

FALL 2018

ReVista

HARVARD REVIEW OF LATIN AMERICA
LATIN AMERICA AND ASIA



South-South

I stumbled into China when I was eleven or twelve. O-lan led me. I was intrigued by her quiet strength, her small stature and big unbound feet. A voracious reader, I couldn't put Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth* down. I had never heard tales like the ones she told of this silently courageous woman in rural prerevolutionary China, a woman who led her husband and family to landed prosperity. Many of the themes the book touched—although I didn't know it at the time—were those that would occupy me during my entire life: poverty, gender relations, women's rights, urban migration, revolution, war and peace, human trafficking, and of course, love, life and death.

As a journalist and editor and just plain human being, I've thought about these issues on another continent—Latin America. I lived in a Dominican neighborhood in New York and perhaps it was inevitable that my Spanish-speaking neighbors would lead me down a path of reality that was stronger than the still vivid call of the fictional O-lan.

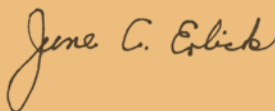
In the late 1960s, the two continents came together in the guise of my neighborhood restaurants, La Nueva Victoria and La Caridad, on Manhattan's Upper West Side, delicious and cheap eateries set up by Chinese-Cuban exiles (Katherine López writes about such restaurants in this issue on p. 40). It was my first inkling that the two continents were connected by large diasporas. Later I was to discover that these diasporas extended to migrants from other parts of Asia, especially Japan and Korea.

In the process of putting together this special issue on Asia and Latin America, I've discovered so many other relationships, ranging from earthquake threats shared by Japan and Chile to trade relations, cultural exchanges and infrastructure goals. When I read Ernesto Londoño's recent piece in the *New York Times* describing a US\$50 million satellite and space mission control center built by the Chinese military in Argentina's Patagonia desert, the development seemed light years away from the rural world of O-lan or even my favorite Chinese-Cuban eateries. But thinking of the article and the Chinese imaginary of *The Good Earth* in context gave new meaning to the somewhat clichéd description of the relationship between Asia and Latin America as South-South. It's not just about geography: it's about history.

Just as Pearl Buck looked upon O-lan from her perspective as the daughter of a white U.S. missionary to China, we see the evolving relationships between the two continents through the prisms of our own experiences. This *ReVista* includes Asian, U.S. and Latin American scholars looking at each other's worlds; it includes many co-authored pieces that bridge the two continents. As in almost every *ReVista*, we've tried to build bridges between art and business, the humanities and science, the current and the historical.

Dear reader, read on. But before you do, I want to say thanks to those who have contributed to keep *ReVista* going, and especially to the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism class of '70, which funded our 2017 Best of *ReVista* photography contest (see the winners on p. 110). *ReVista* belongs to all of you readers and contributors; remember to keep your addresses updated and your suggestion and donations coming.

p.s. Your editor knows Asia is a huge continent and that some areas of Asia are not represented in this issue as thoroughly as we'd hoped. We look forward to more Asia collaborations in the future!



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Photos clockwise: Site of Hitoshi Sanada, 1955/ Londrina -PR (IMS) by Haruo Ohara; Cuban and Chinese flags displayed at El Moro fort in February 2018 during Cuban international book fair honoring China as guest country by Kathleen López; Burning incense to welcome the return of their ancestors' spirits by Yuan Wang.

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HARVARD REVIEW OF LATIN AMERICA

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VOLUME XVIII NO. 1

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LATIN AMERICA AND ASIA

FIRST TAKES

- Bridging Asia and Latin America *By Karen Thornber* 2
From Extraction to Construction *By Cynthia A. Sanborn* 4
What Connects Two Worlds Apart? *By Guo Jie* 8

THE DIASPORAS

- The Migrant Photography of Haruo Ohara *By Rosario Hubert* 12
Growing up Chinese in Uruguay *By Michael Chu* 18
Japanese Peruvians *By Mary Jo McConahay* 25
From *Vendedor* to Fashion Designer *By Kyeyoung Park* 27
Revisiting *Circles and Circuits* *By Alexandra Chang* 30
Nikkei Latin America *By Millie Creighton* 34
The Japanese Brazilian Community *By Regina Matsue and Rafael Shoji* 37
Fried Rice and Plátanos *By Kathleen López* 40
One Day We Arrived in Japan *By Aaron Litvin* 44

TRADE TIES AND BEYOND

- Development in Northeast Asia *By Víctor López Villafañe* 48
Filling the Infrastructure Gap *By Margaret Myers* 50
New Pirates in the Caribbean? *By Horacio J. Godoy* 53
Chinese Development Finance and
the Andean Amazon Infrastructure Boom *By Rebecca Ray* 56
Waves of Asian Investments in Brazil *By Mario Henrique Ogasavara* 60
Made in China 2025 *By Renato Balderrama and Amado Trejo* 63
Understanding the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative
By Rosario Santa Gadea 66
China and Latin America Relations *By Gilmar Masiero* 70
A Commercial Hit That's a Product of Censorship
By Patricia Castro Obando 72
Dragon Mart Cancún *By Emiliano Valle* 75
China-Venezuela Relations *By Matt Ferchen* 77

CROSS CURRENTS

- K-dramas Flow into Latin America
By James A. Dettleff 82
How to Think Globally *By Andrea Bachner* 84
Living Between Distant Shores
By Manuel Azuaje-Alamo 87
Shared Sentiments Inspire New Cultural Centers
By Yuan Wang and Theodore Macdonald 90
Telluric Connections, Bodies in Transit
By Ana Paula Kojima Hirano 94
Transoceanic Traveling Trash
By Ilana Boltvinik and Rodrigo Viñas (TRES) 98

BOOK TALK

- Understanding Social Protections
By Lorena Barberia 102
Guatemalan Youth as Citizens in Waiting
By Martha C. Franco 104
Contemporary Human Rights
and Latin America *By Theodore Macdonald* 105

BUILDING BRIDGES

- Energy Innovation Ecosystems in Rural Mexico
By Francisco Acuña et al 108
Best of *ReVista* 2017-18 110



ON THE COVER

Map illustration
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Bridging Asia and Latin America

China's (Belt and) Road-blocks in Latin America **By KAREN THORNER**

ACADEMICS, JOURNALISTS AND POPULAR authors are writing more and more in recent years on the interconnections between Asia and Latin America. Asia specialists, Latin America specialists and an impressively increasing number of individuals who have expertise in both regions are focusing on varied types of interconnections: diplomacy, military engagement, and security; trade, investment, and other economic networks; environmental degradation and social conflict; knowledge transfer, cultural interactions and transculturalizations. They are also exploring the many facets of the migrations and diasporas that have led to today's longstanding populations of Asians of Latin American descent and Latin Americans of Asian descent, as well as to today's steady movement of peoples between the two regions, despite their great geographic distance.

For scholars of Asia, the growing attention to Asia-Latin America interconnections reinforces the importance of thinking not only across borders within Asia (the primary mission of Harvard's Asia Center, which I direct) but also about Asia in transnational and transregional global perspective. The Asia Center has already done important work in this area. Most notably, in 2015, it partnered with the Center for African Studies, as well as the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies and East Asian Legal Studies at Harvard Law School, to create the Harvard Africa and China Program. Colleagues organized an inaugural workshop on Africa-China interconnections, held at Harvard in September 2015 and featuring panels on Business and Economics, Law and Politics, Global Medicine and Public Health, and Population and Migration. The workshop closed with a screening of *China Remix*. This award-winning film on African immigrants living in Guangzhou, China,

and its focus on three African hip-hop artists striving to forge careers in their new home, humanized many of the complex dynamics between Asia and other regions discussed earlier in the day. It also provided context for other immigrant communities in China, including those from Latin America.

We reconfigured the Harvard Africa and China Program as the Harvard Africa-Asia Initiative in the spring of 2016, recognizing

Africa and India, Japan and China; Infrastructure, Trade and Industry; Migration and Economic Opportunity; Trading and Industrial Diaspora; and Migration, Trade and Health in the Africa-Asian Relationship; and Africa and Asia: The Way Forward. These panels, and in particular the discussions throughout the conference on the lessons Africa and Asia can learn from one

Although unlike with Africa, Asia's known ties with Latin America date back centuries, not millennia, the early success of the Harvard Africa-Asia Initiative suggests just how fruitful a similar collaboration between the Asia-related centers and the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies could be.

that African communities have been interacting with their counterparts from across Asia for millennia, with China becoming a major presence on the African continent only relatively recently. Joining the Asia Center, the Center for African Studies, the Fairbank Center, and East Asian Legal Studies at Harvard Law School in this venture were the Korea Institute, Lakshmi Mittal South Asia Institute, and Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies. In November 2017, at the Harvard Center Shanghai, the Center for African Studies, with the support of Harvard's ten Asia-related centers/programs, spearheaded a two-day conference on Africa and Asia: "Africa-Asia Connections: Bridging Past, Present, and Future." Bringing together a diverse array of participants from around the world representing academia and both the public and private spheres, this event featured panels on Relations between

another, made even more apparent the fundamental importance of examining Asia's relationships with other parts of the world, including Latin America.

The Harvard Africa-Asia Initiative has sponsored a variety of other activities, including a roundtable on "Shared Challenges, Shared Opportunities: Healthcare Delivery in Africa and Asia" in fall 2017. This roundtable will serve as a springboard for a major international conference in Johannesburg in March 2019 focusing on Africa-Asia interconnections as these related to global and public health. Here too, we also must examine the analogous connections between Asia and Latin America.

Although unlike with Africa, Asia's known ties with Latin America date back centuries, not millennia, the early success of the Harvard Africa-Asia Initiative suggests just how fruitful a similar collaboration between the Asia-related centers and



the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies could be. It is my hope that this issue of *ReVista*, featuring an array of articles by some of the most prominent names working on Asia-Latin America interconnections, will inspire colleagues working on Asia and those working on Latin America at Harvard and far beyond to seek out one another and create new collaborations, with the ultimate aims both of providing deeper insights into aspects of

Asia-Latin America interconnections that have already received considerable attention and of shedding light on aspects of these relationships that heretofore have been relatively neglected, creating new knowledge and greater understanding as well as policy proposals that would benefit both regions.

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From Extraction to Construction

Some Reflections on China in Latin America **By CYNTHIA A. SANBORN**

I BEGAN TO STUDY CHINA IN LATIN AMERICA

in 2008, quite by accident. While working as a research professor in Peru, I was invited by the Andean office of Oxfam to prepare an exploratory report on the overseas record of some Chinese companies that were starting to invest in mining in this region. Although I had done work on Western transnational firms in this sector, trying to track and understand their Chinese peers was a new challenge, given the distance and language barriers. My first effort was published in Spanish by the Universidad del Pacífico Press in 2009, and to my surprise it sold out quickly. Apparently, quite a few people in Latin America—like me—did not know much about what China was doing here but were keen to find out.

Ten years and numerous publications later, I believe that the presence of China is one of the most significant changes in Latin America and the Caribbean in the last quarter century. Japan and other Asian countries have also had impact in the region, but China stands out now for the weight of its presence, the magnitude of its ambitions, and the expectations it has raised.

This was not historically the case. For many years, Latin America was marginal to China's economy and foreign

Japan and other Asian countries have also had impact in the region, but China stands out now for the weight of its presence, the magnitude of its ambitions, and the expectations it has raised.

policy. Holding just eight percent of the world's population, Latin America was considered very far from China and very much in the "backyard" of the United States. For most of us Latin Americans as well, China was a distant source of immigrants (voluntary or forced), *arroz chaufa* and wonton soup, or Maoist political ideology, but not a country one hoped to visit or do business with.

In a very short time, all of that has changed. The most recent period of economic growth in our region was driven in large part by our commodity exports to China, accompanied in some cases by bilateral trade agreements. Since then, Latin American trade with China has

increased more than 200 percent, with China replacing the United States as a leading trade partner, the leading market for what we produce, and a major source of foreign direct investment, in traditional commodities and new infrastructure.

Politically, more countries in the region have switched diplomatic allegiance from Taiwan to Beijing, and most of our leaders are unwilling to comment publicly on China's authoritarianism and human rights violations. While the Trump Administration in the United States shows increasing hostility to Latin America, China stresses the need to empower developing countries and promote South-South cooperation—and the discourse of our leaders is much the same.

In this context, understanding the relations between China and Latin America is essential to understanding our own prospects for development in the years ahead. After two decades of accelerated relations, a small but growing number of academics are asking what the balance is so far—whether engagement with China is deepening our dependency on primary exports or diversifying our options, and how Chinese firms, banks and embassies operate on the ground.

Such questions are complicated by the challenges of understanding the Chinese



The presence of China is one of the most significant changes in Latin America and the Caribbean in the last quarter century.

perspective. There are still few Latin American experts on contemporary China, and few Chinese colleagues with expertise on Latin America who do fieldwork in the region and engage with us as peers. Yet Chinese authorities today are determined to change this, by training more people in Latin American studies and promoting academic and cultural exchanges. Some of the new voices from China on Latin America, and vice versa, are included in this special issue of *ReVista*.

CHINA IN LATIN AMERICA: TAKING STOCK

What have we found so far? First of all, our work with Kevin Gallagher and Rebecca Ray at Boston University and colleagues from eight centers across Latin America has shown the impact of China's huge demand for natural resources. This has indeed led to greater concentration in

While the Trump Administration in the United States shows increasing hostility to Latin America, China stresses the need to empower developing countries and promote South-South cooperation—and the discourse of our leaders is much the same.

the extractive industries, and in activities with high environmental risk and high levels of social conflict. Latin America's exports to China, and China's investments in this region, have been more concentrated in primary commodities than have Latin America's economic relations with the rest of the world.

In terms of social impact, Latin America's primary exports—especially minerals—generate less employment than, for example, commercial agriculture, manufacturing or services. As a result, exports to China also produce significantly

fewer jobs than total exports from this region. Furthermore, Latin American exports to China use more water and emit more greenhouse gas emissions per dollar of output than our total exports. And both the investments in large-scale mining and in infrastructure funded by China today, represent serious risks for deforestation and degradation in some of the most biologically diverse parts of South America. Although these outcomes are not the direct responsibility of China, they do put to test its commitment to being a socially responsible global superpower,



China's companies are an important part of its global power.

one that is concerned with the sustainable development of its Southern allies.

Considerable diversity exists among Chinese companies operating in our region, even when most are formally state-owned enterprises, recent research has demonstrated. Some are national champions, with considerable access to capital and a stated commitment to the highest standards for corporate social responsibility. Others have little experience outside of China, face difficulties operating in distinct societies, and lack internal policies to mitigate the impacts of their activities. Many do not undertake adequate risk analysis before deciding to invest overseas, resulting in projects that can be stymied by local protest, government bureaucracy or corruption.

Because China's companies are an important part of its global power, state agencies have developed guidelines for their overseas operations, as well as for the banks that finance them. Yet Chinese authorities do not often have the capacity to monitor their firms overseas, or assure compliance with local norms in diverse locations. As my own research in Peru has demonstrated, from Beijing headquarters there may be a tendency to assume that government-to-government agreements, or encouraging words from *el Presidente*, are all that is necessary for a successful

In such cases, Chinese loans have been a curse, not a blessing, facilitating fiscal irresponsibility and reinforcing both their economies' dependency on oil and their rulers' capacity to repress dissent.

investment in Latin America, ignoring other warning signs. Chinese embassy staff themselves may be too new in the region, or too busy with other tasks, to do the kind of monitoring on the ground that their counterparts from the United States, Canada or the United Kingdom are accustomed to doing.

Of course, the most important step in regulating the performance of companies of any origin is the will and capacity of the host governments. In much of Latin America, our environmental, social and labor norms are more stringent than those in China. We have made progress in legislating ILO 169, the right to

prior consultation for indigenous and native peoples, as well as in requiring environmental impact assessments and monitoring firm compliance through environmental ministries or specialized agencies. Most Latin American countries also require foreign investors to contract national workers, respect trade union rights, and share profits in lucrative industries such as mining and oil. Latin American countries have made advances in fiscal and tax transparency, participating in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and other frameworks. Chinese companies, with a few exceptions, are complying with the norms established by Latin American authorities—as long as our government officials insist on it.

And therein lies the catch. As China's interests in Latin America expand from extraction into construction, its banks have increasingly emerged as an alternative source of finance for major infrastructure projects, ones that our governments eagerly pursue in the interests of improving connectivity and economic diversification. Yet this has also promoted investments with high social and environmental risks, including some that other investors did not want to touch, in what some observers fear will involve reversal of hard-won standards. And

the countries with the largest amount of Chinese debt so far—Venezuela, Ecuador—do not have governments inclined to uphold such standards and invest in the long term benefit of their populations. In such cases, Chinese loans have been a curse, not a blessing, facilitating fiscal irresponsibility and reinforcing both their economies' dependency on oil and their rulers' capacity to repress dissent.

Official Chinese foreign policy doctrine includes the principle of Non-Intervention in the domestic affairs of allied countries. Hence China enters into agreement with all types of regimes, including pariah states such as Sudan and Myanmar, as well as the Venezuela of Maduro and Nicaragua of Ortega. But all loans have conditions. As with most investors, the Chinese prefer projects without competitive bidding, or where their firms are the preferred candidates. Their banks seek to finance Chinese companies, with Chinese suppliers and workers. As with other superpowers, Chinese companies are being encouraged by their government to gain global experience and competitiveness, as part of overall state policy that positions that country for the long term.

Given this situation, the role of civil society and the media is crucial. In Latin America we have many non-governmental organizations that defend the rights of vulnerable communities and foment supervision of the extractive and construction activities promoted by governments. Courageous investigative journalists document the efforts of social and environmental activists, and worldwide campaigns are organized against bad practices, creating consciousness and helping to defend truly global standards in these industries.

In Peru, for example, combined action by local farmers and *ronderos*, international human rights and conservation activists, led to the halting of the controversial Rio Blanco copper project, which would create a large open pit mine in a sensitive cloud forest area on the Peru-Ecuador border. In

In Latin America we have many non-governmental organizations that defend the rights of vulnerable communities and foment supervision of the extractive and construction activities promoted by governments.

the Peruvian Amazon, action by human rights lawyers and local courts postponed initiation of a new Hydrovía Amazónica, an unprecedented river-dredging project, in order to undertake a formal process of consultation of indigenous peoples along the route. While the project received an initial green light, indigenous leaders and their allies continue to monitor how the project will affect river flows and adjacent ecosystems. Both projects involve Chinese investors.

The initially popular Nicaragua Canal, a mega-project awarded by the Ortega government to a Chinese billionaire, was grounded after combined action by local peasants, conservationists, the Nicaraguan Academy of Sciences, and international rights organizations including Amnesty International. Indeed, protests around this project were among the triggers of wider discontent with the Ortega administration.

Nowhere has the role of local and transnational civil society been as notable as in Brazil, where natural scientists and economists, indigenous activists, Catholic missionaries and conservation organizations have mobilized concern about their government's ambitions to further open the Amazon with dozens of new dams and hydropower projects. These include a proposal to build 49 major dams on the Tapajos River and its tributaries, which would not only increase power generation but also facilitate the transport of meat and soy for export to China, and hence accelerate the deforestation that has accompanied such activity. Last year these efforts resulted in a temporary suspension of one of the dams by Brazil's environmental agency, and more recently the Temer administration declared that hydropower

policy need to be reevaluated in the face of such concerns.

The Chinese state, its firms and its banks are not immune to these pressures. Grassroots organizations, professionally-staffed NGOs, independent media and other actors not only protest, but also collaborate with democratically elected authorities in order to maintain safeguards that can prevent or mitigate negative impacts. Both civic vigilance and constructive collaboration are essential to resisting pressures to erode hard-won social and environmental protections.

In the years ahead, all of us—academics especially—should increase our efforts to understand our Chinese peers, their institutions and motives. As with all of our foreign relations, we must ensure that these activities not only protect our sovereignty, but also uphold the rights Latin American citizens have struggled to win, improve the quality of life for all of our peoples, and protect the environment for the generations to come.

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Hernan Manrique, a sociologist and research assistant at the Centro de Investigación de la Universidad del Pacífico (CIUP), provided valuable insights for this article based on his own experience in the Amazon.

What Connects Two Worlds Apart?

Trans-Pacific Relations between East Asia and Latin America **By GUO JIE**

FOR MUCH OF MY ACADEMIC career, I'd focused on the faraway lands of Europe. But then, about eight years ago, I acted on an impulse to expand my research horizons to the even farther away lands of Latin America. This move received great support from my home School of International Studies at Peking University. I went through a period of intensive Spanish language training and then read broadly about the region.

My understanding gradually broadened further through communication with colleagues and friends from Latin America. After 2013, I ventured to visit more than twelve countries in the region and with each trip, my curiosity grew stronger.

I began to notice how different Latin America was from Europe. While in Europe diversity is highly concentrated in small spaces, the opposite is true in Latin America, where a strong sense of identity among different groups prevails even when people might seem quite similar to outside observers like me. The staggering income inequality, complex ethnic relations, changing political culture, tortuous economic development, profound social transformations and broken historical processes all left a deep impression on me. Of course, there are also outstanding works in humanities and arts, as well as fascinating geographical formations and changing natural landscapes.

For a scholar from East Asia, exploring Latin America is relatively a rare opportunity given to the physical distance and cultural differences which limit contacts between our two regions. Even when two worlds



The economic trade between Japan and Latin America is the main pillar of its relationship.

are far apart, it seems that innate curiosity always drives inquiries into foreign people and objects—but it is never easy to build mutual, in-depth understanding of each other. Even time and space are working against us; winter and summer, day and night are both diametrical opposites in East Asia and Latin America. While relations between the two regions are growing ever closer, I want to take a retrospective look into that process of getting close to each other from the beginning.

Research indicates that China and Latin America did not have direct interactions in the written history before modern times. The real contact began at the beginning of the 16th century, after Christopher Columbus discovered the New World and Vasco da Gama opened a new route to Asia. At this point, the main transport channel between Europe and China shifted from land to sea. Relations between China and America began to slowly emerge through trade—with Manila as a hub. Later, in the 19th century, and more specifically between 1800 and 1874, a large number of Chinese contract laborers went to Latin America. Hundreds of thousands of these migrants moved to the region during this period,

mostly between 1847 and 1874, the first time large groups of Chinese people arrived there. Four other waves of immigration ensued, with mainly free immigrants arriving on Latin American shores between 1890 and 1930. Another wave followed from 1949 to 1950, mostly made up of either senior Kuomintang officials or of those who sought to

open their own businesses. In the 1960s and 1970s, more migrants came from Hong Kong, Taiwan and South East Asia. The background of new immigrants after late 1970s was relatively diverse, with some choosing to make Latin America their new home, while others were bent on reimmigrating to places such as North America (United States, Canada) and Europe. The largest numbers of overseas Chinese are concentrated in South and Central American countries, such as Peru, Brazil, Ecuador, Venezuela, Panama, Argentina, Costa Rica and Surinam. Most of these migrants are engaged in business, software, manufacturing, construction, the service sector and the resource industry.

While people-to-people exchanges have a long history, the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 is a turning point for official and academic exchanges. Post-1949 China-Latin America relations can be divided into three periods, the first between 1949 and 1970. China's initial interest in Latin America was driven by a shared affiliation with third world liberation movements. After 1959, the situation changed. On January 1, 1959, the Cuban revolution

succeeded; in September, China issued a joint communique with Cuba on the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations, Cuba becoming the first Latin American country to do so with the New China. In the context of the Cold War and the aftermath of the Sino-Soviet split, a struggle for leadership of the international communist movement emerged and China began paying special attention to Latin America.

After the 1970s, more Latin American countries established diplomatic relations with China, prompting a need for greater mutual understanding. Overall, this first period of bilateral relations was shaped by historical (Cold War) and ideological (revolutionary) factors. The second period of official relations was between the 1970s and the late 20th century. In these decades, the international system went through substantial political, economic and social changes. China and Latin America were experiencing reform and development at the same time. Most Chinese scholars focused on resolving practical problems and they paid most attention to Latin America's opening up and economic adjustment, comparing it with China's post-1978 reforms. Other topics that attracted their interest included Latin America's development strategy, paths and models, as well as social justice movements, democratization, political and ideological changes.

The 21st century can be viewed as the third period of China-Latin America relations. Globalization and market forces, somewhat surprisingly, have tightly bound China and Latin America from two different ends of the world. Economic interdependence and cooperation has reached unprecedented levels. China has already become Latin America's most important Asian trading partner, and it is actively promoting the integration of the Belt and Road Initiative and the region's development strategy. In recent years, with the acceleration of China's economic and social transformation, the country has started paying closer attention to case studies from Latin America on issues such as the middle-income trap, urbanization

and inclusive growth. Nowadays, "Latin American Fever" and "China Fever" seem to be on the rise. Any combination of topics related to "China-Latin America"—from trade to politics, society, diplomacy, history and humanities—has not surprisingly become pivotal for both parties as they seek to jointly develop tighter bilateral relations.

Like China, the two other major East Asian economies, Japan and South Korea, are increasingly developing connections to Latin America based on their own historical background and current needs. Japan's first "encounter" with Latin America was triggered by immigration—the flow of people broke geographical barriers. The earliest record of Japanese immigrants arriving in Latin America dates from 1893, when 132 Japanese plantation workers moved from Hawaii to Guatemala to work on coffee and sugar plantations. As Japan confronted a shortage of land for its workers at the time, it began to encourage immigration to Latin America. The first government-supported wave of migrants went to Mexico in 1897. Two years later, Peru received its first batch of Japanese immigrants. In the early 20th century, Japan sent another batch to Brazil, attracted by its coffee boom. Statistics show that nearly 190,000 Japanese migrants came to Brazil between 1908 and 1941. This trend was interrupted during World War II but restarted shortly after and continued until the 1960s when Japan's economy entered a period of rapid growth.

Meanwhile, the economic relationship between Japan and Latin America became the main pillar of their relations. Japan began to import large amounts of energy, minerals, industrial raw materials, as well as cotton, coffee and other agricultural products. This rapid increase of imports was accompanied by direct Japanese investment in Latin America. During the 1960s and 1970s, more than a quarter of Japan's overseas investment went to the region, mainly towards the heavy equipment industry. After the oil crisis broke out in the 1970s,

Japan's investment in Latin America expanded to iron ore, soybeans, copper, petroleum, aluminum, pulp and paper and other exports. Japanese loans were also crucial to its relations with the region. However, the Latin American economy experienced turmoil in the 1980s, and Japan experienced stagnation in the last decade of the 20th century, prompting a decline in both Japanese imports and direct investment. Although Japan and Latin America gradually grew apart economically, a new "encounter" took place at that time. Like the first "encounter," it was also driven by the flow of people, but in the opposite direction. To address increasingly serious labor shortage caused by declining fertility and aging population, the Japanese government amended its immigration laws, allowing overseas-born Japanese to obtain long-term residence permits. Many migrants from Latin America returned to Japan, with the number reaching around 300,000 at its peak.

History shows that Latin America has often provided solutions to Japan's domestic problems. Of course, this relationship is also equally important to Latin America since Japan has played a dual role in providing labor and capital while importing products and natural resources from the region. Japan's economic recovery in recent years and the overall stabilization of economic development in Latin America, as well as its growing importance in global value chains, have contributed to a new strengthening of bilateral economic relations. Japan has become an observer of the Pacific Alliance, a regional trading bloc aiming at forging stronger economic ties with the Asia-Pacific region, and signed Economic Partnership Agreements with three of the Alliance's four member countries (Mexico, Chile and Peru). Nevertheless, as Japan's economic structure has evolved from manufacturing to global supply chain management, its demand for natural resources and imports of large-scale production has substantially decreased; hence, Latin American countries mostly position

themselves as attractive destinations for Japanese investment at present. In Brazil and Mexico, the top two Latin American economies, the amount of direct investment from Japan is much higher than that of China and South Korea.

Compared to China and Japan, South Korea engaged with Latin America rather late. In the early 1960s, because of its limited land and a lack of natural resources, the South Korean government began to encourage immigration to Latin America; the intended purpose of this policy was primarily to target land development on the continent. In 1962, South Korea implemented the overseas emigration law, with the first 103 Korean migrants setting off to Brazil. Many of them were urban middle-class, including businessmen, military officers and doctors. From then until 1968, before the Brazilian government banned agricultural immigrants, four waves of Koreans went to Brazil. Argentina was another destination for agricultural immigrants. In October 1965, 78 Korean immigrants arrived in Buenos Aires. Between 1970 and 1977, about 200 more Korean families moved to Argentina. Many of these migrants aimed to develop land but they were unsuccessful in both Brazil and Argentina. They lacked experience, funds, agricultural knowledge, as well as necessary skills and facilities. Local production conditions were different and the new countries' agricultural policies were unstable. Faced with failure in the countryside, most agricultural migrants then settled in urban areas.

Korean migrants who came to Latin America after the 1980s were mostly investors, mainly concentrated in the fields of retail and wholesale clothing production. At present, about 100,000 Korean migrants live in Latin America, around half of them in Brazil with other relatively large communities in Argentina, Mexico, Guatemala and Paraguay. The overall number of these migrants remains stable, but their mobility within Latin America is high. Such movements are mostly driven by economic or business incentives, but cultural values,

religion, family and social connections are also important factors. In addition to immigration, two other factors have attracted South Korea's attention towards Latin America. The first stemmed from concern about South Korea's domestic politics—many of its scholars researched democratization processes in Latin America. They used the replacement of military regimes with democracies as an insightful point of reference. Until now, South Korea's Latin American scholars demonstrate a high degree of concern exists about issues related to Latin American political development. The second factor relates to the Korean business community; Latin America is both a key exporter of raw materials and a lucrative and rapidly developing export market. Since the 1990s, bilateral trade volumes have grown tremendously. Similar to the trade framework between China and Latin America, South Korea's commerce also primarily involves imports of commodities, including iron ore, energy resources and agricultural products, while exporting manufactured products. Most of its exports are vehicles and auto parts, followed by electrical machinery, mechanical appliances, optical and medical equipment, steel and others. To further facilitate trade and ensure a steady supply of natural resources, South Korea has signed Free Trade Agreements (FTA) with Chile, Peru and Colombia since 2004, and concluded FTA negotiations with six Central American countries (Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Panama and Guatemala) in 2016.

South Korea's direct investment (FDI) in Latin America has increased significantly in the past 30 years, and now accounts for more than one-tenth of its total FDI in the world. Most investment was in the manufacturing and mining industries, with Brazil, Mexico and Peru as the main destinations. At present, electronics is a key area of South Korean investment in Latin America, with Samsung and LG the two major investors. Most recently, direct investment in the automotive industry has also grown rapidly, led

by Hyundai and Kia. South Korea's investment in Brazil is mainly market-seeking. Investments in Mexico are driven by its proximity to the United States, contributing to global value chain cooperation. Unlike with Brazil and Mexico, South Korea's engagement with Peru is mostly focused on energy and mining.

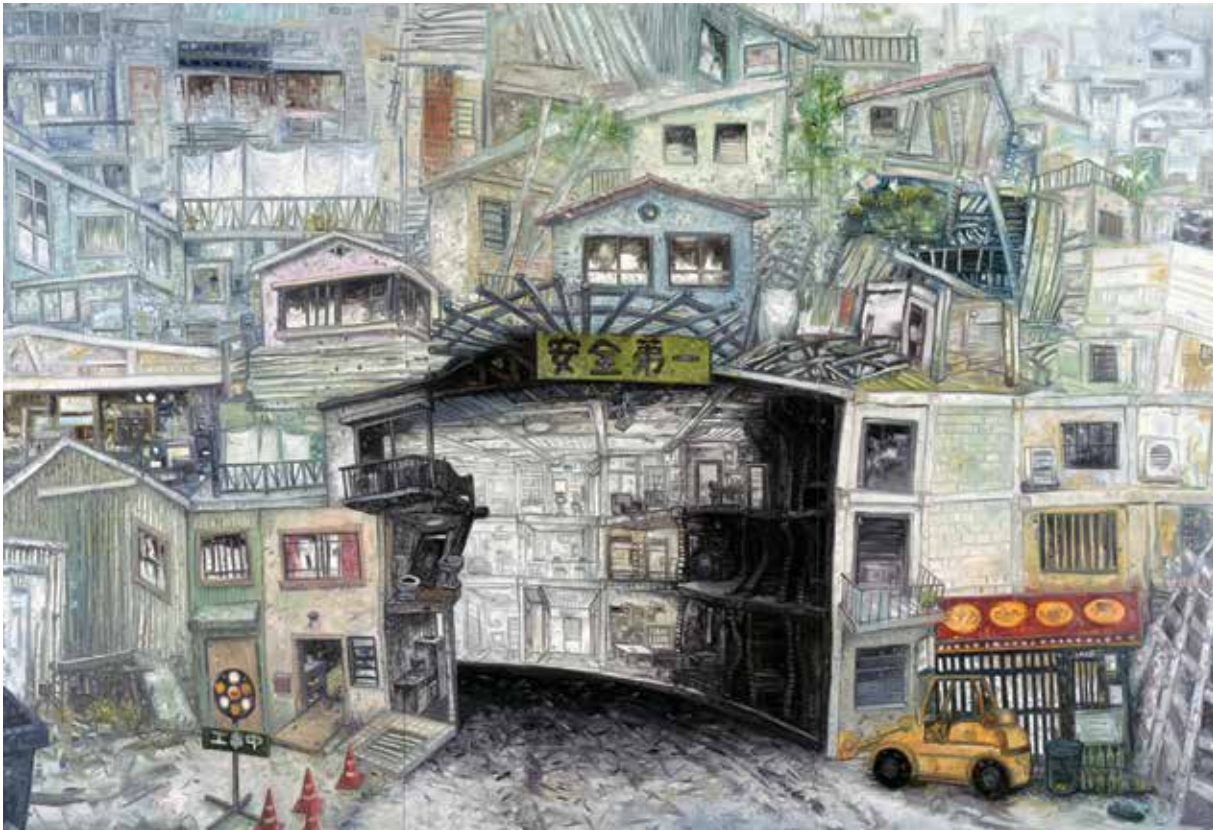
Thus, immigration and economic cooperation have long been two main pillars of East Asian relations with Latin America, and will continue to play an important role in the future. Meanwhile, with continuing globalization and the deepening of mutual exchange, the ties between the two regions will inevitably expand from the flow of people, goods and capital to other areas, influencing politics, culture and historical processes at large. While the Pacific Ocean will always separate East Asia and Latin America, our peoples are growing closer. Former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet once shared a childhood fantasy, stating that if Chileans keep digging down in the ground, they will eventually reach China. For a long time, geography has prompted us to see each other merely as exotic, mythical and magical places. However, reality is sometimes only one step away from magic. East Asia and Latin America are still far away, yet closer than ever before and I believe that there are more wonderful exchanges to come between us in the future.

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THE DIASPORAS



Rosario Hubert [The Migrant Photography of Haruo Ohara](#) • Michael Chu [Growing Up Chinese in Uruguay](#)
Mary Jo McConahay [Japanese Peruvians](#) • Kyeyoung Park [From *Vendedor* to Fashion Designer](#) • Alexandra Chang
[Revisiting *Circles and Circuits*](#) • Millie Creighton [Nikkei Latin America](#) • Regina Matsue and Rafael Shoji [The
Japanese Brazilian Community](#) • Kathleen López [Fried Rice and Plátanos](#) • Aaron Litvin [One Day We Arrived in Japan](#)

The Migrant Photography of Haruo Ohara

An Artist of the Floating World By ROSARIO HUBERT

JAPANESE BEGAN MIGRATING TO BRAZIL 110 years ago, becoming probably the most prosperous minority group in Latin America and certainly the largest Nikkei community in the globe. In 2008, media, academia, art, education—basically every Brazilian cultural outlet—paid homage to the centenary of this immigration with cultural events that have marked an artistic legacy, beyond the economic contributions for which this community is well known.

Among the featured events was the triple exhibition “Japan: Floating Worlds” (Japão: Mundos Flutuantes) at São Paulo’s SESI gallery, which displayed three of the unusual Japan-related collections of Instituto Moreira Salles (IMS). The show included a selection of *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints and paintings from the Edo Period (1603-1868), Haruo Ohara’s mid-century photographs of agricultural settlements in southeast Brazil and engravings by Paulista contemporary artist Madalena Hashimoto. The title of the exhibit derived directly from the translation of *ukiyo-e* (浮世絵) “picture[s] of the floating world,” a phrase that evokes the frivolous and sensual ambience of geishas, kabuki theatre and the red-light districts of Tokyo depicted in these prints so loved by European fin-de-siècle painters.

However, the curators of the show were clearly thinking beyond this conventional meaning when they gathered such diverse artists under this rubric, and pushed the notion of “floating” from “superficial” to “movable,” “continually drifting or changing position,” and “unstable.” The art forms in question were in fact three iterations of displaced Japanese art, either in the form of an orientalist aesthetic in vogue in the West (Japonism); the work of a photographer transplanted to South

America, and the Brazilian intervention of a Nipponese printmaking tradition. In order to commemorate those people who left Japan a hundred years before, the cultural center decided to honor how their art also migrated and flourished in Brazil.

This was Haruo Ohara’s (1909-1999) major solo exhibition. Arriving in Brazil in 1927, he recorded with striking poetry the lives of a pioneering generation of migrants in the developing south. His black and white prints reveal coffee laborers at work, the changing productive landscape, family portraits, still lives and abstractions in the Japanese colonies in the state of Parana. Although he always remained a farmer, Ohara developed a hobby for photography thanks to the Foto Club Bandeirante of São Paulo and the rich influx of specialized publications imported from the archipelago. The masterful use of light, meticulous geometry and poignant humanistic gaze of his images reveal the extraordinary genius of an amateur artist silently in dialogue with modern photography. His personal archive, donated also in 2008 to IMS, is considered to be one of the most valuable—though scarcely studied—photographic collections in Brazil.

HARUO OHARA BACK IN JAPAN

I was fortunate to view these photographs in the outskirts of Osaka in June 2016. Together with a Japanese language catalogue and a substantial marketing campaign, IMS reproduced “Haruo Ohara: Fotografias” in a yearlong itinerant exhibition in an almost identical format to the 2008 one. However, when displayed in the antipodes these images that have become icons of Japanese diaspora in Brazil were suddenly stripped of their commemorative tone. Almost a

decade later and in a new setting, they posed way more intricate questions about mobility, migration and displacement in the present. Were these photographs actually coming back home, as many critics wittingly observed because one of the venues was Ohara’s hometown, Kochi? Did the exhibition, subtitled now as “Light of Brazil, Scenes of Family,” indeed suggest new forms of nation building in the Americas? Were these photographs about Brazil and Japan or rather about global labor migrations in general?

In order to explore further connotations of the term “floating,” a concept from the social sciences offers new insights into the migrant photography of Haruo Ohara. Seen from Japan, these photographs speak of “floating populations,” that is, groups of people who reside in a given community for a certain amount of time and for various reasons but are not generally considered part of the official census count. In this view, the sitters no longer appear as settlers, but as passersby. Migration, the photographs now seemed to suggest, is not a one-time event but a continuous buoyant state.

PASTORAL DREAMS AND TRAVEL BANS

Haruo Ohara’s photographs suggest smooth assimilation. We see agrarian tools, farmers at work and rest, family gatherings and children at play. The wild Atlantic forest in the background slowly mutates into rectilinear labyrinths of coffee trees and exotic flora: cherries, plums, persimmons and pears as well as orchids, lotus, chrysanthemums and wisteria color the black and white prints with their novel textures and shapes. This is a lush land cultivated by amicable settlers closely in touch with their native culture: kids study



Kid with jackfruit c.1950/Chácara Arara, Londrina - PR (IMS). Criança com jaca, c.1950/Chácara Arara, Londrina - PR

kanji, teens perform kabuki and adults play the shamisen. It is a detached space of harmony, fertility and abundance that conveys the bucolic bliss of pastoral scenes.

As I strolled through the Itami Museum galleries wallpapered in kana scripts, the Portuguese captions beside the frames became my only curatorial guides. Suddenly the dates and locations in the cutlines glared and cast a whole new light on these photographs. The majority of these pastoral scenes are set in the Ohara family farm, Chácara Arara, during the 1940s. A family portrait dated in 1949 tells us through the caption that

These pictures are more poetical than documentary because they do not simply register the immigrant's assimilation process but rather unfold his desire to inhabit a new land.

the Arara farm would be expropriated to give way to the construction of the

Londrina airport runway, and after 1952 pastoral scenes are set in the properties of the Sanada, Tomita and other neighbors. Like most Japanese nationals, the Oharas were subject to Getúlio Vargas' policies of containment of "enemy alien" populations during the war years. Suspected of being Axis spies, immigrants had their assets frozen, their travel was regulated and they were not allowed to display their foreign culture. The Oharas were bought out of their property in Colônia Ikku and had to relocate to the city of Londrina, giving up the land they had acquired and nurtured with a lifetime effort. It is striking thus



HARUO OHARA IN JAPAN

With the goal of bringing his work to the Japanese audience, Instituto Moreira Salles' exhibition "Photographer Haruo Ohara - Light of Brazil, Scenes of a Family" was on view at the Kochi Prefectural Art Museum, Itami City Museum of Art and Kiyosato Museum of Photographic Arts from April to December 2016. The exhibit showed almost 400 works; among them objects, documents, tools, albums, videos and original prints as well as a Japanese language catalogue. An abridged version of the collection was in view at the Photo History Museum at Fujifilm Square in Tokyo from October to December 2017 and at the Kobe Center of Overseas Migration and Cultural Interaction from February 17 until May 6, 2018.

that this series of photographs date from the most xenophobic period of Japanese life in Brazil but all they convey is an illusion of a tropical Arcadia untouched by its stormy surroundings.

Perhaps because I write this amidst a political climate where phrases such as "travel ban," "deportation" or "threat to national security" have become so commonplace that I cannot help thinking of this dark episode in global migrations when I read the critical dates of these peaceful pictures. In fact, it was the Immigration Act of 1924 which banned the entry of Japanese nationals to the United States, that diverted emigrant vessels south and made the figures soar: while Japanese arrivals at the port of Santos were 11,350 between 1921 and 1925, they escalated to 59,564 between 1926 and 1930, and peaked at 72,661 between 1931 and 1935. But fears of the "yellow peril" spread south too: Brazil capped Japanese entries in 1934 and suspended them altogether from 1942 to 1951. Even if this was a reciprocal state-sponsored scheme between an Asian nation with excessive labor force and a South American one in want of it, migration waves fluctuated within and beyond borders for a long time.

But perhaps what renders the artistic brilliance of Haruo Ohara's pastoral scenes is the capacity of photography to displace images out of their original context. As an accomplished community leader, Ohara

was well aware of the ongoing tensions between his people and the Estado Novo, the "New State" or Vargas era. Therefore, he made a deliberate choice to step away from the immediate present and reshape it in his craft. These pictures are more poetical than documentary because they do not simply register the immigrant's assimilation process but rather unfold his desire to inhabit a new land. The pastoral, understood here as a rhetoric of rural migration, is a testimony of the power of art to stay afloat in turbulent times.

MODEL NIKKEIJINS

While children occupy a preeminent role in this collection, the Japanese exhibition had them as its true protagonists. Whimsical kids swarm through the prints: whether posing or captured spontaneously, they run in flocks, camouflage in tree branches and plunge into heaps of fruit. Fertility works here as a trope of the land as well as the people. When displayed in one of the most rapidly aging countries of the world, these images of fecundity gain new overtones.

To address the increased labor shortages of its demographic dilemma, the Japanese government has slowly turned to immigration, albeit in very small numbers and largely without public debate. In a society that retains a strong perception of ethnic and cultural homogeneity, immigration remains resoundingly unpopular. To work

around this, in June 1990, the Japanese government introduced new legal category for *Nikkeijin Nikkeijin* (日系人) to refer to overseas Japanese emigrants and their descendants. It provided a long-term resident visa status with few restrictions on their economic activities. As a result, a large number of Nikkeijin from Latin American countries entered Japan to work as unskilled, temporary workers. More than 310,000 Brazilian Nikkeijin and their families currently reside in Japan, constituting one of largest group of foreign citizens (after Korean, Chinese and Filipinos).

Yet, smooth integration is far from a promise. Derogatively labeled *dekasegi* (出稼ぎ) which roughly translates as "working away from home," Brazilian Nikkeijins are subject to discrimination for their difficulty with the language and their Latin ways. Some locals scorn them as the descendants of social dropouts who emigrated because they were giving up on Japanese society, whereas others perceive them more as objects of pity because they were forced into emigrating by unfortunate circumstances beyond their control.

So, how do Haruo Ohara's pastoral scenes play against this backdrop? The dates speak again. Because the Parana photographs date mainly from the 1940s, they portray the end of a phase where immigrants were based in very "Japanese" cultural enclaves that guaranteed a



Clockwise: Haruo's friend Suminozo's daughter, 1949/Londrina-PR; Filha de Sumizono, amigo de Haruo, 1949/Londrina-PR; Haruo Ohara at the exhibit.

smooth return to Japan after the war. The surrender changed homecoming plans, and along the postwar wave of urban migration, many of them resettled in cities like Londrina, Curitiba or São Paulo. Like other immigrant groups, subsequent generations married out of the community, educated bilingual children and blended in the local scene. However, probably

more than any other group, Japanese-Brazilians distinguished themselves for their professional achievements and educational levels.

How ironic is it then that what have become model immigrants in the Americas are now perceived as second-class citizens in their ethnic homelands? To what extent “Haruo Ohara’s: Fotografias” works as a

reminder to the adamant Japanese public opinion of the cultural continuity between Nikkeijin and Japanese nationals? By no means I imply that this exhibit is a pedagogical maneuver of cultural diplomacy, where governments invest in art to harness popular perceptions (the Brazilian Embassy did assist with the sponsorship of the exhibitions,



Clockwise: Self-Portrait: A Pause for Lunch, Kô and Haruo, c.1940/Chácara Arara, Londrina-PR (IMS). Autorretrato-Pausa para o almoço, Kô e Haruo, c.1940/Chácara Arara, Londrina-PR.

Going to harvest coffee in the morning, 1940/Chácara Arara-PR (IMS).De manhã, indo a colher café, 1940/Chácara Arara-PR.

Site of Hitoshi Sanada, 1955/Londrina-PR (IMS) .Sítio de Hitoshi Sanada, 1955/Londrina-PR

Opposite page: Children at Chácara Arara, C. 1950/Londrina-PR (IMS).Criançasna Chácara Arara, C. 1950/Londrina-PR

Rather, I would like to stress how vehemently a change of locale can emancipate a work of art from its original sphere of interpretation and grant it with a whole new set of meanings from the new context.

although I would have to do further research to argue for a larger claim of state intervention). Rather, I would like to stress how vehemently a change of locale can emancipate a work of art from its original sphere of interpretation and grant it with a whole new set of meanings from the new context. Unlike the artist in Kazuo Ishiguro's novel who had given up *ukiyo-e* painting for propaganda art and was thus trapped between generations of Japanese who found his work utterly opaque when detached from its original space of enunciation, Haruo Ohara's work gains density as it floats between latitudes and epochs.

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Growing up Chinese in Uruguay By MICHAEL CHU

WHEN THE DUTCH LINER *S.S. BOISSEVAN* DOCKED in the port of Montevideo in March 1953, it brought my family all the way from Hong Kong to settle in Uruguay. There were eight of us, my father and mother, her sister and my maternal grandmother, and my siblings Anna (11), Alejandro (9), Lina (almost 8) and I, three months short of my fifth birthday. Four other Chinese families had also made the journey with us and as we disembarked, we may well have established the single-day record

We ended up with immigration visas from Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay. My father's bank arranged for the local manager of Pan American Airways (then the premier world airline) to come home to show us promotional films of all three countries.

for Chinese immigration to Uruguay, as I don't think the Chinese community, then or later, ever exceeded 300, counting men, women and children.

Amidst three million Uruguayans, that made us a minority of 0.01%. All of us there that day were in one way or another a consequence of the victory of the Communists in China four years earlier. The heads of our families had been in business or professionals or held public office (or all three, as in the case of my father) and were part of an educated, sophisticated urban class that, in addition to their local dialect, were fluent in Mandarin. We were the second wave



Anna, Alejandro, Michael and Lina (from left to right) with their parents in front of their home in Pocitos, Montevideo.

of Chinese, preceded decades earlier by economic migrants in search of a better life. Like in the United States, they came from Guangdong province, spoke Cantonese and established Chinese restaurants and laundries.

In China, my father was a textile engineer and entrepreneur who went to Yunnan province, where my siblings and I were born, to establish a brand new

world-class textile mill. During the war with Japan, it was the only modern textile mill outside of enemy hands. When the war concluded, my father was elected to represent the province in the National Assembly. Nominally, he belonged to the Kuomintang, the party of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, but in the National Assembly, my father was very involved in the efforts to curtail his dictatorial

powers. With the civil war against the Communists raging, my father also helped found a social-democratic alternative led by university professors and intellectuals that was ruthlessly eliminated by Chiang's secret police. My father ended up being arrested and tortured. With my mother working tirelessly behind the scenes and with the help of my father's closest friends, an escape right out of Hollywood was engineered and my family landed in Hong Kong.

With the Communists victorious and the retreat of Chiang to Taiwan, the National Assembly was "temporarily" relocated to the island. As if his detention had never happened, my father was invited to move to Taiwan to once again occupy his seat as the last elected representative of Yunnan province "until elections could be held once again." My father had no intention of being part of this charade. At the same time, the new Communist government, hungry for professionals with technical expertise, was also inviting my father to return. But he felt China was on a path that ultimately would not be to his liking. This left my parents in a conundrum: neither my father nor my mother wanted to raise us in a British Crown Colony.

The natural default was the United States, where so many Chinese went after the "fall of China." The U.S. consulate in Hong Kong granted visas to the immediate family but balked at including my grandmother and aunt. My parents were not about to leave them behind and so the possibility of Latin America arose. For my parents, it must have been as far away as they could imagine from war and China. We ended up with immigration visas from Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay. My father's bank arranged for the local manager of Pan American Airways (then the premier world airline) to come home to show us promotional films of all three countries. Brazil was still under Getúlio Vargas, who had been a dictator and was in the midst of an embattled presidency. Argentina was ruled by strong man Perón. And then, in the flickering black and white images on the screen in our living

room, my parents saw the Switzerland of the Americas: a wealthy country with a thriving middle class, a clean and orderly modern city by the sea, with well-fed, well-dressed people, schools, hospitals and universities, endless grasslands



Author Michael Chu as he entered Dartmouth College.

The kindness of my friend came naturally, without a trace of self-consciousness, and his openness and warmth were characteristic of the general reception my family got in Uruguay.

stocked with sheep and cattle, flush with gold reserves from wool and beef exports during World War II and now the Korean War, and a fresh World Cup, its second, won in a final against host Brazil in Rio's Maracanã Stadium.

Arriving in late summer, I remember our first days in Montevideo as full of sunshine and open air. Coming from Hong Kong, where food supply was still basic and milk was stretched with water, my siblings and I couldn't believe how

good everything tasted. Every morning we would rush to the breakfast table, help ourselves to slices of freshly-baked, sparkling-white bread on which we laid thick slabs of butter as if it were cheese and washed everything down with huge cups of *café con leche*.

Naturally, school was a priority, but our Spanish was fairly non-existent. My sister Anna and my aunt Theresa (close in age), who had learned some English in Hong Kong, were admitted into The British School and the younger children into the *Deutsche Schule*. My mother informed the German headmaster with trepidation, "I'm afraid my children speak no Spanish." "My dear lady," he replied. "Why should that be a problem? What is a school for if not to teach?" The school had two shifts, one in the morning and another in the afternoon, where the same lessons were taught to a different set of students. With great insight, the headmaster had us attending both shifts.

When you acquire a language in your childhood, it becomes so natural that it's difficult to remember that you actually had to learn it. I have no memory of becoming fluent in Spanish but I do recall that when we moved into our first home in Montevideo, a boy who lived a block away and was three or four years older would drop by after school and we would walk around the neighborhood. We couldn't really talk to each other, so I would point to an object and he would say its name in Spanish, and I would repeat it, and we would do this through all our walk. I thought this was great fun and he must have too, as he did this daily until one day we were chatting.

The kindness of my friend came naturally, without a trace of self-consciousness, and his openness and warmth were characteristic of the general reception my family got in Uruguay. Looking back, and especially today when immigrants spark such a mixed response in the United States, I've wondered what made possible our easy acceptance by the Uruguayans.

One important reason, I think, was that we arrived at the tail-end of the

golden age of Uruguay. In the early years of the 20th century, led by a remarkable and visionary president, José Battle y Ordoñez, Uruguay became the first welfare nation in the world, with many of the characteristics that we associate today with Scandinavia. Battle y Ordoñez expressly defined the role of the state as safeguarding the welfare of the people. By 1915, ahead of the United States, Uruguay had established an eight-hour workday, a minimum wage for agricultural workers, one day of rest a week, workmen's compensation in the event of job injury and retirement pensions. Education was made compulsory, free and secular. There was a free health system, with the government actively seeking to enroll the less affluent. Divorce was legalized in 1907 and in 1913, women could demand it on their own. The 1917 constitution enshrined the separation of church and state and established proportional representation and secret balloting. Women suffrage became law in 1932, 12 years before France and 39 years ahead of Switzerland.

Behind all this was the wealth generated by a country that was world-class in the production of items in high demand around the globe which at that time included wool and beef, during a period of great freedom of trade. With sheep and cattle ranching requiring few hands and a population that was only slowly inching towards three million, in a country five times the size of the Netherlands and 80% larger than South Korea, in 1930 the GDP per capita of Uruguay (\$4,301) was ahead of the average GDP per capita (\$4,297) of the twelve leading European economies. Then the Great Depression, with its cycles of retaliatory protectionism, led to a precipitous shrinking of global



Michael Chu's father and mother on the SS.Boissevan en route to Montevideo (1953)

trade. Like other nations, Uruguay was deeply impacted. But two factors allowed Uruguay to recover and to keep its prosperity going into the 1950s. The first was World War II (and later the Korean War), which once again demanded wool and beef. The second was a national policy of import substitution that gave rise to an industrial sector.

When we arrived, Uruguayans had the open and cheerful disposition of people who for decades could take for granted peace and universal access to all the basics of life and civilization. For sure, there were wealthy Uruguayans but, in terms of the daily necessities, the difference between them and their fellow citizens was one of sophistication rather than need. Accordingly, Uruguayan society in the 1950s was characterized by high social capital, where citizens felt equal regardless of income, education

was universal, discourse was eminently courteous, passion and animosity were confined to the football stadium and crime was petty and low. In an environment with plenty for all, the natural response was to welcome newcomers. Indeed, Uruguay's population was shaped by large waves of immigration.

First came the Spaniards in the days of conquest who, unlike in Peru and Mexico, encountered primitive nomadic warrior tribes and ended exterminating or pushing them into neighboring countries. In the late 1700s and early 1800s, African slaves were introduced but, ranching never needing the extensive labor demanded by plantations, their numbers were small. In the latter half of the 19th century, modern Uruguay was defined by large numbers of Spanish and later Italian immigrants, together with a smaller but influential contingent from Great Britain.

This made Uruguayan society white, as white as any European nation in the 1950s. Accordingly, what made the Chinese stand out in Uruguay was not that we were immigrants, but that we were Asian. For much of our childhood, my siblings and I were often the first Orientals Uruguayans had seen. Occasionally, people would stop us just to wonder. Once, on the principal downtown avenue of Montevideo, my brother and I were asked if we were twins, despite our five years difference. I of course replied, "Yes!"

At school, when we first arrived, kids in the playground would come up to us and stretch the corner of their eyes upwards and say "chinito, chinito," (the diminutive of "chino" or Chinese.) My brother would get angry but I would laugh and push the corners of my eyes towards my nose and say "uruguayito, uruguayito." Instead of spiteful or bullying, I remember these incidents as quite innocent. Perhaps an

ornithologist would have seen little chicks prancing about marking territory.

In fact, being Chinese and a minority of 0.01% proved to be quite a social advantage. It rendered my siblings and I into rare commodities and, in those pre-internet days where the world was not just a click away, our classmates (and their families) were quite intrigued with us. When we made our entrance into our schools, we were, in today's terms, "cool." Kids approached us to talk, they asked us for playdates, they invited us to their birthday parties. This gave us the opportunity to interact and the space for relationships to form so that by the time our novelty wore off, we had established real relationships. Growing up, my siblings and I never lacked friends and we still remain in touch with many of them to this day.

When she was about twelve, influenced by her friends, my sister Lina announced she wanted to become a Catholic. While my father never showed any religious leanings, my mother was a fervent Buddhist. Yet, since Buddhism was not a monotheistic religion, my mother was very supportive, telling Lina that all religions led to God. My brand new Catholic sister then worked on me to take catechesis lessons at the same convent that had taught her, feasible because nuns could teach boys as long as they wore short pants and at 10 years old, I still did, the cross-over taking place around 12.

After a few months, I too decided to be baptized, again with the blessing of my Buddhist mother. This gave me the opportunity to pick my own godparents. By that time, the British School had decided that I too could have the privilege of being their student and I became great friends with one of my classmates. After school we would play together for hours. To this day, he is one of my closest friends. Spending so much time together, I also got to know his parents well. His mother was always ready to do fun things. She once took us to a live concert of The Platters, on tour in Montevideo, and there could not have been many things cooler for a pair of kids in short pants than listening live to "Only You" and "My Prayer." A few years later, when we were still too young



Michael Chu (second row, fifth from left) at the The British School, in Preparatory (pre-First Grade).

It rendered my siblings and I into rare commodities and, in those pre-internet days where the world was not just a click away, our classmates (and their families) were quite intrigued with us.

to drive, she took us around in her little Morris Minor pick-up during Carnival, with the back loaded with friends and a pail full of water balloons, to wreak havoc in the streets of Punta del Este, the seaside resort. His father was an elegant man, with silver hair, a glint in his eye and a ready wit. But what I thought was absolutely magical was how they were together. In the evenings, they would always have a cocktail, I never heard them say anything harsh to each other, and on some special occasions, he would play the guitar or the accordion and she would sing tangos. Who could wish for more wonderful godparents? I was baptized with them beside me, followed by a Chinese banquet at home.

My godfather was an *estanciero*, or rancher, with an *estancia* that seemed impossibly far from Montevideo. On school vacations, my good friend and I would spend time there. In the mornings,

we would be woken up with glasses of milk straight from the cows. Then, we would ride out with my godfather and his foreman as they inspected the livestock and the pastures, with a couple of dogs running by our horses. As we grew older, from time to time we would help in the work. A favorite was driving herd, when cattle had to be taken to a pen to be inoculated, or collected by trucks to take to market. At midday, we would return to the houses and have lunch, followed by a siesta. Then, the afternoon was ours. Sometimes we would ride out again and race each other, or if there were sheep in the corrals, we might pretend we were at a rodeo and attempt to ride them, or we would kick a ball on the lawn outside the main house. At other times we would go out with shotguns to hunt partridges to bring to the cook. Electricity came from a generator by the side of a large shed next to the ranch house, the radio provided

the latest commodity prices and relayed messages (“This is Rosa, I’m arriving on the ten o’clock bus,” “Uncle Pedro’s operation went well,” “Martín says the fencing wire is coming on Wednesday”). There was no television reception. After dinner, we would chat and read.

I realize now that for the ranch hands I must have cut an exotic figure, but like cowboys in the West they are by nature reserved and laconic, and never asked me about China or why I was in Uruguay, and treated me no different than any other friend of the owner’s son. I like to think that they noticed and appreciated how I took to life in the ranch from the very first day they taught me to ride by sitting me on the saddle, telling me to pull the reins in the direction I wanted to go, towards me when I wanted to stop and then gave a smack on the rump of my horse to initiate my riding career. Decades later when I lived in Manhattan and rode every week in Central Park, out of curiosity I decided to take English riding lessons. The instructor told me to go around the ring at various speeds so she could observe me. When I stopped, she said, “You do everything wrong, but you’re so comfortable on a horse that you compensate for it all the time.”

Those days in the *estancia* instilled in me a deep appreciation for the beauty and serenity of the Uruguayan countryside. The grasslands are flat, with a gentle roll, and in those days before the emergence of a vigorous forestry industry, trees were only solitary lines next to streams or water holes. The naturalist W.H. Hudson, writing in 1885, called it *The Purple Land*. With no mountains anywhere, looking around me, my gaze travelled free all the way to the distant horizon. You can ride all day and, unless you purposefully head to a house in the distance, you may literally not cross paths with anybody. Once outside the ring around Montevideo, traffic is so light that still today people by the side of the highway will wave at passing cars.

There was another great advantage to being a minority of 0.01%. If we had emigrated to the United States, I suspect it would have been hard for a Chinese boy to escape the stereotypes set by both society

at large and the Chinese community itself. Not surprisingly, the two converged in many respects. Especially if we had ended up in the East Coast, Chinese seemed destined to make their living either in a restaurant or a laundry or being a doctor or an engineer. But in Uruguay, nothing

Indeed, the proudest sporting achievement of my life was, upon returning from college in the States, to play for Old Boys, the club of the British School alumni, and win Uruguay’s First Division Rugby championship with an undefeated record.

indicated that I should aim for MIT or CalTech, or that my extracurricular life should be indoors and cerebral. Attending a British school that was modeled after England’s public (i.e. private) schools and which supplemented local teachers with staff from the United Kingdom, in a country which regularly surprises the world with its football (soccer) prowess, our girls played field hockey and the boys played rugby. I loved it from the start and from the age of ten became a stalwart on the school teams. When we became old enough to play against our counterpart British schools in Buenos Aires, I had the privilege of being the captain of our team, to the surprise (as I later found out) of our Argentine hosts. I went on to form part of the school’s First XV. Indeed, the proudest sporting achievement of my life was, upon returning from college in the States, to play for Old Boys, the club of the British Schools alumni, and win Uruguay’s First Division Rugby championship with an undefeated record.

Fortunately, I was also good at schoolwork and that combination must

have contributed to being appointed a prefect, and later, Head Boy of the school. Just like English public schools, the discipline of the school was run by students appointed to the role (prefects), led by a Head Boy and a Head Girl. Prefects made sure nobody ran or pushed or otherwise made a nuisance of themselves in the corridors (or anywhere else), enforced the obligatory use of English everywhere other than in classes conducted in Spanish, checked that everybody came in the prescribed uniform (down to the color of socks), and off-campus made sure that those wearing the uniform lived up to the school’s standards (including giving seats up to women and the elderly in public transportation.) To signal their rank, prefects wore different uniforms and, like teachers, had their own leisure room; to enforce their authority, there was a punishment room to where miscreants were sent during breaks and lunchtime.

At around the age of twelve, social life started to involve the opposite sex and that began a cycle of weekend parties for the next several years where we took to the dance floor and, as we became older, the lights grew dimmer and relationships became more serious. Luckily, I was one of the party regulars but I recall it was then that I became most aware of being different. It was difficult enough under normal circumstances to gather the courage to ask popular girls to dance with you or go out on a date; having to worry about race just seemed more daunting than an imperfect nose or bad hair. Yet most of it was in my head since I don’t recall one instance where any girl said anything remotely racist. In retrospect, I don’t think I fared worse than the average boy in school, and perhaps better, since I remember my girl friends as being really nice, fun and interesting, and those on pedestals too high to reach (i.e., older) always remained friends and one, in due course, even married me.

While school life and partying were far removed from my origins, China was very present at home. My parents spoke Chinese, virtually every meal was Chinese and we all learned to appreciate Chinese



Michael Chu (first row, fourth from left) with the school rugby team that went to Buenos Aires.

ingredients and delicacies that became available only when some ship like the one that brought us would make a stop in Montevideo. Our living room had the dark wooden Chinese furniture, the delicate porcelain vases and the carved ivories that had come with us on the *Boissevan*. When we got sick as children, the one bright spot was our father coming to sit on our bed to read us the adventures of the Monkey King, with his buddies Piggy and Sandy, escorting the Buddhist monk Tang Sanzang and the holy scriptures on the *Journey to the West*, a 16th century masterpiece; or the tales of the 108 outlaw rascals of the brotherhood of the marshes who would end up pardoned and saving the empire in another great Chinese classic, *The Water Margin*.

In timeless immigrant fashion, our mother reminded us that we had to work

harder and persevere more; with parents unable to speak the language, we had to make it on our own. She also told us that in life you could lose everything (we were a case in point!) except one thing: your education. It must have sunk in. My brother Alejandro was the only teenager insane enough in the whole of Uruguay to attend the *Deutsche Schule* in the morning and then rush to a vocational school in the afternoon to learn to operate lathes, draft technical drawings and fix engines, followed by getting up before dawn to do his school homework. He did this every single weekday, and eventually ended up at MIT. My sister Lina in her spare time from the *Deutsche Schule* became a master seamstress, with the largest diploma I have ever seen. My eldest sister Anna left for college in the States at age fifteen, as did I.

Yet our mother was no tiger mom,

whip in hand and doling affection based on performance (she was saving that for her children-in-law.) As we were growing up, she wielded an even more effective weapon: unconditional love and limitless faith in us. Being her children, of course we could do anything we set our minds to, but if along the way we failed, she was absolutely certain we had done our very best. In this way, she ended instilling in us the self-confidence that allowed us to aim as high as our imagination could take us together with the natural presumption that we would give it our all. In fact, none of us remember our parents ever asking us if we had done our homework, let alone forcing us to study. Indeed, I realize now how unconventional our parents were, by both Asian and Western standards. We never got pocket money; instead, we were shown the drawer where money was kept



At a party in Punta del Este, summer 1970.

and told we should just take whatever we needed. As a result, we thought about every expenditure. At twelve, I got the key to the house, with the implicit trust that I would know when to come and go, and who to let in. Did they read it in some ancient Chinese parenting manual or did they just bump into the realization that nobody has a stricter taskmaster than oneself?

My parents' closest friends in Uruguay were drawn from both waves of the Chinese diaspora. On one hand were the Baos and the Lins, people like us that had been successful in business and displaced by the Communist victory. On weekends, the grown-ups got together for mahjong marathons and big Chinese dinners. That provided ample time for the children to entertain ourselves with only the minimum of adult supervision, ensuring that we had a great time. While our parents spoke in Chinese, we spoke to each other in Spanish and our interests, our banter and our humor were identical to those of our Uruguayan friends. But when we were together, we had something in common so obvious that it didn't have to be acknowledged and we certainly never dwelt on it, but that was invaluable because it was so rare: we were with the only peers who knew exactly what it was like to be growing up Chinese in Uruguay. Being a 0.01% minority meant that it wasn't only Uruguayans that had a hard time bumping into Chinese people. For many years after I went to the States, whenever I met somebody Chinese, even in the most casual of settings, I assumed we would feel a special connection and was

quite confused when that didn't occur.

Usually, the social interactions between the later wave of Chinese and the earlier Cantonese economic migrants were superficial, taking place at gatherings sponsored by the Chinese Association on important Chinese national holidays and festivals. In addition to class, there was also the language

barrier, many of the more recent Chinese coming from Shanghai and speaking no Cantonese, and the Cantonese speaking no Shanghainese or much Mandarin, the official *lingua franca* of the state, commerce and the educated. But, having lived a few years in Hong Kong, my parents did speak Cantonese and they felt a special appreciation for the openness and straightforward kindness of the earlier immigrants. My parents were still young, in their thirties and forties, and they became very friendly with a set of second generation Cantonese just ten years or so younger than they. These young men would come home on their days off and play card games that would often include us and that were full of banter and laughter. Sometimes, as a treat, they would take my siblings and I to the movie theaters downtown to see the latest films.

Our Cantonese friends had a huge restaurant on the main avenue of Montevideo that served the best Chinese food in Uruguay for lunch or dinner, but you could also order great Uruguayan cuisine, from steak to veal Milanese, tongue in vinaigrette, Spanish omelette or pasta. In between lunch and dinner, the restaurant served afternoon tea, a custom introduced by the English and readily adopted by the Uruguayans, complete with multi-level trays filled with finger sandwiches and cakes and pastries. On many afternoons during school break and weekends, my siblings and I would go to the restaurant and were allowed to "help" and to explore every nook and cranny of the cavernous place. I think we were good

for business because patrons found us very cute behind cash registers or at the bar mixing drinks. During Carnival, the parade of swaying dancers, drummers and floats would snake down the main avenue at night and we were allowed to go to the roof balcony of the restaurant for a front-row view. As the music and the beat of the drums floated up, we rained down confetti (and sometimes naughtier things) on the sidewalks filled with costumed children and their parents.

And so transpired my childhood and adolescence until the time came to go off to university. My choice was Dartmouth College, and a few months later, with my

In retrospect, I don't think I fared worse than the average boy in school, and perhaps better, since I remember my girl friends as being really nice, fun and interesting, and those on pedestals too high to reach (i.e., older) always remained friends and one, in due course, even married me.

family and my friends waving and wishing me well, I boarded the airplane at Carrasco Airport and soon the green countryside and my childhood receded in the distance. No longer a Chinese boy growing up in Uruguay, I was now a Chinese Uruguayan heading towards my future.

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Japanese Peruvians

The Hostages Among Us By MARY JO MCCONAHAY



Japanese custodied by Panama serve up food to their fellow citizens at Canal Zone quarantine station where they are presently under detention, Dec. 13, 1941. Crystal City tags, below.

LIKE MANY AMERICANS, I KNEW THAT 120,000 ethnic Japanese had been held in U.S. concentration camps during World War II. But I had no idea about a secret program that had kidnapped thousands of ethnic Japanese in Latin America and delivered them to concentration camps in the States with the help of compliant Latin American governments.

I discovered this startling historical episode while researching for a book on World War II in Latin America and decided to track down people who might have been affected by the secret program. I got an unexpected lesson in how history can live literally around the corner.

“Yes, I live two blocks away from you,” said Kazumu Naganuma, a seventy-six-year-old graphic designer and active soccer coach. On the afternoon of our first interview in 2016, Naganuma and two of his brothers, all Peruvian-born, walked over to my house in San Francisco. For



hours they recounted their childhoods and described how their father and an older brother escaped to mountains outside Lima when detectives came to their house in Callao, Lima’s port city. By then, in early 1944, everyone in the Peruvian Japanese community knew what might be in store for them when strange men appeared at the door. Eventually the Naganumas’ father, Iwaichi, surrendered, and the whole family, mother (Isoka), father and seven children were taken off

to the United States.

The Naganuma brothers, baptized Catholics as Jose Antonio, Jorge Carlos and Julio Cesar, and their parents, in Peru called Luis and Maria, had been part of a vibrant Japanese Peruvian community of 30,000 persons. Kazuharu Naganuma (the brothers prefer to use their Japanese names now) joyfully remembered a big yard at their house with an attached commercial laundry, “all hand wash, with big paddles and metal tanks and clothes and sheets hanging outside and a sewing room to make repairs.” They spoke Spanish. Another brother, Kazushige, remembered how his older sisters once treated him to an animated movie that made fun of Japanese, featuring a General Tojo-like figure wearing big black-rimmed glasses, “with buck teeth” and other stereotypical features (perhaps *You’re a Sap, Mr. Jap*, from Paramount). “I went home and talked about it, but I wasn’t offended,” Kazushige said. “I was thinking of it as a Peruvian kid.”

There were many more Peruvian kids like him. It did not matter if the Latin American residents were native-born or naturalized citizens of the countries from which they were seized. The given justification: to prevent a fifth column from sabotaging the Allies.

The real reasons for the U.S. program included racial prejudice and the assumed allegiance of Latin American Japanese to Japan, with which the Allies competed for raw materials. Most egregious of all, Washington needed “Japanese” individuals to exchange for certain prisoners of war—U.S. civilians stranded in Asia. Called Quiet Passages, the secret program run by the U.S. State Department Special War Problems Division considered Latin American Japanese ideal pawns to trade for the trapped U.S. citizens. They were perceived to possess even fewer claims to

rights than imprisoned Japanese Americans, most of whom were U.S. citizens.

Ethnic Germans and some Italians from more than a dozen Latin countries were also forcibly brought to U.S. camps, but unlike these captives, most of the Japanese were unable to return to their Latin American homes after the war. All were purposely stripped of their identification papers on leaving the Latin nations where they lived. They arrived in the United States as “undocumented enemy aliens.”

After I talked to the Naganumas, I visited other former detainees over the next months. They remembered being shuttled onto U.S. ships in Latin ports under U.S. military guard, delivered to New Orleans or San Pedro and transferred to a prison camp called Crystal City in the hot Texas desert. There they lived for years surrounded by barbed-wire fencing and watchtowers, subject to daily muster. For these conversations I never had to drive more than an hour from my home. A largely unrecognized face of the Latin diaspora, I realized, might be found in our own backyards.

Libia Maoki, who is retired from a position overseeing charters for a long-distance bus company, sat across from me over coffee in a strip-mall diner outside Sacramento and recalled herself as a young girl in Chiclayo, Peru, five hundred miles north of Lima. There, in semi-tropical surroundings, Libia helped her mother, Elena, an industrious woman who had been a nurse in Japan, to pull taffy and wrap it in paper for sale. Her father, Victor, ran a sugar plantation canteen and a tire-repair shop. Libia watched agents sent by the FBI arrest her father and take him away, standing in a truck bed with other Japanese men and some ethnic Germans. Bereft of their breadwinner, Elena Maoki and her children were granted permission to go to the States, as long as they too became prisoners in Crystal City. Like many of the Japanese targeted for kidnapping, Libia's father and Iwaichi Naganuma, the father of the Naganuma brothers, were prominent in the community and had founded local schools. “In Peru they were preparing us to be leaders. So it's



Right: Drawing by a German captive from Guatemala of kidnapped men from Latin America who traveled in the holds of U.S. ships; **Left:** Libia Maoki with a photo of her son.

really too bad they got rid of us,” Libia's sister Blanca once said to an interviewer.

Of 2,200 ethnic Japanese forcibly taken from Latin nations during the war, 1,800 were from Peru, a country which had exhibited a history of animus toward Japanese immigrants. In May 1940, an anti-Japanese march by teenage students in Lima sparked rioting in the capital and small cities; rowdies and ordinary neighbors trashed or burned six hundred homes, schools and businesses while the police stood by. Ten Japanese people died. Later the U.S. embassy official charged with identifying threatening “aliens,” John Emmerson, used Chinese collaborators to point the finger at suspect Japanese, effectively playing one minority group against another. When the war was over, Peru refused to take back those who had been removed.

In the end six hundred “Japanese” prisoners from Peru were deported from U.S. camps to the ancestral war-torn island, where many had never lived. Other families were forced to stay in Crystal City for up to two years after the war was over—in a Kafkaesque scenario, U.S. authorities officially regarded the prisoners as illegal aliens for having entered the country without documents, and they had no place to go. In 1947 the Naganumas, worn out



and some suffering from tuberculosis, left Crystal City under the sponsorship of a Shinto priest in San Francisco.

Today camp survivors, and their children and grandchildren into the thousands, live scattered across the United States, many in New Jersey, because some captives chose “parole” to a company that produced frozen vegetables in a rural township thirty miles south of Philadelphia, and families stayed in the area. Others gravitated to Chicago, Los Angeles or Northern California where Japanese Americans were trying to rebuild lives. A number of Japanese Peruvians found postwar racial prejudice too strong on the mainland, and moved to Hawaii.

In San Francisco, the Naganuma brothers were enrolled in school as Jimmy, George and Tony. Speaking English with a Spanish accent and looking Japanese, they said new friends doubted their story when they shared it. “They would say, ‘That could not have happened—how could they get away with it?’” said Kazumu Naganuma. “People don’t believe it happened. It’s not in the books.”

Mary Jo McConahay is the author of The Tango War, The Struggle for the Hearts, Minds and Riches of Latin America During World War II (St. Martin's Press).

From *Vendedor* to Fashion Designer

Korean Immigrants in South American Textile Industries **By KYEYOUNG PARK**

KOREAN IMMIGRANTS IN LATIN AMERICA ARE shaping and developing fashion economies there. Upon arrival, Korean immigrants to Argentina and Brazil may have been lonely, isolated and confused, experiencing physical and cultural distance from their homeland. But the textile industry swiftly became a vital part of Korean diasporic identity and belonging.

Since 1963, about 200,000 Koreans have migrated to Latin American countries. These immigrants were from the middle class, leaving Korea because of political and economic instability in the aftermath of the Korean War. Korea sent its first emigrant groups to Brazil in 1962, to Bolivia in 1964, and to Argentina and Paraguay in 1965, to address its population explosion and the country's high unemployment rate and poverty, and to garner foreign exchange.

Korea was producing more professionals, managers and entrepreneurs than it could absorb within its limited land space and lack of natural resources, pushing the government to relocate its surplus population to Brazil and Argentina, which welcomed these immigrants for an agricultural "group settlement." However, this "group settlement" was not successful, and immigrants began to concentrate in large cities such as São Paulo and Buenos Aires. There, they first peddled what they had brought, selling goods purchased at every port where their vessels had docked. Later, running out of goods to sell, they started to produce clothes, disassembling and using newly purchased clothes as templates to learn about local aesthetics and design. This activity developed into small sewing and apparel-making shops.

Following this trend, Korean immigrants in the 1970s and 1980s brought capital, sewing and knitting machines, knowledge, experience, and skills in garment making, and their networks grew

In 2001, about nine out of every ten Koreans residing in Brazil worked in some part of the apparel industry.

in the home country, connecting skilled tailors, clothing and textile storeowners, and garment factory owners. Vertical and horizontal integration in the Korean apparel industry, in both Argentina and Brazil, helped Korean clothing manufacturers become competitive. Gradually, Koreans in Brazil and Argentina replaced Jewish immigrants, who had initially subcontracted their sewing work to Korean immigrants. In 2001, about nine out of every ten Koreans residing in Brazil worked in some part of the apparel industry.

Koreans controlled an estimated 60 percent of the garment industry and occupied 17 percent of Brazil's textile industry as retailers, wholesalers

and manufacturers. By 2004, Korean merchants led the Brazilian clothing industry, and accounted for 40 percent of its clothing production. In 2001, in Argentina, more than 80 percent of Koreans involved in clothing manufacturing comprised slightly less than half of the entire clothing industry, or half of the market goods.

The textile industry has played an important role in many countries' modern development, including Korea's, until supplemented by electronics and later by service and post-industrial sectors. Until the 1980s, Korea was one of the largest textile-exporting Asian countries to the United States. The involvement of the diaspora in these industries was a natural fit.

BRAZIL

When Koreans arrived to Brazil, they lived on whatever money they had brought with them. When they moved to São Paulo, some became peddlers (*vendedores*), clothes vendors or shoe repairers. *Vende* (abbreviation for *vendedor*) covers many



A wholesale shop of a clothing brand owned by a Korean entrepreneur in Bom Retiro, Brazil.



ACEA (Association of Korean Entrepreneurs of Av. Avellaneda)

kinds of work, from selling clothes by going door-to-door to taking orders after showing samples to wholesalers and retailers. Sales of Korean clothing expanded because of their better quality and reasonable prices, though Korean clothes in Brazil were almost ten times more expensive than in Korea. By 1968, Koreans started to manufacture women's apparel.

Early Korean immigrants already included clothing manufacturers. Susan Kim, a North Korean businessman who immigrated to Brazil in 1964 discovering a demand for clothing manufacturing. He brought equipment from Korea and designed a type of nylon jacket which became a big hit among Brazilians. Kim's business was the beginning of the clothing manufacturing industry in Brazil.

By the early 1970s, most Koreans had moved to São Paulo, in the vicinity of Glicerio and Conde de Sarzedas. While this area provided cheap rent and accessible transportation, as well as stores with Asian products, the neighborhood soon became ghettoized. By 1972, better economic conditions allowed Koreans to relocate residentially to Aclimação and establish new businesses in Mooca, Bras and eventually Bom Retiro—the center

of Brazil's garment district still known as Koreatown.

In Kathryn Cho's study of Korean immigrants in Brazil, Wongyu Lee, the owner of Nabirang (now Collins) Confecção, recalls, "My wife and I worked at home...For five to six months; we didn't even go to the market. We barely ate. Most of the times, we worked as a group with other families and they'd feed us. We worked more than sixteen hours per day...including Saturdays" (*The Korean Brazilians*, 1999:21). Lee went from making two to three pieces of clothing at a time to producing 50 to 70,000 per month, about 2,000 pieces daily. Selling up to 150 pieces per day, at five to ten dollars apiece, in 1999 he successfully built an enterprise that was generating US\$6 million annually, of which about 10 to 15 percent was net profit. As of 2012, his children—one a fashion designer and the other a marketing lawyer—took over his business, opening their 100th retail establishment and their first wholesale business.

About 2,000 Korean-owned business establishments flourish in the Bom Retiro and Bras districts of São Paulo. Bom Retiro creates fashion trends within Latin America's high fashion market.

Bras is three times larger than Bom Retiro but displays low-price clothing in high volume. According to journalist and writer Yoo Na Kim, whom I met over *churrascaria* (barbecue in Portuguese) in Higienópolis, as of 2008, one out of every seven shops in Bom Retiro belong to Koreans. There are 1,200 shops in this neighborhood: 1,000 are manufacturers and 840 are controlled by Korean families who offer more professional and higher quality services compared to two decades ago. Koreans in the Bom Retiro suburb supplying shops throughout Brazil are leaders in the wholesale clothing industry, generating approximately 30,000 direct and 20,000 indirect jobs. On average, each brand creates six new styles every day, each manufacturer producing 20,000 pieces of clothing monthly. Beyond detecting global trends, the Korean/Brazilian stylists and designers have to "tropicalize" in order to satisfy Brazilian demand. As of 2008, one out of every three garments produced in Brazil has passed through the hands of Korean immigrants.

ARGENTINA

Upon arriving in Argentina, Korean immigrants were initially housed in emergency refugee shelters. Many Koreans also lived in a neighborhood called "Little Seoul," or "No. 109 village" (*paekkucho'n*), a barrio in Flores that offered low-cost housing and hired cheap immigrant labor. There they specialized in small-scale sewing, clothing sales and other trades, much like the Jewish immigrants before them.

As in Brazil, early immigrants included clothing manufacturers. It was Hwa-sun Cho who first brought a knitting and sewing machine with her in 1965. She and her husband began a knitting business in 1967. Cho passed on basic knitting skills and later she taught basic sewing and more intricate clothing-making skills.

In 1966, Jong-oh Lee, a wealthy textile industrialist from South Korea who had re-migrated from Paraguay, brought over the Jacquard loom (a mechanical loom which simplified the process of manufacturing textiles with complex patterns such

as brocade, damask and matelassé), the *yoko* (“horizontally” in Japanese) knitting machine, overlocking machine and other sewing machines, as well as several technicians, operators of the *yoko* knitting machine. He first began using the *yoko* knitting machines to finish piecework (샅일) he received from a Jewish-owned factory, and in 1968, he began sewing (봉제) work.

In 1972, Sang-lok Chae successfully produced and sold bathing suits under his own brand. The next year, Duk-yu Hong, previously the sales manager of a Jewish-owned sweater factory, produced and sold sweaters under his own brand. Other immigrants later followed suit. In 1976, some Korean merchants started to venture onto Once Street (the city’s textile business area), buying thread from Jews and Italians and selling the finished pieces to Jewish stores. Since 1978, several Korean immigrants have manufactured and sold clothes, initially to small retailers on the fringes of Buenos Aires.

In 1982, increasing numbers of Korean immigrants ventured out of the capital to run retail clothing stores in nearby provinces. They were able to purchase mostly women’s clothes from fellow Korean wholesalers in Once; however, the quality of these clothes was slightly below average and sold for only half to two thirds the price. An increasing number of Korean immigrant manufacturers also relocated to the high-quality clothing hub of Avellaneda—a previously Jewish residential neighborhood that had developed into clothing wholesaling district. The numbers increased visibly from 1986 to 1987, as Korean manufacturers transformed from suppliers of brands to makers of brands and owners of their own stores. These manufacturers organized as the Korean Merchant Association of Once in 1983 and in 1985 as the Korean Chamber of Commerce.

By 2001, Argentina housed 3,000 Korean-owned business establishments. In Buenos Aires alone, there were 600 Korean-owned wholesalers in Avellaneda; 380 retail and wholesale stores specializing in women’s clothing, cotton shirts, jeans

and sweaters in Once; 600 retail stores in Flores; and 800 stores in other provinces such as Córdoba, Santa Fe, Tucumán, Jujuy and Mendoza—every city had Korean retailers, who bought supplies from Buenos Aires.

Hak-jae Lee, the president of the Korean Clothing Manufacturers’ Association in Avellaneda, immigrated to Argentina in 1975. I met Mr. Lee at an *asado* party organized by his association. Lee states that as of 2001, almost one out of every ten Koreans make more than US\$1 million. There are several dyeing companies and other specialty businesses engaged in the production of bags, zippers, buttons and labels; others in fabric production/selling, thread, embroidery and pressing, not to mention garment manufacturing. According to Lee, “Koreans revolutionized the clothing industry as price[s] went down and the quality of clothing improved.... Koreans brought important machines and produced cheaply.... Now thanks to us Koreans, things are cheap.”

The Argentine government began to encourage capital investment and allowed Koreans to immigrate with the condition that each person deposit US\$30,000 (later increased to \$100,000) in the Argentine National Bank (Banco de la Nación). As Kyung soo Chun wrote, after the Argentine and Korean governments’ official agreement on immigration, the 1985 Acto de Procedimiento, Korean immigrants flowed in, reaching approximately 20,000 between 1984 and 1986 (*Discourse on Korean Culture* V4, 1990).

Korean immigrants stumbled into sewing work to adapt to their new environment in South America, and this work led to trade and work in the textile industry—with many Koreans across Latin America now in clothing retailing and wholesaling. As they secured their place among the middle class in São Paulo and Buenos Aires, they were increasingly celebrated as immigrant nouveau riche.

While engaged in the entire spectrum of the textile industry—import/export trade, wholesaling, designing, marketing, retailing, and garment production—

Korean immigrants monitor global fashion trends by traveling extensively to European countries and the United States (and now to South Korea and China) for fabric and trade shows.

Korean family members are integrated in their family businesses. Many work in the fashion industry or in fashion-design and marketing-related trades, while others attend top fashion design schools in Paris, London, Milan, Los Angeles and New York. Christina Moon, faculty at New York’s Parsons the New School for Design, observed that by 2000, 40 percent of her school were students from Asia, the vast majority from South Korea, including some from South American countries (*Critical Sociology*, 2014). Claudia, a graduate of the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM), whom I interviewed in Los Angeles, is 25-years-old, married, and her husband runs a Taekwondo studio in Encino. She left Korea for Brazil at the age of three and now manages one of her parents’ wholesaling clothing stores that employs 25 to 30 people, both Latinos and Koreans, in managerial and designer positions, equally divided between men and women. Her language of preference is Portuguese, but she speaks both English and Korean at home: with her husband she speaks English, with her parents, Korean, with her brothers, Portuguese, and a combination of all three with her friends. Like Claudia’s family, there have been a number of Korean clothing manufacturers who re-migrated from South America since the 1990s, due to the severe economic and political problems that prevailed in South American countries. In terms of global Korean diaspora, thanks to the clothing manufacturing industry, the Korean immigrant communities have developed across the Americas.

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Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, *Finding Balance*, 2015, 28 Polacolor Polaroid photographs on aluminum panels, 105.5 in. x 159.25 in.

Revisiting *Circles and Circuits* By ALEXANDRA CHANG

CHINESE MIGRATION WITHIN THE CARIBBEAN

began in 1565 with the Spanish Manila galleons, or *La Nao de China*—which sailed from Manila to Acapulco and created an imagined China within Latin America. The 1800s and early 1900s saw an increase in labor migration tied to the postcolonial legacies of the sugar and tobacco industries, and the construction of railroads and the Panama Canal. Merchants and entrepreneurs also came during this time and together they laid the foundations of Chinese diasporic communities in the Caribbean. These past histories and their legacies have and continue to shape the lives and works of artists in the Caribbean and its diaspora.

The exhibition *Circles and Circuits: Chinese Caribbean Art* takes on these themes: *History and Art of the Chinese Caribbean Diaspora* at the California African American Museum (September 15, 2017-February 25, 2018) and *Contemporary Chinese Caribbean Art* at the Chinese American Museum (September, 15, 2017 - March 22, 2018) as a part of the Getty's Pacific Standard Time II LA/LA initiative that enabled projects at more than 70 cultural institutions across Southern California to explore Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles.

The title *Circles and Circuits* references the circles of influence around the artists

included in the exhibition, formed by their peers, mentors, and family, while “circuits” alludes to the many migrations, cross-connections, and flows of art, artists, and Chinese diasporic communities—from the Asia/Pacific to the Americas, Africa, the British Commonwealth nations and Europe. The exhibition considered intersections of Asian and African diasporic migrations, Asian coolie (indentured) labor in the Americas, enslavement of Africans in the Americas, and resistance, taking into account how personal relationships and larger contexts of global migrations and historic legacies of cultural, political, and economic power influence and inform artists' work (above).

Wearing a long blue Chinese dress and her hair twisted up, Campos-Pons paced slowly into and around the courtyard, carrying a long sugar cane in her hand, referencing the personal and historic impact of the industry in Cuba.

While the history of Chinese in the Caribbean may have started with the romantic Spanish Manila galleons, migration really intensified during the mid-late 1800s through the early 1900s. Young Chinese men, especially from Fujian and Guangdong in southern China, signed on as contract laborers or traveled as merchants between China and the Caribbean during this period when China experienced political turmoil due to defeats by the British during the Opium Wars and internal peasant unrest during the Taiping rebellion. Approximately 7.5 million Chinese emigrated globally during the 19th century, with major destinations including Cuba, British West Indies and Panama. The majority of the Chinese who arrived into the West Indies came between 1853 and 1866, after the abolition

of the African slave trade necessitated a new source of labor (see Wally Look Lai, *Indentured Labor, Caribbean Sugar: Chinese and Indian Migrants to the British West Indies, 1838–1918* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993). *Circles and Circuits* concentrated on the work of artists who are part of the Chinese Caribbean diaspora in North America, Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Panama.

Larger immigrant populations and political, economic, and social-cultural conditions—including the development of national museums and art schools and training abroad—encouraged the development of pipelines of thought with peers in and through major international hubs such as New York, Washington, D.C., London, Paris, Havana, Martinique,

Panama City, Kingston and Port of Spain. These streams of movement of people and ideas created transnational networks or “corridors” through which cultural production was nurtured and developed in an interconnected way. Rather than deny the importance and realities of geographic place, and systemic structures of national borders and narratives, the exhibition instead suggests a perspective beyond the physical Caribbean into the spaces of connected local and global communities, affinities and legacies—and likewise expands beyond the idea of derivative art into a corridor of international conversation, exchange and influence.

Circles and Circuits also focused on the postwar period leading up to, through and after Independence movements in the Caribbean in the 1960s, as the impact of creating national identities on artists in the Caribbean became evident in the work of artists and writers, both domestically and in diasporic art circuits abroad. Artists sought primordial “authenticity” and new and old iconographies of nation-building, which looked to their Indigenous and multi-ethnic histories. Their work emerged both as exemplary of and accomplice to the visual



Left, Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, *Poetformance*, performance on February 23, 2018 at Pico House. Below, Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, *My Mother Told Me I Am Chinese, The Painting Lesson*, 2008 (composition of 9 Polaroid panels, approximately 106.5 in. x 71.5 in.)



Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, *My Mother Told Me I Am Chinese, China Porcelain*, 2008 (hand-painted Chinese porcelain and Plexiglas shelf, approximately 90 in. x 91 in. x 55 in.) Below, Sybil Atteck's *Self Portrait*, ca. 1970 (oil on board, 24 in. x 18 in., collection of Helen Atteck, Canada)

complex of nation-building, as well as visual resistance (p. 33). Examples include the work of Sybil Atteck, Carlisle Chang, and others who created and selected national symbols and visual aesthetics of power such as festival design and landscape painting, or Trinidad and Tobago's national flag and coat of arms. Carlisle Chang designed the coat of arms and national flag for Trinidad after Independence, while Sybil Atteck served on the committee that oversaw the selection of artists and design.

Two female artists from Trinidad, Amy Leong Pang and Sybil Atteck, were fundamental in the development of the artistic communities in Trinidad and Tobago in the 1930s and 1940s. Pang founded the Society of Trinidad Independents, a group of intellectuals and artists from Trinidad and Tobago that published *The Beacon*, a literary journal that ran between 1931 and 1933 (one final special issue was published in 1939). Many of those involved with *The Beacon* also shaped the Caribbean Art Movement in London, with artists traveling between Europe and the Caribbean maintaining ties and forming pathways for shared



ideas. C. L. R. James, who often wrote for the journal, became a leading figure in Pan-Africanism, and along with George Padmore played an important role in the Caribbean Art Movement involving literature and the arts. Pang was a major force in establishing a homegrown art movement in Trinidad and Tobago, and in teaching, writing and creating artwork for the *Trinidad Guardian's* new art

section (1939).

From 1945 to 1948 Atteck went to the University of Washington School of Fine Arts in St. Louis, Missouri, and studied under Max Beckmann, who influenced her use of abstraction, angular lines, and color palettes. In 1950 she sailed to London on a British Council scholarship, where she showed her work between 1952 through 1959, including at the Royal Academy and the Commonwealth Institute. Her circle of close friends, among them Boscoe Holder, Nina Squires, and Althea McNish, would also travel to London to continue their careers (fig. 5). Atteck also showed at the São Paulo Biennial, another important international hub, in the mid-1950s and 1960s. She and her students were born from immigrant merchant families, and became heavily involved in defining art education in Trinidad and Tobago and the newly independent nation's visual and cultural landscape.

The contemporary artists included in *Circles and Circuits* and presented at the Chinese American Museum in Los Angeles held different viewpoints, and had different relationships with their Chinese Caribbean

heritage and positionality within both the Chinese diaspora in the Caribbean and the Chinese Caribbean diaspora that resettled outside the Caribbean. Their works reflect this diversity through the range of intersecting topics they touch upon including: postcolonial histories, personal histories, transcultural aesthetics, gender, sexuality, the body, popular culture, countercultures, food, carnivals, and art history.

One of the artists who was included in both parts of *Circles and Circuits* is María Magdalena Campos-Pons with her works *Finding Balance* (2015) and *My Mother Told Me I Am Chinese* (2008) (p. 31 and 32). During the run of the exhibition, the artist also presented her performance *Poetformance* at Pico House, a performance space in a historic building across from the Chinese American Museum in Los Angeles.

Her work offers a space for Caribbean identities outside of the more dominant narratives of “black and white.” Her large-scale Polaroid installations triangulate the histories of the slave trade and Chinese coolies in the Caribbean working in the sugar industry, as well as early political meetings and merchant crossings in relation to China, Africa and Europe.

Finding Balance is a part of a larger series of work called *FeFa* that Campos-Pons and her partner Neil Leonard have installed at both the Havana and Venice Biennale. For *Finding Balance*, the artist wore a theatrical replica of a Chinese Emperor’s robes, similar to those she saw at the Museum of Archeology in Venice, where she presented *53+1=54+1=55. Letter of the Year*, an installation of birdcages at the Venice Biennale. While at the Biennale, Campos-Pons staged a guerilla performance, walking through the Piazza San Marco wearing the robes and a birdcage on her head, which references a Yoruba headdress as well as an architecture of entrapment that cannot hold onto sound that can drift through its bars.

For *FeFa* and *Finding Balance*, the artist also wore sandals purchased in Italy, completing an outfit to echo the presence of merchants from China, Africa, and Europe who historically exchanged wares



Nina Squires’s painting *La Naissance – Birth of a Nation* (left), 1956 (oil on canvas, 20 in. x 24 in., The Collection of Senator Albert Sydney, Trinidad and Tobago)

at the piazza. Similarly, the ceramics of *My Mother Told Me I Am Chinese* gesture toward crossings with her use of Chinoiserie porcelain wares, famously traded between China and Europe, and were used as religious Santería vessels in Cuba.

Her performance for *Circles and Circuits* of the work *Poetformance* stems from her work *FeFa*. (p.31). A video of dark blue waves was projected as a backdrop as the artist entered the inner courtyard of Pico House. The building is located in El Pueblo, which serves as the original site of Los Angeles. It is also just blocks away from Union Station, where the old Los Angeles Chinatown was located before it was destroyed to create the station. Pico House is also located one block from what was once known as “Calle de los Negros” and the site of the lynchings of Chinese during the 1871 anti-Chinese massacre.

Wearing a long blue Chinese dress and her hair twisted up, Campos-Pons paced slowly into and around the courtyard, carrying a long sugar cane in her hand, referencing the personal and historic impact of the industry in Cuba. She approached audience members, handing out small gifts and strips of fabric. Crossing the inner courtyard of Pico House, she spoke, repeating the words “If I were a poet” and continued

the phrase with narratives about the pain and suffering of passage from one land to another, telling the story of labor, migration, and family histories. With the long sugar cane, she untangled strips of fabric lying on the ground that opened to form the shapes of Chinese pictograms such as door, table, and bed, words of the home. She asked the audience to join with her in remembering and sharing their own stories, passing around a journal for people to add their stories. For Campos-Pons’s *FeFa* and her related body of work, draws upon circles and circuits, tying together globally interconnected narratives about home, migration, and memory, and finding and redefining the meaning of permanence and locality.

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Nikkei Latin America

Highlighting Histories, Diversities, Identities and Continuing Transnational Connections By MILLIE CREIGHTON

JAPANESE PEOPLE AND THEIR DESCENDANTS have been part of the Latin American ethnoscape for more than a hundred years. People of Japanese descent whose “home” countries are elsewhere than Japan, are called Nikkeijin (people in a Japanese descent line) or more simply (and often more commonly in the Americas) Nikkei. Latin America has been particularly important in showing how networking among Japanese descent groups brought about a global identity of such people as Nikkei, and awareness of being part of a Japanese diaspora, a consciousness emerging in the last 20 to 30 years despite the long existence of such groups in various countries.

An examination of Japanese descent communities in Latin American countries and their on-going ties with Japan sheds light on how people establish identities weaving together a sense of ancestral heritage with attachments to the societies in which they live, while showing both convergence and divergence from ideas, concepts and values of their ancestral places. Such research also sheds light on other current issues, ranging from radiation effects to immigration.

Ways in which Latin American countries were brought into the historic internment of people of Japanese descent during World War II, often little known about even in the United States where Latin American Nikkei were interned along with Japanese Americans, can help inform contemporary issues related to borders and concentrating people into encampment areas, including Latin American children separated from family members, into encampment areas (see Mary Jo McConahay’s story on p. 25). Nikkei communities in Latin America also provide important insights to on-going

effects on people and their descendants as a result of exposure to radiation from the atomic bombings of Japan at a time when some officials in countries such as the United States would like to increase nuclear arms, reversing long-term struggles to reduce the numbers of such weapons in the world.

Japanese immigrants began coming to Latin America in the late 1800s when this became possible after Japan was forced to lift its long policy (since the 1600s) of maintaining a ‘closed country’ (*sakoku*) under whose terms non-Japanese could not enter Japan for the most part and Japanese could not leave it (except upon receiving punishment of a death sentence). Once it was possible for Japanese to pursue movement abroad, they did so, and immigration to the Americas began. Many went to the United States and Canada, and many to Latin American countries. While immigration is on-going, three

immigration from Asia done under the so-called gentleman’s agreement resulting in potential immigration to the United States being diverted to Latin American countries; and a migrant wave following World War II, when many Japanese emigrated to Latin America after the overwhelming destruction of Japan during the war. The earlier attempts to block immigration from Asian countries have later been condemned as discriminatory processes against particular peoples and countries of the world, shedding potential light on current attempts to restrict immigration from certain Arab countries.

Brazil became home to the largest number of people of Japanese descent in the world outside Japan. São Paulo became home to many Japanese Brazilians, with the Liberdade area becoming a bustling Nikkei center area that still retains a concentration of Japanese stores, restaurants, other businesses, and



Traditional Japanese instruments at cultural festival Bunka Matsuri

periods of immigration to Latin America from Japan are particularly pertinent; early immigration to Latin America from the late 1800s on; increased immigration to Latin America from the 1920s because of U.S. desire to limit or eliminate

community groups. Japanese immigrants also settled in Registro, near São Paulo but removed from the urban core, where Japanese immigrants set up tea plantations with tea plants and seeds brought from Japan, and also processed the harvested



Buddhist ceremony in honor of Japanese Immigrants

Hibakusha is a term for surviving victims of the atomic bombings or atomic testing elsewhere in the world.

tea leaves there. A heritage area to the history of Japanese immigration to Registro is maintained there, including heritage buildings that housed workers and factories that processed tea.

While Brazil has the largest number of persons of Japanese descent, their presence is marked in many Latin American countries where it reveals similarities and diversities in their histories and contemporary existence as ethnic communities of Latin America. Mexico has an old, long-standing community established over 120 years ago, which celebrates its long presence in Mexico and takes pride in its dual tradition. Argentina and Chile may have smaller such communities, but they are ones that have been active in recent decades, with many youth re-exploring their identities as members of Latin American countries with a sense of Japanese ancestry. Many Japanese immigrated to Bolivia after the World War II period. There Nikkei

have been less integrated; they remain in residential enclaves such as the so-called “Okinawan colonies” or those residential agricultural communities largely comprised of people who immigrated from Nagasaki. Many had been farmers in Japan (the most common occupation at the time) and settled in such communities (sometimes called “colonies”) to collectively restart agricultural activities in Bolivia. Peru has a large and prominent community of Nikkei. Peru also had a Nikkei president, Alberto Fujimori. Initially having a person of Japanese descent reach the top post of the country and become the president was a point of pride for Japanese Peruvians, but unfortunately the president was later disgraced. Noteworthy, however, is that his rise to popularity and the presidency was in part thought to be related to his ability to merge values from the agrarian background of Japan that resonated with rural voters in Peru.

Colombia, as some other Latin American countries, has active *hibakusha* members. *Hibakusha* is a term for surviving victims of the atomic bombings or atomic testing elsewhere in the world. Latin American Nikkei communities have been important in understanding the long-term nature of atomic radiation poisoning in human beings. Many of the agreements to deal with medical issues of survivors

involved Japan and the United States, at a time when later effects of exposure to radiation poisoning were not well known. Thus, among immigrants to Latin America were some who were seemingly healthy despite exposure to the atomic bombings but who later developed cancers and other medical problems in higher numbers than expected in a general population due to exposure. While similar cases occurred in Japan, immigrants to other countries, such as those in Latin America, had additional problems because they were not residents of the countries involved in the initial medical treatment agreements (based on the idea that survivors lived in Japan or were returned U.S. servicepeople) and thus had to band together for recognition of their cause. Issues also occurred over birth defects or medical problems in subsequent generations and establishing the connection to radiation exposure of parents or grandparents. Thus, like Bolivia which had a high number of settlers from Nagasaki due to relocation after the destruction of the atomic bombing, other Latin American *hibakusha* reveal that issues related to war and use of nuclear weapons did not end with the war, but need to be dealt with among survivors for decades and generations, and in areas of the world far removed from the original blasts.

Latin American countries were



Sakuri Matsuri Japanese cherry blossom festival (above); REVI - National Forum for Young Leaders (below)

particularly important in the rise of an internationalized ethnic identity of being Nikkei or someone of Japanese descent anywhere in the world along with the recognition and greater understanding of the existence of a Japanese diaspora. Even until the late 20th century, Japan was not thought to have a diaspora like many other countries including those from Asia such as China. Scholars would often give reasons for the lack of a Japanese diaspora, such as so-called cultural attitudes against emigrating. Yet, Japanese individuals began moving and immigrating abroad as soon as this was possible and by the late 1800s. What was absent was not a Japanese diaspora but a common identity that linked people of Japanese descent in diverse countries of the world. Then in the late 20th century new organizations such as the Pan American Nikkei Association (PANA) facilitated gatherings and networking of Nikkei from throughout the Americas, meeting alternately in a North American (including Mexico) and South American venue. People from Latin American countries in particular came together to share their immigrant histories and discuss their shared issues, developing a consciousness of being Nikkei and of being part of a Japanese diaspora, which is now also well recognized in scholarship on or related to Japan and Japanese descent groups.

Ongoing and renewed ties among Latin American countries and Japan

are important in showing how people perceive their own identities and build on understandings of their heritage or ethnic backgrounds along with their presence, participation and identities as members of the countries in which they reside and/or have citizenship. Particularly from the 1990s Japan—needing additional workers but not wishing to open fully to immigration from outside—developed programs and laws to allow Nikkei elsewhere to come to Japan as the country of their ancestral heritage, live and work there. Most of those who did so came from Latin American countries. While most of these were Japanese Brazilians, many Japanese descendants from Peru, Mexico and Chile, among others, also went to Japan to reside (often for many years) and work. As a result, those within Japan learned that being of Japanese descent from abroad was not the same as being Japanese in Japan. These Latin American Nikkei developed a stronger sense of their identity with the Latin American country they came from living in Japan, as they realized they identified more strongly with their “home” country in which they had been born and raised than with their ancestral country of Japan, something many were not aware of until they resided in Japan. Thus, the histories of Japanese immigrants to Latin America, their diverse communities in different areas of Latin America, and their greater understandings of their own identities as members of

Latin American countries—while also grasping and maintaining a sense of Japanese ancestral or heritage identity—reveal much about human international and transnational flows, adaptation and identity-building along with the ability to construct diverse human societies and collective national identities that allow for or embrace multiple understandings of identity formation.

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The Japanese Brazilian Community

Diversity and Creativity of Circular Migrations By REGINA MATSUE and RAFAEL SHOJI

THE LARGE COMMUNITY OF JAPANESE Brazilians is often seen as a model minority. Indeed, many Brazilians without any Japanese heritage are now taking pride in Japanese martial arts, food, culture and religions. Yet it wasn't that long ago that Brazilians of Japanese origin were being seen as a "yellow peril." And because of Brazil's cyclical periods of economic instability, many Brazilian Japanese now find themselves as immigrants once more, now as second-class citizens in Japan. The history

between the two nations is now 110 years old, and it is a complicated one.

At the end of the 19th century, there were too many people in Japan. There were too few in Brazil, especially with so much labor needed for its vast coffee plantations. Thus was born an exchange that would eventually make Brazil the country with the largest population of Japanese descendants outside Japan, more than one million and a half people.

The first wave of Japanese migrants to Brazil arrived on June 18, 1908; a shipload

of 781 people sailed into the port of Santos aboard the *Kasato Maru*. At first, most migrants intended to work hard for several years, with the dream of striking it rich and one day returning gloriously to Japan. However, few immigrants actually returned. In the pre-World War I period, the Japanese in Brazil became settlers organized independently or were promoted by the Japanese government, rather than contracted workers. The migration intensified in the 1920s and 1930s; in the mid-1930s there were more



Children frolic at the Brazilian Festa Junina in Moka City, Japan.

than half a million Japanese in Brazil.

Workers on coffee plantations later became independent farmers who settled together, forming Japanese enclaves known as colonies, scattered mainly around São Paulo and Paraná states. Social life revolved around Japanese customs, with little interaction with Brazilians. This increasing visibility of Japanese in Brazil propelled an anti-Japanese sentiment in the public and political sphere, rejecting this ethnic group as a “yellow element” not consistent with national identity.

World War II and the ensuing years proved to be a tough challenge for the community. Japanese—including the Japanese Brazilians—had a nationalistic devotion to Japan and its main symbol at this time, the Emperor. At the same time, Brazil itself had a nationalistic authoritarian regime under the dictatorship of Getúlio Vargas from the 1930s on. Caught between these two nationalisms, the *Nikkei* (descendants of Japanese) community suffered restrictions during World War II. In 1934, the Brazilian government established a compulsory assimilation program to foment nationalism; education was standardized throughout the country, and teaching in foreign languages was strictly forbidden in 1937. The Japanese were not allowed to run their schools, and their children were not allowed to study their language. In 1940, foreign language publications and newspapers were prohibited, and two years later Brazil broke off diplomatic relations with Japan. With Brazil and Japan on opposing sides in World War II, migrants took the brunt.

After the war, many Japanese Brazilians, unable to understand the news media in Portuguese, refused to believe that Japan had been defeated. Their education and worldview had centered on Japanese invincibility and superiority. These events provoked a traumatic confrontation in the community between the *Nikkei* who believed in the Japanese victory (*Kachigumi*) and those that accepted the Japanese defeat (*Makegumi*). Class division in the community was probably an essential factor in this split,



Right: Tanabata Festival in São Paulo, Brazil; Left: poster promoting Japanese immigration to Brazil.

In Brazil, family life and many Nikkei associations promote Buddhist rituals, typical Japanese festival and traditions.

one that even led to murder and terrorist actions from the *Makegumi* faction. The fanatical *Kachigumi* even assassinated some members of *Makegumi* who spoke against the ideal of invincibility of Japan.

But despite the divisions, the Japanese decided to remain, and Brazil became their adopted country, a possible homeland. Permanent residence in Brazil looked like a viable destiny among these migrants. Until the decade of the 1940s, nine out of every ten Japanese lived in rural communities. After many years of hard work, these migrants began to ascend socially. By the late 1950s, one out of every two Japanese lived in Brazil's urban areas.

The second generation of Japanese born in Brazil (*Nisei*) became more involved in Brazilian national life. The *Nisei* saw themselves as individuals in the process of transition. In the 1960s, the *Nikkeijin* joined the middle classes and started to establish their economic, cultural and religious bases in the urban centers with high concentrations of Japanese migrants, such as Liberdade, a Japanese district in São Paulo. Engagement in industrial and commercial activities increased and families started to invest in the education of their children. In the first decade after the war, while a

minority of *Issei* (first generation) and *Nisei* from the pre-war period remained attached to Japanese traditions and made efforts to preserve their ethnic identity, the majority underwent an identity crisis, which continued into the following decades.

The Japanese achieved considerable educational and socioeconomic success in Brazil—they had traveled a long and hard way from Japanese immigrant workers to *Nikkeijin* as a positive minority. The participation of Japanese officials and government in the promotion of Japanese culture and permanent settlement were decisive for the *Nikkeijin* in Brazil. The boundaries of ethnic identity between the *Nikkeijin* and the Brazilians were demarcated in a constructive way that was also promoted by the Japanese soft power, which helped the image of the Japanese Brazilians decisively as a model minority. Although the community continued to be divided in terms of generation, waves of migration, and prefectures of origin, the *Nikkei* could still be seen as an independent ethnic group.

Over the years, the *Nikkeijin* have become quite diverse and heterogenous. For example, in some communities in the countryside in which *Nikkei* from the

third or fourth generation still use the term *Gaijin* to refer to people who have no Japanese ancestry, and many prefer to marry *Nikkei*. In contrast, many *Nikkei* are called *Mestiços*, because they are a mix of Brazilians and *Nikkei* (half or more than half Brazilian). Indeed, some cannot even be identified as Japanese descendants by appearance, but only by Japanese-sounding surnames. In contrast, the young generation of *Nikkei* cannot speak Japanese and have little attachment to Japan or Japanese culture. However, there is a new group of people without Japanese ancestry, who claim a certain level of “Japaneseness.” In general, these people are practitioners of Japanese martial arts, religions, enthusiastic fans of J-pop or any other Japanese-related activities. Many of these Japanese enthusiasts take their self-identification seriously by travelling and living in Japan for a period, learning the Japanese language and the philosophy behind these practices.

The Japanese contribution includes a diverse range of fields, such as agriculture; they are responsible for the increase in production of some vegetables and fruits brought from Japan and adapted to Brazil. Japanese introduced martial arts, such as judo and Aikido which became very popular among Brazilians. Japanese religions such as Buddhism and new religious groups also attract many Brazilians, not to mention the Brazilian fondness for Japanese food and arts.

Despite their success, the *Nikkeijin* also suffered from the country’s economic and political instability. In the 1990s, Brazil’s economic crises together with the need for blue-collar workers in Japan stimulated a substantial reverse migration. The Japanese government allowed the *Nikkeijin*—the first, second and third generation—to legally work in Japan, mainly in demanding industrial jobs. These reverse immigrants are called *Dekasegi* (roughly translated as “working away from home”), echoing the epithet of their ancestors, but in reverse. In Japan, the *Nikkeijin* have built ethnic communities and are known as “Brazilians.” Many live without

contact with the larger Japanese society, consuming Brazilian products and media. The construction of a Brazilian *Nikkei* identity as a minority group in Japan reveals the diversity within this transnational community. At the same time as they are considered a positive minority in Brazil, in Japan the Brazilians are seen in a lower position than the nationals. Most have no political rights and are seen as second-class citizens, performing unskilled jobs that no Japanese wants to do.

Nikkei identity becomes negotiated bilaterally with the respective majority societies. In Brazil, the *Nikkei* are native in culture and language, but they do not share the “racial” type usually identified as Brazilian, so they are identified as Japanese. In Japan, the *Nikkeijin* fit theoretically into the Japanese identity constructed on the tradition of valuing blood and race, but their lack of cultural and linguistic competence isolate them from interaction with the Japanese. In Brazil, family life and many *Nikkei* associations promote Buddhist rituals, typical Japanese festival and traditions. Therefore, the Japanese culture is not completely strange to many *Nikkeijin*. Conversely, in Japan, the *Nikkeijin* valorize Brazilian symbols such as samba, carnival and popular festivals, and in this way try to reinforce positive aspects of Brazil as a way of marking differences with the Japanese. Many *Nikkeijin* act as is contextually expected by the majority society in which they find themselves, justifying the label “Japanese” in Brazil and “Brazilian” in Japan—a dual diaspora.

The number of Brazilians in Japan was estimated at more than 300,000 during its peak. In 2008, however, during the Japanese economic recession, Brazilian workers faced layoffs, and after 2011, following Japan’s devastation by the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster, the number of Brazilians dropped to about 100,000. Now, Brazil is once again experiencing an economic crisis and 230,000 Brazilians are now estimated to be living in Japan. This movement could be called a circular

migration; many of these migrants are caught in this circle between Japan and Brazil, depending on the fluctuation of the socioeconomic conditions of these two countries. The fluctuation of the waves of people coming and going is constant and also the maintenance of the recruitment system, communities and facilities for the Brazilians in Japan.

Although many of these Brazilians have little contact with Japanese except in the workplaces, many of their children are raised in Japan with Japanese classmates. However, these children performed poorly in school due to difficulties with the language and bullying in the Japanese school system, so they started to work when they were teenagers in the factories. In this sense, many of them are considered a lost generation, with no future in Japan nor in Brazil, perpetuating their position as citizens of the second class in Japan.

Despite these complications, the circular migration process brought much dynamism to both societies. Japan is in need of workers, and the presence of Brazilians exposes lots of old problems related to the minorities in the country and it is challenging the government and the civil society to find alternative ways to deal with them. At the same time, the *Nikkei* community in Brazil is renovating its ties and contacts with Japan. The people who lived in Japan and come back to Brazil bring with them a background and new ideas that have much impact in their community.

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Fried Rice and Plátanos

Chinese Cuban Restaurants and Global Migration Circuits **By KATHLEEN LÓPEZ**

IN NOVEMBER 1968, TWO FOOD CRITICS FOR *New York* magazine enthusiastically announced the arrival of a new cuisine in town: “Probably the only benefit that has been derived from the U.S.-Cuba estrangement is the establishment of the Cuban-Chinese restaurant as part of New York’s gastronomic life.” Chinese Cuban restaurants emerged in Manhattan from Chelsea to the Upper West Side. At Asia Pearl on 54th Street, Spanish-speaking customers filled the plain formica tables or sat at the counter for their fried rice and traditional Cuban dishes. The reviewers noted: “The fried rice dishes are good and seem to be comfortably placed between the Chinese and Cuban cooking. Pork,

From 1847 to 1874, about 125,000 men from southeastern Guangdong Province arrived in Cuba as indentured laborers for sugar plantations, railroads and mining prior to and during the period of gradual abolition of slavery.

ham, shrimp and one called simply *special* are \$1.05 each. It is the Cuban side of the menu that should be the most novel for the average New Yorker. The scope of the familiar omelet is enlarged by the addition of either banana, shrimp or Spanish sausage (from 85 to 95 cents).”

While this Chino Latino cuisine may have surprised the magazine’s readers, it was perfectly comprehensible for the influx of Cuban immigrants arrived since the 1959 Cuban revolution. They would have been familiar with Havana’s Barrio Chino, which by mid-century was one of the largest Chinatowns in the Americas, or encountered Chinese-owned restaurants and shops in provincial towns across the



La Fortuna, a former Chinese restaurant in Sagua la Grande, which had a large Chinese presence and was the birthplace of artist Wifredo Lam.

island. Indeed, the Chinese Cuban eateries in New York and elsewhere are one strand of a history of global migration circuits between Asia and the Americas.

From 1847 to 1874, about 125,000 men from southeastern Guangdong Province arrived in Cuba as indentured laborers for sugar plantations, railroads and mining prior to and during the period of gradual abolition of slavery. The coolie trade ended after an investigative commission exposed its atrocities in 1874. Those who remained settled in Cuba as agricultural and urban workers, artisans, labor contractors and market gardeners or remigrated elsewhere. As early as the 1860s they established eateries and food stands in an emergent Chinese district of Havana, and within a few decades merchants from Hong Kong and San Francisco set up transnational firms for the import of food products and luxury goods from China.

Food is a central motif in narratives about the Chinese role in the Cuban *ajiaco* (stew), a metaphor for the multiple ethnic components of Cuban national identity. The Chinese who participated in Cuba's independence struggles beginning in 1868 and made interracial marriages and other alliances were key to a process of integration. War narratives emphasize the Chinese role in patriotic and noncombat auxiliary activities, such as delivering messages, preparing food and acquiring medicine and clothing for the rebels. In 1884, for example, a group of Chinese charcoal makers protected hungry Cuban insurgents from Key West from Spanish forces. Once they were out of danger, the Chinese welcomed the troops with coffee, as any good Cuban would do. The Cuban commander commented that "they prepared a magnificent meal: rice with chicken, fried pork, plantain and sweet potato: a Creole meal" (Antonio Chuffat Latour, *Apunte histórico de los Chinos en Cuba*, [1927]). As Shannon Dawdy notes in her article on food, farming and national identity in Cuba, the foundations of an emerging national cuisine were *viandas* or starchy roots and tubers such as sweet potatoes, yams and manioc, as well as



Typical meal at La Caridad 78 Restaurant on Broadway in New York City.

plantains, which were native-grown and produced on small-scale farming plots. (*New West Indian Guide* 2002) A Cuban nationalist movement similarly developed in opposition to both foreign control and large-scale agricultural regimes. Although the Chinese were recent arrivals, through their preparation of a quintessential Cuban meal they were represented as

supporters of Cuban independence and potential citizens in the new republic. These kinds of narratives undermined the more common racialized descriptions of the Chinese as a "yellow peril" that circulated throughout the Americas since the 19th century.

Chinese immigration to Cuba was officially restricted under the U.S.

occupation in 1899 and into the republican era, but the ban on Chinese laborers was lifted to boost sugar production during World War I. With an influx of new immigrants, bustling Chinese communities took shape in Havana and other provincial towns. Restaurants, bodegas, laundries, shoe and watch repair shops, bakeries, photography studios and pharmacies, as well as cultural institutions such as ethnic associations and theaters, lined the streets of Havana's Barrio Chino.

Everyday interactions and intimacies, many of them around food and restaurants, fostered an environment in which the Chinese became Cuban. They made ice cream with fresh tropical fruit, sold savory fried snacks on street corners and ran restaurants that served working-class Cubans. Truck gardeners provided fresh cabbage, lettuce, tomatoes, carrots and beets to the Cuban population. Chinese vendors delivered produce and fish door to door in provincial neighborhoods. Cuban women who married Chinese men often learned to cook Chinese dishes and participated with their mixed-race children in religious and community life.

In an October 2015 blog, journalist Tania Quintero Antúnez recalls carrying a metal container for take-out dinners from a Chinese restaurant just two blocks from her house in her Havana neighborhood. In the 1950s, 15 *centavos* could buy a "complete" meal of meat, rice and beans and *plátanos maduros*. Her family also frequented La Estrella de Oro on Monte Street for fried rice, chop suey and *maripositas chinas* (fried wontons). (<https://www.martinoticias.com/a/salimos-a-comer-algo/105764.html>) The award-winning composer, conductor and arts educator Tania León fondly remembers her Chinese grandfather, born in Cuba to two Chinese parents. He presented León with her first piano when she was five years old. She accompanied him to dragon parades that coiled through Zanja Street during the Chinese New Year and to dinners at the famous restaurant El Pacífico. In a personal communication in 2005, she recalled: "We would have

dinners there with his friends (owners and employees of the restaurant) and return home late."

After the revolution, the final stage of the nationalization of private commerce in Cuba in 1968 produced an exodus of middle-class entrepreneurs, among them Chinese immigrants. They settled in Cuban neighborhoods of Little Havana in Miami, along the west side of Manhattan, and across the Hudson River in Union City, New Jersey, where they established small businesses. Now, fifty years later, we see the fading imprint of these later migrations upon urban landscapes.

Chinese Cuban restaurants offer a utilitarian ambience, simple paper placements adorned with a map of Cuba and ample portions for their mostly working-class patrons. Mi Chinita (later Sam Chinita) on the corner of Eighth Avenue and 19th Street was known for its chrome, railcar-inspired façade typical of New York City diners of the era as well as for its *ropa vieja* (shredded beef in tomato sauce) and fried rice. At La Caridad 78 on Broadway, the menu's "special combination platters" consist of *arroz frito especial* with ham, roast pork and shrimp alongside standards such as *plátanos maduros*, *chicharrones de pollo* (fried chicken chunks) or *costilla ahumada* (barbecue ribs).

Above all, Chinese Cuban restaurants provide for their Cuban customers a touch of nostalgia for a prerevolutionary era. Lisandro Pérez, CUNY professor and expert on the Cuban presence in the United States, was 11 when he left Cuba. He recalls frequenting El Wakamba in downtown Miami for fried rice and *plátanos maduros*. In his Cuban New Yorker blog, Pérez describes the interior of La Caridad 78 during a 2012 outing: "The décor (if we can call it that) is punctuated by yellowed magazine and newspaper reviews of the restaurant, and presiding over all of it is a framed image of La Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre, the restaurant's namesake and the island's Catholic patron saint, who looks over the restaurant's tables with their Chinese zodiac paper placemats." (<https://cubannewyorker.com>)

wordpress.com/tag/la-caridad-78/)

Today only a handful of the original Chinese Cuban restaurants that proliferated along Eighth Avenue and in the boroughs remain, due to high rents, gentrification and an aging immigrant generation. Kenny Yu's grandfather had established a laundry business in Cuba in the 1920s, but fled the island after the revolution and opened a restaurant in Chelsea in 1970. Yu did not meet him until the age of 12, when his grandfather brought family members directly from China to the United States. Since high school Yu worked in the restaurant, La Chinita Linda, and eventually took it over. In a June 2003 interview with Larry Tung, Yu commented that "the second and third generations are not interested in the restaurant business. They want to do other professional work, like [becoming] lawyers and doctors." (http://www.gothamgazette.com/citizen/jun03/original_cuban_chinese.shtml)

The original Chinese Cuban restaurants have expanded their offerings to account for shifting demographics and more recent migrations from Latin America. At the remaining establishments, older Spanish-speaking Chinese staff are joined by newer Chinese immigrants, including some from Peru and elsewhere in Latin America. La Dinastia on 72nd Street now refers to its cuisine as "Chinese-Latin" and offers other Caribbean specialties such as *mofongo*.

As anthropologist Lok Siu notes in a 2008 *Afro-Hispanic Review* essay, these Chinese Cuban restaurants—and Chino Latino restaurants more broadly—claim "a distinct ethnic cuisine and cultural space within the urban landscape of New York City." They challenge fixed notions of national culture that subsume alternate identities. Census categories and racial hierarchies fail to account for the secondary migrations of Asians from Latin America and the Caribbean to the United States. This neglect is beginning to change, as scholars, writers and artists increasingly explore the complex identity formations of Asians from Latin America and the Caribbean who re-



Culinary exhibit of typical Chinese dishes at Fifth Festival of Chinese Overseas, Barrio Chino, Havana. (2003).

migrate within the Americas, especially to the United States and Canada. They grapple with mixed-race identities, hybrid languages and histories of migration and displacement.

Emily Lo's family history is representative of the twists and turns of global migration between Asia and the Americas. Lo's Cuban grandmother married a Chinese immigrant who returned to China in 1949 and was never heard from again. Her grandmother left Cuba with her young mother in 1962 and found work as a seamstress in a New York City factory. Her grandmother's niece, Aida, married Chinese immigrant Jesus Loo, whose family owned restaurants in Cuba. When Aida and Jesus left the island, they opened a chain of Chinese Cuban restaurants in New York, including the flagship Asia Número Uno on Eighth Avenue at 55th Street. The Loos were among several restaurant owners featured in a 1985 *New York Times* article by Marvin Howe that noted the gradual disappearance of these establishments. Their children grew up speaking English, Spanish and Chinese and helped out with the family business. Jesus Loo's restaurants in New York City helped to fund the trans-Pacific

migrations of his cousins, including Emily Lo's father, a Chinese from Indonesia. In her 2007 essay "A Cuban-Chinese *Familia*," Lo relates how her father met her Chinese Cuban mother in New Jersey: "He was set up with my mother when she was nineteen and he twenty-nine, and this was how my own Cuban-Chinese-American *familia* came to be" (*Cuba: Idea of a Nation Displaced*).

Some Asian Latinos such as Emily Lo have embarked on journeys to learn more about their family history. Lo laments: "I could never get stories out of Aida at our lunches at La Nueva Rampa, a Cuban-Chinese restaurant in Manhattan....We'd sit down and order rice and beans, *bistec empanizado*, breaded steak, and the kind of *tostones* my grandmother and I used to hand-make in our kitchen." Although retired from the restaurant business, Aida Loo would easily fall into old patterns at the eatery owned by her friends: "She grabs her own silverware from the tray in the back. She finds the plastic pitcher of ice water and marches it head high to our table." Lo describes her journey to uncover her family history and frustrations with the boundaries imposed by academic disciplines and U.S. racial categories. She

explains: "I just wanted to know how I fit in my family. And I wanted to know how my family fit in a larger scope of history. We had studied immigration in school, but our textbooks never considered families like mine, families that were of blended heritage before they even set foot in America. We celebrated hyphenated ethnicities all the time in our diversity-conscious curriculums, but adding one more, like Cuban *and* Chinese American, didn't fit any mold."

Today, as descendants of Chinese Cubans in the United States make their way to Cuba in search of family history, they are met with a Barrio Chino in transition. After 1959, the population of ethnic Chinese in Cuba had sharply declined, and only about one hundred of the prerevolutionary immigrant population remains. However, the Chinese presence in Cuba has resurfaced through state investment and infrastructure projects, Chinese products such as bicycles and televisions, cohorts of Chinese students learning Spanish, and a handful of Chinese entrepreneurs. Festivals draw younger generations of mixed Chinese Cubans. The remaining Chinese ethnic associations run restaurants in their former meeting rooms to boost tourism and ensure survival. They maintain the tradition of serving Chinese food alongside *comida criolla* and pizza, popular among Cubans. Whether future reforms will be substantial enough to spur another influx of Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs is an open question. It is clear, though, that food and restaurants will continue to be an integral component of the Chinese Cuban migration experience in the Americas.

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One Day We Arrived in Japan

A film by Aaron Litvin and Ana Paula Hirano

LITVINSIGHT PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS "ONE DAY WE ARRIVED IN JAPAN" SAYURI RICARDO BRUNO LEONAN ANNA PAULO
SACHIKO DANIELLA EDITED BY AARON LITVIN MARLOM MEIRELLES ANA PAULA HIRANO LUELANE CORRÊA TRAVELING WITH FELIPE LACERDA
SOUND EDITOR RICARDO CUTZ COLORIST FÁBIO SOUZA CINEMATOGRAPHY BY AARON LITVIN ANA PAULA HIRANO RICARDO MARCELLO
PRODUCED BY AARON LITVIN CREATIVE CONSULTANT MARLOM MEIRELLES DIRECTED BY AARON LITVIN ANA PAULA HIRANO

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One Day We Arrived in Japan

A Transnational and Longitudinal Documentary By AARON LITVIN



Aaron Litvin filming the documentary.

IN 2003, WHEN I WAS AN UNDERGRADUATE at Harvard, I started studying the fascinating history of Japanese migration to Brazil and the more recent Brazilian migration to Japan. Brazil has the largest population of Japanese descendants (outside Japan) in the world. In 1990, the Japanese government passed a law allowing second- and third-generation Japanese descendants (the children and grandchildren of Japanese citizens) and their families to live in Japan and work there. For many Brazilians of Japanese descent, this was an attractive option, as they could earn higher salaries by going to Japan and working in factories. During the past 28 years, hundreds of thousands of Brazilians of Japanese descent and their families have gone to Japan in search of higher salaries and a better life.

The migration is overwhelmingly for economic reasons: although most of the migrants have Japanese heritage, my surveys and interviews have shown that they go to Japan in search of financial stability and a better life, not due to cultural ties or a desire for some mythical “return” to their ethnic homeland. When they arrive, most of the migrants do not speak much Japanese or identify with Japanese culture and society; that fact, along with the physical and mental toll of exhausting factory work, is a major reason why many Brazilians have such a

challenging experience in Japan.

I received grants and fellowships to do several years of field research in each country, and I wrote articles and theses that I presented at academic conferences. But in the process, I realized that while my sociological research was good for identifying trends and making generalizations based on surveys and interviews, it wasn’t really showing the lives of individual migrants and families. In 2006, I was in São Paulo finishing a year of research and was about to go to Japan for 18 months of research there. It occurred to me that, just as I was about to move from Brazil to Japan, thousands of Brazilian families were about to make the trip. I wanted to meet them, show their faces, and give them the opportunity to tell their stories—not just through interviews, but by following their journeys across the world for several years and letting them share their own lives and experiences. So, I bought video and audio equipment and, together with co-director Ana Paula Hirano, set out to find Brazilians who were about to go to Japan. That’s how the documentary *One Day We Arrived in Japan* was born. At the time, we imagined that we would see some major changes in the lives of the participants, but we didn’t foresee that this film would be a decade-long journey and that we would witness in great intimacy such dramatic and unexpected turns of fate.

The great challenge of this film was that instead of just going to Japan and interviewing Brazilians there, or providing information and statistics, we wanted to follow people’s entire immigration experience from the beginning. We wanted to do something with the film that no journalistic report could do: closely follow people’s lives for many years, showing how their hopes and expectations withstand a challenging new reality and

unexpected outcomes. That’s why the film took over a decade to make. Ana Paula and I imagined that the experience of moving to a very different country on the other side of the world would be transformative for everyone, and we wanted to capture that—but we didn’t know how it would affect each family. We needed to allow a lot of time for life to take its course. We are deeply grateful to the protagonists of the documentary for entrusting us with their stories.

To find the participants, we went to places in São Paulo where we knew people would go if they were preparing to move to Japan: employment agencies, Japanese language classes, and NGOs that host workshops about working in Japan. We interviewed dozens of families; some of them decided not to migrate, or didn’t get their Japanese visas, or decided to quit the documentary—and we ended up following five families in Japan for the first two years. Three of those families made it into the final film: a mother and daughter, a young couple, and a family of four with a small child named Bruno. The families struggled to adapt to life in Japan, as 5-year-old Bruno grew up and became a teenager.

We wanted the film to focus on the migrant families and their stories directly and transparently. For this reason, there is no voiceover narration or added music or sound effects, and there are also no “talking heads”—everyone who appears in the film has a direct connection to one of the three families. We don’t pretend that the camera isn’t there or that every scene is somehow “pure” or natural; to the contrary, I believe that the filmmaker can and should be a bit disruptive sometimes, creating situations and opportunities for truth to surface. At the same time, I guess I do appreciate a sort of simplicity and purity in documentaries: I believe that a powerful scene or interview conveys



Bruno, age 8, in Okazaki, Japan: “When I started first grade at the Japanese school, I cried, because I didn’t understand what anyone was saying. It made me want to return to Brazil. I stood there thinking, ‘What are they doing? What are they saying?’ Then I thought, ‘I’ll stop doing what I want, and I’ll imitate them.’ And I was able to interact with them a little bit. Now I’m in second grade, trying hard to become a third grader. I understand everything now – I can talk with my teacher and with my friends.” (below), a worker in Japan.

its own emotions and insights, without pseudo-poetic voiceovers or tear-jerking cello tracks. Essentially, we wanted to give the migrant families a series of occasions to share their lives and tell their own stories, without external material. We did that by recording verité footage, and by creating opportunities for reflection, such as by showing the families past interviews and footage of themselves.

The crew was just me and Ana Paula. This allowed us to become very close to the families in the film, which I think was fundamental to sharing their stories. We did some of the most powerful interviews at their houses at two in the morning. I think that this intimacy is one of the defining characteristics of the film. We also collected and incorporated their home videos, and we used a variety of cameras and aspect ratios for our own footage, so as to differentiate between past and present and to form layers of memory.

One Day We Arrived in Japan is the result of what turned out to be a massive editing project—shaping more than 200 hours of footage of three families, in two countries, over ten years, into a compelling 80-minute film with a coherent and engaging narrative structure. Ana Paula and I did a lot of preliminary editing over the years, but after filming was finally complete in 2015, four excellent filmmakers joined the team and made wonderful creative contributions. First,



Marlom Meirelles—a very talented filmmaker from Pernambuco—became the film’s creative consultant and co-editor, and together we reviewed all of the footage and edited multiple versions over the course of ten months. After that, we collaborated for two months with co-editor Luelane Corrêa (who edited many of the films of legendary director Nelson Pereira dos Santos), revising the film and adjusting scenes and transitions frame by frame. Then, during two intense weeks as editing consultant and finishing editor, Felipe Lacerda (co-director of *Bus 174*, and editor of the Brazilian classic *Central Station*) helped us to develop a more compelling narrative structure and improve the film on every level. Finally, Ricardo Cutz did the sound editing and sound mix, and the team at O2 Pós in Rio de Janeiro did the image post-production. So, what started as a two-person project became a massive team effort. And hundreds of people from around the world provided support and advice, for which we are extremely grateful. It has been quite a saga.

One Day We Arrived in Japan had its world premiere in May 2018 at the Latin American Studies Association Film Festival in Barcelona. It is now available for online viewing; see www.onedaywearrivedinjapan.com for details.

Aaron Litvin spent 30 months in Brazil and 30 months in Japan during pre-production and production of *One Day We Arrived in Japan*. Litvin graduated from Harvard College with a degree in Latin American Studies, earned an M.S. in Sociology from the University of São Paulo, and is a Ph.D. candidate in Luso-Brazilian literature and Critical Media Practice at Harvard University. He was a Fulbright Scholar in Brazil and a Japanese Government Research Scholar at Sophia University in Tokyo. His e-mail address is litvin@fas.harvard.edu

The directors express their sincere thanks to Jorge Paulo Lemann, whose generous financial support allowed them to complete the editing and post-production of the film. The David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies provided the initial grant 15 years ago for Litvin’s research on Brazil-Japan migration, and this year DRCLAS funded the directors’ travel to Barcelona for the premiere of *One Day We Arrived in Japan*.

TRADE TIES AND BEYOND



A friendly mascot greets visitors to a Chinese augmented reality company at the Mobile World Congress in Shanghai, June 2018.

Victor López Villafaña [Development in Northeast Asia](#) • Margaret Meyers [Filling the Infrastructure Gap](#) • Horacio J. Godoy [New Pirates in the Caribbean?](#) • Rebecca Ray [Chinese Development Finance and the Andean Amazon Infrastructure Boom](#) • Mario Henrique Ogasavara [Waves of Asian Investments in Brazil](#) • Renato Balderrama and Amado Trejo [Made in China 2025](#) • Rosario Santa Gadea [Understanding the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative](#) • Gilmar Masiero [China and Latin America Relations](#) • Patricia Castro Obando [A Commercial Hit That's a Product of Censorship](#) • Emiliano Valle [Dragon Mart Cancún](#) • Matt Ferchen [China-Venezuela Relations](#)

Development in Northeast Asia

A Perspective from Latin America By VÍCTOR LÓPEZ VILLAFÁÑE

I'VE BEEN STUDYING NORTHEAST ASIA—MAINLY China, Japan and South Korea—for the past four decades, and I'd like to share with *ReVista* readers what I consider to be the principal differences and lessons the rapid development of these countries can offer Latin America.

ONE REGION, THREE POWERS

After World War II, Japan became a world economic power. South Korea followed suit, and then finally after 1978, China. Nowadays, China is the second economic power in the world, Japan the third, and South Korea, the eleventh. Seventy years ago, the three countries were underdeveloped: their takeoff and economic growth have been exceptional in world history. And they became motors for the growth and development for the entire Asiatic region in terms of trade and mutual investment.

In Latin America, Argentina was regarded as an emerging power at the beginning of the 20th century with great possibilities of becoming a world power, but that never happened. I remember that famous joke attributed to Russo-American economist Simon Kuznets when he was asked about how countries should be classified. He said that there were developed countries and underdeveloped countries—and then there were Japan and Argentina. No one could explain why Japan, with so many limited resources, was a developed country, and how Argentina with such abundant resources was underdeveloped.

Mexico and Brazil, the two other large countries on the continent, had spectacular economic growth between 1950 and 1970, which led them to be dubbed Latin America's great economic miracles; however, this growth stagnated because of their high debt level which led to the so-called lost decade in Latin



Japan revived its economic growth with savings.

America between 1980 and 1990. Frequent financial crises followed. In spite of all this and because of their great economic potential, these two countries continue to figure as mid-size economic powers in the world system.

As we might imagine, the great countries of Latin America—unlike Japan, China and South Korea—did not contribute to the internal development of the continent. Foreign trade and investments kept coming primarily from overseas. Mexico is a case in point. It has a large economy, but it is a platform for trade for big U.S., Asian and European companies, which focus their investments on taking advantage of closeness to the U.S. market and of the low salaries paid to Mexican workers. The attempts at regional integration up until now have suffered from this flaw. They do not depend on the region's own economies by developing capability to restructure industrial and industrial platforms, making them dynamic as happened in East Asia. The majority of countries in Latin American

and the Caribbean continue to be very dependent on the export of resources and primary materials, and this has given rise to new debates such as that about neo-extractivism as a form of evolution, but within the context of the exploitation of natural resources as an essential means in all economic operations.

LESSONS FROM NORTHEAST ASIA

The region provides varied and important lessons for Latin America. It seems to me that the intensity of industrialization policy in the three countries is one of them. In general, all of these cases were successful in transforming ample masses of urban and rural dwellers into workers in their new industries—more than Mexico, Brazil and other Latin American countries have been able to do. Over time, these new industries generated a cycle of change and technological development, confronting the challenges that these processes of restructuring demanded. The job market absorbed many people, and later, in the face of industrial

and technological changes, workers' salaries increased, creating a virtuous cycle and increasing exports at the same time a new dynamic domestic market was created.

In contrast, the industrial growth that was important in some Latin American

spiralling rural unemployment. Almost a million and a half jobs were lost in the rural areas of Mexico between 1994 and 2004. Other migrants left low-paying jobs in the cities in search of the American dream. Salaries paid to workers in Mexico

to strengthen the industrial, technological and human resource factors to bolster the effects of trade integration within the Mexican economy. Mexico has substantial exports but basically foreign companies manufacture in Mexico and export to the United States. We should remember that Asian countries became export powerhouses in the world market without trade agreements, and that these were signed after the fact.

Without an industrial policy, which was completely abandoned in Latin America in the last decades, the continent's economies could not establish interconnections with their national industries, nor between their industries, and, indeed, in many cases industry did not even exist and foreign firms dominated the export sector. Thus, positive effects could not be generated in economic growth and job creation; technological transfer was limited. As a result, in the majority of Latin American countries, dependence on international oil prices and other natural resources continues to determine economic growth. Thus, the power of control and management of the economies follows the cycles of international prices. The continent is still—as the actual economic relation with China demonstrates—a provider of natural resources to the world market.

The stage of industrial development and import substitution in Latin America was carried out without native technological development. This was the other key to the difference with East Asia where, as historian Bruce Cumings has pointed out, authoritarian bureaucracies placed emphasis on endogenous (without external factors) industrialization and promotion of the export sector. In contrast, Latin American national industries were developed, but they never could be competitive in international markets. In almost all Latin American countries, advanced technologies were implemented through investments in industrial plants. There were no strategies to learn and to transfer these new technologies to local industries, as happened in Japan (more through the use of the acquisition of licenses and patents for technological use)



China mixes the traditional with the ultramodern.

As we might imagine, the great countries of Latin America—unlike Japan, China and South Korea—did not contribute to the internal development of the continent.

countries such as Mexico and Brazil, in the stages of development in post-war Latin America, was not sufficiently intense to prevent marginal populations in the countryside and the city from emerging as the bottleneck generated by inadequate rural and industrial development.

The case of Mexico again began to receive a lot of attention when its industrial strategy started to emphasize foreign investment and international trade as the instruments with which to transform Mexico—according to its leaders at the time—into an economic powerhouse. Thus with the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994, the migration of workers to the United States accelerated dramatically because of

are very low, and this basically constitutes a comparative advantage in keeping the costs of goods down. But, mostly because of these low wages, the domestic market lives with a permanent bottleneck. Levels of poverty are maintained just as they were in the past without new strategies to alleviate them.

I believe that the Mexican case is an example of what has been happening to different degrees throughout Latin America. Many countries saw the NAFTA experiment as a great promise that free trade with the United States would shape Mexico into an economic power similar to that of eastern Asia. It did not happen that way, because integration was carried out without strategies and prior planning

and in South Korea. For decades now, China has been acquiring and transferring new technologies to its national companies, which now constitutes one of the points of conflict with the United States.

Once the model of import substitution had run its course in Latin America, a reliance followed on external debt, implemented on a grand scale in Mexico, Brazil and Argentina during the decade of the '70s and the beginning of the '80s, which then led to financial crises and low growth. In contrast, Japan could fuel its industrial growth with financing that was a product of internal savings, while South Korea became greatly indebted almost on the levels of the large Latin American countries. The difference in the Korean case is that the borrowed resources were destined with preference to export industries that could pay off the debt and maintain growth. For its part, China has carried out its economic development with large and permanent injections of local credit derived mainly from local savings. Latin America's debt in great part was not destined to export industries, but to basic industries such as oil and gas and to government expenditures, with the enormous possibility that a great percentage of this debt was channeled into corruption, which is an endemic evil in the entire region.

RELATIONS BETWEEN ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA

Since the Spanish trading ships known as Manila Galleons engaged in regular trade between the two regions from 1565 and 1815, and perhaps since the first Asian migrants set foot on Mexican soil, the relations have existed, becoming very dynamic in the last decades between the end of the 20th century and the beginning of this 21st century. Migrations from Asia, mainly from China and Japan, have created one of the most important groups in almost all the countries on the continent. The population of Japanese origin in Brazil, for example, is the largest number of Japanese outside of Japan, and in many countries Chinatowns have become important because of China's important presence in

the region. Groups of Korean migrants and other Asian nations are also settling in Latin America as living proof of the dynamism of exchange that exists between the two regions.

Investments and trade have increased notably in the last few years. Japan has had an important economic presence since the end of World War II and China with its enormous economic potential has become the primary trading partner for many Latin American countries. Trade with Asia now takes second place after the United States for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Investment has also soared. For example, in 2008, total trade was already 143,000 million dollars, and in 2017, it had spiralled to more than 250,000 million dollars. Trade between Asia and Latin America increases on an average of 15% yearly. If this pace continues, in the next ten years, Latin American markets will make up an enormously important part of China's world trade.

Moreover, in these years, China's commercial penetration was decisive not only in helping many Latin American countries withstand the world economic crisis, but China became a primary or secondary partner for many. In the case of Chile and Brazil, China passed the United States as principal trading partner. In Argentina, Costa Rica, Peru and Cuba, China became the second most important market. The principal problem, as we have mentioned, is the fact that the trade is unequal, with Latin America selling raw materials and energy to China, while China exports manufactured goods. This puts Latin America at risk of once again creating a cycle of dependency.

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Filling the Infrastructure Gap

China's (Belt and) Road-blocks in Latin America

By MARGARET MYERS

MUCH HAS BEEN MADE OF CHINA'S REMARKABLE inroads into Latin America over the past two decades, and with good reason. In 2017 alone, China exported \$140 billion in goods, spent about \$17 billion on mergers and acquisitions, and provided \$9 billion in state finance to the region. In addition to announcing some new investment initiatives in Peru and Brazil in recent months, Beijing also recruited two new political allies—Panama and the Dominican Republic—from Taiwan's dwindling diplomatic partners in the region.

Now, as Latin America is gradually incorporated into China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)—Chinese President Xi Jinping's signature, connectivity-based foreign policy—governments are increasingly looking to China to address the region's glaring infrastructure deficit. The hope is that Chinese state banks, such as the China Development Bank and China Export-Import Bank, or other China-backed financial platforms, such as the \$40 billion Silk Road Fund or Asian Infrastructure Development Bank, can provide some of the estimated \$300 billion per year needed to modernize the region's infrastructure in the next decade.

However, if history is any indication, China's commitment to Latin American infrastructure development is unlikely to result in a slew of mega-projects in the coming years. Transport and energy sector construction has been a primary



Then-Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff and China's Prime Minister Li Keqiang signed a cooperation plan until 2021, including feasibility studies for a Bioceanic Railway Connection.

focus of Chinese engagement with Latin America for more than a decade, and is a centerpiece of Chinese policy toward the region. Even so, Chinese firms and financiers only rarely deliver operational infrastructure in Latin America, despite relatively deep pockets and considerable appetite for risk.

Despite some examples of successful project delivery, occasionally at record speed, Chinese investors are still wary of operating in Latin America. Many view the region's distance from Asia as prohibitive, and some countries' regulatory environments and bidding processes exceedingly complex or taxing. As Zuo Pin of the Shanghai International Studies University noted in Chinese journal *Guoji Guancha* in 2015, whether it's part of the BRI or not, Latin America is considered a difficult investment environment.

Moreover, the frequent failure of Chinese companies to practice due diligence in the region has led to unforeseen conflicts and resulting project delays. Preferring not to interfere in the domestic affairs of host countries, many Chinese infrastructure companies rely

on host government risk assessments and feasibility studies when planning a project, despite a history of unfortunate outcomes.

Take, for example, the involvement of China Three Gorges and China International Water and Electric Corporation in the Rositas hydroelectric dam in Bolivia, a priority project for President Evo Morales. A separate Chinese firm, Hydrochina Corporation, was hired to perform engineering and financial feasibility assessments and to take part in designing the nearly US\$1 billion project, but none of the Chinese companies involved sufficiently understood—or were reportedly informed of—the potential for opposition to the project by local communities, whose concerns about displacement and food security have delayed the project indefinitely. The potential effects on these communities were such that the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues eventually took up their demands.

In other cases, Beijing knowingly accepts high levels of risk in order to strengthen political partnerships in the

region, ensure economic gains, or advance an especially high-profile project. Of all of China's proposed infrastructure projects in Latin America, the Bi-oceanic Railway is arguably the most emblematic of BRI principles, including infrastructure-based connectivity and trade facilitation. If built, the mega-project would link Brazil's soy heartland to the Peruvian coast, enabling safer and quicker transport of soy to China, and connecting fragmented railway segments across South America. The Michel Temer and Pedro Pablo Kuczynski governments in Brazil and Peru both shelved the project in 2017, citing environmental and other concerns, but Beijing continues to promote the railway and to favor a so-called "northern route," running from Ica, Peru, to Santos, Brazil. The northern route would be the most cost-effective for China, but is widely recognized as the most environmentally and socially costly of three proposed options. Initial plans have it passing through especially biodiverse areas, such as the Isonahua Reserve and Vale do Rio Juruá, and through relatively untouched forests in Brazil's Mato Grosso, Rondônia and Acre states.

At present, China is perhaps the only actor that could carry out a project of this scale, but it's hard to imagine that any Chinese entity could do so without causing considerable public backlash, reputational fallout or damage to the broader China-Latin America relationship. Latin American civil society and watchdog organizations have already made known the likely effects of northern route construction on tropical savanna and forest, and on the hundreds of indigenous communities living there.

To be sure, there are also examples of Chinese companies taking necessary precautions and complying with local procedures and regulations, yet still grappling with Latin American political uncertainty in its various forms. Mexico's annulment of a high-speed passenger train line linking Mexico City to Queretaro in 2014 reportedly shocked China Railway Construction Corporation, which had won a bid for the project as part of a Chinese-



Belgrano Cargas Project, Argentina

Mexican consortium. The agreement was rescinded after an outcry from Mexican lawmakers and amidst speculation that public works projects benefited allies of Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto and his Institutional Revolutionary Party. For China, which was actively seeking to export increasingly high-tech products and services, Mexico's about-face was an awkward development, especially considering that this deal was highly publicized in the Chinese media. Chinese citizens took to the Internet en masse to condemn Mexico's decision. Even so, China may very well participate in a resurrected version of the project, recently promoted by Mexican President-elect Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

Whatever the reason, setbacks for Chinese infrastructure companies are more the rule than the exception in most Latin American countries. So, while we may see a BRI-related uptick in Chinese bids for regional infrastructure projects, Latin Americans would be well advised to temper their expectations. China is just as likely to attach the BRI label to existing projects—as it has in other regions—than to pursue dozens of new high-profile deals. The Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar (BCIM) Economic Corridor, a core component of the BRI, was conceived

as far back as 1999, for example, fourteen years before Xi Jinping ever mentioned the Belt and Road.

None of this has stopped Chinese officials and executives from expressing interest in Latin American roads, rail, ports and other forms of infrastructure in recent months. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi called for “greater connectivity integrating land and ocean” during the January 2018 China-Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) Forum. More recently, Chinese Ambassador Jia Guide announced \$10 billion in Chinese investment in Peru over the next three years, including in the country's telecommunications, construction and infrastructure sectors. In addition, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, and Bolivia joined the list of around seventy Belt and Road Cooperation Agreement signatories this year, while the Panama City-David railway became an official BRI infrastructure project. More Latin American and Caribbean states are expected to formalize their ties to the BRI in the coming months, with the expectation of securing China-backed infrastructure deals.

Whether any of this materializes will depend, among many other factors, on

the extent to which Latin American governments are inclined to engage in policy coordination and strategic planning in the coming years. Chinese companies would benefit considerably from a register of regional projects that are not only badly needed, but also thought to be executable and sustainable by a variety of Latin American stakeholders. The Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America (IIRSA), an effort by South American governments to produce a new infrastructure network for the continent, including dozens of roads, waterways, ports, and energy and communications projects, is an important start. However, according to non-governmental organization International Rivers, few attempts have been made to assess the cumulative impacts of IIRSA's ambitious plans.

Chinese attention to the many externalities associated with public works and other projects would also improve success rates. Beijing will continue to take on high levels of overseas risk in support of political objectives, to ensure energy and food security, and to promote economic growth in China, but individual Chinese companies can learn from the setbacks they've encountered in Latin America as they pursue new projects. Many, such as mining company MMG in Peru and State Grid in Brazil, are already arguably doing so. China's success in crafting a “community of shared destiny” with Latin America—a cooperative framework promoted by Chinese officials in recent months—will depend on the continued application of lessons learned by Chinese firms. Until its companies improve their rates of project completion in Latin America, China can be expected to make only a marginal dent in the region's infrastructure deficit.

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The 2,300-room Baha Mar resort hotel in the Bahamas received Chinese financing.

New Pirates in the Caribbean?

The Rising Chinese Wave By **HORACIO J. GODOY**

ENGLISH PIRATES TROLLED THE CARIBBEAN five hundred years ago seeking the best plunder for the British Crown. Spanish colonizers of the Americas shipped the gold and silver from this region to Europe. Later, the United States rose to power and defined the whole Americas as their area of influence through the Monroe Doctrine. The Caribbean lived a particularly intense version of this doctrine. The 20th century began with President McKinley intervening to support the independence of Cuba from Spain and imposing the

Platt Amendment on the island, followed by Theodore Roosevelt taking Panama to build the Canal, and finally Reagan invading Grenada and Bush bombing Panama. The Caribbean has been a focal point of the major economic players of the world now for five centuries.

More recently, for a short period, Hugo Chávez's Venezuela became an active player in the Caribbean to fill a gap of an increasingly indifferent United States, disbursing cheap fuel and financing broken economies through the oil alliance

Petrocaribe.

Today, a new global power is making waves in the Caribbean. It is the People's Republic of China. In order to satisfy its voracious internal demand, China began to acquire the area's natural resources (bauxite, alumina, nickel) and agricultural products (sugar), as it did in the rest of Latin America. At the same time, it significantly increased its exports of manufactured goods to these countries and is now the largest or second-largest trade partner for almost all the region.

Moreover, in countries like Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica, to name a few, Chinese imports are up to five times larger than exports to the Asian republic.

Since 2015, however, China started to go well beyond trade, to concentrate also on investment, especially in infrastructure such as roads, ports, tourism and energy. Through its development banks, the government has multiplied its loans to Latin America sixfold since 2007, according to the Council on Hemispheric Affairs, and the Caribbean is not the exception. In a few years, China has become the major foreign investor in this continent, surpassing the United States and Europe. A closer look at some of these investments shows the magnitude of China's impact on the small Caribbean nations.

Known as the "Beijing highway," Highway 2000, completed in 2016, is a state-of-the-art divided road that connects Jamaica north to south. The 41.6 mile artery that cost \$732 million, linking the capital city of Kingston with the popular beachside resort of Ocho Rios, may be the single biggest investment by China in the Caribbean thus far. The highway was constructed by the China Harbor Engineering Co. (CHEC), a state-owned global company.

In return, the Jamaican government has handed over to the Chinese 1,200 acres of land along the road for the construction and development of hotels and resorts. Three luxury hotels with up to 2,400 rooms are planned, as well as a host of other investments in the area. Despite some serious questions concerning jobs for local workers, environmental threats to the sites, and potential negative effects on local competitors, the Jamaican government continues to be very supportive of new Chinese investments.

China has also expanded investment and trade in Cuba, despite their limited relationship during the Cold War. Trade between the two countries has increased since 2010, and in 2016 China surpassed Venezuela as Cuba's largest trading partner, with a bilateral trade of \$2.5 billion, only 257 million of which

In order to satisfy its voracious internal demand, China began to acquire the area's natural resources (bauxite, alumina, nickel) and agricultural products (sugar), as it did in the rest of Latin America.

were exports to China. Chinese firms have invested in Cuban infrastructure with projects such as renewable energy research, hotel development and tourism. A new Air China Beijing-Havana flight has increased the number of Chinese visitors to Cuba since 2017 and is expected to grow further.

Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Panama and Suriname have all received a major influx of Chinese funds, varying from economic investments to gifts and direct aid. In 2017, Beijing went even further and presented a new comprehensive development plan for Grenada. This is a blueprint for infrastructure development, including highways, railways, deep-water ports for cruise and cargo ships and a new economic center built around St. George, the capital. "Helping other nations to design a national development plan is a demonstration of our soft power," said Chen Fengying, a fellow at the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR). "It is an equal and friendly gesture from China to other developing countries."

CHINESE ADVENTURERS

However, not all Chinese investments have been so orderly and successful. Largely encouraged and enabled by China's central government, Chinese firms set out to invest overseas with diverse qualifications and capacity. Civil society activists in Latin America and the Caribbean have criticized a few of these projects for employing and giving special conditions to Chinese workers and lacking effective environmental impact policies. Some projects have run out of funding, causing great economic distress, and in others, the origin and intentions of investors have been opaque.

In 2016, for example, the Chinese had

plans for a monumental deep-sea port on the coast of Jamaica's Great Goat Island, with a price tag of 1.5 billion dollars, to process cargo from the newly expanded Panama Canal. It would have been the biggest Chinese investment in the region to date, but the project was brought to a halt, and later virtually shelved, due to strong pressure from environmental groups that argued the area was an ecological reserve, home to endangered local species.

The Bahamas partnered with China on a number of high-profile investments including trans-shipment ports and luxury resorts to accommodate the growing tourist trade. In 2017, the Baha Mar resort, a \$4.2 billion project with 2,300 rooms, finally opened its doors, some four years behind schedule and with severe financial difficulties including a bankruptcy of the initial owners and hundreds of jobs lost. The import-export bank of China finally sold the project to the Cheng family from Hong Kong, known for its casino businesses in Macao. They completed the works and inaugurated (although partially) the site only last year.

The construction of the Nicaragua Canal, an allegedly \$50 billion project to be financed by private Chinese investors, was to begin in 2013. Surrounded by secrecy and doubts regarding the funds, the future of the project remains uncertain. A recent study by Belgian-based research institute Porteconomics shows that the project is rife with uncertainties and challenges, as well as high economic and environmental costs. Additionally, Nicaragua does not have diplomatic relations with Beijing, as it still recognizes Taipei.

WHY THE CARIBBEAN?

In 2016, China released its White



The Chinese are constructing beachside resorts in the Caribbean.

Paper on Latin America and the Caribbean and introducing guidelines for the region, complementing its first 2008 paper on the region. The White Paper lays out broad principles of peace and stability, non-interference and mutually beneficial relationships, which are to be the basis of China's engagement with South America. China has become a member or observer state in most regional international organizations, from the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) to the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), a regional organization including all countries except the United States. It is also an active partner within the Caribbean Community of the English, French and Dutch-speaking countries, known as CARICOM.

Why would the second biggest economy in the world bother to develop such tight relations with the small nations of the Caribbean?

"It's the economy," most analysts answer. They argue that trade, as in the whole world, is China's main motivation. Caitlyn Campbell states, for example, in a U.S.-China Economic and Security

Review Commission (UCESC) report, that "China's engagement with the Caribbean is primarily economic in nature and appears to be tied to Beijing's broader efforts to gain access to key markets."

It makes sense to claim that in Latin America, China had initially focused on assuring access to the region's natural resources. However, Caribbean economies are too small to be significant for China's trading plans. This region accounts for less than one percent of the Asian country's trade. But viewed from the Caribbean perspective, China's partnership is indeed very significant.

Other studies emphasize China's intention to contribute to South-South cooperation for development. This explanation is particularly strong given the scarce attention that the region has been receiving from its traditional partners, the United States, Europe and South America. Nevertheless, as expert Evan Ellis has noted, "China's Caribbean involvement does not represent an altruistic Sino-Marshall Plan. Beijing talks about 'win-win,' but actually this means 'China winning, and if Latin America will

go along with what China wants, that's good too."

Other observers contend that China has been investing systematically in the Caribbean in the last 15 years as part of Beijing's diplomatic efforts to obtain the recognition of the People's Republic of China (PRC) over that of Taiwan. Of the 19 countries in the world that maintain formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan, ten are in Latin America and, with the exception of Paraguay, all are in Central America and the Caribbean.

In the years leading up to the 2007 Cricket World Cup, for example, China doled out \$132 million to Caribbean countries in aid and flexible loans. The soft touch rendered some fruits. In 2005, after Grenada severed ties with Taiwan and recognized Beijing, it received a token of appreciation from the mainland Chinese government: a \$55-million cricket stadium.

A 2008 diplomatic truce between China and Taiwan came to an end in 2016, when Taiwan elected nationalist Tsai Ing-wen of the Democratic Progressive Party as president. China's push for switching recognition became stronger then, and it has been paying off lately. In 2017, after a Chinese conglomerate funded and completed expansion of the Panama Canal, Panama cut ties with Taiwan and recognized the People's Republic. The Dominican Republic followed suit, and in May 2018 announced its severance of relations with Taiwan and recognition of Beijing. Prior to this decision, China had promised \$800 million in infrastructure investments, including the Yuna River Project, a construction of low-cost housing and a trash recycling/energy generating plant.

A third explanation of Beijing's interest in the Caribbean is geopolitical. Some specialists consider that China, responding to its global strategic plans, is defying the U.S. influence in the area. "Beyond market access, China's increased presence in Caribbean affairs can be understood as a subtle jab at American Western Hemisphere dominance at a time when Washington is pushing Beijing

in the South China Sea,” says University of Akron China specialist Jared Ward. Although Ward explains that China does not represent a direct threat to U.S. security today, he argues China’s footprint will grow and challenge U.S. power.

There are no indications so far that Chinese growing influence in the Caribbean poses a security challenge to the United States. China’s military and security presence in the region is minimal. Cooperation, loans and institutional relations are indeed growing in the military and security sectors, but seem to be mostly token gestures, like sending military support troops and medical units with the UN mission for the recovery of Haiti after the earthquake or offering other countries vehicles for rapid police deployment.

For the last five centuries, the Caribbean has seen rising and declining powers navigate its waters, and what happened in that region reflected shifts in power in the world. It is no different today. The United States seems to be in retreat. In 2013 Secretary of State John Kerry announced the end of the Monroe Doctrine. He stressed the need and desire of the United States to re-engage with the region, but this has not yet taken place and, under the current circumstances, seems unlikely that it will happen in the near future.

Thus the real question for the Caribbean leaders is not whether China’s economic and political influence will affect the United States, but rather how they are going to take advantage of their developing relationship with China. They could seek a different historical path, so that the newcomers are not yet another wave of pirates in this sea, but visitors who will help to produce greater autonomy and a more prosperous future for their citizens.

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Chinese Development Finance and the Andean Amazon Infrastructure Boom

By REBECCA RAY

WHILE DIPLOMATIC TENSIONS SIMMER between the U.S. government and its counterparts in Latin America and in China, the South Americans have been growing closer to the Chinese, particularly in the area of development finance. Six South American nations (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Venezuela) have applied for membership in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and China has also invited Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries to join the “Belt and Road Initiative” of infrastructure links between Asia and the world. This coming year, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) will hold its annual meeting in China.

CHINA’S EXPANDING PRESENCE IN ANDEAN AMAZONIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

China’s presence in LAC has not only been growing in size but also shifting from a focus on extracting raw materials toward financing infrastructure necessary to produce and transport them. Figure 1 shows the last decade of Chinese merger and acquisition investment in LAC. While the first several years were focused on extraction, electricity generation and distribution have dominated more recently.

SEE FIGURE 1

China’s shift toward LAC infrastructure finance comes as the Andean Amazon—the western Amazon basin and central Andean highlands of Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia—is

experiencing an infrastructure boom with help from international development finance institutions (DFIs). This region is particularly challenging for infrastructure planning, as it boasts the richest biodiversity in the hemisphere as well as the “uncontacted frontier”—the highest concentration of voluntarily isolated and uncontacted indigenous communities on earth. Figure 2 shows international DFI-financed infrastructure projects approved and completed between 2000 and 2015, compared to new projects and those still in the pipeline. The last 15 years saw 64 projects completed, including many hydropower dams along the edge of the Amazon basin and in the Andean highlands. Since then, 58 new projects have already been completed or approved, and they are expanding further into the Amazon basin itself. The Andean Amazon is at a crucial juncture for determining how this unfolding infrastructure boom will unfold.

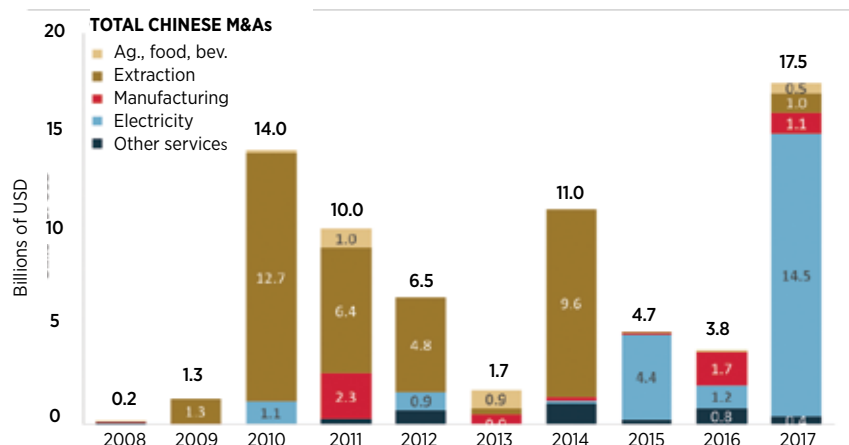
SEE FIGURE 2

Chinese policy banks—the China Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China—play major roles in this expansion. As Figure 3 shows, Chinese DFI infrastructure finance in the Amazon basin is growing quickly. While Chinese DFIs accounted for fewer than one in 10 projects between 2000 and 2015, they are financing one-fourth of new projects—and one-third of those in the Amazon basin itself.

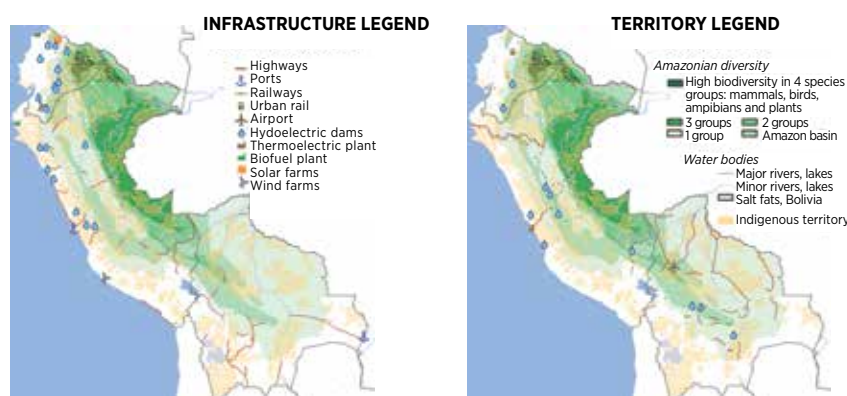
SEE FIGURE 3

FIGURE 1: Chinese Mergers and Acquisitions in LAC, 2008-2017

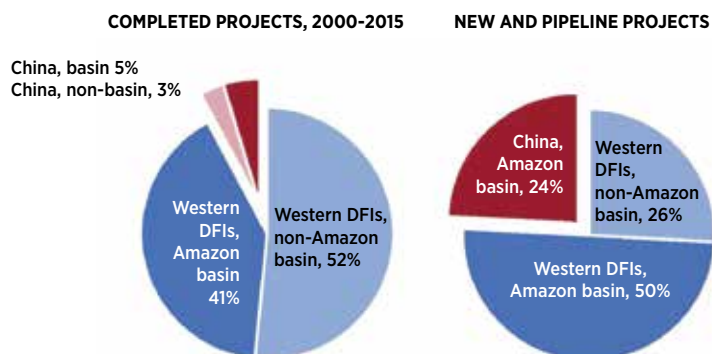
Source: Rebecca Ray, 2018. China-Latin America Economic Bulletin: 2018 Edition. Boston University

**FIGURE 2: International DFI-Financed Infrastructure Projects in Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. Completed Projects, 2000-2015 New and Pipeline Projects**

Source: Rebecca Ray, Kevin Gallagher, and Cynthia Sanborn. (2018). "Standardizing Sustainable Development? Development Banks in the Andean Amazon" Boston University.

**FIGURE 3: Infrastructure projects in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia, by financing and location**

Source: Rebecca Ray, Kevin Gallagher, and Cynthia Sanborn. (2018). "Standardizing Sustainable Development? Development Banks in the Andean Amazon" Boston University.



LAC undoubtedly need infrastructure, and China's participation will help fill that gap. Marianne Fay and Mary Morrison, writing for the World Bank in 2007, estimated that the region will need to expand its infrastructure investment from its current level of less than two percent of GDP (the least of any middle-income region) to between three and six percent of GDP to diversify away from reliance on raw materials. Further World Bank research in 2017 concluded that to fulfill its promise of improving living standards, LAC infrastructure investment will also need to improve in quality, accessibility and sustainability.

CHINESE POLICY BANKS AND ESRM

LAC's need for infrastructure improvement—not just expansion—seems well matched with China's pursuit of "a new type of international relations with win-win cooperation at the core" of its relationship with LAC (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016). However, Chinese DFIs have a particularly passive approach to environmental and social risk management (ESRM), which may leave them vulnerable to attracting riskier projects in an already sensitive region, potentially impacting China's goals of cooperation-based diplomatic relations.

Table 1 (next page) shows the ESRM approaches of major DFIs in the Andean Amazon region. They range from a passive "light green" approach to a highly active "dark green" approach. Table 1 divides DFIs into columns depending on whether these projects require a formal system of environmental and social safeguards ("conditional harmonization") or rely on borrower standards ("national recognition"). It divides them into rows based on whether they offer concessional assistance to help borrowers *reach* the applicable standards ("capability enhancement") or rely on the current state of national institutions ("capability deference"). Chinese DFIs—together with Brazil's national development bank BNDES—occupy the "light green" quadrant, "national recognition with capability deference." Chinese DFIs' passive ESRM approach

TABLE 1: ESRM Approaches of International DFIs Active in the Andean Amazon

Source: Rebecca Ray, 2018. China-Latin America Economic Bulletin: 2018 Edition. Boston University

	NATIONAL RECOGNITION	CONDITIONAL HARMONIZATION
CAPABILITY DEFERENCE	QUADRANT 1: “LIGHT GREEN” BNDES CDB CHEXIM	QUADRANT 2: “YELLOW GREEN” IFC OBD INVEST (IIC) US EXIM
CAPABILITY ENHANCEMENT	QUADRANT 3: “BLUE GREEN” CAF	QUADRANT 4: “DARK GREEN” IDB IBRD (WORLD BANK)

TABLE 1: ESRM Approaches of International DFIs Active in the Andean AmazonSource: Adapted from Kevin Gallagher and Fei Yuan. (2017). “Standardizing Sustainable Development: A Comparison of Development Banks in the Americas,” *Journal of Environment & Development* 26(3), 243-271. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1070496517720711>

is not without benefits. Their lack of formal safeguards accelerates their approvals, avoiding what Chris Humphrey calls the “hassle factor” of traditional development finance. The World Bank’s new Environmental and Social Framework may partly address these delays by relying on borrowers’ “country systems” of assessment and monitoring. Nonetheless, at present the World Bank and IDB both face significant disadvantages in this regard: Humphrey has calculated that IDB approval takes an average of 5.8 months and World Bank projects in LAC take 14 months (“The ‘Hassle Factor’ of MDB Lending and Borrower Demand in Latin America.” In S. Park & J. Strand (Eds.), *Global Economic Governance and the Development Practices of the Multilateral Development Banks*. London: Routledge).

Despite these advantages, Chinese DFIs’ deferential ESRM framework may attract projects that have failed to pass other DFIs’ safeguards processes – or which pose enough risk to make traditional DFI financing time-consuming or potentially impossible. DFIs do not regularly publish

their rejections, so it is unknown which Chinese-financed infrastructure projects have been rejected elsewhere. However, bank records show that planners for some of the region’s largest flagship projects—such as Ecuador’s Coca-Codo Sinclair dam—sought Chinese financing only after years of seeking approval through DFIs with more active ESRM approaches.

ESRM IN ACTION: THE CASE OF COCA-CODO SINCLAIR

Over the last two years, Boston University’s Global Development Policy Center has partnered with colleagues at FLACSO Ecuador; Universidad del Pacífico in Lima, Peru; and INESAD in La Paz to explore the extent to which various approaches to ESRM contribute to project outcomes. Among the case studies examined was Coca-Codo Sinclair (CCS), Ecuador’s largest hydroelectric dam. CCS was financed by the Export-Import Bank of China (CHEXIM) and built by Sinohydro, though the project was previously considered by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Across all six case studies in three countries, results show

that three factors are crucial in mitigating environmental and social risks: stakeholder engagement; robust environmental impact assessments (EIAs); and transparency and accountability. (For more on this work, see Rebecca Ray, Kevin Gallagher, and Cynthia Sanborn. “Standardizing Sustainable Development? Development Banks in the Andean Amazon” Boston University, 2018.) CCS case study researchers (María Cristina Vallejo, Betty Espinoza, Francisco Venes, Víctor López, and Susana Anda) found major shortcomings in the project’s management in each of the crucial areas.

CCS sits among small, non-indigenous communities, which are not covered by Ecuador’s guarantee of prior consultation for indigenous nations. Instead, these communities had a *socialización* process in which project details were communicated and community concerns noted. Interviews with community members show a near-universal understanding that CCS promised ample employment for local workers and opportunities for local contracting of worker lodging. However, the lack of formal commitments meant that the community had little recourse

when the contractor brought workers from another Sinohydro worksite in coastal Ecuador and housed them in a separate worker camp, leading to significant social conflict and numerous protests.

CCS's environmental impact was assessed in two stages, corresponding to two loans: one for the dam and one for associated high-tension power lines. No comprehensive assessment of the entire project was performed, nor were cascading risks between the two project parts considered, as would have been required if it had received IDB financing. No catastrophic environmental problems have occurred yet but given the proximity of the active Reventador volcano and the prevalence of earthquakes in the area, this simplified EIA process may leave CHEXIM with unanticipated risks.

Finally, CCS's full environmental impact is unknown, because of lagging transparency. Coca-Codo Sinclair was charged with performing its own environmental audits (an arrangement that presents serious conflicts of interest) but has not published them as required. Labor problems have also been exacerbated by inadequate accountability. Unsafe labor conditions prevailed during construction despite worker complaints, until after an outbreak of typhoid fever related to unsafe water, the deaths of 13 workers from a

platform collapse, and eventually a worker strike. After that point, Labor Minister Francisco Vacas visited the site to spur a resolution; fieldwork interviews show that conditions improved thereafter. Ideally, an effective system of transparency and accountability would have entailed active project monitoring and evaluation, with the goal of preventing these instances of worker deaths, illnesses, and conflict.

Chinese policy banks' deferential approach to ESRM enabled an ambitious project like CCS to be approved quickly and with few bureaucratic hurdles. But flagship projects like CCS stretch the need for monitoring beyond national institutions' experience and create incentives to overlook due diligence to save time, save money or save face. By establishing its own standards like the World Bank or IDB do, or by helping national institutions enforce their own standard like CAF does, CHEXIM could help prevent similar problems in future projects.

DISCUSSION: IMPORTANCE OF MUTUALLY-REINFORCING NETWORKS

Despite these problems, our work suggests that bank safeguards alone cannot determine the environmental and social impacts of infrastructure projects. If that were the case, projects

financed by DFIs with the most stringent standards—the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank—would have universally positive outcomes, which did not emerge in any of the case studies.

Nor are strict *national* regulations sufficient, though governments ultimately oversee enforcement of social and environmental norms. Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia's standards are among the world's most ambitious, covering indigenous consultation, labor rights and liability for environmental damages. However, none of the case studies showed adequately implemented national standards.

Instead, this research shows that safeguards succeed or fall short depending on the strength of collaboration between banks and national authorities. Effective safeguard implementation appears to be associated with *mutually-reinforcing* networks of support from both sides. DFIs and national governments have similar—but not identical—project goals, and answer to different constituencies. Through collaboration in project oversight, they can ensure that a wider range of concerns is considered, and a broader array of resources harnessed to address them.

In the context of maximizing overall benefits, Chinese policy banks' deferential approach to ESRM gives them a distinct disadvantage relative to other DFIs in the region. LAC's burgeoning relationship with China has brought new partnerships and opportunities for development finance, but also new risks. Pursuing those opportunities while mitigating the risks will be crucial in ensuring a truly "win-win" relationship.



Environmental and social safeguards must be provided for Amazon communities.

Rebecca Ray is a post-doctoral research fellow at the Boston University Global Development Policy Center. She holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and an MA in international development studies from the George Washington University Elliott School of International Affairs. She is the lead editor of China and Sustainable Development in Latin America: the Social and Environmental Dimension (Anthem Press, 2017)

Waves of Asian Investments in Brazil

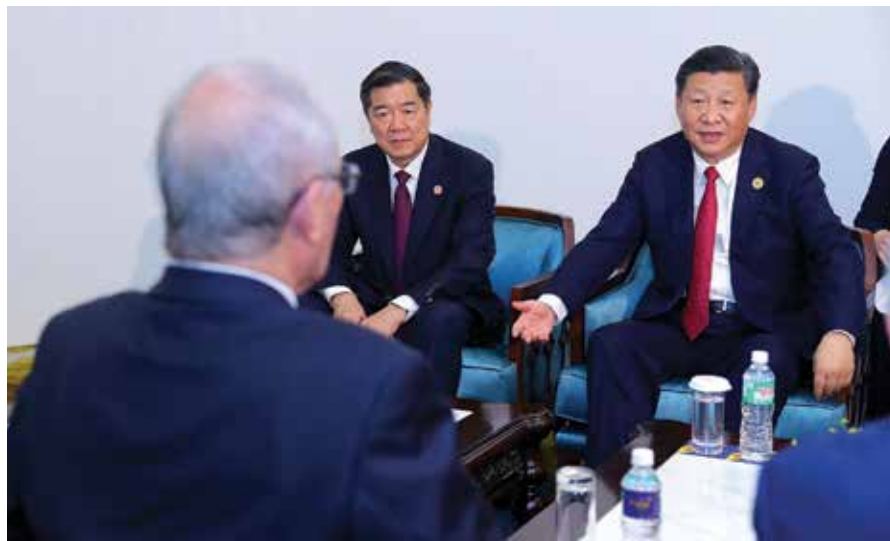
China, Japan and South Korea By **MARIO HENRIQUE OGASAVARA**

CHINA, JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA ARE THE MOST critical economic and political powers in the East Asian region. Latin America represents an important destination of foreign direct investment, particularly in the Brazilian market. Brazil, which has the world's fifth largest population and its eighth largest economy, is considered to have a large growth potential as one of the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China). Despite its current domestic political and economic crisis, the country has weathered such situations successfully in the past. Remarkably, Brazil received waves of investments from these Asian countries throughout its history, in various entries and patterns.

FIRST ASIAN WAVE: JAPANESE INVESTMENTS

The Japanese-Brazilian relationship began in 1908 when the first Japanese ship *Kasato Maru* arrived in Brazil with 165 immigrant families to work in agricultural fields, especially in coffee cultivation. Currently, Brazil is the country with the largest Japanese community outside Japan, estimated at more than 1.6 million people, a priceless asset in strengthening the bonds between both countries over the past century. Japanese investments in Brazil started in 1935 following a trade mission from that country, and many Japanese companies related to the cotton textile industry began to establish subsidiaries there. To mediate the trade between Japan and Brazil, some Japanese trading firms and banks opened offices in Brazil and created the Japanese Chamber of Commerce.

Japanese investment boomed in the 1950s, when Brazil began to attract the attention of Japanese companies as a potential market for manufacturers and a supply source of raw material. Besides the



Chinese President Xi Jinping (right) meeting with then-Peruvian president Pedro Pablo Kuczynski (across from him) in Da Nang, Vietnam, in 2017.

cotton-related firms, there are also other Japanese companies set up subsidiaries in Brazil, such as Pilot Pen Corporation, Ishikawajima-Harima, Ajinomoto, Yanmar Diesel, and Toyota Motors, which was the first Toyota car assembly plant established abroad. This first boom of manufacturing investments exhibited two special features. First, compared to the Japanese standards at that time, the investment was substantial. Second, these companies established full- or majority-owned subsidiaries.

The second boom of Japanese investments occurred in the 1970s as Japanese companies and Brazilian state-owned enterprises embarked on large joint projects (known as “national projects”) making significant raw-material investment. During this period, Japanese firms invested as minority owners in ventures related to petrochemicals, aluminum, pulp and paper industries. Another important joint investment related to the “national projects” was

Between 2010 and 2015, the Chinese government invested US\$ 37.5 billion in the country, which is a significant amount surpassing Japan as the leading Asian investor in Brazil.

the Japanese-Brazilian Program for the Cerrado Development (PRODECER), involving JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) and the Brazilian government aiming at expanding the agricultural production of soybeans in the Cerrado region.

The third boom of Japanese investment occurred from 2008 through 2016 with an average of US\$3 billion flow of investment per year. It started with the celebration of the 100th

anniversary of Japanese immigration to Brazil, prompting many Japanese firms to invest in the steel sector, in bio-energy and the automotive industry. For instance, the establishment of a joint venture between Sumitomo Metals and the French company Vallourec aims at producing seamless steel pipes in Brazil to supply the national and international markets. Likewise, Mitsui & Co. and Petrobrás established a joint venture to implement bioethanol related projects.

In the automotive sector, Japanese companies such as Toyota (6th), Honda (8th) and Nissan (10th) have been in the top ten carmakers in terms of sales volume in the Brazilian market in 2017. Together, these three companies had 12.2% of market share in 2014 and increased to 18.4% in 2017. Notably, Japanese companies are well ranked in car segments that provide the best profit margins in the automobile industry: sedan and SUV (Sports Utility Vehicle). For the sedan segment, Toyota Corolla and Honda Civic represented 67% of total volume sales, while Honda HR-V and Nissan Kicks had 33% of sales in the SUV segment. The excellent performance in sales volume required reinvestments in some production plants. New plants have been built in other cities such as Itirapina (Honda), Porto Feliz (Toyota) and Resende (Nissan).

SECOND ASIAN WAVE: KOREAN INVESTMENTS

The second wave of Asian investment in Brazil came from South Korea. Although the immigration of Koreans to Brazil started officially in 1963, which inaugurated a potential relationship between Brazil and South Korea, the first boom of Korean companies began twenty years later in the 1990s. The investment boom came particularly in the electronics sector with Samsung and LG establishing production plants in the Free Zone of Manaus (Amazon state). In addition, some companies in the automobile industry, such as Hyundai and Asia Motors, took advantage of the financial incentives provided by the Brazilian government to establish assembly plants

in less developed regions in Brazil.

Based on statistics from the Brazilian Central Bank, the second boom of Korean investments took place from 2010 through 2012 with an average of US\$1 billion of commitments yearly. The funds went to the establishment of manufacturing plants in the steel, construction machinery, and automotive sectors. Dongkuk Steel Mill and Posco established a joint venture with Vale, a Brazilian multinational firm in the metals and mining sector.

In the automobile sector, Hyundai Motors already had manufacturing plants in Brazil since 2004. However, its passenger cars became increasingly popular in that country as demand for high-quality yet affordable vehicles rose in the subsequent years. To take advantage of this growing success in the Brazilian market, Hyundai opened a new major production plant in 2012 with more than US\$700 million of investment and developed a new car model (HB-20) tailored to the Brazilian consumer. HB-20 is a small car with a beautiful design that quickly gained a reputation for excellent quality and value as a “premium” brand quickly. Before the launch of the HB-20, Hyundai was ranked as the ninth-largest carmaker in Brazil, an industry that was dominated by Fiat, Volkswagen, GM and Ford, and was listed behind Toyota and Honda. In 2017, Hyundai became one of the top five carmakers in Brazil, surpassing the Japanese automakers Toyota (6th) and Honda (8th). Also, HB-20 became in 2017 the second-largest model in volume sales in the small car segment.

Hyundai also established, through its subsidiary Hyundai-Rotem, a production plant of trains to supply regional transit systems as well as a commuter railway in other cities in Brazil. This train factory aims at becoming Hyundai's second-largest plant in the world. While it was initially focused on the Brazilian market, it now seeks to serve the broader region.

THIRD ASIAN WAVE: CHINESE INVESTMENTS

The third Asian wave of investments came from China. In 1810, the Chinese

were the first Asian people to arrive in Brazil. However, the economic Chinese-Brazilian relationship intensified only two hundred years later, but then it had a very intense impact on this bilateral connection. In 2009, for the first time, China became the largest Brazilian trade partner, surpassing the United States. Most of the trade is related to the export of commodities that are products of Brazilian firms.

Chinese investments started mainly in the second decade of the 21st century, but at four different moments. Between 2010 and 2015, the Chinese government invested US\$ 37.5 billion in the country, which is a significant amount surpassing Japan as the leading Asian investor in Brazil. The first boom occurred in 2010 focused on business related to commodity products. An example is an acquisition of the operation of the major oil company, Repsol's Brazilian subsidiary, for US\$7.1 billion by Sinopec Group, strengthening the presence of China in the natural resource sector of the Brazilian market.

The second boom (2011-2013) occurred in the manufacturing sector. Chinese firms established manufacturing plants in the machinery and equipment (Sany Group), automotive (Chery Automobile Company), electronics and communication sectors. The latter refers to Huawei and Lenovo, which increased their business operations during a favorable period of economic growth and expansion of the Brazilian consumer market. The third boom occurred in late 2013 with the establishment of Chinese banks, such as the China Construction Bank Corporation that acquired Brazilian Bic Bank, and the investment of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) to support the internationalization of yuan and the trade and investment between China and Brazil.

More recently, the fourth boom (2014-2015) is related to the massive amount of investment in the infrastructure sector, mainly related to the construction of energy power plants, and the acquisition of assets in the transmission and

China Three Gorges (CTG) became consolidated as the primary private energy generator by acquiring assets of Dulke Energy (US\$1.2 billion), Triunfo (R\$1.7 billion) and Jupiá and Ilha Solteira (R\$13.8 billion).

generation of energy. For instance, State Grid acquired US\$1 billion in assets of Plena Transmissora and CPFL for R\$15 billion, gaining the participation of 13% of the Brazilian market of the energy distribution. China Three Gorges (CTG) became consolidated as the primary private energy generator by acquiring the assets of Dulke Energy (US\$1.2 billion), Triunfo (R\$1.7 billion) and Jupiá and Ilha Solteira (R\$13.8 billion). These figures show that although the Chinese investments came later than those of other Asian countries, they came in amounts showing an exceptional commitment to the economic relationship.

ASIAN INVESTMENTS IN RECENT TIMES

In most recent years, these three central Asian countries (Japan, South Korea and China) continue to invest in the Brazilian market but focus on different sectors. For instance, although Brazil had suffered from a severe economic crisis, the sales volume of the franchising sector has continuously increased on average by 8.2% per year. The World Franchise Council confirms the representativeness of this sector showing that Brazil ranks as the world's fourth in the number of brands offered through the franchising model. We can highlight some Japanese companies

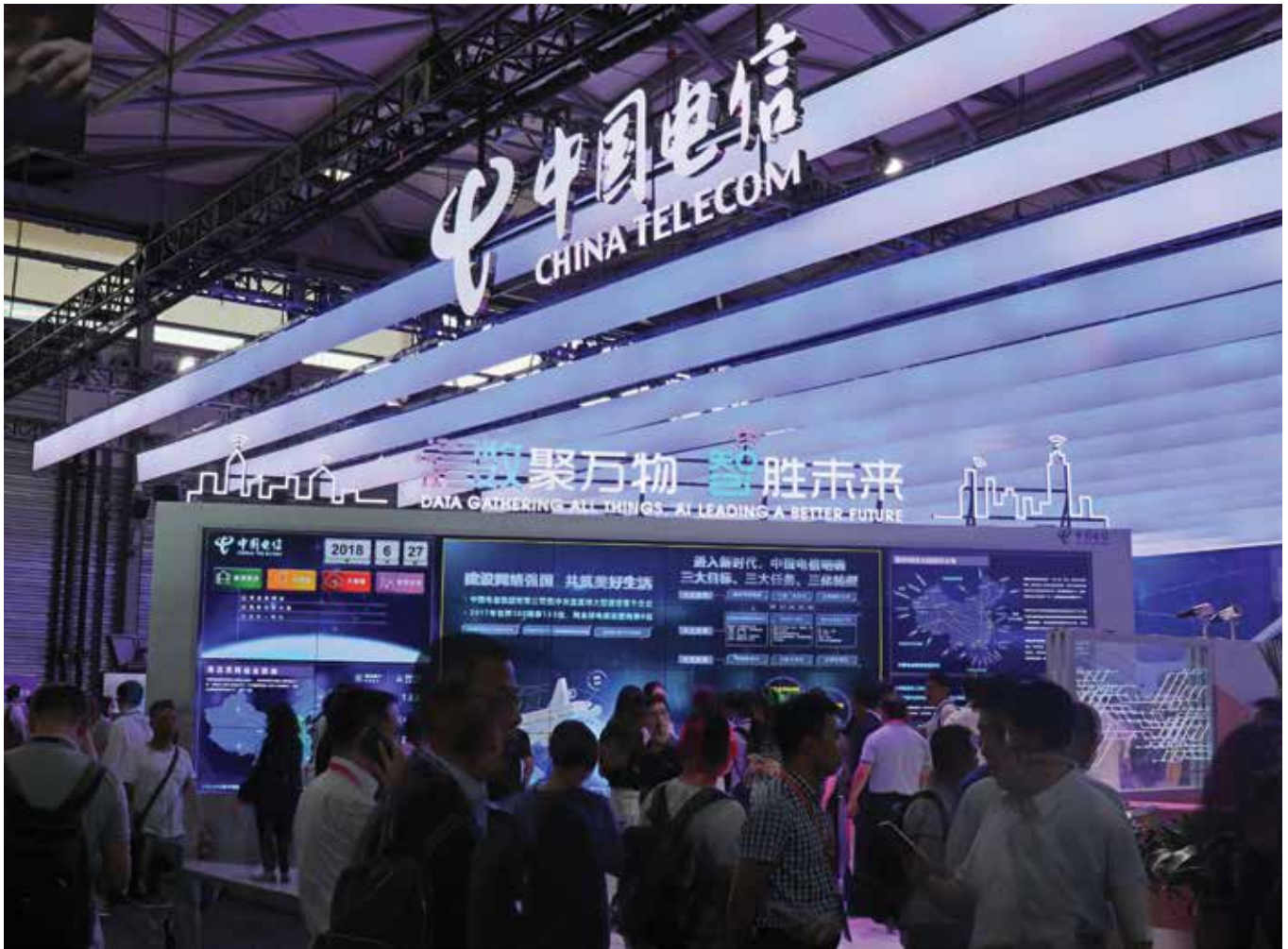
in this sector. The Japanese company Kumon, which provides an afterschool program for reading and math, ranks as the seventh largest franchising chain in Brazil with 1,400 units. Two Japanese companies are intensifying their presence in retail by using a franchising model. Daiso Japan—a 100-yen shop—and Miniso, a Japanese fast-fashion designer brand that specializes in household and consumer goods including cosmetics, stationery, toys and kitchenware.

Korean firms are focusing on the high technology sector. For instance, Qualcomm Technologies and USI (a subsidiary of South Korean ASE - Advanced Semiconductor Engineering) established a joint venture of US\$200 million to install a semiconductor module factory dedicated to the design, development, and fabrication of modules and components for smartphones and IoT (Internet of Things) devices in Brazil. Meanwhile, Chinese firms are looking for the new mobility sector. Didi Chuxing, the world's largest mobile transportation platform acquired 99, the Brazilian company which operates a ride-hailing business and is the main competitor to Uber in Brazil. Didi Chuxing had effectively invested US\$900 million in this company to accelerate market growth in Latin America further and bring more transportation choices to the region's citizens.

What about the future, is a new boom of Asian investments coming to Brazil? The trends show a continued commitment to the country with other opportunities in agribusiness, high technology sector, renewable energy sources and the infrastructure sector.

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“Made in China 2025”

Industrial Transformation with a Global Reach

By **RENATO BALDERRAMA AND AMADO TREJO**

“MADE IN CHINA 2025” (MIC 2025) IS A NATIONAL strategy announced by the Chinese State Council in 2015 to develop and consolidate China’s manufacturing industry to convert it into a world power with the capability of influencing international standards and supply chains. It also plans to become a leader in innovation at an international level. Likewise, through the modernization of its productive structure, the central government plans

to put the brakes on a slowdown in the economy in the medium term. This plan, drawn up by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technologies (MIIT, after its English acronym), has very specific goals, projected not only until 2025, as its name would indicate, but until 2049, the 100th year anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China.

In just a few years, China has not only become “the world’s factory,” but also the

best ecosystem for entrepreneurship and innovation at the global level, competing neck and neck with the United States—the two most important epicenters of startups and spinoffs in the world. And it’s important to understand where Latin America stands in all this. What is the region doing to avoid being left out of Revolution 4.0 [referring to cyberphysics systems]? Latin America is experiencing a process of deindustrialization, above all

in countries like Peru, Chile, Argentina and Colombia. Those countries decided to strengthen their raw materials sector, primarily for exports to Asia, however, in general, they did not bet on designing strategies for the use of technology to make those exports more profitable and with added value.

Mario Castillo, head of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Office for Innovation and New Technologies, comments, “The region didn’t do its catching up during the third revolution [referring to automation and the Internet] and because of that the debate has become about the public policies necessary to put in place to take advantage of the new wave of development.” According to the latest 2018 Bloomberg global index for innovation, in the ranking of the fifty most innovative countries in the world, there is not a single Latin American country. And it is not only highly developed countries on the list: South Africa, Tunisia and Morocco all made the list.

Most Latin American countries, especially in the private sector, continue to see China as a market for our raw materials and, perhaps in some cases, a way of attracting investment in infrastructure. However, no country as yet is designing strategies to take advantage of the entrepreneurship ecosystems that have been developed in cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Hangzhou, where an enormous number of successful entrepreneurs are concentrated. What Latin America does not seem to understand about MIC 2015 is the opportunity cost of not taking advantage of the technology and capital for entrepreneurship China has at its disposal and, as I will explain, is its priority for the next decades. It is now not a matter of seeing how much we can export to China, but how we create patents in China to later manufacture in the Southeast and South of Asia through Chinese business networks and from there to market to the entire world.

MIC 2025 draws its inspiration from

Germany’s “Industry 4.0” blueprint, but the Chinese version is broader because it focuses on issues of quality, consistency in finished products, security and environmental protection, among others, that are considered strategic for the country’s development. The plan is not an isolated effort, but was developed in the context of interconnected policies that seek to increase local innovation through so called “emerging strategic industries,” which include the 13th Fifteen-Year Plan (2016–2020), a new plan for science and technology and several for the development of regional strategies, according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce report, *Made in China 2025: Global Ambitions Build on Local Protections*, 2017.

The MIC 2025 has nine strategic goals: to foment innovation; promote integrated manufacturing with the use of digital and high technology; strengthen the general industrial base; improve product quality and create Chinese global brands; concentrate efforts on ecological means of manufacturing; restructure industries for greater efficiency and production; improve service industries; globalize Chinese manufacturing industries; carry out technological innovations in ten priority sectors with high value-added.

The ten sectors designated as priorities for development include advanced marine equipment and high-technology ships; trains and related advanced commitment; aviation and aerospace equipment; agricultural machinery and technology; biopharmaceutical products and high-level medical equipment; integrated circuits and new information technologies; manufacturing control and robotic equipment; vehicles using new energy technology; and new and advanced materials.

The Chinese government seeks through MIC 2025 to provide incentives for local innovations and self-sufficiency in strategic sectors for the country’s development and leadership at an international level. It seeks to gradually provide a substitute for foreign technology in Chinese industry and to

Most Latin American countries, especially in the private sector, continue to see China as a market for our raw materials and, perhaps in some cases, a way of attracting investment in infrastructure.

create a decisive presence for Chinese technology at an international level. The implementation of the program has been provided with substantial funding.

The funds destined to coordinate financial support for domestic firms to innovate are generally in the form of loans and subsidies for research and development. The goal is to set up 40 innovation centers by 2025 to develop integration mechanisms for information technology in manufacturing; to construct 1,000 green factories by 2020 to determine the best emission practices; to move toward self-sufficiency by importing no more than 20% of raw materials by 2025; and to promote research and local development, particularly in the areas of airplanes, alternative-energy vehicles and medical equipment, according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce China report.

INDUSTRIAL DISRUPTION AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

If MIC 2025 has a strongly internal focus in the sense of strengthening China’s capacity for modernization and innovation through its national industries through the stimulation of so-called local innovation, at the same time it seeks to expand internationally in two directions.

First, technology must grow the accelerated acquisition through purchase and fusion, as well as investment in foreign firms, primarily in the United States and Europe, with the participation of quasi-state firms, as well as private Chinese

companies, which seek technological solutions that would take years to develop themselves. Some analysts sustain that in the long run China could obtain control of the majority of profitable supply chains and production networks. This could produce tensions between China and technologically highly developed countries because of the need to protect their national industries from fusions and acquisitions that are considered strategic for each country, as has been evidenced in the recent tension between China and the United States over the possible acquisitions of U.S. companies dedicated to the manufacture of micro-computers and infrastructure equipment by finance groups of Chinese origin.

Second, through the efforts of the central government to support its large technological conglomerates in the global market as major providers of goods and services, they compete with other international and regional

firms. This effort is not new, given that, since the end of the last decade, the Chinese government has made an effort to internationalize its businesses. What is different now is its capacity for mobilization both in terms of financial resources as well as the exponential growth Chinese technology firms can have as change agents, including as disruptors, in other latitudes.

Both factors are worrying several countries and global corporations who are looking for more access to the Chinese market as suppliers of the products and services spelled out in MIC 2025, as well as having reservations about the clauses concerning technology transfer to local firms who seek to establish operations in that country. The primary argument of the Chambers of Commerce of the United States and the European Union, as well as other international actors, is that this plan could have a degree of protectionist connotations that could generate obstacles

for the norms of international trade and would prevent them from expanding in a just and competitive form in the Chinese market. Thus, President Donald Trump's tariff barriers made under the argument of national security could be interpreted in this context.

In the face of this abundance of capital, technology and talent on the Chinese side, what will be the strategies of developed economies—and developing countries—to generate public policies to strengthen national science and technology, to avoid the increasing digital gap and, as a result, a lag in economic development and competitiveness in the near future?

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National involvement is necessary for the development of rural China.

Understanding the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative

Renewing China-Latin America's Economic Cooperation?

By ROSARIO SANTA GADEA

THE BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE IS AN EXAMPLE of how the Chinese invoke their millenary history in their current strategies. In 2013, President Xi Jinping called upon the spirit of the Silk Road, a two-millennia trade route that connected China to Central Asia, Africa and Europe, to build the New Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, hence the nickname Belt and Road Initiative (BRI for short).

The BRI has progressively become a global initiative for China. One expression of that is the invitation made, a year ago, in May 2017, by President Xi to Latin American countries, to become part of it. In January 2018, the Second Ministerial Meeting of China- Community of Latin America and the Caribbean States (CELAC) Forum issued a special declaration about the BRI. However, the declaration is still very general. Basically, it says that China explained the Initiative and the Latin American and Caribbean countries listened with interest.

The task now for us is deepening our understanding of the BRI in order to

design a good and efficient strategy on how we could be involved in the Initiative.

ADVANCING RESEARCH ON BRI AND LATIN AMERICA

Recently, I have had the opportunity to study this question. The Community of Chinese and Latin American Studies (Comunidad de Estudios Chinos y Latinoamericanos, CECLA), together with the Institute of Latin America of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (ILAS-CASS), based in Beijing, undertook a book project, *The Belt and Road Initiative and Latin America: New Opportunities and New Challenges*, to comprehensively explore and analyze how Latin American countries could be involved in the BRI, with the contribution of researchers from China and Latin America. The cases of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Peru are analyzed.

I was invited to write the Peruvian country-specific chapter that I entitled "The BRI and Peru: Strategic Vision from the Perspective of South American Physical Integration and Competitive

Insertion in Asia-Pacific." This research paper, originally written in Spanish, will be published, first, in the *Journal of Latin American Studies* of ILAS-CASS, in a Chinese version. Subsequently, the book, including all of my contributions, will be released, in both Chinese and Spanish versions. The present article is based on this research.

I have had a second recent opportunity to deepen my understanding of the BRI, since I participated at the "2018 Seminar on China Issue Experts for BRI Countries" invited by the Chinese government. This seminar was organized by the Graduate School of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (GSCASS), under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Commerce of China. It took place in Beijing, between June 28th and July 18th, 2018, and included a field trip to Yunnan Province in the southwest of China. It certainly enriched my perspective on this topic and helped me to understand that the BRI is not only an international initiative for China, it is also part of a national strategy to bring development



Above, Belt and Road Forum; map (center) from the *Wall Street Journal* based on information from Xinhua, U.S. Department of Defense, Gazprom, Transneft and the United Nations, 2014; Below, connectivity between South America and Pacific Asia and its potential.

to the western and southern parts of the country that are less advanced than the eastern and coastal areas.

My perspective is shaped by my decade-long work on the physical integration of South America, first, as a government official and, later as a research scholar (Santa Gadea, 2012). This background helped me to trace the convergence between key concepts of the scheme of physical integration in South America and those of the BRI. Both approaches move from a sectorial to a territorial vision of development, in which connectivity should be achieved through investments in “integration infrastructure” as a key element for territorial development.

I believe that this convergence of approaches could serve as a basis for renewing the agenda of China’s cooperation with South America, and Peru in particular.

UNDERSTANDING THE BRI

Four principal points stand out. First, the key concept of the BRI is connectivity. This concept relates, principally, to the provision of infrastructure in the areas of transportation, energy and communications—three basic foundations of development. However, the BRI should not necessarily account for all the infrastructure needs of member countries since the idea is to connect those countries with China. Therefore, we should focus on

improving connectivity for making more efficient trade and investment with China.

A second key concept of the Initiative relates to “economic corridors.” There are six economic corridors designed so far between China and the countries involved in the BRI. Building economic corridors is more than just providing infrastructure. It is necessary to generate the conditions for development in the areas connected by the infrastructure through productive integration, logistic facilities and other complementary measures. The BRI tends to promote development within a specific territory, which is connected by the infrastructure, and this is the importance of the economic corridors.

The third principal concept I found in



the BRI is that it refers to connectivity by land and by sea. As already mentioned, the BRI is the combination of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. And this differentiation is very important for Latin America. In fact, the involvement of Latin

America in the Chinese Initiative requires the extension of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road to the Pacific Ocean,—more a bit later about this subject.

My fourth point concerning the way



to understand BRI is that we should not reduce the Initiative to investments in infrastructure. There are five pillars in the Chinese Initiative:

- Coordination of economic policies or development strategies.
- Free trade (within the corridors).
- Financial integration including, among others, banks and funds created to finance projects, for example, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). Investment in infrastructure.
- People-to-people links.

Therefore, national involvement in the Initiative should include ways of working in the five pillars and not only in one. In general, the spotlight on the BRI put more attention on its infrastructure component,

but in fact it is more like a comprehensive program for economic integration.

Now let's consider the reasons that have been driving China to undertake such an endeavor. At its national level, analysts point out that the Initiative would contribute to reducing the development gaps between the hinterland (the less developed regions) and the coast of China, through a greater integration of the former with the neighboring economies (Cai, 2017) and also with the more advanced regions of China. The BRI seeks to create strategic drivers for the development of the interior of the country (Niu, 2017) and it would generate new internal trade, reducing transportation costs (Amighini, 2017).

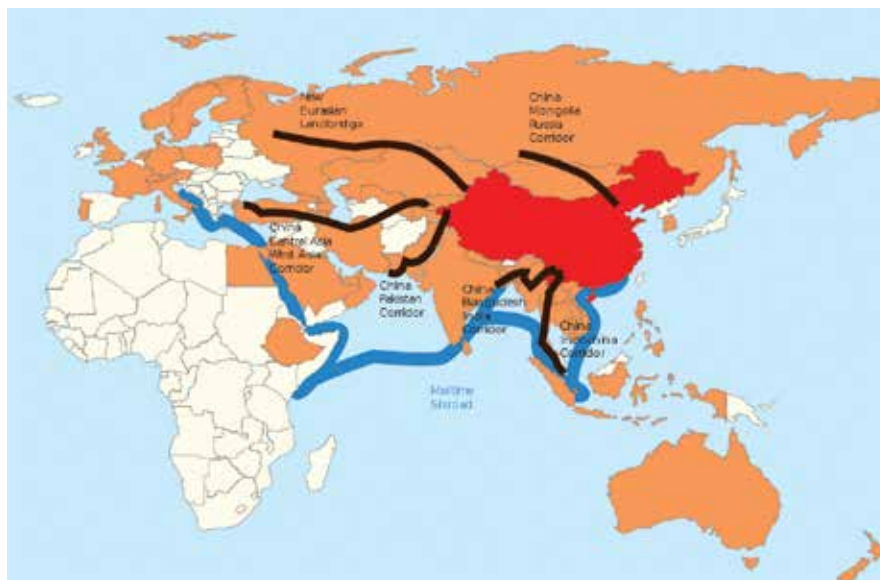
At an international level, it would create new markets for China, not only for the export of goods, but also for the relocation of productive overcapacity in some industries such as steel and cement (Amighini, 2017). Another advantage is the creation of a regional production chain, with China as a center for advanced manufacturing, innovation and establishment of new standards (Cai, 2017). Additionally, the BRI would allow China to attain a position of leadership in the world and strengthen ties with neighboring countries. In this sense, it could be considered as an example of globalization (Niu, 2018).

CONVERGENCE OF CONCEPTS BETWEEN BRI AND SOUTH AMERICAN PHYSICAL INTEGRATION

Very important matching points exist between the key concepts of the BRI, particularly the “economic corridors,” and those of the South American physical integration, especially the so-called “axis of integration and development,” defined originally within the Initiative for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure of South America (IIRSA).

In both cases, connectivity is crucial for economic development and it is important to plan and implement investments in infrastructure, particularly on transport, energy and communications with the perspective of regional and global integration.

PERU AND THE BRI



Above: One Belt, One Road; Left: Axes of Integration and Development, 2018 (COSIPLAN-AN IRSA); Opposite page: “Next Stop Vancouver.”

Peru is geographically located in the central part of South America with its coast in the Pacific Rim. Because of this geographical location, Peru could be a hub in South America for intermediate trade between both sides of the Pacific

Rim, particularly between China and South America. Therefore, the extension of the BRI to South America would imply building a trans-Pacific economic corridor between China and the region and, I believe, Peru could be the point of

connection of that corridor on our side of the Pacific.

This would necessitate the establishment of an efficient and regular direct maritime connection between South America and China with Peru as a hub. The idea is to consolidate cargo from other South American countries, mainly Brazil, in Peruvian ports, to reach a greater scale and make viable and more attractive (compared to other routes) such direct maritime traffic with Asia through the South Pacific, reducing logistics costs in international trade between China, Peru and the rest of South America.

Physical integration in South America is a necessary complement of such direct transpacific maritime routes and the projects for bioceanic railways in the region should be re-examined in this perspective. Two of these projects consider reaching a Peruvian port. The first one is the Brazil-Peru Bioceanic Railway project, which has been analyzed by a trilateral governmental group composed of China, Brazil and Peru. At present, this project is on hold due to its extremely high cost and its potential negative environmental effects. However, the basic study that supports these conclusions has not been made public. It is necessary to do so in order to undertake further assessment. The other project is the Central Bioceanic Railway, promoted by Bolivia and connecting this country with Brazil and Peru; feasibility studies are now underway.

I argue that a comparative assessment is necessary, not only of railways but of the entire set of connections, including port conditions and land and maritime connections. For example, some analysts point out that the distances to Asia, from the Atlantic and the Pacific ports, are not very different, while the cost of transport by land, when it is necessary to cross the Andean mountain range, is very high. This assessment suggests that large volumes of cargo generated in the center of the continent would not actually be diverted to Pacific ports.

While the potential for South America to be part of an extension of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road is perceived



through a direct trans-Pacific connection between the subcontinent and China, it is necessary to undertake in-depth studies to assess the feasibility of such a trans-Pacific economic corridor. The studies should include logistics costs, travel time and frequency of ships, making comparisons between the trans-Pacific alternatives and the traditional maritime routes.

This is a vision for the extension of the BRI to Peru and South America. Other countries and other regions should build their own vision, too, and start a dialogue with China on that basis.

HOW TO COOPERATE WITH CHINA

I believe that some countries have more instruments than others for this cooperation. In the case of Peru, for example, we already have a Free Trade Agreement with China. We are one of the only three countries in Latin America that have this type of agreement. We also have the status of Comprehensive Strategic Alliance with China, meaning that we have the possibility to coordinate economic strategies through the dialogue mechanisms already in place. Peru also has been accepted as a member of the AIIB. Therefore, we have advanced in several of the five pillars of the BRI.

With regards to investments, China concentrates mainly in extractive sectors, principally mining. Due to the importance of mining, Peru is the second destination of Chinese investments in Latin America, after Brazil. However, the arrival of Chinese firms in others sectors, such as

infrastructure, is a recent and growing tendency.

One important thing is that Chinese investment in infrastructure could not be a government-to-government arrangement. Chinese firms have to act according to the regulations of a market economy. This means that they would have to participate in international tenders and compete for the projects with firms from all over the world. The association with local firms is a good strategy. They also need to learn how to operate in Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs).

In sum, there is much to do to, first, complete a strategic vision; second, design the trans-Pacific economic corridor and third, assess its viability. Government, business sector and academia should cooperate in that effort with a long term view.

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The author thanks Leolino Rezende, who collaborated with the preparation of this article. He has been Assistant to the Director at the Center for China and Asia-Pacific Studies and currently is pursuing a Master's degree in International Relations at Peking University.

China and Latin America Relations

A New “Win-Win” Partnership? By GILMAR MASIERO

AFTER MORE THAN THREE DECADES OF HIGH rates of economic growth making China the world's second-largest economy, its government continues to emphasize its status as a developing country. Now the international community is intensely debating China's role in the global economic and political order. Should China continue to support the existing economic order, which has mostly benefited its rise or should it seek the creation of a new order? What development strategy should the country adopt in the coming decades regarding the world and Latin America?

The first alternative may somehow limit Chinese potential for expansion and the second brings more significant risks and responsibilities as well. These alternatives raise significant questions for Latin America: it has been among the regions receiving a significant percentage of China's external investments, particularly in the areas of energy and natural resources. China could gradually seek to deter U.S. power and replace it with something similar or entirely new. That would mean exchanging long-established relationships with U.S. partners for others who are not so well known to the Chinese. Will Latin American countries, large or small, move from the sphere of influence of the United States to that of China?

China could also continue to support the existing order and maintain multilateral and bilateral integration and cooperation initiatives, in some way complementing or expanding the existing order. It could still gradually broaden the benefits of a higher international insertion, and power in a balanced manner, without, however, paying for them. In this scenario, Latin American countries may manage the pressures of the United States and China and be able to follow their own path of development.

A much bigger project estimated at US\$50 billion is the Nicaragua Canal that rivals the Panama Canal.



Uncertainties and challenges of all kinds are present in the role that China must play on the world stage or in global governance. It is possible to develop arguments that support any of these competing views and find data and facts that legitimize them nationally, regionally or globally. Latin American countries must maintain awareness of both Chinese internal and external developments in order to take advantages of the new—and each year stronger—economic and political ties to the region.

The Chinese economy faces increasing challenges, and its international performance can solve some of its problems while creating others. In this

context, in late 2013 on a trip to Central Asia and Southeast Asia, President Xi Jinping announced the ambitious Belt and Route Initiative. Later he announced the formation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), open to the contribution of any country. Several countries have adhered to the treaty establishing this Bank, and several others will do so in the coming years demonstrating, to a certain extent, their support for the Initiative.

Likely and unlikely partners must understand the Chinese global strategy for sustainable and “win-win” relationships. In 2016, the outbound direct investment from China surpassed the inbound investment, at US\$183.2 and US\$126 billion, respectively. In 2015 China became the second more substantial investor in the global economy. In the last five years, outbound mergers and acquisitions have grown 33% per year. The Chinese investment drive should continue due to the discrepancies between the massive accumulated reserves mostly in U.S. Treasury bonds and the investments returns in productive assets (see Yuning Gao, China's Global Investment: Structure, Route, and Performance. In *Direction of Chinese Global Investments: Implications for Brazil*, Anna Jaguaribe (coordinator)—Brasília: FUNAG, 2018).

From 2005 to 2016, Chinese outward investments focused on sectors related to energy (38%), metals (14%), real estate (9%), and transport (8%). Africa, Latin America, Australia and certain Asian countries received most of the investments in the areas of energy and natural resources. Europe and the United States, which in the previous years were the general focus of the Chinese State Companies became the focus of investments in services, telecom technology and high-end manufacturing. On average the geographical distribution



Unloading new locomotives in the Belgrano Cargas Project, Argentina.

of Chinese global investments from 2005 to 2016 was 23% to Europe, 17% to the United States, 11% to East Asia and another 30% equally distributed among Australia, South America and West Asian countries. In a declining trend, African nations represent the other 9%.

The amounts of investments and trade patterns are not solely influenced by the country-specific advantages but also by the level of economic development of China. It is also strongly affected by the Chinese foreign policy that from the end of 2013 have been discussed under the idea of building a New Silk Road. Chinese leader Xi Jinping launched The Belt and Road Initiative in 2013 to build up infrastructural connectivity through the high-speed economic development countries of East Asia at one end to the developed European economies at the other end. In the official rhetoric,

the initiative is open to any country to participate, but it seems that there are no plans to extend the routes to the Americas.

In the Americas, besides the increasing trends of trade and investments, the Chinese are also leading the studies for a transcontinental railway connecting the Brazilian Atlantic coast to the Peruvian Pacific coast. A much bigger project estimated at US\$50 billion is the Nicaragua Canal that rivals the Panama Canal. This project has met strong opposition from locals and environmentalists because of its potential damages to the environment. It has also been delayed by financial constraints of the Hong Kong-based HKND (HK Nicaragua Canal Development) Group. The channel and other projects in Nicaragua, if finished, will give China a major foothold in Central America, a region traditionally influenced by the United States. It is worth noticing

that both Panama (2017) and El Salvador (August 2018) have broken formal diplomatic relations with Taipei, switching their allegiance to China.

The goals of Chinese foreign policy—as well the Chinese principles of morality, virtue, tradition, culture and history—are all present in all Chinese government documents and speeches. By carefully reading these documents, we can explore the official rhetoric of the Mao Zedong time of “struggle” and “revolution” to our present days of “peaceful development” to reassure the internal and external community about a “harmonious world.”

It seems that the China external policy is mostly defensive: mainly to prevent from the formation of an anti-Chinese bloc and to focus on internal development. The dynamic and rich Chinese development experience from the death of Mao to its current rising international presence is the most extraordinary political and economic development experience ever seen in human history—exporting its culture through the mushrooming Confucius Institutes in Latin American and other countries as well as building roads and routes abroad.

Hopefully, the goals of the Chinese external policies of sovereign independence, territorial integrity and national development will be respected while dealing with Latin American large or small countries. These countries must be aware of increased Chinese presence in the region and develop their own strategies of development to improve the standard of living of their population. If poor South and Central American countries are moving from the U.S. sphere of influence to the Chinese one, they must do it wisely. They must be aware that in all win-win relationships with China, or any other country, there will be a bigger winner than the other.

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A Commercial Hit That's a Product of Censorship

In the Name of Alpaca By **PATRICIA CASTRO OBANDO**

HOW DO YOU PICTURE “ALPACA” IN CHINESE characters? With the December 2017 inauguration of the official store of the Peruvian Alpaca brand in a prestigious Beijing mall, and the launching a month later of an online store with Peruvian alpaca clothes and accessories, a language game became reality with the faraway and mysterious alpaca as its protagonist. A clever effort to evade Chinese censorship ended up popularizing the soft touch of alpaca and led to an outstanding commercial success.

It all began with the tale of the “Grass Mud Horse” at the beginning of 2009—created by the denizens of the Internet to defy censorship through sound-alike words typical of the Chinese language. Alpacas—the animals—were totally unknown in the land of the dragons, but Chinese social media created a character of a quasi-mythical beast that became a banner-carrier for freedom of expression in China. And the mythical animal became associated with a real one—the alpaca in the faraway Andes.

In the magical world of the Internet—much more magical in China where “seditious” postings simply disappear—the story of the “Grass Mud Horse” was born, the first of a series of “the ten mythical creatures of Baidu,” a type of alpaca that supposedly inhabits the “Gobi Mahler” desert. Its enemy was the River Crab, who wore three wristwatches and had invaded the creature’s turf to devour its grassland. At the end of the story, the Grass Mud Horse defeats the River Crab and expels him and his three wristwatches forever.

What seemed to be a children’s story turned into the Chinese Internet users’ tricky way of challenging the capacity of the censors to detect and control ciphered messages. By changing tones and relying

on a slight shift in the written characters, “Caonima,” the Chinese name for the “Grass Mud Horse,” is morphed into a huge insult, with the alleged reference to the desert instead becoming the Chinese name for the female sexual organ.

The enemy at which these punsters were aiming their darts was already well known in the rural slang, where to call someone “a crab” refers to a braggart who uses force to gain power, a practice that often occurs in regions far from the central authority. With a masterly mixture of tones and characters in the Chinese names, the cyberspace parody turns the river crab’s “three wristwatches” or “Sangebiao” into “Three Represents” and “Harmonious Society,” political concepts invented by Chinese leaders.

“Three Represents” was the principle formulated by then-General Secretary of the Community Party Jiang Zemin in 2002 that officially opened the doors of the country to a new wave of business entrepreneurs. Two decades after the start of the process of reform and the opening of 1980, the already existing economic disparity between regions was accentuated. To alleviate the social tensions caused by this uneven growth, Chinese leader Hu Jintao brought back

the traditional concept of “harmony” in 2005, calling for the construction of a society and world free from disagreement and dissent.

Harmony imposed by decree brought with it a radical increase in repression in 2008, the same year the Olympic Games took place in Beijing. Chinese social media was “harmonized,” a euphemism to announce the elimination of publications that protested against the Chinese authoritarian system. It was in this context that the “Grass Mud Horse” came into being.

With the complicity of words that sound alike and the aspect of sweetness and innocence that contrasted with its name in Chinese, the alpaca became a celebrity. A wide range of personalized products, as well as photos, videos, illustrations and online games deluged the Internet forums and went from there to retail stores. A children’s video with real alpacas had more than a million views on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01RPek5uAJ4>), when YouTube was still allowed in China. Children found special pleasure in cuddling toy alpacas stuffed with the actual fiber, which were slowly beginning to be commercialized in China.





From a children's soft cuddly toy to a high-end fashion show, alpaca has made a hit in China.

The Chinese name for alpaca might have eluded the censors, but the soft texture of the fabric attracted children and grabbed the attention of local merchants. At the end of 2008 and all throughout 2009, the imports of fine-combed alpaca products surged in the Chinese market. Peru became the major supplier, since it has at least four million alpacas, the largest quantity in South America. In 2010, 59 percent of Peruvian alpaca fiber exports went to China.

ALPACA TAKES OFF ON CHINESE FASHION RUNWAYS

The Peruvian Embassy in Beijing and PromPerú, a Peruvian governmental export commission, organized the first alpaca clothing fashion show in 2013. It featured 24 pieces by Chinese-Peruvian designer Sumy Kujon. Subsequently, the

Alpacas—the animals—were totally unknown in the land of the dragons, but Chinese social media created a character of a quasi-mythical beast that became a banner-carrier for freedom of expression in China.

collections of Mirva Trujillo (Qaytu), Henry Vela (Velavera) and José Miguel Valdivia (JMV), among other Peruvian designer brands, were featured on Chinese runways.

These fashion shows—four in total by 2017—highlighted the high quality of Peruvian clothing, not just its textiles. Peruvian alpaca was especially popular in the north of China, where winters are very cold. Other natural high-quality

fibers such as cashmere and mohair competed with alpaca in market share, as all were popular with sophisticated local consumers who demanded good value and original designs. But the anti-censorship symbolism was swift to give alpaca an upper hand.

The 2014 ExpoPerú in Beijing—the largest Peruvian export event overseas—consolidated the presence of Peru as a guarantor of quality and creativity. That



(Top) The Alpaca Store offers its goods in an upscale mall; (Below) alpaca stars in fashion shows.

same year, the cooperation of PromPerú with the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology (BIFT) led to a series of agreements allowing several prestigious Chinese designers to participate in Perú Moda—the most important fashion fair in Peru—and also led in internships in China for young Peruvian designers such as Silvia Paredes and Vania Tafur.

In the three years following that expo, Peruvian exports of alpaca fiber continued to increase, driven by Chinese demand. This growth was sustained by an increase in production and export prices. Between January and November 2017, the primary destination for Peruvian exports was China, going from US\$15.1 million in 2016 to US\$48 million in 2017, registering an increase of 217 percent. Peru is the world producer and exporter of alpaca fiber, producing 4,500 tons of fiber annually with 60 percent exported.

THE ALPACA STORE IN BEIJING

Peruvian alpaca fashion became solidly positioned in December 2017 with the opening of a multibrand store run by the Chinese firm World Link and with the official inauguration of an online pavillion of Peruvian alpaca products at the gigantic Jingdong (JD.com), the main Chinese direct-sales online platform (E-tailer). JD boasts 413 million online shoppers and more than 198 million active clients. It is expected that Peruvian firms will take in US\$1.5 million yearly

through this online platform.

Just as in the physical store, the virtual store is under the umbrella of the Peruvian Alpaca “Alpaca del Perú” brand, and the clothes sport a label with this logo as a symbol of authenticity and quality. Both projects testify to the high value that Peruvian alpaca products have reached in China. During the opening of the physical store, World Link founder Huang Minghui said before hundreds of leaders in the Chinese textile sector that he “felt very satisfied to bring the warmth of the Andes to China.”

In a ceremony held hours before the store inauguration in the historic Beijing Hotel near the Forbidden City, the World Link group received authorization for the use of the official brand “Alpaca del Perú.” This Chinese firm has invested in the first multibrand Peruvian shop, located in the emblematic Wangfujing Mall’s World Link works with the Commercial Office of Peru in Beijing (OCEX Beijing) and PromPerú to spotlight alpaca clothing and accessories produced in this Andean country, in this highly competitive Chinese market.

Fashion shows in the store windows and two live alpacas in a corral in front of the shop greet well-off consumers. In this manner, “Alpaca de Perú” and World Link work to commercialize the products of six Peruvian firms through a network of contacts that includes malls, import

groups, well-known designers and other key people in Chinese society.

Alpaca has also helped to drive the commercial relationship for other products. At this time, China makes up 26 percent of the country’s exports, ten percent more than Peru exports to the United States. Thus, between January and May 2018, exports reached US\$5.3 billion, the highest number ever achieved for the first five months of the year. According to official sources, this is because of the increase in textile shipments, including alpaca, to China.

Alpaca in China has also shifted its language identity. “Grass Mud Horse” is now stuck in some older corner of the Internet, while in the country’s elegant malls and on its fashion runways, alpaca shines with its official name in Chinese, “yangtuo,” although its palindrome “tuoyang” is still admitted. In the collective Chinese imagination, the Andean animal is now described as something like a goat, which is “yang,” and a camel, which is “tuo,” but never again like a horse—especially one made of grass and mud.

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Dragon Mart Cancún

Opposing the Mega Mall **By** EMILIANO VALLE

THE ANTI-CHINESE RHETORIC WAS UNMISTAKABLE: “[The Chinese] are a dirty people... They come and they bring their whole family... They occupy the area and it ends up being an invasion because they reproduce and grow in the areas they get to. They are like a plague. A dirty plague.” Hearing this type of racist language made me realize that the opposition to Dragon Mart Cancún (DMC) was more complex than it first appeared.

As a college student looking for a thesis subject, I became intrigued by DMC when I learned of its closure for violating environmental law. I was familiar with the area, and this was the only major development project in the region that I knew to have been cancelled for environmental reasons. So in the summer of 2015, I traveled to Puerto Morelos, Mexico, to find out more about the project, and why many locals seemed to support DMC’s closure.

The project had been conceived as a mega mall and exhibition center—modeled after the Dragon Mart in Dubai that had been constructed a decade earlier—and was to be built between Cancún and the town of Puerto Morelos. It was designed to sell products from international suppliers directly to Mexican and Latin American businesses and the general public. In the final iteration of the proposed project, a Chinese company, Chinamex Middle East Investment & Trade Promotion Center, had a 10 percent investment in the effort while the other 90 percent was owned by two Mexican business groups. On the DMC website, the project director billed it as an important step toward helping Cancún become “the largest commercial center in the Americas.” However, in late January 2015, the Federal Attorney for Environmental Protection in Mexico (PROFEPA), ordered the closure of the



Many interview subjects were involved in the sale of artisan goods and worried that DMC would facilitate the sale of cheap, Chinese knock-offs that tourists would buy instead of their wares.

project (after initial building had begun) because of its violation of environmental law. The DMC project was charged with destruction of forested area and improper land use—federal offenses punishable by fines or jail time.

The closure of the project for environmental reasons surprised me. I knew of massive resorts that had been built nearby that had damaged local mangrove forests. Although mangroves are federally protected, those projects were ultimately completed. I was also surprised by the strength of the local community’s opposition to DMC. While following the project from afar, I had learned of several meetings and a march against the project. I wondered if the enthusiastic opposition to DMC was because of serious concerns about the project’s environmental impact.

Indeed, the most obvious explanation for why people opposed the project was

also the official reason for its shuttering: environmental damage. There are a couple of reasons why this would make sense. First, the presence of two marine research centers near the town of Puerto Morelos (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and Instituto Nacional de Pesca) may have contributed to heightened awareness of environmental issues, which could have motivated the townspeople to oppose DMC. Second, the town has a history of environmental advocacy. In 1998, community efforts succeeded in having Puerto Morelos’s coral reef designated a marine protected area. Thus, residents had a record of concern for environmental health and had experienced success in their advocacy efforts.

However, over the course of 80 interviews with mostly working-class inhabitants of the Cancún/Puerto Morelos area, it became evident that strong environmental conservation rationale was negligible compared to other considerations. Particularly apparent was the nationalistic rhetoric used by interview subjects. This nationalism manifested itself in two ways: support for economic protectionism and anti-Chinese language.

Interview subjects voiced concerns that DMC’s part-Chinese ownership and exhibition of Chinese products would hurt their wallets and the Mexican economy. Many interview subjects were involved in the sale of artisan goods and worried that DMC would facilitate the sale of cheap, Chinese knock-offs that tourists would buy instead of their wares. They also noted the cheap price of Chinese goods in their daily lives and felt that “Mexican-made” products were being pushed out of stores and rendered unaffordable compared to Chinese manufacturing; having a store directly selling these

products to consumers would only make things worse. The residents of the Cancún/Puerto Morelos area most likely did not know the specific history and development of Mexico's trade deficit with China, but they were aware of the Mexican manufacturing industry's open opposition to the project and of increased Chinese product presence in the area. The people I interviewed worried about the hardships they might face because of an abundance of Chinese products, and they expressed their concerns regarding Mexican manufacturing and how that would impact *el pueblo mexicano*—the Mexican people. They were anxious about unfair competition.

Their comments showed the importance of nationalist sentiment in the economic opposition to DMC. Using the phrase “*el pueblo mexicano*” both indicates concern for the Mexican people as a whole and unites the working class and business owners into a homogenous “pueblo.” By calling the economic competition that DMC would have brought “unfair” to Mexico and Mexicans, interview participants framed the potential economic harm in patriotic, nationalist terms. Interview subjects made it clear that they were angry that this gigantic project had initially been approved as they saw no benefit in it for Mexicans. They wanted government action to protect and support Mexican business, not facilitate foreign competitors.

Once I began to probe these nationalist sentiments, the people I interviewed often described fears of a Chinese colony being built to house the workers and vendors who would work in DMC. Interview subjects saw this as a problem because the Chinese were considered “unwilling to assimilate,” “dirty,” and “greedy.” One person even noted that “Mexicans don't trust the Chinese and would make it difficult for them to assimilate even if they wanted to. We have even had problems with anti-Chinese violence in Mexico.”

Robert Chao Romero and Julia Maria Schiavone Camacho give detailed accounts of the development of this anti-Chinese sentiment in Mexico in their

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respective books *The Chinese in Mexico, 1882-1940* (2010) and *Chinese Mexicans: Transpacific Migration and the Search for a Homeland, 1910-1960* (2012). They tell the story of more than 60,000 Chinese migrating to Mexico in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, at least partly caused by the United States' passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882. They then describe, along with Elliot Young, how anti-Chinese sentiment coalesced in northern Mexico during the Mexican Revolution of 1910.

The Mexican Revolution was, at its core, an uprising of the lower classes against the excesses of wealthy landowners and bourgeois class interests. One target of this ire was foreign corporations that had been free to make vast profits off Mexican land. Elliot Young documents in *Alien Nation: Chinese Migration in the Americas from the Coolie Era Through World War II* (2014), how this backdrop, combined with the relative financial successes of the Chinese immigrant businesses in northern Mexico, led to a crystallization of anti-Chinese racism. In some towns in northern Mexico, organizations were set up to protect Mexican businesses and to oust Chinese-Mexican businessmen. These anti-Chinese groups quickly spread to southern states and amassed over two million members in the 1930s. These organizations fomented feelings of nationalism by asserting that the economy should be structured around benefitting mestizo Mexicans (those with a mix of European and Indigenous heritage), not recent Chinese immigrants. These businessmen of Chinese heritage mainly ran small-scale businesses rather

than the multinational corporations that amassed large profits off Mexican soil and labor. Nevertheless, in writings and in cartoons, people of Chinese ancestry were portrayed as immoral, unclean people and parasitic to Mexican businesses and Mexican prosperity. These insults levied against Chinese Mexicans a century ago bore a striking resemblance to the wording used by interview subjects.

The modern-day characterization of the Chinese, and especially Chinese businesses, in a negative manner shows why this earlier period can help us understand the opposition to DMC. Just prior to the Revolution, large multinational corporations were major exploiters of Mexican land and resources; interview subjects predicted a similar result when discussing the implications of DMC. Just like many Mexicans were frustrated with money flowing out of the country in the early 1900s, many interview subjects felt the DMC would facilitate Chinese profit extraction from Mexico. In both cases, the Chinese populations played minor roles, but served as easy scapegoats. In the early 1900s, the Chinese Mexicans were occupying a petite-bourgeoisie class that sold services and small wares to customers—they were not business executives or heads of extractive industries in Mexico, but were nevertheless objects of ridicule during and after the Revolution. With DMC, the Chinese company backing the project only had a 10 percent stake in the project and no plans for a “Chinese colony” were ever presented, but fears of economic opportunity going to foreign workers stoked racial resentment. In both cases, the Chinese served as targets

for anger stemming from government policies that inadequately supported the working class.

Yet, rather than voice grievances tied to socioeconomic class, interview subjects illustrated that race and nationality were the important factors connecting them to a larger identity. By defining, or imagining, themselves in relation to people from a different race, with different customs, and a different culture, interview subjects sidestepped power and class divides in Mexican society in order to construct a unifying rhetoric in opposition to a project that they felt would benefit the Chinese more than it would Mexicans. Interview subjects did not have any special affinity for Mexican manufacturing, the entity that was perceived to be put most at risk by the project, but still spoke about protecting Mexico's economy and its people.

These opinions and conceptual frameworks point to a larger, deeper dissatisfaction with the type of trade liberalization that DMC's director touted, and that Mexico has aggressively pursued since the structural adjustment programs of the 1980s. Liberalization of the Mexican economy in the past few decades has opened more sectors of the economy to competition from foreign firms, putting Mexican workers at risk. These feelings of frustration and anger have been reflected in recent years on a worldwide scale. Populations that have felt abandoned by their governments' disbursement of economic gains have turned to right-wing populists who promise a brighter future for them through racial exclusion and economic protectionism. Unless leaders of countries, such as Mexico, do a better job implementing initiatives that equitably allocate the economic gains of globalization, they should expect a similar flavor of opposition to that faced by DMC—claims of unfair competition and the surfacing (or resurfacing) of racial prejudices.

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China-Venezuelan Relations

A Perfect Storm By **MATT FERCHEN**

IN THE SPRING OF 2012 RESEARCHERS FROM China's biggest Latin America-focused think tank, the Beijing-based Institute of Latin American Studies (ILAS) at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, invited me to give a talk. ILAS hosts suggested they would be especially interested in hearing my thoughts on what Chinese researchers, businesses and policy makers should understand about political risk in Latin America. I found that choice of topic particularly intriguing given what I'd been hearing about rising anxiety about how political risks tied to the Arab Spring posed a challenge to China's rising commercial interests in regions like Africa and the Middle East.

It was just around the time of the ILAS invitation that I had become curious to understand more about China's rapidly expanding oil, finance and diplomatic relationship with Venezuela's Hugo Chávez. So even though the topic of Venezuelan political risk was new to me, I chose that as the focus for my presentation. I argued that across a number of dimensions, from rising social and political polarization to politicization and mismanagement of the oil sector to Chávez's growing health concerns, Venezuela presented an array of formidable political risks—probably second to none in the Western Hemisphere, for any investor or lender, including China. The almost universal



Meridith Kohut made this image of pro-Chávez graffiti in Caracas. The photographer is receiving a Maria Moors Cabot citation this year for her excellent work in Venezuela.

response from the ILAS participants was that even though they acknowledged the worrying trends in Venezuela, ultimately China's economic and diplomatic interests there would not be adversely affected since, after all, Venezuela had a lot of oil and China needed a lot of oil and besides, had a lot of money to pay for it.

Fast forward over six years and the question of how China should understand and manage political risk in Venezuela has become one of the most important, if too often ignored, questions not just in China's relationship with Latin America, but in its broader efforts to be seen as an agent and leader of development on the world stage. This relationship of superlatives (Venezuela has the world's largest oil reserves, China is the world's largest oil importer, China has lent more money to Venezuela than any other country in the world, etc.) and larger-than-life personalities (at least on the Venezuelan side) has long since become a debacle. And while Venezuela's deepening economic and humanitarian crisis has attracted global headlines and concern, China has neither acknowledged its role and interests in Venezuela's crisis nor sought to address the plight of the closest country it has to an ally in the Americas.

How did this dysfunctional relationship come about and what does it tell us about China's ties with Latin America and its even more high-profile efforts at global development and South-South leadership?

A PERFECT STORM

On its surface, the China-Venezuela relationship fits into the broader pattern of raw materials-based trade, investment and financial ties between China and South America in the first decade or so of the 21st century. The China-led commodity boom from around 2003-2013 ushered in massive new trade flows of agricultural (soy), mining (copper and iron ore) and energy (oil) commodities from South America to China, which rapidly became the number one trade partner for countries like Brazil, Chile and Peru. Venezuela, with the world's largest

petroleum reserves, was thus seemingly a perfect partner for China, which is today the world's largest crude oil importer. Even as Venezuela has descended into crisis, China has at least officially continued to emphasize the natural "complementarity" of the relationship as a kind of stabilizing ballast amidst the storm.

Yet from the beginning, the China-Venezuela relationship has stood out among all of China's ties to commodity-rich countries, not just in South America but globally. Venezuela's former larger-than-life leader, Hugo Chávez, and what Henry Sanderson and Michael Forsythe have dubbed China's "superbank," the China Development Bank (CDB), together created a loans-for-oil and diplomatic partnership that was intended to showcase the possibilities of the type of South-South cooperation ushered in by China's emergence as a global actor, but that instead serves as a cautionary tale of hubris and unintended consequences.

On the Venezuelan side, Chávez saw China as a crucial partner in his efforts to use control of the nation's abundant petroleum supplies to implement his

Even as Venezuela has descended into crisis, China has at least officially continued to emphasize the natural "complementarity" of the relationship as a kind of stabilizing ballast amidst the storm.

radical domestic and foreign policy agendas. Not only did expanded exports of petroleum to China fit into Chávez's rhetoric of diversifying away from export dependence on the United States, but massive loans-for-oil deals with the CDB (to the tune of \$40 billion prior to his death in 2013) provided a steady supply of economically and politically

fungible funds that no other international creditors would or could provide. In addition, by emphasizing China's socialist and revolutionary bona fides (as faded or imagined as they may be), Chávez also found China to be a convenient, if often reticent, partner in his Bolivarian Revolutionary agenda at home and abroad.

On the Chinese side, what may initially have been another largely practical trade and investment relationship with a commodity-rich South American country soon turned into something quite bigger and different. Instead of just buying Venezuelan oil as India has done, China's state-owned CDB set up a series of multi-billion dollar loans-for-oil deals. At the time and still today, these loans constituted China's largest outlay of finance to any other country not just in Latin America but globally, and quickly made China Venezuela's largest source of sovereign finance. Part of what explains the CDB's eagerness to lend to Venezuela in these years was that the bank, under the leadership of its seemingly untouchable president and Chinese Communist Party scion, Chen Yuan, was looking to establish its credentials as China's principal financier of global energy deals. It was also no mere coincidence that around the time of the largest loans, including one for \$20 billion in 2010, that massive new sources of liquidity were sloshing around the Chinese financial system in the wake of Beijing's response to the global financial crisis.

Thus Chávez and the CDB convinced themselves that theirs was an economically and politically astute and viable partnership. Yet by the time I gave my talk at ILAS in 2012, a growing sense of unease about Venezuela was spreading in Beijing, including concerns about Hugo Chávez's ill health. By the summer of 2014, Chávez had died and been replaced by a leader in whom China had far less confidence, and the global price of oil had plunged. The Venezuela political, economic and humanitarian crisis that has followed has not only been a disaster for the people of Venezuela, but it has also undermined every element of China's

interest in the relationship. The near complete meltdown in Venezuela's oil production has meant that its government has been unable to service the original terms of the loans, which eventually came to total more than \$60 billion, including not just a form of de facto default but also lower-than-agreed oil shipments to China. Probably more consequential, however, is that Venezuela's oil production crisis has contributed to a rise in global oil prices over the last year, raising China's total oil import bill. From almost every possible angle, then, the China-Venezuela relationship has become completely dysfunctional for the governments, businesses and citizens of both countries.

BROADER LESSONS

Unsurprisingly, neither the Chinese nor Venezuelan authorities publicly acknowledge that their relationship has failed to live up to the high expectations their leaders had set well over a decade ago. To be sure, China has dramatically scaled back the scope of its lending in recent years, but at each new sign of Venezuela's further descent into crisis, Chinese foreign policy leaders simply make formulaic statements about their hopes for "stability" in Venezuela. Yet China has refused to play any public role in Latin American regional efforts, such as through the Lima Group, to help Venezuela find a more sustainable path forward. In short, China has chosen to wash its hands of its role in first facilitating, and then failing to help resolve, Venezuela's crisis.

Beyond just the details of what has gone wrong in their one-on-one relationship, China-Venezuela ties have broader, if too often underappreciated, implications in a number of ways. In view of that discussion I had with the ILAS researchers back in 2012, it is clear that Venezuela was and remains an important test case for how Chinese researchers as well as government and business officials understand, or misunderstand, political risk in Latin America and beyond. There was a strong belief in China that complementary oil-based linkages, grounded in seemingly unshakeable



ties between Venezuela's paramount leader and one of China's state-banking champions, could not be derailed. There was further belief that through its loans-for-oil deals, China would both guarantee oil flows and loan repayments while remaining immune from any vicissitudes of Venezuelan economics or politics.

Although all of these assumptions have been upended in Venezuela, yet China has made similar calculations in its lending and investment relations with other resource-rich developing countries not just in Latin America but also in Africa and Asia. To be sure, it's hard to find another equivalent of Chávez's Venezuela in Latin America, but Mugabe's Zimbabwe or Hun Sen's Cambodia offer analogues in China's Africa and Southeast Asian relationships. Moreover, the massive debt-based relationship that China built up with Venezuela is a warning sign for debtor and lender alike as China seeks to lend and invest hundreds of billions of dollars through its global Belt and Road infrastructure plan.

FINAL THOUGHTS

In the more than six years since that original ILAS presentation, I have been writing, speaking and teaching about the slow-motion train wreck that is China-Venezuela relations. I have done so not out of a sense of schadenfreude; certainly the United States has made bigger mistakes in Latin America and elsewhere, but out of a sense that something could and should be changed. For example, as a country that is working to improve climate governance both at home and abroad, China could engage with Venezuela to think of innovative ways to develop the country's

oil resources in a sustainable way. Or, given China's growing role as an important energy and infrastructure lender in Latin America and globally, an honest and open reckoning with China's experience in Venezuela could serve to avoid similar mistakes down the road.

One final thought stays with me as I reflect on these years of researching and writing about China and Venezuela. It is that for most of that time I was a professor in a Chinese university (I left Tsinghua University last summer), and even though in every publication and every classroom and public presentation I gave what I viewed as constructively critical view, I was never once directly or indirectly dissuaded from such a stance. In fact, quite the opposite was true as I was frequently invited for media interviews, think tank conferences and business confabs where it was clear that I would voice my concerns about the direction of China-Venezuela ties or of China-Latin America relations in general. All that may come as a surprise given the well-deserved reputation China has gained for sensitivity to criticism of its foreign policy or for the lack of intellectual freedom in Chinese academic institutions.

They listened politely, but I wish China's foreign policy and bank officials would heed my calls for a more sensitive and empathetic approach to their foreign policy toward Latin America and other developing country regions, one that does not threaten to unnecessarily repeat the past mistakes of other global powers.

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CROSS CURRENTS



James A. Dettleff [K-dramas Flow into Latin America](#) • Andrea Bachner [How to Think Globally](#)
Manual Azuaje-Alamo [Living Between Distant Shores](#) • Yuan Wang and Theodore Macdonald [Shared Sentiments](#)
[Inspire New Cultural Centers](#) • Ana Paula Kojima Hirano [Telluric Connections, Bodies in Transit](#)
Ilana Boltvinik and Rodrigo Viñas [Transoceanic Traveling Trash](#)

K-dramas Flow into Latin America

A Look at Korea's Cultural Products By JAMES A. DETTLEFF

I WAS AT CHILE'S SANTIAGO AIRPORT SOME months ago when I heard a group of young ladies chanting and cheering. I couldn't really understand what they were saying, while running with short steps from one place to another. Their chanting continued in what sounded like Japanese or Korean, until I recognized some words: *Super Junior*. The k-pop group was leaving Chile after a successful and massive concert, and their fans were following them until their last moments in the country. The next day there was barely a note about it in an interior page of a Chilean newspaper, and only some seconds' mention on a TV news program. How come a musical group with so many and loyal fans had no publicity in the media? Welcome to the *hallyu* experience.

Korean pop groups and television dramas broke frontiers and arrived on Latin American soil more than 15 years ago. Their popularity has increased thanks to the easy access to these products through the Internet, and to thousands of fans around the world who upload, classify, and share these songs and episodes to the delight of the South Korean government.

The Asian products have been part of the Latin American culture for decades. TV cartoons from Japan—*animes*—are part of the regular schedule since the mid 60's when *Astroboy* was first broadcasted, followed by *Street Racer* (*Meteoro*, in Latin America), *Knights of the Zodiac*, *Dragon Ball*, *Mazinger Z*, *Rurouni Kenshin*, only to name a few that followed in the next

decades. Martial arts films and video games from Asia also flooded the world, as did the comic books, known as *manga*. These products were mainly targeted at the male audience, but a few products—such as *Candy Candy*, *Sakura Card-captors* and some *manga shojo*—were aimed at the female audience. But at the turn of the century, that changed.

Japan has been a huge production center of *animes*, TV shows, *mangas*, pop music and such. But by the end of the 20th century other production centers started to expand. South Korea was one of them, and cultural industries played a role as well as politics. After the country restated its political relationship with China, Korean TV dramas and pop music groups started to appear on



Yoon Eun-hye stars in OK Drama.

China's television and music venues. Up until then, Japanese *dramas*—TV fiction shows, called that after the English word drama—ruled the Asian market, as did the *J-pop*, Japanese boy band or girl groups that sang and danced catchy themes mainly attracting young audiences. South Korea's entertainment industry also worked on training *aidorus*—after the English word idols—young men and women who became models, singers or actors/actresses. At the same time, new television stations changed the format of their dramas, shortening them and creating original soundtracks (OST) for the shows, which were usually performed by pop singers, creating a synergy between music and television industries, and later fashion and make-up industries. The Korean government supported them as a way to promote an image of a modern and dynamic Korea.

To differentiate their national products from Japanese ones, Korean songs are known as *k-pop*, and their TV series as *k-dramas*. A performance in Beijing of HOT—a *k-pop* boy band—had a huge success, taking by surprise the Chinese media, which started to talk about the Korean wave: the *hallyu* was born.

Hallyu means wave or flow, and is used to describe the cultural phenomenon that includes music, television dramas and films from South Korea. These products didn't only succeed in China but also in Japan, Taiwan, Singapore and many other Asian countries. Thanks to the Internet they reached several other regions of the world, with young females as their main audience. Blogs and web pages started to appear offering episodes of *k-dramas*, and fans started to watch them even without speaking Korean. Some websites started a collaborative work to subtitle the episodes: the *fansubs* were born. Web pages that allow people to learn Korean were easily found, and in 2013 the applications to take the proficiency test in Korean had quadrupled compared to 2004.

K-dramas arrived to Latin America in the early years of this century, when Mexico started dubbing them. In Peru, the Korean embassy wanted to promote the



Above, OK Drama; below, Anime Sakura



country's image in the context of the 2002 Soccer World Cup, and offered *k-dramas* to the national public broadcast station, TV Peru. Since there was no money to pay for the products, the embassy offered them for free if the station would also broadcast promotional videos of Korea. Since then, *k-dramas* continued to be shown in the country: until 2010 by TV Peru, then by Panamericana—a private broadcasting company—and since 2016 also by Willax, a small TV station that is trying to increase its share of the Peruvian television market.

One would imagine that these series are a huge success with the audience, but it isn't so. They barely reach two points on the ratings, which is pretty low for what is expected on Peruvian television. So how have they survived more than 15 years on Peruvian television screens? On the

one hand, *k-dramas* have young female die-hard fans who are willing to watch the series over and over, despite having watched it before in Korean, subtitled, or even on other TV stations. On the other hand, the broadcasting companies that have aired the *k-dramas* have low ratings, with these programs often being their most watched shows. The low cost of buying a *k-drama* compared to the audience the station gains seems to make it a profitable business.

The problem of depending on these *k-dramas* is that it will not allow those stations to grow but just to survive, and there is always the risk that the audiences will start to fade away. But for now, we still see in Peru and other Latin countries young people dancing to the music of *k-pop*, buying magazines with news and pictures of their *aidorus*, or running around the airport to have a last glance when their Korean stars leave the country.

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How to Think Globally

Between China and Latin America **By ANDREA BACHNER**

THE HOLLYWOOD ACTION FILM *PACIFIC RIM*, directed by Guillermo del Toro and released in 2013, features the Pacific as an abyssal gateway through which alien monsters from another dimension enter the world. The film's human heroes fighting in giant robots in order to contain the aliens set on conquest and destruction show a rather skewed picture of our imaginary of the Pacific. The Pacific Rim invoked in the title, as the film suggests with its main protagonists, a U.S. American with his Japanese love interest, involves North America and Japan, while characters from Russia and China serve as expendable sidekicks. Pacific islanders are only precariously included—in the form of victims. In spite of Guillermo del Toro's cultural roots, Latin America is completely absent from the picture—as if the Pacific's rim did not extend south.

In time, of course, Magical Realism was a Latin American export success that inspired writers all over the globe, not least in China.

Most spectators would not have noticed this omission or would have dismissed it as unimportant. After all, del Toro's *Pacific Rim* is not a geopolitical treatise or a reflection on cultural interactions in the Pacific, but a light-hearted action blockbuster. But that's precisely the problem: some ways of thinking, some ways of mapping the world are so deeply ingrained that it's difficult to see beyond them. My own research trajectory is a case in point. In spite of having trained as a comparatist with a focus on Chinese

literature and culture on one hand and Latin American studies on the other, only my third book project engages explicitly and in detail with both cultural traditions together.

When I started research on the connections between Chinese and Latin American cultures some years ago, I was in for several surprises. I wasn't prepared for the sheer wealth of relations and resonances between the two cultural realms that I began to encounter. Most people might have heard of the Manila galleons—carrying goods from China—with their direct trade route between the Philippines and Mexico from the 16th to the 19th century. But it is not common knowledge that voices in Spain were clamoring for a conquest of southern China as an addition to the empire in the sixteenth century. The fact that Chinese coolie laborers shaped the economy of 19th-century Cuba has been widely researched. But the important role of Chinese coolies in Cuba's Ten Years' War and the War of Independence, especially highlighted by leftist historians after the Cuban revolution, was news to me. Many Latin American writers were inspired by China—at least in their imagination—of what appeared as an exotic, far-away culture to most. We may think of Jorge Luis Borges' imaginary of a Chinese novel that includes all possible decisions and their consequences in his "The Garden of Forking Paths," or the excessive chinoiserie of Rubén Darío's "The Death of the Empress of China." But countering the Orientalist visions of China in Latin America, the first Latin American literary text (at least to my knowledge) to be translated into Chinese was selected out of a spirit of solidarity among weak nations: leftist writer and intellectual Mao Dun prefaced his 1923 translation of Darío's "The Veil of Queen Mab"—rendered in

Chinese from an English translation—by pointing to the shared marginal position of Latin American countries and China vis-à-vis Europe and the United States. In time, of course, Magical Realism was a Latin American export success that inspired writers all over the globe, not least in China. But it is more than a fascinating detail that the Sino-Tibetan Tashi Dawa (writing in Chinese) chose to reflect critically on Magical Realism and the dynamics of world literary emulation. He started his 1985 novella "Tibet: Souls Tied to a String" by having his persona inspired by the globally circulating song "El cóndor pasa" to compose an imaginary (and highly metafictional) Tibetan scene.

And on and on it went. Until my brain, my copious hand-written notes, and my computer were crisscrossed by a complex tangle of connections between the two cultures: ones that traced routes taken by people and ideas, ones that tracked literary influences, but also ones that probed exotic fantasies of the cultural other or that marked surprising analogies. Rather than a picture of harmonious mutuality, what emerged was a cacophony of felicitous intersections and superimpositions, but also of cultural frictions, unequal exchanges or mistranslations. And yet, for me, the multiple, dynamic, relational constellations at work testified to the power and productivity of intercultural work against all odds.

As I was unearthing new relations between Latin American and Chinese cultures, I felt profound unease at having been taken by surprise to begin with. Why hadn't my work discovered and explored this comparatist motherlode earlier? True, I didn't precisely custom-design my formation in comparative literature with a view to working on Chinese-Latin American connections. Instead, I kept adding new languages

Space, Transformation and Movement

Three Chinese Artists in Buenos Aires, Argentina.



Vuelta de Rocha, La Boca, Buenos Aires, January 2015. A multitude of entranced spectators surround the illuminated edges of Riachuelo de La Boca, the old port neighborhood of fishers and humble workers in the south of Buenos Aires. A spectacle of movement and dance accompanies the forms in movement and the lit-up landscapes in the sky and on the water. The Chinese fireworks artist Cai Guo-Qiang has transformed this spot under the title “Life is a milonga: Fireworks Tango for Argentina.” Cai conceived this explosive project, inspired in the history of tango, as a dialogue between cultures in which elements of nature are integrated into the human landscape in an unpredictable, fluid and open manner. (Text by Verónica Flores; Photo by Tatsumi Masatoshi, courtesy of Cai Studio.)



Fundación Proa, La Boca, Buenos Aires, December 2017. Ai Weiwei disembarks in Buenos Aires. There, where in yesteryears, the painter Benito Quinquela Martín observed the arrival of cargo ships from his studio while he painted the daily life of immigrant workers. In the historical and colorful context of Caminito, right in front of a prow looking out on the river, Ai installed a monumental mass sculpture, made of 1,254 steel bicycles, referring both to the most traditional form of transportation in China, but with a playful nod to conceptual artist Marcel Duchamp. Architecture in movement, a metaphor for permanent change in the culture, this gigantic work recontextualizes daily objects to reveal the dissolving force of mass industrial production. The wheels spin infinitely, surprising passersby, while they evoke the creative spirit of the artist and his capacity to act for social transformation.

(Text and photo by Verónica Flores)



San Telmo, Buenos Aires, April 2015. Eighteen intertwined bodies pose silently, making up a long fixed chain. They wear various shades of yellows and tans, the colors of the tiny soybeans whose presence in the background slowly becomes apparent. It is an optical illusion carried out for this photo-performance through the mimicry of the models and the camouflage techniques meticulously designed by the Chinese artist Liu Bolin. The powerful living image is a subtle and ingenious invitation by the artist to reflect on the forms of invisibility and dehumanization created by the global economy. An incessant line of spectators—sometimes up to 500 people—went to look at the installation. (Text by Verónica Flores; Photo courtesy of the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Buenos Aires.)

and cultures to my comparatist's portfolio depending on time and opportunity, and driven, above all, by the fuzzy criterion of personal fascination. But upon further reflection, something else was at play here, something that had very little to do with my own serendipitous intellectual development. Instead, what I had happened upon pointed to an intellectual problem beyond the specific examples of China and Latin America that I had singled out for an analysis of alternative Pacific networks. Our way of mapping the world was in need of updating. As we are busy either complaining about or lauding globalization, the very logic of thinking about different parts of the world is profoundly biased, provincial rather than global. After all, why are some places widely represented while others receive next to no attention? And why do we find connections between some countries and regions self-evident but imagine other spaces as if they were disconnected islands? And what assumptions determine the comparisons we trace between different cultures?

Of course, Latin America and Chinese cultures represent merely one of many cases of a biased global imagination. But I have found this example particularly instructive. For one, both regions are no longer (or have never really been) peripheries to Europe's center or appendixes to North American power, as they have come to occupy important geopolitical, economic and cultural roles. And yet, on many people's imagined map, Asia and America still seem to occupy the opposite ends of a flat, discontinuous space, embodying the antipodes of East and West. Concurrently, increased stress on the North-South division within the American continent has transformed the border between the United States and Mexico into "la frontera" (the frontier) *par excellence*, bracketing reflections on the connection between Asia and the South of the American continent. Overshadowed by the conventionalized binaries of East and West and North and South, as well as divided by the boundaries of disciplines and areas, comparative work on Asia

and Latin America, though of increasing interest to scholars in history, sociology and economics, still occupies a marginal position in cultural and literary studies.

This work falls outside of disciplinary boundaries or is severely curtailed by them. It is also marked by the politics and positionalities of academic traditions. For instance, scholars within Latin American studies have long studied literary Orientalism and have begun to focus more attention on diasporic circuits. But until recently, most of their research has been limited to sources in Spanish and Portuguese. Scholars in China and Taiwan, while increasingly competent in the languages of Latin America, are often bound by disciplinary expectations: for instance, to produce ambitious surveys rather than fine-grained analyses. Literary scholars are often too caught up in histories of translation, literary influence, or the intercultural experiences of individual intellectuals to look at a bigger global and interdisciplinary picture. Historians, who have done much to allow us to think about Latin America and Asia together, for example, by reconstructing histories of immigration, do not account for the elusive yet important web of imaginaries that forge intercultural thinking. In addition, this kind of research moves uneasily even within more capacious frameworks. For the field of transpacific studies, some parts of China and Latin America are entirely too continental. And a world power such as China doesn't quite fit into the category of the global South either. And what about all the cases that fall outside of neat patterns of geopolitical panoramas, economic networks, diasporic movements or literary influence?

One of the most exciting insights for me has been the sheer polarity that marks how we think of China and Latin America together—or rather apart: on the one hand, they have often been treated as antipodes, situated at opposite ends of the world map and thus embodying divergent negative mirror images of Western imagination: China's inscrutable, decadent civilization versus Latin America's

unchartered barbarity. On the other, since Columbus's erroneous superimposition of China and the Americas, we have not ceased to fantasize about Latin America and China as closely linked; for one, in the periodically resurfacing hypotheses of common cultural roots between pre-Columbian cultures and China or early contact and interaction between them. Too close for comfort and yet worlds apart, the imagination that thinks both cultural regions together also embodies the extremes of thinking comparatively, pitting sameness versus total difference.

Between uncanny closeness and unbridgeable distance, Latin America and China are spheres multiply connected by histories of migration, commerce and collaboration, as well as tied together by analogies, cultural resonances, and cultural fantasies. In my work, I use the complex networks of intersections between China and Latin America as a laboratory for rethinking intercultural analysis. This involves a radical reimagining of comparison—as flexible and multi-focal, as an operation that assumes that its objects are internally hybrid and fuzzy rather than clearly delimited, and as a method that often has to work with uneven dialogues, weak links, hallucinatory superimpositions, and tenuous affinities. I view this work not merely as the methodological navel-gazing of the field of Comparative Literature in which I situate my research. Instead, such an approach forces us to critically reassess how we think globally. After all, to define what is comparable and what incommensurable forms the basis for an understanding of cultural difference and, potentially, the grounds for an ethics of interculturality.

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Living Between Distant Shores

A Decade Reading Latin American Literature in East Asia **By MANUEL AZUAJE-ALAMO**

ESTA MECÁNICA, [LA DE DEPENDER DEL estado] de alguna manera, desoreja a los escritores mexicanos. Los vuelve locos. Algunos, por ejemplo, *se ponen a traducir poesía japonesa sin saber japonés* y otros, ya de plano, se dedican a la bebida. (2666 161-162, my italics)

(This dynamic [of depending on the state], somehow, emasculates Mexican writers. It makes them crazy. Some, for example, *set out to translate Japanese poetry without knowing Japanese*, and others, quite simply, take up drinking).

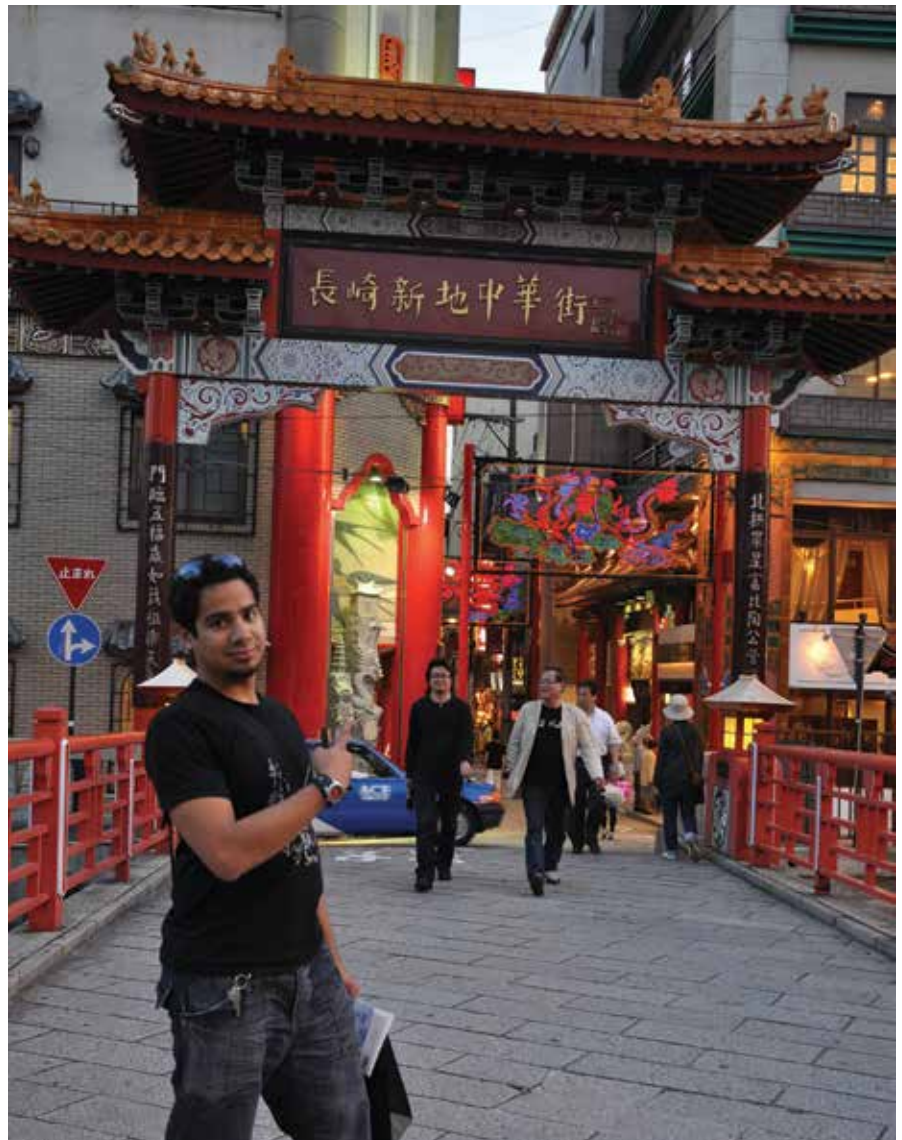
The lines above take place in Mexico City. We are in the world of the late Chilean writer Roberto Bolaño's masterpiece of a novel, *2666*, and a Mexican character is describing—to his interlocutors, literature scholars from Europe—that one of the signs of the intellectual malaise that afflicts some Mexican writers is an inexplicable desire to translate Japanese poetry without knowing any Japanese. The lines quoted above are only a tiny fragment of a massive novel, and yet they have stuck with me all throughout my graduate studies.

The scene from this novel takes place in the Mexico of the 1990s, but I read it neither in Latin America nor at Harvard, but years ago, when I was still a Master's Degree student at the University of Tokyo. The café where I immersed myself in Bolaño's world was in the middle of Tokyo, on an avenue facing the outer moats of the Imperial Palace. Less than a five-minute walk from that intersection, there stands the Tokyo branch of the Centro Cervantes, where, back then I—a Spanish-speaking student living in Japan—used to borrow a weekly dose of Latin American fiction from its vast library. The Centro Cervantes at Tokyo is a six-story building, housing a library and, one floor above it, a Spanish restaurant where you could have one of

the best paellas in Tokyo. I would go there Saturday mornings for a literature fix, and then take the stairs one flight up to eat a Spanish lunch while listening to flamenco music.

Back then, as a Master's student, I had no idea of what the future held, but some years later—after I became a Ph.D.

student at Harvard—I visited all the other Centros Cervantes in East Asia: the stately branch in Beijing, an annex of the Spanish embassy; the branch in Shanghai, embedded in one of the fanciest parts of the French Concession, within walking distance of that odd block where the American and Iranian consulate almost



The author poses in front of the Chinatown gate in Nakasaki, Japan.

face each other; and the minuscule branch in South Korea, comprised of a couple of rooms in a university office, a budget operation that opened during the recent years when the Spanish economy almost collapsed and has thus remained—regrettably—stunted.

Those centers are my reflections of Latin America and East Asia. Like walking into an air-conditioned room in the middle of a sweltering summer or huddling into a reading room with a fireplace to escape from the Cambridge winter, walking into these centers from streets with signs written in letters such as 靖国通り, 朝阳区, or 왜대앞역 meant more than a change in location: it was a change in mindscape, a complete reversal, soothing, coming back—however far away—to the mother tongue even as for the past 20 years I had lived in voluntary exile from the Venezuelan regime.

...

But I get ahead of myself. I was writing about Bolaño's *2666*, and that passage where the Chilean-born novelist says—unprompted, untriggered, and out of the blue—that Mexican writers who write translations of Japanese poetry without knowing any Japanese have one too many loose screws in their heads. What was Bolaño talking about?

Bolaño was writing about Octavio Paz. Or, rather, he was mocking Octavio Paz.

At least that is what—after having read hundreds of pages by both Bolaño and Paz—my dissertation research is increasingly suggesting. *Se ponen a traducir poesía japonesa sin saber japonés*, Bolaño would know: he was still living in Mexico City in 1970, the year in which Paz published the greatly edited—and much more widely sold—second edition of the book that was the Mexican writer's longest translation from Japanese literature: his Spanish-language translation of Matsuo Bashō's classical haiku narrative *The Road to the Deep North*, or, in Paz's Spanish, *Las sendas de Oku*.

Octavio Paz's fascination for East Asian poetry predated the 1970 edition of *Las sendas de Oku* by at least two decades, and his interest in East Asian culture goes



Olympic Bird Nest Stadium in China.



Yonsei University historical site in Seoul, Korea.

back even further. Having lived in India and Japan for the first time as a diplomat between 1952 and 1954, Paz met a young Japanese diplomat in Mexico in 1955 who would go on to help him translate into Spanish the haikus of Matsuo Bashō. The little book came out in 1957, but it was not until 1970 that Paz—now, after all those years, working alone—revised the translation of the book and recreated

many of its haikus, made them his own poems. Without knowing any Japanese. Octavio Paz: Mexico's one and only Nobel-prize winner, its national poet, was *bête noire* for Bolaño and the poets of his coterie; no wonder Bolaño would feel inclined to mock his translational overreach.

And yet, in Latin American letters Octavio Paz is not alone. During the 20th century, for a Latin American writer to be interested in Japanese literature was not an oddity, but a common step in his or her poetic development. Jorge Luis Borges, in an early book review of a translated Japanese novel, is casual enough to write, in his usual off-hand manner, that "*Hacia 1916 resolví entregarme al estudio de las literaturas orientales*" ("Around 1916 I decided to dedicate some time to the study of Oriental literatures"): 1916, that is to say, when Borges was merely 17 years old. Fittingly, during the 1980s, nearly 70 after that early encounter with Asian literature, Borges paid two visits to Japan. By then he had completely lost his sight, but this did not impede his perception of his beloved Japanese culture; as he would say in an interview during the 1980s, he could not see the temples, nor see the stone steles and their inscriptions, but he could touch them, and this tracing of his blind fingers over the smooth wood and rock provided a more intimate contact with Japanese culture. Blind, Borges composed his

late-period poetry mnemonically inside his head, relying on poetic forms to hold already-composed verses in suspension while he went on to work on the new lines. This is how he wrote the original haikus collected in his last poetry collections, *The Cypher* and *The Gold of the Tigers*. This, by the way, is also how he translated a classic from Japanese literature, Sei Shonagon's highly allusive essay collection *The Pillow Book of Sei Shonagon*. Working from an English version, Borges and his wife would sink everyday into the world of the medieval Japanese court—described in the English language that Georgie had learnt as a boy from the British side of his family—and come out at the end of the day with pages of Borges's succinct and elegant Spanish.

Like Borges, Brazilian poet Haroldo de Campos, debuting in the decade of the 1950s, was also fascinated with Japanese poetry, especially by the Chinese characters that it used in its writing system. He had a radical approach to poetry, and, along with his brother Augusto de Campos and the poet Décio Pignatari, founded the movement *poesia concreta* in Brazil. The Chinese script so fascinated de Campos that in 1977 he collected, edited and translated a whole volume collecting essays on the poetics of East Asian characters, *Ideograma: Logica Poesia Linguagem (Ideogram: Logic Poetry Language)*. Some 15 years later, he would also translate—likewise without speaking Japanese—the Noh theater piece, *The Feather Mantle*.

The renowned Uruguayan poet Mario Benedetti also composed poetry based on Japanese models. His late poetry collection *Rincón de Haikus*—fittingly published in 1999, as the new Asian century was about to begin—became a bestseller not only in his native Uruguay, but also in other parts of the Latin American continent.

Why did Japanese literature attract so many fans from the ranks of eminent Latin American authors?

There are limits to my ability to explain why it attracted *them*, but I can explain why it attracted *me*. It all started with the

Chinese Cultural Revolution (no, really, it did). One of my parents' closest university friends was a Venezuelan of Chinese descent. This man's last name was that of a Chinese dynasty, so here I will just call him "Tang."

Tang was like an uncle to me, an uncle from faraway lands. He would often visit our house, and stay over talking with my parents until the wee hours of the night. As a five-year-old, I was convinced that he was related to either Bruce Lee or Ultraman, or both, and I always asked him to spar with me, a request that he would often brush away with a hearty Latin American laugh. For us, in my family, he was *el chino Tang*, even though he had never put his foot on any part of the Asian continent, and even though Tang's father, scarred from his exile, had not made enough of an effort to teach his son any Chinese. The *el chino* moniker was given to him in the Venezuelan manner, without racial overtones, the same way that in my family I was called *el negro*, and my cousin *el rubio*.

Of course, Tang was not alone; there have been whole generations of Chinese and other East Asian immigrants to Latin America. I know about that now, but back then I was still a kid, living in the surreal peaceful family life of pre-Bolivarian Revolution Venezuela, and *el chino Tang* was the only Asian person I knew, and, man, was he interesting.

Following that, my family moved to the United States for some years. I picked up English, and, in the way that many do, in picking up a new language I also picked up, without noticing, new ways of seeing. And before I knew what happened, my family moved back to Venezuela during middle school, and there was a *parilla* with *el chino Tang*, and there was his Hong Kong story.

Hong Kong. After many Hong Kong movies, three Hong Kong visits, and the whole oeuvre of the director Wong Kar-Wai, my heart is convinced, even as my mind knows better, that the best neighborhoods of Caracas—those neighborhoods built in the modern style and which were, once, the promise of a better tomorrow now betrayed—were

trying to copy the now nostalgia-ridden modernism of Hong Kong architecture: skyscrapers built on a tropical island fighting the marine wind and water. *El chino Tang* traveled to that city for the first time in his life when he was close to 40 years old, to meet the estranged side of his family that his own side had not met since the Cultural Revolution. In Hong Kong, my uncle Tang explained, all sorts of Asian and Chinese people gathered, and many of them did not speak the local dialect, so in order to communicate they would trace Chinese characters with their fingers on the palms of their hands. Speaking, writing, to each other in this way, a sort of communication was achieved. With no Mandarin or Cantonese, uncle Tang lived for a whole season in Hong Kong, and when he returned to Venezuela he marveled his nephew with stories of the island.

"You could live there too," he said to me one of those times. "You would just need to know a dozen of Chinese characters to get by. They would look at your face and think you're from deep in Inner China. You would just need to know some characters."

Now, decades later, I know "some" characters, or just about enough to read novels in Japanese, Chinese and Korean. Japan is now my adopted home, having lived here for more than a third of my life. But it all started because one evening uncle Tang traced some Chinese characters on the palm of his hand, and then on the palm of mine.

I would like to think that past writers from Latin America also have had experiences like this, and that is why they came back, now and again, to the Asia of their imagination.

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Shared Sentiments Inspire New Cultural Centers

Wuayusa and Incense By YUAN WANG and THEODORE MACDONALD

IN THE EARLY AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 3, 2018, in the mountainous village of Shicang, Zhejiang Province, China, firecrackers burst into the air and flags waved in the wind as a parade of Clan Que members stepped out of their newly built ancestral temple. Behind them marched a band of local drummers, and cymbal players and *suona* trumpet performers played high-pitched folk music. Headed by Que Guande, a respected clan member and village chief, they walked through the gates, marching to village shrines and temples where, with incense burning, they paid tribute to the local spirits. They then carried the spirits' statues to the new ancestral temple, informing these divinities that, in the evening, the Clan's ancestor souls would return. It had been 172 years since the first Clan Que ancestor temple had been inaugurated—and 46 years since it had been removed. The marchers' faces were solemn and proud. They were the patrons of this temple where their souls would remain after death, join their ancestors, and enjoy worship by their descendants in a rapidly changing world. Four days earlier, and several hours before dawn, in the Ecuadorian Amazonian community of Arajuno, Margarita López, a teacher and eldest daughter of a famous shaman (*yachaj*), and her husband, Cesar Cerda, former president of the Organization of Indigenous Peoples of Pastaza (OPIP), sat with their children to drink *wayusa* tea, a daily ritual linking them to the spirit world. They were at the foot of Pasu Urcu, the hill that houses local spirits, and inside the Puka Rumi Community Center, which was created to illustrate the harmony between their Kichwa community and the biodiverse, spirit-laden forest which surrounds it. They were not alone. For



Burning incense to welcome the return of their ancestors' spirits.

They then carried the spirits' statues to the new ancestral temple, informing these divinities that, in the evening, the Clan's ancestor souls would return.

the next several days, other leaders of the local ethnic federation, ACIA (Association of Indigenous Communities of Arajuno), elevated the domestic ritual to a large public event, *Wayusa Upina*, inviting people from the surrounding communities. The celebration seeks to restore *Sumak Kawsay*, the good life, that requires communal and spiritual ties as well as a degree of political and economic self-determination, amidst rapid environmental and political changes.

In most ways Shicang and Arajuno could not be more distinct. They are literally worlds apart—geographically, culturally and historically. But both now share sentiments about cultural and spiritual losses and a desire to rebuild some of that communal life while adapting to inevitable, often positive but sometimes alienating, economic and political changes. The two sentiment-sharing communities did not connect through spirits, shamanism, or anything magical. The similarities were simply noted by the authors, who have worked separately for years in one of the areas and, recently, were fortunate enough to visit the other. Comparisons were obvious. Each village was originally settled by migrants with a strong sense of community and spiritual ties. Both were later challenged by national “modernization” policies, leaving a spiritual vacuum of sorts. Each is now actively restoring local history, spirituality and agency amidst growing national and globalized economies. Their new cultural centers are a shared way of saying “Let’s decide some of the future through the past, as we did before.”

SHICANG: ANCESTORS AND ARCHITECTURE

Among the approximately 6,000 Shicang villagers now spread along the Shicangxi River, more than 4,000 belong to Clan Que. These ethnic Hakka arrived during the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1636-1912) dynasties. They migrated out of the densely populated Shanghang County in nearby Fujian Province after lands in Zhejiang Province opened up because of rebellion, warfare, and

population displacement. Initially, the Que Clan members settled in small huts and worked as subsistence farmers. In time some noted nearby iron deposits and began smelting. Several were quite successful and shifted from small farmers to manufacturers. By the mid-Qing Dynasty (1800s), the Que Clan’s change in status was displayed in more than thirty ornate estates which copied, and often embellished, the rich ornamentation of the wealthy original inhabitants. However, the Que Clan retained the basis structure of their ancestral Fujian houses. That was essential. The most important household space was the central incense hall, used for worshipping the ancestors. Associated responsibilities and duties were not merely obligatory tasks but, rather, a foundation underlying the moral values of the village.

In 1846 Que Tiankai, a rich Que Clan businessman, constructed the first community ancestor temple. While tracing the genealogy and constructing the temple, Clan Que elders dispatched a four-person team back to Fujian’s Shanghang, their original hometown. There this delegation acquired the ancestral spirits’ incense burners and furnace ash. Holding the incense burners in their hands to assure continuous burning and climbing the numerous mountains along a trade route, they carried the ancestor incense and its spirits to Shicang. After that was done, all the members of Clan Que placed their ancestors’ tablets, or the tablets of the newly deceased, inside the temple. They lived comfortably amidst their history for a while. However, as iron commerce grew nationally and globally, prices dropped and wealth declined.— reflected clearly in architectural history. Without funds to build new houses, families crowded into the old estates. In 2006, when we historical researchers first visited Shicang, it was obvious that several generations of the same family were living in the same house, sharing the courtyard and passageways. And they continued joint responsibilities for the maintenance of the incense halls. In 1972, however, the status of the community temple and related aspects of spiritual life changed

against their will. And after 1989, as the Deng economic opening was introduced, many gradually took advantage of modern housing.

ARAJUNO: SPIRITS AND SUBSISTENCE

About 8,000 people now live on the right bank of the Arajuno River in the recently established municipality of Arajuno, with parks, stores, bank, bars, churches, schools and several large government offices. Claims on these ancestral lands, however, began in 1912 at the foot of Pasu Urcu. At the time, Pasu Urcu was simply an ancient rest stop with no permanent residents on a trail linking Kichwa settlements across various rivers. Some communities crafted small drums, violins and woven bags to trade for blowguns, poison for their darts, and salt. Each exchanged shamanic skills and provided ritual curing.

Two such travelers, Domingo Cerda and Roque Volante Lopez, well-known shamans, left their main settlement on the Upper Napo River and set up temporary residence near Pasu Urcu to enjoy the hunting and fishing, and to escape feuds. Compared to the more densely populated areas to the north, Pasu Urcu’s environs were ideal. Fish and game were plentiful. And at the foot of Pasu Urcu, a large section of the adjacent river’s flood plain, the *isla*, provided a relatively large and fertile site for subsistence gardens. Later, the new residents cleared a plaza whose obligatory maintenance, organized by the shaman through communal labor, or *minga*, architecturally centered the developing community.

Unlike Que Clan, Arajuno’s original settlers were not a single lineage. Families from various parts set up houses nearby, became friends and later intermarried, resulting in residence-based kindred known as *muntun*. It was not that ancestors and lineages did not matter; on the contrary, kinship, as well as place, formed the sense of community, provided identity, and shaped relations. But large family groups and settlements were often broken up by sudden illness and death,



Parading to local spirit temples, inviting them to new Ancestor Temple.

frequently attributed to shaman feuds. Some kin groups were also separated by abusive labor demands, ranging from public works to rubber gathering to debt servitude, all under the control of government officials or local patrons.

Feuding, though conflictive between groups, nonetheless tightened relations within the *muntun*, where the *yachaj*'s ties to spirits, *supai*, were understood to insulate and protect *muntun* members. And while some Kichwa from the Upper Napo were hauled off as far as Peru to gather rubber or obliged to work on local farms and ranches, most of those who settled in Arajuno were fortunate enough to obtain essential manufactured objects (tools and cloth) and pay off the related debts to Upper Napo patrons by panning for gold along the river banks. Though the patron-client economy was truly exploitative, the residents were able to farm, hunt, and fish locally. To do so successfully, local *yachaj* had to establish close ties with the Pasu Urcu *supai*, who were understood to own and provide access to these essential resources. As the spiritual ties increased and relations intensified, Kichwa understanding of

territory became coterminous with the *supai*'s control over resources. A territorial agreement developed, which tied *muntun* members to their land and consequently to each other, through spirits. Arajuno residents, though far less focused on tight genealogies and ancestor worship than Shicang dwellers, nonetheless developed a strong sense of kin-based community and self-identity grounded in spirit-based links to place and family.

But in the 1970s, spiritual ties and community bonds in both Shicang and Arajuno were challenged by government policies. The Chinese and Ecuadorian governments, coincidentally and for radically different reasons, mandated changes which produced disruptions to community and the spiritual world.

MATERIALIZING LIFE: "MODERN" STATE POLITICS AND POLICY

Today in Shicang, as in most Chinese villages, many young adults leave to work in the cities and send the money back to their parents and children who remain in the village. New red-brick buildings with modern amenities have sprung up with government support. Shicang's local government has also built a parking lot,

a bus station and public toilets. It has widened the road, enabling daily shuttle buses between the county seat and the village. Material life has improved. Some of the crowded, deteriorating old estates are being converted into museums and tourist attractions, with trained tour guides.

The Que Clan's priorities were illustrated during one of our visits. A regional ministry had dropped off plans to convert the old houses into tourist attractions, based on attractive but inauthentic designs drawn up by an external architect. For the Shicang residents, there was a sense that something was missing...the spiritual and moral links to ancestors. Community leaders spoke to the author, an architectural historian, who then met with regional officials to express disagreement with the alien design. Fortunately, for budgetary reasons, the drawings did not become architectural reality.

Another, more serious, concern was political. In 1972, the old ancestor temple of Clan Que in Shicang was demolished and replaced by a primary school. Though not clearly stated, it was fairly obvious to community members that the move reflected the Maoist/Cultural Revolution's (1966 to 1976) opposition to, and elimination of organized religion. Community spiritual concerns persisted when, in 2004, the primary school building was declared to be structurally dangerous. The school was temporarily relocated. The Que Clan responded gradually.

In the late spring of 2013, after a five-hour drive from Shanghai, the author returned, still impressed by the old residential houses with their rammed earth walls and black tiles, a rural landscape which was distinct from the "modern world." She later attended a meeting held by Clan Que Committee for Ancestral Temple Reconstruction to discuss her rendering (architectural drawings) of an ancestral temple plan based on the older villagers' memories. The Que Clan liked the plan, and then moved quietly towards recreating the ancestor hall, temporarily calling it a

“culture center.”

In January, 2016, Que Longxing, the organizer of the ancestor temple project, showed the author a booklet “Records on Rebuilding the Weizeng Tang Ancestor Temple” prepared by the villagers. Many Clan Que members also wrote to government officials. Two letters were even sent to the national prime minister. Receiving no response from any government office, a few members of Clan Que moved a huge iron incense burner into the vacant lot to demonstrate the right of occupation. The villagers called all these actions the “Baoji Campaign (Protect the Base).” Some were then arrested and detained for a night. The Communist Party’s secretary of the village (also a member of Que family) was later removed from his position for failure to prevent the protest. Nevertheless, under the pressure of Clan Que’s actions, the local government decided to leave the disputed site alone. Nonviolent action and community mobilization won the day politically. And the ancestor hall began to fill a personal spiritual gap, which many sense in current-day China.

ARAJUNO

Beginning in the 1960s, as part of the agrarian reform that took place throughout Latin America, the Ecuadorian government encouraged colonization of Amazonian lands. Unaccepting, or at least unaware of indigenous perceptions of territory, government officials regarded the forested areas around villages like Arajuno as *tierras baldías*, idle lands, and thus available to settlers. A few colonists moved in and acquired government-awarded, 50-hectare plots near the center of town. Some indigenous residents also began to request and receive such plots. But initially there was little impact on the old sense of territory and community. The spirits were alive and well.

However, a more aggressive, national-economic, agrarian reform took place after 1972, when oil development began in the Amazon. By 1974, as property owners, the Kichwa of Arajuno were required to visibly exploit their land holdings. They were told



Traditional Kichwa wedding drummer/chanter and violin player, now electronically amplified.

that it was best (i.e., highly visible) to raise cattle, and were provided with bank credit to do so. Consequently, land use patterns in Arajuno changed radically. By 1975 portions of every 50-hectare plots were converted to pasture. While the broader sense of territory and spirit ties did not disappear, private property became the primary concern, challenging the earlier sense of communal territory.

The induced privatization created tense social and political relations with colonists and among the Kichwa as well, confusing the indigenous sensibilities that had formed the community. To illustrate, in 1975, while surveyors from the agrarian reform agency were working in Arajuno, some members of the community became angered by the principal *yachaj*’s efforts to acquire more land on the riverside garden area, the *isla*. They suggested that a large section of that communal land be divided in half—one section, including the plaza, would go to the *yachaj* and his family while the other section would remain for communal agricultural use. Although the division would have given the *yachaj* a large piece of land, he reacted violently, arguing that members of the *muntun* should be made to realize their obligation to maintain the plaza, which reflected the organization of the *muntun*, where he was the internal authority figure.

At the time it struck me as ironical, yet understandable, that this spiritual leader, who daily seesawed between subsistence horticulture and production for the market, private property and communal land, the *muntun* and government initiatives, should rage at actions that whittled away at the symbols of his previous authority and status, while at the same time acting in a manner that encouraged such behavior. He was caught between contradictory desires to maintain his previous role and prestige, while also attempting to maximize his personal economic condition. Many shared that confusion, as individual families began to experiment with independent forms of social and economic life, away from the unifying spiritual and communal ties.

Fortunately, perceptions changed in 1979, when young leaders founded ACIA, an organization inspired by other indigenous ethnic federations that emerged throughout the Amazon as oil and agribusiness interests, as well as expanding colonization, increased threats to indigenous territories. The organizations regularly battled with colonists and oil developers. And in 1992 Arajuno residents participated in a massive, multiple-day, protest march from the provincial capital of Puyo to Quito. Shortly thereafter, the government

formally recognized indigenous rights to a number of large territories, including Arajuno. Gradually the presence of colonists and cattle diminished, and communal land holdings re-emerged. As in Shicang, nonviolent protest redirected government actions and resuscitated spiritual life.

GROUNDING THE FUTURE

These changes are not a movement backward in time. Like the incense wafting in Shicang's ancestor hall, Arajuno's *guayusa upina* ceremonies and Puka Rumi Culture Center, are not simple folkloric answers or utopian responses to current and future needs. Throughout China ancestor worship is on the rise, not in opposition to any economic development or government planning, but simply to fill a *perceived* gap in people's lives. In Amazonian communities the new language of *Sumak Kawsay*, the good life, also expresses a need by communities to take more control of future economic development. It suggests a pause, time and space to allow thinking and encourage discussion as oil and logging companies now sit perched at the edge of Arajuno's territory. ACIA members, consequently, are asking the government to recognize their territory as a CTI, *circumscripción territorial indígena*, a space for exercising self-determination. And at home they are

ceremoniously linking themselves to the past, as when the founding yachajs first linked themselves to the *supai* in 1912.

In both Shicang and Arajuno, new culture centers are linking old communal sentiments to changing worlds. They do so in positive ways, by providing a sense of order and culture that, communities agree, is often lacking as states rush to modernize, or even revolutionize economies and societies. The two communities are not unique in China or Latin America. They were observed by coincidence, and the underlying sentiments invite future cultural comparisons as China's presence in Latin America expands.

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Villagers at a wedding dance.

Telluric Connections, Bodies in Transit

Un cuerpo en Fukushima in Santiago del Chile

By ANA PAULA KOJIMA HIRANO

ON A SUMMERY MORNING IN SANTIAGO, Chile—January 20, 2016—my mother and I decided to go to the Gabriela Mistral Cultural Center. My mother was returning to Brazil the next day, and I was going off on a solo trip to the south of Chile before returning to Cambridge. As we explored the architecture of the space and its many rooms, we encountered an exhibit called “A Body in Fukushima.” Fukushima was for me the birthplace of my ancestors from my mother's side, and by a stroke of luck she was there with me. We entered a dark silent room, with its walls painted black. The white frames with pictures of the now phantasmagoric abandoned town and its debris stood out. The lower stage of the exhibition, with its ivory bound screens, accentuated the colorful futons carried by a pale, black-haired woman wearing opaque colored kimonos.

“A Body in Fukushima,” performed by Eiko Otake and photographed by William Johnson in the vicinity of Fukushima Daiichi Reactor reminds me of images from the film *Dreams* by Kurosawa. The photographs, taken in a ghost town, seemed to have come out of an incubus. The spaces portrayed in the pictures existed, the town existed, the people once existed, but they were all washed away by the tsunami. Any life that was spared had to flee from the town, as the radiation was everywhere and remains still there with its invisible and silent poison. Eiko, as the



angel of history, wanders around trying to make sense of what was left. Her body, dressed in traditional Japanese clothing, kimono, stands out in the frames amidst emptiness and horror. In some pictures, she carries with her a bright colored futon—sometimes red, other times purple. It stands out as a silent scream, while Eiko's pale face seems to be grieving with a quiet sorrow. She is the phantom who perambulates aimlessly in this haunted place where it is forbidden for any human being to enter. This was one of the most beautiful and horrifying experiences I had in Chile.

After the 2011 earthquake and tsunami and the following meltdown in the nuclear plant, Fukushima will be remembered as the place of one of the most dreadful disasters in history. Nearly 20,000 people died, and about 2,500 went missing, and these numbers



do not include the possible future deaths caused by diseases associated with this catastrophe. The Kurosawa dream, in which families are running away trying

to escape radiation, came true.

My mother was actually born in Fukushima. Sometimes I forget it, since she went to Brazil when she was only a few months old, on a 56-day trip to the port of Santos. Her boat, Santos-Marú, crossed the oceans full of Japanese immigrants who came to work in the coffee plantations. My grandfather loved nature, and he wanted to be able to work the land, planting fruits and vegetables, and start a new life with his family in Brazil. My grandmother didn't want to go, but she did not have a choice. She left Fukushima behind without knowing if she would ever go back. Baby Toshimi almost did not make it, since she contracted measles, a highly contagious disease, and was almost thrown overboard for it. Luckily, she survived, and here I am telling this story of bodies in transit and telluric connections.



On that day at the cultural center, I thought “what a surprise and an extraordinary bit of serendipity to have an exhibition on Fukushima in Chile!” It was something of a shock to find this exhibit by chance in Chile when the largest population of Japanese heritage outside Japan is in Brazil; however, I could only see this exhibition when I went to Chile. Why Chile and not Brazil? Brazil is located on the South American Plate and it is out of the reach of significant earthquakes. The same cannot be said for our “neighbor” without shared borders. The haunting disaster in Fukushima, echoed in Chile, a country that shares the same fear as Japan. This upside-down-reflected country is also susceptible to earthquakes and tsunamis. Japan and Chile—both very long, narrow countries— are the farthest from each other among the countries that share the Pacific Ocean. Nonetheless, the fear of natural disasters affects both the Japanese and the Chileans, who both might wonder from time to time why their ocean is called Pacific.

A year before the accident in Fukushima,

This moment of displacement—the earth moving under us shaking the soul of the ones who lived on it, and in the context of this exhibition—touched me in a soft spot removing me from an unstable zone within myself.

Santiago de Chile had been struck by a terrible earthquake, 8.8, which became the subject of Juan Villoro’s book *8.8: the fear in the mirror: A Chronicle of the Chilean Earthquake*. Villoro was in Santiago for a conference on children’s literature when the earthquake struck. He had already experienced the 1985 earthquake in Mexico—one that left more than 10,000 dead, thousands of injured, and hundreds of thousands of homeless. As he puts it, “We Mexicans have a seismograph in our soul, at least the ones of us who survived 1985.” He lived once again in his body the fear and the trauma one can feel when the earth shakes one’s spirit. The 2010 Chile earthquake and tsunami caused more than 500 deaths. Villoro also mentions Japan

on his writings on the earthquake. He remembers having read instructions, in a Japanese manual, on how to survive violent tremors. They recommended keeping a kit handy with a flashlight, a whistle, and a pound of rice. The Japanese, as well as the Chileans and the Mexicans, know what it is like to live with the possibility of having their lives interrupted by seismic waves. Japanese astronaut Soichi Noguchi saw the aftermaths of the 2010 Chilean earthquake from space and sent a message to Chile “We pray for y[ou].”

Witnessing “A Body in Fukushima” in the context of Chile and with my mother made me think of different kinds of bodies, of narratives of displacement, fear, death and “disbelonging.” This moment of

displacement—the earth moving under us shaking the soul of the ones who lived on it, and in the context of this exhibition—touched me in a soft spot removing me from an unstable zone within myself. The connection with my Japanese family was fading away. My mother is one of its last links, but it is a very fragile link, since she cannot really speak Japanese and is not in contact with her relatives still in Japan. She embraced Brazil in a way that makes me forget her place of birth.

The year I went to the exhibition was after the passing of my grandparents. I was never able to tell them that I also appreciated the culture and the place where they came from. All the bullying and prejudice that I suffered while growing up, and I still suffer, for being Asian, made me try to suppress and filter anything that could be associated with them. I rejected that “other” culture, without understanding that I didn’t have to deny their Japanese connections and their race. Why is it so hard for us Latin Americans to understand that Brazilians, in the same way as Chileans, or Mexicans, or many other Latin Americans, or North Americans, are in part Asian, physically, but also in some ways culturally? What are we Americans, if not a mix of several different cultures, ethnicities, races, and even, languages?

The beauty of the performing art, and in this specific case, “A Body in Fukushima” is that it can trespass frontiers, it can touch the audience through the senses and make us understand sorrow, pain, fear, even without writing or saying those words. All surfaces—from the water to the earth, from the photos to the mirrors and windows, from the concrete to the glass, from the confines of our skin to our soul, and from the imaginary boundaries created by us humans, to the walls, all those surfaces—can be fragile and ephemeral. Seeing Eiko wandering around in a land that lost its soul, as a ghost who is trying to understand what is left of humanity, made me think that the body that carries our soul shouldn’t be a barrier for us humans to have empathy

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with each other, and yet, being a minority in this world can be a reason for a lot of sorrow and pain. The body that carries our soul is also as ephemeral and in transit as the earth.

Eiko Othake says about her performance “By placing my body in these places, I thought of the generations of people who used to live there. Now desolate, only time and wind continue to move.”

I read her comment only after writing my own impressions on this exhibition, and it resonated greatly with me and my family, but I am sure it also resonates with many of the souls in transit in this world. William Johnston, who photographed Eiko’s performance in Fukushima, says “By witnessing events and places, we actually change them and ourselves in ways that may not always be apparent but are important. Through photographing Eiko in these places in Fukushima, we are witnessing not only her and the places themselves, but the people whose lives crossed with those places.” In the same way that Villoro was able to connect with the fear and the sensation of dislocation during the earthquake, Raul Zurita was able to connect with the dreams of Kurosawa. Zurita’s “Dreams for Kurosawa” is full of dead bodies within the geography of Chile, going from the Atacama’s desert to the sea. Bodies that disappeared during the Pinochet dictatorship—it could also have been the dream of Kurosawa or the bodies and lives that were washed away by the tsunami in Fukushima.

“A Body in Fukushima” was part of a larger project entitled “A Body in Places.” Eiko is lending her body and her performances to build bridges and connections between the viewers and the places. Chile and Japan seem to be very

far from each other, but they share many ties, including some Japanese Chileans going as far back as 1860 when a Japanese ship docked in Chilean shores. There is also a deep and telluric tie through their earthquakes, a connection through the fear and through the possibility of having a whole city destroyed together with the lives and bodies of the people in it. What makes this exhibition also universal, is that it touches on something that all of us will face one day, death and solitude.

Sometimes you have to be in contact with the disaster and horror to realize that there is a thin line that separates the ones who are still in this world and the ones who have vanished away. Time is implacable, and the “angel of history” wanders around, trying to make sense of the destruction. Being in front of these pictures with my mother in Chile made me have to face again a past that I wanted to forget. Villoro said in his book that he had to go to the end of the world to find another “first occasion” to write about the earth that opens up. I also had to go to Chile and see “A Body in Fukushima” to be able to speak of the traumas of my body, and have another chance to be able to connect with Japan.

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Transoceanic Traveling Trash

BY ILANA BOLTVINIK AND RODRIGO VIÑAS (TRES)

OBJECTS WITH CHINESE CHARACTERS FLOAT up on beaches in Mexico and Peruvian bottle caps land in distant Australian sands. Since 2014, the Mexican art-based research group TRES has been devoted to collecting and investigating marine debris in its Ubiquitous Trash Project.

Much of the oceanic realm still remains a mysterious abyss on which hundreds of

millions of objects and various lifeforms hitch rides and travel from one location to another—including from Asia to Latin America and back again. Trash is one of these privileged objects that can still move freely in the vast sea if it has the appropriate weight which will determine the direction of movement, utilizing currents or wind. “Trash moves, all the

time,” writes Maite Zubiaurre in her article on garbage for the 2015 winter issue of *ReVista*. Zubiaurre was referring to trash on land. We wish to expand her statement by concentrating on the arguably vaster and less controlled regions of national and international waters.

Moved by ocean currents and winds, marine debris composed mostly of plastic



can travel enormous distances. One famous example involved a cargo ship that lost 28,800 colorful plastic bathtub toys (notorious for the rubber duckies, that render them very identifiable) en route from Korea to Washington. The Ocean Conservancy Report of 2010 asserts that sixteen years later, many of these items had drifted as much as 34,000 miles, enough to circle the

Plastic will linger on earth long after human beings have disappeared, and probably will be able to visit more corners of the globe than any of us.

planet almost one-and-a-half times. Not only does plastic travel far, but, as Shakespeare said of truth, it lives long after; beyond our lives. Plastic will linger on earth long after human beings have disappeared, and probably will be able to visit more corners of the globe than any of us.

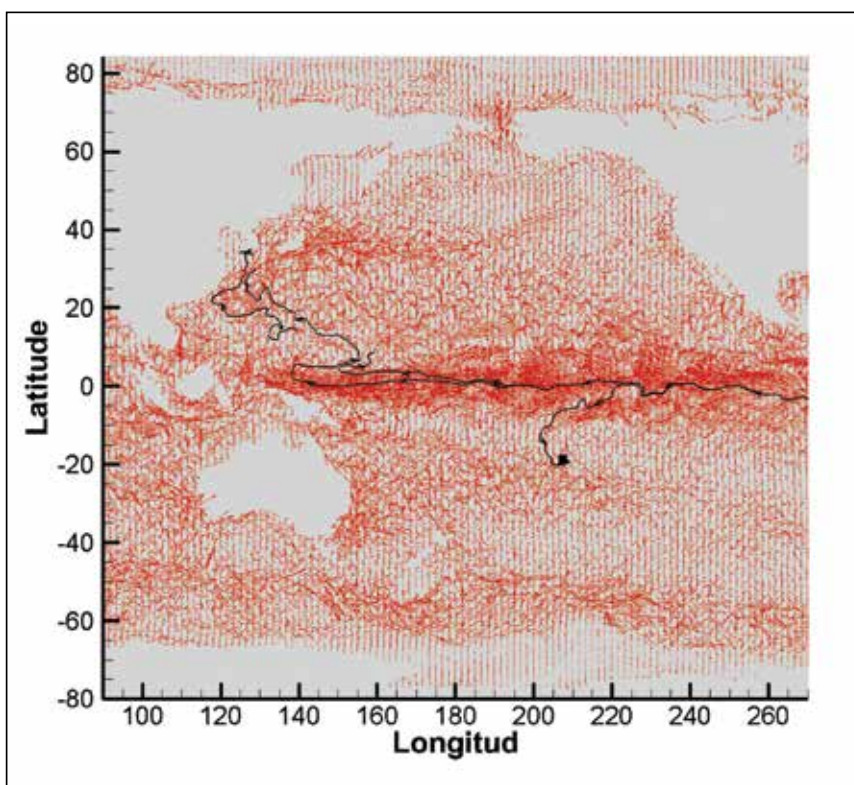


Figure 1. Simulation of the trajectories through the Pacific Ocean when realizing drifters in the sea of Hong Kong ($22^{\circ}13'31.1''\text{N}$ $133^{\circ}56'02.8''\text{E}$). Model developed by the Laboratorio de Oceanografía Física of the Instituto de Ciencias del Mar y Limnología, UNAM (National University of México). Authors: Víctor Kevin Contreras Tereza, David Alberto Salas de León, Rosalinda Monreal Jiménez, María Adela Monreal Gómez.

The movement of the currents (figure 1)

Eight of the top ten countries that filled the oceans with plastic in 2010 are Asian: China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, and Bangladesh, according to an article published in the February 13, 2015 *Los Angeles Times*. The trend continues today. What part of this ends washed up on Latin American beaches? Exact data are incomplete and difficult to obtain. Studies on these movements are almost nonexistent, particularly in the global south, because of lack of resources. The graphic simulation (Fig.1) created by the Physical Oceanography Laboratory in UNAM, Mexico City, in collaboration with the Ubiquitous Trash Project, shows that a piece of plastic on the Island of Lantau, Hong Kong, can end up in the coasts of Chile and with patience in the Atlantic Ocean via the circumpolar current of the Antarctic.

Many citizen based initiatives around the world have committed their time to tracking marine debris. During the last 12 years, the Australian Marine Debris Initiative and the community organisations and individuals involved in the collection and provision of data, detected 143 items from Latin America. Water, milk, detergent and shampoo bottles; an even higher sum of bottle caps; whole chicken packages; a plastic crate; car wash and solvent containers from countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay, washed up on the Eastern seaboard and particularly on the northern shores of Australia. Although some items come from shipping, some of these objects have traveled via ocean currents many miles and countless years.

This is equally true for certain marine organisms, in particular some species of bryozoans, a strange and fascinating tiny (typically about 0.5 millimeters)

hermaphroditic aquatic invertebrate that happens to thrive on plastic. Sometimes referred to as moss animals, bryozoans proliferate on ocean plastic fragments, which become vessels that can carry them to other continents. After the 2011 Japanese tsunami, an astonishing transoceanic biological migration was set into motion. An article published in *Science Magazine* in February 2018 documented the 289 living invertebrate and fish species from Japan that arrived during a five-year period in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean (on coastlines from Midway Atoll to Hawai'i Island, and from south central Alaska to central California). Millions of objects, from small plastic fragments to whole fishing vessels, served as transportation for these critters. Certainly if the study was continued southward, many more items would have been found in Latin American terrain. This information inevitably leads us to question the prejudices and knowledge we have about the relationship between plastic and life, mobility and travel.

We at TRES investigate the traces and stories that these objects and organisms have to tell. For this art team, trash embodies, among other amazing qualities, a hidden code for understanding post-capitalist distribution and consumption patterns in the world, as well as a supplementary alternative: that of free trajectories on ocean currents and the mobility this provides for diverse objects and species. In an interdisciplinary effort, TRES has collaborated with specialists in biology, sociology and archeology, among others, to map out the possibilities of this paradoxical material we named plastic, so present and useful in our daily lives, but that simultaneously produces much disdain.

Our obsession with traveling trash began in Hong Kong. Some beaches of Lantau Island resemble a post-apocalyptic landscape that took our breath away;

a short distance from the impact made by the 19th-century painting *The Raft of the Medusa* (Le Radeau de la Méduse) by Théodore Géricault. Not because “the evil that men do lives after them,” citing Shakespeare once again, but because the beach became the setting for endless entanglements of correlated information, amalgamations and proof that we are all connected: Asia and Latin America, humans and non-humans. What we do in China affects Latin America, what is done in Hong Kong marks Australia, Finland, Russia and Mexico—thus the name *Ubiquitous Trash*.

Trash has the capability of voyaging through water at local and global scales. It has no clear frontier. Trash from anywhere can be found everywhere. The beach, in its very nature dissolves boundaries—anything can wash up, from anywhere—and, what does wash up tells us a great deal about not only what people leave behind, but also who and how we are: a collective message in a bottle. Once upon a time the oceans separated us from faraway lands; now they seem to bridge us together.

TRES (Ilana Boltvinik + Rodrigo Viñas, Mexico City) is an art research collective founded in 2009 that has focused on exploring the implications of public space and garbage through artistic practices that concentrate on the methodological intertwining and dialogue with science, anthropology, and archaeology, among other disciplines. Of particular interest has been the inquiry on the subject of garbage as a physical and conceptual residue that entails political and material implications. They are the 2016 recipients of the Robert Gardner Fellowship for Photography at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard with which they are currently investigating Australian beaches.
www.tresartcollective.com



Clockwise: a cart in the middle of garbage dump, Mexico, 2007; ghosts of the dump Hong Kong lighter.

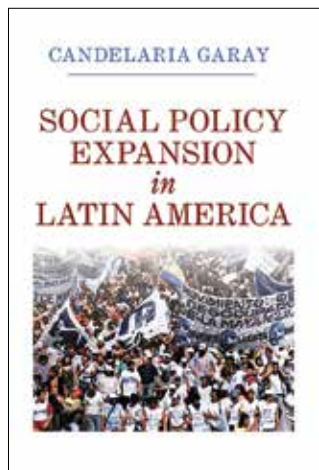
Understanding Social Protections

A REVIEW By LORENA BARBERIA

Social Policy Expansion in Latin America by Candelaria Garay (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016, 393 pp.)

The welfare state emerged in middle-income countries in Latin America during the first half of the 20th century when health care services and pensions were granted to workers with formal sector jobs. However, for most of the 20th century, workers who were hired outside the formal market and their dependents did not have access to social protection. This was all too common in a region characterized by massive labor informality, segmented labor markets and relatively high unemployment.

In the last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century, a stunning transformation took place—several Latin American democracies extended social protection to these citizens in the informal and rural sectors (often referred to as “outsiders”). Indeed, by 2010, Argentina and Brazil were providing universal health coverage to their populations, pensions were granted to between 80 and 100 percent of adults aged 65 and older in low-income households, and income-support transfers were provided to school-age children on a massive scale. While coverage rates were



considerably lower in Mexico and Chile, about half of all senior adults in low-income households were also covered by pension support programs.

In *Social Policy Expansion in Latin America*, Harvard Kennedy School Associate Professor of Public Policy Candelaria Garay seeks to explain the factors that have driven this dramatic inclusion of these informal and rural workers and their dependents in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico. Garay theorizes that large-scale nondiscretionary social policy expansion is driven by two factors: partisan competition for low-income voters in elections and large-scale grassroots social mobilization. Universal or nearly universal and more generous benefits, termed inclusive social policy design by the author, are more likely to be provided in cases in which social movements and labor allies are actively

engaged in pushing for social policy reform. In the absence of social mobilization, social policies will be more restrictive and will be provided to a smaller pool of “outsiders” in a more state-centric welfare system design.

Using comparative policy analysis and process tracing since the establishment of benefits for insiders in the first half of the 20th century, Garay tests her theory with empirical rigor based on original data from multiple sources. Looking for possible explanations, she selects four countries that vary in their level of the institutionalization of the party system, the presence of social movement coalitions, and the size of the outsider population (with Argentina and Chile having relatively smaller outsider populations compared to Mexico and Brazil). Garay argues that increased electoral competition drives incumbents to advance nondiscretionary social programs as policymakers consider that these programs make them less vulnerable to accusations of engaging in politically-motivated policies to secure electoral support and as opposition parties in Congress are more likely to support social policies that have a less discretionary character. She concludes that electoral competition combined with

powerful social movement coalitions in Brazil and Argentina, contributed to the adoption of broad-reaching benefits. However, Garay shows that these social movement coalitions operated in different ways. In the case of Argentina, social movements primarily relied on pressuring the government through protests whereas, in Brazil, social movements worked through institutional channels. In contrast, social movements were mostly absent in the cases of Mexico and Chile, and as a result, powerful conservative parties negotiated with opponents in Congress to produce more restrictive benefits.

In addition to the chapters detailing the book’s theoretical framework and a final chapter exploring the broader implications beyond the book’s case studies, the author’s seminal contribution is the four chapters devoted to in-depth case studies for each country. Garay shows that inclusive social policy expansion took place during very distinct democratization stages in Argentina and Brazil. In the case of Brazil, Garay traces the two major expansions to incorporate outsiders that took place underscoring the gradual character of the process which led to the incorporation of deeply excluded populations. The first expansion, and arguably the most

comprehensive, coincided with the return to democracy in the late 1980s and early 1990s and resulted in the creation of a universal public health system and pension reforms to incorporate rural workers. These reforms were primarily driven by social movements that successfully lobbied for social service delivery to include community participation in councils in order to promote accountability and responsiveness. The second expansion centered on income-support programs for households (Bolsa Escola and Bolsa Família). Of the two, Garay argues that the increasing need for parties to secure the votes of outsiders is most important in explaining this second policy expansion. Incumbent President Fernando Henrique Cardoso and the PSDB initiated a broad income transfer program targeting the poorest households in the year before the 2002 election, but his party still lost to Luiz “Lula” da Silva of the Worker’s Party (PT). This income subsidy program was subsequently expanded starting in 2004 even though the Lula administration had initially sought to prioritize an anti-hunger program as its key social policy. Garay argues that is because a policy coalition made up of PT politicians who had implemented cash transfers subnationally was more effective in lobbying for a more straightforward top-down program in the context of electoral competition.

In the case of Argentina, Garay contends that the

dramatic turnaround to extend social policy coverage was preceded by heightened electoral competition for low-income voters in the 1999 election (fifteen years after the return to democracy in 1983) and increased social mobilization of the unemployed and informal poor workers who subsequently forged alliances with unions. Faced with mounting protests and social upheaval in the late 1990s and early 2000s, programs to strengthen the primary health system, provide income assistance and subsidize prescription drugs were successfully introduced during the Duhalde interim presidency in 2002. Similar to Brazil, inclusive social policy expansion also took place in two waves in Argentina with the second and later wave under the Nestor Kirchner administration between 2003 and 2007 being the more comprehensive one. In this wave, social movements including the unemployed workers’ organization and their union allies successfully agitated for the universalization of contributory pensions to provide high benefit levels comparable to those of low-income formal workers to non-contributory seniors with coverage increasing to incorporate 97% of seniors formerly excluded from the pension system.

In the two cases with more limited social policy expansion, Garay contends that social movements played a more limited role and as result, benefits were restricted in scope and

level of benefit. In the case of Mexico, social policy innovations only began in the early years of the democratic transition following the end of 71 years of rule by the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). The Vicente Fox administration expanded the conditional cash transfer program started under Ernesto Zedillo, and introduced a health insurance program that provided full coverage to the extremely poor, but charged insurance premiums proportional to household income to the rest of households. Following the 2006 election of Felipe Calderón and fueled by alternative policies advanced by opposition parties, nondiscretionary social policies were once again expanded by the Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN), a conservative party ruling as a minority government.

In the case of Chile, social policy expansion only occurred sixteen years after the transition to democracy as the center-left Concentración party began to experience a constant and more credible challenge to its dominance of the presidency from the UDI and RN conservative opposition parties. However, health reforms were meager and limited to providing services for indigent and low-income outsiders. Most of the most social policies enacted in Chile were directed at increasing the percentage of noncontributory pension coverage while there was a moderate expansion in conditional cash transfers for school-age children from low-income households.

Garay’s volume makes a seminal contribution to scholarship on redistributive politics in developing democracies. It draws attention to a neglected and major transformation that has taken place in Latin America—the dramatic expansion of nondiscretionary social policies in the last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century. Garay provides extensive and in-depth empirical evidence to trace the political dynamics that explain why welfare coverage advanced more significantly in some middle-income countries more than others in Latin America. The book is particularly noteworthy because it contradicts the predominant view in contemporary political science that emphasizes patronage and clientelism as the key determinants for understanding social policy provision in Latin America. Future scholars seeking to understand social policies and their effects in Latin America will have to reconcile their theories and results with the powerful arguments advanced in this volume by having to consider how the transition to democracy influences welfare state developments differently depending on political context.

Lorena G. Barberia is a professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of São Paulo. She is also a research associate at the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard University.

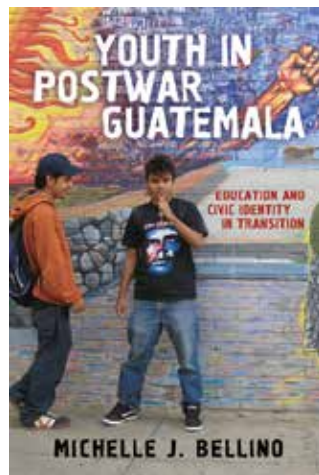
Guatemalan Youth as Citizens in Waiting

A REVIEW By MARTHA C. FRANCO

Youth in Postwar Guatemala: Education and Civic Identity in Transition by Michelle J. Bellino (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, Rutgers Series in Childhood Studies, 2017, 270 pp.)

What happens when young people must simultaneously grapple with an uncertain future burdened with the legacy of conflict, violence, and impunity? Michelle Bellino provides some answers to a question that echoes throughout many conflict-affected areas, Guatemala in this case.

Presently, much media coverage about Guatemala spotlights the violence that propels many of its citizens to flee. Thus, the public image of places like Guatemala becomes synonymous with violence, danger, chaos and impunity. What these portrayals often ignore is the people— particularly the young people—who are learning to be citizens and attempt to forge a future for themselves and Guatemala. Understanding what the process of learning to be citizens in a fragile state is not as clean-cut as it may seem. Michelle Bellino's book focuses exactly on this process by examining the multiple ways in which Guatemalan youth learn about their country's violent history, grapple with the turbulent present, and attempt to



understand their role in its future.

The idea of children and young people as the beacon of hope for the future is often invoked by many yet this rhetoric is often devoid of any concrete understanding of how young people see themselves and how they are being prepared to take on the future. Bellino's book provides concrete examples of what this youth development process looks like.

Specifically, she examines what this process looks like for youth confronted with the reality of a fragile postwar state like Guatemala. From 1960 to 1996 Guatemala endured a civil war that is referred to as the armed conflict (*el conflicto armado*), and the legacy of this period remains present in the lives of Guatemalan citizens, especially in the lives of its youth, Bellino notes.

Using a multi-sited

ethnography, Bellino depicts how the “postwar” legacy comes alive through the education Guatemala's youth receive and through their everyday interactions with family, friends, and others. The book is divided into eight chapters with the first two chapters discussing the impact of civil war on the current violence. Bellino also discusses the role of education in exacerbating the conflict itself, specifically by excluding indigenous groups from access to education. Moreover, through an analysis of curricular texts, Bellino finds that students were taught neutralized versions of the armed conflict that lacked discussion about the power struggles that occurred during the war.

Throughout the book, Bellino establishes the idea that Guatemalan youth are positioned as citizens in waiting or “wait citizens” (p.11). This position of “wait citizenship” allows youth to “conceive of their private autonomy over their own moral development but see little capacity to impact the broader social, political, and economic reality that they share with morally corrupt others” (p. 11).

The position of Guatemalan youth as citizens in waiting becomes animated in the next four chapters of the book which take the reader into four different

schools: International Academy and Paulo Freire Institute in Guatemala City, and Sun and Moon and Tzolok Ochoch in rural areas with predominantly indigenous students. Through rich narratives, Bellino offers descriptions of the inner workings of Guatemalan history classrooms and the school hallways where students attempt to make sense about what they learn formally and what they have learned through other means. As she mentions in her introduction, Bellino also spent some time living with some of the students' families during her ethnographic fieldwork. This allowed her to spend time outside of formal school settings with some of the youth. In effect this gave Bellino access to everyday interactions that might go unseen and form a critical piece of the extrapolation of the concept of wait citizenship.

Thus, she is able to listen as Alejandro's mother explains why the family sees the state as the perpetuator of violence against the most vulnerable and her insights allow the reader to understand why Alejandro is frustrated with his conservative peers and teachers at the International Academy (p.46). Unlike the rest of his elite peers who travel with bodyguards, Alejandro comes from a

modest background, and his parents are activists who attend protests and rallies to support indigenous rights, taking a critical stance against the state. Yet Alejandro adopts a more fatalistic view on the future of Guatemala and ultimately decides to leave the country for college.

Juxtaposed with Alejandro's experience at the International Academy, the schooling experience of the youth attending Tzolk Ochoch focuses on recognizing the injustices the indigenous community has felt at the hands of the state. Importantly, at Tzolk Ochoch the school leaders guide their students to understand the importance of collective action to hold the state accountable to the needs of the various indigenous communities. Given the fact that Tzolk Ochoch is a rural boarding school that educates mostly indigenous students, Bellino notes that its isolated environment provides a semblance of safety away from the urban violence

that affect schools like the International Academy. While the students are taught to embrace a more critical understanding of the *conflicto armado*, they also must realize that for their communities "postwar" justice is nothing but an elusive concept. Collective action and fighting for their pueblo allows the students of Tzolk Ochoch to challenge some of the aspects of wait citizenship.

The final two chapters of *Youth in Postwar Guatemala* provide an in-depth analysis and synthesis of the various themes Bellino saw throughout the four school sites. In her analysis, she shows how youth from different backgrounds, locations, and understandings of the *conflicto armado* are positioned as varying forms of wait citizens and how they navigate various forms of risks as well. For some waiting is the least risky option in hoping for a better Guatemala. Bellino emphasizes that

"state fragility conveys to young people that the state is unwilling or unable to protect and provide for them or uphold their basic rights" (p.205). As such, Guatemalan youths' lives "have come to increasingly be defined by the risks they are willing to take and the precautions they apply to mediate those risks" (p. 210).

While some students, like Alejandro, take on more fatalistic views on how collective action can create a better Guatemala, others—like the students of Tzolk Ochoch—are taught that hope lies in collective action. Both stances produce varying forms of risks for students. A fatalistic view can lead some to further disengage with the state and seek options outside of it. Collective action can expose students to violence and retaliation from those who continue to oppress vulnerable communities. Ultimately, the Guatemalan youth in this study grapple with a history that is ever-present in their daily lives

while they hope and wait for a better future.

Bellino ends by emphasizing that Guatemalan youth continue to wait. Although this might be true for some, the reality for a few others is that instead of waiting they have chosen to *flee*. The number of Guatemalan youth crossing multiple borders to flee the dire conditions of the country reminds us all that there is only so much waiting one can risk when life is on the line. Bellino's book can serve as an introduction for those seeking to understand what propels many Guatemalan migrant youth to leave. For many of these young migrants waiting is no longer a risk they are able to take.

Martha C. Franco is a Ph.D. student at Harvard University. Her research focuses on how Central American unaccompanied minors are incorporated into U.S. public schools and the nation more broadly. You can often find her searching for the best Salvadoran coffee in town.

Contemporary Human Rights and Latin America

A REVIEW By THEODORE MACDONALD

Evidence for Hope: Making Human Rights Work in the 21st Century by Kathryn Sikkink (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017)

On September 5, 1921, Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle, Hollywood's then best-paid star, attended a party in San

Francisco's St. Francis Hotel, drank heavily, and wound up in a bedroom atop an unconscious young actress. She died several days later from a ruptured bladder. His size was blamed for the accident and, though found not guilty of murder, he was blacklisted in Hollywood

for most of his life. This apparently rare case captured the news. In 2017, however, multiple public accusations of often-violent sexual abuse exposed dozens of movie, television and media stars.

On quite another higher level, data on violence has increased significantly in

Brazil and Guatemala since the 1980s, as democracy, one of the pillars of human rights, grew.

Recently several Latin American countries—Brazil, Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador—have threatened to leave or cut off funding to the Inter-American Commission

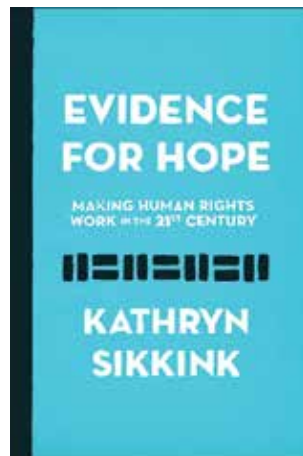
on Human Rights.

In late June the United States quit the UN Human Rights Council and then condemned Special Rapporteur Philip Alston's report on extreme inequality and poverty in this country.

What's happening? It looks like an explosion of human rights violations and the demise of institutions that support them... unless you factor in the “#me too movement,”

consider a greater range of violations, and utilize new data-gathering tools. Viewed through such lenses, human rights standards are improving. This is the tenor of much of Kathryn Sikkink's highly personalized and far-ranging review of human rights, at a time when others suggest that the human rights movement is on the wane, unrepresentative or somehow misdirected.

Drawing heavily on her own and others' political science data, Sikkink argues that “human rights activists have been effective in creating new issues, putting these issues on the agenda, and constructing a changing standard of accountability for what constitutes a human rights violation.” So, despite contrary claims, even from the United Nations, the world is not getting worse. Activists are simply expanding reporting into areas like domestic violence and “unofficial” police actions. This, she argues, is part of a new normative agenda, consistent with psychologist Steven Pinker's view of a historical decrease in violence among humans.



But, fully aware of human behavior, she predicts no teleological utopia, and thus supports her colleague Thomas Risse's Non-Ideal human rights theory, which “tells us what we ought to do given that others will not do what they ought to do.” In brief, we must continue to keep an eye on people.

The book covers a wide range of topics, including historical legitimacy, effectiveness of law and activism, and practical future recommendations. Sikkink suggests that readers may want to jump around according to their interests. Doing so, this reviewer first considers Latin America's contribution to human rights, where Sikkink's experience is greatest, her history of Global South's involvement is most detailed, and her conclusions are hardly debatable. The review then shifts to her disagreement with intellectual historian Samuel Moyn's critique of the contemporary human rights movement and its distance from neoliberalism's contribution to global economic inequality.

LATIN AMERICA'S “LEGITIMATE” CONTRIBUTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS

Much of the earlier writing on Latin American human rights notes that the passage of the American Declaration of Rights and Duties of Man (April 1948) preceded the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), by eight months. However, the American version is not widely known or cited (This reviewer wrote a *New York Times* op-ed article that was questioned by editors for citing the little-known declaration) and it could appear that Latin Americans simply “jumped the gun” or had a smaller constituency. However, Sikkink carefully demonstrates that the creation of the American Declaration was quite different in several important ways.

As World War II was coming to an end, international relations talk and policy planning shifted from Frank Delano Roosevelt's heavily rights-focused Four Freedoms speech and the related U.S.-Great Britain Atlantic Charter (1941) to a narrower focus on security, with several treaties among the “Great Powers” that did not include much human rights language. Sikkink details how Latin American countries, and dogged diplomats there, voiced strong concerns about exclusion of human rights language in these treaties, emphasized social and economic issues, organized international conferences

and drafted statements that were presented to the “Big Powers.” Lobbying by Latin American nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) led to the inclusion of human rights language in the 1945 UN Charter. And the “language adopted was not the language of the great powers, but rather of the Global South; it was only adopted by the great powers in response to pressure from small states and civil society.” Sikkink also points to even greater pressure from Latin American countries and diplomats in the crafting of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They pressed for the inclusion of economic and social rights, stressing the *duties* of states as well individual rights. While these efforts were not always successful, the persistent actions clearly illustrate that international human rights are not the exclusive creation of a few Global North superpowers, as some suggest.

Adding to this regional perspective, Sikkink details the inclusion of women in the drafting of the UN Charter and the subsequent Universal Declaration of Human Rights. While the role of Eleanor Roosevelt is widely documented, two Latin American women—Berta Lutz of Brazil and Minerva Bernardino of the Dominican Republic—were extremely active in the endeavor. Though often opposed, even by women, Lutz and Bernardino were able, for example, to shift the language in that declaration

Though often opposed, even by women, Lutz and Bernardino were able, for example, to shift the language in that declaration from “all men are born free and equal in dignity and rights” to “all human beings.”

from “all men are born free and equal in dignity and rights” to “all human beings.”

Sikkink recognizes that Latin America’s early role often goes unnoticed because later Cold War concerns dominated public attention. For example, as a Bogotá meeting drafted the American Convention, the popular leftist leader, Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, was assassinated on the streets of the city. That sparked decades of clear violations of human rights. Elsewhere, notably in Guatemala (1954), governments, often supported by the CIA, shifted focus to fierce anti-Communism. After the 1959 Cuban Revolution such sentiments and related human rights violations spread to the Southern Cone. During that period Sikkink began her work on human rights and related actions, illustrating, for example, the imaginative and effective “Boomerang Effect” of the international human rights movement. As democracies reappeared, legal and legislative actions inspired her well-documented argument describing a “Justice Cascade,” a surge of new laws and constitutions in support of human rights. Accepting this focus and

chronology, there is no doubt that Latin Americans played a strong and long-lived role in the development and practice of human rights.

However, other accounts of events at about the same time and in the same Latin American region are not so optimistic in regard to human rights. Among the many critics of the optimistic view is intellectual historian Samuel Moyn, whose detailed global histories cannot be fully detailed here. But the focus of the debate can be introduced by remaining in the Southern Cone.

HUMAN RIGHTS VERSUS ECONOMIC EQUALITY

Moyn’s *The Last Utopia* (2010) and numerous essays introduced his concern with the near parallel rise of both human rights and neoliberalism, leading to global inequality. This obviously drew Sikkink’s attention and efforts to refute. However, Moyn’s longer and recent (2018) historical study, *Not Enough: Human Rights in an Unequal World*, more clearly illustrates his argument, and can be seen by looking at Chile in the 1980s, when and where the movement away from Pinochet’s dictatorship paralleled the

rise of strong neoliberalism. He mentions that some Marxist theorists such as Naomi Klein suggest “that human rights movements were to blame for collusion or at last distraction from the truth.” For Moyn this is “exaggerated and implausible,” and he adds that “the human rights movement surely did not bring the neoliberal age about.” Moyn’s emphasis lies not so much on the links but the failure of many human rights scholars and activists to support the sort of economic and social rights that go beyond mere subsistence, or sufficiency, and aim toward equity and equality. No doubt Sikkink shares some of the interest, and Moyn certainly likes human rights. So, one could suggest that the two books were like ships that simply crossed in the night and the writers need to sit down and chat. However, at a December 2016 panel at Harvard, they continued the debate.

Part of the difference is methodological. Moyn draws almost entirely on high-level conferences, scholarly work and public statements to develop his intellectual history. Sikkink argues from archival historical research, political science literature and quantitative surveys to ascertain the facts. They both do a good job. However, as seen by this anthropologist, both seem to have drawn little interpretation, directly or indirectly, from those who historically suffer gross violations, namely, indigenous peoples in Latin

America. Here the situation supports Sikkink in her argument for improvements. National and international laws and constitutions in support of indigenous rights, largely social and economic, have grown significantly in Latin America. Previous UN Special Rapporteurs on Indigenous Rights, Rodolfo Stavenhagen and James Anaya, both Latin American specialists, agreed that laws have improved, but both have lamented the large gap that exists between laws and practice.

Here, indigenous peoples are not simply waiting. The aspects of the broad laws that most draw their attention and actions focus on territorial and economic questions. The cry is no longer “States, give us goods!” but rather, “Consult us with regard to economic issues, generally natural resources on our lands, and let us help to determine how to share that wealth.” This is not a cry in the dark for new rights but simply a request to implement existing human rights laws through dialogue. In many areas, it’s working, and where it doesn’t, the indigenous groups keep up the pressure. This exemplary case—groups realizing group rights—not only supports part of Sikkink’s argument but perhaps illustrates a means toward Moyn’s egalitarian ends.

Theodore Macdonald, anthropologist and Faculty Affiliate at DRCLAS, has worked on indigenous rights and with indigenous leaders since the 1980s.



Energy Innovation

Energy Innovation Ecosystems in Rural Mexico

BY FRANCISCO ACUÑA, GUILLERMO CEDEÑO, RAMON SANCHEZ, KEITH SHARP, JOHN SPENGLER
AND JAMES RITCHIE-DUNHAM

THE HARVARD APPLIED LEADERSHIP IN Renewable Energies Program is making a difference in rural Mexico by engaging universities and local indigenous communities throughout the country to focus on the challenges of sustainable energy. Almost three hundred university professors and researchers have proposed innovation ecosystems for 93 renewable energy and energy efficiency projects that were developed and funded.

The program created 953.3 MW of wind energy, 512 MW of photovoltaic energy, 1.36 MW of biomass electricity, 40 million liters of ethanol/year, 7.2 million liters of biodiesel/year, and 9 million liters of bio-jet fuel/year. This project,

which received the 2017 APEC ESCI Best Practices Award, is described in a documentary and casebook.

The program proved that shifting away from thinking in terms of centralized investments with low return on invested capital (ROIC), in favor of high-impact, economically resilient, national renewable energy and energy-efficiency projects, results in reproducible local innovation ecosystems with a much higher, more resilient, and more equitable ROIC. Rural indigenous communities and rural universities can provide large-scale renewable energy sources by democratizing access to expertise and financing. This creates opportunities

that narrow the gap between the two Mexicos, the rural and the urban one, and provides a model of social innovation particularly relevant to countries facing rapid urbanization. To formulate ways to replicate this program, we are meeting now with Mexico's ministers of economy and social development.

We found that indigenous communities in rural Mexico can bring their natural and social capital to engage in equitable ways with worldwide systems. This includes global financial, social and environmental metrics, as well as intellectual capital. Such engagement can lead to large-scale carbon emission reduction through renewable energy and energy efficiency; provide

equitable access to energy efficiency and renewable energy; and generate local economic wealth.

Traditionally, rural indigenous communities in Mexico are completely disconnected from global investment markets and know-how because of issues of human development, economic connections, and isolated social and political structures within Mexico. We asked ourselves what kind of organizational form could match these unmet needs with their natural and social capital—underutilized resources in the modern world?

We first had to take a look at how national investments in energy and agricultural industries generally behave and then examine an alternate framing that highlighted new possibilities, and how it worked in Mexico.

Observed Behavior. In many countries, recent development of new energy sources requires very high economic investment and comes with very high social and natural costs. While investing in new energy sources might be “the right thing to do,” it is very expensive, achieving low social impact and poor economic

return. Lands available for energy and agricultural developments belong directly or indirectly to rural farmers and/or indigenous populations, which brings another level of social interactions which, if not treated correctly, becomes a factor for tension instead of social change.

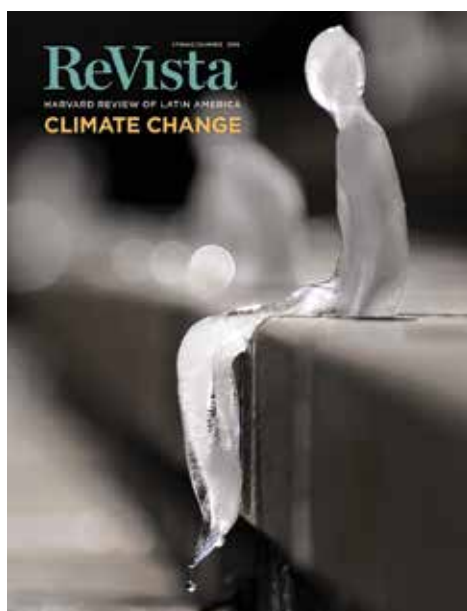
Traditional Frame. National energy investments usually focus on the return on invested capital (ROIC)—economic capital invested and the economic costs incurred. Social and natural risks and damages are labeled as “externalities,” thus avoiding any negative impact on a project ROIC. This framing leads to federal investments in large-scale energy sources driven by large firms and governmental agencies in major urban centers.

Generally speaking, the resource-poor rural universities transfer encyclopedic knowledge and obsolete technical skills with low practical social impact to the students, lacking the experimental pedagogic component to resolve local issues. The social-capital-rich indigenous communities are poor in the financial and intellectual capital to exploit their wealth in natural human capital.

Alternate Frame. Another way of framing these investments, however, is to connect rural communities rich in social and natural capital and local institutions rich in intellectual and human capital with global markets willing to de-risk their capital investments, in one ecosystem. Such connections seem to achieve greater impact, lower risk and higher resilience with these investments. This approach reframes economic costs and externalities as social and natural capital.

An analysis of the ecosynomics—the social science of the agreements that guide human interaction—of these underlying agreements shows how participating faculty were able to integrate social, natural, intellectual, and economic capital in energy-innovation ecosystems within their communities, driving wealth creation for future generations.

All co-authors except James Ritchie-Dunham participated in the Harvard Applied Leadership in Renewable Energies Program. Ritchie-Dunham served as a member of the Center for Health and Global Environment advisory board.



CORRECTIONS

With apologies to all the librarians in the world, the volume and issue number of the Spring/Summer 2018 issue is volume 17, number 3, not volume xviii, no. 3, or volume xiii, no. 3. Thanks to David Wright, editor of the Directory of Periodicals, for being the first to catch our mistake.

In the article “Words Matter” by Gisela Heffes, *statu nasquendi* should have read *statu nascendi*.

In the article “Preparing Students to Lead Social Change” by Ramon Sanchez, Erika Eitland, Jie Yin and John Spengler, the photo credit were reversed between May Woo and Erika Eitland. Erika Eitland took the photos of the coffeeshop and the dog. May Woo took the photo of the limestone carver.

The caption on page 15 should have read:

Frances Gallardo (Hurricane series), 2011-2012, variable dimensions, cut paper, collage. Clockwise from upper left: Carmela, Carmen, Luis, Cynthia.

The Best of ReVista 2017-18

The Best of *ReVista* 2017-18 is a prize for the best photograph published in *ReVista* in the previous academic year sponsored by DRCLAS publications and ARTS@DRCLAS.

ARTS@DRCLAS
David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies Harvard University

This is the contest's third year. This year's winning photographs chosen by a jury of professional photography experts are by Nicolo Filippo Rosso and Oscar Negreiros. Honorable mention in the professional category goes to Maxi Jonas and in the emerging photographer category to May Woo.

This year's contest was funded by the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism class of 1970.

WINNER, PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER CATEGORY

NICOLO FILIPPO ROSSO for "*Woman and Son at Manaure Hospital, Colombia*"



Nicolo Filippo Rosso is an Italian photographer based in Colombia

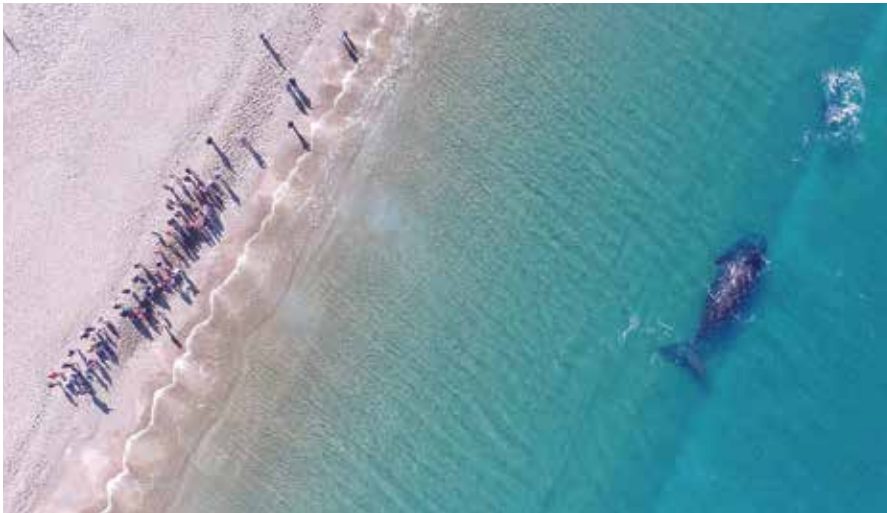
WINNER, EMERGING PHOTOGRAPHER CATEGORY

OSCAR NEGREIROS/OJOS PROPIOS/ILAS/COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY for "*Biosphere Reserve Project Huascarán, Peru.*"



Oscar Negreiros is a member of the photo collective of community members learning photography in Peru (Ojos Propios)

HONORABLE MENTION, PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY

MAXI JONAS for “*Whales, Argentina.*”*Maxi Jonas is an Argentine photographer based in Puerto Madryn*

HONORABLE MENTION, EMERGING PHOTOGRAPHER CATEGORY

MAY WOO for “*Limestone Carvers, Mexico.*”*May Woo is a scientist in San Francisco, California, and a recent graduate of the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health*

THIS YEAR'S JUDGES

Ilana Boltvinik is a Mexico City-based artist and member of the art research collective TRES, which focuses on exploring the implications of public space and garbage through art. She is the recipient (together with collective member Rodrigo Viñas) of the Robert Gardner Fellowship for Photography Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard.

Stephen Ferry is a photojournalist and the author of *La Batea* (with Elizabeth Ferry), *I Am Rich Potosí: The Mountain that Eats Men and Violentology: A Manual of the Colombian Conflict*. He has contributed to the *New York Times*, *GEO*, *TIME* and *National Geographic* and also works as a visual investigator with Human Rights Watch.

Andrea Josch is the editor-in-chief of the South American photography magazine *Sueño de la Razón*. She is a researcher and director of the Masters in Photography Investigation/Creation of the School of Visual Arts at the FINIS University, Santiago de Chile.

João Pina is a photojournalist and a 2018 Nieman Fellow. He is the author of several photo books, including *46750*, a visual account of Rio de Janeiro, and *Condor*, a tribute to the memory of the victims of the secret military operation in the Southern Cone known as Operation Condor.

Adriana Zehbrauskas is a Brazilian documentary photographer based in Mexico City, Mexico. Her work covers mostly issues related to migration, religion and the aftermath of the violence related to the drug wars in Mexico. She contributes regularly to *The New York Times*, BuzzFeed News, *The Washington Post* and others. She received one of the first Getty Images Instagram Grants and was awarded the Best Female Photojournalist by Troféu Mulher Imprensa (Brazil).



Shicang shaman, inviting the return of the ancestors' souls, while walking on fire.

DAVID ROCKEFELLER CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

VISITING SCHOLARS AND FELLOWS PROGRAM



THE CENTER

Founded in 1994, the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard University works to increase knowledge of the cultures, economies, histories, environment, and contemporary affairs of past and present Latin America.

THE PROGRAM

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APPLICATIONS DUE FEBRUARY 1ST

THE APPLICATION

Applications should be submitted electronically to drc_vsf@fas.harvard.edu or via the online application form. For the form and further details please visit <http://www.drclas.harvard.edu/scholars>.

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CONTRIBUTORS

108 Francisco Acuña participated in the Harvard Applied Leadership in Renewable Energies Program. **87 Manuel Azuaje-Alamo** is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Department of Comparative Literature of Harvard University. **84 Andrea Bachner**, associate professor of Comparative Literature at Cornell University, received her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Harvard in 2007. **102 Lorena G. Barberia** is a professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of São Paulo. **63 Renato Balderrama** is the director of the Center for Asian Studies at Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León (UANL), México. **98 Ilana Boltvinik** is an artist and a member of the Mexico City art research collective TRES. **72 Patricia Castro Obando**, a Peruvian journalist and a Ph.D. candidate in Anthropology, has lived in China for the past 15 years. **108 Guillermo Cedeño** participated in the Harvard Applied Leadership in Renewable Energies Program. **30 Alexandra Chang** is the Curator of Special Projects and Director of Global Arts Programs at A/P/A Institute at New York University. **18 Michael Chu**, a DRCLAS Executive Committee member, is a Senior Lecturer of Business Administration at Harvard Business School. **34 Millie Creighton** is a Japan specialist and Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. **82 James A. Dettleff** is an Audiovisual Professor at Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. **77 Matt Ferchen** is a nonresident scholar at the Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy, where he runs the China and the Developing World Program. **104 Martha C. Franco** is a Ph.D. student at Harvard University whose research focuses on Central American unaccompanied minors. **53 Horacio J. Godoy** has been a professor of International Relations at the Universidad del Norte, Barranquilla, Colombia, for a decade. **94 Ana Paula Kojima Hirano** is a doctoral student in Harvard's Department of Romance Languages and Literatures. **12 Rosario Hubert**, Harvard Ph.D. '14 in Romance Languages and Literatures, is Assistant Professor of Spanish and Portuguese at Trinity College (CT). **8 Guo Jie** is an associate professor with the School of International Studies at the Peking University, China. **44 Aaron Litvin** is a Ph.D. candidate in Luso-Brazilian literature and Critical Media Practice at Harvard University. **40 Kathleen López** is a faculty member in the Department of Latino and Caribbean

Studies and the Department of History at Rutgers. **48 Víctor López Villafañe** is a professor at the Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas, Mexico. **90** and **105 Theodore Macdonald**, an anthropologist, is a Lecturer in Social Studies and a DRCLAS Faculty Affiliate. **70 Gilmar Masiero** is a professor at the University of São Paulo and coordinator of the ProAsia-Asia Studies Program. **37 Regina Yoshie Matsue** is an anthropologist and professor at Federal University of São Paulo (UNIFESP). **25 Mary Jo McConahay** is the author of *The Tango War, The Struggle for the Hearts, Minds and Riches of Latin America During World War II*. **50 Margaret Myers** directs the Latin America and the World program at the Inter-American Dialogue. **60 Mario Henrique Ogasavara** is a Professor of International Business at ESPM São Paulo, Brazil. **27 Kyeyoung Park** is associate professor of Anthropology and Asian American Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. **56 Rebecca Ray** is a post-doctoral research fellow at the Boston University Global Development Policy Center. **108 James Ritchie-Dunham** served as a member of the Harvard Center for Health and Global Environment advisory board. **4 Cynthia Sanborn** is Vice President for Research and a Professor of Political Science at the Universidad del Pacífico in Lima, Peru. **108 Ramon Sanchez** participated in the Harvard Applied Leadership in Renewable Energies Program. **66 Rosario Santa Gadea** is director of the Center for China and Asia-Pacific Studies at Universidad del Pacífico, Lima, Peru. **108 Keith Sharp** participated in the Harvard Applied Leadership in Renewable Energies Program. **37 Rafael Shoji** is a researcher at the Center for the Study of Oriental Religions (CERAL) at the Pontifical University of São Paulo. **108 John Spengler** participated in the Harvard Applied Leadership in Renewable Energies Program. **2 Karen Thornber** is Victor and William Fung Director of the Harvard University Asia Center. **63 Amado Trejo** is the coordinator of the UANL's representative office in Asia. **75 Emiliano Valle** is a Harvard Medical School student and a graduate of Harvard College '16. **98 Rodrigo Viñas** is a member of the Mexico City art research collective TRES. **90 Yuan Wang**, an architectural historian, was a 2011 Harvard-Yenching Institute Visiting Scholar.

FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHERS AND ARTISTS: MARÍA FERNANDA GARCÍA MÚNERA, OSCAR OIWA AND HARUO OHARA.