

Working Paper No. 12, 2019

**Conviviality through Time
in Brazil, Mexico, Peru, and Río de la Plata**

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Mecila:
Working
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Series

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The Maria Sibylla Merian International Centre for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America (Mecila), Rua Morgado de Mateus, 615, São Paulo – SP, CEP 04015-902, Brazil.

Executive Editors: Sérgio Costa, Lateinamerika-Institut, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany
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Editing/Production: Sérgio Costa, Barbara Potthast, Nicolas Wasser, Paul Talcott

This working paper series is produced as part of the activities of the Maria Sibylla Merian International Centre for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America (Mecila) funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

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Printing of library and archival copies courtesy of the Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, Germany.

Citation:

Scarato, Luciane (2019): “Conviviality through Time in Brazil, Mexico, Peru, and Río de la Plata”, *Mecila Working Paper Series*, No. 12, São Paulo: The Maria Sibylla Merian International Centre for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America.

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Conviviality through Time in Brazil, Mexico, Peru, and Río de la Plata

Luciane Scarato

Abstract

This paper analyses convivial contexts in unequal societies from a historical and comparative perspective in Brazil, Mexico, Peru, and Río de la Plata between the Conquest and the early twentieth century. It seeks to highlight how conviviality occurred on the ebb and flow of everyday life in unequal societies. In doing so, it aims to demonstrate that conviviality exists within inequality. It starts with a brief semantic cartography of the term conviviality, followed by its application on a selection of case studies about gender and family in Latin America. It explores ideals and structures of conviviality, underscoring individuals' creativity to negotiate unequal power relations. It also looks at social movements to analyse conviviality in crisis, focusing on strategies to deal with, overcome, and subvert inequalities. In the end, it hopes to contribute to our understanding of conviviality in unequal societies.

Keywords:

conviviality | inequality | semantics | family | gender

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1. Introduction

How does conviviality take place in unequal societies? This paper takes a historical approach on Latin America to answer this question, as the region offers “a unique comparative advantage given the region’s long history and myriad experiences in coping with the consequences of inequality” (Oxhorn and Jouve-Martín 2017: 206). In doing so, it hopes to demonstrate that conviviality throws new light on how people have experienced inequality.

It starts with a semantic (re)construction of the word conviviality in dictionaries of Latin, Spanish, and Portuguese, comparing these meanings to the concept of conviviality to date. By underscoring the similarities and differences between the various usages of the term and its correlates, it seeks to give breadth to conviviality as a powerful analytical tool. On the following, it looks at how conviviality occurred in the realm of the everyday in Brazil, the viceroyalties of Mexico and Peru, and the Río de la Plata region. The analysis includes the colonial period because it is crucial to understand conviviality in Latin America. Given that Latin American history is unthinkable without African and Amerindian slavery, this essay explores conviviality within the slavery regime, as it shaped Latin American societies. As such, it analyses rupture and conflict in these societies but also individuals’ creativity to negotiate, deal with, overcome, and subvert the order.

In conjunction with conviviality, this essay builds on Marie Louise Pratt’s concept of “contact zone”, as it allows us to think about history horizontally and comparatively. In contact zones, “difference”, one of the pillars of conviviality, is twofold: it poses a problem, but it is also an asset (Bizzell 1994: 166). This ambiguity leaves a door ajar for those who see it as a contribution, not a liability (Bizzell 1994: 166). As social scientist Frank Adloff puts it, “the base of the social are non-equivalencies and asymmetries” (Adloff 2016: xi). Therefore, difference and asymmetries of power render the discussion about conviviality and inequality in Latin America possible. Such asymmetries are most prominent in contact zones, as it is “a space where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived in many parts of the world today” (Pratt 1991: 34). Multiple phenomena emerge from a contact zone, and they “express the effect of long term contact and intractable, unequal conflict,” such as “collaboration, bilingualism, mediation, parody, denunciation” (Pratt 1991: 37). Mutual recognition and shared knowledge come together in contact zones (Pratt 1991: 40).

The definition of contact zones moves in tandem with knowledge production and circulation since they are historically defined spaces where “different groups within the society contend for the power to interpret what is going on” (Bizzell 1994: 167). The

present essay takes the instance that individuals in contact zones did more than to interpret what was going on: they acted upon, responded to, maintained, subverted, and yielded to difference – most times, out of necessity, not virtue (Bizzell 1994: 168). It contends that the study of contact zones in Latin America illuminates our understanding of conviviality in unequal societies and throughout multiple turning points. For example, taking state-building processes from the perspective of contact zones, we move beyond national borders and to analyse family structure and *mestizaje* under the same umbrella while maintaining the particularities of each historical context.

In the end, this paper hopes to demonstrate the contribution of history in shaping the concept of conviviality as a powerful analytical tool in the social sciences and humanities. Where gender, economic, and political asymmetries are at stake, it is as crucial to look historically on the “changing and enduring nature of inequality in Latin America” (Oxhorn and Jouve-Martín 2017: 205).

2. Conviviality Then-and-Now: Semantic Shifts

Conviviality as an analytical tool is a recent phenomenon; *convivencia* is a modern value if taken as a synonym of peacefully living together (Deardoff 2018: 163). The main argument to put forward in this section is that, despite the theoretical novelty, the idea of *convivencia* has been part of both the Hispanic and Portuguese linguistic repository at least since the fifteenth century. To put it differently, although *convivencia* and conviviality are not synonyms, the latter derives, at least semantically, from the first; therefore, notions of conviviality are not a twentieth-century invention. Seen in this light, looking at the semantic shift of *convivencia* into conviviality gives depth to theory and sheds light on conviviality through time.¹ This section starts by looking at dictionary entries for the word. On the following, it provides a brief survey of recent scholarship about conviviality.

Jurist and historian Alfons Aragoneses demonstrates the relevance of semantic historical reconstructions in an essay about the uses of *convivencia* in legal and political texts in Spain (Aragoneses 2018). Focusing mostly on Sephardic Jews in Spain between the Middle Ages to the twenty-first century, Aragoneses argues that shifting meanings of *convivencia* are crucial to understanding how political and legal discourses have reconstructed the term to shape the idea of *Hispanidad*. The author analyses the usage of *convivencia* in several periods: building the Catholic nation (1812-1868); *Filosefardismo* and the re-definition of Spain as a tolerant country (1869-1876); the Restoration and the End of the Empire (1898-1923); *Filosefardismo* and the first Republic (1924-1964); *convivencia* and Francoism (1931-1964); *convivencia* and

¹ “Semantic shift” as used in Duve and Sakrani (2018).

cosmopolitanism. Aragonese argues that although this reconstruction aims to create reconciliation and unit in Spain, it masks histories of persecution, torture, and violence. By looking at the meanings of *convivencia* through time, he successfully demonstrates that diverse historical actors have appropriated the term to legitimize political discourses in Spain for two centuries. This conclusion lends weight to the importance of situating the word *convivencia* within myriad historical contexts.

Raymond Boisvert, a philosopher, argues that the word conviviality “has a lengthy heritage” in Latin (Boisvert 2010: 59). Does it? *The Dictionarium Latino Lusitanicum et Lusitanico Latinum* (1643), written by Jerônimo Cardoso, was one of the most popular Latin dictionaries in Portugal. According to it, *convivo, is, ix, ctum* means ‘to live together’ (Cardoso 1643: 43).² In the *Dictionarium latino-hipanicum*, Antonio de Nebrija – author of the first grammar book on Castilian – defines *convivo, is, xi*: as ‘to live in one’ (Nebrija 1492: 42).³ As jurist Raja Sakrani and historian Max Deardorff demonstrate, political discourses recover this meaning, but it does not entail that a collaborative form of conviviality took place in Al-Andalus (Deardorff 2016; Sakrani 2016).⁴ The difference between the Latin definitions in Spanish and Portuguese is subtle: both mean to live together but, in Castilian, intimacy seems to play a more significant role. Has this difference increased over time? What does this say about conviviality in Latin America?

In the eighteenth century, drawing from Bernardo de Lima e Melo Bacellar (1783), *conviver* (verb) is ‘to live in peace’ (Bacellar 1783).⁵ A few years later, António de Moraes e Silva (1789) expands the word and its variants: 1. *Convivial* (adjective): ‘related to invitation, feast’; 2. *Convivência* (noun): ‘action or effect of *conviver*; an association of people who live, eat, and drink together and in intimacy’; 3. *Conviente* (noun): ‘a person that makes conviviality with others’; 4. *Conviver* (verb): ‘to make conviviality, to live, eat, and drink in the company of another, or others’; 5. *Convívio* (noun): ‘a celebration, a feast’; 6. *Convizinho* (noun): ‘contiguous, next to the dwelling or residence’ (Silva 1789: 461-462).⁶ Joaquim José da Costa e Sá (1794), Latin royal teacher and member of the Lisbon Royal Science Academy, writes that the verb *conviver* is to ‘live together’

2 Original in Portuguese: “viver juntamente” (Cardoso 1643).

3 Original in Spanish: “por bivar en uno” (Nebrija 1492).

4 El-Andalus is the Iberian Peninsula under Muslim domination.

5 From the original in Portuguese: “conviv-êr, encia, ido, idouro; viver em paz” (Bacellar 1783).

6 Original in Portuguese: “convivial: de convite, de banquete; convivência: ação, e efeito de conviver; sociedade de pessoas que vivem, que comem e bebem juntamente, e com familiaridade; conviente: pessoa que faz convivência com outra, ou outras; conviver: fazer convivência, viver, comer e beber em companhia de outro, ou outros; convívio: festim, banquete; convizinho: contíguo, chegado na habitação ou morada” (Silva 1789).

(*viver juntamente*), *vivre avec*, *convivere* (Sá 1794). These entries reveal that the eighteenth-century definition of conviviality became more detailed than in previous years: in addition to the meaning of living together, it further built on the idea of feast, companionship, to eat and drink together. However, another meaning came under the spotlight: to live next to someone, to share the same neighbourhood. Transnational migration and forced diaspora may have contributed to this change since peoples from various origins came to live side by side, albeit not necessarily under celebratory conditions.

In the nineteenth century, Spanish entries amount to the traditional definition of conviviality. The *Diccionario de la Lengua Castellana* (1824), published by the Spanish Academy, defines *conviviente* (adjective) as ‘anyone that one lives with’ (Academia 1824: 635).⁷ There is no mention of a feast. In the *Diccionario da Língua Portuguesa* (1858), José da Fonseca and José Ignacio Roquette write that: 1. *convivencia* (noun) is ‘to *conviver*’ and ‘a society of people with whom one lives’; 2. *convivente* (noun) is ‘a person that lives with’; 3. *conviver* (verb) is to live together and to ‘make *convivencia*’ (Fonseca and Roquette 1858: 311).⁸ In the nineteenth century, the notion of “feast” continued to be restricted to other words such as *conviva* (guest).

How do the definitions above relate to the concept of conviviality to date? According to the *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* (2001), the noun *convivialidad* has a Mexican origin (Lapesa and Española 2013). It refers to both *camaradería* (camaraderie) and *convite* (invitation) or *banquete* (feast). The Portuguese dictionary Houaiss defines *convivência* as 1. ‘life in common; daily or frequent contact’; 2. ‘intimacy, familiarity’; 3. ‘harmonious coexistence’; 4. ‘close and simultaneous existence’ (Houaiss 2009).⁹ Note that the contemporary Portuguese definition of conviviality is not as positive as the Spanish entry since only the third definition implies a sense of camaraderie. The Spanish Royal Academy registered the term *convivialidad* in 2001, while Houaiss states that *convivência* appeared for the first time in 1769. The verb *convivir*, on the other hand, occurred in 1925 in Spanish as ‘to live in the company of others, to

7 From the original in Spanish: “conviviente: cualquiera de aquellos com quien comunmente se vive. Convictor, convivens” (Academia Española 1824).

8 From the original in Portuguese (Fonseca and Roquette 1858): “convivencia: o conviver; sociedade de pessoas com quem se vive; convivente: o que vive com; conviver (com) viver juntamente; fazer convivencia.”

9 From the original in Portuguese (Houaiss 2009): *convivência*: 1. vida em comum, contato diário ou frequente; 2. Intimidade, familiaridade; 3. Coexistência harmoniosa; 4. Existência próxima ou simultânea.

cohabit' (Lapesa and Española 2013).¹⁰ This definition, similarly to Portuguese, does not imply harmony. As for *conviver* in Portuguese, the pattern observed for *convivência* repeats, as only the second definition implies harmony: 1. 'to live in proximity'; to have conviviality'; 2. 'to have friendly relationships; to get along well'; 3. 'to adapt, to get used to extrinsic conditions'; 4. 'to share the same space; to coexist' (Houaiss 2009).¹¹

The Spanish verb *convivir*, the Portuguese noun *convivência* and the verb *conviver* amount to the idea that conviviality is to share the same space and to live in proximity. Harmony and friendship may occur, as common sense often perceives it. However, if we reconstruct the history of the term, harmony and peace were not always embedded in the word, meaning that individuals may have used conviviality differently, depending on the context, as a flexible term. Conviviality is a flexible, yet defined way of describing ways of living together.

Moving on to the theoretical debate, social scientist Ivan Illich stands for a somewhat positive notion of conviviality, although he claims that a convivial society does not preclude inequality (Illich 1985 (1973)). At the same time, he considers that convivial life occurred in the past, but that it "inevitably demanded the servitude of others" (Illich 1985 (1973): 28). Illich's view on conviviality calls out for a revolution; conviviality materializes in the foreseeable future, not in the present. From his perspective, convivial refers to tools rather than to people. A convivial society is, thus, the only alternative to a technocratic disaster. Such a society should result from arrangements that guarantee for each of its members ample and free access to convivial tools (Illich 1985 (1973)).¹² Perhaps the most insightful trait of Illich's definition of conviviality is the importance of the relationships between human and non-human subjects. Philosopher Rosi Braidotti further develops this idea, as she argues that conviviality implies daily interdependency and sustainability between humans and non-humans (Braidotti 2013). Amidst the definitions of conviviality mentioned earlier, the ones that fit best Illich's and Braidotti's theories are 'to adapt, to get used to extrinsic conditions' (Houaiss 2009) and 'to live in peace' (Bacellar 1783).

Historian Achille Mbembe takes the stance that postcolonial relationships are convivial, "fraught by the fact of the *commandement* and its 'subjects' having

¹⁰ From the original in Spanish (Real Academia 2013): *convivir*: vivir em companhia de outro u otros, cohabitar.

¹¹ From the original in Portuguese: 1. viver em proximidade; ter convivência; 2. ter relações cordiais; dar-se bem; 3. adaptar-se, habituar-se a condições extrínsecas (físicas, culturais etc.); 4. compartilhar o mesmo espaço; coexistir.

¹² According to Adloff (2016:161), the "common reference to things and tools that transform and encourage people's relationship to each other" underlies Ivan Illich's tools for conviviality".

to share the same living space” (Mbembe 2001: 104). Instead of focusing on oppositions, we should understand “the dominant and the dominated” as part of the same episteme (Mbembe 2001: 110). From this viewpoint, colonization entailed both venality and conviviality. The former entails the grotesque of domination, while the latter implies intimacy (Mbembe 2001: 237). Intimacy is one of the definitions for *convivência* in Moraes e Silva (1789) and Houaiss (2009).

British sociologist Paul Gilroy situates conviviality not only in the future, like Illich and Braidotti, but also in the present. According to Gilroy, conviviality is the process of cohabitation and interaction (Gilroy 2004). This definition is closer to the historical meanings of the word conviviality for Nebrija (1492), Cardoso (1643), Moraes e Silva (1789), Spanish Academy (1824), Fonseca (1858), and Houaiss (2009). According to Gilroy, conviviality brings a radical openness that overcomes fixed and reified identities. Instead, conviviality implies “unpredictable mechanisms of identification” (Gilroy 2004: xi). A convivial culture, for Gilroy, accepts ever-changing modes of identification and deems solidarity, community, and interconnection as crucial in the process of living together (Gilroy 2004). The author allows us to critically look at – and beyond – conflict, without assuming that any aspiration towards collaboration in unequal societies is tainted or doomed from the beginning.

Recent studies build on Illich’s, Marcel Mauss’ and *décroissance* definitions of conviviality. The *Manifeste Convivialiste* (2013) calls for a social mobilization around *convivialisme*, the art of living together that privileges cooperation, without bypassing conflict (Caillé et al. 2013). As Adloff puts it, “the exchange of gifts between groups of people makes them allies, without withdrawing their agony, thus their combative confrontation” (Adloff 2016: 164). The *Manifeste* urges society to adopt a transnational and positive perspective while considering historical, cultural, political, and geographical particularities. As a normative project, the *Manifeste* illuminates our understanding of conviviality, but it offers few analytical tools to systematize it.

Against this background, social scientist Magdalena Nowicka and anthropologist Steven Vertovec share a positive view towards conviviality, as they claim that it is a way in which people live together successfully, “how they envision a *modus co-vivendi* and what strategies they create in order to practice it” (Nowicka and Vertovec 2014: 342). Despite the controversy of the word “successfully,” this perspective broadens the scope for future research on other subjects in addition to violence and conflict. It also deems the everyday to be crucial for understanding conviviality. Spatial settings move in tandem with conviviality

within this framework, lending weight to the interdependence between humans and the environment.

In another essay, Nowicka and anthropologist Tilmann Heil define conviviality as “human modes of togetherness, the everyday process of how people live together in mundane encounters, how they translate between their sustained difference and how they (re)negotiate minimal consensus” (Nowicka and Heil 2015: 1). This view is less institutional than Illich’s, but the authors also focus on objects and technologies (tools) as intermediaries that improve the quality of human relations (Nowicka and Heil 2015). This view is still anthropocentric, but it helps us to think about the materiality of conviviality. To Nowicka and Heil, conflict is intrinsic to life; to live in conviviality is to accept the fragility of relations and to reach a minimal level of sociability. As an analytical tool, conviviality provides “a language to speak of the fleeting and ‘quiet’ social phenomena which in political discourse on diverse societies are too easily overlooked” (Nowicka and Heil 2015: 13).

As such, conviviality conflates conflict, frustration, empathy, and respect. Conviviality does not gloss over interdependence, as “the everyday of everybody involves situations in which they engage with people who are different and who and who expose of a social status different to their own. Even people who would claim to avoid such encounters can be found to (re) translate between their sustained differences and (re) negotiate minimal consensuses” (Nowicka and Heil 2015: 14). Conviviality does, therefore, rearticulate power asymmetries. Asymmetry and interdependence appear in Adloff’s definition of the gift. According to Adloff, the gift-giving theory “distinguishes itself from the symmetry and equivalence of exchange” (Adloff 2016: 45). In doing so, the author directs our attention to the precariousness and fragility of human relations in unequal societies. Conviviality, hence, lies between conflict and peace.

For Raja Sakrani, *Convivencia* is “displacement and reunion,” a “polyphony,” “a plurality of views,” the history of “cohabitation lived side by side” (Sakrani 2016: 1). The latter meaning brings us back to the definitions of Cardoso (1643), Sá (1794), Moraes e Silva (*convizinho* – 1789), the Spanish Academy (1824), Fonseca (1858) and Houaiss (2009). To understand *Convivencia* from an Islamic perspective, Sakrani writes normative historical research without glossing over its limitations: *convivencia* can be dangerous for idealizing contexts (Sakrani 2016: 4). According to the author, this criticism does not hold if one takes on board the paradox of *Convivencia*: as a concept, it does not exclude violence (Sakrani 2016: 7).

Sakrani's essay has also been an inspiration to write this section based on the various meanings of *convivialidad* through time. The author emphasizes the pivotal role that semantic shift plays in shaping conviviality, at least in the realm of theory, by exploring Arabic words that mean to 'live together with.' For example, "*lšhra* has a flexible meaning, as it refers to a whole range of living together: with a friend, a companion or associate, a husband/wife, a group of people or also a neighbour" (Sakrani 2016: 37). Sakrani's texts is an invitation to continue reading and cross-reading, as the histories of living-together are complex, mixed, divergent, complementary, and opposed (Sakrani 2016: 9). *Convivencia*, as a flexible normative concept, organizes this complexity in connection with everyday cohabitation (Sakrani 2016: 53).

Raja Sakrani and legal historian Thomas Duve invite the reader to think about the "subtlety, fluidity, limits, and even ambiguity of the concept and images that illustrate cross-cultural exchanges" (Duve and Sakrani 2018: 93). In the introduction of the "Focus" section of the *Max Plank Institute for European Legal History Journal* (2018), the authors pose the question of how coexistence, interaction, and conflict regulate living together. They contend that "the ways in which we think about such constellations and conflicts has its own history" (Duve and Sakrani 2018: 93). Like Nowicka, Vertovec, and Heil, Duve and Sakrani highlight the need for looking at the realm of the everyday to study *convivencia*. They suggest a legal-historical perspective that looks at how different normative systems coexisted and interacted. The aim of this perspective is somehow similar to the *Manifeste Convivialiste* (2013), as Duve and Sakrani call for modern-day *convivencia* in which "one thereby learns not to suppress the *Other* and her/ his differences, be curious about her/him, and if possible attain conviviality in the most profoundly human properties!" (Duve and Sakrani 2018: 94).

We are brought back to the main strands that run through this essay: how does conviviality take place in unequal societies? Drawing from the definitions above mentioned, conviviality is to live in intimacy but not necessarily in peace. Intimacy entails different degrees of connection and types of relationships, thus occurring not only in private but also public spheres where minimal proximity takes place. This intimacy puts daily interaction at the forefront of conviviality. With this summary in mind, the following sections explores evidence of conviviality in Latin America.

3. Ideals of Conviviality

Which strands came together in Latin American definitions of race? This section interweaves slavery, abolition, sexuality, and gender to study conviviality in Latin America.

Self-identification, gender, and sexuality are critical elements in the work of Maria Elena Martínez (Martínez 2016). She offers a reflection about archival research and the development of new analytical tools to read written sources. At the same time, the author builds on recent scholarship about queer and transgender studies in the Atlantic world and colonial New Spain. The paper tells the story of Mariano Aguilera, a man raised as a girl. In 1758, Aguilera requested an examination of his body so that he could legally be declared a man and marry his partner, a woman called Clara López. The author demonstrates that non-normative sexuality was related to crime and sin in the modern period, acquiring racial connotations in the new world. As the author puts it: “‘queers’ who normally entered the archive were those whose sexual behaviour, desires, and/or bodies were considered a problem by neighbours or church and government authorities, whereas those who escaped the arm of secular or ecclesiastical courts and the accusatory finger of scandalized townspeople or acquaintances do not normally appear in it, thus constituting a structural archival absence” (Martínez 2016: 424).

Martínez engages in dialogue with Ann Twinam (Twinam 1999) to conclude that Spanish American tradition split what a person was in private (and by birth) from what they were in public. Public opinion, therefore, shaped conviviality in the sense that it defined the minimal consensus of living together. Martínez’s research gives a glimpse of sexuality in New Spain in an innovative way that opens future research possibilities in the field of gender and queer studies in colonial Latin America. As such, it contributes to our understanding of conviviality among same-sex persons, and between them and contemporary societies.

Frank “Trey” Proctor looks at sexuality within the slavery regime, claiming that sexual liaisons between male masters and their female captives do not explain higher manumission rates in Latin America than in the United States (Proctor 2006).¹³ The author agrees that manumission was a gendered social process, as most manumitted slaves were women. In other words, colonial gender norms influenced the relations between masters and slaves, but not necessarily because of sexuality: “contact between adult slaves and masters of the same sex within gendered social spaces — particularly the domestic sphere for women — had more influence on manumission patterns than did contact between masters and slaves of the opposite sex, especially male masters and female slaves” (Proctor 2006: 315). Proctor’s paper reveals that

13 For a comparison between Brazil and the USA regarding manumission rates, see Chalhoub 2015.

the interaction between women in multiple convivial contexts, not between men and women, determined manumission rates. Mistresses, female slaves, and their children shared the same environment; manumission was related to female care-giving roles. However, this was not the only type of relationship that emerged in households: “for example, masters and mistresses often freed female slaves for the care given to adults, especially during illnesses” (Proctor 2006: 322). It seems that “relationships formed within the domestic sphere were the primary motor behind manumission” (Proctor 2006: 324).

Regarding methodology, Proctor draws from secondary literature, but also from empirical research such as wills and manumission deeds (*cartas de libertad*) to throw new light on the gendered nature of manumission in New Spain. The author compares the sex of the liberating master with the sex of the freed slave. Proctor also correlates higher rates of manumission among women and children with changes in the New Spanish slave market (the end of slave trade in 1640 and increased importance of internal reproduction to meet the demand for slave labour). The author also contends that women were more likely to free their slaves than men – although women owned fewer slaves than men. The origin of slaves, whether purchased or born in the household, the types of relationships and with whom they were established, were vital to the process of manumission. For example, masters freed *criado* slaves (domestic) more often, leading to the conclusion that domestic convivial constellations forged interactions that were more favourable to manumission than others.

We remain in the realm of domestic sphere and sentiment, as Olívia Maria Gomes da Cunha looks at the Nossa Senhora do Amparo School of Domestic Service (established in Petrópolis in the late 19th century) to demonstrate the connection between slave emancipation, morality, and pedagogic discourse (Cunha 2008). The author focuses on the clear-cut connection between women and domestic labour that goes back to slavery, as Frank Proctor demonstrates (Proctor 2006). Gomes da Cunha contends that the domestic space mirrors social relations in the public sphere. She demonstrates how social status naturalized and crystallized social inequalities in the realm of domestic labour. What is innovative about this work is that Gomes da Cunha reformulates spaces of conviviality and pulls together seemingly disconnected ideas about slave emancipation, free labour, and feminist rhetoric. The author concludes that the foundation of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo School and the creation of rules to guide the contact between owners and servants “sought to define the terms in which to establish relations between unequal individuals within a social space recognized by the ties of intimacy and affinity that connect kind and kin” (Cunha 2008: 490).

The school thus regulated conviviality by establishing minimal conditions of living together from the upper-class viewpoint. At first, “the inequality that characterized”

this relationship “was directly linked to the laws governing slavery” (Cunha 2008). With emancipation, legal regulation of work emerged. Consequently, domestic service became a personal relationship in which the maid served people instead of performing tasks, regulated institutionally. This conclusion lends weight to the argument that people internalize reciprocity as a social norm because, sooner or later, it will bring benefits (Adloff 2016: 14). However, if in serving people, maids could interpret “the limits, restrictions, consent, liberty, and intimacy that brought them more or less close to their employers,” this possibility was more theoretical than real (Cunha 2008: 490). Employers had the law on their side to protect their interests. This way, conviviality created reciprocity that did not compensate inequality and lent weight to the “the physical and symbolic violence that saturated the relationship” between masters and maids (Cunha 2008: 490).

4. Contexts of Conviviality

One of the most promising ways of looking at conviviality in Latin America is through institutional and family structure as they offer multiple elements of analysis. This section combines literature about family, illegitimacy, and purity of blood in Brazil, Mexico, Paraguay, and Peru to analyse convivial constellations between the Conquest and the republic.

Guillermo Zermeño’s paper lends weight to the argument that it is important to look at *mestizaje* from a historical perspective (Zermeño-Padilla 2008). Adopting an epistemological view, the author argues that *mestizaje* in Mexico is a modern invention that imposes negative evaluations of the Indigenous world. The society of *castas* was virtually a European imposition that did not correspond to how plural colonial societies worked (Zermeño-Padilla 2008: 82). Zermeño contends that *mestizaje* is a flexible and unstable concept that cannot overlook the singularities of its components (Zermeño-Padilla 2008: 90). This instability, combined with the fact that Europeans were often unable to clearly distinguish Indigenous people from Spaniards, motivated the creation of artificial *casta* categories. The Mexican Revolution used the same categorisation to create national identity (Zermeño-Padilla 2008: 83). However, the post-revolutionary idea of *mestizaje* is more rigid than the premodernist view. The latter understood *mestizaje* as a flexible category, while the former widened the gap between social groups, reducing the Indians to a lingering synonym for backwardness (Zermeño-Padilla 2008: 88).

It is important to note that Amerindian social position in the Spanish Empire differed from Brazil (Cooney 2011: 27). Jerry Cooney gives a glimpse into this difference by looking at *mestizaje* in Paraguay between 1776 and 1845. Spanish-Americans in Paraguay

descended from the first conquerors and the Guaranis. In the sixteenth century, these mestizos occupied the most important administrative positions in Paraguay. The noblesse attained by Spanish-Americans was such that, by the nineteenth century, they became Spanish instead of Spanish Americans (Cooney 2011: 23-24). In 1776, to maintain *la pureza de sangre*, the Spanish government promulgated a Marriage Law to discourage Amerindians and whites to marry blacks and *pardos*. In Paraguay, Spanish-American was the equivalent to *criollo* (Spanish born in the Americas), whereas *pardo* was a synonym for black (not a mestizo as it was in Brazil). In the nineteenth century, dictator-for-life Dr José Gaspar Rodríguez Francia downgraded peninsular Spanish to the category of blacks and *pardos*, reinforcing class prejudice in Paraguay (Potthast 1991; Potthast 2011).

Social categories are at the core of family studies in Latin America, together with the notion of purity of blood. Jane Mangan offers a fresh approach to the subject of conquest in Spanish America (Mangan 2016). She examines the impact of colonial encounters on family structure, challenging the notion of purity of blood in sixteenth-century Peru (1530s–1590s). Mangan argues that the violence of colonization affected convivial family relationships in both sides of the Atlantic. The author also claims that although violence shaped the everyday of colonization it did not preclude family formation (Mangan 2016: 9). From this perspective, family convivial constellations are pivotal points to better understand the impact of conquest and colonization in the Americas. *Transatlantic Obligations* analyses the malleability of family arrangements and the role that illegitimate relationships played in colonial Peru (Mangan 2016: 50).¹⁴

Malleability was so because Spanish fathers saw children born out of wedlock as children, not as illegitimate, but as natural offspring (Mangan 2016: 48-49). Many children lived only with their mother in Spanish America because their fathers went back to Spain, but this does not mean that they were abandoned. A considerable high number of fathers sought out their mestizo children and some sent for them to study in Spain (Mangan 2016: 49-50). It is important to note that Mangan talks about Spanish/Indian families, as “Spanish men rarely sought out their children with African women” (Mangan 2016: 58-59).

The structure of family convivial constellations is at the forefront of liberalism, too. Drawing from court cases, Christine Hünefeldt looks at how couples handled the effects of liberalism in their daily lives (Hünefeldt 2000). In doing so, the author reveals how Peruvian men and women possibly understood and shaped gender relations, race, and class between 1800 and 1910. According to Hünefeldt, three periods are crucial to understanding gender, racial, and class relations in Peru: (1) the end of the colonial period (1800-20); (2) the age of guano (1840-1860); (3) reconstruction after

14 See also Potthast (1991).

the War of the Pacific (1890-1910). As Jane Mangan (2016) does, Hünefeldt looks at family as a pivotal point structuring society. In her words, “women challenging existing laws about who should administer conjugal goods are redefining socially and culturally constructed power relations, gender roles, and the institution of marriage” (Hünefeldt 2000: 5).

Hünefeldt offers a glimpse into daily social interactions between couples and neighbours, spatial segregation, solidarity, and violence. In doing so, she demonstrates that people denounced violence beyond accepted limits even though it was part of their everyday (Hünefeldt 2000: 71). For example, immigrants recently arrived in Lima usually found in the neighbourhood cooperation ties that they had left in their hometowns, even if they were intrusive (Hünefeldt 2000: 74-75). This research spans from virginity and morality to secularization and illegitimacy; from racial diversity to racism; from the purity of blood to *mestizaje*. As such, it adds to our understanding of the effects of liberalism on gender and family. It also illuminates our understanding of conviviality as the regulations of minimum social rules of living together. Cases such as these pay testimony to the importance of archival research to reconstruct convivial constellations in addition to theoretical debates about *mestizaje*, gender, and sexuality.

5. Conviviality in Crisis

How did conviviality occur in pre-independence movements? Did a strike in nineteenth-century Salvador have anything to do with a strike that took place at the beginning of the twentieth century in Rio de Janeiro? Which challenges did the republican regime have to face in Latin America? In which ways did enslaved Africans fight slavery? Drawing from Felipe Castro Gutiérrez’s argument that violence was not an anomaly, but a structural part of people’s daily lives, this section offers a brief literature review to answer these questions (Gutiérrez-Castro 2018). It seeks to shed light on conflict as a fundamental part of conviviality, whether violent or not.

Sergio Serulnikov looks at eighteenth-century urban rebellions against the regular Spanish Army in La Plata, the seat of the Charcas Audience (Serulnikov 2008). Serulnikov describes these rebellions as popular contestations that exerted a significant impact upon the city of La Plata, although La Plata had not been affected by the Túpac Amaru rebellion (Serulnikov 2008: 95). For example, the abuses that soldiers committed, particularly against local women, transformed the presence of regular Spanish military unit in La Plata into a social problem, in addition to a political issue. The author concludes that, as in other parts of the Spanish empire, discontentment with the Bourbon reforms spurred the rebellions in La Plata. The specificity of the La Plata rebellion lies in the fact that it occurred after and not in tandem with the Túpac

Amaru rebellion (Serulnikov 2008: 119-120). This specificity suggests that cooperation between the elites and lower groups was stronger in La Plata than in other parts of Spanish America. Conviviality, thus, reveals organized violent responses against the *commandement* (Mbembe 2001) from marginalized social groups.

Marginalized social groups led an almost unknown rebellion that challenged the Brazilian monarchy two years after the independence: the Revolt of the *Periquitos* in Bahia (Reis and Kraay 2009). *Periquitos* (Parakeets) was the nickname of the Third Battalion in Salvador, formed during the independence wars. It was mainly composed of blacks and *pardos*. An imperial order from 21 October 1824, ordering the removal of the *Periquitos* Battalion to Pernambuco and the transfer of their commander to Rio de Janeiro, spurred the rebellion. It culminated in the murder of the Governor of Arms of Salvador.

Although it is hard to tell if the *Periquitos* Rebellion was a popular movement, the military involved in it belonged to marginalized social sectors. Repression had racial connotations, as the leaders went to trial, but the soldiers were merely dismissed. The central imperial government sent the remaining soldiers to the neighbouring district of Pernambuco. However, their ship was not allowed to land there. Instead, prisoners from another rebellion, the Equator Confederation (1824) went on board and, together, they sailed to Rio de Janeiro. From there, they continued to Montevideo.¹⁵ As the author puts it, “unlike the *Confederação do Equador*, the *Periquitos*’ revolt and the conspiracies that preceded it failed to produce a clear statement of their underlying political goals. Nevertheless, the Bahian movement must be seen as part of the North’s challenge to Pedro’s increasingly authoritarian government” (Reis and Kraay 2009: 431).¹⁶

We move from a virtually anonymous to a famous rebellion in the maelstrom of Pedro I’s return to Portugal and the beginning of the Regency period in Brazil. As Mark Harris demonstrates, the *Cabanagem* rebellion (1835-1840) represents a turning point in post-independence Brazil. Potentially separatist, it occurred in a period of uncertainty, when Pedro I returned to Portugal and left his underage son, Pedro II, to rule the country (Harris 2010). *Cabanagem* thus exposed the former colonial division between Portuguese America and Grão Pará and Maranhão. It resulted from burgeoning dissatisfaction with *Paraense* elites among lower social groups.

One of the most relevant parts of this Harris’s work is that about Indigenous groups, family, and kinship in Pará, for it allows a fruitful comparison with Spanish America

15 *Confederação do Equador* was a separatist and republican movement that started in Pernambuco, Brazil.

16 Pedro refers to Pedro I, Brazil’s Emperor at the time.

(Harris 2010: 5). Harris focuses on the period pre-rubber boom to demonstrate that both the continuity of peasant values and the submission of the Amazon region to the rest of Brazil enabled rubber “success.” The author also emphasizes the importance of non-human actors, such as the rivers Amazon and Madeira (Harris 2010: 104). Similarly, he delves into the debate about *mestizaje* in Brazil. Harris claims that not all colonial rebellions were against the colonial order. They somehow challenged the elites and colonial authorities for different reasons (Harris 2010: 145). As such, violence was the main source of communication to express, not to break the colonial order. Harris evokes the image of the multi-headed hydra to describe rebellions in the Amazon: the more authorities cut them off, the more they grew (Harris 2010: 209). Cases such as these demonstrate that conviviality between lower social groups enabled organized and violent responses that challenged established power. They also reinforce the importance of studying interactions between humans and non-humans, as the geography of each region often shapes human conviviality.

Flávio dos Santos Gomes conducts an in-depth analysis of *mocambos* and *quilombos* (maroons’ settlements) in Brazil (Gomes 2018). Spanning from the sixteenth to the twenty-first centuries, Gomes challenges the idea that *quilombos* stayed isolated from the rest of society. He highlights that communication and interaction with society were essential to their maintenance. He also urges readers to broaden the definition of *quilombo* beyond “pure” African communities. According to Gomes, to better understand the formation and meaning of *quilombos* not only for the sake of history, but also for recent social movements and state policies, one needs to consider memory, ethnicity, territory, and citizenship when defining a *quilombo*.

Flávio Gomes looks at quilombos in the Amazon region to demonstrate that, although the African enslaved population in northern Brazil was less numerous than in other parts of the colony, resistance played a crucial role in their lives (Gomes 2005). The author successfully demonstrates conflict and cooperation between *quilombolas*, settlers, and Amerindians. Gomes also presents the image of the many-headed hydra to describe *quilombos*. In doing so, he summons up the mythological character of the monster, with multiple and renewable heads that only Hercules managed to kill. These heads bear a twofold meaning. From an elitist viewpoint, they represent disorder, the unstoppable, rebellious, and violent marginalized groups that culminated in the Haitian revolution (Linebaugh and Rediker 2008). For the marginalized, it meant resistance. The many-head hydra is a powerful image to describe conviviality in Latin America, as it entails ambiguity and structural violence, as Gutiérrez-Castro argues (Gutiérrez-Castro 2018).

João José Reis points in the same direction when he discusses an African porters’ strike that occurred in Salvador, Brazil (Reis 1997). The author argues that previous

African male labour organizations – particularly organized by the Nagôs – had laid the foundations of the strike. The *ganhadores* (workers) organized themselves ethnically in areas called *cantos* (corners) to offer their services (Reis 1997: 365). The *cantos* had a structure of power that resembled African traditions in a way that we can call them convivial constellations. In *cantos*, slaves and freedmen performed their occupations and lived their religion, forging new identities and coming together as a group. Reis focuses on solidarity networks that Africans set up in Salvador, chiefly due to the nature of urban slavery, which was more dynamic than in the plantations. To quote Reis: “although one African people outnumbered the rest, all African peoples participated in mutual cultural exchange, negotiation of identity and re-definition of solidarity” (Reis 1997: 360). The author portrays Africans as a heterogeneous group that, despite cultural and religious conflicts, congregated in the name of mutual causes. Reis also boldly contends that “slaves did not cease to produce cultural signifiers when producing merchandise or providing services” as brutal as slavery was (Reis 1997: 361). Slave culture was linked to slave labour, and they moved in tandem: “no matter how oppressive it may have been, work was not disconnected from life” (Reis 1997: 364). Against this background, the relationships forged on the streets and marketplaces were a daily form of African resistance.

Along the same lines, Maria Helena Machado analyses the establishment of two maroon communities within the limits of Santos, São Paulo: Jabaquara and Pai Felipe (Machado 2006). The author contends that these *quilombos* were organized in cooperation: they were a result of both the creativity of slaves and the manipulation of local bosses, who used the maroons as a source of cheap labour and political strategy. Established in the 1880s, white abolitionists organized and supported both *quilombos* (Jabaquara and Pai Felipe). They sought for abolition without further social transformation and promoted for European migration. However, the maroon communities escaped white elite control as they grew; Jabaquara and Pai Felipe became areas of self-identification and slave autonomy.

It is important to note that collaborative networks within these maroon communities existed before their formation, as their roots date back to the 1870s and the mass flights from plantations that took place in 1882. Machado also analyses the participation of *quilombolas* and their leaders in the port strikes that occurred in Santos in the late nineteenth century. She further looks at the consequences of urbanization for *quilombos*, presenting the complex relationships between *quilombolas* and European immigrant workers. These relations were asymmetrical, but not always conflictive. She delves into the asymmetries of power among the *quilombolas*, revealing inside hierarchies. *Quilombos* offer multiple elements to study conviviality in Latin America, as they are a result of a profoundly unequal regime while posing an ostensive challenge to slavery.

Interaction between enslaved people, their masters, and indigenous people mirrored and challenged inequalities in colonial societies. After the abolition, *quilombo* culture continued to exist in society and shaped multiple labour resistance movements.

Maria Cecília Velasco e Cruz explores an understudied coffee porters' strike in Rio de Janeiro in 1906 (Cruz 2006). In doing so, she unveils slave labourers' free patterns of organization and the ways in which they continued to affect freemen twenty years after the abolition of slavery. She guides the reader through solidarity amidst conflict in a port contact zone. The author cross-references multiple primary sources to undergird her argument that Brazilian working-class formation was not forcibly a consequence of European immigration. Instead, Cruz connects the world of slavery with that of workers during the First Republic. According to the author, coffee porters formed a solidarity network that went back to urban African slavery. As such, the 1906 waterfront labour movement followed slave resistance traditions and not European organizational patterns. This paper analyses conviviality in an asymmetrical context of power without restricting it to the dichotomy upper class (for example, coffee planters) versus popular sectors. It also puts into play asymmetries of power among labourers, demonstrating how they appropriated union discourses to suit individual and group interests.

We remain in 'strike territory,' as Silvana Palermo highlights the key role that women and families played in the organization of the first Argentinian general railroad strike that occurred in 1917 (Palermo 2013). The author contends that this strike is a turning point in Argentinean government intervention in labour affairs. The fact that women participated in public demonstrations although they were not yet allowed to vote complicates gender relations in Latin America and reinforces other forms of civic participation among minorities.¹⁷

Numerous cases in Brazil offer a glimpse into the degrees of violence that the railroad labour movement could reach in Latin America. For the scope of this essay, there are two cases in point. For example, in 1900, railroad workers ripped out rails during a strike in Itapecerica.¹⁸ In 1915, two hundred workers took the station master hostage and threatened to blow up the station during a strike.¹⁹ Both cases appear in the police records. Therefore, they signal that these were off-limits types of violence. Further research on labour movements can establish a pattern of contestation actions.

17 In Paraguay, although women played a key logistical and symbolic role during the Triple Alliance War (1864-1870), suffrage was virtually off the list of their claims and men's discourse. See Potthast (2011).

18 Arquivo Público Mineiro, Chefia de Polícia, Caixa. 35, pacote 5.

19 Arquivo Público Mineiro, Chefia de Polícia, Caixa. 50, pacote 19.

The foundation of Latin American republics was a tumultuous process in which multiple social groups participated. Therefore, labourers, deeply connected to African resistance tactics, played a key role in challenging republics tailored according to the elites' interest. Women's participation, often discreet – at least in official records – leaves a door ajar for future research about conviviality in Latin America.

6. Conclusion

We wind up where we began: does conviviality take place in unequal societies? Brief historical cartography of the term conviviality points to a nuanced definition that allows its application in unequal societies. It demonstrates that although conviviality is a relatively new concept, people have had different perceptions of its correlates – *convivial*, *convivir*, *conviver*, *convivere*, *convívio*, *convivialidad* – through time. For Mbembe (2001), conviviality is intimacy. This definition already appeared in Moraes e Silva (1789) and occurs in Houaiss (2009). According to Gilroy (2004), conviviality depends on cohabitation and interaction; and so does it according to Nebrija (1492), Cardoso (1643), Moraes e Silva (1789), the Spanish Academy (1824), Fonseca (1858), and Houaiss (2009). To live side by side is an assumption shared by Sakrani (2016), Cardoso (1643), Moraes e Silva (1789), Fonseca (1858), and Houaiss (2009). It is not far-fetched from reality, thus, to claim that conviviality and its variants mean not only to live in peace, but also to live in intimacy. In the realm of the everyday, intimacy is not a synonym of peace.

As such, conviviality entails conflict and violence, but also solidarity and cooperation. It creates exclusion, and it crystallises inequality, but it also subverts the order. Within this framework, varied historical contexts reveal that concepts of gender, ethnicity, and violence are flexible, mutable, and ambiguous. This ambiguity shaped conviviality in Latin America in unexpected ways, as in sexuality (Martínez 2008), gendered relations (Proctor 2006), and education (Cunha 2008).

Family structure also shed light on conviviality. Recent narratives about the Conquest, such as those written by Christine Hünefeldt (2000) demonstrate the relevance of keeping the idea of diversity within conviviality. Diversity refers to variety, whereas difference is the lack of similarity. Against this background, human and non-human relations expand the idea of conviviality, as Mark Harris (2010) demonstrates during the *Cabanagem* revolt when rivers were crucial for the success or failure of attacks.

Violence appears as a structural part of the everyday. Conviviality allows looking at violence beyond simplistic dichotomies. Conviviality applies, therefore, to pre-independence movements such as in the Charcas (Serulnikov 2008). Conviviality illuminates our comprehension of virtually anonymous rebellions (Periquitos, Bahia 1824) against

the Brazilian monarchy, lending weight to the idea that marginalized social groups did not passively yield to domination.

Concerning the slavery regime, manumissions and *quilombos* are both forms of resistance, albeit different. Additionally, resistance against slavery was not restricted to the monarchical period, but it continued to exist during the republic, as the coffee porters' strike (Rio de Janeiro 1906) was based on slavery ties. Amidst violence, strikers built solidarity interactions that shaped conviviality in the long run, not only in isolated episodes. We observe similar patterns of railroad labour strikes and conflicts, as Silvana Palermo demonstrates for Argentina (1917).

The ubiquity of conviviality in Latin America confirms that conviviality occurs in unequal societies. This paper has delved into myriad topics to illuminate our understanding about conviviality and inequality in Latin America. In doing so, it offers a reference point to examine similar questions in other regions of the world, opening plenty of future research possibilities in the field of conviviality and inequality.

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The Maria Sibylla Merian International Centre for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America (Mecila) was founded in April 2017 by three German and four Latin American partner institutions. It is being funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) for an initial period of three years. The participating researchers will investigate coexistence in unequal societies from an interdisciplinary and global perspective. The following institutions are involved: Freie Universität Berlin, Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut/Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Universität zu Köln, Universidade de São Paulo (USP), Centro Brasileiro de Análise e Planejamento (CEBRAP), IdIHCS (CONICET/Universidad Nacional de La Plata), and El Colegio de México. Further information at <http://www.mecila.net>.

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