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Nostra Patria é il Mondo Intero

Libertarian Internationalism in the Era of Mass Migration and the Development of the South American Labour Movement (1870–1920)

Abstract

From 1870 to 1920 the internationalist ideas in multi-ethnic countries of the Americas were strongly influenced by revolutionary syndicalism. The distinctively international and trans-cultural working class identity of multi-ethnic subaltern classes in South America developed in the context of European mass immigration, urbanisation, and industrialisation. Many thousands of immigrants contributed to social struggles for better living and working conditions fighting against political exclusion. The examples of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay illustrate that the subjectification of the international proletariat can be seen as collective identity construction of a libertarian subculture which developed in response to global capitalism. The revolutionary movements in South America and Europe formed the *Libertarian Atlantic* as one international movement.

Keywords: *mass migration, South America, working class, international proletariat, libertarian counterculture*

Introduction

The emerging labour movements in South America were composed and influenced by European immigration in the period from 1870 to 1920. Up to 11 million immigrants mostly from Italy, Spain and Portugal formed an important part of the working class. Some of them travelled to their new home countries with influential revolutionary baggage, equipped with political ideologies and trade union experience.[1] Ideologies like anarchism and syndicalism were then brought to Latin America by a small number

1 For European emigration to Latin America, see, among others, Walther Bernecker: Die transatlantische Massenmigration von Europa nach Lateinamerika: Phasen und Erschein-

of political activists and refugees. Their ideas would find fertile grounds among marginalised immigrants and local urban subaltern classes.[2] This chronologically resulted in the parallel evolution and exchange between the Americas and Europe at a time that can be globally regarded as the golden age of anarcho-syndicalism.[3] The transcultural, multi-ethnic formation of a libertarian counterculture in the Americas influenced the subjectivisation of the international proletariat within the Atlantic space due to continuous transfer processes of people, ideas, experiences, cultural practices and communication across the Atlantic.

Proceeding from their mutualist and anarchist origin at the end of the 19th century, the first federally organised and syndicalist-oriented trade unions in South America emerged at the turn of the century.[4] Their libertarian ideologies and related cultural practices were, to some extent, influenced by the political cultures of their countries of origin in Europe. However, their adaptation to local conditions and the reciprocal exchange with movements in Europe and other movements within South America contributed to the transcultural evolution of an international proletariat. The papers

ungsformen, in: Thomas Fischer/Daniel Gosselt (eds.): Migration in internationaler Perspektive, Munich 2009, pp. 36–60.

2 In the libertarian ideology "leaders" were rejected. However, individual protagonists have been well established in biographical research. Errico Malatesta, Piedro Gori, Neno Vasco, Friedrich Kniestedt or Oreste Ristori would be good examples for South America. See for example: Maurizio Antonioli/Franco Bertolucci/Roberto Giuliainelli (eds.): Nostra Patria è il Mondo Intero, Pietro Gori nel movimento operaio e libertario italiano e internazionale, Pisa 2012; Alexandre Ribeiro Samis: Minha Patria é o Mundo Inteiro Neno Vasco: O Anarquismo e o Syndicalismo Revolucionário em dois mundos, Lisbon 2009; Carlo Romani: Oreste Ristori: Uma aventura anarquista, São Paulo 2002. See also: Robert Alexander: International Labor Organizations and Organized Labor in Latin America and the Caribbean, Santa Barbara 2009, p. 1: "The ideology that found widest acceptance in the early decades of the organized labor movement in Latin America was that of anarchism or anarcho-syndicalism (we shall use the terms interchangeably)."

3 For the recognition of the heyday of international syndicalism in social history, see Marcel van der Linden/Wayne Thorpe (eds.): Revolutionary Syndicalism: An International Perspective, Aldershot 1990 and currently in: Lucien van der Walt/Michael Schmidt (eds.): Black Flame: The Revolutionary Class Politics of Anarchism and Syndicalism, Oakland 2009 and Steven Hirsch/Lucien van der Walt (eds.): Anarchism and Syndicalism in the Colonial and Postcolonial World 1870–1940: The Praxis of National Liberation, Internationalism and Social Revolution, Leiden 2010.

4 For the transition from mutualism to syndicalism see Marcel van der Linden: Workers of the World: Essays Toward a Global Labour History, Leiden 2008, and as a general overview of the development in South America see: Alfredo Gómez Muller: Anarquismo y Anarcosindicalismo en América Latina, Medellín 2009 or the classics: Julio Godio: Historia del movimiento obrero Latinoamericano, vol. 1: Anarquistas y Socialistas 1850–1918, San José 1985 and Carlos Rama: Die Arbeiterbewegung in Lateinamerika: Chronologie und Bibliographie 1492–1966, Bad Homburg 1967.

circulated in libraries of social centres, and articles reprinted and discussed across the Atlantic demonstrate the close political interaction between the two continents. Especially the libertarian trade union federations, which were multi-ethnic organisations of the urban subaltern classes in South America, influenced the international discussion and shaped working class organisation. This process cumulated into the ideology of revolutionary syndicalism.

As a result of this international process, a collective class consciousness developed through subjectivisation within the Atlantic space.[5] The revolutionary syndicalist organisations constructed a common working class identity that was fundamentally internationalist, cosmopolitan and libertarian.[6] The main countries of European

5 The concept of subjectification refers to the process of self-construction. In this case the social actor is a social group, which was shaped by social stratification and political exclusion. The group's actions followed socio-cultural patterns in the form of performed rituals and symbolism, which was fundamental to the emergence of the group as a historical subject. The continuous transfer of cultural practices, people and experiences as well as intense communication among newspapers, combined with the international awareness of the movements on both sides of the Atlantic, brought me to the term "libertarian Atlantic". This concept seems appropriate to express the reciprocal exchange that has been formative to transatlantic identity construction. See for the Atlantic concept also Peter Linebaugh/Marcus Rediker: The Many Headed Hydra, Boston 2000. Intense transfer relations between Europe and the Americas during the time of mass migration were also pointed out by Dirk Hoerder: Cultures in Contact: World Migrations in the Second Millennium, Durham 2002, but without referring explicitly to this phenomenon. The idea of the Atlantic as one region of cultural transfers has also been elaborated by Thomas Benjamin: The Atlantic World: Europeans, Africans and Indians and their Shared History 1400–1900, Cambridge 2009 or, John K. Thornton: A Cultural History of the Atlantic World: 1250–1820, Cambridge 2012. For transcultural aspects of transnational migration processes, see: Nina Glick Schiller/Linda Basch/Cristina Blanc-Szanton (eds.): Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration, New York 1992. For subjectivisation and libertarian counterculture, see: Sharif Gemie: Counter-Community: An Aspect of Anarchist Political Culture, in: Journal of Contemporary History 29:2 (1994), pp. 349–367; Frédéric Vandenberghe: Avatars of the Collective: A Realist Theory of Collective Subjectivities, in: Sociological Theory 25:4 (2007), pp. 295–324.

6 The libertarian orientation was based on anti-authoritarian, grass-roots democratic, federalist socialist ideologies. Influential theorists were, among others, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Mikhail Bakunin, Pjtor Kropotkin, Errico Malatesta, and Rudolf Rocker. There are different currents within libertarian ideologies like anarchism and syndicalism, but due to numerous similarities, like rejection of state and capitalism or the direct action model, the term libertarian is frequently used in research. These ideologies were dominating global working class before the communist Revolution in 1917. In this context see Eric J. Hobsbawm: Revolution und Revolte, Frankfurt a.M. 1977, p. 93: "Es fällt schwer sich in Erinnerung zu rufen, dass in den Jahren 1905–1914, die marxistische Linke in den meisten Ländern am Rande der revolutionären Bewegung stand und dass der größte Teil der Marxisten mit einer de facto nichtrevolutionären Sozialdemokratie gleichgesetzt

immigration to South America were Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay. At the onset of industrialisation, urbanisation and the modernisation of transport as well as communication, these countries were facing an aggravation of political and social injustices.[7] These conditions formed the basis for the social conflicts of the 20th century.

A great number of strikes and social protests occurred at the beginning of the century. Guided by examples of the Mexican and other European revolutions, a revolutionary phase took place also in South America between 1917 and 1920. The highlights were the general strike in São Paulo in July 1917, the suppressed anarchist uprising in Rio de Janeiro in November 1918 and the *Semana Tragica* (tragic week) in Buenos Aires in January 1919.

The importance of immigrants in these social conflicts became particularly evident with the legislative initiative to deport and expulse foreigners in 1902 in Argentina (*Ley de Residencia*) and in 1907 in Brazil (*Lei Adolfo Gordo*). [8] The repression was a response to the emergence of trade union federations and actions of libertarian organisations in labour disputes. In the course of the ongoing conflicts, these laws were further tightened, usually in response to specific developments: for example, the *Ley de Defensa Social*, introduced in 1910 in Argentina, was a response to the great strikes of 1909 and preparation for the upcoming 100th anniversary of independence in the following year. At the time of the 1909 repression, an important police officer fell victim to a bomb attack. The government subsequently suppressed the workers' movement as well as politically active immigrants. This set the strong Argentine movement back for years.

A number of research approaches considered manifestations and developments separately focussing only on national histories or specific social and ethnic groups.[9] However, taking transnational and Atlantic perspective, they all appear connected.

wurde, während die Masse der revolutionären Linken anarchosyndikalistisch war oder zumindest den Ideen und Gefühlslage des Anarcho-Syndikalismus näher stand als denen des klassischen Marxismus". See also: Carlos Taibo: Repensar la anarquía Acción Directa: Autogestión, Autonomia, Madrid 2013, pp. 15–30.

7 See for example Ronn Pineo/James Baer (eds.): Cities of Hope: People, Protests, and Progress in Urbanizing Latin America 1870–1930, Boulder 2000.

8 For repression in Brazil, see: Alexandre Ribeiro Samis: Clevelândia: Anarquismo, Sindicalismo e Repressão Política no Brasil, São Paulo 2002; and for Argentina, in particular for the repression of 1909, see: Juan Suriano: Anarquistas: Cultura y Politica Libertaria en Buenos Aires 1890–1910, Manantial 2001; Juan Suriano: Auge y Caida del Anarquismo Argentina 1880–1930, Buenos Aires 2005.

9 Especially Italian emigration has been well researched; see, for example: Donna Gabaccia/Fraser Ottanelli (eds.): Italian Workers of the World: Labor Migration and the Formation of Multiethnic States, Illinois 2001. For Spanish migration, see José Moya: Cousins and Strangers: Spanish Immigrants in Buenos Aires 1850–1930, Los Angeles 1998. Latin-American historiography on the working class and migration has traditionally been too restricted to methodological nationalism. More recent approaches have been trying to

Any international perspective has to question the internal reference of migrants to the nation-state, especially in terms of class identity.[10] People could be identified and understood as international proletarians, who would make their ethnical and regional identities more complete. Many immigrant organisations, clubs and mutuality societies were based on regional identification – like the *Centro Galego* in Rio de Janeiro. It has to be stressed that identity is theorised here as a multiple and floating concept of individual perception.[11]

This transatlantic development in the immigration countries of the Americas, where people of various European backgrounds came together to form a multi-ethnic working class, facilitated a new and practical approach to the internationalist idea among socialist ideologies. In Europe, this was a more theoretical concept. Active labour movements in the Americas involved a number of local subaltern classes and subsequent generations of immigrants, who were naturalised by law to become citizens.[12] Relations with local workers were not always free of conflicts, but they only occurred on a relatively small scale. For example in Argentina Labour unions tried to include locals by using the Gaucho figure in libertarian literature and theatre plays. Propaganda in newspapers, leaflets and theatre tried to show that the problems of subaltern classes were common for all, irrespective of their origin. In this context, it

compare national evolutions in anthologies, like Antonio Do Paço/Raquel Varela/Sjaak van der Velden (eds.): Strikes and Social Conflicts: Towards a Global History, Lisbon 2012.

10 At the time of European mass migration, the concept of the modern nation was relatively new. Emigrants were disappointed with their situation at home so that their self-identification rather based on regional than national identity. For the concept of nation and national identity, see: Benedict Anderson: Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, New York 1983; Eric Hobsbawm: Nations and Nationalism Since 1780, Cambridge 1990. For the relevance of regional identities, see: Juan Andrés Blanco Rodriguez (ed.): El Asociacionismo en la Emigración Española a América, Salamanca 2008.

11 Identity research has developed as a broad interdisciplinary discipline. See, for example, Bernhard Giesen (ed.): Nationale und kulturelle Identität, Frankfurt a.M. 1991 and Stuart Hall: Rassismus und kulturelle Identität, Hamburg 1994.

12 Domingos Passos can be regarded as famous example of Brazilian activism. "The black Bakunin" was an activist in the union of construction workers in Rio de Janeiro. See Alexandre R. Samis/Renato Ramos: Domingos Passos O Bakunin Brasileiro, Rio de Janeiro 2009. An outstanding example of a next-generation activist was Edgar Leuenroth, who is honoured today by the name of the most important archive of labour history in Brazil: Arquivo Edgar Leuenroth. For many years he had been an important activist, heavily involved in the general strike of 1917, in which he acted as member of the proletarian defence committees. See among others Yara Aun Khoury: Edgard Leuenroth: Uma Vida e Arquivo Libertários, São Paulo 1997. Another famous local activist was Diego Abad de Santillán, who also acted on behalf of the international movement. See María Fernanda de la Rosa: La Figura de Diego Abad de Santillán como nexo entre el Anarquismo Argentino, Europeo y Latinoamericano 1920–1930, in: Iberoamericana 48:12 (2012), pp. 21–40.

is important to underline that the libertarian ideology emphasised an internationalist, subaltern position, which encouraged immigrants and locals to participate in unions and social movements.

Conflicts sometimes occurred when governments and employers tried to hire local rural workers to scab strikes. The immigrants also formed the bulk of the metropolitan subaltern classes. Cities such as Buenos Aires or São Paulo experienced an extraordinary demographic growth. Especially at the peak of immigration in the 1890s, São Paulo witnessed conflicts between Italians and Brazilians. In 1896 street fights between Brazilians and Italians occurred for three days.[13] In 1917, anti-German protests occurred in the south of Brazil in the context of the First World War. The main ethnic conflict between locals and immigrants occurred during the Tragic Week in Buenos Aires, when the paramilitary patriotic league, composed of soldiers and students of the young upper and middle classes, began attacking eastern European immigrants. Due to the Red Scare, most attacks were directed against communists and Jews during a large strike in January 1919.

Another parallel was the perception of immigrants by South American elites and governments, which recruited them as workforces and expected to gain "European civilization and progress". At the same time, the elites politically suppressed migrants and left them without the right to vote and without a political voice in view of precarious working and living conditions. This led to a radicalisation of wide sections of the immigrants, who had participated actively in anarchist and syndicalist organisations,[14] hoping to improve their situation. They fought for the eight-hour day, wage increases and a decrease in the cost of living.[15] In this context, they constructed a collective identity, which shaped social stratification and lead to the subjectification of the working class. This process was strongly influenced by political, economic and cultural conditions that complemented ethnic identities – like *Teuto-Brasileiro* – along with a growing class identity.

13 For the relations of Italians in São Paulo, see Michael Hall: Entre a Etnicidade e a Classe em São Paulo, in: Maria Luiza et. al. (eds.): História do Trabalho e Histórias da Imigração, São Paulo 2010, p. 54.

14 For Argentina see Diego Abad de Santillán: La F.O.R.A.: Ideología y Trayectoria del Movimiento Obrero en la Argentina, Buenos Aires 2005. For Brazil see: Sheldon Leslie Maram: Anarquistas, Imigrantes e o Movimento Operario Brasileiro 1890–1920, Rio de Janeiro 1979.

15 For example, see the studies of the radicalisation of the Italian immigrants as largest group in Brazil: Zuleika Alvim: Brava Gente!: Os Italianos em São Paulo, São Paulo 1986; Vitor Sapienza: Café Amargo: Resistencia e Luta dos Italianos na Formação de São Paulo, São Paulo 1991.

A libertarian counterculture – expressed in educational, cultural and leisure activities – became increasingly important for collective identity construction on the basis of the social stratification, through the inclusion of the social environment (for example family members or neighbours) in the holistic concept of the international proletariat. Labour unions frequently announced their activities in the newspapers. These events were organised as a mixture of political indoctrination and leisure activity, such as family dance evenings within the infrastructure of the social centres of the movement. Worker picnics became a frequent leisure activity for the whole family. During the First World War, the picnics took place in the public parks of urban areas and became a successful performance to enforce social bonds and to create a shared identity that involved internationalism.

Comparable Basic Trends

Between 1870 and 1920 some 11 million Europeans immigrated to Latin America. A total of 9.5 million of them went to Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. They settled in regions and cities where they subsequently represented a significant proportion of the population. The Italians constituted the greatest part of the migrants (38 per cent), followed by the Spanish (28 per cent) and the Portuguese (11 per cent). The French as well as people from the Ottoman, German, Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires respectively accounted for less than three per cent. The seasonal transatlantic "harvest migration" was composed of up to 100,000 so called *Golondrinas* (swallows of work) and it basically refers to Italians working in Argentina. The different crop stages between the hemispheres, the development of cheap and relatively fast steamship connections and the wage differences, partly related to favourable exchange rates when combined, were factors that facilitated the movement of Italian workers.

Predominantly Europeans from rural regions were travelling to work overseas. The political orientation of labour movements in the major countries of emigration was characterised by a strong share of libertarian organisations throughout the timeframe of this study[16]. Especially in Spain, Portugal, France and Italy the wider populations were familiar with social conflicts and libertarian movements. The largest trade unions' and workers' organisations in France, Italy, Portugal and Spain were of anarchist and

16 See Peter N. Stearns: Revolutionary Syndicalism and French Labour: A Cause Without Rebels, New Brunswick 1971; Jean-Louis Robert/Friedhelm Boll/Antoine Prost (eds.): L'Invetion des Syndicalismes: Le Syndicalisme en Europe Occidentale à la Fin du 19e Siècle, Paris 1997; Nunzio Pernicone: Italian Anarchism 1864–1892, Princeton 1993; Peter Merten: Anarchismus und Arbeiterkampf in Portugal, Hamburg 1981; Lily Litvak: Musa Libertaria: Arte, Literatura y Vida Cultural del Anarquismo Español 1880–1913, Madrid 2001.

syndicalist orientation. Especially northern Italy experienced frequent and extensive popular uprisings at that time and northern Italians tended to migrate to South America, whereas southern Italians preferred emigration to the United States, where they also represented a high portion of the libertarian movement.[17] However, trade union federations in Europe were mostly emerging after their equals in South America. When, for example, the French *Conféderation Générale du Travail* declared their libertarian principles with the *Charte d'Amiens* in October 1906, the libertarian trade union federations of Argentina (1904), Uruguay (1905) and Brazil (1906) already existed. The experience of European activists in South America shaped the international discussion, for example at the anarchist conference in Amsterdam 1907. At this meeting, the agenda of the global libertarian movement shifted from the "propaganda of action" towards organisational principals, as labour unions were subsequently regarded as the main actors leading to social revolution. Organisations were founded, such as the Spanish *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* in 1910, the Italian *Unione Sindacale Italiana* in 1912 and the Portuguese *União Operaria Nacional* in 1914, following this revolutionary agenda and forming together the the *Confederação Geral do Trabalho* in 1919.

The main immigration countries – Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay – were governed as oligarchic republics (with the short-term exception of the Empire of Brazil between 1822 and 1889), where overall suffrage was dependent on income and gender. Noticeable changes only occurred with electoral reforms, for example in Argentina in 1912, but even then naturalised foreigners were not always allowed to vote. The immigrant receiving countries were also predominantly rural. Their agricultural export economies aimed at integrating into the growing world market. The main economic activity was found in the agricultural export sector – like the coffee plantations of Brazil or the wheat farming and meat production of Argentina, to name two examples. From 1880 onwards, the industrialisation of the cities gradually developed into an operational field that went hand in hand with the development of transport systems and urban infrastructure.

The fast growing cities then attracted more and more newcomers and discontented farm workers. Service and construction sectors were important areas of employment. However, lousy and overpriced housing conditions as well as plagues and diseases negatively affected wide parts of the population of these cities – and the constant demands of the social movements in the libertarian presses and campaigns show this

17 The city of Patterson, for example, was an Italian anarchist stronghold, where many Italian immigrants participated in the union Industrial Workers of the World. See, among others: Michael Miller Topp: Those Without a Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists, Minneapolis 2001 and Kenyon Zimmer: "The Whole World is Our Country": Immigration and Anarchism in the United States: 1885–1940, PhD Thesis, Pittsburgh 2010.

quite clearly.[18] In 1904 an urban riot in Rio de Janeiro took place because of a forced vaccination campaign. Three years later 120,000 people joined the tenant strike in Buenos Aires – accounting for about 10 per cent of the inhabitants of the city.[19] Tenant strikes also occurred in Barcelona in 1905 and this event was reported in South American newspapers such as the anarchist daily of Buenos Aires *La Protesta* on the 30th May and 21st June 1905. This paper published a manifesto on 29th August 1906 entitled *Viva la Huelga de Inquilinos* (long live the tenant strike). A tenant league in the Argentine capital was founded in October 1906. It was based on a broad network of neighbourhood organisations, anarchist groups and the union federation FORA which supported these interest groups. The tenant strike was also noticed in Brazil and Uruguay. In Rio de Janeiro the Portuguese immigrant and activist Neno Vasco wrote a stage play entitled *Greve dos inquilinos* (Tenant strike). In the play an activist from Buenos Aires escaped to Rio because of police persecution, and presented to the Brazilian activists a letter of accreditation issued by the daily *La Protesta* to proof that he was sent to spread information on the strike. At the end of 1907, a tenant league was founded in Rio de Janeiro and tenant strikes occurred also in the United States.

Stage plays were often used in the libertarian counterculture to reach a broader audience. The play *Greve dos Inquilinos* sought to show values of libertarian ideologies like solidarity and internationalism. When Neno Vasco came back to Portugal in 1911, he also brought his play, which was published in Lisbon and thus being performed on both sides of the Atlantic, just like the stage plays by Piedro Gori.

The general strike in Montevideo of 1911 was partly provoked by increasing living costs.[20] With the beginning of the First World War this problem, which affected all of Latin America, became increasingly apparent.[21] In response the libertarian movements catalysed the formation of neighbourhood organisations that formed an important structure for future social conflicts. The interaction with broader social movements was also a comparable tactic of the libertarian labour federations, which tried to organise not only workers but the whole population. The demand for European workers in South America was great at the beginning of the 20th century, so that public campaigns

18 See for example the headline of the Italian anarchist newspaper printed in São Paulo: La Carestia Della Vita, in: La Barricata, March 8, 1913, p. 1; see also the anarchist journal, printed in São Paulo: Revolta Popular Contra a Carestia da Vida e a lei de Expulsão, in: Germinal, 30 March 1913, p. 1. Social protest against rising living costs were linked with protest against the expulsion of foreign activists.

19 See James Baer: Tenant Mobilization and the 1907 Rent Strike in Buenos Aires, in: The Americas 49:3 (1993), pp. 350–351.

20 See Pascual Munoz: La Primera Huelga General en el Uruguay 23 de Mayo 1911, Montevideo 2011.

21 See Bill Albert/Paul Henderson: South America and the First World War: The Impact of the War on Brazil, Argentina, Peru and Chile, Cambridge 1988.

for immigration, including the payment for overseas transport to work sites or land grants, were not uncommon. While Brazil was actively promoting immigration, some European governments sought to prevent emigration.[22] Local labour movements in South America also turned against subsidised migration. Spanish anarchists in Argentina, for example, protested in the Spanish workers' press with the call: *Trabajadores, no vayáis á la Argentina* (Workers, do not travel to Argentina).[23] In a same way the Italian anarchists in São Paulo called upon their compatriots in Europe to not enter Brazil (see the following illustration). The organiser of the newspaper *La Battaglia*, Oreste Ristori,[24] was a well-known activist in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and Italy. His call was published on the newspapers' front pages. It is noteworthy that as early as in 1900, the federation of the Chambers of Labour in Ristori's home region of northern Italy had appointed a secretary for questions of emigration.[25]


ANNO I S. PAOLO (Brasile) 11 SETTEMBRE 1904

DIRETTORE
ORESTE RISTORI

Per tutto quanto riguarda *La attaglia*, dirigersi: Oreste Ri-ori, Avenida Tiradentes, 100.

LA BATTAGLIA

22 For example in Prussia 1859. From 1900 onwards, the ban had been loosened and at the turn of the century, more German emigration associations focussing on Brazil were founded. Subsidised migration to South America became an alluring contrast to the immigration to the United States. See Rüdiger Zoller: Förderung, Quoten, Assimilierung: Zur Einwanderungspolitik Brasiliens im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert, in: Thomas Fischer/Daniel Gossel (eds.): Migration in internationaler Perspektive, München 2009, pp. 121–142.

23 Huelga Geral 11, Barcelona 1903.

24 The newspaper was published in Italian in São Paulo. It was founded in 1904. At the end of 1912 its name was changed to *La Barricata*, The weekly paper had 5000 copies. See Luigi Biondi: Anarquistas Italianos em São Paulo: O Grupo do Jornal Anarquista La Battaglia e a sua visão da Sociedade Brasileira: o Embate entre Imaginários Libertários Etnocêntricos, in: Cadernos Arquivo Edgard Leuenroth (AEL) 8:9, Anarquismo e Anarquistas, Campinas 1998.

25 See Maurizio Antonioli: Le Camere del Lavoro in Lombardia tra Otto e Novecento, in: Isabelle Milanese (ed.): Le Camere del Lavoro Italiane: Esperienze Storiche a Confronto, Ravenna 2000, p. 169.

Lavoratori d'Europa
non venite al Brasile

I giornali libertarii di tutto il mondo, sono pregati di riprodurre il seguente appello:

Gli operai dei centri industriali ed agricoli, stieno in guardia dai vili adescamenti di giornalisti e di agenti di emigrazione interessati nel dipinger loro il Brasile coi più smaglianti colori, per invogliarli a immigrarvi.

Source: *La Battaglia* (São Paulo), 11 November 1904, p. 1.

In 1910, the German anarchist Friedrich Kniested, who lived in South America, wrote an article in the New York anarchist daily *Die Freiheit* that Brazil "was no paradise for colonists".[26] In 1913–1914 the anarchist journal *Kampf* from Hamburg frequently published articles and letters from Argentina and Brazil reporting the bad living conditions and warning its readers of migrating.[27] The shortage of work and food as well as political repression was mentioned.

Continuous migration, however, encouraged the building of networks between the places of origin and destination of politically active European migrants, who were able to maintain professional and private contacts. Especially Italian left-wing activists developed network structures spanning across the Atlantic to directly recruit activists and exchange information. But the Atlantic connections also affected other European countries. The Argentine revolutionary syndicalist newspaper *Accion socialista*, for example, was citec in the French journal of the *Confédération Générale du Travail* (General Confederation of Labour, CGT) to draw attention to political repression in Argentina.[28]

It is important to note that there was a very high percentage of migrants returning to Europe, ranging up to 40 per cent. Migrants were often either dissatisfied or had planned to limit their stay to business purposes only. Return migration has some-

26 Friedrich Kniested: Brasilien kein Kolonisten-Paradies, in: Die Freiheit, 15 January 1910.
27 Kampf: Unabhängiges Organ für Anarchismus und Syndikalismus, February 1913, p. 3; January 1914, p. 4.
28 Accion socialista: La Vie ouvrière, 20 June 1910, pp. 721–724.

times been interpreted as a response to unworthy circumstances and exploitation in South America.[29] And migration did, of course, usually involve hope for a better life and better income opportunities, and to *Fazer America* (make America). The bitter disappointment and realisation of the circumstances of the new life in South America in many cases, however, also led to a broad participation in social protests and strikes, and it influenced the development of a collective identity, self-organisation, and the formation of social movements and trade unions as key actors in social conflicts.

The Origin and Formation Phase: 1880–1900

The evolution of labour movements in South America can be divided into three phases. One should recognise, however, that mutualist ideas have already been existent in this region before 1880. The first associations of organised mutual help emerged to support ethnic communities and professional groups.[30] Some of these associations were inspired and influenced by international political contacts. Some members established early affiliations with the First International. French, Italian and Spanish speaking sections were established in Buenos Aires in 1872, and South Americans took part in meetings in Den Haag in the same year. At this early stage, particularly political refugees from Europe played an important role. They often came to South America as victims of suppression in their home country, for example in the context of the Paris Commune in 1871 and the *Revolución Cantonal* in Spain in 1873, the introduction of Anti-Socialist Laws in the German Empire in 1878, and the *Mano Negra* processes of 1883 in Spain as well as the ongoing repression in Italy.

In this first phase smaller groups were important in terms of publishing newspapers and leaflets in different languages to spread their propaganda, such as the journals *Vorwärts* (Buenos Aires, 1886), *La Questione Sociale* (Buenos Aires, 1887), and *Gli Schiavi Bianchi* (São Paulo, 1892). As early as 1896 the first anarcho-feminist newspaper *La Voz da Mujer* was published in Buenos Aires together with an enormous variety of libertarian newspapers which were founded in even remote locations of the

29 See Maria Cristina Cacopardo/José Luis Moreno: La Emigración Italiana a la Argentina entre 1880 y 1930: Las Regiones de Origen y el Fenómeno de Retorno, in: Fernando Devoto/Gianfausto Rosoli (eds.): La Inmigración Italiana en la Argentina, Buenos Aires 1985, pp. 63–85.

30 For various types of mutualistic organisations in the host countries, for example in Argentina, see Fernando Devoto: Historia de la Inmigración en la Argentina, Buenos Aires 2003, pp. 310–319. For Brazil and as a precursor of the emerging labour movement, see Claudia Maria Ribeiro Viscardi/ Ronaldo Pereira de Jesus: A Experiência Mutualista e a Formação da Classe Trabalhadora no Brasil in: Jorge Ferreira/Daniel Aarão Reis: As Esquerdas no Brasil: A Formação the Tradiçoes 1889–1945, Rio de Janeiro 2007.

continent before 1900. [31] Even during this early stage the newspapers and journals played a fundamental role for the communication of the movement in the Atlantic space, including Europe, the USA and Cuba.

A few European activists then promoted changes in the political culture by importing ideologies and collective action strategies from Europe to the South American continent. A famous example for this was the Italian anarchist Errico Malatesta, who sustainably shaped the development of trade unions in Buenos Aires in the period from 1885 to 1889.[32] One of the first trade unions influenced by Malatesta and the Italian example in Argentina was *the Sociedad Cosmopolita de Resistencia y colocacion de Obreros Panaderos* (Bakery Workers' Union), which was organised by the Italian Hector Mattei in 1887.[33]

In addition to Spanish activists like José Prat or Inglan Lafarga, who had been active in unions in Spain prior to their arrival in South America, the Italian Piedro Gori is worth mentioning as another influential protagonist in the Argentinian movement.[34] During his stay in Buenos Aires between 1898 and 1902, Gori wrote some of the most important stage plays. For example the *primo maggio* (Mayday), and some of the most famous songs of the international proletariat like *Stornelli d'esilio* were completed in this period. The chorus of this song "*Nostra patria è il mondo intero, nostra legge è la libertà*" (Our fatherland is the whole world, our law is freedom) reflected the spirit of his time. His stage play about Mayday was then translated into Spanish and Portuguese and became the play performed most in Latin America. Apart from his cultural importance he had a great impact on the formation of the *Federación Obrera Argentina* in 1901. In 1898 the experienced Italian Socialist Alceste de Ambris migrated to Rio de Janeiro. He was revered as folk hero in both Italy and Brazil being active in both countries.

31 See Maxine Molyneux: No God, No Boss, No Husband: Anarchist Feminism in Nineteenth-Century Argentina, in: Latin American Perspectives 13:1 (1986), pp. 119–145.

32 Malatesta was the most respected and important Italian anarchist in the international movement (coming close to Bakunin and Kropotkin). For his biography see: Max Nettlau: Errico Malatesta: Das Leben eines Anarchisten, Berlin 1922. On Malatesta in South America, see pp. 90–97.

33 For Baker trade unions in Argentina, see: Willy Buschak: Schwalben der Arbeit: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Bäckereiarbeiter und des Anarchismus in Argentinien, in: Archiv für die Geschichte des Widerstands und der Arbeit 10 (1989), pp. 83–108. The years of Malatesta in Argentine are well documented. He arrived hidden in a coffin, founded newspapers, groups and social centres, and he searched for gold in Patagonia to support the Italian movement in the years of repression. See, for example, Gonzalo Zaragoza Ruvira: Anarchisme et Mouvement Ouvrier en Argentine à la fin du 19e siècle, in: Le Mouvement Social 103 (1978), pp. 14–17.

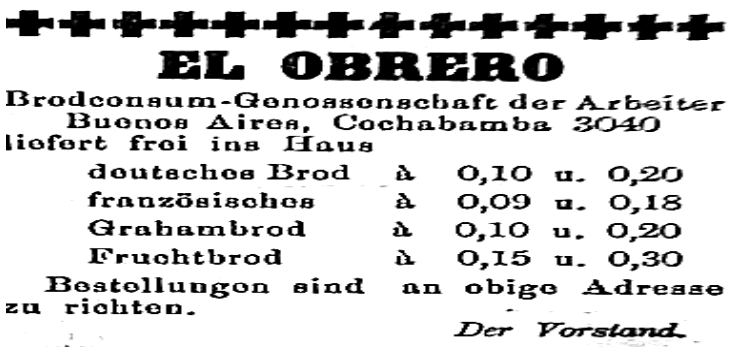
34 For Piedro Gori, who was active in Europe, North and South America, and the Middle East, see: Maurizio Antonioli/Franco Bertolucci/Roberto Giuliainelli, Nostra Patria.

Unions emerged and class-consciousness developed, as it is well documented by the newspapers of the labour movement of that time.[35] This period constituted an important step towards the development of collective identity of the cosmopolitan working class. Immigrant workers had no right to vote and mostly they were not interested in existing political parties. However, the foundation of political parties and party-affiliated structures happened at that time. A famous example was the Buenos Aires club *Vorwärts* (Forward), which was founded by German Social Democrats who participated in the first attempt to establish a trade union federation in Argentina in 1891.[36] The facilities of the *Vorwärts* club were frequently used for events by the whole labour movement. The club was also the place where social democratic activists issued their German-language newspaper *Vorwärts*. In this environment a number of special alliances were organised, for example the Workers' Cooperative for Consumption of Bread in Buenos Aires. German socialists of various currents also founded the general German Workers' Association in Porto Alegre, the largest city of the main region of German immigration to Brazil.[37]

35 The term "labour movement" refers to active workers with class-consciousness, active labour union members, sympathisers and those who participated in labour and civil unrest and protests, without being official member in a social movement, including neighbourhood organisations or labour unions. For a holistic treatment of social movements, see: Charles Tilly/Sydney Tarrow: Contentious Politics, London, 2006, pp. 111–133.

36 For the development in Argentina, see: Geoffroy de Laforcade: Federative Futures: Waterways, Resistance Societies, and the Subversion of Nationalism in the Early 20th Century Anarchism of the Rio de la Plata Region, in: Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe 22:2 (2011), pp. 71–96; Ruth Thompson: The Limitations of Ideology in the Early Argentine Labour Movement: Anarchism in the Trade Unions: 1890–1920, in : Journal of Latin American Studies 16:1 (1984), pp. 81–99; Ronaldo Munck/Ricardo Falcon/Bernardo Galitelli (eds.): Argentina: From Anarchism to Peronism: Workers, Unions and Politics: 1855–1985, London 1987.

37 For an interesting example, see: Friedrich Kniestedt: Fuchsfeuerwild: Erinnerungen eines anarchistischen Auswanderers nach Rio Grande do Sul, Hamburg 2013. Kniestedt acted as secretary and influenced the anarchist ideology of the club later on. On German migration to Brazil, see for example: Mercedes Kothe Gassen: Land der Verheißung: Die deutsche Auswanderung nach Brasilien 1890–1914, Rostock 2003.



EL OBRERO

Brodconsum-Genossenschaft der Arbeiter
Buenos Aires, Cochabamba 3040
liefert frei ins Haus

deutsches Brod	à	0,10 u. 0,20
französisches	à	0,09 u. 0,18
Grahambrod	à	0,10 u. 0,20
Fruchtbrod	à	0,15 u. 0,30

Bestellungen sind an obige Adresse zu richten.

Der Vorstand.

Source: *Vorwärts* (Buenos Aires), 13 April 1889, p. 4.

Libertarian centres were established also in other South American countries for instance the *Centro Internacional de Estudios Sociales* in Montevideo in 1898[38] or the *Casa del Pueblo* in Buenos Aires in 1899 – which included a vegetarian restaurant, a school and a library.[39] (Vegetarianism developed as part of the libertarian counterculture.)

The multifunctional use of the centres in Buenos Aires was also noted in Brazil. On 19 July 1902 the widespread Brazilian anarchist newspaper *O Amigo do Povo* commented extensively on the centre in the Argentine capital. The idea to create social centres was widespread on both sides of the Atlantic at that time.[40] These centres helped build up the infrastructure of the libertarian counterculture. The movements founded up to 30 centres in the districts of the metropolitan areas such as Buenos Aires, Montevideo and São Paulo. Their relatively autonomous infrastructure was comprised of libraries, schools and halls where the libertarian subculture could be performed. Stage plays, political conferences and group meetings took place; leagues and unions

38 The international centre for social studies in Montevideo was one of the most famous institutions in South America. See, for example, Daniel Vidal: Florencio Sánchez y el Anarquismo, Montevideo 2010, pp. 42–44. The book is about the famous writer and dramaturge Florencio Sanchez who worked at the centre.

39 See *Programa-Estatutos de la Casa del Pueblo, Buenos Aires, 1899* and Juan Suriano: Anarquistas, Cultura y Política Libertaria en Buenos Aires 1890–1910, Buenos Aires 2001, pp. 48–50. In Spain the centres of labour movement were also called *casas del pueblo* (houses of the people).

40 It is more important to note the simultaneous existence of the centres all over the Atlantic than where and when the first centres were exactly established. In the case of the *casas del pueblo* it is evident that centres had existed already in Spain before being called *Ateneo*. The wave of *casas del pueblo* started in Spain between 1908 and 1936, when there were 120 *casas del pueblo*. However, the idea spread early in Argentina. Social centres also existed in Rosario, Bahia Blanca and, since 1901, in Montevideo.

were organised; and there was room for leisure time activities, music and the so called *Baile familiar* (family dance). The centres were staged as real existing utopias and virtually represented a collective identification model for the international proletariat.[41]

Three major strikes occurred in this period: in Santos in 1891, the general strike in Rosario in 1895, and the railway strike in Argentina in 1896, which lasted 120 days and mobilised 12,000 strikers to participate. In the 1890s, politically inspired settler communities were established. The most famous example is the *Colonia Cecilia* in Parana, southern Brazil, which existed between the years of 1890 and 1893.[42] Established by Italian anarchists, this short-time project was highly respected among the international libertarian media. Many newspapers reported on the colony.[43] The book about the experience of the founder, Giovanni Rossi, was published in a Spanish version by the *Biblioteca La Questione Sociale* in Buenos Aires in 1896 as well as a German version appeared in Zürich already in 1897.[44]

Utopian ideas were popular at that time. There was an increase of utopian novels circulating with the newspapers across the libertarian Atlantic. Probably the most famous example was the novel by Pierre Quiroule *La Ciudad Anarquista Americana* (The anarchist American city), first published in 1914 as a special edition of *La Protesta*. Quiroule was a French activist and immigrant in Argentina, inspired by Peter Kropotkin's ideas and dedicated to the Mexican revolutionaries. Quiroule also wrote for the famous Spanish libertarian journal *Revista Blanca*. Vicente Carreras' short novel *Acrapolis* describes a fictive utopian community in Brazil and it was published in *Revista Blanca* on 1 October 1902 and already reprinted a month later in the Brazilian *O Amigo do Povo.*[45] These are only a few examples to demonstrate the intense transfer and share of ideas within the libertarian Atlantic space. The exchange of music and songs were of similar importance. Many songs appeared in songbooks, of which many were published in various languages and countries between 1895 and 1905.

41 In France and Italy, labour movements organised "chambers of labour" for the same purposes.

42 See Newton Stadler de Souza: O Anarquismo da Colônia Cecília, Rio de Janeiro 1970; Giovanni Rossi: Utopie und Experiment, Berlin 1979; Candido de Mello Neto: O Anarquismo Experimental de Giovanni Rossi, De Poggio al Mare a Colônia Cecília, Ponta Grossa 1998.

43 See for example: Le Journal [Paris] 23 February 1893, L'Eclair [Paris] 20 February 1893, the Sempre Avanti [Livorno] April 1893; Freiheit [New York] 1894 and Socialist [Berlin] 1894.

44 The Spanish version was published as: *Un episodio de amor en la colonia socialista Cecilia*, and the German version as: *Utopie und Experiment: Studien und Berichte von G. Rossi ("Cárdias")*.

45 See O Amigo do Povo, ano I, n°15, November 8, 1902.

1895	London	*Canti Anarchici*
1896	New York	Canti anarchici rivoluzionari
1898	Patterson	Canti anarchici – rivoluzionari
1899	Buenos Aires	Canti rivoluzionario Canti ed inni libertari di differenti autori
1904	Barcelona	Canciones libertarias. Colección de himnos y cantos populares de varios autores
1906	Patterson	Il Canzoniere Rivoluzionario
1906	Buenos Aires	Il Canzoniere dei ribelli

The Peak Period: 1900–1917

The timeframe from 1900 to 1917 constitutes the peak of the libertarian organisation and the social conflict in South America. Further important labour activists came from Europe to Brazil at that time, including the Italians Giulio Sorelli and Oreste Ristori as well as the Portuguese Neno Vasco. More and more unions were established and federations were created. In Argentina the *Federación Obrera Argentina* emerged in 1901 before it split into the socialist *Unión Geral de Trabajadores* and the anarcho-communist *Federación Obrera Regional Argentina* in 1904. Subsequently, strike activities were increasing. The first general strike took place in Buenos Aires in November 1902, which resulted in the law to deport "dangerous foreigners". The next general strike of 1909, commonly referred to as the Red Week, gained broad participation with almost 200,000 people. Thereafter, in 1910, the *Ley de defesa social* (law of social defence) was adopted in Argentina.[46] Further crucial examples in other countries were the railway strikes in Uruguay in 1908 and the general strike in Montevideo in 1911.[47]

A large number of papers were then published of which *La Protesta Humana,* founded in Buenos Aires in 1897, was most widely read. Since 1904 it had been published as a daily anarchist newspaper. In 1910, *La Battala* emerged as the second anarchist daily paper in Buenos Aires. No other city in the world at that time daily published two anarchist newspapers. However, 26 days after the *La Battala*'s launch, many activist presses were closed down by the government. The newspapers served as the principal communication medium, connecting the movements between the various countries. Nearly every journal and newspaper published a special section listing the likeminded

46 For Argentinian labour history, see: Juan Suriano: Auge y Caida del Anarquismo: Argentina 1880–1930, Buenos Aires 2005.

47 See also: Anton Rosenthal: Streetcar Workers and the Transformation of Montevideo: The General Strike of May 1911, in: The Americas 51:4 (1995), pp. 471–494.

journals they received from all over the world. This happened in Europe, Latin America and the United States. It was a common practice across the Atlantic to send one's own publications to publishers of other newspapers.

A good example for this pratice can be seen in the journal *Tribuna Libertaria*, from Montevideo, with the article *Bibliografia Hemos recibido de nuestro canje los siguíentes periódicos y revistas que están en la sala de lectura del Centro Internacional a disposición de todos los compañeros que se quieran enterar del movimiento social*.[48] The article listed the following journals:

Buenos Aires	*La Protesta Humana, L'Avenire, El Rebelde, Royo y Negro, Ciencia Social, La Libera Parola, El Progreso de la Boca, La Reforma*
Interior de la República	*La Democracia, La Igualdad, El Progreso, El Plata, La Ley, El Conciliador, La Lealtad, La Libertad, El Argos*
Brasil	*O Protesto, Il Diritto*
Chile	*La Campana, El Ácrata*
Peru	*El Libre Pensamiento*
Cuba	*El Nuevo Ideal*
Norte America	*La Questione Sociale, L'Aurora, Germinal, La Protesta Humana, La Federación, Volne Lysty*
España	*La Revista Blanca, Suplemento de La Revista Blanca, La Protesta, La Tracción, El Trabajo, Fraternidad, La Redención Social, El Esclavo Branco*
Italia	*L'Agitazione, L'Avenire Sociale, Combattiamo, Il Pensiero Libertario*
Portugal	*A Obra*
Francia	*L'Humanité Nouvelle, Les Temps, Nouveaux, Le Libertaire*
Inglaterra	*Freedom*

The variety of languages in which libertarian newspapers were published was remarkable. Especially Italian newspapers were common in South America. There were also some bilingual newspapers (Spanish/Italian or Portuguese/Italian). The famous Buenos Aires newspaper *El Perseguido* published its first edition on 18 May 1890 using the headline: "*1. Que somos y que haremos? 2. Chi siamo e cosa faremo? 3. Qui sommes nous? Et que ferons nous?*" The movements also exchanged literature, translated and original, across the Atlantic, such as Kropotkin's *Conquest of Bread*.

48 See: *Tribuna Libertaria*, Montevideo, August 1900, p. 3. The article was called *Bibliography*. The following newspapers and journals can be accessed openly at the International Centre's reading room.

The newspapers paid also attention to the world market's effect on farm workers. In 1912 a larger rural workers strike movement developed (*Grito de Alcorta*).[49] As a result the *Federación Agraria Argentina* (Federation of Agricultural Workers) was founded. Around the same time rural strike movements developed in coffee growing regions in São Paulo state. The settlement movement continued to exist only on a very small scale but was still affecting international debates. For example, in Santa Catarina in Southern Brazil a German vegetarian, nudist and communist colony called *Zukunft* (future) was founded in 1908.[50]

More political and cultural facilities such as centres, schools, libraries, theatres and musical groups were established in South American cities. They often had identical or similar names in Buenos Aires, Montevideo and in São Paulo (for example *Círculo de Estudios Sociales Libertario*). Recreational events such as trips, parties, picnics and in particular family dances were organised and frequently announced in the newspapers of the labour movement. These activities were quite common and because of their widespread importance across the social milieu of the workers they served as practices of subjectification and as performative expressions of the libertarian subculture.

49 See Carina Frid de Silberstein: Migrants, Farmers and Workers: Italians in the Land of Ceres, in: Donna Gabaccia/Fraser Ottanelli, Italian Workers, pp. 87–90; Ronaldo Munck/Ricardo Falcon/Bernardo Galitelli (eds.): Argentina, p. 65; Sandra Carreras/Barbara Potthast: Eine kleine Geschichte Argentiniens, Berlin 2010, p. 118.

50 See Friedrich Kniestedt, Fuchsfeuerwild. The author himself used to live next to the colony for some time.

EL HOMBRE

SEMANARIO ANARQUISTA
Editado por la agrupación "El Hombre"
REDACCION Y ADMINISTRACION
DOMINGO ARAMBURU No. 1828

AÑO III | MONTEVIDEO, SABADO 16 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 1918 | (PORTE PAGO) | Núm. 108

Alegría universal

Las calles de Montevideo, se han visto llenas de gente entusiasta que se entregaba al regocijo de festejar la paz.

Muchos, habrán rebosado de júbilo por el triunfo de los aliados, pero la inmensa mayoría ha sentido un profundo alivio al saber que se terminó para siempre la cruenta e inútil carnicería.

Los grandes y nobles espíritus se habrán de alegrar infinitamente; no por que los aliados hayan logrado un triunfo de circunstancias sobre los imperios centrales, sino por volver a la normalidad de las cosas, dejando, por cansancio de la lucha, de seguir matándose.

Toda guerra se extingue, cuando el límite de resistencia ha llegado, en el justo instante en que ya no es posible aguantar más.

Ahora, a los amigos del progreso, se les presenta una buena oportunidad para trabajar por él. Si saben encontrar el buen camino como en Alemania, Rusia y Austria, por medio de sus hombres más sinceros e inteligentes, realizarán grandes cosas explotando habilmente los acontecimientos producidos.

Los soldados que han sido vencidos, como los vencedores, sentirán en esta hora la alegría del vivir, percibirán algo así como una plácida resurrección.

Ellos, en su inmensa mayoría, no han ido a la guerra por voluntad

gos con el fin de preservarse a sí mismos de la destrucción.

Los gobernantes triunfadores temen, ven obscuro su porvenir; los gobernantes vencidos han huído cobardemente, villanamente, en el momento más crítico; los pueblos en un entusiasmo irreflexivo, por instinto solamente, avanzan, avanzan por el camino de la revolución, azuzados en primer término por la necesidad imperiosa de vivir, que no reconoce vallas ni respeta ley.

Hay, pues, razón en estar alegres, muy alegres de lo que sucede. La solución de esta guerra toma un camino favorable al progreso, resultando ser, como una crisis curativa del cuerpo social.

Bien es cierto, que pudo suceder todo lo contrario de lo que se está realizando ante nuestros ojos. La guerra, es en realidad, un juego de azar, donde resultan cosas y se operan fenómenos insospechables.

Los mejores teóricos, los más videntes profetas, han fracasado una vez más, lamentablemente.

Decíase antes de esta guerra, que ella no era posible, que los trabajadores socialistas y avanzados la impedirían con la revolución.

No sucedió así, sino todo lo contrario.

Llega la hora de la liquidación. final, y las fuerzas que no impidieron la guerra, se hacen presentes para detenerla y finiquitarla en beneficio del progreso.

¿Quién hubiera dicho, hace meses nada más, que la bandera roja,

Source: *El Hombre*, 16 November 1918, p. 1.[51]

51 This is an example from an anarchist newspaper from Montevideo, mid-November 1918. The article on the left side refers to the end of the First World War on 11 November 1918, entitled *Universal Joy*. The newspaper organised family picnics in the central park of Montevideo every

At the beginning of the 20th century the labour unions in South America established federations.[52] These anarcho-syndicalist trade union federations were the largest by numbers and most influential in the world before European federations were founded. Thus the development in South America was an important contribution to the international evolution of the libertarian movement. The South American federations were represented by delegations at the international anarchist conference in Amsterdam in 1907 as well as the first international syndicalist conferences in London (1913), in El Ferrol (1915) and in Berlin (1922).[53]

Within and amongst the South American countries the transfer of ideas and cultural practices was promoted on a large scale by continuous migration. Activists such as Piedro Gori, Oreste Ristori or Virgina Bolten, participated in social movements in a number of South American states. The exchange processes across the La Plata region were particularly intense, since both capitals, Buenos Aires and Montevideo, are so close to each other. Especially in times of severe repression in Argentina many activists and publishers left the country. Florencio Sánchez, dramaturge and activist of the *Centro Internacional de Estudios Sociales* in Montevideo, was also popular in Buenos Aires.[54] The movements sent delegates to the congresses of neighbouring countries and organised regional congresses like the *Congreso Internacional Gráfico Sulamericano* in Buenos Aires in 1907, where six Argentineans and three Brazilians came together with one person from Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay.

two weeks including free entrance for women and children, tombola and game activities. Special attention was also paid to the buffet, as they believed that good organisation was important for a successful meeting. This was discussed in the article *El Buffet*, in: El Hombre, 26 October 1918, p. 4. Picnics as leisure time activity occurred frequently also in North America. In Buenos Aires, it was common to organise picnics at the Beach of Maciel Island, accompanied by tango music. Calls for picnics were common in working class journals of different languages, including Brazil. Picnicking in general was a popular leisure activity at that time as also in bourgeois newspapers photos of picnics were shown.

52 The establishment of the important *Federación Obrera Regional Argentina* (FORA) in 1904 was mainly the result of the split of the *Federación Obrera Argentina* (FOA), founded already in 1901. The *Federación Obrera Regional Uruguaya* (FORU) and the *Federação Operária do São Paulo* (FOSP) were founded in 1905. The *Confederação Operária Brasileira* (COB) was founded 1906 in Rio de Janeiro.

53 See: Hélène Finet: Le Congrès Anarchiste d'Amsterdam 1907: Anarchie ou Syndicalisme à la Lumière de la Réalité Argentine, Orthez 2007; Maurizio Antonioli: The International Anarchist Congress: Amsterdam 1907, Pisa 2007. For London see Wayne Thorpe: "The Workers Themselves": Revolutionary Syndicalism and International Labour: 1913–1923, Dordrecht 1989.

54 Daniel Vidal: Florencio Sánchez y el Anarquismo, Montevideo 2010; Marcelino Eloy Viera: In the Shadow of Liberalism: Anarchist Reason in the Literature and Culture of the Rio de la Plata (1860–1940), Dissertation Doctor of Philosophy (Romance Languages and Literatures), University of Michigan 2012.

Delegates from South America attended the international peace conference in El Ferrol, Spain in 1915. An international follow-up conference in Rio de Janeiro was organised in October 1915.[55] The newspapers of the South American labour movements intensively discussed international activities on both sides of the Atlantic, especially key events like the Russian Revolution in 1905, the execution of Francisco Ferrer y Guardia in Barcelona in 1909, the proclamation of the Republic in Portugal in 1910 and the Mexican revolution in the same year.

Both the repressive measures against foreign activists in South America and their activism intensified with new deportation laws. The prospective ratification in Brazil in January 1907 was a response to the first national labour congress in Rio de Janeiro in 1906. 132 "unwelcome foreigners" were expelled, partly already before the law was meant to be in force. This threat further stimulated the activists' networking, as they fled to neighbouring countries. Especially Uruguay, then under a more liberal government, was a popular destination refugees from Argentina.

Conflict Phase: 1917–1920

During the third phase the South American countries saw an increasing number of large strikes. Particularly notable was the general strike of São Paulo in July 1917. It had almost spread all over Brazil, when local unions were using the opportunity for solidarity strikes to protest against rising living costs. The strike in São Paulo, though partly inspired by the Russian February Revolution, was primarily triggered by the introduction of a *de facto* war tax initiated by employees of Italian descent to support the "fatherland" (*Pro Patria*) during the First World War.[56] The contribution was two per cent of the workers' wages and automatically collected also from non-Italians. The resulting strike of one single company had the snowball effect of causing more and more strikes, affecting diverse industries and districts. The killing of one worker by the police and the official suppression of his funeral led to the proclamation of a general strike in mid-July 1917. The general strike lasted several days and caused violent riots. Between 30,000 and 45,000 people were actively involved in the strike in São Paulo, a city of 400,000 inhabitants at the time. The strike soon extended to other Brazilian cities. In Rio de Janeiro, 50,000 workers went on strike on 22 July.[57]

55 For both conferences, see Wayne Thorpe: El Ferrol, Rio de Janeiro, Zimmerwald, and Beyond: Syndicalist Internationalism 1914–1918, in: Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Historie 84:4 (2006), pp. 1005–1023.

56 Especially the battles of the Isonzo between Italy and Austria were of key importance. The 10th battle of the Isonzo took place from May to June 1917.

57 The general strike is well documented in Brazilian historiography, see for example Boris Fausto: Trabalho Urbano e Conflito Social, Rio de Janeiro 1977. For an English contribu-

Through the mediation of bourgeois newspapers, which expressed sympathy for the strikers because of the ongoing general price increases related to the war, negotiations between employers, the government and the strikers were held. The strikers were represented by the Committee for Proletarian Defence (*Comitê de Defesa Proletária*) and only for a 20 per cent wage increase – among other concessions – the acute danger of a social revolution was resolved. The committee accepted the offers made to them due to the increasing militarisation of the city, while it was anticipatable that these concessions would not be consistently implemented.

In 1918 the unrest in Brazil continued. Strikes by textile workers in Rio de Janeiro began to flare in July and the situation escalated in August when soldiers began to side with the strikers. Some soldiers defended the workers with arms against the repression of police forces. In November, a scheduled anarchist uprising and the strike in Rio de Janeiro attracted great attention among the presses. The preparations were spied on by the police, so that the rebellion could be crushed relatively quickly.[58] The strike started on 18 November 1918 in Rio de Janeiro. At the same day a revolutionary general strike was also organised in Lisbon. Thus the libertarian movement in the capitals of Brazil and Portugal, tried to organise a connected revolutionary strike at the peak time of the international revolutions – one week after the November Revolution in the German Empire; both attempts failed.[59].

In January 1919 the *Semana Tragica* of Buenos Aires – the "tragic week" – developed out of a metal workers' strike. In the wake of the repression, several people were killed. Subsequently, various trade unions and federations proclaimed the general strike which was paralleled by riots and gun battles between the police, workers and paramilitaries. Argentina witnessed 700 deaths, 2,000 injuries and ten thousands of

tion, see Joel Wolfe: Anarchist Ideology, Worker Practices: The 1917 General Strike and the Formation of São Paulo's Working Class, in: The Hispanic American Historical Review 71:4 (1991), pp. 809–846. Other strikes in the states of Rio Grande do Sul, Parana, Mato Grosso do Sul, Minas Gerais, Bahia, Ceara, Para, Pernambuco followed, see for example: Joan Bak: Labor, Community, and the Making of a Cross-Class Alliance in Brazil: The 1917 Railroad Strikes in Rio Grande do Sul, in: The Hispanic American Historical Review 78:2 (1998), pp. 197–227.

58 For the strike in July and the uprising in November in Rio de Janeiro, see Carlos Augusto Addor: A Insurreição Anarquista no Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro 1986.

59 The activist Neno Vasco was important within the libertarian movements at both sides of the Atlantic. In both cases the governments got information of the strike and were prepared to crush them down. A compromising document to prove that the strikes were connected is still lacking, but it seems more than obvious that this was no coincide. See for this thesis also: Samis, Alexandre Ribeiro, Minha patria é o mundo inteiro, Neno Vasco, O Anarquismo e o Syndicalismo Revoluciónário em dois mundos, Lisbon 2009, p. 10. For the strike in Lisbon see Pereira, José Pacheco, As lutas operárias contra a carestia de vida em Portugal a greve geral de novembro de 1918, Porto Alegre, 1971

political prisoners. In the course of the conflicts and street fights, anti-Semitic and anti-Communist pogroms of the paramilitary organisation *Liga Patriótica Argentina* against Russian-born immigrants took place.[60]

In the following years between 1919 and 1922, the Argentinean hinterlands experienced a wave of strikes, in particular a large dock workers strike. In the southern province of Patagonia, the rural workers went on strike from 1920 to 1922. The government sent troops and the protest was suppressed along with 1,500–2,000 executions. The responsible officer – Colonel Varella – was subsequently assassinated in Buenos Aires by the German anarchist Kurt Wilkens.[61] In Brazil and Uruguay, vast strike activities were also carried out. The extended railway strike of Leopoldina in Rio de Janeiro from March 1920 is one notable example.[62]

Further Developments

The foundation of communist parties in South America was strongly influenced by the developments of and within the international context, as they were regarded as promising means to reach a social revolution, following the Russian example. The parties emerged from syndicalist, anarchist and socialist structures and competed with the libertarian labour movement. The *Partido Comunista de la Argentina*, for example, was founded in 1918 by the International Socialist Party and jointed the Comintern in 1921. The *Partido Comunista do Brasil* was founded in 1922.[63] General social unrest and reformist ideas also gained some influence on Brazilian military and resulted in a relatively small uprising at Copacabana in 1922. This led to a reform-orientated movement of young officers within the Brazilian army. From 1924 until 1927, a military uprising occurred in southern Brazil. The revolting military formed a column under the leadership of Carlos Prestes and they passed through 30,000 km of the Brazilian

60 For the *Semana Tragica*, see for example: Ruth Thompson: Argentine Syndicalism, pp. 175–178; David Rock/Mario dos Santos: Lucha Civil en la Argentina: La Semana Tragica de Enero de 1919, in: Desarrollo Económico 11:42/44 (1972), pp. 165–215; Victor Mirelman: The Semana Trágica of 1919 and the Jews in Argentina, in: Jewish Social Studies 37:1 (1975), pp. 61–73.

61 For a detailed study, see Osvaldo Bayer: La Patagonia Rebelde, Buenos Aires 2004.

62 For this example, see: The Russian revolution echoes in Brazil: 1918–21, submitted by International Review on 13 May 2013, available at: http://en.internationalism.org/internationalreview/201305/7739/russian-revolution-echoes-brazil-1918–21 (accessed on 1 September 2014); Jacy Alves de Seixas: Mémoire et Oubli: Anarchisme et Syndicalisme Révolutionnaire au Brésil, Paris 1992.

63 See John W. Dulles: Anarchist and Communists in Brazil 1900–1935, Texas 1973; Iza Salles: Um Cadaver ao Sol: A Historia do Operário Brasileiro que Desafiou Moscou e o PCB, Rio de Janeiro 2005.

hinterland, promulgating social and political reforms in the oligarchic rural areas.[64] Unrest and strike activities continued all over South America, and the state repression of social protest became harsher against the backdrop of the Russian Revolution and the associated fear from above.

In 1929, the Latin American labour movement finally concluded its organisational formation by founding the libertarian-oriented *Asociación Continental Americana de Trabajadores* (Latin American branch of the International Workers Association) in Buenos Aires. Trade unions from all Latin American countries participated in this federation. This association joined the anarcho-syndicalist International Workers Association (founded in Berlin in 1922).

LA CONTINENTAL OBRERA

ORGANO DE LA ASOCIACION C. A. DE LOS TRABAJADORES
(Adherida a la A. I. T.)

Sede del Secretariado: BARTOLOME MITRE 3270

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LA PROPAGANDA EN EL CONTINENTE

Source: *La Continental Obrera*, Buenos Aires, July 1929, n.1.

Equally in 1929 the communist *Confederación Sindical Latinoamericana de Trabajadores* was founded in Montevideo and joined the Red Trade Union International (founded in 1921). There was a massive increase in ideological disputes and divisions within the labour movement and trade union federations in South America overall.

In addition, the growing paramilitary and nationalist organisations such as the Patriotic League in Argentina developed and threatened workers movements. Fascist movements in Europe, like Mussolini's Black shirts, served as examples for their South American counterparts. Similarly, the dictatorships in Spain (Primo de Riveira,

64 The march of the *Columna Prestes* is also well documented in Brazilian historiography. Prestes was called the "knight of hope". He went into exile in Bolivia later on. From there he went to Moscow. He joined the Comintern before he was sent back to Brazil, where he was instrumental in the communist revolution in 1935 – which failed. See, for example, Hélio Silva: 1926 A Grande Marcha: A columa Prestes, Porto Alegre 2005. There is also a biography on Prestes by Jorge Amado: The Knight of Hope, Buenos Aires 1942.

1923–1930) and Portugal (Salazar, 1928) had a serious impact on the developments in South America, as a nationalist corporatist discourse was reinforced. As a result, the first dictatorship phase[65] emerged with Vargas's coming to power in Brazil in 1930, with Terra in Uruguay in 1933 and military dictatorship of General Uriburi in Argentina in 1930.

Conclusion

European immigration strongly affected many South American cities while turning into multi-ethnic and metropolitan spaces. The era from 1870 to 1920 was a crucial stage in this regard as forces of migration, urbanisation and the beginnings of industrialisation were working together. The resulting subjectivisation of urban subaltern classes and labour movements in South America was constitutive for the collective identity of an international proletariat. The libertarian movement was dominant within the Atlantic Space in numbers, influence and action until 1920.

When pursuing a comparative analysis, this transcontinental process shows numerous convergences. Despite all differences, this historical process cumulated into an auto-identity construction of libertarian urban subcultures. This progression was to a large extent based on socio-cultural patterns of action which correspondingly evolved in the Americas and Europe and can be seen as practices of proletarian subjectivisation. The Atlantic sphere shared a common structure which formed the social movements on both sides. European migration strongly influenced the spread of cultural practices and formed its basis. Simultaneously, these evolving practices shaped the international development of revolutionary syndicalism. In the countries of South America, this was significantly influenced by immigrants from Italy, Spain and Portugal as well as other European countries. Local subaltern classes and their organisations actively formed the trans-cultural exchange in the Atlantic region. Earlier studies have always wrongly assumed that labour movements in Latin America had imitated European developments instead of grasping the various movements on both sides as parts of *one* international movement.

Their emerging organisational structures developed hand in hand with new forms of socio-cultural performance and for the transmission of values and norms of the libertarian ideologies. With this in mind, the following aspects are relevant for South American urban history: the performance in public space (for example demonstrations, strikes or picnics), the social and political organisation of urban residents (for example district leagues in São Paulo or the tenant strike in Buenos Aires in 1907) and the development of an educational infrastructure of the subculture – such as schools and

65 The second period comprised the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

social centres. The subjectification discussed here was therefore mainly a process among the urban lower classes: workers, short- and part-time workers, employees in the service sector, the unemployed, the so-called *Lumpenproletariat* and the socially excluded in general. This enabled an identification of the frustrated and exploited immigrants with an international worker movement. The majority of immigrants, socially marginalised and politically excluded, came to the Americas full of hope for a better life. Here they found themselves in disappointment of their expectations – in precarious housing, living and working conditions. They responded to these circumstances with return-migration, urban migration and migration to neighbouring countries. Another crucial response to the precarious conditions was the growth of an interactive social movement network, which was sustained by an international libertarian counterculture able to achieve the mobilisation of, and identification with the migrants' social environment. The "libertarian Atlantic" became an imagined community of the international proletariat.

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