Appropriation and Resistance Mechanisms in (Post-) Colonial Constellations of Actors: the Example of the Latin American Frontiers

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Introduction: Appropriation or Resistance?

In post-colonial criticism, appropriation and resistance mechanisms are increasingly taken to be the result of a necessary reaction to the lack of adaptation of the colonial and post-colonial governance mechanisms to the socio-economic circumstances on a regional and local level.[1] Governance mechanisms implemented by the state require modification, which can only take place locally and with the collaboration of local governance addressees. Experience shows that this type of process may take decades or centuries, as the populations' familiarity with the governance mechanisms is a decisive factor for their acceptance.

For some time, historical science has analyzed the processes of appropriation of non-local governance forms under the heading of intercultural transfer.[2] It has been shown that the terms appropriation and resistance have had only limited effectiveness in analyzing the long-term or sudden adoption of the means arising from (newly) introduced state structures.[3] In

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[1]Anke Draude & Sonja Neuweiler, *Governance in der postkolonialen Kritik. Die Herausforderung lokaler Vielfalt jenseits der westlichen Welt.* (Berlin:SFB 700 - Governance Working Paper Series, 2010), 24.

[2]Rudolf Muhs (Ed.), *Aneignung und Abwehr. Interkultureller Transfer zwischen Deutschland und Großbritannien im 19. Jahrhundert* (Bodenhein: Publication / Workgroup German England-Research, Vl. 32,1998); Johannes Paulmann, "Internationaler Vergleich und interkultureller Transfer. Zwei Forschungsansätze zur europäischen Geschichte des 18. bis 20. Jahrhunderts", *Historische Zeitschrift 267*, (1998): 649-685; Eugenia Roldán Vera, *The british book trade and Spanish American Independence: education and transmission in transcontinental perspective*. (Aldershot:Ashgate,2003); Kiran Klaus Patel, „Überlegungen zu einer transnationalen Geschichte", *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft 52* (1994): 626-646.; Stefan Rinke, *Begegnungen mit dem Yankee. Nordamerikanisierung und soziokultureller Wandel in Chile (1898-1990).* (Köln,Weimar,Wien:Böhlau,2004); Wilhelmus M. Verhoeven (Ed.), *Revolutionary Histories: Transatlantic Cultural Nationalism, 1775-1815*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave,2001).

[3]Katja Füllberg-Stolberg, *Die afro-amerikanische Aneignung von Afrika. Die Begegnung schwarzer Amerikaer und afrikanischer Bevölkerung zwischen "Civilizing Mission" und Pan - Afrikanismus* in: Henner Fürtig (Ed),

effect, the term appropriation signifies the presence of an adjustment as well as a definite intention. This intention on the part of the appropriating collective or individuals provided a basis for their interactions with the state actors, not only in pursuing their interests, but also in keeping sovereign government actions or the one-sided implementation of state interests at bay: "In reality, forms of resistance and appropriation present themselves as ambivalent and, empirically, are almost inseparable".[4]

In view of this consideration, one could therefore understand the "resistance mechanism" category as indicating the refusal to make an appropriation. As a result, an absolute resistance mechanism should first be sought in the refusal of social cohabitation (i.e. flight) or in the rejection of communication. Violence – understood as the attempt to force the interaction counterpart to accept the appropriation of one's own ideas of governance – should moreover be placed at the other end of a gradual classification of appropriation and resistance mechanisms. The actual appropriation mechanisms would then lie between these two extremes of flight/rejection of communication and (non-negotiating) violence. As we will show, some kinds of violence may be understood as *negotiating* violence (i.e. taking captives and adopting them).

This form of grading allows for a classification of the processes of ethnogenesis often observed in Latin America to be put into the middle category of appropriation. The flight from aggressive intruders in one's own territory (for example from the European conquerors) obliged the displaced groups to establish new forms of organization which allowed life to continue in unknown regions or for lost territory to be retaken.

Already during the invasion of Gran Chichimeca, the area north of the Mexican high valley, the Spanish conquistadores could observe that their military campaigns had forced formerly settled farming communities to leave their fields to continue living as hunters and gatherers. They subsequently adapted their horses to the purpose of transportation and began their raids

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Abgrenzung und Aneignung in der Globalisierung: Asien, Afrika und Europa seit dem 18. Jahrhundert. Ein Arbeitsbericht. (Berlin: Workpaper/ Zentrum Moderner Orient, Geisteswissenschaftliche Zentren Berlin e.V., Bd. 19., Vl. 19,2001), 3–31.

[4]Teresa Pinheiro, *Aneignung und Erstarrung. Die Konstruktion Brasiliens und seiner Bewohner in portugiesischen Augenzeugenberichten 1500 - 1595*. (Stuttgart: Univ., Diss. Paderborn, 2002. Beiträge zur europäischen Überseegeschichte, Bd. 89, 2004), 46. In the most recent Governance- investigations, Appropriation also is understood as a *re-interpretation*, which puts the emphasis on an interest-guided change in external or new forms of Government. Sybille, De la Rosa: „Aneignung oder Annäherung, zwei Formen interkultureller Kommunikation." In: Sybille de la Rosa, Ulrike Höppner und Matthias Kötter (Hrsg.), *Transdisziplinäre Governanceforschung. Gemeinsam hinter den Staat blicken*, (Baden-Baden:Nomos,2008), 80-99.

on horseback against the Spanish settlers. The so-called "Chichimecan Wars" of the 16th and 17th centuries thus in many ways created the so-called "barbarians" against whom the Spaniards believed they were fighting of a war of capitulation in the following centuries.[5]

Appropriation and Resistance in the Context of Cultural Diversity

As shown by the example above, all three categories – rejection, appropriation and violence – may be discovered in (Latin-) American history in their various manifestations. Emphasizing the interethnic relationships on the frontiers proves to be a particularly fruitful field of investigation. Here indigenous groups showing mainly egalitarian organization encountered representatives of the European colonial powers, which were trying to create state (and with it hierarchical) structures in these territories. The definition of the frontier as a "space for mutual cultural penetration"[6] already implies the appropriation mechanisms taking place there, though their individual functions are still undetermined and insufficiently analyzed in light of their character as processes. But, what does "egalitarian" mean in our context?

The egalitarian organization of indigenous groups on the frontier was anchored in equal access to the most important means of production (i.e., knowledge of the environment and the techniques for its exploitation), which could not be monopolized. All members of egalitarian societies had equal opportunities for their individual development. Hierarchical structures along gender and generational lines, however, were still present. These arose out of the rational authority of more experienced group members (such as the village elders) or differentiated individual abilities, but were not upheld by order and obedience structures, as with state administrative organizations or institutions such as missions or the military. The only specialized activity – shamanism – was open to both sexes.

In agricultural societies, territorial usage rights were transferred from collective ownership and could then be gradually allocated to familial lines. In the Araucania in southern Chile, for example, the representatives of chieftain lines, which had already formed in pre-colonial times, specialized more and more in the regulation of collective matters and appeared as mediators in disputes over usage rights. Even the Mapuches, however, could not discontinue ritualized mediation, as the leaders – called *lonkos* – needed to convince their followers of their decisions without resorting to compulsory measures. While the generally highly mobile

[5] Charlotte M. Gradie, "Discovering the Chichimecas", *The Americas 51*(1994):82–83.
[6] Michael Riekenberg, *Ethnische Kriege in Lateinamerika im 19. Jahrhundert*. (Stuttgart:Heinz,1997), 31.

farming societies of the Mexican northwest did not establish similar chieftain dynasties, they nevertheless settled their collective matters in locally restricted general assemblies.[7]

In contrast to settled farmers, the topographical and demographic conditions in these areas permitted nomadic indigenous groups to choose with relative freedom from the three possibilities of rejection, appropriation and violent resistance until the end of the 19th century. As was also the case in other colonial and postcolonial areas around the world, however, technical developments in the Occident resulted in the enclosing of these frontiers. New modes of transport and communication techniques, as for example telegraphy, and travel by rail and steamship, largely curtailed the possibility of flight for the indigenous groups, while repeating rifles and machine guns eliminated the former superiority of autochthonous weapon technology. This turned the use of violence as a last measure of resistance for the numerically inferior indigenous groups into a deadly trap.

Trust and Security

The question, therefore, about which avenues could be taken to enable interactions between egalitarian and state conceived societies in a colonial and postcolonial context that had limited or no conflict can only be answered in terms of the middle category, appropriation. This investigative field has benefitted for some time from the use of the "middle ground" metaphor. Richard Whites' influential study on the colonial powers' and later republics' interactions with the indigenous groups in the Great Lakes region in eastern Canada and the north-western United States shows that the encounters and negotiations between the different actors only proved successful when a common denominator could be found in their efforts to communicate.[8] Crucial elements – such as the use of paternalistic rhetoric or the offering of gifts – show that the ideas of both societies, indigenous or European, had to be incorporated into the negotiations in order to achieve a mutually amicable agreement. The "middle ground" therefore does not denote a border territory, where representatives of both societies

[7]Edward Holland Spicer, *Cycles of Conquest. The impact of Spain, Mexico und the United States on the Indians of the Southwest, 1533-1960*. (Tucson: The Univ. of Arizona Press,1962); Cynthia Radding, Wandering Peoples: Colonialism, Ethnic Spaces, and Ecological Frontiers in Northwestern Mexico, 1700-1850. Durham, London: Duke Univ. Press, 1997).

[8] Richard White, *The Middle Ground. Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815.* (New York: Cambridge Press,1991).

meet, but rather a type of communication[9] in which both sides are able to recognize a sufficient number of familiar things that convey trust in their interactions. As a type of communication that had existed for centuries, new hybrid forms of interactions formed with which both side became familiar over time. The assumption therefore that appropriating interactions are only possible on the basis of trust seems valid. Implemented governance mechanisms are appropriated by being combined with familiar forms and elements of interactions and, in this way, are integrated into one's own values. If such an opportunity is undermined, the only possible reaction is flight or violence.

Ute Frevert has suggested that violence and trust relate to each other as "fire and water," since the violent settlement of a conflict is not compatible with the anticipation that fellow human beings will act cooperatively and be fundamentally interested in the well-being of others. As a result, the monopolization of forcible means inherent to historical state-building was the foundation for a society based on the mutual trust between its individual members.[11]

The social situation in the European overseas colonies and the postcolonial states governed by Creole elites, however, was hardly suited to guarantee safety or ensure trust through a monopoly of power. Until the present day, the governments of the culturally heterogeneous nation-states of the Americas can claim only partial acceptance by all population groups in their territory. As the case studies of our subproject show, the lack of legitimization spurred periodic eruptions of violence and therefore had to be recognized as one of the causes of the existing security issues. Consequently, and in view of the territorial unity inside the respective state borders, the tense constellation between the states claim to power (military monopoly) and indigenous peoples striving for autonomy does not offer much room for a quick and final solution in the future. As a result, in a protracted process which can be characterized as appropriation, the interethnic relationships necessitate constant adjustments by the state/government/national complex of actors, on the one hand, and the indigenous society, on the other.

[9]Richard White expressly points to this conceptional aspect of Middle Ground in a later discussion forum: Richard White, "Creative Misunderstandings and New Understandings", *William and Mary Quarterly 63* (January 2006): 9-14.
[11]Ute Frevert: Vertrauen. Eine historische Spurensuche Trust. In: Ute Frevert (Ed.), *Vertrauen. Historische Annäherungen.* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), 20, 38.

As shown by the example of the conquest and colonization of America, a pre-colonial history involving the development of indigenous tribute empires eased the implementation of European (monarchic-feudal, administrative) forms of government. In the Mexican high valley or in the central region of the Andes, the European conquistadores were able to make use of pre-existing institutions, which was not fundamentally different from the situation under colonial rule. The *tlatoani* in Tenochtitlan (Mexico City) and the Incas in Cuzco (Peru) also nominally ruled populations that possessed different languages and cultural attributes from their own. They demanded labour, tributes and military service from them, as the Spaniards would later on.[12] The state-building processes here – as in Europe – contained ethnocidal practices which aimed at the abolition and substitution of local cultural elements by state-implemented governance mechanisms.[13] This type of strategy, however, seldom achieved more than the superimposition of such mechanisms on top of those already in place locally. From this perspective, the hispanisation of the indigenous population of the Andes in South America or the Mexican high valley did not differ substantially from pre-colonial "incaisation" or "mexicanisation". It therefore only seems paradoxical at first when considering that the colonial powers in North America, Central America or in the South American low lands (where non-state like societies were settled that had little potential for mobilizing military force) had more difficulties establishing their claim to rule. The necessity of establishing leadership structures and hence identifiable governance addressees delayed the subjugation of these autochthonous populations – often into the 19th century, beyond the system's collapse and the obtainment of independence.

Ethnogenesis as a Form of Appropriation

In many places, the hostile relationship with the conquerors is what allowed "tribes" or ethnicities to develop into political units, be it through the integrative effects of common resistance interests against the foreign intruders or the preferential access to European military means or property as a reward for military cooperation with the conquerors. The cultural properties of the local indigenous groups, conversely, also left a lasting mark on the colonial

[12]Spalding, Karen (1999): The Crises and Transformations of Invaded Societies: The Andean Area (1500-1580). In: Frank Loewen Salomon & Stuart Schwartz (Ed.), *The Cambridge history of the native peoples of the Americas* (Cambridge:Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1999)1:904-972, 936.
[13]Pierre Clastres: Über den Ethnozid, in: Pierre Clastres, *Archäologie der Gewalt*. (Zürich,Berlin:Diaphanes, 2008), 17-18.

state, which could establish itself only slowly: "Tribes make states and states make tribes", as Neil Whitehead has remarked.[14]

Consequently, a process of ethnogenesis was initiated on many frontiers in America which resulted in the uniting of groups that were estranged from each other, but who (often) presented linguistic similarities and also found a common enemy in the colonial rulers that they mutually confronted.[15] It was not, however, only the conflicts engendered by the Europeans' claim to rule that brought about new forms of society. For instance, several indigenous prairie people in North America (Pawnees, Wichitas, Cheyenne) are known to have given up their soil tilling and gardening activities when the horse was adapted to transport in order to then live as riding nomads.[16] This kind of cultural transformation rarely took place between Europeans and autochthonous populations, which had the form rather of a purely indigenous exchange. In the prairie, the Ute served as a model in the taming of horses and the usage of European finished products for the so-called *kumantsi* – "enemy" – groups, who entered aggressively into the Ute territory. These prairie Indians, later called Comanche, became famous and infamous under that name. They subsequently taught their riding skills to the Cheyenne, who then relinquished their farming activities to also become riding nomads.[17]

Just as with their cultural counterparts in South America, the Guaycuruanos of the Gran Chaco, the riding warriors of the prairie exploited the rivalries amongst the colonial powers in order to obtain concessions and material benefits ("gifts" in colonial rhetoric). They did not therefore orient themselves according to the imperial or national affiliations of the settler societies, but rather pursued different political strategies in relation to smaller administrative unities such as New Mexico, Texas or individual settlement centers. From this perspective of the "indigenous empires," the historiographically constructed frontiers in the north and south

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[14]Whitehead, Neil (1999): Tribes make state and states make tribes. Warfare and the Creation of Colonial tribes and States in North-eastern South America. In: Brian Ferguson & Neil Whitehead (Ed.), *War in the Tribal Zone. Expanding States and Indigenous warfare,*(Santa Fe und Oxford: SAR Press,1999), 127-150.

[15] Hal Langfur, *The forbidden lands*, (Stanford, California: Stanford Univ. Press, 2006), 29; Guillaume Boccara, "Mapuche Ethnogenesis: resistance and restructuration among the indigenous people of the mid-south of Chile (XVI-XVIII Century*)", Hispanic American Historical Review 79:3*. (1999), 425–461.

[16] Hämäläinen, Pekka (2003): The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Culture. In: *Journal of American History 90:3*, 833–862, 856.

[17] Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press,2008), 25-26,170-171. In the first Century b.C., the riding animals imported from Europe had a similar socio-revolutionary effect in the Eurasian region, as they had later on among the autochthonous population of America. The Adaptation of the horse by population groups of the Eurasian steppes led into a socio-economic change even in the „old world", from seasonal farmers to riding nomads and under changing circumstances also to the creation of Empires, comparison Tomas J. Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier. Nomadic Empires and China* (Cambridge & Oxford:Blackwell,1989), 29.

of Spanish-America ultimately dissolves, permitting alternate spatial structures to be discerned,[18] which were constituted by different appropriation and resistance mechanisms. Thus, the European satellites of the Comanche empire were forced to accept indigenous ideas of governance in the face of threats or the carrying out of violent sanctions.

Appropriation in Egalitarian Groups: the Case of the Cuncáac (Sonora, Mexico)

Besides these extraordinary outcomes of overseas cultural contact in America, micro-historical case studies are able to trace the basic contrasts between societies with a state conception and groups organized in an egalitarian fashion in the colonial and postcolonial context. The foraging groups of the Cuncáac in Sonora did not adapt the horse nor did they make systematic use of firearms. In their arid roaming area of the Sonora Desert, these cultural goods of the European colonial rulers were soon discovered to be useless. Although they had proved effective in others places, here they caused the groups to be dependent on new supplies, whether pasture land, water or ammunition.

The coexistence of hunters and gatherers with the settlers was marked by the contrasting principals of their respective economic systems until the late 19th century. The cattle of the settlers, which wandered freely on the traditional roaming grounds of the Cuncáac, were generally considered by the foragers to be available hunting prey, and true to the *optimal prey choice principle*, they were killed with preference over others. The cattle breeders, however, viewed this livestock as private property and demanded protection from the state actors. If the state did not respond to their satisfaction, they took measures into their own hands and killed the hunters. They did this, moreover, with the expectation that their lives would be protected by the military, in spite of their actions. These contradictory views of territorial usage rights and individual property probably laid the most explosive foundation for potential conflict on Latin America’s cattle frontiers.

Because of these differences, warlike disputes would erupt periodically between the Cuncáac and the settlers. Here the Spaniards observed the Cuncáac’s appropriation of symbolic communication early on. When they wished to end hostilities, the Cuncáac would demonstrate their peaceful intentions through the use of Christian symbolism in erecting elaborately manufactured crosses close to the Spanish Fort. The European colonial masters

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[18] James Schofield Saeger, *The Chaco mission frontier. The Guaycuruan experience* (Tucson, Ariz.: Univ. of Arizona Press, 2000),134; Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 182.

had been familiar with the significance of these symbolic forms of communication since the early 18th century and, after seeing them, would send ambassadors to invite the family units of the Cuncáac to a special meeting. Depending on the strategic considerations, however, they could also feign ignorance if they considered that it was too early for peace negotiations or necessary to give further proof of their (supposed) military superiority [see Elizondo-Expedition 1769]. The rejection of symbolic communication by the colonial power can therefore also be considered a form of state resistance.

The proselytizing and settling of the hunters and gatherers of Sonora failed in large part because of the hierarchical structures of the colonial and republican institutions. In times when individual representatives of the administration (governor), military (commanding officer of the fort) or missionaries were able to forge personal relationships based on trust with individual families of the Cuncáac, these small groups could be temporarily persuaded to adapt to the expectations of the colonial rulers. The transfer of locally stationed personnel by the higher administrative levels, however, regularly terminated these bonds of trust. As a consequence, the most recently founded mission, for instance, would be deserted from one day to the next. The transition between personal trust towards a kind of "face-independent" trust in the colonial institutions of the mission, military and administration was rarely achieved with any indigenous group along the Latin American frontiers.

Instead, the Spaniards along the northern border of Mexico, as well as in the Gran Chaco in South America, observed that the independent indigenous groups included the missions, settlements and fortresses in their seasonal migratory movements.[19] The forager groups of the Cuncáac also maintained periodic exchange relationships with their neighbours, who had undertaken at least seasonal agricultural activity since before colonial times. Bringing the products of their hunting and gathering activities to the settlements of the farmers, they exchanged them for the carbohydrate-rich farming products that the settlers had to offer.[20] They did the same with the Spanish soldiers in the fortresses and in the Jesuit missions since the beginning of the colonization, if permitted by the responsible civil servants. The

[19]David J. Weber, *Barbarians. Spaniards and their savages in the Age of Enlightenment*. (New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2005),132; Sara Ortelli, *Trama de una guerra conveniente: Nueva Vizcaya y la sombre de los apaches (1748 - 1790)* (México, D.F.: El Colegio de México Centro de Estudios Históricos, 2007), 136.

[20] Gary Clayton Anderson,*The Indian Southwest, 1580 - 1830. Ethnogenesis and reinvention*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press,1999)107; Maria Elisa Villalpando, (2000): "Conchas y Caracoles. Relaciones entre Nómadas y Sedentarios en el Noroeste de México." In: Marie-Areti Hers, José Luis Mirafuentes Galván, María de los Dolores Soto, Beatriz Braniff Cornejo (Ed.) *Nómadas y sedentarios en el norte de México. Homenaje a Beatriz Braniff* (México, D.F.: Univ. Nac. Autónoma de México Inst. de Investigaciones Estéticas,), 525–546, 541.

Cuncáac's familiar relations with the agricultural neighbour groups were easily transferable to the newcomers from Europe. The Cuncáac, however, insisted on the voluntary nature of their relationship with the colonists and only resorted to flight or violence to repel attempts by the Spaniards to exert control over them. The colonial power's intention of settling the indigenous population in villages and exploiting their agricultural production was generally not realized along the frontiers. The foragers neither gave up their hunting and gathering practices nor did they relinquish their highly mobile social structure. Attempts to bestow three times as much land on cooperative leaders of the Cuncáac in the mission and to introduce an artificial stratification into the forager society through this economic enrichment proved to be counterproductive. In the eyes of the other group members, a "privileged" Cuncáac leader with two additional cornfields simply had three times as much irritating fieldwork. His standing therefore did not improve.

The colonial powers' attempts to influence indigenous groups by improving the material conditions of individual leaders were mostly thwarted by the levelling mechanisms inherent to these societies. Although the redistribution of these riches imported from the outside to the group's followers gave prestige to the leaders, they impeded the forming of power positions based on the unequal distribution of possessions. Given that decisions on collective property issues were made in general assemblies, corrupt leaders could never establish themselves.[21]

Appropriations after Independence

After the independence of the young republics, this inner political organization of the indigenous groups caused some state leaders to express their admiration. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs of the Republic of Texas noted in the 1840's that the Comanches are "the most perfect democracy on the face of the globe; everything is managed by primary assemblies, and the people have a right to displace a chief and elect a successor at pleasure".[22] Voices of the intellectual elite also emanated from the young Republic of Mexico. They saw a prime example of democratic structures in the rural organization of indigenous populations which were only gradually beginning to grow in the world of the "rational human beings"

[21] Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*, 132-137; Barfield, *Perilous Frontier*, 7-8.
[22] [the Comanches are] the most perfect democracy on the face of the globe; everything is managed by primary assemblies, and the people have a right to displace a chief and elect a successor at pleasure", quoted in Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire,* 271.

(*gente de razón*).[23] From the point of view of the egalitarian societies, however, efforts to introduce representative self-government mechanisms by the state actors should be seen in terms of a primary monarchy, as they curtailed the right of the indigenous collective to independently depose leaders placed into positions by the state government. Pre-state organizational structures that appeared to approach the envisioned democratic ideal of the republics mostly collapsed under the pressure to adapt to the state hierarchy.

A long-term micro-historical study of these conflicts shows that although the egalitarian societies rejected the hierarchical structures of their Creole neighbours for their own social organization, they nevertheless understood how to use them to their advantage. Even the post-independence state regulation, which stipulated that individual landownership should be implemented as the basis for liberal economic development, was creatively appropriated by some family groups among the Cuncáac. When the property rights were negotiated for the former mission land of the Cuncáac in the first decades after independence in Sonora, the still unsettled foragers were put at the back of the line by the local government representatives because they did not do a lot of work in the fields.

When the Cuncáac complained to the next higher authority, the prefect of Hermosillo, he also disappointed them, as he was dependant on the good will of the local landowners who wanted to divide the mission land among themselves. The Cuncáac then left with a delegation to visit the governor of Sonora and complain about the occupation of their land. The governor was interested in a peaceful Cuncáac population and thus ordered the return of the lands to the Cuncáac in no uncertain terms. As a result, under the protest of the mestizo landowners, the Cuncáac heads of family were given a small piece of land (called *suerte*) as private property, which was deemed sufficient to feed a nuclear family. The foragers, however, once again made optimal use of the opportunities of the liberal economic system. Instead of working the fields themselves, they leased their plots to mestizo neighbours, collected an annual lease fee and obtained the other things they needed to live through small exchanges and, above all, by means of their traditional hunting and gathering activities. The foragers had become hunting and gathering micro-landowners and not settled small farmers as the government had

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[23]José Miranda for instance stated: "No cabe descubrir en la Nueva Espña otra manifestación de verdadera democracia que la elección del cabildo en algunos pueblos indígenas por todos los vecinos....nobles y macehuales"; "There is no need to discover any other manifestation of true Democracy in the New Spain, other than the election of leader in some indigenous villages by all the neighbours….noble and macehuales." Quoted in: Dorothy de Tanck Estrada, *Pueblos de Indios y educación en el México colonial, 1750 - 1821*. (México: El Colegio de México, 2000), 35.

intended. The government's declared goal was not achieved, but the Cuncáac acted entirely within the established legal framework.

The micro-historic result here shows that smaller groups have a distinctly higher potential of successful appropriation and are able to adapt quickly and creatively to changing circumstances. States, on the other hand, appear particularly lethargic from an historical perspective. Just the same, the independent separation of smaller collectives from the state-conceived society also enabled parts of the Creole population to avail themselves of new and emerging opportunities.

Indigenous territories such as the Comancheria of the early 19th century can hardly be described as states. By the same token, they were secure places to live by the standards of the epoch. They were therefore attractive to smaller groups, including Spaniards and Mestizos, who emigrated to the Comancheria in their search for prosperity and security and were integrated into the multi-ethnical society through fictitious kinships.[24] In contrast to the neighbouring republics of Mexico and the USA, the leading clans of the Comanches were able to establish a generalized monopoly of power in their sphere of influence.

Even the Apache groups, who were only loosely connected by their linguistic commonalities, based their interactions with the state-conceived neighbour societies on strategies resulting from their adaptation to the changed social environment. For instance, they raised taxes on travellers between Sonora and New Mexico and were kept informed through confiscated mail. Within the scope of their mostly predatory activities, they economized in a sustainable manner and always left (as the Comanches did) a remaining stock of cattle on the raided farms so that their settled meat providers could breed new provisions for the next year.[25] As already mentioned, these cattle-raiding gangs, who were active everywhere on the frontiers in Latin America, were often composed multi-ethnically, comprising Creole and European deserters. They also maintained – partially through these "renegades" – good relationships with the local "notable" families, who were happy to buy cattle that had been stolen from different settlements.[26] It was not uncommon that indigenous groups were led by Europeans who had been abducted in their youth and grown up in the indigenous societies. In contrast to

[24] Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*,168-175.

[25]David J Weber,*The Mexican frontier, 1821 - 1846. The American Southwest under Mexico* (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 2001), 87.

[26]Ortelli, *Trama de una guerra conveniente*,130,159; James Schofield Saeger, *The Chaco mission frontier. The Guaycuruan experience* (Tucson, Ariz.: Univ. of Arizona Press, 2000),11-18.

the isolated settler society, autochthonous groups were traditionally open to receiving external offspring and made opportunities for social promotion available to them.[27] This flexibility allowed for the rapid appropriation of external knowledge and goods, without fundamentally changing the egalitarian character of the societies or even putting them into question.

The success of autochthonous adaptation to the socio-economic circumstances of the frontiers eventually also rubbed off on transnational actors, who came into the country after its independence. In their attempt to create a homogenous national society, the elites in Latin America recruited European settlers, who acquired "unpopulated land" and in return were to ensure the "whitening" of the rural population. In Mexico, French immigrants were particularly favoured because of their assumed closeness to the "Latin culture" with which the Creole elites identified. After a French colony was founded in 1852 in Cocóspera (Sonora), however, the government of the province soon received complaints that the European settlers were hunting free-roaming horses and occasionally organized raids on the Mexican citizens. They had largely adapted to the given circumstances and asserted themselves almost as "French Apaches" into the culturally heterogeneous population of the Mexican Northwest.[28]

Finally, it is also possible to observe in the Mexican Northwest that independence and the republican form of governing with personnel newly appointed to political positions introduced local knowledge about indigenous groups into the higher administrative levels, which had previously not been able to find an anchor there. The higher administrative levels – governors and also missionaries and the military – were almost exclusively occupied by non-local staff in colonial times. While their loyalty to the crown was proven, they also had no knowledge about the socio-economic peculiarities of the indigenous groups they were to govern. The republic, on the other hand, could not fall back on external actors and was therefore obliged to rely on the recruitment of the local Creole population as state actors. Although the sovereign administrative center often characterized them in terms of their disobedience to orders, they were frequently highly knowledgeable about the local population, which was in essence their neighborhood. In the 1820s, for instance, a Creole commanding officer of a fort wrote about the semi-nomadic forager groups of the Cuncáac, who needed permission to regularly visit their *madriguera* or roaming grounds. In the preceding one-and-a-half centuries, the mobile family groups that had distanced themselves from the mission and hunted in their roaming

[27]Anderson, *The Indian Southwest*, 132; Saeger, *The Chaco mission frontier*, 78, 96.

[28]Delia González de Reufels, *Siedler und Filibuster in Sonora: eine mexikanische Region im Interesse ausländischer Abenteurer und Mächte Filibuster* (Köln: Böhlau, 2003), 90,110-113.

territories were often followed by troops of soldiers who tried to force them to immediately return to the mission. The cyclical conflicts issuing from these control mechanisms could be diffused through a mutual-trusting relationship. The Cuncáac returned voluntarily to the mission after a few weeks or months and stayed near Mexican farmers when food was difficult to obtain.

Appropriation of Cultural Techniques and Rhetoric

In spreading the Spanish language (Castellanización), colonial and republican governments tried to homogenize the governance addressees in the area they governed and to create a uniform *demos*. During the course of the 19th century, Spanish replaced the autochthonous languages as the *lingua franca* in Sonora, even though the greater part of the indigenous population remained bilingual. Some leaders of indigenous rebellions, however, increasingly utilized Spanish in order to unite the multilingual population in their following against the "whites". This undermined the goal of the state language policy.

Immediately after independence a certain Juan Ignacio Jusacamea was able to elevate himself to captain general of the Cahita-speaking Yaqui and Mayo groups in the southern part of the province. He made himself known to the Mexican government entities under the name of "Juan Banderas". The civil-military position of captain general had already been introduced by the Spaniards and Jesuits in the 18th century in order to make the egalitarian groups of Yaqui and Mayo farmers governable in the European fashion. Although the captain general was usually appointed by the state authorities, Jusacamea appointed himself and turned against the republican government of Sonora. He dictated speeches to the literate Yaqui that were aimed at the indigenous communities in Sonora. They were then taken to the Indian villages by messengers, where they were posted and read out loud. In Spanish, Jusacamea called for a general uprising against the Mexican settlers, declared himself the successor of King Moctezuma (the last Aztec ruler who had been killed in battle against the Spaniards) and emphasized his call to leadership with an apparition of the Virgin Mary (the Virgin Guadalupe, Patron Saint of Mexico).[29] Both knowledge of the Holy Virgin and the Aztec ruler were discursive elements in Sonora that had been familiar to the Spaniards and Jesuits themselves. The Spanish language, Christian religion and Indigenous traditions of the Mexican high valley were to serve as a common denominator for the extremely heterogeneous

[29]Spicer, *The Yaquis*,130-133; Evelyn Hu de Hart, *Yaqui Resistance and survival. The struggle for Land and Autonomy, 1821-1910* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Pr., 1984), Chapter 2, *They Refuse to be Mexicans*.

population during the time of the Mexican Republic. Jusacamea, however, used all three of these elements in order to win over the indigenous people in Sonora against the Mexicans. A gifted guerrilla warrior, he was able to keep the periphery of the Sonora province restless for eight years (1825-1833) and assemble a broad, multi-ethnic coalition of indigenous resistance in his following, until he was finally caught and executed.

Appropriation in Heterarchical/Multicephal Societies: the Mapuche in Southern Chile

In the case-study region of the border areas in southern Chile, colonial and republican actors also had to appropriate indigenous ideas of governance in order to find a way of getting along with the groups called the "Mapuche". In pre-colonial times, the Mapuche were already farming the lands on which they had settled and organized themselves according to a horizontal hierarchy. These hierarchies were based on the existence of traditional lineages, from which the respective *lonkos* (war leaders) were chosen. The often mutually antagonistic Mapuche groups settled collective property issues through common rituals at which the *lonkos* presented the requests of their respective group and aimed at achieving a consensual solution. The redistribution of material goods played a central role and weakened the potential for conflict due to unequal property conditions between the residing groups. After the conquest of the central valley of the Andes, the Spanish conquerors ventured into the territory of the Mapuche and tried to compel the individual groups of the population to swear allegiance to the king, as they had done throughout America. The Mapuche society, however, which has been described as multicephal or heterarchical, did not represent a centralized political unity. In spite of a cultural and above all linguistic kinship, the individual groups and their *lonkos* were politically independent and in this small-part autonomy similar to the egalitarian hunter and gatherer groups such as the Cuncáac. Contrary to a war leader of the Cuncáac, however, a single *lonko* could enter into binding agreements in his group's name. The Spaniards campaigns of conquest ended in the Araukania not least because no elite had established itself within the Mapuche. Its removal or instrumentalization would have given the Spaniards a position of power over the remaining population. The civil servants of the colonial power, who were accustomed to clear hierarchical structures, had to try to win over each *lonko* individually, as total military subjugation proved impossible. Instead of

conquering the territory, the dispersed Mapuche farmers forced the Spanish military and missionary machinery to apply strategies for "conquering their friendship."[30]

One possibility for doing this was through the pre-Spanish ritual for the reaching agreements with the Mapuche into which the foreign intruders had been integrated. Just as the individual *lonkos* did, the Spanish colonial state and, later on, the Republic of Chile had to employ substantial sums of money in order to appear as generous gift-givers in the meetings they dubbed *parlamento*. Moreover, the ambassadors of the colonial power or the Republic were obliged to listen to the tiring speeches of all the *lonkos*. Each one of the sometimes more than hundred Mapuche leaders repeated in his own words the agreements that had been reached, thereby expressing his consent and that of his group. This proceeding could last for days, during which gifts and food needed to be constantly distributed and the impatient Spanish soldiers pacified. In order to keep the Mapuche from their feared *malones* – horseback raids on the Creole settlements – the colonial power and the Republic had to appropriate the indigenous forms of negotiation. The familiar form of meetings, speeches and mass feedings made it possible for the participating Mapuche groups to trust that the agreements with the Spaniards or Chileans would be held. The Spanish/Chilean need for a legal structure was met by making the reached agreement contractually binding, but the interethnic meeting in itself had to satisfy the demands of an oral tradition and proceed in a correspondingly ritualized manner.

For Spaniards and Chileans, the crux of these negotiations concerned agreements which, from today's perspective, would be located in the political sphere of security. Similar to the Comanches, the Mapuche did not draw a fundamental line between raid and trade, diplomacy and violence or slavery and adoption, which resulted in their actions seeming spontaneous and unpredictable. As shown by the example of the centralized European administrative state, however, government was supposed to be based on the unity of principle and action. Consequently, external relationships were divided into different categories. In some cases, they were mutually exclusive, resulting in the paralysis of government processes.[31]

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[30]Mónika Contreras Saiz, „Die Eroberung der Freundschaft: Indios amigos, Fuertes und lokale Regierungsweisen am Rio Bueno, 1759 – 1796." In: Stefan Rinke, Mónika Contreras, Lasse Hölck, *Regieren an der Peripherie. Amerika zwischen Kolonien und unabhängigen Republiken* , (Stuttgart: Verlang Hans- Dieter Heinz, 2011), 113 – 140.

[31]Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire*,16.

For the Chilean state, a governance service in the security sector principally meant the avoidance of violent attacks by indigenous groups against the white settlers living in the border towns (*pueblos fronterizos*) and their goods. There were several mechanisms through which this governance service was to be rendered.

One mechanism consisted in the state appointment of a missionary, whose task in the first instance was to establish contact with the indigenous society and spread Christian ideals. As soon as a missionary had won the trust of the indigenous population, it was easier to construct of a military fort, whose garrison could fend off the indigenous attacks on the white settlers. To this end, the missionaries had to appropriate the Mapuche law (the so-called *ad mapu*, "Customs of the Land"). Values, therefore, that would normally have been rejected by Christian doctrine found their way into the communications of these men of the cloth.

The *ad mapu* is a collection of rules and norms for the Mapuche's social, religious and cultural patterns of behaviour and provided autochthonous mechanisms of conflict resolution. Knowledge about the traditionally handed-down conflict solution mechanisms was bestowed upon individuals called *weupife.* In addition to the *lonkos* and *shamans* (*machi*), they formed a third specialized group inside the Mapuche society. In the *ad mapu* penalties for murder and raids were to be found, as well as for adultery and other behaviours the Mapuche perceived as anti-social. If a Mapuche, for instance, murdered someone, a determined material restitution had to be made to the family of the victim. In a "Confesionario" from 1843 (a small booklet which serves as a guideline for Christian confessions), the following question to be posed by the missionary to the indigenous sinner is found: "If you killed another, haven't you paid the owner of the deceased?" (Si mataste tu a otro, no pagaste al dueño del difunto?).[32]

Here the appropriation of autochthonous values can be observed which likewise contradict Christian doctrine and republican law. Violent acts inside the indigenous society could not be persecuted as criminal acts according to republican law. The French and English in the Great

[32] Hernández Calzada, Fray Antonio, Diario,1907. Confessionary through questions and talks about doctrine in spanish and araucano (according to the unedited manuscript of the Franciscan brother Antonio Hernández de Calzada (1843) with biographical notes by R.P. brother Antonio Pavez O.F.M. published by Rodolfo R. Schuller, F. Becerra M. Editor, Santiago. Published in: Rolf André Menard Milos Diego Foerster, *Fray Querubín María Brancadori Documentos sobre la Araucanía 1837 – 1852* (Santiago de Chile: Publicaciones del Archivo Franciscano, 2006), 16.

Lakes region also had to accept that the victim of a murder would either be "covered" in gifts or "rise again" through the handing over of a slave.[33]

Nevertheless, the strategic adoption of indigenous ideas of laws and values could also be used against the culture of the Chilean native population. When the systematic occupation of the Araukania began around 1860, the state power actors tried to instrumentalize their knowledge of the indigenous values of the Mapuches for their own purposes. A military captain of the republican government justified the occupation of part of the indigenous territory to the *lonkos* by claiming that the aggressive taking of lands constituted compensation for the Chileans who were killed by the Mapuches during the independence wars. Individual Mapuche groups had fought on the side of the royalists against the independence armies after 1810.[34] The argument of the captain was based on the logic of the Mapuche oral law, the *ad mapu*. The occupation of the indigenous lands between the Bio–Bio and Malleco Rivers, however, was in reality part of the security plan for state expansion endeavours aimed at opening this territory for the settlement of Creole citizens by means of killing and displacing the indigenous population. This cynical use of indigenous moral concepts overlooked the fact that although murder could be compensated in exchange for cattle or women in payment according to the *ad mapu,* it could not be compensated for by signing over land. The adoption of indigenous values by missionaries and military in the Chilean south was meant to resolve the security issues of the white population. Hence, the appropriation was based on the intention of instrumentalizing the Mapuches' values for their expulsion.

Summary and Prospect: Appropriation in the Culturally Heterogeneous Context

A comparison between the case studies that have been presented here and those that have been left out shows that colonial and post-colonial states fundamentally lacked legitimacy in regard to indigenous groups. The successful regulation of collective matters on a local level could therefore only be achieved through measures that were aimed at building up trust. This necessity was often only noticed once the states' monopolies of power had proven to be non-existent. The unquestioned claim to sovereignty of the Crown or, after independence, the "legitimately constituted authorities", often blinded government representatives to the necessity of translating sovereign actions of the state into processes for establishing

[33] White, *The Middle Ground*, 76-77.
[34] Arturo Leiva, *El primer avance a la Araucanía. Angol 1862* (Temuco: Ed. Univ. de la Frontera, 1984), 68, 106 – 107.

agreements on a local level. State actors had to (citing Luhmann) incorporate the expectations of their negotiation counterparts into their own communicative self-presentation in order to build up a relationship of trust with them. The first step – finding out the expectations of the autochthonous groups for the social coexistence with the Europeans and Creoles – was rarely taken, however, and when it was, the insights of individual civil servants and missionaries mostly died away without being heard even on a local level. They were also removed by the transfer of personnel in the completely hierarchical government systems and missionary orders. Only the necessity that arose after the detachment from the motherland of recruiting government personnel from the local population brought a wave of intimate knowledge about the regional indigenous population to the state administrative levels. The lessons the regional officials learned from their experiences (in colonial times) with the indigenous groups were well suited to avoiding cyclical conflicts.

As shown by the example of the Araukania, the acceptance of indigenous legal logic could also be used against the indigenous society and serve as a justification for the use of drastic force. A discrepancy between rhetorical appropriation and the practical deterrence of the indigenous population's striving for autonomy can be recognized in this case, which may be deemed typical for imperial strategies (we are thinking of the Roman Empire, which swallowed small neighbouring peoples and then attacked the closest neighbours in order to protect them).

Parallel to this, the example of the Yaqui captain general Jusacamea shows that the indigenous collective also appropriated individual elements of the Mestizo society, which stemmed from the colonial-governance tradition, and used them to obtain military means (recruitment of armed forces). Our example cases seem to show that the appropriations taking place during the colonial time mainly served the purpose of surmounting communication problems, while appropriations in the culturally heterogeneous context after the system collapse through independence served the specific end of violent resistance between the actor complexes of the state and the indigenous collective. The micro-historical results further suggest that different forms of violence that would have been defined as security problems from the perspective of the state had a mediating or communicative function from the indigenous point of view. Raids, for instance, served as a mechanism for levelling unequal states of property ownership between neighbouring societies that were considered to have equal rights (egalitarian), and they did not necessarily have to be responded to with violence,

as was usually the case with (colonial) states. Even the abduction of “white” settlers or their children and their integration into the indigenous society can be viewed as a way of creating artificial kinships between the enemy collectives, which were designed to bring about greater mutual affinity in the long term.

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