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Matthew Brown, Gabriel Paquette. *Connections After Colonialism: Europe and Latin America in the 1820s.* Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 2013. 330 S. ISBN 978-0-8173-1776-8; ISBN 978-0-8173-8639-9.

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M. Brown u.a. (Hrsg.): Connections After Colonialism

The reviewed monograph is the product of a symposium held in 2009 at the Trinity College in Cambridge and consists of an editorial introduction and thirteen individual analyses, compiled with the aim of shedding light on various aspects of trans-Atlantic connections in the 1820s. In order to critically assess this collective work, I want to subject three aspects to scrutiny: first, the theoretical concepts and units of analysis presented as framework; second, the scholarly, intellectual, and narrative qualities of the articles; and third the coherence of the contributions in view of the framework.

In their introduction, which serves as theoretical pivot of the volume, the editors present the studied decade as a comparatively understudied period which is, nonetheless, of considerable importance to central questions of historical investigation, namely the idea of a paradigmatic shift from "colony" to "informal empire". Traditionally, the 1820s tend to appear as a time of rupture and broken ties between the Old World and the New, when old antagonisms are finally disentangled.In such a view, the 1820s and following decades are somewhat of a black box out of which a fully developed "age of empire" emerges. Studying the persisting, changing, and rupture of connections in the 1820s with more detail, therefore, becomes a necessity to better understand the origins of that later dominance.The editors are sceptical of the view thatinterprets the formation of the new nation states in the 1820sas the terminal point of a largely unidirectional diffusion of the "age of revolutions" back to the American continent. Instead they call for a more nuanced view of mutual influences and detect a lack of linearity of processes.

The transnational and comparative approach of the volume is not particularly novel- it is common in Atlantic history, and the vast commemorative bibliography on the bicentenaries of 1810, and 1812 is testimony to it -, butit certainly is a sterlingway to overcome the national prisms so long prevalent in the study of the formative decades of Latin American nation states. It is, thus, well suited to remedy the relative neglect the 1820s have received- not so much in the number of individual studies but in considering it as a separate unit of analysis and a fulcrum in the overall development of Atlantic history.

The intellectual quality of all contributions in the volume in itself is fine, without exception, and they are generally quite readable. When in the following I express some criticism, it is not on the individual quality, but on how much they contribute to the central statements and theoretical focus of the volume. Keeping conference-based volumes coherent is often a difficult task: the common basis of ideas often only forms at such an occasion, and some of the talks fit closer to it while others don't. Brown and Paquette apparently tried to remedy this issue by drafting their introduction first, then handing it out to the authors so they could adjust focus and arguments in that light - at leastI interpret this from the references to the introduction in several texts.

The first thematic contribution of the volume by Brian Hamnettis a panorama of the main political and economic developments in Latin America in the turbulent 1820s. It does not get to the core of the volume, but it does serve as a convenient second, less theoretic background for the other contributions. In several of the articles, however, the relevance to the guiding questions and objects of study of the volume remains somewhat unclear: Josep Fradera's article about the limitations and inner contradictions of Spanish liberalism on colonial policy, for example,is more focused on the relation with the remaining Spanish colonies and the 1820s have no prominent place in it, so it fails to contribute much to the discussion about persistence and change of connections around political rupture nor helps to establish the 1820s as way-point in Atlantic history. Likewise, Christopher Schmidt-Nowara's contribution on Las Casas in the Abolitionist discourse in itself is most interesting, it but does

not specificallyshow how the two shores of the Ocean interacted in the 1820s. Another article about slavery, by Carrie Gibson, lacks a transatlantic orientation altogether and centers on the "Haitian Specter" that functioned as a glue for loyalty of the remaining colonies. Finally, Scarlett O'Phelan gives a well-informed account of Bernardo O'Higgins's years in Peruvian exile, but ultimately it is the Pacifictale of a *libertador* who outlived his prime, with only some volatile reference to his Atlantic identity formed much earlier: the 1820s as epigraph to a past world.

One contributionthat only ostensibly does not fit well to the line of investigation is Jay Sexton's text on the foreign policy towards Latin America by the Monroe administration. Convincingly, the author manages to justify the presence as relevant by highlighting the political and economic connections between Latin America and Europe as a pivotal aspect to which the Monroe administration's policy reacted. Two articles take on reception processes of political thought and culture in both directions across the Atlantic: Will Fowler analyses the Spanish origins of Mexican *pronunciamiento*-culture, and Gabriel Paquette lines out the Brazilian influences on the Portuguese constitution of 1826 through dynastic connections and how this set into motion a chain of reaction in Portugal and Europe.

A more direct entanglement of hemispheres is presented by Maurizio Isabella about the connections between Italian liberals and Spanish America in the 1820s, illustrating a "trans-Atlantic, pan-European liberal" identity with intense personal and epistolary connections and mutual influences. Reuben Zahler's buoyant account on foreigners in 1820s-Venezuela examines the insertion or isolation of different new groups of foreigners and a growing popular xenophoby, showing both how new connections formed, yet remainedfrail and incomplete. Equally central is David Rock's study on the rise and decay of British influence, trade and interest in Riverplate under Rivadavia, a contribution that conforms very well to the conception of the 1820s a distinct period and the lack of linearity in the development of "informal empire".A thematically rather isolated, yet important contribution to the aims of the volume is that of Iona Macintyre: it shows how a specific demand for educational literature on the Spanish American book market is satisfied by British publications specifically produced and tailored to meet the demand, promoting British liberal ideas with even a Protestant touch to them - a prime example of how new political circumstances and new actors converge in new forms of Atlantic connections.

The last article, by Matthew Brown is a closing parenthesis, the effort of uniting the various contributions under a common umbrella. He ultimately infers a "slight [sic] inflection of destination" of connections towards London and Amsterdam, yet shying away from making a leap to broad assumptions of a linear shift from one dependence to a new one. Brown acknowledges the "more political and more social" scope of the contributions of the volume.

It is true: important aspects of economic ties and personal networks are absent, as well as a case study of persisting, changing or forming academic/intellectual connections. Yet, nobody can expect a monograph that searches for a fresh angle to be all encompassing; or a conference-based volume to contain a set of contributions that all equally contribute to its theoretical framework. Overall, editors and authors convincingly establish the decade of the 1820s as an important unit of study for Atlantic history, and the volume fulfils the purpose of an opener to further investigations.

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