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## **Entangled Migrations**

The Coloniality of Migration and Creolizing Conviviality

Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez



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## **Entangled Migrations**

### **The Coloniality of Migration and Creolizing Conviviality**

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#### **Abstract**

This Working Paper discusses entangled migrations as territorially and temporally entangled onto-epistemological phenomena. As a theoretical-analytical framework, it addresses the material, epistemological and ethical premises of spatial-temporal entanglements and relationality in the understanding of migration as a modern colonial phenomenon. Entangled migrations acknowledges that local migratory movements mirror global migrations in complex ways, engaging with the analysis of historical connections, territorial entrenchments, cultural confluences, and overlapping antagonistic relations across nations and continents. Drawing on European immigration to the American continent and specifically to Brazil in the 19th century, this argument is tentatively developed by discussing two opposite moments of entangled migrations, the coloniality of migration and creolizing conviviality. To do this, the paper engages first with the theoretical framework of spatial-temporal entanglements. Second, it approaches the coloniality of migration. Finally, it briefly discusses creolizing conviviality.

**Keywords:** entangled migrations | coloniality of migration | creolizing conviviality

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## 1. Introduction

Entangled migrations looks at migration as territorially and temporally entangled onto-epistemological phenomena.<sup>1</sup> It is a theoretical-analytical framework, addressing the material, epistemological and ethical premises of spatial-temporal entanglements and relationality in the understanding of migration as a colonial modern phenomenon. As such, it works on: (a) the theorization of onto-epistemological phenomena; (b) historical and social analyses of entangled migratory movements and policies; and (c) an ethical proposal for cosmological futurities. Engaging with the analysis of historical connections, territorial entrenchments, cultural confluences and overlapping antagonistic relations across nations and continents, entangled migrations acknowledges that local migratory movements mirror global migrations in complex ways (Castles 2006; Faist et al. 2013; Pries 2010). Drawing on Wimmer and Glick Schiller's (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002) critique on "methodological nationalism" as well as debates on entangled global inequalities (Jelin et al. 2018; Gutiérrez Rodríguez and Reddock 2021), the perspective on entangled migrations focuses on the movements, circuits, and interdependencies within multiple times and geographical scales brought into connection through migratory movements, policies and discourses. Departing from a broader ongoing study on German immigration to Brazil in the 19th century and early 20th century and its impact on contemporary German asylum and migration policies, this study looks at the relationship between historical migratory movements and contemporary asylum and asylum policies and discourses in Germany (Gutiérrez Rodríguez forthcoming). By addressing the relationship between these two different spaces and times, the concept of entangled migrations introduces a theoretical and methodological perspective on migration studies that focuses not just on the analysis of linear, circular, multi-directional, and peripatetic migration movements but on its entangled entrenchments and overlaps. As such, it does not reiterate elements discussed by scholars of transnationalism and globalization. Instead, it follows the methodological path undertaken by anthropologists (Tsing 2005; Thomas 1991) and historians (Cohen and Lin 2009) of entangled (hi) stories by relating past (hi)stories of migration with current policies and discourses on migration.<sup>2</sup>

German migration to Brazil in the 19th and early 20th centuries cannot be perceived as isolated moments and detached spaces from contemporary migration policies and discourses in Germany. Instead, how these moments and places interact and are (re-) produced through interaction guides the analysis of historical moments and social

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2 I would like to thank Susana Durão, Léa Tosold, and Yves Cohen for their suggestions.

configurations of entangled migrations. In this sense, this perspective engages with the structural conditions and constraints created by the governance of migration through racial and colonial differences understood as the coloniality of migration (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2018). It also addresses the practices of an everyday culture that escape the logic of racial and colonial social hierarchies by tracing creolizing conviviality (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2015, 2020).

For the purpose of this working paper, let me make a caveat. Though I will give some insight into the three dimensions of entangled migrations as a theoretical, socio-historical analytical, and ethical proposal, a working paper will not allow me to engage with the empirical breadth and theoretical implications of the study of German immigration to Brazil in the 19th and early 20th century and its impact on contemporary German migration policies and discourses. Further, though I will consider the immense literature addressing questions of racial democracy, *mestiçagem*, and creolization, I will not be able to unfold all these argumentative strands here as will be the case in my ongoing monograph. Nonetheless, this working paper aims at giving an insight into the theoretical, analytical, and ethical grounds underpinning the framework of entangled migrations. In the argument that follows, I will first approach the theoretical framework of spatial-temporal entanglement. Second, I will look at the historical and social analysis of what I have theorized elsewhere (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2018) as the coloniality of migration, and third, I will discuss creolizing conviviality (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2015, 2020) as a conceptual framework for the understanding of entangled migrations.

## **2. Entangled Migrations: On Spatial-Temporal Entanglement**

Migration as a transnational phenomenon (Basch et al. 1994) has been central to migration studies in the humanities and social sciences since the 1990s. Acknowledging that local migratory movements mirror global migrations in complex ways (Castles 2006; Faist et al. 2013; Pries 2010), research on migration has increasingly focused on the movements, circuits, and interdependencies across geographical entities. Furthermore, research engaging with postcolonial and decolonial debates in the social sciences in Europe have argued for a connected analysis of societies and their historical entanglements (Bhabra 2014; Boatcă 2016; Go 2013; Gutiérrez Rodríguez et al. 2016; Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2011). On another level, Latin American and Caribbean social and cultural theorists have also developed theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches to capture these societies' historical, economic, political and cultural intercontinental and interregional configurations. Approaches such as dependency theory (Cardoso and Faletto 1979; Frank 1967), Caribbean radical social thought (Reddock 2014; James 1989; Williams 1994; Reddock 2021), analysis of cultural contact (Ortiz [1946] 1995; García Canclini 1992), and mixing in

(post-)colonial societies (Moraña et al. 2008; Barrow and Reddock 2001; Lander and Castro-Gómez 2000; Cusicanqui 2012) engage with perspectives and theoretical concepts addressing the temporal entrenchments and spatial connections of global-local power asymmetries and their repressive effects. These approaches also explore the cultural and social transformations shaped by these intercontinental as well as regional connections. In the Brazilian context, as we will see later on in this paper, this is addressed through the question of racial democracy and *mestiçagem*. These approaches introduce a dialectical understanding of (post) colonial societies as sites of colonisation, anti-colonial and decolonial struggle by uncovering the historical interlockings, geographical entrenchments, and cultural confluences configuring these societies. To capture the temporal and spatial dynamics of the mutual constitution of societies entrenched by historical moments, power relations, and social configurations, I will look at spatial and temporal entanglements. From this angle, the paper aims to address the colonality of migration (as a structure of domination and asymmetrical social relations) and creolizing conviviality (as a field of practices and social encounters) as the two sides shaping entangled migrations.

## **2.1 Spatial Entanglement: Discourse and Matter**

The concept of “entanglement” has received attention in the last two decades in the fields of science and technology studies, archaeology, material culture, and postcolonial and decolonial studies. Entanglement has sharpened the understanding of multiple connections and their interrelations in time and space, offering a new perspective on temporal and spatial relationalities. Looking in particular at the spatial dimension, studies in material culture and science and technology have opened our analytical scope to the plurality and transversality of the multifaceted relationships between people, things, and places. Karen Barad (Barad 2007, 2003), a feminist scholar of theoretical physics and the philosophy of technology, has drawn our attention to the interdependent relationship between matter and discourse. Following Judith Butler’s framework of performativity and Donna Haraway’s reflections on material-semiotic entanglement, Barad introduces the notion of entanglement as the interface between ontology and epistemology. Within this framework, entanglement describes an intra-active, ongoing process in which different elements of the realm of the human and the nonhuman meet and interact, producing an ontological reality (Barad 2003: 803). The interplay between matter and discourse brings us to rethink material articulations as solely discursively shaped. Rather, discourses are interwoven into material realities, produced by the confluence and spatial proximity between elements. Bodies result from the “agential intra-action” between specific discursive configurations and corporeal materialities, things set in relation to each other (Barad 2003: 814). Based on this



entanglement, Barad defines an “agential realist ontology” representing the foundation of her “posthumanist performative account of the production of material bodies” (Barad 2003: 814). Following Barad,

[to] be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another, as in the joining of separate entities, but to lack an independent, self-contained existence. Existence is not an individual affair. Individuals do not pre-exist their interactions; rather, individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating (Barad 2007: 439).

Within this process of “intra-action”, entanglement surfaces as “the sedimenting materiality of an ongoing process of becoming” (Barad 2007: 439).

This perspective on entanglement is relevant not only for quantum physics but also for understanding the relationship between space and temporality. As Lindsay Der and Francesca Fernandini (Der and Fernandini 2016: 14) argue in the field of archaeology, the perspective on entanglement addresses the “heterogenous assemblages of human and non-human and the generative potential for each of these actors ‘to make other actors do unexpected things’” (Latour 2007: 129). Asserting that the field of archaeology is constituted by ‘things and the material practices in which they become ingrained’, Der and Fernandini (Der and Fernandini 2016) develop an approach to artefacts as things in relation, as outcomes of the entanglement of space, time and objects. They become ontological realities, shaped by historical entanglements and the spatial relationship in place, shaping these objects in the present. Objects are thus outcomes of “iterative inter-actions”. In sum, this perspective on spatial relationalities and discursive-material enactments as shaping semantic-ontological realities leads us to consider the relationship of time and space and its material enactments. However, this perspective disregards the sedimented character of the temporal in shaping spatial contingency and informing the relational connections. Thus, while this perspective invites us to consider the processual and dynamic nature of agential realism, it disregards the historically sedimented relations of domination and power within the intra-active configuration. The spatial relational perspective needs to be put into relation with a historical materialist analysis of social configurations and relations such as the one outlined by the concept of colonial entanglement.

## **2.2 Temporal Entanglement: Modern Colonial**

Studies on colonial history work with the perspective of temporal entanglement through the focus on colonial entanglement. Achille Mbembe defines colonial entanglement as “socio-political dynamics” that “are constantly shaped and mediated by multiple, overlapping modes of self-fashioning in which the past and the present



function relationally” (Mbembe 2001: 229). Colonial entanglements are articulated in “a number of relationships and a configuration of events – often visible and perceptible, sometimes diffuse, ‘hydra-headed’” (Mbembe 2001: 229). This hydra-headed phenomenon is composed of historical processes having lasting effects on the configuration of the present. Thus, for Mbembe, our present social reality “encloses multiple *durée* made up of discontinuities, reversals, inertias, and swings that overlay one another, interpenetrate one another, and envelope one another”, producing “an entanglement” (Mbembe 2001: 14). Drawing on Mbembe, Pius Adesanmi (Adesanmi 2004) discusses the multiple temporalities such as age, *durée*, and entanglement that configure the colonial in the present. For Adesanmi, a *durée* constitutes units, fragments of experience that “crystallize into normative phenomena even within the context of temporal progression” (Adesanmi 2004: 229). *Durée* “becomes the site in which the constituted experiences of a given present can be grasped in a synchronic fashion”, while entanglement as “multiple *durées* over a period of time, in turn, offers the possibility of a diachronic apprehension of phenomena” (Adesanmi 2004: 229). The “diachronic apprehension” related to the interweaving of multiple *durées* is particularly interesting here for our discussion of spatial-temporal entanglement.

For the French Annales School historian Fernand Braudel (Braudel 1949), the *longue durée* marks a historical process that is interlaced in the configuration of the present time. For Braudel, time can be differentiated on three levels as a short episode, a medium-term conjuncture, or a *longue durée*. As he describes it, this approach to time is defined by a “differentiation of a relational plurality of social times – the short-term events or episodic history (for instance, political history), the medium-term conjunctures (such as, among others, economic cycles), and the *longue durée* of structures (the organizational regularities of social life)” (Lee 2018: 71). Formed by distinctive historical processes shaping the global system of production and social reproduction, Immanuel Wallerstein’s (Wallerstein 2004) world-system analysis draws on the multiple times and Braudel’s *longue durée*. While Anibal Quijano (Quijano and Ennis 2000: 545) does develop his analysis of the coloniality of power using Wallerstein’s framework, he complicates the analysis of capitalism as duration by connecting it to other dimensions of domination such as colonialism. In this regard, he introduces the analytical perspective of “historical-structural heterogeneity” for the analysis of Latin American societies.

Considering the heterogeneous social structures constituting contemporary societies, Quijano (Quijano 2000; Quijano and Ennis 2000) focuses on the intercontinental economic, political, cultural, and social relations between Europe and the American continent. Analysing the impact of European colonization and imperialism in establishing hegemonic global power, Quijano develops the coloniality of power as an analysis of global racial configuration based on a Eurocentric view and organization of

the world. The Eurocentric view sets Europe as the cradle of humanism, knowledge, enlightenment, and democracy, while denying the existing systems of knowledge, governance, language, and culture established in the American territory previous to European colonization. The category of “race” as an organizing principle for modern colonial societies is crucial in this analysis. Thus, though Quijano does not cite Cedric Robinson’s (Robinson 1983) analysis of racial capitalism, his analysis of coloniality resonates with this one. Maria Lugones (Lugones 2007) expands Quijano’s analysis by introducing the critique of the binary category of “sex” and “gender” as a matrix constituting modern colonial societies. Suggesting the analytical category of “the coloniality of gender”, she undertakes an intersectional analysis of the implementation of racial heteropatriarchy as a normative system in European colonized territories. Quijano’s coloniality of power and Maria Lugones’s coloniality of gender address the endurance of a Eurocentric colonial matrix of racial heteropatriarchal thinking, forging in systemic ways the organization of labour, knowledge production, (inter) subjectivity, as well as social and power relations.

Regarding entangled migrations, Quijano’s analysis of the coloniality of power and Lugones’ coloniality of gender invite us to look at the “historical-structural heterogeneity” of migration in modern colonial societies. Organized through an “entangled intra-relation” (Barad 2007: 439) between different social relations, territorialities and temporalities entangled migrations surfaces as a social phenomenon connoting the mobile, fluid and entangled character of “historical-structural” heterogeneous social realities. In this vein, the conceptual framework of entangled migrations tries to capture the “agential intra-action” between policies, discourses, and practices shaping the semantics and corporeality of interlaced moments and places shaping migratory movements and connections. In this regard, this paper looks at entangled migrations by interrelating a temporally rooted theoretical dimension, the coloniality of migration, with one that surfaces from spatial interactions, creolizing conviviality. Both dimensions will be discussed to some extent by referring to empirical examples.

### **3. The Coloniality of Migration**

As the Osage scholar Jean Dennison argues, colonial history is not a remote past but constitutes present societies. Dennison (Dennison 2012) analyses the entanglement between settler colonial processes and the Osage struggle for sovereignty. Working with Mbembe’s notion of entanglement as “the coercion to which people are subjected, [...] a whole cluster of reordering of society, culture, and identity, and a series of recent changes in the way power is exercised and rationalized” (Mbembe 2001: 66), Dennison traces the relationship between the Osage and the colonial forces as a colonial entanglement. This colonial entanglement is shaped by the parallel existence

of multiple social times – moments of oppression, but also resistance and resilience. In the entanglement of these moments, new forms of production, creativity, and agency unfold, complicating the relational and multi-sited character of colonial entanglement. This becomes apparent in the usage of the ribbon work that resulted from the 18th-century trade between the Osage and the French. As Dennison writes, in “picking up the pieces, both those shattered by and created through the colonial process, and weaving them into their own original patterns, Osage artists formed the tangled pieces of colonialism into their own statements of Osage sovereignty” (Dennison 2012: 7). Settler colonial forces appear as having “varied, dynamic, and uneven impact across space and time and even within a small population such as the Osage” (Dennison 2012: 8). Through the example of the Osage, the divide between colonized and colonizer is complicated, and ways of resisting the logic of settler colonialism are brought to light.

Following Dennison and exploring Quijano’s coloniality of power framework, I approach entangled migrations as a spatial-temporal entanglement. Reflecting on European transatlantic migration, settler colonialism, and racial capitalism, elsewhere (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2018) I observed migration as a continuity of colonization. This resonates with Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang’s focus on colonization as an ongoing process in the present. As they argued in their seminal essay “Decolonization is not a metaphor” (Tuck and Yang 2012), the vocabulary of decolonization cannot be used as a replacement for social or racial justice projects without considering the contemporary “resettlement, reoccupation, and reinhabitation” (Tuck and Yang 2012: 5) of Indigenous communal land through the introduction and implementation of liberal individual property law. Colonization, thus, informs the present of settler-colonial societies. Thus, Quijano’s concept of coloniality of power is complicated by Tuck and Yang’s critique. The matrix of colonial thinking governing contemporary societies does not only have a material effect on the level of discourses, knowledge institutions and practices and the shaping of inter-subjectivity as well as Eurocentric worlding implications. Rather, the question of land and planetary survival for Indigenous communities remains at the center of the struggle for decolonization. The denial, ignorance, and refusal to acknowledge settler colonialism and its impact on contemporary societies are “a set of evasions”, or “settler moves to innocence”, that problematically attempt to reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and rescue settler futurity. Thus, “settler colonialism operates through internal/external colonial modes simultaneously because there is no spatial separation between metropole and colony” (Tuck and Yang 2012: 5).

The disregard of the connection between European transatlantic migration and the European settler-colonial project represents a “move to settler innocence” and an engagement with “settler futurities”. As Tuck and Yang write regarding the United States,

many Indigenous peoples have been forcibly removed from their homelands onto reservations, indentured, and abducted into state custody, signaling the form of colonization as simultaneously internal (via boarding schools and other biopolitical modes of control) and external (via uranium mining on Indigenous land in the US Southwest and oil extraction on Indigenous land in Alaska) with a frontier (the US military still nicknames all enemy territory “Indian Country”). The horizons of the settler colonial nation-state are total and require total appropriation of Indigenous life and land, rather than the selective expropriation of profit-producing fragments. Settler colonialism is different from other forms of colonialism in that settlers come with the intention of making a new home on the land, a homemaking that insists on settler sovereignty over all things in their new domain (Tuck and Yang 2012: 5).

The model of the sovereign settler that comes to make a home stands in opposition to the lives of the people living on these territories before European colonization and settlement. Thus, as Tuck and Yang note, working against migration control policies does not automatically include Indigenous struggles for the recognition of their sovereignty and jurisprudence. This perspective complicates the question of migration, as, on the one hand, it draws a line between European colonization and settlement and, on the other, migration itself has become a field of colonial racial governance, opening hierarchies between “worthy” and “unworthy” migrants, defined by capital, financial and economic demands, overlapping with global-local genealogies of colonial and racist violence and practices. Forms of governing migration through the lager-deportation industrial complex, instituting categories of deportability, encampment and incarceration of persons seeking asylum, shelter, stability, and livelihood articulate past and present forms of colonial power.

The discussion of migration outside the framework of coloniality omits the historical and geographical entanglement in which it surfaces as a modern colonial terrain of governing, social formation, and cultural transformation. As I have discussed elsewhere (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2018), the theoretical framework of the coloniality of migration is interested in the entanglement between migration and settler colonialism. To speak of the coloniality of migration is to link migration to settler colonialism. In current European discussions on migration, European mass migration to formerly colonized territories and their impact on transcontinental migration are silenced. Yet, when we draw our attention to European mass migration in the 19th century to the *Américas*, the North, Central, South American continent and the Caribbean, entangled migrations as a modern colonial formation appear.

### 3.1 European Immigration to the *Américas*

Considering Europe's entangled global history, it is surprising that contemporary migratory movements in Europe are perceived in political and media discourses as external to Europe's history. This has not always been the case. For example, in territories marked by a history of European colonialism, settler colonialism, and transatlantic migration, such as nation-states in the American continent, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, transatlantic European migration has been foundational to the creation of these settler states. Defining themselves in the 18th and 19th centuries as "countries of settlers and immigrants," public discourses of these nation-states on national, cultural, and linguistic representation oscillated in the 19th century between negation or partial acknowledgment of the transcultural fabric of these societies. As Douglas Massey (Massey 1990) states, from 1500 to 1800, world immigration patterns were defined by European colonialism. While Europe was establishing colonial rule in Africa and Asia, approximately 48 million emigrants left Europe for the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand between 1800 and 1925 (Massey 1990). The settlers arriving in the American continent from Britain, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Poland, Russia and Sweden, to name a few, represented the continuation of European settler colonialism (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2018). Though not all of these countries were linked to this territory through a direct colonial history, the migration recruitment policies established in Northern, Central, South America, and the Caribbean were set within a European framework of colonization, drawing on administrative experiences of colonial ruling and imperial expansion.

In settler-colonial states, in particular, as the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne B. Simpson (Simpson 2014) notes, the colonizers deliberately ignored the organized resistance and struggle of the populations inhabiting these territories for centuries. Considered as *Terra Nullius*, "a Latin expression meaning 'nobody's land'", and legal concept introduced by the settler-colonial administration, a justification was created, prescribing "that lands were empty and therefore open to colonization, conquering and resources extraction" (Mack and Na'puti 2019: 360). This imaginary also nourished the immigration projects in the American continent.

Immigration was analogous to colonization, as Giralda Seyferth (Seyferth 2002) observes in Brazil.<sup>3</sup> The colonization of certain territories was conducted by settlement strategies connecting remote rural areas to the commerce, financial, economic, and political centres in the 1820s and 1830s in Brazil. In the 1820s, Swiss migrants created the settlement of Nova Friburgo (Rio de Janeiro), and migrants from the German city of Bremen established the colony of São Pedro de Alcântara (Santa Catarina). The fact that

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<sup>3</sup> I would like to thank Tilmann Heil for drawing my attention to this author. For the fruitful discussion on German immigration to Brazil, I would like to thank Susanne Klengel and Barbara Potthast.

these territories were already inhabited by Indigenous populations was disregarded by colonizers perceiving them as savage nomads with no attachment to the land. Attached to the settlement of the Swiss and Germans in these territories was the idea of social advancement and civilization attached to white skin and Europeanness. Further, as Seyferth (Seyferth 2002) notes, this European immigration represents the beginning of a rhetoric of naturalization of the European migrant to the American continent. Thus, white Europeanness is set interchangeably with migration, while Black, African, Asian, Arab, and *mestiços* migrants are exempt from this rhetoric at the beginning of the 19th century. Also, the approximately 13 million people from West and East Africa (Andrews 2004; Eltis and Richardson 2008), arriving between the 16th and 19th centuries to the American continent was omitted from the account of industrial and technological progress through European immigration. At the beginning of the 19th century, Black people worked as enslaved labour in German (Cassidy 2015) and Swiss farms, but some of them were also employed as “free workers”.<sup>4</sup> These workers, however, were to be differentiated from the European migrant workers, recruited to serve “settlers’ futurities” of progress and social order as inscribed in the Brazilian flag. Exempt from the perception of workers serving the building of the “new nation-state” were also the Indigenous populations working in the plantation economy. As Seyferth summarizes:

European immigration is naturalized in the debate on colonization and in it, Blacks and mestizos, free or slaves, only eventually appear as disposable social actors under a simplistic argument – that of the indirect reestablishment of the slave trade. This figure of speech is intended to disqualify the immigration of Africans, generally considered unfit for free labor as small landowners (Seyferth 2002: 120).

In the second half of the 19th century, European immigration signalled a new model of production opposed to enslavement and celebrating the modern idea of “free labour”. Enslavement in this context was perceived as a backward system of feudal times. On the other hand, as already mentioned, the figure of the “free worker” was synonymous with the “white European worker”, while unofficial enslaved labour sustained the large rural estate after emancipation in 1888 in Brazil. This interplay between settler-colonial immigration, African slavery, and dispossession of Indigenous people shaped the settler-colonial system at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries in the American continent. Yet, as Solberg (Solberg [1970] 1987) and Nugent (Nugent 2000) observe, the settler-colonial systems varied throughout the region. Referring to Canada and Argentina, Solberg, for example, determined three criteria of differentiation. First, “the prairies” in Canada “were a society primarily of small-owner-operators”. While in Argentina, the “pampas, in contrast, were a society of tenants who rented land on

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4 I would like to thank Seth Racusen for drawing my attention to this aspect.



short-term contracts and who moved about frequently” (Solberg [1970] 1987: 28–30). Second, these two settler-colonial societies differed in relation to the question of citizenship and land. The question of citizenship in Canada was coupled with access to land titles. The prairie farmers in Canada thus became an influential political group on the national level. In contrast, in Argentina small landowners were marginal compared to the politically influential urban elites. The Brazilian settler-colonial system shared common traits with the Argentinean. Also, Brazil relied on an urban political elite, agglomerated in the urban ports and the regions around them. Yet, these elites, in particular the coffee plantation industry, were interested in a migrant workforce that would be recruited in large numbers for the extensive rural estates in Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul. As already mentioned, European migration became pivotal in the rhetoric of technological development and industrial expansion, consolidating the establishment of the plantation industry and their global connections. The plantation economy elites and their supporting financial and political sectors were engaged in the rhetoric of the building of a modern Brazilian nation-state based on European migration (Roche 1959; Solberg [1970] 1987).

### **3.2 Immigration and Settler Colonialism in Brazil**

In the late 19th century, migration policies were instituted in the American continent (Lesser 2013; FitzGerald and Cook-Martín 2014). This process took place in Canada, the United States, the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, and Latin America. As a biopolitical governance tool, migration policies were first implemented in countries in transition from colonial rule to national sovereignty. Guaranteeing the political, economic, and cultural influence of former colonial powers, migration policies established a set of instruments prioritizing the recruitment of white European migrants (Hernández 2014). The newly constituted nation-states in the American continent, among them Brazil, reacted to increasing immigration by establishing policies banning certain social, national, religious, and racial groups from entry (Plender 1988; Neuman 1993; Knowles 2016; FitzGerald and Cook-Martín 2014).

As Sérgio Costa (Costa 2008) and Márcio de Oliveira (Oliveira 2011) note, between 1886 and 1895 the Brazilian Sociedade Promotora de Imigração, initiated by a representative of the coffee industry, Martinho Prado Jr., recruited 266,732 mainly Italian migrants. These migrants were mainly subsidised by the Paulista elites to work under exploitative conditions in the coffee industry. In 1890, the Decreto no. 528 law confirmed the government’s aim of recruiting European immigrants by establishing selection criteria excluding migrants from the African and the Asian continents, while promoting the settlement of Europeans through reimbursement of travel fares and land gifts. This decree instituted the primacy of whiteness and dispossessed the Indigenous



population. In the same year, the *Inspetoria de Terras* was established, which legally (Decreto no. 603) linked immigration to land distribution. This was institutionalized further through the citizenship rights established in the constitution of 1891. Article 69 allowed the naturalization of foreigners that in a period of six months had not demonstrated any attachment to their country of origin; and article 72 guaranteed the migrants living in the country the same rights as national citizens and forbade expulsions. As Oliveira notes, these laws seem to contradict each other, but their existence can be explained if we consider law no. 97, passed in 1892. This law confirmed Brazil's trade relations with China and Japan and introduced the possibility of immigration for the citizens of these countries. Consecutively, in 1892, the distribution of land in regard to immigration was revised and from 1893 the state actively managed immigration by prioritizing European immigration, which accompanied the passing of Decreto no. 144, allowing the government to pay the transport cost of migrants coming from Europe. In 1895, Decreto no. 360 defined travel fares coverage as being for ships arriving in the main harbours of Santos and Rio de Janeiro. These different regulations were concealed in law 1453, passed in 1905, regulating migration policies concerning the colonization of the territory and in agreement with regional states and shipping companies. Two years later, the *Lei de Expulsão* (law no. 1641) enabled the state to deport migrants organizing in collective protest as it dictated, if these migrants "threatened public order or national sovereignty" (Oliveira 2011: 11). In 1921, decree no. 4247, or *Lei dos Indesejáveis*, related migrants to productive, healthy bodies by prohibiting the entry of people with disability, the poor, and prostitutes. The debate between "worthy" and "unworthy" migrants evolved within questions of disability, poverty, and the notion of "indecenty", including notions of married heterosexual respectability and submissive, docile femininity. Yet, from the 1930s, as Costa discusses, Brazilian elites influenced by scientific racism set the question of racial differentiation as a marker for migration regulations.

The inauguration of migration policies, set within the continuum of colonization and migration, reinforced and introduced a system of racial hierarchies shaping the expansion of global racial capitalism as a system of domination organized around the coloniality of migration. The perspective on entangled migrations also deals with the colonial entanglement of governance, and the practices resulting from and challenging the imposition of racial compartmentalization and oppression.

## 4. Creolizing Conviviality: Contesting the Politics of *Branqueamento*

### 4.1 Assimilation, *Branqueamento* and Racial Democracy

Discussing the Estado Novo, the initiation of the Nova República under the military dictatorship of Getúlio Vargas, between 1937 and 1945, Seyferth (Seyferth 1997) and Costa (Costa 2008) draw attention to the discourse on “assimilation” circulating the question of who belonged to the Brazilian nation-state. German immigrants that settled in the South of Brazil since the beginning of the 19th century engaged extensively in the preservation of their German culture and language by establishing German schools, creating leisure clubs (*Vereine*) and journals (Penny 2015). Germans were perceived at this time, because of National Socialism and World War II, as potential enemies of the Brazilian nation. Some German enclaves in southern Brazil were Nazi sympathizers and built an infrastructure supporting their activities in Germany and Brazil, leading to the sheltering of Nazis after the war. Not all the German communities were party to these racist, antisemitic and fascist ideologies. Rather, as Luebcke (Luebcke 1999) notes, German immigration to Brazil’s Southern states was composed of people from diverse regional backgrounds. For example, in Rio Grande do Sul “many of the early settlers of the 1820s were from Holstein, Hanover and Mecklenburg; later many arrived from the Rhineland, especially the Hunsrück district south of the Mosel River” (Luebcke 1999: 99). In other States, such as Espírito Santo, Germans from Pomerania were abundant. After the formation of Germany in 1871, the migrants arriving from Germany maintained their German citizenship. As Glenn Penny notes, in the “major cities of these southern states, much of the trade and many of the larger merchant houses were dominated by these people, Germans who were residents, but were not always there to stay” (Penny 2015: 353). In these communities of the South, “ethnic Germans” established German language, culture, and religious (a majority were Protestants) enclaves since their arrival at the beginning of the 19th century. These communities were known for their social organizing through *Vereine*, dedicated to the conservation of German customs, folklore, and traditions. Vargas’ Campanha de Nacionalização, implemented during 1937 and 1945, targeting migrants and their offspring considered by the military junta as not assimilating to the “national spirit” of the Brazilian state, drew attention to the German communities in southern Brazil. Labelled as unwilling to assimilate and dedicated to the reproduction of *Deutschtum*, Germans became one of the groups which experienced forced assimilation. Introducing the term *alienígena* (alien) as the official classification for migrants and their offspring considered as *não-assimilados* (not assimilated), a differentiation between Brazilian and foreigners, defined as *quistos étnicos* (ethnic cysts) emerged, and German communities were identified as the most isolated community preserving their ethnic

ties. The national campaign of naturalization made Germans a specific group in need of *abrasileiramento*. The military became one of the institutions serving this purpose of official implementation of assimilation by recruiting young men, imposing civil norms and the Portuguese language on these communities (Seyferth 1997). The campaign of nationalization, as Seyferth (Seyferth 1997) and Costa (Costa 2008) observe, was preceded by debates between two intellectual camps discussing the racial and ethnic composition of Brazilian society on the basis of scientific racism.

The 1890 Brazilian Census reported 14,333,000 inhabitants. Of those, 440,000 were registered as Indigenous, 6,302,000 as whites, 2,098,000 as *pretos*, and 5,934,000 as *pardos* (Costa 2008: 106). While *pretos* defined the black population, *pardos* referred to persons with mixed Indigenous, African, and European backgrounds. Costa (Costa 2008: 106) notes that between 1851 and 1960, 1,732,000 immigrants from Portugal, 1,619,000 from Italy, 694,000 from Spain, 250,000 from Germany, and 229,000 from Japan arrived in Brazil. Between 1551 and 1860, 4,029,800 enslaved persons from East and West Africa arrived in Brazil, which represented 40% of the total population of enslaved people in the American continent (Costa 2008: 106). Despite these different racial and national provenances, the official discourse at this time was driven by the myth that the Brazilian citizen was of European descent and white. This was complicated by discourses embracing the interracial and pluri-racial composition of the Brazilian nation. For example, Silvio Romero (1851-1914) advocated for *regeneração racial* (Costa 2008: 106), departing from racial mixing but having as an ultimate goal the whitening of the population. This approach resonated with other approaches in the Caribbean and Latin America at this time. For example, the notion of creolization brought by the Haitian Revolution of 1801, discussing the racial mixing of Black and white, but also a century later José Vasconcelos' (Vasconcelos [1925] 1997) notion of *la raza cósmica* in Mexico, establishing European and Indigenous mixing as the future of the nation. However, Vasconcelos' or Romero's approach conceived racial mixing as a way of inclusion in a society dictated by whiteness as the primordial position of social privilege. Thus, for Romero, mixing was coupled with the assimilation of the European migrants, mainly Portuguese and Italians, as Brazilian citizens. As Seyferth (Seyferth 2002) notes, Romero considered the Black, Indigenous, and racially mixed populations inferior to the European migrants. For him, the Italian and the Portuguese contributed to the Brazilian spirit, deriving from Brazil's connection to its Portuguese colonial and imperial past. The Indigenous and Black population were not included in this process of national mixing. In opposition to Romero's whitening racial mixing project, the criminologist and anthropologist Raimundo Nina Rodrigues (1862-1906) and his followers such as Cesare Lombroso (1836-1909) would pronounce a critique of racial mixing, based on scientific racism. Presupposing racial mixing as threatening white supremacist ideas of "racial purity", Nina Rodrigues and his followers advocated

for the prohibition of racial mixing as they estimated that Brazil was undergoing a “racial problem”. Despite their different approaches on mixing, these opposite intellectual camps, organized around Romero and Rodrigues, shared a common belief in European white superiority.

Vargas’ project of *brasilianização*, though departed from the incorporation of migrants and their offspring into the nation, based on the myth of the racial amalgamation of Black, Indigenous and white people. Yet, the assumption of whiteness as a marker of social superiority prescribed the concept of *mestiçagem* (Seyferth 2002), organizing his idea of racial democracy. Thus, Brazilianness was defined as *mestiçagem*, belonging to one nation based on the unity of language and race. This idea of racial democracy made migrants and their offspring, who did not comply with this national dictate, targets and enemies of the nation. At the same time, the Black and Indigenous populations were kept outside the project of national modernization. Vargas’ project of racial democracy was connected to the coloniality of migration. The reformulation of the constitution enforced by Vargas’ military regime included a continuation of settler-colonialism by coupling migration to racialization, implemented through recruitment policies racially and ethnically differentiating between settler-migrants and setting settler-colonization, favouring white Europeans, as its central project.

On September 18, 1945, Vargas passed a new immigration law (no. 7967).<sup>5</sup> This decree regulated the admission, fiscal, and settlement of immigration to Brazil. Under chapter 1, everyone could immigrate to Brazil if the criteria set out in the law were considered. Those criteria were laid out in article 2, chapter 1, where Europeans were listed as the preferred migrant group to comply with the existing “ethnic composition” of the Brazilian nation. This ideological argument was paired with the necessity to attract the labour skills demanded by national companies.<sup>6</sup> This law also limited the recruitment of each European national group by a two percent quota with the aim to create balanced “ethnic” distribution. The demand for migrant labour was further connected to the expansion of the nation-state into remote areas, inhabited by the Indigenous population, considered by the government as “savages” and “nomads”, non-existent in these territories. Migration was coupled in chapter 2 of the law with *colonização*. The settler-colonial recruitment of migrants attended to a modern colonial project of expansion of the capitalist urban infrastructure and its pairing with the agrarian and cattle industries in the rural areas. The project of racial democracy, based on the organizing principle of *mestiçagem*, was propelled by the coloniality of migration promoting the expansion of racial capitalism, driven by European settler-colonialism.

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5 I would like to thank Juliana Streva for drawing my attention to this law.

6 “Atender-se-á, na admissão dos imigrantes, à necessidade de preservar e desenvolver, na composição étnica da população, as características mais convenientes da sua ascendência europeia” (Presidência da República do Brasil 1945).

## 4.2 Beyond Racial Democracy: Creolizing Conviviality

The project of racial democracy was aimed at abolishing racial differences and hierarchies. This program promulgated the conviction that everyone, despite their race, belongs to the Brazilian nation. Yet, as Angela Figueiredo (Figueiredo 2004), an Afro-Brazilian sociologist, notes in the 21st century, her social positionality as a Black woman is not reflected in the state program of *mestiçagem*. Further, as Reiter and Mitchell (Reiter and Mitchell 2009) argue, Vargas' pronouncement of racial democracy went hand in hand with the persecution and prohibition of Black political organizing. In 1936 Vargas forbade the radical Frente Negra Brasileira, the Brazilian Black Front with 200,000 members (Reiter and Mitchell 2009: 3). Also, Costa (Costa 2008) draws attention to the limits of *mestiçagem* as a project of *branqueamento* that Seth Racusen (Racusen 2004) considers promoting notions of equality and justice based on colour-blindness, enforcing racial inequality. These considerations have also been at the forefront of Indigenous and Black political movements in Brazil, struggling against colonization, extractivism, dispossession, and dehumanization for centuries. As Léa Tosold (Tosold forthcoming) and Juliana Streva (Streva forthcoming) discuss regarding the writings and accounts of the Afro-Brazilian historian, theorist, and activist Beatriz Nascimento, accounts on Brazilian racial democracy need to be contested by practices and forms of struggles, creating other forms of social recognition and other grammars of existence. Discussing the notion of *quilombo* Streva (Streva forthcoming) and Tosold (Tosold forthcoming) draw attention to the historical accounts, political projects and cultural forms of representation engaging with ontological, epistemological and cosmological forms of resisting racism and racial compartmentalization. Drawing on debates surfacing in the 1970s in Brazil on Black Liberation, both Tosold and Streva highlight a long-standing tradition of activism, artistic and scholarly traditions, and other forms of existence in Brazil going beyond the state's matrix of racial democracy and walking towards racial justice. This side of struggle and resistance against racism and other forms of oppression, subjugation, and domination are also present in entangled migrations, and that is set in dialogue with my proposal of creolizing conviviality.

The perspective on the racial configuration of society and its transformation through resistance and cultural mixing resonates with Édouard Glissant's (Glissant 1997) *creolization*. Glissant's notion of creolization as a "syncretic process of transverse dynamism that endlessly reworks and transforms the cultural patterns of varied social and historical experiences and identities" (Balutansky and Sourieau 1998: 1) goes beyond racial compartmentalization, opening a window to the "unforeseeable". As Shirley Anne Tate and I write in our introduction to *Creolizing Europe: Legacies and Transformations*, creolization, "speaks about the creation of new articulations not inscribed in any hegemonic script. It is the creation of a new vocabulary that transcends



the normative order still invested in recreating the colonial gaze” (Gutiérrez Rodríguez and Tate 2015: 7). Keeping this in mind, Glissant refers to the “creolized streets” of Rio de Janeiro, but also the Parisian suburbs. Though creolization emerges within Caribbean radical thought and in the Gestalt of the *Antille* (Wynter 1989), it is an abstract concept capturing the dynamics and dialectics between movements of root and routes (Glissant 1997). Creolization is embedded in a concrete historical context, colonialism, and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. It addresses racist ideological differentiations between whiteness as superiority and Blackness as inferiority by drawing attention to modern colonial societies’ social engineering as racial hierarchical formations. Thus, creolization works through the ontologies, epistemologies, aesthetics and histories of racial classification and racism, as well as the moments of Anti-Black racism, genocide, necropolitics, subjugation, oppression, exploitation, extraction and appropriation. It also focuses ultimately on the challenge, the contestation and the resistance against the moments of racist subjugation, oppression and violence. Creolization surfaces through the experience of pain and yearning, but also through fierceness and willfulness. It carries the conviction and determination in visionary thinking and communal ways of working towards a proposal and a practice for racial, economic and social justice for “Tout-monde” (Glissant 1997). Linking it to conviviality, creolization enables us to think the limits and potentials of living together.

Linked to conviviality, creolizing conviviality (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2015, 2020) is interested in the potential for a good living together within a contested terrain shaped by historical antagonisms, global inequalities, and social struggles, and how we do that. The focus on creolization demystifies conviviality as a notion of harmonious living together by reminding us of the system of domination shaping society through social inequalities, economic asymmetries, class distinctions, racial segregation, gender subjugation, ableist normativity, sexual exploitation, and their entangled interplay. In fact, creolizing conviviality speaks about social contradictions and conflicts, while it also engages with the struggle and processes of transformation towards common futures.

For the discussion of entangled migrations, creolizing conviviality as a decolonial ethical premise counterbalances the coloniality of migration as a modern colonial social reproduction system of racial, gendered entangled inequalities and hierarchies. As such, creolizing conviviality engages with the immediacy of practices of relationality and interconnectedness in a concrete local place and global space, embedded in multiple times. In this entanglement of space and time, creolizing conviviality addresses the immediate dynamics of the potential of living together. At the same time, the coloniality of migration attempts to dominate through blocking, destroying, and limiting the potential of responsible interrelated differential common lives. Entangled migrations occurs between these two poles, the coloniality of migration, and creolizing conviviality.

## 5. Conclusion: Entangled Inequalities and Convivial Futures

Migration movements in Europe and Latin America need to be understood as globally entangled ones. As previously discussed, migratory movements and the governing of migration in Latin America have European colonial roots. Historical global connections have shaped the contemporary configuration of Latin American and European societies. Yet, in current political, media and scholarly debates on migration, the history of European emigration and its settler-colonial influence in building nation-states abroad is largely ignored. Instead, recent public media and populist right-wing discourses reiterate European nations' foundational myths based on an imagined monolithic racial and ethnic communities. In this regard, consider that the colonial entanglement described previously by Mbembe shapes the field of governance and practice of Transatlantic European migration and its effects in the contemporary shaping of current European forms of governing asylum and migration.<sup>7</sup> The emigration to the American continent was “shaped and mediated by multiple, overlapping modes of self-fashioning” resulting from the history of European colonialism and racial capitalism's expansion (Mbembe 2001: 229). These migratory movements, migration regulation, and control policies were not “self-contained” nationally and locally occurring manifestations but were emerging within an “entangled intra-relating” (Barad 2007: xx) system of social relations, governance practices, and institutional logics within the modern-colonial entanglement. The concept of entangled migrations describes exactly this entangled intra-relaiton, resulting from the connection between two apparently separated spaces and time scales, but interlaced through their practices and agential inter-actions. When we consider *entangled migrations*, we are not dealing just with parallel or connected histories.

Instead, as Yves Cohen (Cohen 2009) suggests, we are dealing with a form of *histoire croisée* (Werner and Zimmermann 2006).<sup>8</sup> As Cohen notes, at the centre of this type of history stands circulation. As he writes, “Histoire croisée is extremely useful as a means of liberation from traditional methods of comparison that ‘reify’ differences or similarities. It introduces a reflexivity that allows for reciprocal questioning in every temporal and spatial dimension” (Cohen 2009: 12). Further, as Cohen develops in reference to the historical analysis of the Indian subcontinent, circulation does not just imply simple mobility but also peripatetic double movements shaping each place. The circulatory approach emphasizes processes of transformation at either end. The methodological approach of *histoire croisée* goes beyond mere comparative studies as it is interested in how history is a product of interlaces between places, people, and practices. While

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7 This aspect could not have been developed in this paper due to its word limitation, but is addressed elsewhere (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2018).

8 I would like to thank Yves Cohen for his generosity and inviting me to think along these lines.



the concept of entangled migrations interrogates how temporal and spatial dimensions cross and in the circulation of ideas, people, practices, and forms of governing, its focus lies on how these elements enmesh, bringing a new phenomenon to the fore. As such, when we look at the immigration of Germans to Brazil and their effects for contemporary discourses and policies in Germany, we are not just dealing with their connections or the practices of circulation. Rather, we are looking at “entangled intra-related” realities embedded in the crossings of multiple spaces and times, shaping the social phenomenon of entangled migrations.

In this regard, historical and societal elements deriving from the different places and times intermeshed, uncovering continuities, and ruptures and new and old elements of social realities, reshuffled and reconfigured in new ways. Thus, entangled migrations not only address the reshuffling of different spatial and temporal elements but, in particular, looks at the tension between sedimented markers of social inequalities and their re-composition or transformation under new inter-regional and inter-continental circumstances.

In this regard, I have considered here, on the one hand, entangled inequalities through the theoretical prism of the coloniality of migration and convivial futures through the vision of creolizing conviviality. Both dimensions articulate the theoretical and analytical framework of entangled migrations. This working paper has discussed the two sides of entangled migrations, the coloniality of migration and creolizing conviviality from a spatial-temporal methodological angle, focusing on entangled migrations as a theoretical and analytical perspective for understanding contemporary societies. Both concepts, the coloniality of migration and creolizing conviviality, are rooted in an analysis of colonial modern structural intersectional violence, examining economic, political, and cultural dependencies in the forging of interdependent nation-states, national communities, and their racialized gendered others. Yet, while “coloniality” aims at examining domination, “creolization” focuses on moments of agency and transformation. Both concepts entail an analysis of tangible and less tangible logics of (dis)encounters, the potential, and limits of living together. Addressing the two conceptual vectors, coloniality of migration and creolizing conviviality, we have unwrapped the ambivalent character of entangled migrations. As we have seen, it was not until the second half of the 20th century and more recently in the last decades that the rights of the Afro-descendant and Indigenous population in the American continent and Europe’s responsibility are being internationally publicly addressed. Intertwined with this question is also the acknowledgment of European colonial and imperial atrocities, the recognition of Indigenous jurisprudence and land as well as the question of reparation for the Black and Indigenous populations.

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