a Romanophone have no ethnic or cultural basis—only sociolinguistic. In that capacity, a Romanophone is: “any speaker whose maternal language is neo-Latin and who, above all, expresses him- or herself most spontaneously, most easily, and most willingly in a neo-Latin language in the majority of his or her social interactions (family, leisure, work, school, administration).”¹³⁰ This definition of Latinity as the Romanophone world is useful from the purist perspective of a sociolinguist. But it is limited when understood according to national borders. For example, in the case of French-speaking African countries, and more specifically in the case of ex-colonies who use French as an official language in administration and law,

¹²⁶ To elaborate this statement, Pohl uses the Rwanda-Burundi region’s ethnic diversity as an example. Despite the fact that the Tutsi shepherds, the Hutu farmers, and the Twa hunters each belong to distinct ethnic groups, they all speak one common language.

Ibid. 41.

¹²⁷ “[...] *on ne met plus en doute la romanité des créoles engendrés par les colonisations ‘romanes.’*”

Ibid. 40.

¹²⁸ **Romania**: An umbrella term for the Romanophone world. Not to be confused with the country of Romania (Fr. *Roumanie*). Fr. *romanophone* is a synonym of *néo-latinophone*. *Latinophone* is not used in this case, as it applies only to speakers of Latin and not its Romance dialects.

Romanophonie: Taken from Fr. *Francophonie*—a term used to refer to the entirety of the French-speaking world throughout Europe, Africa, the Americas, and elsewhere.

¹²⁹ **Neo-Latin**: a descriptor representing the Romance languages (i.e., French, Spanish, Occitan, Galician) that evolved from Vulgar Latin during the middle ages, or any aspect that pertains to the people and culture of these languages.

¹³⁰ “[...] *tout locuteur qui soit de langue maternelle romane et, surtout, qui se serve le plus spontanément, le plus facilement ou le plus volontiers d’une langue romane dans la majorité des rapports sociaux (famille, loisirs, travail, école, administration).*”

Ibid. 44.

Pohl's criteria do not apply. For despite the official status that French enjoys in matters of government, a large majority of the non-urban populations speak no French at all.

Likewise, Romanophones residing in non-Romanophone countries (such as a Portuguese in Germany, or Mexicans in the United States) would find themselves excluded from the transnational Romanophone community, despite their quotidian use of a neo-Latin language.¹³¹

The problematic of an incoherent concept of Latinity is even more complex when left to more subjective interpretation. In a similar survey conducted by Pohl, 35% of French-speaking Belgians identified themselves as “Latin.” When asked about the Latinity of the same group, however, 85% of the French surveyed identified them as “Germanic.” Similarly, a majority of Bretons surveyed denied a Latin identity on the grounds of belonging instead to a “Celtic” civilization.¹³² The Québécois of Canada also rejected a Latin identity, despite the fact that 95% of the French who were asked the same question regarding the same group replied that they *are* indeed Latin. The anti-Latin sentiment of the French-speaking Canadians was apparently due to a rejection of the English-speaking concept of Latinity emanating from the United States. A “[*qualité latine de sociabilité*,”—originating from a stereotyped concept of Hispanic Caribbeanity—is projected on this isle of Latinity in an Anglo-Saxon sea.¹³³ Or perhaps the Québécois suffer from racist shame upon being grouped into the same cohort as whatever they imagine the “Latin” stereotype to be.

¹³¹ *Ibid.* 49.

¹³² **Bretons**: inhabitants of Brittany in Northwestern France. A people of Celtic origin, similar to the Irish, the Portuguese, and the Galicians of Spain.

¹³³ **Translation**: Latin quality of sociability.

The result is ever more troubling when the Latinity of non-European “Latin” is called into question. 65% of those surveyed said that black Brazilians are not Latin, while 88% insisted white Brazilians are.¹³⁴ With regard to those “Latin” Americans with native ancestry, 53% of those surveyed claimed the former group is not comprised of Latins, but “something else.”¹³⁵ Less than 5% accept the inhabitants of Zaïre (a country with an almost entirely French-speaking population) as Latin, and in the case of Haitians, only 25%. These statistics, though nearly thirty years old, shed light on the nature of European notions of Latinity. A race and culture based exclusivity often characterizes these notions in the minds of Europeans. In any case, it is clear that Latinity is not a concept that lends itself to simple qualification, whether on scientific or subjective grounds.

For the sake of comparison, I collected similar data to Pohl’s in São Paulo. I asked, *how is it possible that a country like Brazil—with such a large African-, indigenous-, Asian-, and non-Latin European-origin population—is Latin?* One student of Portuguese language at the University of São Paulo responded that Brazil is Latin because Brazil is mixed: “The concept of Latin surrounds those countries where a Latin-derived language is spoken. Portuguese fits inside that concept. But the concept here—the concept of *Latin America*—Brazil is very similar to all of those so-called *Latin* countries, from Mexico down. They’re all countries characterized by a sort of racial mixing. Brazil very much fits into that scheme, so I think we’re Latin in that sense.”¹³⁶

A student of Ancient Greek and Latin responded that he doesn’t perceive a substantial pan-Latin sentiment in Brazil. “I have to admit, I’m not familiar with any

¹³⁴ *Ibid.* 55.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.* 57.

¹³⁶ For whole interview, refer to Appendix 2, Interview 1.

discourse supporting a global pan-Latinism,” he said. “I think that Spanish Americans have a much stronger pan-Latin, or pan-American, sentiment than we Brazilians do. They have always resisted “Americanization” to a much larger degree. I see a few extremely localized groups in Brazil generally associated with left-wing political parties that, because of their leftist ideology, try to cut [North] American influence, which they automatically associate with capitalism and the ‘American way of life.’ But, really, I never perceived that as a popular sentiment in Brazil. In Spanish America much more so. They have a fighting spirit. They group together to resist that Anglo-Saxon influence.”¹³⁷

During my trip, I stayed with a woman who worked as a civil servant before retiring. We had long conversations about my research, and on one such occasion, she explained the extent to which the idea of Latin America as a geopolitical unit is engrained in the South American psyche: “It’s not that people don’t understand that Portuguese is a Latin language. People have a pre-conceived notion about what “Latin” implies. The average Brazilian has an immediate association with the geopolitical concept of Latin America.” The pervasiveness of this “preconceived notion,” though I had already been aware of it, became clear to me in Brazil. Next, I will explore the history of how South America got its Latin name.

¹³⁷ For whole interview, refer to Appendix 2, Interview 2.

France's republican political project: Latinité venue de la France

Chassés par les Germains et par les Slaves, les Latins du vieux monde seront forcés de se réfugier sur les bords de la mer bleue qui porta leur berceau flottant, et il sera permis à un Français de ne pas croire que la capitale de la culture classique puisse jamais passer de Paris à Buenos-Ayres, comme elle a passé de Rome à Paris. Mais sans nous attarder à des anticipations alarmantes, nous pouvons réjouir nos yeux de perspectives plus prochaines et plus lumineuses. Que l'Amérique du Sud, tout en restant elle-même, tout en cultivant . . . son idéal américain, devienne de plus en plus hospitalière à notre littérature, à nos arts, à notre commerce, à nos capitaux. La grande famille latine ne pourra qu'y gagner en prospérité matérielle et en autorité morale.

Pursued by Germans and Slavs, the Latins of the Old World will be forced to take refuge on the shores of the blue sea that kept their crib afloat, and a Frenchman will be justified in his disbelief that capital of classical culture could ever move from Paris to Buenos Aires, as it once did from Rome to Paris. But in the meantime, instead of preoccupying ourselves with alarmed anticipation, we can rejoice in brighter and closer prospects. That South America, while remaining herself, while cultivating her American ideal, become increasingly hospitable to our literature, our arts, our commerce, and our capital investment. In doing so, the great Latin family can only benefit in material prosperity and moral authority.¹³⁸

Raymond Poincaré, President of France 1913-1920

Why do the inhabitants of South and Central America call themselves Latin? How is “Latin” America Latin, after all? Brazilian historian Carla Brandalise writes that this “compound denomination” assigned to the southern portion of the American continent is so engrained in our understanding of geography that it seems “immanent” and “atemporal.”¹³⁹ The logical explanation to a non-expert posits that the name for this region is derived from the influence of the Spanish and Portuguese languages and cultures. This is partially true. But this designation was not given to the indigenous and newly arrived African peoples of America by the Spanish or the Portuguese. Instead, the name comes from France.

¹³⁸ Poincaré, Raymond. Preface. *Les démocraties latines de l'Amérique*. Paris: Ernest Flammarion, 1914. 7. Web.

¹³⁹ Brandalise, Carla. "O conceito de América Latina: Hispano-americanos e a panlatinitude europeia." *Caderno CILHA* 14.1 (2013): *Scientific Electronic Library Online*. Web.

By beginning of the sixteenth century, Iberian conquerors had comfortably established their colonial rule over an expansive portion of the American continent along with its native population. In Spanish America, the Spanish throne transferred authority to the hands of the American born descendants of the original conquerors and colonizers, called Creoles.¹⁴⁰ This ruling class configured political power in the form of viceroyalties, through which the authority of the Spanish monarchy was seceded to imperial representatives of Spain in the American colonies. During this early colonial period spanning from the late fifteenth to the late eighteenth centuries, there was no “Latin” America. Instead, there were the respective Viceroyalties of Peru and New Spain, “united in the concept of *Indias Occidentales*,” or in English, the West Indies.¹⁴¹ Portuguese America, on the other hand, followed a different historical trajectory. The majority of Portugal’s colonial possessions were located in the Eastern Hemisphere—in Africa, Arabia, India, Oceania and East Asia. Because Brazil was Portugal’s only colony in the Western Hemisphere, it received less attention from the Portuguese throne than the Spanish colonies did from Madrid. Remarkably, private enterprise marked the first century of Brazil’s history, which later dissipated upon the tightening of royal control of politics and commerce in the mid-sixteenth century.¹⁴²

While Continental Europe moved toward a mercantilist model of economy that dissolved feudal ties of the middle ages, Spain and Portugal—due to their fanatic Catholicism, imperial opulence dependent upon a system of racial domination modeled off feudalism, and deep distrust of the liberal changes brought about by bourgeois

¹⁴⁰ **Creole:** From Spanish *criollo*, meaning American-born landholders of European (usually Iberian) descent.

¹⁴¹ Mignolo, Walter. “Latin’ America and the First Reordering of the Modern/Colonial World.” *The Idea of Latin America*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2005. 66.

¹⁴² “Brazil.” *Iberia and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2005.

mercantilism—looked the other direction.¹⁴³ The European Renaissance of the sixteenth century expanded the horizons of thought in such areas as philosophy, literature, social studies, law, and the natural sciences. This humanist rebirth contrasted starkly with medieval philosophy, which revolved around Christian divinity. A Cartesian logic that placed human beings and their selfish pursuits at the center of society harkened in the modern era of European history.¹⁴⁴

Descartes' focus on human craft and culture led him to adopt a relativist philosophy unthinkable in the middle ages—a period during which power was conceived of vertically in the form of religious devotion and feudal dominance and exploitation. His willingness to acknowledge the social, cultural, and technological achievements of non-Europeans was essential to sparking the “noble savage” discourse, through which the relative peace and prosperity enjoyed by indigenous Americans inspired reflection upon the social and political status quo in Continental Europe.¹⁴⁵

The expression “Europe ends at the Pyrenees,” though in partial reference to the North African occupation of the Iberian Peninsula from the eighth to the fifteenth centuries, asserts Spain and Portugal's ideological separation from the rest of Europe. Iberia, unlike the France of Descartes, was, from the time of the sixteenth century, locked

¹⁴³ “*la futura España estaba ingresando . . . en un prolongado curso histórico que la llevó desde el centro del mayor poder imperial hasta el duradero atraso de una periferia, en el nuevo sistema-mundial colonial/moderno. Ese curso hizo que aquel señorío caballeresco, dominante y beneficiario . . . era ya incapaz de mutarse plena y coherentemente en burguesía, cabalgar las pulsiones y los conflictos democratizantes del nuevo patrón de poder y dirigir la nacionalización de la heterogénea población, como, en cambio, pudieron hacerlo sus rivales y sucesores en el centro-norte de Europa occidental.*”

Translation: Spain was entering a drawn-out historical trajectory that would bring it from the center of imperial power to the stubborn backwardness of a periphery in the new colonial/modern world-system. This historical trajectory ensured that Spain's seigneurialism, based on feudal domination and exploitation, was incapable of 1) fully adapting to mercantilism, and 2) of getting on board with the democratizing political movements of the modern era, coursing through the Central-Northern regions of Western Europe. Quijano, Aníbal. “Don Quijote y los molinos de viento de América latina.” *Pasos* 127 (2006): 3. Web.

¹⁴⁴ Magallón Anaya, Mario. *Filosofía política de la Conquista*. 81.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 82-3.

in a state of cultural absolutism maintained to justify the domination and evangelization of the native inhabitants of America. To the Spanish and Portuguese, the Americans—who differed from them in culture and society—were not equals in difference, but inferiors.¹⁴⁶ The absolutist philosophy of the Iberian colonial powers was fueled by Saint Thomas Aquinas’ concept of the “right of war and conquest.” Aquinas Christianized what Anaya calls a “Pagan-Aristotelian tradition of natural law,” which saw as natural the submission of the weak to the will of the strong, and the conquered to the will of their conquerors.¹⁴⁷ Though this Aristotelian concept of human relations had been left behind by modern Europe, in Iberia it remained in order to rationalize a colonial system of cultural, political, and ideological domination.¹⁴⁸

Many Creoles, already frustrated with over-taxation, trading tariffs that favored Spanish commerce, and representational exclusion, recognized the conservatism of the Spanish colonial regime. In rejecting Spain and Portugal, they turned their eyes to Continental Europe, and especially to France, for moral guidance. During the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century, the Napoleonic Wars—fought in the spirit of the French Revolution, which had toppled the French monarchy in 1792 and established a secular state—brought forced institutional change to most of Europe.

The pillars of Napoleonic reform were: 1) the implementation of centralized republican governments, and 2) the enactment of the Napoleonic Code.¹⁴⁹ The idea of republic [La. *res publica*, ‘public matter’] during the French Revolution supposed a liberal challenge to the monarchic absolutism of the *ancien régime*. The “matter”

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 81.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 82.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 85.

¹⁴⁹ "Napoleonic Code." *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*. Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 2012. Credo Reference. Web.

pertaining to the public can be understood as the affairs and collective wealth under the jurisdiction of the state. In Roman times, this meant territory, wealth, human capital, and political decision-making. In France and the rest of Europe, it meant everything that was controlled *absolutely* by monarchs. The Napoleonic Code was based on the civil code of Roman law. In this tradition, all legal matters are divided into three categories: 1) persons, 2) things, and 3) modes of acquiring ownership of things.¹⁵⁰

Following the collapse of Napoleon III's First French Empire in 1815 the epicenter of European hegemony shifted from Gaul to Britain. Both France and Great Britain raced to expand their colonial wealth, but France was falling behind in terms of industrial might and territorial acquisition. France and Britain's colonial rivalry was accompanied by a set of differing intellectual experiences of modernity in each country. France's liberalism, spearheaded by romantic thinkers like Rousseau, Voltaire, and Montesquieu, rejected absolutism in favor of a more just and representative society.¹⁵¹ French romanticism celebrated the human spirit and strived for its emancipation, believing human nature to be essentially rational. The modern democratic ideals upon which the French concept of *république* was founded had been derived from Rousseau's idea of a "social contract"—a theoretical political system that would put its trust in the will of the people and respect their decision to maintain or discard of regimes or institutions whenever so desired.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ Sánchez, Luis Alberto. "La Révolution française toujours actuelle." *L'Amérique latine et la Révolution française*. Paris: La Découverte/Le Monde, 1989. 64. Print.

¹⁵² "Les fondements du Contrat social constituent les assises même de la démocratie . . . *Que dire d'un système politique démocratique qui ferait fi de la volonté des hommes, de leur accord à se doter ou à se défaire d'un gouvernement ?*" *Ibid.* 65.

Liberalism had also been thriving in Britain, but it took a different form. Thinkers like Hobbes, Locke, and Hume tended towards a liberal philosophy that criticized and largely rejected the role of society and the state in the affairs of the individual. A citizen should do as he or she pleases, so long as the liberty of fellow citizens is not encroached upon. Most of their theories were based on the naturalist notion that human behavior is driven by desire, and not reason. Adam Smith's theory of the "invisible hand" applied this strain of liberal thinking to economy, insisting that the capitalist market can only flourish if left unregulated. British liberalism was heavily disseminated across the English-speaking world. In the United States, it took especially strong hold.

These moral, philosophical, and material disparities were part of what Brandalise describes as a "conflict of races in vogue" at the height of European modernity. From the time of Greco-Roman civilization, and throughout the middle ages, Latin Europe had been at the forefront of intellectual and moral authority. Since the progression from classical-Scholastic authority, to Renaissance humanism, however, the power dynamic had switched. Germanic and Slavic Europe had gained power and influence, while Italy, Spain, and Portugal refused to exchange their feudalistic and Catholic values for the modern, industrial innovations of the North. In the words of Brandalise, these "Europeans who self-identified as Latin looked with estrangement to the evolution and/or development of the 'peoples of the North and of the East.'"¹⁵³ France was modern Europe's only Latin power and so, in the context of European geopolitical relations, as

¹⁵³ "europeus auto identificados como latinos viam com estranhamento a evolução e/ou desenvoltura dos 'povos do norte e do leste.'"

Brandalise, Carla. "O conceito de América Latina: Hispano-americanos e a panlatinitude europeia." *Caderno CILHA* 14.1 (2013): *Scientific Electronic Library Online*. Web.

Translation: Europeans who

the “inheritor of the Catholic nations of Europe.”¹⁵⁴ Likewise, as France assumed leadership of the Latin “race,” did Russia assume leadership of the Slavic “race,” and did Britain of the Anglo-Saxon “race.”¹⁵⁵

In 1808, Napoleon’s Empire invaded Spain.¹⁵⁶ The occupation incited strong feelings of anti-liberal nationalism among the Spanish, which escalated into violent conflicts between Napoleon’s troops and Spanish guerilla warriors. American Creoles took advantage of Spain’s military paralysis during French occupation to rebel against their Spanish oppressors. In a matter of years, Spain’s most important colonies in Central and northern South America had gained their independence by force. France’s republican political innovations in the struggle against the *ancien régime* inspired the recently-independent Creoles, to whom the perils of absolutism were all too familiar. Indeed, Simón Bolívar—leader of the independence movements in present-day Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Bolivia, Panama, and Peru—admitted to having been heavily influenced by the writing of French romanticists.¹⁵⁷ The French brand of republicanism became one of the first foundational elements in the creation of a “common cultural space” following independence in the Spanish ex-colonies of the early nineteenth century.

The Creoles who formed this collectivity shared a repertoire of principles of French origin—namely liberalism, rationalism, and republicanism. These ideas were proposed, discussed, and lived out through a wide variety of discursive media. According

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ In this case, “liberalism” refers to counter-absolutism, not free market liberalism.

¹⁵⁷ “Bolívar a affirmé qu’il avait étudié les œuvres de . . . Montesquieu . . . de Rousseau, de Voltaire et d’autres.”

Le Riverend, Julio. “Cohérence et diffusion de la Révolution française”. *L’Amérique latine et la Révolution française*. 83.

to Garretón et al., “we’re talking about an ideological lifestyle practiced vehemently through newspapers, magazines, historical texts, treaties of jurisprudence, political debates, laws, social gatherings, reformist organizations, masonic lodges, educational institutions, novels, theater pieces, graphic art, and even fashion and attitudes.”¹⁵⁸ This republican community dynamic gave life to a long “process of national elaboration,” in which a “common cultural space,” or a “corridor of ideas and identitary appeals of a republican vocation.”¹⁵⁹

Among this republican community, active directly following the independence movements of the early nineteenth century, the need for Creole solidarity between regions was clear. This was especially true in light of the United States’ “incessant” territorial expansion. It begins with the U.S.’s purchase of Louisiana from Napoleon in 1813, and of Florida from the Spanish in 1819. These purchases were negotiated so that the United States, upon obtaining the new territory, would adopt the responsibility of paying off the region’s debts. In 1923, the Monroe Doctrine is signed into law by U.S. Congress, which prohibited any European power without an already-established presence in the Americas to stake any territorial claim in the interest of American territorial

¹⁵⁸ “Se trata de un ideario que se canaliza con vehemencia a través de diarios, revistas, obras históricas, tratados de jurisprudencia, discursos políticos, leyes, agrupaciones sociales, clubes de reforma, logias masónicas, instituciones educativas, novelas, piezas de teatro, expresiones gráficas y hasta modas y actitudes vitales.”

Garretón, Manuel Antonio, et al. *El espacio cultural latinoamericano: Bases para una política cultural de integración*. 40.

¹⁵⁹ “Así, desde la Independencia, se generó un largo proceso de elaboración de las naciones, un proceso que revisitó un carácter fundacional. En torno a este proceso, se constituyó un espacio cultural común, un corredor de ideas y apelaciones identitarias de vocación republicana.”
Ibid. 39.

integrity. It soon became apparent, however, that the Monroe Doctrine's real function was to afford legality to the United States' expansionist aspirations.¹⁶⁰

When the United States obtained large portions of Mexico (current day California and New Mexico) in 1850, the threat posed to the territorial integrity of Ibero-America became unquestionably apparent. The Chilean writer and politician Francisco Bilbao called for the implementation of the Bolivarian ideal of a confederation of Spanish-speaking South American republics, based on the need to “guarantee territorial independence, minimize internal divisions, safeguard the values of republicanism, and diversify economic interests,” in order to “push back the ‘Yankee’ advance in Panama and Mexico.”¹⁶¹ Venezuelan writer Francisco de Miranda proposed that this macro region be called “Colombia,” after Christopher Columbus. Neither of these concepts, however, became popularly accepted. Instead, the term “Latin” came to represent the Creole republics of America.

Latin “spiritual civilization” in the Americas

The “Latinization” of America came to be through the self-insertion of France in the geopolitical landscape and history-writing process of Creole America during the second half of the nineteenth century. France's unfavorable geopolitical situation in Europe led Napoleon to turn his eyes to the America, partly in search of a trade route to

¹⁶⁰ Katers, Nicholas. "Monroe Doctrine." *Africa and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2008. Credo Reference. Web.

¹⁶¹ Brandalise, Carla. "O conceito de América Latina: Hispano-americanos e a panlatinidade europeia." *Caderno CILHA* 14.1 (2013): *Scientific Electronic Library Online*. Web.

Asia, to which both the British (the Anglo-Saxons) and the Russians (the Slavs) had access. The other incentive for France to involve itself in American geopolitics was the expansion of the United States, which was seen as “characteristic of the [Anglo-Saxon] civilization to which it belonged”—a reference to the material clout of Britain’s Empire, as well as to the materialist tendencies evident in the political, moral, and economic philosophies of the English-speaking world.¹⁶²

A philosophy student in São Paulo described to me the “intellectual colonization” of France in Brazil. “For practically two hundred years, Brazil took almost all its influence from France. The way they designed our cities is French. The books we read at university were written by French philosophers. You can see how French our intellectual culture here is. Look—everyone is out here sipping espressos and philosophizing. That guy over there is even wearing a beret.” A woman in her late fifties from north-central Brazil recounted how important it was to learn French when she was a little girl. “We all had to speak French in primary school. French language was mandatory. You had to learn it. You didn’t have a choice about that. But that stopped. Now, everything is [North] American. Technology, movies, fashion—it’s all from the United States. Now everybody learns English. The average Brazilian speaks better English than Spanish.”

The main actors in this process of “Latinization” were French intellectuals with France’s imperial interest in mind, and Creole Francophiles, many of whom had spent long periods in France. Michel Chevalier—French political and economic philosopher, as well as head counsel to Napoleon III—promoted the idea that the division between the powerful European “races” had reproduced itself in America, with an underlying

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

Protestant and Anglo-Saxon character in the North, and a Catholic and Latin character in the South.¹⁶³ Accordingly, France's geopolitical role was to be "the trustee of the destinies of all of the Latin nations on the two continents," to prevent the "swallowing up" of the Latin family by the "encroachment of the Saxons."¹⁶⁴ George Hugelmann, propagandist of Napoleon III's Second Empire (1852-1870), embraced the superiority of the Anglo-Saxons' "material civilization." The Latins, instead, had been "endowed with a more elevated spiritual culture."¹⁶⁵

The "spiritual civilization" of the Latin world was imagined as a colorblind fusion of Roman law and custom, and French political ideals from the eighteenth century, inherited by the peoples of South and Central America and essentially foreign to the Anglo-Saxon civilization of the North.¹⁶⁶ Francisco García Calderón, President of Peru during World War I after having spent a significant portion of his life in Paris, asserted that this civilization was *not* ethnically Latin (it was something closer to Afro-Indian, or Afro-Iberian, distinguishing the Ibero-Moorish ethnicity from the Latin), but morally so. For both the Anglo-Saxon civilization of the North, and the Latin civilization of the South, were possessed an unprecedented level of "racial," or ethnic diversity. For "Anglo" America was no longer comprised solely of Puritans from England, but also of

¹⁶³ Mignolo, Walter. "'Latin' American and the First Reordering of the Modern/Colonial World." *The Idea of Latin America*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2005. 77-8.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 79.

¹⁶⁵ "Os anglo-saxões podiam ser superiores aos latinos no quesito de civilização 'material,' mas os latinos eram dotados de uma cultura 'espiritual' mais elevada."

Brandalise, Carla. "O conceito de América Latina: Hispano-americanos e a panlatinidade europeia." *Cuaderno CILHA* 14.1 (2013): *Scientific Electronic Library Online*. Web.

¹⁶⁶ "Au point de vue de la race, on ne pourrait pas dire que les républiques d'outre-mer soient des nations latines. Elles seraient plutôt indo-africaines ou afro-ibériques. La culture latine — idées et art de France, lois de Rome, catholicisme — a crée dans le Sud-Amérique une forme d'esprit analogue à celles des grand peuples méditerranéens et qui est hostile ou étrangère à la civilisation des Germains ou des Saxons."

García Calderón, Francisco. "Les Ibéro-Américains sont-ils de race latine ?" *Les démocraties latines de l'Amérique*. Paris: Ernest Flammarion, 1914. 259. Print

Russian Jews, Italians, and Irishmen. In the same capacity, “Latin” America was not solely comprised of Southern Europeans, but also of Africans, indigenous Americans, Germanic and Slavic Europeans, and East Asians. As the original English and Spanish populations dissipate, what is left, instead of a racial legacy, is a “moral heritage.” Ergo, the Anglo-Saxon or “Anglo” American civilization and the “Latin” American civilization.¹⁶⁷

According to García Calderón, the spirit of “Latin” American law came from Spain. Spain’s legal system, implemented universally by Alfonso X in the thirteenth century, was based in Roman feudal law. Three centuries later, these laws would be transported to America through Spanish colonization.¹⁶⁸ In both Spain and America, they would reinforce the patriarchal configuration of the Roman family structure—“*la famille comme la gens romaine, réunis enfants et esclaves sous le sombre pouvoir paternel*”¹⁶⁹—and authorize marriage between freeman and serf.¹⁷⁰ The legal authorization of master-slave relations in marriage and, by association, procreation, would have an enormous effect on the structuring of colonial society in Latin America. Unlike in Anglo America,

¹⁶⁷ “*Ibères, Indiens, Latins, Saxons et Orientaux se confondent en Amérique, Babel de races, au point qu’on n’arrive pas à y découvrir les lignes bien définies d’un type futur. Inutile d’y chercher l’unité de race. Et aux Etats-Unis même, l’invasion confuse de Juifs russes et d’Italiens méridionaux mine, peu à peu, la primitive unité saxonne. Cette confusion de races, du Nord au Sud, laisse en présence deux traditions : l’anglo-saxonne et l’ibéro-latine ; leur force d’assimilation transforme les races nouvelles. Anglais et Espagnols disparaissent ; seuls, subsistent les deux héritages moraux.*”
Ibid. 261.

¹⁶⁸ “*Des lois d’origine espagnole régissent l’Amérique . . . Et ces lois, en dépit de forts éléments féodaux, c’est de Rome qu’elles viennent. Sous l’influence du droit latin, Alphonse X unifie la législation espagnole, durant la première moitié du XIIIe siècle ; trois siècles après, les Espagnols colonisent l’Amérique.*”
Ibid. 262.

¹⁶⁹ **Translation:** The family as Roman *gens*—children and slaves reunited under the somber authority of the father.
Ibid. 262.

¹⁷⁰ “*elles consacrent l’égalité, autorisant le mariage entre gens de condition libre et serfs naguère bannis de la cité ; elles adoptent le formalisme romain.*”
Ibid. 262.

which, from its beginning, was racially segregated, in Latin America mixture between Creoles, Indian servants, and African slaves was the norm.

The Roman precedent of monarchic rule also contributed to the social-political foundations of Latin American society. Catholicism was inextricably linked to the authority of the Roman king who, in both Spain and America, is both “prince” and “pastor of the Church.” In the Roman Catholic tradition, “religion is an instrument of political domination—it is an imperial force inherited from the Latin tradition.”¹⁷¹ The idea of “formidable lord,” to whom viceroys, judicial courts, clerical committees, and religious practitioners had been required to answer, shaped the absolutist fervor of Spanish political society that would plague the political struggles of Spanish America both before and following Independence.¹⁷² The effect of Roman law on Latin America, then, was the normalization of interracial relations, the reinforcement of the feudal-patrilineal plantation system, in which both slaves and the children of Creoles lived under the same authority, and the fusion of monarchic and clerical authority, which would inform the nature of the Latin American political struggle between liberal French republicanism and conservative Spanish absolutism. Under the dual pressure of Catholicism and Roman legislation, writes García Calderón, “*l’Amérique se latinise.*”¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ “*La catholicisme s’unit indissolublement à l’autorité romaine des rois : en Espagne et en Amérique, le Prince est en même temps pasteur de l’Eglise. La religion est un instrument de domination politique ; c’est une force impériale, héritée du génie latin.*”
Ibid. 263.

¹⁷² *Ibid.* 262.

¹⁷³ **Translation:** *America becomes Latin.*
Ibid. 263.

The second spiritual element comprising, and, at the same time, creating a variant of, American Latinity, is Franco-Latin humanism.¹⁷⁴ The “qualities and faults of the classical spirit” reveal themselves in American life. From its “tenacious idealism” that often dismisses the “conquest of the utilitarian,” to the ideas of humanity, equality, and universality, in spite of racial diversity—the spirit of the Imperial cult of ancient Rome, under which all Roman subjects submitted to central authority, regardless of their culture and beliefs. From the “instability” and “vivacity” of the Latin peoples, to their faith in “pure ideas” and “dogmas.” All of these qualities, in the eyes of García Calderón, “meet in these foreign lands.”¹⁷⁵ It is this *mélange* of classical civilization that, transported to the Western Hemisphere, comprises Latin America.

A contextualizing geopolitical narrative of “North American peril,” in which two incompatible civilizations collide, affords this conception of Latinity a significance that rings true to Creoles. In García Calderón’s view, the “moral pressure” of the United States can be sensed everywhere as the pride of its people grows exponentially and its riches grow infinitely. The incessant practice of conquering and purchasing foreign territories subjects Latins to an inescapable cycle of “political and financial slavery” which “justifies the concerns of the Southern peoples.”¹⁷⁶ “Where the ‘Yankees’ and the Latin Americans meet,” he asserts, “we can see more clearly the unresolvable differences

¹⁷⁴ “*La France a réalisé la conquête spirituelle de ces démocraties, et elle y a créé une variété de l’esprit latin.*”

Ibid. 264.

¹⁷⁵ “*Les qualités et les défauts de l’esprit classique se révèlent dans la vie américaine : l’idéalisme tenace qui dédaigne souvent la conquête de l’utile, les idées de l’humanité, d’égalité, d’universalité malgré la variété des races, la culte de la forme, la vivacité et l’instabilité latines, la foi en les idées pures et en les dogmes politiques se rencontrent dans ces terres d’outre mer.*”

Ibid. 264.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 275-281.

between them.”¹⁷⁷ In order to ensure the preservation of the Latin spirit in America, the “overseas republics that live under the wing of the Barbarians must cultivate their spiritual originality at the point of contact with enemy forces.”¹⁷⁸ The pairing of the terror incited by North American expansionist imperialism and the age-old narrative of the “civilized” versus the “barbarians” was irresistible to many Creoles intellectuals, who were more than content to be considered part of the classical humanist civilization associated with French liberalism.

Colombian writer and intellectual José María Torres Caicedo was arguably the first American to use the written expression “Latin America.”¹⁷⁹ In his infamous poem *Las dos Américas*, written in Venice in 1856 for the overseas Spanish-language newspaper *El Correo de Ultramar*, Caicedo criticizes North America’s reckless materialism and lack of moral integrity. In doing so, he calls for unity among the “Latin American race:”

*«Cuanto es útil, es bueno», así creyendo,
La Unión americana da al olvido
La justicia, el Deber, lo que es prohibido
Por santa ley de universal amor;
Y convirtiendo la moral en cifras,
Lo provechoso como justo sigue;
El Deber ¡qué le importa si consigue
Aumentar su riqueza y su esplendor!*

*Mas aislados se encuentran, desunidos,
Esos pueblos nacidos para aliarse:*

¹⁷⁷ “Là où les Yankees et les Latins américains se joignent, on observe mieux les contradictions insolubles qui séparent les uns des autres.”

Ibid. 265.

¹⁷⁸ “La défense de l’esprit latin est leur devoir primordial . . . Les républiques d’outre mer qui progressent . . . sous l’ail des Barbares, doivent cultiver leur originalité spirituelle à l’encontre des forces ennemis.”

Ibid. 266.

¹⁷⁹ Brandalise, Carla. "O conceito de América Latina: Hispano-americanos e a panlatinidade europeia." *Cuaderno CILHA* 14.1 (2013): *Scientific Electronic Library Online*. Web.

*La unión es su deber, su ley amarse:
Igual origen tienen y misión;
La raza de la América latina,
Al frente tiene la sajona raza,
Enemiga mortal que ya amenaza
Su libertad destruir y su pendón.*¹⁸⁰

In Caicedo's prose, the "Saxon race" is Latin America's "mortal enemy," and the "Latin American race" is called, under "duty" and "law of love" to unite in defense of their civilization.

Francisco Bilbao's proposal of *Colombia*—the political union of the American Spanish-speaking republics based on concepts of Creole unity during the South American independence struggle—was partially realized in 1884, when the *Unión Iberoamericana* was founded. The prevailing name, however, became "Latin" America, instead of *Colombia*, by the mid 1870s. The Puerto-Rican intellectual Eugenio María de Hostos, who in 1870 had proposed the employment of the term *Colombia*, announced his support in 1874 for the term "Latin America" for the "inhabitants of the New World originating from Iberia and the "Latin race."¹⁸¹

And so, as European intellectuals like Chevalier and their American counterparts like Torres Caicedo projected Old World civilizational narratives onto the New World, "the idea of America as a whole began to be divided, not so much in accordance with the emerging nation-states as, rather, according to their imperial histories, which places an

¹⁸⁰ **Translation:** "Whatever is useful is good," believing such / The [North] American Union forsakes / Justice and Duty, which is forbidden / by the universal law of love; / And turning Morality into figures, / She proceeds capriciously; // But they find themselves isolated and disbanded / the peoples born to ally: / Union is their duty, their law to love one another: / They have the same origin and mission / the Latin American race / Before her she has the Saxon race / Mortal enemy that threatens / To destroy her liberty and her flag.

Torres Caicedo, José María. *Las dos Américas*. 1857.

¹⁸¹ Brandalise, Carla. "O conceito de América Latina: Hispano-americanos e a panlatinidade europeia." *Cuaderno CILHA* 14.1 (2013): *Scientific Electronic Library Online*. Web.

Anglo America in the North and a Latin America in the South in the new configuration of the Western Hemisphere.”¹⁸² In the next section of this chapter I will briefly cover the critiques posed to the pan-Latinist perspective elaborated here, as well as explore the question of whether or not it is just, relevant, and useful in a contemporary context.

Pan-Latinism examined: Modernism and postmodernism in the postcolonial context

The word “modern,” much like the term “Latin America,” is one which we utter daily without second thought. The modern is the *new*. Often, too, it is the *righteous*. We find laws, practices, and beliefs that we associate with bygone eras to be anti-modern. The cutting of the clitoris, or the persecuting of homosexuals, are “backwards” practices. They represent a style of thinking that, to us, belongs to a past filled with mistakes. A past in which we have sinned—sins for which we have since repented.

This way of thinking is called positivism. Positivism is the idea of progress. It is the idea of a starting place, and a place beyond that starting place. But the main principle is that there is a fixed track upon which the human mind can advance forward. Positivism is the rejection of subjective judgment, which argues that science, as well as all other modes of knowledge acquisition, must be confined to matters of tangible and “objective” understanding. Essentially, it is the assumption that absolute realities exist, and thus, that absolute knowledge exists, too. It is the concept of absolute progression in a world of

¹⁸² Mignolo, Walter. “‘Latin’ American and the First Reordering of the Modern/Colonial World.” *The Idea of Latin America*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2005. 57.

universal facts and truths, and a finite set of possibilities. It is upon this myth that all modern thought is based.

In a sense, all “pre-modern” thought possessed this positivist quality. Modernity as a movement in European history represents the acknowledgement and embrace of positivist rationales, and the subsequent imposition of the European episteme on the rest of the world. This brand of modernity (which, pertinent to Europe, should in theory be capitalized, though I choose not to in accordance with common practice) is, according to American cultural theorist Elizabeth Ermarth, a “culture of humanist rationalism disseminated in Renaissance and Reformation Europe.”¹⁸³ Rationalism in the West, she adds, can be traced back to classical philosophy. It is humanism, not rationalism, which appears in this era without precedent. Humanism places humanity at the center of human thought and activity. Human beings are not held to the whim of their divine creator, but instead have to capacity to know and explore the human self and the outside world. All this in the hope of establishing grounds for human wellbeing and to move forward in achieving it to an ever greater degree.

The humanism of European modernity engendered so-called liberal ideologies. Liberalism affirms the value of the individual, weighing its value against the demands of society’s status quo. If the individual’s autonomy and wellbeing are lessened by social forces, then needed is a call for social reform in the individual’s favor. Liberal ideologies that serve this function are democracy (political agency of the individual through representation) and socialism (even redistribution of material resources and, thus, the redistribution of the means of production, personal wealth, and material goods and

¹⁸³ Ermarth, Elizabeth. “Agency in the Discursive Condition”. *History and Theory* 40.4 (2001): 36.

services for other individuals). The self-knowing capacity of the individual, however, is obscured by complex systems of symbols that represent constructed truths. These constructed truths are called metanarratives. The positivist assumption that the individual's understanding of a metanarrative is equivalent to the individual's understanding of reality creates a fictitious air of objectivity to which we, as products of modernism, are accustomed.

In the words of Ermarth, the “‘individual’ agent of modernity exists for and makes possible the objectivity that we have learned to take for granted, thanks to our familiarity with representational conventions first in art, then in science, then in *political systems*.”¹⁸⁴ In intellectual discourse, this illusory pretension to objectivity is what we call modernism. Postmodernism is an intellectual shift away from modernist thought. Ermarth calls it an “advanced cultural critique of modernity.”¹⁸⁵ Or more simply, and in more general terms—terms that will later interest us—“a historical term [indicating] whatever comes after modernity.”¹⁸⁶

Postmodernism's main prerogative is to break down the universalist pretensions of modern European thought through the study of semiotics. Semiotics is the interpretation of systems of symbols. It is a philosophy derived from linguistics and sociology that attempts to elucidate language's role in human understanding. It understands language as a symbolic system. A symbol's essential function is to communicate an assumption. Symbols are inherently social tools, as they communicate assumptions meant to be interpreted the same way by all parties involved in the symbol-

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 37-8.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.* 38.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.* 36.

mediated interaction. Semiotics, then, examines the concept of signs and sign systems, as well as their capacity to facilitate communication and the making of meaning among humans. Since its formal appearance in the early twentieth century, postmodern thought has worked to “unsettle assumptions basic . . . to the Culture of Representation, including especially its development in Europe of democratic institutions and their ‘individual’ agents.”¹⁸⁷ This “Culture of Representation” is the aspect of modernist thinking that we will isolate in order to present, critique, and re-examine in this exploration of Latinity as a project of modernity.

The Hegelian model of Eurocentric modernity is the same modernity that Ermarth attributes to rational humanist movements in Renaissance and Reformation Europe. This modernity considers and imagines human history as a positivist course of development. There is a primitive stage and an advanced stage—or advanced stages. North-Central Europe, as the place having given birth to rational humanism, is considered the both the culminating point and the end of World History.¹⁸⁸ North-Central Europe’s prime positioning on the chronological, and geographic, map of History necessarily excludes all other parts of the world. These excluded parts are relegated to the status of “periphery.” The idiosyncrasies of other cultures are not understood as such in relative terms. Rather, they are perceived as deficient and inferior.

From this mentality springs the idea of *Entwicklung*—German for development—as an “ontological category.” The development, or realization, of a rational concept in

¹⁸⁷ Ermarth, Elizabeth. “Agency in the Discursive Condition”. *History and Theory* 40.4 (2001): 37.

¹⁸⁸ “World History” is spelled out in capital letters to indicate the positivist framework in which history was conceived of. There is *one* World History, and North-Central Europe finds itself at the farthest, or most advanced point in this trajectory.

Dussel, Enrique. “Eurocentrism and Modernity (Introduction to the Frankfurt Lectures). *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America* 20.3 (1993): 74.

real terms is the direction that positivist progress should take. According to this rationale, neither “custom [nor] tradition have validity,” and so, “the path of Europe’s modern development must be followed unilaterally by every other culture.”¹⁸⁹ It is this line of reasoning that has emanated from Europe for the entirety of the modern era. It is this line of reasoning that came to determine the subjectivity of Europe’s colonial subjects.

Postcolonial critique refers to the branch of postmodernism that attempts to deconstruct the positivist rationales of modern Eurocentrism implanted in ex-colonial (postcolonial) societies by colonization. To refer to this tradition of criticism, I will use the term “postcoloniality,” as opposed to “postcolonialism.” This is because ‘postcolonial’ is often used in reference to ex-colonial societies following colonial severance, regardless of the intellectual efforts made to undo the representational violence committed on behalf of the colonizers. “Coloniality” is the matrix of positivist colonial structures—racism, classism, sexism, Eurocentrism, etc.—that remains and continues to inform the subjectivities of the colonized in postcolonial societies.

For Peruvian sociologist and political theorist Aníbal Quijano, the most significant act of the Spanish colonial project and, by association, the first step in the creation of a Latin American subcontinent, was the virtual annihilation of the indigenous cultural systems at the time of European arrival. This fact, however, is rarely an “active element” in the formulation or production of Latin America’s sense of history.¹⁹⁰ Upon the ruins—both physical and semiotic—of the Amerindian civilizations brought to their knees by the Spanish, a bizarre system of symbols, a foreign cultural logic, was imposed.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 68.

¹⁹⁰ “*La producción histórica de América latina comienza con la destrucción de todo un mundo histórico, probablemente la más grande destrucción socio-cultural y demográfica que haya llegado a nuestro conocimiento.*”

Quijano, Aníbal. “Don Quijote y los molinos de viento en América latina.” *Pasos* 127 (2006): 7. Web.

From a postcolonial perspective, this cultural logic was intentionally configured by Europeans to dominate and exploit determined sections of the new society.

The foundational element of this system of power and exploitation was race. Race is the idea that attitudes, behaviors, and intellectual capacity are linked to biology. That is, that judging by the morphology of a human being, it is possible to ascribe an individual 1) a geographic point of origin, 2) a race, or a genetic community displaying shared behavioral traits innately, and 3) a determined level of intellectual capacity. From a semiotic viewpoint, the differing behavioral dispositions between genetic groups are ascribed to cultural programming. A different metanarrative will produce socialized individuals that approach the world in a different way. In the context of colonial Latin America, race served to essentialize cultural behaviors and perceived levels of civilization.

The motivation to racialize reflected the desire of the Spanish to naturalize the unprecedented power relations they had configured in their favor.¹⁹¹ The Spanish dominated the indigenous and African population of the America by controlling the continent's labor. According to Quijano, the Spanish control of labor, its resources, and its fruits was, for nearly three hundred years, an "expression of the racial categorization of the population."¹⁹² The labor system in colonial America was divided. But it was not divided according to class lines, as had always been the case in Europe. Instead, the division of labor was determined by race. Africans were necessarily slaves, natives were servants and mineral extractors, and Europeans were lords, public administrators, and owners of commercial profit. By the time of Independence in the nineteenth

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.* 8.

¹⁹² *Ibid.* 9.

century, the colonial project had failed. But the cruel presence of coloniality remained. Because it had been commonplace for Creoles to procreate with African slaves and indigenous servants, the color lines of Latin America's population began to fade. The majority of Latin American society was, by then, the product of some mixture of European, Africa, and indigenous ancestors. This phenomenon created an anarchic system of racial classification called *blanqueamiento*, by which social prestige correlated directly with subjective whiteness.

From a postcolonial perspective, Creole Independence and the subsequent "Latinization" of American political vocabulary and moral disposition are simulacra. A simulacrum is an image, a likeness, a semblance, a representation, or an illusion. A simulacrum, in this case, is something that appears to be certain, but in reality, it is virtual. In simpler terms, political Latinity in the Americas is one of the illusory falsehoods of the modern Culture of Representation. "Latin" America, suggests Mignolo, "is not so much a subcontinent as it is the political project of Creole/Mestizo elites."¹⁹³ The imposition of a solely "Latin" identity on a continent of people whose subjectivity had been controlled by Latin colonizers for hundreds of years brought about the "sociological invisibility" of all non-Europeans. Before, they had been colonial subjects in an American continent dominated by the Spanish and Portuguese. Now, because the elite class at the helm of the colonial system of domination decided so, all Americans were "Latin."

In defense of those postcolonial actors seeking social, political, epistemic, and economic recognition, Mignolo reminds us that:

¹⁹³ Mignolo, Walter. "Latin America and the First Reordering of the Modern/Colonial World." *The Idea of Latin America*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2005. 59.

While “Latin” America remains a comfortable name that functions at the level of the control of land, of labor, and of authority, in the spheres of the colonial matrix of power, at the level of subjectivity and knowledge, the legacies of European colonialism in South America are being challenged and displaced by Indian and Afro legacies disputing languages, knowledges, religions, memories . . . the political projects that brought “Latin” America into being have to co-exist with political projects originating among the silenced population, who do not see themselves as they have been constructed and do not care to belong to the “Latin” ethos.¹⁹⁴

So “Latin” America is a symbolic misnomer that—as a representation of the (post)colonial status quo of American coloniality—we feel at ease with. But the social movements emerging in this part of the world, namely, those in favor of Afro-indigenous emancipation, reject the concept of “Latin” America—both as a cultural, social, and linguistic unit, and as a political project—as a representational injustice.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 94.

Chapter IV

Political Latinity: The threat of neoliberal globalization and the communitarian ethic of the Latin world

Global hegemony and transmodernity

Constant and conflict-ridden encounters with the United States shaped South America's "Latin" identity. In this chapter, I explore how contact with North America, and later with the world market during the era of globalization, transformed an antagonistic identity into a real social ethic. The embrace of communitarianism as a political philosophy by Latin countries strengthens their bond with one another. In response to the harmful social and ecological effects of globalization, they band together to counter individuation and call for the reconstruction of socially organized human existence.

In order to situate Latinity in the contemporary world, we must return to the theory of transmodernity. Spanish theorist Rosa María Rodríguez Magda was the first to coin the term "transmodernity." Several Latin American contemporaries would later adapt her philosophical framework to explore their own questions. But Rodríguez Magda, unlike Dussel, does not see the fusion between modern and postmodern thought that transmodernism offers as useful for the sake of redacting the standard (read: Western) conception of History. The fusion is not useful, but imperative in order to counter the disintegrating effects of the globalizing process.

“Globalization” is a word that people utter frequently. Though many don’t have a rigorous grasp on what it means. It is true that it is a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon with no single definition. Even so, knowledge of the formal concept of globalization and its effects on the rest of the world is poor. I have often understood it in the mouths of others as a positive process of assimilation. Divisions characterize human relations to an ever lesser degree. More products are available at a cheaper price. People have more access to information than ever before.

This romantic conception of globalization, however, is simplistic. In reality, the change taking place on a worldwide scale is far more severe, and its effects, not necessarily positive. Peruvian philosopher Salomón Lerner Febres defines it as the “process of implementation of structural relationships of an economic, technological, and bureaucratic nature on an international level.”¹⁹⁵ Accompanying the “successive waves of technical innovation,” writes Australian social scientist James Camelleri, is “the retooling and reorganization of production, large-scale reshaping of transportation and communication systems, and profound changes to rural and urban life.”¹⁹⁶ The degree of contact made possible by technological craft has had the effect of linking an array of human activities on a global level that had before always been separate. The result, writes Camelleri, is a “highly interconnected system of social and economic relationships, with

¹⁹⁵ “[el] proceso de implantación de relaciones estructurales de tipo económico, tecnológico o burocrático a nivel internacional.”

Lerner Febres, Salomón. "Civilización global y solidaridad: El comunitarismo latino como aporte a una globalización humanitaria." *La Latinité en question*. Paris: Latin Union, 2004. 166. Print.

¹⁹⁶ Camillieri, Joseph A. "Citizenship in a Globalizing World: The Role of Civilizational Dialogue." *Civilizational Dialogue and Political Thought*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2007. 134. Print

produce, trade, and finance brought increasingly under the unifying logic of the world market.”¹⁹⁷

The concentration of human affairs into one forum of economic, social, and scientific interaction creates “networks accessible to all people, despite nationality or cultural belonging.” The problem that critics of the globalizing process raise, however, is that these networks no longer perform the function that they have throughout the course of human history. They do not strengthen human bonds of solidarity, but weaken them.¹⁹⁸ For, as social creatures, human beings have traditionally derived their values, attitudes, and sense of moral appropriateness from the communities in which they were socialized. Though contemporary civilization forges the creation of interpersonal links of unprecedented reach, its new relational media isolate individuals, preventing them from developing a full relationship with a single cultural system. The rupture between individual and community “dissolves the fibers of cooperation and reciprocal belonging” constituting the basis of human social existence.¹⁹⁹

The result has been a worldwide political crisis. Because of the speed at which the world *globalizes*, the residual social and political apparatuses of pre-global societies have been unable to fulfill their originally intended representational function. The rapid redrawing of boundary lines in terms of identity, belief, and belonging lessens the capacity of most societies to draw together their members under the pretension of a

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.* 134.

¹⁹⁸ “*La globalización crea redes universales multidimensionales vigentes para todos los individuos independientemente de su nacionalidad o de su pertenencia cultural, pero no crea redes solidarias o consensualmente aceptadas.*”

Lerner Febres, Salomón. “Civilización global y solidaridad: El comunitarismo latino como aporte a una globalización humanitaria.” *La Latinité en question*. Paris: Latin Union, 2004. 166. Print.

¹⁹⁹ “[L]a civilización contemporánea . . . hace un creciente aislamiento de los individuos, hacia la pérdida de su identidad cultural y hacia el resquebrajamiento de los lazos de cooperación y adhesión recíproca.” *Ibid.* 163.

common citizenship, national identity, or voice. “At stake,” warns Camilleri, “is the very capacity to govern.”²⁰⁰ Equally as destabilizing to the existing political system is global market integration. The global absorption of local economies, along with their respective systems of regulation, renders them subject to the demands and “unifying logic” of the world market. Accordingly, many of the important economic, political, juridical, and technological decisions of national populations no longer depend on the political will of their respective governments.²⁰¹ Rational attempts to govern according to political-economic philosophy are thwarted by the instrumental demands of the free market economy, which requires a perpetual spirit of competition. Instead, suggests Lerner Febres, “it seems that globalization is generating frameworks of action disinterested in the approval or participation of those involved, nor does it take into account their specific needs.”²⁰² In this capacity, globalization is considered by many theorists to be a de-politicizing force. It is a process that 1) disengages citizenry from political life on the level that corresponding political institutions exist, and 2) alienates governments from their own decision-making authority by subjecting national and local economies to the material whim of the world market.

Rodríguez Magda likens the phenomenon of globalization to modernity’s

“Culture of Representation.” She claims that now we face a “New Great Story that is

²⁰⁰ Camillieri, Joseph A. “Citizenship in a Globalizing World: The Role of Civilizational Dialogue.” *Civilizational Dialogue and Political Thought*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2007. 134. Print

²⁰¹ “*Muchas decisiones económicas, políticas, jurídicas o tecnológicas de los Estados nacionales no dependen ya de la voluntad política de sus gobiernos.*”

Lerner Febres, Salomón. “Civilización global y solidaridad: El comunitarismo latino como aporte a una globalización humanitaria.” *La Latinité en question*. Paris: Latin Union, 2004. 166. Print.

²⁰² “*La globalización . . . parece estar generando con intensidad cada vez mayor y con una lógica implacable, marcos de acción que no solicitan el asentimiento ni la participación de los involucrados ni tienen en cuenta sus necesidades específicas.*”

Lerner Febres, Salomón. “Civilización global y solidaridad: El comunitarismo latino como aporte a una globalización humanitaria.” *La Latinité en question*. Paris: Latin Union, 2004. 166. Print.

unresponsive to the theoretical and socially emancipatory efforts of the metanarratives of modernity, but rather to the unexpected effect of communication technologies and the newfound globality of market parameters and geopolitics.”²⁰³ The globalization of the economy, of politics, of information technologies, of society, of culture, and the human race’s relationship to the environment is, according to Rodríguez Magda, a completely “totalizing” phenomenon. Postmodern critique, which, through its culture of semiotic nitpicking, has become complacent, and exceedingly relativistic, is *not* a suitable adversary for the real threat of the globalization’s instrumental logic.

Ermarth writes that “postmodernity necessarily and perhaps even opportunely undermines the bases upon which political democracy traditionally has rested; and that therefore some significant work must be done in order to redefine, restore, or otherwise reconfigure democratic values and institutions for a changed cultural condition.” In simple English, she means to explain that the positivist pretension upon which the rational humanists of modernity philosophized must necessarily be absent from postmodernist discourse. In order to accept the principles of semiotic analysis, it is imperative to abandon any positivist notion of universality in thought or practice. Though postmodernity has without doubt been a useful tool in undoing the often harmful webs of fictional metanarratives that make socially invisible the subjectivity of the non-European, or of the proletarian, or of the sexual “pervert,” it has also had the effect of de-politicizing philosophy. Without the epistemological basis of positivism, whose doing away with is postmodernity’s main feat, there can be no metaphysical conviction. Without

²⁰³ “*Un Nuevo Gran Relato que no obedece al esfuerzo teórico o socialmente emancipador de las metanarrativas modernas, sino al efecto inesperado de la tecnologías de comunicación, la nueva dimensión del mercado y de la geopolítica.*”

Rodríguez Magda, Rosa María. “Transmodernidad: Un nuevo paradigma.” *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World* 1.1 (2011): 5.

metaphysics, we are unable to construct the metanarratives that allowed us to strengthen and refine the Social Contract of the Enlightenment Project. Postmodernity has left us defenseless against the “totalizing” material power of the globalizing process.

But modernity cannot be readopted in its entirety. The logical fallacies of modernist thought are irreconcilable in the postmodern era.²⁰⁴ In between the usefulness of modernist rationalism and postmodern semiotics, arises transmodernity.

Transmodernity, insists Rodríguez Magda, “takes on again the open challenges of modernity following the failure of the Enlightenment. It re-accepts Theory, History, and Social Justice, as well as the autonomy of the Subject, while assuming postmodern critiques in order to etch out a possible horizon of reflection that can avoid the nihilistic tendencies of postmodernism. It refuses to latch onto expired ideals, but also refuses to forget their usefulness.”²⁰⁵

In the same capacity, Rodríguez Magda asserts the necessity to “reclaim modernist values, in the aftermath of their loss of metaphysical authority, as regulatory ideas,” and as “operative simulacra” recovered for their practical, logical, and social necessity. It is the “public values” of modernity that we need to reclaim. But instead of “universal,” she says, we need to think of them as “universalizable.”²⁰⁶ We must recognize the utility of the modern rationales that brought us the liberal democratic ideal. Our newfound situation does not permit us to stand by passively and pass judgment upon

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 8.

²⁰⁵ “*La Transmodernidad retoma los retos abiertos de la Modernidad tras la quiebra del proyecto ilustrado. No renunciar hoy a la Teoría, a la Historia, a la Justicia Social, y a la autonomía del Sujeto, asumiendo las críticas postmodernas, significa delimitar un horizonte posible de reflexión que escape del nihilismo, sin comprometerse con proyectos caducos pero sin olvidarlos.*”
Ibid. 7.

²⁰⁶ “*Es preciso retomar los valores, tras la pérdida de su basamento metafísico, como ideales regulativos, simulacros operativos pactados en su necesidad pragmática, lógica y social. Son estos valores de carácter público, quizás no universales, pero universalizables.*”
Ibid. 7.

the metaphysical pretensions of our modern political past. We are now subject to a “hegemonic digital reality,” from which we cannot escape,²⁰⁷ from which the semiotic awareness of *post* thinking cannot protect us.

Neoliberalism in Latin America and Latin Europe

It is important to distinguish earlier stages of globalization from the present one. The invention of the ocean vessel, the steam engine, and the airplane were technical advances that changed the parameters of human interaction on a global scale. Globalization loosely defined as the reduction of global space, and therefore as the increased interrelatedness of human affairs, is insufficient in terms of conceptualizing the Latin world’s opposition to global hegemony. We must specifically examine the neoliberal stage of globalization in order to understand why political Latinity has rejected the global project, and, in turn, to understand how political Latinity was formed in response to its harmful effects.

Neoliberalism is a political-economic philosophy that arose in the 1970s in the liberal democracies of the developed West. Based on a neoclassical interpretation of economic liberalism, the neoliberal model insists that the state should not be involved in the processes of production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 6.

²⁰⁸ Matías Camargo, Sergio Roberto. "Intervencionismo y neoliberalismo en los modelos de estado y de desarrollo." *Intervencionismo y neoliberalismo*. Santa Fe de Bogotá: Ediciones Jurídicas Gustavo Ibáñez, 1998. 27. Print.

Instead, the fate of the economy should be left to the *invisible hand*.²⁰⁹ That is, the forces of producer supply and consumer demand. Neoliberals purport that the free market system is 1) more just, as consumers, not oligarchs, determine patterns of consumption and production, and 2) that it is more efficient in “generating and allocating resources.” The main proponents of this philosophy were the then-leaders of the Anglo-Saxon world, Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher.

Both the United States and the United Kingdom, arguably the two countries with the most international influence in political, economic, and military questions at the time, were steeped in relationships of extreme hegemonic power with expansive portions of the world. Their authority on the matter of political-economic policy overseas was partially a result of the worldwide economic crisis of the same decade. By the start of the 1980s, Reagan and Thatcher had put into motion a worldwide campaign of neoliberal policy reform in the name of “deregulation” and “modernization.”²¹⁰ Paramount to both leaders was the “need to make labor more responsive to the changing dynamics of capital,” which was achieved by diminishing the power of organized labor and cutting the state’s responsibility to provide social welfare benefits to its citizens.²¹¹ In parts of the world in which interventionist state models had been the norm, the imposition of neoliberal policy supposed a series of radical reforms with dire social consequences.²¹²

²⁰⁹ Adam Smith, widely considered the father of classical liberal economics, insisted that the best regulator of the economy is the market itself. The “invisible” forces of production supply and consumption demand would bring economic prosperity.

²¹⁰ Matías Camargo, Sergio Roberto. "Intervencionismo y neoliberalismo en los modelos de estado y de desarrollo." *Intervencionismo y neoliberalismo*. Santa Fe de Bogotá: Ediciones Jurídicas Gustavo Ibáñez, 1998. 27. Print.

²¹¹ Mullings, Beverley "Neoliberalism." *Encyclopedia of Geography*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2010. Credo Reference. Web.

²¹² **Interventionism:** The participation of the state in the economic affairs of its jurisdiction, within the context of a capitalist economy. Interventionist philosophy attributes to the capitalist state “the

In the Latin countries of America, and to a more drastic degree due to the direct influence of the United States, those of America, these reforms advanced the systematic sale of state owned firms, along with their direct investments in the production of goods and services, “promoting [their] privatization and surrendering the control of the economy’s vital arteries to both domestic and foreign capitalists.”²¹³ “Like an olive oil stain,” writes



**"Alienation of this space is prohibited."
– São Paulo, Brazil. [5]**

Colombian political scientist Sergio Roberto Matías Camargo, “these theories [and policy reforms] extended across the entire American continent in the 1980s and 90s, thanks to the Reagan, Bush, and Clinton administrations.”²¹⁴ The introduction of these reforms was carried out under the propagandistic mantra of “development” and globalization. In Romance languages, the process of relinquishing service and production responsibilities to foreign capitalists is called “alienation.”

The United States, and more specifically Wall Street, determined the standard of development adopted by Latin America. The neoliberal track of development consisted of the “total adoption of the free market creed, unrestricted insertion in the world economy,

authority to direct the economy, to participate directly in the processes of production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services, in the construction of physical and social infrastructure, and in socioeconomic planning, with the end goal of promoting ‘social wellbeing’ full liberty and rights to its citizens.”

Matías Camargo, Sergio Roberto. "Intervencionismo y neoliberalismo en los modelos de estado y de desarrollo." *Intervencionismo y neoliberalismo*. Santa Fe de Bogotá: Ediciones Jurídicas Gustavo Ibáñez, 1998. 17. Print.

²¹³ “se adelanta un proceso de venta de las empresas estatales y de sus inversiones directas en la producción de bienes y servicios, promoviendo su privatización y entregando el control . . . de las arterias vitales de la economía, a los capitalistas nacionales y extranjeros.”

Ibid. 27.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.* 29.

unregulated exchange of capital and merchandise, and the gradual neglect of national cultures and governments in response to a global imperative.”²¹⁵ Gross domestic product growth, export growth, and foreign capital investment were Wall Street’s principle metrics for economic “progress” in Latin America. As a result, an ethic of constant growth and competition, along with a demand for the consumption and monetary support of the liberal “Scientific-Technological Revolution,” was exported to the South American republics. “This vision, that confuses development with mere economic growth” writes Chilean political Jacobo Schatan in 1998, “has penetrated the minds and hearts of the political, intellectual, and business elites of Latin America.”²¹⁶

How did the liberal powers, and in particular the United States, effectuate the neoliberal colonization of interventionist societies? North America was able to impose its system in two ways: 1) through historically established political and economic influence, and 2) through investment in, and indebting of, Latin American nations. In the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, the United States developed a habit of intervening unilaterally in Latin American military affairs. North America’s influence in the South produced a situation of military and economic dependency.

The United States’ economic involvement in the World War II left Latin America without the aid to which it had grown accustomed, provoking a series of popular revolts against the Falangist dictatorships that had taken hold in previous decades.²¹⁷ The

²¹⁵ Schatan, Jacobo. *El saqueo de América Latina*. Santiago de Chile: LOM Ediciones, 1998. 9. Print.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.* 9.

²¹⁷ **Falangist:** A variant of twentieth century European fascism developed in Spain and widely adopted by Latin American conservatives. It rejected liberalism in favor of syndicalist collectivism, and promoted a traditional, Catholic, and family-oriented model of society.

conservative factions of the Latin American elite class had adopted Spanish fascism as an alternative to both free market liberalism and horizontal socialism. While collectivist in nature, it promoted the vertical configuration of society, so that the strong and morally exemplary could lead the inferior classes. Following the revolts, the United States was forced to re-deliberate its stance in relation to fascism—a shift most notable in the character of the Cold War conflict, in which the United States refocused its attention from combatting fascism to countering communism in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. The direction it had taken in opposition to socialism set the precedent for its stance in the Latin American conflict. In terms of money, supplies, and military and political support, the United States systematically propped up fascist regimes in Latin America. In exchange for said support, fascist leaders eventually softened their attitude toward both liberalism and North American interference.²¹⁸ Since democratization and the redrafting of sovereign constitutions did not come until the late 1980s and early 1990s for most countries having foregone this political experience, it was liberalized dictators with ties to the United States who first opened the South's doors to liberalism.²¹⁹

The Latin Falangists shared a common trait with the Anglo-Saxon neoliberals: an ethic of social conservatism. Both fascists and neoliberals sought to maintain traditional class divisions. The former encouraged collectivist class divisions, while the later encouraged dispersion and individualism. Nonetheless, the dictators in power recognized their multifaceted dependence on the United States. From the majority of the twentieth century, two-thirds of the capital flowing into Latin America was foreign. Most aid had

"Falangism." *Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Political Thought*. Basingstoke: MacMillan Publishers Ltd, 2007. Credo Reference. Web.

²¹⁸ Friedman, Max Paul. "Relations with Latin America and the Caribbean, 1945-1970." *Guide to U.S. Foreign Policy: A Diplomatic History*. Washington: CQ Press, 2012. Credo Reference, Web.

²¹⁹ Schatan, Jacobo. *El saqueo de América Latina*. Santiago de Chile: LOM Ediciones, 1998. 9. Print.

come in the form of long-term, low-interest loans provided by governments and multi-lateral agencies. But the neoliberal boom of the 1970s changed the nature of Latin America debt politics.²²⁰ By the end of the decade, nearly 90% of foreign capital flowing into the region was private. Direct foreign investors and private banks came the South's principle creditors. Consistent with Reagan's tendency to "tighten" money supply by increasing interests rates, most banks adopted short-term lending policies with variable interest rates.²²¹ Latin American governments began to have serious difficulty paying off their debts on time and in full, which forced them to take out further loans, and sink deeper into debt. By 1982, the region was in crisis and, to an unprecedented degree, dependent upon foreign finance.

The situation of Latin America in the early 1980s mirrors that of the crisis-stricken European countries from 2008 to the present. Huge portions of Latin America had acquired debt that could not be paid off. In response, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund imposed a series of structural conditions, as well as its own neoliberal model of development. Administrative leaders were left with no choice but to accept the IMF's "recommendations," which called for the reduction of social benefits, the increase in price of public services and energy, and the practical erasure of import tariffs.²²² The 1990s saw the total consolidation of the neoliberal model in Latin America, as well as its "imposition on all fronts"—"economic, social, political, juridical,

²²⁰ Cravey, Altha J. Oglesby, Elizabeth. "Debt and Debt Crisis." *Encyclopedia of Human Geography*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2006. Credo Reference. Web.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² Matías Camargo, Sergio Roberto. "Intervencionismo y neoliberalismo en los modelos de estado y de desarrollo." *Intervencionismo y neoliberalismo*. Santa Fe de Bogotá: Ediciones Jurídicas Gustavo Ibáñez, 1998. 30. Print.

constitutional, domestic, foreign, and on a central, territorial, regional, and municipal level.”²²³ Matías Camargo calls this shift *el Revolcón*, “the Great Tumble.”²²⁴

Following the pop of the U.S.-driven housing bubble in 2008, Europe entered into financial crisis. Banks had been giving out mortgages indiscriminately and acquiring the funds to continue crediting from potential debtors. When the demand for housing dropped, many banks found themselves in debt. A multi-lateral committee called the Troika, comprised of the European Commission, the European Bank, and the International Monetary Fund was put in charge of solving the financial crisis.

The fate of crisis-stricken Europe is similar to that of Latin America’s at the end of the twentieth century. The Troika, in exchange for aid, has imposed a series of conditions on the countries in need of financial “bailout.” These conditions—collectively call “Austerity measures”—are almost identical to those itemized for Latin America. In short, they enforce the redirection of public funds to wherever capital happens to be. Budget cuts in education, health, transport, employment and retirement benefits, and culture have swept across the continent.

But what are tangible effects of neoliberal policy? How does neoliberalism negatively affect the quality of life of the people it touches? Schatan divides its harmful effects into two categories—the social and the environmental. In the realm of the social, competition between megacorporations is primary. It is in the DNA of private corporations to buy one another’s assets, and to absorb small and medium-sized companies. The ultimate goal is *always* to increase capital, so corporate buy-outs are a

²²³ “[*Aquella fue*] la etapa de consolidación del modelo neoliberal y de su imposición en todos los frentes: económico, social, político, jurídico, constitucional, interno y externo, a nivel central y a nivel territorial, departamental y municipal.”

Ibid. 30.

²²⁴ *Ibid.* 30

given in a free market economy. But the problem with the absorption of assets is that it necessarily implies employment cuts. One corporate entity acquires ownership of assets that once belonged to two.²²⁵

The constant demand for advanced technology also takes a toll on the workforce. Technology takes the place of human labor. It is more efficient, and, ultimately, less costly. Though machinery might be expensive and require highly trained personnel to operate, it has no mouth to feed, no health insurance to cover, and no pension to pay. In order to compete in the world market—as is compulsory in globalized state of the world—technology is necessary in order to reduce



"They stole my salary!" - Lisbon, Portugal. [6]

production costs and increase efficiency, in terms of both time and money.²²⁶

These trends, according to Schatan, represent a “profound transformation” in the world’s labor markets. What we can see on a global scale is a “decrease in the quantity and quality of occupations,” along with the reduction of pay. This is universally so, except for select pockets of the workforce who possess increasingly sophisticated technical ability.²²⁷ The streamlining of marketability into an ever-smaller pool of highly

²²⁵ Schatan, Jacobo. *El saqueo de América Latina*. Santiago de Chile: LOM Ediciones, 1998. 11. Print.

²²⁶ *Ibid.* 11.

²²⁷ *Ibid.* 11.

sophisticated skills that are expensive to obtain makes the prospect of employment precarious.

The debt crisis of the 1980s continues to exact severe costs on Latin America's environmental integrity. South America's wealth of natural resources is perhaps its biggest asset in the capitalist marketplace. In order to pay off lingering debts, much of Latin America has turned natural resource extraction and exportation into an industry essential to the region's capacity to pay off interest.

The reorientation of human capital demand to respond to the needs of financial capital—instead of social or environmental necessity—provokes trends of “irrational” behavior. The tendency to engage in counterintuitive behavior has “provoked serious uneasiness and doubt with respect to the virtues of an unrestricted model of neoliberalism—[a system] based on the perpetual indenture and exploitation of people and corporations for the sake of projects with absolutely no socioeconomic priority or justification.”²²⁸ We can observe a recent instance of this sentiment surrounding the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil. In the global era, a country or city's privilege to host an international sporting event is a rite of passage. It is partially a form of visual advertising, intended to draw attention to the physical and cultural character of a given place. But hosting rights principally serve the purpose of conveying a message: Look! We're developed—we have funds to build athletic and transit infrastructure, and our grasp on security is tight enough to make sure an event of such proportions can be realized safely.

²²⁸ “[*Tal tendencia*] ha provocado inquietud y dudas respecto de las virtudes de un modelo neoliberal sin restricciones, apoyado en el endeudamiento creciente de empresas y personas, así como en el gasto desmedido de las mismas en proyectos que no tienen justificación o prioridad socioeconómica alguna.” *Ibid.* 14.

In March 2014, I sat down with Jorge Hori in his home in São Paulo to discuss the World Cup and the massive protests surrounding it. Jorge has been working in São Paulo as a transit consultant for decades and is highly opinionated concerning the Cup and the possible strains and benefits it might put confer on Brazil. “The rationale behind Brazil’s bid to host the World Cup is to recreate what happened in Barcelona,” he explained. “The Brazilian government wants to put Brazil on the map as an international destination. They want people to see it on T.V., so that they’ll say to themselves, ‘I want to go there.’” But



**"If your child gets sick, take him to the Stadium!"
- São Paulo, Brazil. [7]**

the bid has caused uproar. Brazilians have put on a series of formidable, and, sometimes destructive, demonstrations against the World Cup across the country. Posters advertising the demonstrations were part of the urban landscape during my trip to São Paulo. They read: *Não vai ter Copa!*—“There will be no Cup!”

I wondered—is this opposition to the World Cup a popular sentiment? Or is it just a few people making noise? “There will be a World Cup,” Jorge asserted, “but we won’t be ready for it. Brazil doesn’t have the infrastructure to support such an event. Our cities don’t have the lodging capacity. We don’t have the restaurants. Our subway system isn’t big enough to move all the people that will come. But that isn’t the problem that people are complaining about in the streets. From a businessman’s perspective, it’s a problem, yes. But what the people are angry because the government chose to take on the

challenge. Everyone in Brazil loves soccer. People aren't protesting against a soccer game. People are protesting against the reallocation of public resources to build a stadium and parking lots. We don't have the kind of money it requires to prepare for a World Cup, not because we don't have it or can't borrow it. We don't have that kind of money because there are other things to spend it on; health care, education, medical research, and public transit, to name a few.²²⁹

The decision of government bureaucrats to dedicate public funds to the construction of a stadium is a prime example of the shift from social to market priorities in Latin America. The officials calling the administrative shots are interested in attracting business to Brazil. They want people to be televised spending money in their country, so that more people come to spend money there. Of course, it is a good thing for Brazil to earn money. It is normal that a country with a history of financial dependence wish to better its financial fortunes. It is important, however, to ask the question—who will benefit from materially from this venture? Hotel chains. Clothing stores. Restaurants. Stadium vendors. In short, the spectacle will be fruitful for sectors of the economy that employ people already capable of sustaining themselves. At what cost does this venture come? When public funds derived from taxation are detracted from public services in order to stimulate certain sectors of the economy, who wins, and who loses?

²²⁹ Excerpt from interview with Jorge Hori on March 23, 2014 in São Paulo, Brazil.

The neoliberal ethic willfully disregards collective interest. It ignores the wisdom environmental of mature civilizations, as well as the cautioning light of science. It is cold, stubborn, and irrational—like a virus, solely occupied with its own propagation. Those attentive to the demands of the market wield a foolish pretension to “real world” knowledge. But there is nothing realistic about the logic of the free market. On the contrary, it turns a blind eye to the material limitations of the universe. Its apologists operate on an a-physical plane, in which the Earth’s material endowment cannot possibly be abused.



"The Earth has enough to feed everyone, but not enough to feed everyone's greed." - Marinilla, Colombia. [8]

The out-and-out capitalism that neoliberalism fosters is defended by its promoters in the name of “liberty.” But the liberty of capitalists in the free market to do as they please without regard for the social and ecological consequences of their actions does not represent a transcendental concept of liberty. There is no *liberty* implicit in *liberalism*. In the words of Schatan, the only liberty therein is the “liberty to produce, to consume, to invest, to sell, to become rich, to pay any price to whomever wants to work or sell her

products, and to charge any price to whomever wants or needs to buy something; liberty to pollute and destroy the natural environment.”²³⁰

Communitarianism as a philosophical basis for political Latinity

The Academy of Latinity’s mission statement indicates that globalization’s threat to the authority and autonomy of cultures produces the need for a political network of pan-Latin solidarity: “The Academy is opposed to whatever harm the imbalances caused by the globalization of communication and trade may cause in detriment to the languages, cultures, and values of the Latin world.”²³¹ In particular, the Academy defends “the necessity to confront the risks of cultural homogenization” and “the importance of Latin civilization’s contributions to democracy.”²³² These vindications are based on communitarianism and multiculturalism—two branches of discourse that criticize globalization.

The Academy of Latinity’s call for mutual respect for all the world’s cultures is an example of multiculturalist thought. Lerner Febres distinguishes between “factual”

²³⁰ “*Es la defensa a ultranza del modelo neoliberal vigente en buena parte del mundo, del cual los Estados Unidos se han constituido el garante, en nombre de la libertad; libertad para producir, para consumir, para invertir, para vender, para enriquecerse, para pagar cualquier precio a quien quiera trabajar o vender sus productos, para cobrar cualquier precio a quien quiera o necesite comprar algo; libertad para ensuciar y destruir el entorno natural.*”

Ibid. 13.

²³¹ “[A] Academia se opõe aos danos que possam ser causados pelo desequilíbrio introduzido pela globalização dos meios de comunicação e de intercâmbio, em detrimento das línguas, culturas e valores dos países latinos.”

“Quem somos?” Academia da Latinidade. Web. <http://www.alati.com.br/quem_somos.html>.

²³² “*A necessidade de enfrentar os riscos de uniformização cultural . . . [a] importância, para a democracia, das contribuições da civilização latina.*”

Ibid.

and “political” multiculturalism. The former pertains to the “coexistence of heterogeneous cultural groups within a space that, until the time of convergence, was home to a culturally homogenous population.” The latter refers to a desired tendency in worldwide social conscience to recognize the right of each cultural community to affirm itself as equal in relation to all others.²³³ Political multiculturalism is a variant of postmodern thought. Its adherents work to “de-legitimize the liberal Western model of civilization,” and promote a spirit of cultural relativism.²³⁴ The multicultural ideal has in common with globalization that it demands individuals to subject themselves to “processes over which they have no control.” In the case of globalization, the process is global market integration. In the case of multiculturalism, it is cultural socialization. A “totalizing” interpretation of multiculturalism subjects the individual to collective will without recourse by denying him access to mechanisms with which to challenge the conservative authority of a culture over its members. The prospect of a fragmented world system in which cultures do not meddle in each others’ affairs, and the individual cannot claim *universal* rights in spite of his cultural system demonstrates the utility of Rodríguez Magda’s thesis of transmodernity.

Communitarianism is not a school of thought per se, but a loose association of philosophers and social scientists who have come together to pose both a theoretical and empirical critique of “liberal civilization.” In particular, communitarians denounce the “effects of social disintegration,” as well as the lack of social solidarity, that the “liberal system” has produced.²³⁵ In the words of Lerner Febres, communitarian critique has

²³³ Lerner Febres, Salomón. "Civilización global y solidaridad: El comunitarismo latino como aporte a una globalización humanitaria." *La Latinité en question*. Paris: Latin Union, 2004. 165. Print.

²³⁴ *Ibid.* 166.

²³⁵ *Ibid.* 167.

emerged as a “challenge to the current civilizing system centered upon the instrumental rationality of economic activity—which is the one that secretly characterizes the process of globalization.”²³⁶

The communitarian critique of liberalism comprises: 1) a critique of individualism, and 2) a critique of moral ethnocentrism. In the communitarian view, the individual is not a totally isolatable unit. Individuals exist within the context of societies that, in part, determine their values, concepts, and behaviors. Therefore, the individual as consumer, or as the most basic element of a political democracy, is a falsehood. Lerner Febres elaborates on this critique:

In real life, what we find are not isolated individuals with the capacity to choose, in principle, anything they like, but members of collectivities that, in fact, *have already chosen* common values and aspirations. These individuals share, in their daily lives and in their institutions, a given system of moral norms. Individuals themselves are not conceivable outside the cultural contexts by which they acquire their identity and internalize a system of beliefs by way of socialization These collectivities are heterogeneous in nature, and can range from families, to cultural minorities (or majorities), to linguistic communities, and to ethnic and religious groups.²³⁷

Liberalism’s emphasis on the will of the individual in political and economic questions, then, is based on a faulty rationale, as it fails to recognize the extent to which a given individual’s subjectivity is influenced by varying forces of socialization. In particular,

²³⁶ *Ibid.* 164.

²³⁷ “*En la vida real, lo que encontramos no son individuos aislados con capacidad de elegir en principio cualquier cosa, sino miembros de colectividades que de hecho han elegido ya valores o fines comunes, es decir, que comparten, en su vida cotidiana e institucional, un sistema específico de normas morales. Los individuos mismos no son pensables al margen de estos contextos vitales o culturales en los que obtienen su identidad a medida que internalizan el sistema de creencias en el proceso de socialización Las colectividades de las que nos hablan los comunitaristas pueden ser de diferente naturaleza o de diferentes dimensiones: una familia, una minoría (o una mayoría) cultural, una comunidad lingüística, un grupo étnico o religioso.*”

Ibid. 168.

economic relations based on the ideal of the individual subject's autonomy have harmful effects on peoples' material lives. The other main critique launched by communitarians is against the idea of liberalism as a product of the European Enlightenment project. Liberalism is "un-confessed ethnocentrism," because its practitioners and sympathizers wish to "continue the moral project of modern thinkers . . . while hiding the cultural origin of said project."²³⁸

Brazilian political psychologist Marco Aurélio Máximo Prado remarks that, "in their respective theoretical and methodological options, as well as in their historical development, the northern [American] hemisphere has cultivated a more individualist stance, and the southern hemisphere a more communitarian one."²³⁹ He adds that this "distance" between the psychologies of the two Americas is "no news to social psychologists."²⁴⁰ For Lerner Febres, communitarianism has become a useful and popular political philosophy in Latin America in the last three decades. First of all, communitarianism's critique of "free market utopia" allows for a closer examination of the inequalities that already exist in Latin American society. "When formal egalitarian policies are implemented in countries that already experience a high degree of social inequality," Lerner Febres asserts, "they often prolong and exacerbate asymmetrical power relations."²⁴¹ That is, only a select few have access to the means of significant capital accumulation. The remaining majority is subject to the exploitation of capital, with continuously less aid from the state.

²³⁸ *Ibid.* 168.

²³⁹ Prado, Marco Aurélio Máximo. "A Psicologia Comunitária nas Américas: O individualismo, o comunitarismo e a exclusão do político." *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica*, 2012, 15(1). 202.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 201.

²⁴¹ Lerner Febres, Salomón. "Civilización global y solidaridad: El comunitarismo latino como aporte a una globalización humanitaria." *La Latinité en question*. Paris: Latin Union, 2004. 169. Print.

Second, communitarianism's emphasis on cultural socialization could be useful in "distrusting those interpretations of the Latin American process of modernization that take modern liberal civilization as a reference model." This civilizing system, which fails to take into account the "complexity of intercultural relations" in Latin America, draws attention away from the extent to which individuals are products of their communities and social classes. To ignore the mosaic structure of Latin American society is to represent Latin America in a false manner. In recognizing the uniqueness of social relations, it is logical to assert Latin America's "right to difference in the context of the global uniformization of culture."²⁴²

Third, the call to revisit community roots invokes in a sense of moral responsibility on the part of its members to 1) remember and articulate the social phenomena that have marked Latin America in the past, and 2) to be especially aware of them in the future. In the following passage, Lerner Febres explains how this introspective community awareness has helped to form a Latin American political attitude:

I'm referring to the painful processes of cultural disintegration, to the forced migrations, to the political upheavals, to the various forms of social violence from terrorism, guerilla warfare, and drug trafficking. In all these cases, the fragility of our social and political institutions has been apparent. But even clearer has been the show of collective desire to forge bonds of social solidarity that counteract disintegration and promote peaceful coexistence.²⁴³

²⁴² *Ibid.* 169.

²⁴³ "Me refiero a los dolorosos procesos de desintegración cultural, a las migraciones forzadas, a las convulsiones políticas, a las múltiples formas de violencia social generadas a partir del terrorismo, las guerrillas o el narcotráfico. En todos estos casos, se ha puesto de manifiesto . . . la fragilidad de nuestras instituciones sociales y políticas, pero ante ellos se ha puesto más claramente aún de manifiesto el ánimo, el deseo, la voluntad colectiva de crear lazos de solidaridad social que contrarresten la desintegración y promuevan la convivencia pacífica."
Ibid. 169.

In light of the painful transformations Latin America has undergone since the imposition of neoliberalism—usually in the direction of social fragmentation rather than cooperation—its inhabitants have developed a communitarian ethic. This ethic is a collective awareness to be wary of social violence, and to speak out against it in an effort to effectuate positive change.

Citizenship in the Latin and Anglo-Saxon traditions

A common stereotype of the French is that they protest too frequently and about too many issues. Observers of this habit often carelessly attribute it to a sense of entitlement or, worse, to a lack of work ethic. A German professor of mine who had lived in France once commented on the propensity of the French to launch into total protest on a moment's whim. "I don't understand how they get anything done," she exclaimed—"when there's a strike, everyone gets involved. You can't even buy bread or take your dog to the vet."

In a Time Magazine article entitled "Why the French Love to Strike," journalist Bruce Crumley insists that recent protests against large-scale unemployment are an "echo of France's historical penchant for insurgency in response to adversity," which is "now making a comeback with the global economic crisis." Crumley qualifies this history as a "leftist-driven insurrectional tradition," spanning from the Revolution, to the student

protests of 1968, to the present day.²⁴⁴ Crumley's interpretation, though formally accurate, carries a negative tone. "Insurgency" implies rebellion against a regime, or against a political system that does not serve the interests of a given group within the populace at large. But in reality, the spirit of protest—which French Latinists so adamantly claim is a Latin family heirloom inherited from Roman civilization—is an affirmation of the civil society construct. The impulse to make popular demands on an elected governing body is inextricably linked to the Greco-Roman conception of citizenship.

The concept of citizenship [La. *civitas*, 'civil society'], despite its Latin name, has Hellenic roots. In Ancient Greece, "citizenship meant participation in the life of the community and in the decisions that vitally affect its future,"²⁴⁵ claims Camilleri. The participatory aspect remained in the Latin tradition of citizenship, though added to the mix was the element of law. In Rome, a citizen was someone "free to act by law," and "free to ask and expect the law's protection." In sum, a "citizen of such and such legal community and such a legal standing in that community."²⁴⁶ But European Christendom modified the Roman code, displacing favor from patrician will to divine authority.²⁴⁷ The switch in authority from the elite to the sacred served as a medieval precursor to the Enlightenment. The modern project resurrected classical principles of citizenship and "[grounded] them in the existence of a secular state and the development of universalistic norms of participation in civil society." According to this newfound understanding of

²⁴⁴ Crumley, Bruce. "Why the French Love to Strike." *Time*. 16 Apr. 2009. Web.

²⁴⁵ Camilleri, Joseph A. "Citizenship in a Globalizing World: The Role of Civilizational Dialogue." *Civilizational Dialogue and Political Thought*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2007. 130. Print.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 130.

²⁴⁷ **Patrician will:** In Rome, as well as in Greece, citizenship was limited to elite members of society. The Roman elite were called Patricians.

citizenship, “state authority was legitimate to the extent that it represented the democratically expressed will of the people.”²⁴⁸ It was the basis for the emancipatory movements of modernity and, in particular, for the French Revolution.

But the modern conception of citizenship progressively liberalized. In Western liberal democracies, the “participatory, communitarian ethic of shared values and intersubjective discourse was replaced by the concept of ‘private’ and ‘passive’ citizenship.”²⁴⁹ The trend towards what Camilleri calls “private” citizenship—in which citizens “concentrate on their individual rights and preferences”—was particularly strong in the Anglo-Saxon tradition. Camilleri employs Daniel Skubik’s Anglo-American model as the pinnacle of private liberal citizenship. The key attributes in Skubik’s description are: 1) individualism, by which “each human being is considered to be a separate, distinct whole;” 2) moral agency, by which “each person is a free, autonomous agent;” 3) moral equality, by which “each individual is deemed inherently equal;” 4) rationality, by which each individual has access to reason;” and 5) individual integrity, by which “each person has an inherent dignity concomitant with his or her individuality.”²⁵⁰

The advance of private citizenship, in Camilleri’s view, was related to the growth of capitalism during the modern era. Its emphasis on technology, productivity, and the rationality of the individual has provoked the “[rupturing] of the traditional attachments to local community and [the creation] instead [of] mobile and atomized populations whose claim to humanity rests primarily on the assertion of individual rights vis-à-vis an

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 130-1.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 132.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 132.

impersonal, distant, and bureaucratized governmental apparatus.”²⁵¹ The civil rights movements of liberal Anglo-Saxon democracies extended rights and citizenship to a wide range of previously excluded groups, including women, blacks, and gays, “but their inclusion was primarily as individual voters, as claimants of rights in the public domain, and consumers of goods and servants in the marketplace, in short as members of an atomized society.” The function of these democracies, then, became to act as a mediator in assuring that their members were “relatively satisfied customers.”²⁵² The basic unit of society was not the individual as part of an organic whole, but the individual as an entity per se—separate from the community. Civil society in the private tradition is a collection of atomized individuals, in which the essential relationship between government and citizen is dependent upon the market.

France’s republican and “humanist” interpretation of citizenship, which it advertised so fervently in South America following Independence, derives its spirit from the classical tradition. In Greece, as well as in Rome, “to be truly human, life had to be lived inside the *polis*.”²⁵³ In this capacity, French republicanism claims its civic principles to be Latin in origin. The continued defense of this civic tradition in the whole of the Latin world pumps life into Latinity’s contemporary political dynamic.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.* 132.

²⁵² *Ibid.* 133.

²⁵³ *Ibid.* 130.

*The “culture” of
communitarian protest in the
Latin world*

The austerity measures imposed on the crisis-stricken countries of the European Union have provoked uproar. It was during my time living in Madrid that I



"For a social and anti-capitalist solution to the Crisis." – Madrid, Spain. [9]

first experienced the magnitude of anti-neoliberal protests first hand. I arrived in Spain employing the same rationales I had been taught in the United States. I asked myself—how could anything ever get done like this? I was late to class almost every week because of a transit strike. Incessantly, it seemed, there were protests coursing through the main avenues of the city center. That kind of insistent behavior, I thought, isn't sustainable. What I came to realize was that *that* is exactly the point of the protests. A strike is *supposed* to be a debilitating show of popular outrage. It's *supposed* to complicate the life of the passive citizen. It's *supposed* to render normal life impossible.

The Spanish economy had suffered serious financial problems as a result of the housing bubble pop of 2008. Spaniards, and not the banks which had exhausted their resources, bore the burden of the national capital shortage. Public funding for education, health care, and culture has since been continually cut from the Spanish State's spending budget. The conservative *Partido Popular* has, at the urging of the Troika, implemented labor reforms that have left workers more vulnerable to short-notice termination with

reduced compensation in an economy in which nearly a third of the population is unemployed.

It became clear to me over time that these protests were the result of a serious aversion to capitalism in Spanish culture. But this sentiment is not particular to Spain. My experience with Latins from France to Colombia is that they often challenge my cultural assumptions as an English-speaker from the United States. In art, in history, in politics, and in matters of economy, there is an intensity and a rigor that the average North American does not possess. I understand this rigor as a challenge to the intellectual indolence that a material-centric life encourages, and I understand this intensity as a sore rejection of global Anglo-Saxon hegemony. This sentiment is expressed explicitly in Latinist discourse. Peruvian ambassador to Italy and Secretary General of the Latin Union Bernardino Osio writes:

We must give a political dimension to Latinity. The world's Latin countries are often put at a disadvantage by the laws of geography and economy. Worse yet, in order to confront recurrent economic crises, these countries are forced to adopt austerity policies, for which the victim is indisputably the domain of culture, with the merciless reduction of university,



"Humanity first. No to austerity!" – Grenoble, France. [10]

school, and museum budgets. All political initiatives that counter these trends are thus welcome.²⁵⁴

The unification of Latin peoples occurs, according to Osio, when these societies “perceive a threat that could endanger and dissolve a social body, and, refusing decadence, spontaneously create antibodies that self activate everywhere and at once to forge the defense necessary for survival.”²⁵⁵

Osio’s body metaphor takes shape when we apply it to European austerity. We can see a similar expression of discontent all across Latin Europe. From France, to Spain, to Portugal, and to Italy, citizens take to the streets to protest the neoliberal pillaging of their republican societies. The theme of these protests is



"ENOUGH! Stop social terrorism! Revolt against the 'fascization' of our lives!" Lisbon, Portugal. [11]

universal. Protesters call for social justice, communitarian solidarity, and resistance against the social violence of capitalism and neoliberal policy reform.

²⁵⁴ "Il faut avant tout donner une dimension politique à la Latinité : les pays latins [sont] souvent défavorisés par les lois de la géographie et de l'économie . . . Pire encore, ces pays, pour affronter des crises économiques récurrentes, sont contraints de mener des politiques d'austérité dont la première victime est indéléctablement le domaine culturel avec la réduction impitoyable des budgets destinés aux universités, aux écoles et aux musées. Toutes les initiatives politiques qui luttent contre ces courants sont donc bienvenues."

Osio, Bernardino. "Allocution de son excellence l'Ambassadeur Bernardino Osio." *La Latinité en question*. Latin Union: Paris (2004). 7. Print.

²⁵⁵ "Quand elles perçoivent un mal qui peut mettre en danger et dissoudre un corps social, les sociétés les plus mûres, qui refusent la décadence, créent spontanément des anticorps qui s'activent un peu partout pour réagir et mettre en place la défense nécessaire à la survie." *Ibid.* 8.



"For social justice. Against cutting rights. RESISTANCE" Canarias, Spain. [12]



"For social justice. For ecological transformation. NO TO AUSTERITY!" – Grenoble, France. [13]



"For labor, solidarity, and social justice" – Bologna, Italy. [14]

In Latin America, policy reform has engendered a similar breed of communitarian protest. The Latin American protests are alike the European ones in their anti-neoliberal vocation. Major protests broke out in São Paulo in June 2013 after the municipal government announced the price hike in public transit to 3,20 R\$ per one-way trip.²⁵⁶

The fare increase was partially due to the privatization of one of the city's metro lines. The news provoked acute and, sometimes violent, response from the São Paulo's population. Many protesters waved signs like the one to the right, calling for the total nationalization of the city's public transit system.



"Nationalization of public transit, NOW!" – São Paulo, Brazil. [15]

In early 2014, a series of equally as intense protests against the FIFA World Cup have marked Brazil. Many Brazilians see the Federal Government's aspirations to host the Cup as an instance of neoliberal opportunism. Protesters beg the question: Whom is the cup meant to serve? They are indignant that public funds are being poured into a tourist venture, when they should be invested in increasing the wealth of Brazilian civil society. On average thousands of people attend these protests, which take place approximately once a month. One of my interviewees



"World Cup for whom? Anti-capitalist youth, to the streets!" – São Paulo, Brazil. [16]

²⁵⁶ 3,20 R\$ = 1.44 USD

identified this faction of Brazilian society—one that rejects the influence of North American capitalism as—“localized.”²⁵⁷ This comment provoked my curiosity. After our conversation, I began asking people if they believe the protests to be truly popular movements, or if they simply represent a small, educated, elite minority class. One student replied that the latter “tends to be the case in political activism” all around the world.²⁵⁸ A pair of Portuguese language students told me that the protesters make up a very small minority: “The majority of Brazilians are unaware of the fact that they are being exploited.” According to these students, the street protesters are a small minority who has had more opportunity to gain political awareness than the average Brazilian. The large majority of Brazilians, they say, are apolitical.²⁵⁹

Jorge Hori, on the other hand, insists that the protests are entirely popular: “People are protesting because they won’t have a place to park their cars during the Cup. There is constant construction, and people can’t get around. They understand the fact that they pay taxes, and that their money is being spent on something from which they will not benefit.” At the same time, Jorge does not see the popular unrest in Brazil as an expression of pan-Latin sentiment. “This idea of pan-Latinism is certainly interesting. But it’s an academic term, overall. It’s not a part of people’s identity here. No one is protesting because they’re Latin. People are protesting because they’re being taken advantage of by their government.”

One literature student agreed that the protests—at least some of them—are popular manifestations. “I don’t think it’s the same across the board. There are several

²⁵⁷ For whole interview, refer to Appendix 2, Interview 4.

²⁵⁸ For whole interview, refer to Appendix 2, Interview 1.

²⁵⁹ For whole interview, refer to Appendix 2, Interview 4.

issues, and you're not going to have the entire population united as one if people are demanding different things." Another said that, in terms of transit, healthcare, and education, the protests are definitely representative of a popular sentiment. "The people on the street range from the children to the elderly." They don't have any concept of systemic exploitation, but they know that certain services are becoming more expensive, and that affects their lives directly. It's a question of emergency versus working towards a constructive ideal. The people are protesting the rise in price of essential services because that change affects their life in a direct way.

She insisted that some fights are particular to a smaller section of the population: "Transit [is] more [popular] than education, because it's still hard for people to understand that a quality education is a right. Many people don't know that." This ignorance is part of a larger cultural domination that, though not entirely, is a product of global hegemony—"Brazilians listen to American music even if it's shit. They don't see it as a form of domination." When I asked the two of them if they thought a pan-Latin civilizational bloc formed to counter globalization would be desirable, they responded ambivalently: "I think it could be positive, yes," one of them said. "But, *a priori*," insisted the other, "it would be ideal to not feel the need to defend your condition as a Latin, or an Anglo-Saxon."²⁶⁰

When I asked one of the Portuguese language students about the pan-Latin bloc, he too wavered in his answer. "If it comes to fruition in a practical way, as a political petition, and as a relationship based on mutual caring. If we're not affirming a Franco-Roman spirit, but a geopolitical situation in the world in which we feel the pressure of an

²⁶⁰ For whole interview, refer to Appendix 2, Interview 3.

Anglo-Saxon empire, that's good—I think that's valid," he said. "But to this day that's never been an aspect of my life. I don't feel like a victim of those groups." He claimed instead to understand that there's an "international bourgeoisie . . . that puts great effort into . . . belonging to an Anglo-Saxon-ness"—which he calls "that great mystical thing, the wonder of capital." "I resist that," he reassures me, "but I find that I resist very specific and regional things within an international framework, because the dialogue is monetary, international, and universal."

Despite the undeniable encroachment of foreign interests in Brazil, he tells me that, in his eyes, Brazil remains backwards, provincial: "Brazil is a country that, despite having close ties to the universality of capitalism, still has its own historically marked institutions . . . We Brazilians never sent a king to the guillotine. So we never broke with some traditions that have been imposed on us since our beginning. We don't know what a real bourgeoisie is. We're something between aristocracy and—we're a labor-centered country. We're a plantation society."

Cultural logics and identities

Through these interviews, I came across two challenges to the idea of political Latinity: 1) that most Brazilians aren't familiar with, and furthermore don't identify with pan-Latinism, and 2) that communitarian protests do not stem from a culturally-inherited sense of political awareness, but from directly experiencing the negative consequences of bureaucratic decisions. But identities, as I briefly explored in the introduction to this

thesis, surface through dialogue and conflict. Ultimately, an identity is a label ascribed to an entity, according to its relationship to another entity. I had never considered that my perspective in questions of politics and popular agency are to a large extent relative to my cultural understanding, until this perspective was qualified as “Anglo-Saxon” by someone from outside my cultural sphere. Cultural logics are deceptive, because they impart on their subjects an illusion of universality. To belong to a cultural system (or a community, or a civilization) is to inherit a set of norms determined by a community. But the members of a society only consider its norms as the product of a distinct culture, once they have encountered *another* set of norms shared by *another* collectivity. Until there is contact, there is reality. Upon and after contact, there is identity.

My impression of the Brazilians I met is that they are Latin, according to the criteria of Latinist scholars. They were socialized in societies of a republican vocation, and were educated in a public university system based on the French model in which a communitarian ideal of social

organization is the intellectual norm. Many interviewees point out, only an elite fraction of the population is educated in this so-called Latin tradition, so pan-Latin morality

cannot be a popular sentiment. But to



“What is democracy? People + power.” – São Paulo, Brazil. [17]

me, what’s remarkable is that those who are educated have a heightened socio-political awareness. The United States has also always had an elite-driven culture to which the socially powerless must adapt. But here Occupy Wall Street was not a movement of

elites. Rather, it was a fringe minority movement of hyper-conscious, counter-culture leftists. The majority of university students in the United States—where higher-level education acquires an increasingly vocational value—did not sympathize with the anti-capitalist sentiment of Occupy protesters. But in Spain, and to a comparable extent, in Brazil, a university education is seen as an opportunity to become aware of the mechanisms of social violence. The idea of education as a means to popular emancipation enters in conflict with the idea of education as corporate employee training. It seems to me that opposition to neoliberalism in Latin countries is not a matter of political association, it is a matter of education. It is a matter of participating in a Latin project of civil society in which Anglo-Saxon liberalism is perceived as foreign and recognized as destructive.

On the United States, Schatan writes that “liberals and conservatives, democrats and republicans, can differ in many ways, but they agree completely in one basic aspect: the primacy of the totally free market above all other forms of organizing economic activity.”²⁶¹ Many Brazilians do not identify consciously with Latinity as a political movement. But in their belonging to a Latin cultural logic that consciously opposes the imposition of an alien one, perhaps they take part in political Latinity *without realizing it*.

²⁶¹ Schatan, Jacobo. *El saqueo de América Latina*. Santiago de Chile: LOM Ediciones, 1998. 13. Print.

Conclusion

To reiterate the words of Lerner Febres, “there is no doubt that the notion of Latinity is somewhat inaccessible or conceptually vague, despite the fact that it arouses in us, even if only intuitively, awareness of a substantial reality.” In this thesis, I hope that I have provided an account of Latinity clear enough that you, the reader, find it less “conceptually vague” than when you started reading. As a researcher, my ultimate goal has not been to provide a unique explanation of a problem per se, but to compile and analyze elements of a discourse whose force I have perceived in my time in the Latin world. This compilation should be of interest to the English-speaking world, however, as a discursive entity, the Anglosphere seldom acknowledges the antagonisms its hegemony produces.

In my primary research, I have found that Latinity is more diffuse as other identity categories. Some affirm their Latinity, as well as that of their societies, and others deny its existence. Unfortunately, my primary research pool—limited to a single demographic and to a single city, São Paulo—was small. In order to wholly assess the legitimacy of Latinity’s representational claims, a cross-demographic, international survey is necessary. But more important than its identitary properties is Latinity’s significance as a unifying force. Even though, outside of a small circle of theorists, it may not join Latins under a consciously held sentiment, its principles—republicanism, communitarian citizenship, and humanism—are in conflict with the violence of neoliberal globalization. In a remarkable number of Latin societies, this tension is

omnipresent. It can be perceived in the remarks of passers-by and in the tone of a university lecture. It is announced on the placards of anti-neoliberal protesters from Italy to Mexico.

Rejection of globalization is not by any means a phenomenon specific to the Latin world. Anti-fascist and anti-neoliberal protests in Greece, Turkey, the United States, and all across the Arab world are proof of this. What is important is not that this movement be identified as Latin, and only Latin. But rather, that substantial worldwide discontent with the economic and political status quo harken in a new era of multiculturalism in which civilizations can preserve their core values, without falling prey to foreign imperialism disguised as universalist progress.

The Latinists promote an alternative project to globalization—that of a *globalatinization*, in which “human dignity as a foundation of democracy” is respected, and Latinity’s role in terms of memory, innovation, and anticipation in societal questions is recognized.²⁶² Maybe in a new world system, Latinity will regain what its proponents claim to be its rightful place in the collective memory of human civilization.

²⁶² "Quem somos?" Academia da Latinidade. Web. <http://www.alati.com.br/quem_somos_historia.html>.

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