

# From the South to the North: The circulation of Latin American dependency theories in the Federal Republic of Germany

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Clara I Ruvituso 

Institute for Latin American Studies Free University of Berlin, Germany

## Abstract

Sociological research into the transregional North–South circulation of knowledge in the social sciences and humanities has tended to have a unidirectional bias to date. The standard assumption is that as a result of globalization, theories and methods are spread from the global North to the global South. Based on this premise, many of the studies of circulation focus on the transfer of knowledge in terms of ideas, traditions, authors and concepts from the North to the South. Thus far, little attention has been paid to the transregional circulation of theoretical approaches from the South to the North and their impact on the transformation of the European social sciences and humanities. Analysing the circulation of the Latin American dependency theories in the Federal Republic of Germany, this article addresses precisely this gap. The focus is on processes of institutional consolidation of area studies, North–South mobility, the translation-process into German, application in empirical research, modification and rejection. Focusing on this little-explored orientation regarding the circulation of knowledge, this article is in keeping with the current attempt to analyse transregional entanglements within European social sciences.

## Keywords

Area studies, circulation of knowledge, dependency theories, global North, global South, transregional entanglements

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## Corresponding author:

Clara I Ruvituso, Freie Universität Berlin Lateinamerika-Institut, Rüdeshheimer Str. 54-56, Berlin, 14197, Germany.

Email: clara.ruvituso@fu-berlin.de

## Introduction

Current analyses of the circulation of knowledge in social sciences between the global North and the South underscore the historical and presently increasing asymmetries and inequalities (Keim, 2014; Ramos Zincke 2014; Rodríguez Medina, 2014). The preponderance of Anglo-Saxon production and the indexed publication system increases the South–North gaps, in spite of advances in digitalization and access to information (Beigel, 2014; Hanafi and Arvanitis, 2014; Vessuri et al., 2014). Alatas (2003) also points to the existence of an international division of labour – between a recognized North as producer of theories and a South as a producer or object of empirical research – within the framework of a long-term transregional ‘academic dependency’. However, analysis of ‘semi-peripheral’ spaces of knowledge production and ‘counter-hegemonic tendencies’ from the South are recognizing the generation of own autonomous and alternative circuits with national and transregional impacts (Beigel, 2013; Collyer, 2018; Keim, 2008; Ruvituso, 2017). The current attempt to analyse the social sciences in terms of transregional entanglements (Heilbron et al., 2015) is opening a perspective to think about a less-researched direction of the circulation of knowledge, namely from South to North.

Thus, the dependency theories can be considered the first scientific conceptual approach from ‘within the South’ that significantly influenced the social sciences, especially the debate on development and underdevelopment in the South–South and South–North directions (Beigel, 2015; Costa, 2019). Emerging in the mid-1960s within a transnational and interdisciplinary network of social scientists with its epicentre in Chile, the debates around the concept of dependency produced innumerable contributions from the fields of political economy, sociology, political science, history and cultural criticism (dos Santos, 2003; Svampa, 2016). In spite of the differences that have been highlighted between the so-called ‘(neo)Marxist’ and ‘historical-structuralist’ or ‘reformist’ currents (Kay, 2010), the conceptual and methodological approach of the *dependentistas* shared a common vision: they argued for a radical reversal of the modernization approach, thus, underdevelopment was no longer regarded as a kind of pre-historic, endogenous natural state of the ‘Third World’, but as a result of a historical process of unequal integration into the capitalist world market. These asymmetrical relations of ‘peripheral’ countries with ‘central’ industrialized countries were analysed by *dependentistas* as stemming from the colonial period and especially the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, leading to its ‘current’ phase, accentuated by monopoly and transnational capital. The new paradigm had epistemological implications, but also political ones: opening the economics debates of *cepalismo* to interdisciplinary and (neo)Marxist-horizons, the dependency approach included in centre–periphery structural analysis heated debates regarding the interrelation of external and internal factors of dependency, the ruling classes and the marginality phenomenon, the internal colonialism and the historical modes of production.

Some studies have hinged on the ‘misunderstandings’ of the international circulation of dependency theories, especially in the English-speaking countries (Blömstrom and Hettne, 1984; Cardoso, 1977; Kay, 2010; Weissenbacher, 2015), but the case of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) has not been investigated to date. The cleavage

modernization/dependency dominated the debates on development/underdevelopment, especially during the Cold War in the FRG (Nohlen, 2000; Potthast and Bodemer, 2002). The objective of this article is to analyse the congruence of factors that made possible the circulation of Latin American dependency theories in the FRG.

How can the circulation of knowledge in the social sciences be analysed when considering the direction of flow from the South to the North? Wiebke Keim (2014) recently proposed the possibility of thinking the circulation of knowledge within centre–periphery structures in terms of ‘reception’, ‘exchange’ and the ‘negotiation of theory and practice’. The congruence of factors such as ‘mobility’, a ‘common language of communication’ (mainly through the existence of translations) and above all ‘mutual recognition’ could transform the circulation of knowledge into a form of exchange (2014: 101). Thus, processes of reception should include the analysis of application, modification and rejection. Following this proposal, in the next five sections: (1) I analyse the institutional development of Latin American studies and the academic growth of mobility, especially between the FRG and Chile; (2) I reconstruct the translation process of Latin American dependency authors into German, taking into account the role of mediators and publishing houses and the construction of a German dependency canon as a paradigm; (3) I analyse the process of application of Latin American *dependentistas* in empirical research at the Free University of Berlin and of modification within academic groups in Bielefeld, Frankfurt am Main and Starnberg; (4) I describe the central arguments of rejection and the paradigm shift in the German post-unification context; and (5) I arrive at conclusions regarding the congruence of factors explaining the circulation of dependency theories in the FRG.

## **The consolidation of Latin American studies in the Federal Republic of Germany: Institutions and North–South mobility**

The circulation of dependency theories in the FRG developed under specific political and institutional conditions. As a result of the international impact of the Cuban Revolution from 1959, and later the experience of the Chilean *Unidad Popular* (1970–1973) and the triumph of *sandinismo* in Nicaragua in 1979, Latin America had a period of unprecedented centrality in transregional political and cultural perception. Recent research has shown that the wave of international solidarity with the Third World in France, the FRG and Switzerland had implications for the political and cultural recognition of Latin America and its production of knowledge (Kalter, 2016; Kuhn, 2011; Weitbrecht, 2012). In that context, the acclaimed ‘boom’ of Latin American literature in the FRG was accompanied by the reception of Latin American social scientists, with impacts on the heated debates about underdevelopment/development and ‘third-worldism’ inside and outside the academy, within the framework of the long-term political and cultural transformations marked by the student movement of 1968 (Einert, 2018). In addition, two congruent phenomena fostered this unusual flow of knowledge from Latin America in the FRG: the foundation of academic and political institutions focused on Latin America, and the consequent boost to the mobility of scholars. The first aspect occurred within the framework of the general development of area studies throughout the West. From the mid-1960s,

Latin American studies grew in a decentralized and autonomous manner at various universities and research centres in the FRG. Inspired in part by theories of modernization and imperialist projections in the USA during the Cold War (Chilcote, 2018; Wallerstein, 1997), it had another starting point in the FRG. Following the recent analysis by Puhle (2018), West German Latin American studies developed in a political climate of growing interest in the problems of development in the Third World after the decolonization. This interest was broad within society, including interest from social democracy, civil society actors and the churches, as well as the emerging radical and anti-imperialist movements. The significant difference with the USA was that ‘from 1966–1969 to the early 1980s the center-left Social Democratic Party was in government and launched the policies of détente, more communication and careful negotiation with the countries of the Soviet bloc’ (Puhle, 2018: 71). Thus, the general direction of Latin American studies in the FRG was not as strongly politically contested (*grosso modo* between left and right) and the profession was not as polarized as it was in the USA. The creation of the international policy of aid and development cooperation, promoted among others by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation (BMZ) since 1961 produced another crucial impulse for research into development and underdevelopment, with implications for the growth of research on Latin America. And, at the same time, institutions such as the Latin America section of the Science and Politics Foundation, which functions as an adviser to the government, and specially the foundations linked by German political parties (such as the Friedrich Ebert and Konrad Adenauer Foundation) promoted research on Latin America with scholarships and support for extended stays for scholars.

The direct consequence of this institutional process was an increase in North–South and South–North mobility: many of the researchers involved in the reception of the dependency debates in the FRG arrived in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s through the support of these academic institutions and exchange policies. A large part of these scholars arrived in Chile, the epicentre of dependency theories at that time. The presence of transnational research centres in Chile and between 1970 and 1973 the huge magnet that resulted from the experience of the *Unidad Popular* established a space of academic productivity and political exchange (Beigel, 2010). In this context, the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES), based at the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), was one of the centres where dependency theory was developed, including international figures such as Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Celso Furtado from Brazil, Osvaldo Sunkel from Chile and Aníbal Quijano from Peru. Other scholars converged at the Centre for Socio-Economic Studies (CESO) of the University of Chile and the Centre for Studies of National Reality (CEREN) of the Catholic University of Chile, including Theotônio dos Santos, Vania Bambirra and Ruy Mauro Marini from Brazil, the American researcher of German origin André Gunder Frank, the Francophone couple Michèle and Armand Mattelart and Alain Touraine, among others.

The presence of researchers from Germany in Chile included young scholars from different political configurations. Franz Hinkelammert, Norbert Lechner and Dieter Nohlen arrived in Chile between 1963 and 1970 supported by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, linked to the Christian Democratic Union. Close to the Social Democratic Party, the historian and political scientist Hans-Jürgen Puhle served as director of the Latin American Institute of Social Research (ILDIS) funded by the Friedrich Ebert

Foundation between 1966 and 1968. From the Free University of Berlin, the sociologists Clarita Müller-Plantenberg, Urs Müller-Plantenberg and Volker Lühr arrived in Chile between 1968 and 1969, thanks to the exchange programme organized by the professor Richard Behrend, exiled in Bolivia during National Socialism (Müller-Plantenberg, 2001). Klaus Meschkat, one of the protagonists of the early student movement in West Berlin and an active member of the so-called Opposition Outside Parliament, obtained a teaching position at the University in Concepción in March 1973. Passage through other regions of Latin America also influenced the reception of other authors involved in the debate. The sociologists Heinz-Rudolf Sonntag and Elena Hochman moved to Venezuela in 1968 and made close contact with the Venezuelan scholars Armando Córdova, Héctor Silva Michelena and the Brazilian Darcy Ribeiro, among others (Darwich Osorio, 2015: 150–151). For his part, Wolf Grabendorff arrived in Venezuela in 1968 with the support of the Volkswagen Foundation and later travelled to Argentina as a press correspondent connecting Argentinian scholars linked by dependency debates. These stays in Latin America implied the first encounter with Latin American thought and especially with the theoretical framework of the dependency theories.<sup>1</sup> After this experience of research and political transformation in Latin America, many of these scholars joined different institutes and research centres: Nohlen in Heidelberg, the Müller-Plantenbergs and Lühr in West Berlin, Meschkat in Hannover and Puhle in Münster/Bielefeld. The emergence of the solidarity movements with Chile after the Pinochet coup d'état of September 1973 in the FRG coincided with the wide circulation of the dependency approach until the mid-1980s. In this context, André Gunder Frank, Franz Hinkelammert, Ruy Mauro Marini, Norbert Lechner and Luis Vitale were some of the scholars linked to dependency debates who obtained decisive help from their West German colleagues to be able to move from Chile to different institutes in the FRG, where they worked as teachers and researchers, mostly for a short time.<sup>2</sup> Frank and Hinkelammert spent short periods at the Institute for Latin American Studies (LAI) at the Free University of Berlin (FU) as visiting professors and researchers, but their attempts to obtain chairs in the FRG failed. Frank moved to England and Hinkelammert to Costa Rica (Frank, 1991: 69–70). Coming from Panama, Marini arrived in Munich in January 1974 and worked at the Max Planck Institute in Starnberg. He received a position as a professor in Mexico in September 1974. The Argentinean/Chilean historian and political activist Luis Vitale was able to leave Chile and arrived in Frankfurt am Main, where he worked as a teacher between 1975 and 1977, moving on to Venezuela. The networks woven by the Germans with Latin America during the 1960s and early 1970s and the institutional support for Latin American studies, accompanied by a new Third World perspective within social movements, achieved an unprecedented possibility of political and academic recognition of Latin American social sciences. These transformations were reflected in a 'boom' of translations into German.

### **Translation into German: Mediators, publishing houses and the construction of a German dependency canon**

Between 1969 and 1981, about 10 books and 21 articles linked directly to the dependency theoretical debate from Latin America were translated into German (see Table 1). The success of the German circulation of works on dependency was also due to their

**Table 1.** Translations of Latin American *dependentistas* into German (1969–1981): Top 10.

Author	Number of translations	Books	Papers	Publishing house/ Journal
1. <b>André Gunder Frank</b>	6	4	2	Europäische Verlagsanstalt, Wagenbach, Suhrkamp, Rotbuch, Rowohlt
2. <b>Fernando H Cardoso</b>	6	1 <sup>a</sup>	5	Fink, <i>Prokla</i> , Suhrkamp, Rotbuch, <i>Peripherie</i>
3. <b>Celso Furtado</b>	4	2	2	Suhrkamp, Fink, Verlag für interkulturelle Kommunikation
4. <b>Armando Córdova</b>	3	1 <sup>b</sup> /1	1	Suhrkamp, Bertelsmann Univ.-Verl.
5. <b>Ruy Mauro Marini</b>	3	1	2	Wagenbach, Rotbuch, Suhrkamp
6. <b>Rodolfo Stavenhagen</b>	3		3	Wagenbach, Suhrkamp
7. <b>Anibal Quijano</b>	3		3	Suhrkamp, Hoffmann und Campe
8. <b>Oswaldo Sunkel</b>	1		1	Suhrkamp
9. <b>Theotônio dos Santos</b>	1		1	Suhrkamp
10. <b>Octavio Ianni</b>	1		1	Hoffmann und Campe
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>21</b>	

<sup>a</sup>With Enzo Faletto.

<sup>b</sup>With Héctor Silva Michelena.

publication in the influential *edition* Suhrkamp, which was a central book series within the postwar intellectual field. Günther Busch, the editor of the *edition* from 1963 to 1979, opened the book series to some Latin American social scientists on the strong insistence of the sociologists Heinz-Rudolf Sonntag and Elena Hochman, living in Venezuela since 1968.<sup>3</sup> As a result of this mediation, the first translation was published in 1969: it was the compilation of three studies by the Venezuelan economists Armando Córdova and Héctor Silva Michelena under the title *Die wirtschaftliche Struktur Lateinamerikas: Drei Studien zur politischen Ökonomie der Unterenwicklung* (*The Economic Structure of Latin America: Three Studies on the Political Economy of Underdevelopment*). In this book, the authors proposed some central theses towards a definition of underdevelopment, criticizing the monetarist approaches and adjusting above all the structural variables for their historical understanding. The last text introduced the question of ‘dependency’ as one of the central consequences of economic structures of underdevelopment. Along with the third edition of Córdova and Michelena’s book, in 1971 Armando Córdova’s *Strukturelle Heterogenität und wirtschaftliches Wachstum* (*Structural Heterogeneity and Economic Growth*) was published. According to Manfred Nitsch (2002), Córdova’s book opened a new perspective on the problems of development for research in German, where the form and importance of dependency and structural heterogeneity are seen as the determinants of economic growth. The book closed with a positive commentary on

*Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* by André Gunder Frank, translated into German in 1969.

Surprisingly, the consolidation of the academic translation of the debates on dependency and its wide circulation were carried out by Dieter Senghaas, a German scholar not linked to Latin American studies. Senghaas discovered the Latin American dependency theories in 1970 when reading the article by Osvaldo Sunkel entitled 'Intégration capitaliste transnationale et désintégration nationale en Amérique latine' in the French journal *Politique Etrangère* (Senghaas, 2016). As a result of his bibliographical work in West Berlin libraries, in 1972 Senghaas published the compilation *Imperialismus und strukturelle Gewalt. Analysen über abhängige Reproduktion (Imperialism and Structural Violence. Analysis on Dependent Reproduction)* in the edition Suhrkamp. On the description of the book, Senghaas reflected on the asymmetries of the circulation of knowledge, emphasizing the extra-academic reasons that explained why some authors were not yet known in Europe:

While for decades the theorists of the metropolis dominated the debate on Imperialism in an apologetic or critical way, an animated discussion took place in the Third World, especially in Latin America, about the conditions of dependent reproduction. The fact that it remained largely unknown in the metropolises is itself the result of an imperialist structure: scientific imperialism. The present volume gives to three important representatives of the Third World, Theotônio dos Santos, Osvaldo Sunkel and Celso Furtado, a voice. (Senghaas, 1972: 2, own translation)

This book was especially paradigmatic in the West German reception of dependency theories because, in addition to presenting Latin American scholars in the international debate on imperialism, Senghaas published for the first time in Europe an updated bibliographical list on the subject of dependency. The list of contributions around the '*dependencia* discussion in Latin America' consisted of nine pages with 164 contributions, influencing the formation of a broad canon, including titles in Spanish, English, German and French written by scholars from Latin America, Europe and the USA. In September 1972, Senghaas participated in the conference 'Strategies for Economic Development' organized by Samir Amin in Dakar, giving rise to meetings with many of the central figures of the dependency debate from Latin America. With the publication of the volume *Peripherer Kapitalismus. Analysen über Abhängigkeit und Unterentwicklung (Peripheral Capitalism. Analysis of Dependency and Underdevelopment)* in 1974, Senghaas consolidated the reception of dependency as a paradigm in the West German academic field. The book focused on theorists from the South and compiled contributions by Samir Amin, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Oscar Braun, Celso Furtado, André Gunder Frank, Ruy Mauro Marini, Aníbal Quijano, Rodolfo Stavenhagen and Giovanni Arrighi. Most of the articles were translations of the conference papers that the authors had delivered in Dakar in 1972. The compilation proposed by Senghaas constituted a dialogue between *dependentistas* across the Third World, where the political differences between the Latin American authors were not emphasized. Furtado maintained the hypothesis that the history of underdevelopment was based on the division of an economic model, in which technological progress gave way to the global modernization of

**Table 2.** Senghaas dependency canon according to language (1972–1974).

Language	Number of publications	%
<b>Spanish</b>	154	58.7%
<b>English</b>	39	15%
<b>German</b>	35	13.4%
<b>French</b>	25	9.5%
<b>Portuguese</b>	8	3%
<b>Italian</b>	1	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>100%</b>

forms of consumption and to a partial transformation of the production processes. Cardoso presented the need to reformulate the classical theories of imperialism, explaining the consequences of current monopoly capitalism and its forms of investment in peripheral economies dealing with different forms of dependency and integration. He explicitly criticized Frank's theories about the development of underdevelopment and warned of the need to think about different forms of dependency at a global level. Stavenhagen compared the different forms of production in the agrarian structures of Africa and Latin America during colonial and postcolonial history, realizing the impossibility of thinking that these forms were feudal or capitalist. From a horizon of direct debate with Western Marxism, Marini presented his concept of super-exploitation for the analysis of peripheral capitalism and Aníbal Quijano exposed the basis of his theories about dependent urbanization and marginal poles.

In this book Senghaas renewed the list of publications on the Latin American dependency debate, while consolidating his own research group. The new list of publications added 98 new titles. As can be seen in Tables 2 and 3, the 'Latin American' dependency canon constructed by Senghaas between 1972 and 1974 consisted of 262 titles written by 118 scholars from 22 countries. The presence of women in the canon was minimal: only seven women appear alongside 111 men.<sup>4</sup>

The bibliographical lists published by Senghaas built a transregional and transdisciplinary Latin American canon around dependency, defined more by the shared perspective than by nationality or discipline. After the boom of translations between 1969 and 1974, two last paradigmatic translations appeared in *edition Suhrkamp*. In 1976, the already famous study by Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto *Abhängigkeit und Entwicklung in Lateinamerika (Dependency and Development in Latin America)* was translated. To the original text from 1969 was added an *epilogue* where the authors clarified some controversial issues of reception: dependency should not be thought of as a static theory and much less an economic theory, but as a complex of hypotheses to think the concrete situations of dependency from a dialectical and historical perspective. Despite Cardoso's insistent clarifications about the misunderstandings that were emerging around the concept of dependency, especially in the West, the criticisms of the approach were increasing and were mainly directed at the supposed economical and external reductionism of the analysis. The publication of *Abhängige Akkumulation und*



**Table 3.** Senghaas dependency canon according to nationality (1972–1974).

Country	Number of authors	%
<b>Brazil</b>	23	19.5%
<b>Argentina</b>	18	15.3%
<b>USA</b>	14	11.9%
<b>Mexico</b>	12	10.2%
<b>(West) Germany</b>	10	8.5%
<b>Chile</b>	9	7.6%
<b>Venezuela</b>	7	5.9%
<b>France</b>	5	4.2%
<b>Colombia</b>	4	3.3%
<b>Peru</b>	3	2.5%
<b>Austria</b>	2	1.7%
<b>Others<sup>a</sup></b>	11	9.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>a</sup>One representative from: Belgium, Costa Rica, Greek, Guatemala, Italy, India, Holland, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Spain and Uruguay.

*Unterentwicklung (Dependent Accumulation and Underdevelopment)* by André Gunder Frank, completed in 1977 with the support of the Max Planck Institute in Starnberg, was published in 1980 by Suhrkamp. The book included a long prologue, where Frank tried to defend himself from the increasingly numerous criticisms. The critical tendencies increased during the 1980s.

## **Application and modification of the Latin American dependency theories in academia**

In 1973, Tilman Evers and Peter von Wogau published the article '*dependencia: Lateinamerikanische Beiträge zur Theorie der Unterentwicklung*' (*dependencia: Latin American contributions to the theory of underdevelopment*) in the West Berlin leftist journal *Das Argument*. The authors assumed that the local reception of dependency theory was immersed in a 'total misunderstanding'. The list of publications on the subject was almost 'impossible to deal with' and the concept of dependency had already penetrated industrialized countries: 'where not only representatives of the intellectual left, but also the strongholds of the bourgeois social sciences took note of it' (1973: 404–405, own translation). They concluded that the hypotheses presented by the *dependentistas* still needed concrete empirical support. Thus, the question of application became especially relevant among the defenders and critics of dependency as a theoretical approach.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the works of many Latin American authors within the dependency debates were used as a theoretical-conceptual framework in empirical research. This process was especially productive within Latin American studies and within chairs and institutes spread throughout the FRG. Within the field of the sociology

**Table 4.** PhDs and *Habilitationen* on Latin America under the dependency paradigm at the FU Berlin (1975–1986).

Discipline	Author/Year	Region	Gender	Type of study/ Supervisor
<b>Sociology</b>	1. Rott, 1975	Mexico	F	PhD/ Jaeggi
	2. von Werlhof, 1975	El Salvador/Costa Rica	F	PhD/ Lühr
	3. Schwahn, 1978	Peru	M	PhD/ Lühr
	4. Boeckh, 1978	Colombia/Venezuela/Peru	M	<i>Habilitation/</i> -
	5. Rott, 1979	Colombia/Mexico	F	<i>Habilitation/</i> -
	6. Spessart, 1980	Peru	F	PhD/ Lühr
	7. Wöhlcke, 1981	Brazil	M	<i>Habilitation/</i> -
	8. Klemp, 1985	Argentina	F	PhD/ Lühr
<b>Economics</b>	9. Mezger, 1977	Chile	F	PhD/ Albrecht
	10. Fürst, 1981	Peru	M	PhD/ Nitsch
	11. Hurtienne, 1984	Latin America/ Third World	M	PhD/ Nitsch
	12. Männling, 1986	Peru	F	PhD/ Nitsch
<b>Political sciences</b>	13. Brock, 1975	USA/Latin America	M	PhD/ Zieburá
	14. Evers, 1977	Latin America/Third World	M	<i>Habilitation/</i> -
	15. Bieber, 1978	Latin America	M	PhD/Sotelo

of development and economy empirical research was carried out by Volker Lühr, Manfred Nitsch, Urs Müller-Plantenberg and Renate Rott in West Berlin, by Johannes Augel, Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen, Maria Mies and Claudia von Werlhof (initially in West Berlin) in Bielefeld, by Germán Kratochwill, Heinrich Krumwiede and Franz Nuscheler in Hamburg, Klaus Meschkat in Hannover, Dieter Boris in Marburg and Clarita Müller-Plantenberg (initially in West Berlin) in Kassel. Within the political sciences, research was carried out by Tilman Evers and Ignacio Sotelo in West Berlin, Dieter Nohlen in Heidelberg, Hans-Jürgen Puhle in Münster/Bielefeld, Wolfgang Hein in Hamburg and Andreas Boeckh in Tübingen, among others.

As a case study, I will focus on the empirical research on Latin America within the FU Berlin. Since 1970, the Institute for Latin America Studies (LAI) has been the major interdisciplinary institute of Latin American studies in the FRG. The original main goal of the institute was research and teaching around the problematic of 'socio-cultural and socio-economic underdevelopment' from an interdisciplinary perspective.<sup>5</sup> The empirical research at the LAI was based on extensive knowledge of Latin American authors, due to the invitation of visiting scholars and long stays by LAI researchers in the respective countries. Thus, between 1975 and 1986, the empirical research assumed the dependency paradigm as a theoretical/conceptual starting point. For the present bibliometrical analysis I will take into account 15 research works (11 doctorates and four *Habilitationen*)<sup>6</sup> published in the German language during that period (see Table 4) that explicitly assumed the dependency theories as the conceptual framework. The disciplinary division (eight in the field of sociology, four in economics and three in political science) corresponds more

**Table 5.** Top 10 most-cited Latin American *dependentistas* in empirical research on Latin America, FU Berlin (1975–1986).

Author	Number of citations	%
1. Fernando H Cardoso	63 <sup>a</sup>	18.2%
2. André Gunder Frank	57	16.5%
3. Aníbal Quijano	51	14.8%
4. Celso Furtado	47	13.6%
5. Theotônio dos Santos	27	7.8%
6. Osvaldo Sunkel	26	7.6%
7. Armando Córdova	23 <sup>b</sup>	6.7%
8. Octavio Ianni	21	6%
9. Rodolfo Stavenhagen	17	5%
10. Ruy Mauro Marini	13	3.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>a</sup>Twelve with Enzo Faletto.

<sup>b</sup>Four with Héctor Silva Michelena.

strongly to institutional issues (supervisors, institutes) than thematic issues, since the central problematic of underdevelopment/development was thought to be fundamentally interdisciplinary.

The field of sociology covered very varied topics: the Mexican trade union movement under 'dependent industrialization' (Rott, 1975), social structures and underdevelopment in Costa Rica and El Salvador (von Werlhof, 1975), the industrial sector in Colombia, Venezuela and Peru in contexts of 'external dependency' (Boeckh, 1978), the productive forces of work in Peru (Schwahn, 1978), the relations between trade unionism and the political system in Colombia and Mexico under structures marked by 'structural heterogeneity' (Rott, 1979), urban 'marginality' in Lima under military rule (Spessart, 1980), social structures and 'dependent industrialization' in Brazil (Wöhlke, 1981) and the problem of 'dependent urbanization', exploitation and the city/countryside relationship in Buenos Aires (Klemp, 1985). In economics, the theses analysed alliances and conflicts around the international exploitation of raw materials regarding the case of the copper industry in Chile (Mezger, 1977), regional inequalities in Peru from a national and international socio-economic perspective as 'structural heterogeneity' (Fürst, 1981), the long-term theoretical foundations of development thinking in dialogue with the dependency debate (Hurtienne, 1984) and the internal consequences of the exploitation of gold in Peru (Männling, 1986). In sociology and economics, the amount of research carried out by women began to equal that of men. Within the political sciences only three works by males appeared, focused on more regional and theoretical perspectives: the regional policies of the Latin American peripheries against the US (Brock, 1975), a theoretical approach to the state in the capitalist periphery (Evers, 1977) and the consolidation of the nation-states and the possibility of Latin American unity since 1880 (Bieber, 1978). As can be seen in Table 5, which presents a bibliometric analysis of the citations of Latin American *dependentistas* in the 15 selected PhDs and *Habilitation* theses (Table 4) there

was some congruence with the translation process: Fernando Henrique Cardoso and André Gunder Frank were the most translated and also the dependency authors who were more frequently cited in empirical research.

Although André Gunder Frank was in second place, many of the authors adopted a critical position towards his approach and were inclined to the position of Cardoso in terms of thinking ‘dependency situations’ and not necessary dependencies (‘development of underdevelopment’). The concepts of ‘structural heterogeneity’ and ‘marginality’ were the most used in empirical research. Thus, although Armando Córdova was ranked seventh, the 1971 translation of his book in *edition* Suhrkamp was cited in all of the PhDs and *Habilitation* theses. Aníbal Quijano’s third place can be understood in part by the amount of works that were concentrated on Peru, five in total.

Parallel to this case study-oriented research, three big research groups developed their own theoretical perspectives in dialogue with the dependency debates and based on comparative studies in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. The research group around Ernest Feder, Folker Frödel, Jürgen Heinrich and Otto Kreye within the Max Planck Institute on the Preconditions of Human Life in the Modern World in Starnberg – which was especially in contact and exchange with André Gunder Frank, Ruy Mauro Marini and Osvaldo Sunkel – influenced the international debate on imperialism with critical contributions on the ‘new international division of labour’ and structural unemployment in developed countries. Following Samir Amin’s ‘delinking’ approach, Senghaas’s research group on ‘dissociation’ at the Peace Research Institute in Frankfurt am Main proposed on the basis of comparative studies in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe, ‘self-centred development’ as a way out of underdevelopment. The central hypothesis suggests that countries should undergo a stage of ‘decoupling’ or ‘selective dissociation’ from the global market (to allow Third World societies to mobilize resources to meet the local needs of their own populations in a coherent way). They also advanced the analysis of socialism (as societies absolutely dissociated from the global market). Between 1974 and the mid-1980s, under the direction of Hans-Dieter Evers in Bielefeld, the research group on ‘subsistence production’ was constructed as a complement to the dependency theories. The group was oriented by Frank in the debate on the modes of production, and they understood ‘subsistence’ as a necessary and strategic form of articulation of the poor sectors within capitalist accumulation, and not as a pre-modern or traditional way of working. Within the framework of this programme, the group investigated subsistence production in rural and urban spaces in Africa, Latin America, Asia and India. As much of subsistence work is carried out by women, some of the members focused on women’s work in Latin America (especially Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen, Cornelia Giebler, Maria Mies and Claudia von Werlhof) with an impact on the incipient German ‘women’s studies’, also embracing the feminist and ecological cause in both research and activism until today.

## Rejection and paradigm shift in (unified) Germany

Following Keim (2014), ‘rejection’ means that received knowledge is responded to negatively: ‘The author questions or denies its validity, utility, adequacy or underlying assumptions and premises’ (2014: 99). The reception of the dependency theories as

'rejection' began early among conservative intellectuals in the FRG, but increased and expanded in the late 1980s, until it provoked a paradigm shift. As Maristella Svampa points out, 'if the Latin American and global impact of dependency theory was enormous, it was also quickly a victim of its own success' (2016: 198, own translation). As part of its reception, there were a series of 'misunderstandings', 'simplifications' and 'criticisms' – especially in Frank's reception – that contributed to the discrediting of the approach (2016: 198). However, most authors agree that there were, above all, a series of contextual factors that explain the collapse of dependency theories as an explanatory framework of transregional scope. The 'defeats' of the left in Latin America under military dictatorships (with the consequent repression and diaspora of scientists and intellectuals), the renunciation of revolutionary ideology and the growing appreciation of the democratic system had an impact on Latin American intellectual debates with a new focus on transition (Beigel, 2015; Rovira Kaltwasser, 2003; Svampa, 2016). Finally, with the collapse of real socialism and the new cycle of neoliberal consensus, '(under)development' entered into decline in the world political and academic agenda, to make room for market integration and globalization (Connell, 2007; dos Santos, 2003; Kay, 2010). Faced with the unexpected and enormous challenges of German unification, the debates about the Third World lost relevance. Latin America, together with Africa, was no longer a focus of the academic agenda of German area studies, which now focused on Eastern Europe or the emerging Asian economies (Werz, 2016). One of the central books that reflected the crisis of the debate on development and the radical change of perspective was written by Ulrich Menzel, the most important disciple of Dieter Senghaas. In 1992, Menzel published an influential essay titled *Das Ende der Dritten Welt und das Scheitern der grossen Theorie (The End of the Third World and the Failure of the Grand Theory)* with Suhrkamp. Menzel's central argument was that with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of developing countries (East Asia and some regions of Latin America) there was no longer any point in talking about the Third World and of the necessary dependency relations within the world market. Dependency theories had failed, and this came with a necessary paradigm shift in development theories. Menzel listed the 'ten taboos' that had led to the crisis of development theories. Through these taboos, the dependency approach was discredited. With taboo number three, 'The legitimating function of imperialism and dependency theory', Menzel argued that,

Imperialism and dependency are at least very convenient theories, despite their multiple shortcomings. This is the only way to explain why they have fallen on such fertile ground throughout the 'Third World' and are enjoying continued popularity there. Thus, they deliver . . . a wonderful explanation as to why all problems come from the outside, relieving them of the necessity of carrying out changes in their own countries. (1992: 52–53, own translation)

The argument that dependency theorists only drew on external elements to explain underdevelopment continued to be reproduced. A PhD student of Menzel wrote in his research on dependency theories: 'Not in the history of the countries were the causes of the underdevelopment seen, but in colonialism and imperialism, in the international division of labour and world economic relations' (Minhorst, 1996: 37–38, own translation). This simplifying thesis was expanded in many of the books on development/underdevelopment. Franz Nuscheler wrote in 2005:

But the one-sided classification of the causes of underdevelopment in the integration into the world market became a fate, because development took place precisely where it could not take place according to the dependency theories: in East Asia and in parts of Latin America. Dependency theories failed because they underestimated not only the shaping and change of the power of politics, people and cultures, but also the opportunities of the world market. Moreover, the blindness of the ‘multis’ as an embodiment of exploitation and economic imperialism hid the positive effects of foreign investment proved by research. . . . The texts of the dependency classics have long been gathering dust in the bookshelves of the grandparents of the Opposition Outside Parliament. (2005: 218–219, own translation)

Stefan Pimmer (2018) argued that the dependency theories lost their centrality precisely at the time of greater transregional dependencies, created with the new capitalist world order after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The current analyses from Latin America, which advocate the rehabilitation of the dependency approaches and their adaptation to the new conditions of capitalism in the so-called era of globalization, highlight the analytical potential of Latin American thought in the current multipolar world (dos Santos, 2003; Osorio, 2016; Rovira Kaltwasser, 2003; Svampa, 2016). In addition, recently Sérgio Costa (2019) pointed out that *dependentistas* opened a ‘second lineage’ of Latin American modernity research, rejecting dualistic descriptions towards a radical relational approach to global asymmetries and inspiring current postcolonial and decolonial approaches.

## Conclusions

In this study, I sought to examine the circulation of Latin American dependency theories in the FRG in order to determine the congruence of factors explaining an unusual flow of knowledge from the South to the North, as well as its scope and limits. Following Wiebke Keim’s (2014) sociological approach, I focused on the possibility of ‘exchange’ within structural asymmetries, taking into account the recognition promoted especially by factors such as ‘mobility’ and ‘communication’ between languages (through translation) and within the reception process, including applications in empirical research and its modification.

The recognition of dependency theories in the FRG took place in a favourable global context for Latin America. After the Cuban Revolution of 1959, the geopolitical importance of the continent began to increase together with the debate on development/underdevelopment in the Western political agenda. The creation of academic and political institutions with a focus on the Third World was consolidated in the FRG under social democratic governments and as a result of political pressure from anti-imperialist student activism after 1967/68. The institutional financing of area studies made possible the arrival of Latin American scholars in the FRG, but also especially the mobility of West German academics to Chile, the epicentre of the dependency debates. By analysing the ‘exchange’ factors (institutions and mobility), I highlighted the configuration of Chile as a centre of the transregional production of knowledge in the social sciences and the fact that West German scholars were incorporated into international research centres, and were thus in contact with scholars from different countries, witnessing first-hand the emergence of the dependency approaches in their own space of production and debate.

The enormous German solidarity after Pinochet's coup in 1973 led to some intellectuals linked to dependency theories working in the FRG, albeit for a short time.


By analysing the translation process, I focused on the role of mediators, such as Heinz-Rudolf Sonntag and Elena Hochman (who produced and introduced the German translation of specific authors such as Armando Córdova and Héctor Silva Michelena from Venezuela) and Dieter Senghaas (who mediated the construction of a transnational and multilingual Latin American dependency canon). They mediated the recognition of the existence of a dependency paradigm in the FRG. In addition, the translation process of Latin American *dependentistas* into German was supported by the prestige and scope provided by the platform of the publishing house Suhrkamp. My analysis of the process of application of the dependency theories in empirical research in the FRG focused on the Latin American research at the FU Berlin, involving empirical works on Latin America between 1975 and 1986. This corpus covers only a sample of a phenomenon that developed in institutes throughout the FRG, and leaves open a possible comparison with other institutes for future research. Likewise, I showed that the dependency paradigm worked as a theoretical basis for re-elaborations within academic groups in Bielefeld, Frankfurt am Main and Starnberg. Finally, by analysing the process of rejection and the paradigm shift in the FRG, I adhere to the perspectives that explain the different contextual factors that limited the international circulation of dependency theories. In the West German case, the fall of the Berlin Wall meant an absolute reconfiguration of the social sciences, whereby Latin American studies lost relative importance, and the debate on (under)development lost centrality, with a new focus on the subject of democracy and transformation in East Europe. In my analysis, I highlighted Ulrich Menzel's postulation in 1992 of the 'end of the Third World' and the defeat of 'the great theories' as one of the paradigmatic texts of this change.

In 2007, Raewyn Connell's book on Southern theories argued for a more democratic global recognition of social theory from societies outside the 'dominant' European and North American metropolises. Despite current efforts from postcolonial and decolonial perspectives to question the epistemological basis of social science canons and to open these up to theories from the South, the global circulation of Southern theories continues to meet structural limits. If the idea of asymmetries within the international circulation of knowledge between the global South and North has already been brought up in different settings, the most important finding that I highlighted here is that if some Latin American dependency authors were recognized in the FRG between 1969 and 1989, this recognition was marked by an extraordinary favourable political conjuncture for Third World issues in Europe during the Cold War, accompanied by an institutional and political framework that allowed for financing mobility of scholars, mediating translation and constructing a canon.

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## ORCID iD

Clara I Ruvituso  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5043-1405>

## Notes

1. This was the case for the following scholars interviewed by the author during 2017 and 2018: Wolf Grabendorff (28 January 2017 in Berlin), Hans-Jürgen Puhle (17 May 2017 in Berlin), Clarita Müller-Plantenberg (12 January 2017 in Berlin), Urs Müller-Plantenberg (23 November 2017 in Berlin), Klaus Meschkat (30 August 2018 in Berlin) and Dieter Nohlen (13 December 2018 in Heidelberg).
2. See the testimonies on the West German solidarity with scholars coming from Chile in Frank (1991: 69–70); Müller-Plantenberg (2001: 50) and Marini (2012: 89).
3. See letters in: Suhrkamp Archive at the German Literature Archive in Marbach.
4. The women who appeared in the canon were: Vania Bambirra (Brazil), Susanne Bodenheimer (USA), Cecilia Cadena (Mexico), Ida Paz (Cuba), María del Rosario Green (Mexico), Inés Izaguirre (Argentina) and Jacqueline Weislist (France).
5. See the document: *Entwicklungsplan für Lehre und Forschung (5. April 1971)*, p. 10 in LAI/ Archive of the FU Berlin.
6. German postdoctoral lecturing qualification (similar to a second doctorate qualification).

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### Author biography

Clara I Ruvitosa is researcher and lecturer at the Institute for Latin American Studies (Freie Universität Berlin, Germany). She studied sociology at the University of La Plata, Argentina, and gained her PhD in Political Science from the University of Rostock, Germany. Her main research interest is the transregional circulation of knowledge and entangled inequalities in the fields of philosophy and development studies. Publications include *Diálogos existenciales. La filosofía alemana en la Argentina peronista (1946–1955)* (Vervuert/Iberoamericana, 2015) and with N Wertz and J Piovani, *Transiciones, Memorias e Identidades en Europa y América Latina* (Vervuert/Iberoamericana, 2016).

### Résumé

La recherche sociologique sur la circulation transrégionale Nord-Sud des connaissances en sciences humaines et sociales a eu jusqu’à présent tendance à adopter un parti pris unidirectionnel. L’hypothèse courante est qu’en raison de la mondialisation, les théories et les méthodes se répandent du Nord global au Sud global. Partant de cette hypothèse, de nombreuses études sur la circulation du savoir sont centrées sur le transfert de connaissances – idées, traditions, auteurs et concepts – qui s’opère du Nord vers le Sud. Jusqu’à présent, peu d’attention a été accordée à la circulation transrégionale des approches théoriques du Sud vers le Nord et à leur impact sur l’évolution des sciences humaines et sociales européennes. Avec cet article, dans lequel nous analysons la circulation des théories latino-américaines de la dépendance en République fédérale d’Allemagne, nous cherchons précisément à combler cette lacune. L’accent est mis sur les processus de consolidation institutionnelle des études régionales, la mobilité Nord-Sud, la traduction en allemand de ces théories, leur application dans la recherche empirique et leur modification ou leur rejet. Axé sur cette orientation peu explorée de la recherche concernant la circulation des connaissances, cet article va dans le sens des

efforts actuels pour analyser les enchevêtrements transrégionaux au sein des sciences sociales européennes.

**Mots-clés**

Circulation des connaissances, enchevêtrements transrégionaux, études régionales, Nord global, Sud global, théories de la dépendance

**Resumen**

La investigación sociológica sobre la circulación transregional del conocimiento Norte-Sur en las ciencias sociales y las humanidades ha tendido a adoptar un sesgo unidireccional hasta la fecha. El supuesto estándar es que, como resultado de la globalización, las teorías y los métodos se extienden del Norte global al Sur global. Sobre la base de esta premisa, muchos de los estudios sobre la circulación de conocimiento se centran en la transferencia de conocimientos en términos de ideas, tradiciones, autores y conceptos del Norte al Sur. Hasta ahora, se ha prestado poca atención a la circulación transregional de los enfoques teóricos del Sur al Norte y su impacto en la transformación de las ciencias sociales y las humanidades europeas. Analizando la circulación de las teorías latinoamericanas de la dependencia en la República Federal de Alemania, este artículo aborda precisamente este vacío en la literatura. Se centra la atención en los procesos de consolidación institucional de los estudios de área, la movilidad Norte-Sur, el proceso de traducción al alemán de estas teorías, su aplicación en la investigación empírica, así como su modificación y rechazo. Centrándose en esta orientación poco explorada con respecto a la circulación del conocimiento, este artículo está en línea con los intentos actuales de analizar los entrelazamientos transregionales dentro de las ciencias sociales europeas.

**Palabras clave**

Circulación del conocimiento, entrelazamientos transregionales, estudios de área, Norte global, Sur global, teorías de la dependencia