The legacy of the Manila Galleon in the First Globalization: continuity and change in transpacific Asian-Latin American trade, 1876-1938

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This paper is still a work-in-progress, any feedback would be greatly appreciated.

Abstract

The study of trade between Asia and Latin America has focused on the history of the Manila Galleon (1565-1815) and the current boom (2000 to the present). Less is known about transpacific trade during the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. This paper provides a novel trade series on trade between Asia and Latin America between 1876 and 1938. The paper shows that the role of Asia in Latin America's foreign trade was marginal in volumes, but the composition of Latin American imports from Asia reveals clues to the persistence of colonial links across the Pacific. While traditional products such as textiles, tea, rice and porcelain maintained a constant presence in Latin American imports, new manufactures emerged in this period. Furthermore, there were differences in terms of exporters, with Japan becoming the most important Asian exporter.

Keywords: Transpacific trade; Asia; Latin America; First Globalization; Interwar period

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1. Introduction

Western industrialization led to a major reconfiguration of the world economy. Among other consequences, it shifted the economic center of the world from Asia to Europe and the United States, which emerged as the new hegemons of world trade during the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century (Frank 1998; Pomeranz 2000). This process began to change later, when the economic development of Japan, followed by the rise of the "four Asian tigers" and the eventual entry of China into the World Trade Organization, reintroduced the relevance of Asia in the world economy. This late shift has fostered a renewed academic interest in Asia's role on the global economic scene.

One factor that has received particular attention is the dynamism of trans-Pacific international trade. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) was created in 1989 among 12 countries of Asia, North America and Oceania with the aim of facilitating trade, investment and economic cooperation. A few years later, three Latin American countries (Chile, Mexico and Peru) joined, a process that shows the growing relevance of East Asian markets in the region. This preponderance was consolidated during the last commodity boom (2003-2014), when China became the main trading partner of different countries, especially in South America (Devlin, Estevadeordal, and Rodríguez-Clare 2006; Fornes and Mendez 2018; Jenkins, Peters, and Moreira 2008; Kuwayama and Rosales 2012).

These connections between Asia and Latin America are not surprising from a long-term perspective. In fact, during the colonial period (1500-1820), these regions were strongly connected through the Manila Galleon, a trade route established by the Spanish authorities linking the Viceroyalty of New Spain (present-day Mexico) and the Philippines. The Manila Galleon ceased to operate in the 1810s, when most Latin American countries achieved political independence. In addition, transpacific exchanges were further disrupted by the expansion of European powers in Asia throughout the 19th century. These political changes, together with the growing importance of the Atlantic economy, led to less interest in economic exchanges between the two regions during the First Globalization and the interwar period.

Using a representative sample of countries, this paper provides a new data set on the trade between Asia and Latin America in this period. The relative importance of Asian economies in Latin

American foreign trade from 1876 to 1938 shows that Asian markets accounted for less than 5% of total exports and imports from the last quarter of the 19th century until World War II. The relevance of Asian markets increased during the 1960s and remained stable thereafter. After a rapid acceleration since early 21st century, Asian countries accounted for 18% of Latin American exports and more that 25% of its imports in 2020.

Despite Asia's relative low trade during the First Globalization and interwar periods, the composition of Latin American imports from Asia shows clear continuities with the colonial period. For instance, tea, spices, rice, porcelain and textile products maintained a consistent presence in Latin America's import baskets. This highlights the existence of a historical hysteresis in terms of consumption patterns. At the same time, differences emerged among the three Asian countries. Imports from India were heavily concentrated on agricultural raw materials such as jute, rice and spices. Imports from China, while also saw a high share of agricultural products, like tea, opium, rice and spices, showed some diversification. This included the persistence of silk products and the increasing share of cotton products in 1900s and 1910s. In contrast, since the early 20th century, the imports from Japan consisted of silk and cotton textiles and showed an increasing share of manufactured goods such as toys, artifacts and machinery.

To understand the continuities and changes in Asian-Latin American trade in this period, we look at supply and demand forces. The relevance of supply-side dynamics is exemplified by the evolution of Latin American imports of tea and textiles. These reflect the disparities in Asian countries' industrial development and foreign trade policy strategies. In China and India, this period was marked by restrictions on the trade policies and tariffs, which led to an exports composition more concentrated in raw and low processed materials and agricultural products. In contrast, Japan underwent rapid manufacturing industrialization, which led to a diversification of Japan's exports composition with an increase in the share of manufactures.

The demand-side factors also help to understand Latin America's import from Asia. The consumption of luxury oriental goods among upper classes persisted, but also more accessible textiles remained popular among broader social consumers. Additionally, the massive Asian migrants to Latin America in this period maintained their consumption in specific products, such as opium and tea. Moreover, the Asian communities and socio-economic associations in Latin America also contributed to the long-term transpacific trade between the two regions. These

different interactions between Asian and Latin American economies are relevant to understand current economic exchanges.

After this introduction, the chapter is organized as follows. Section 2 presents the trade data sources. Section 3 reviews the long-term trade between Asia and Latin America from the colonial period to the present. Section 4 studies the continuities and changes in the composition of Latin American imports from Asia during the period 1876-1938. Section 5 proposes some hypotheses to understand Latin American imports from Asia in this period from the perspective of supply and demand factors. Section 6 concludes.

2. Data Sources

This study looks at the evolution of transpacific trade through a sample of three Asian (China, India and Japan) and six Latin American (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru) countries. This sample is justified because of different reasons. To begin with, it incorporates the largest Asian and Latin American economies. Indeed, the three selected Asian countries accounted for 63% of total Asian exports in 1913.[4] Likewise, imports of the selected Latin American countries were equivalent to 73% of total Latin America imports in 1913.[5] The sample is also justified by historical reasons since it incorporates some of the most relevant spaces involved in the Manila Galleon (China, Mexico and Peru) and two other countries located in the Pacific rim that could be affected by this process (Chile and Ecuador). Similarly, the sample allows considering the role of the most relevant migration flows that took place during the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century: Chinese migrants to Chile, Peru and Mexico, and, Japanese migrants to Brazil and Peru (Hu-Dehart 1989; Hu-DeHart and López 2008).

Based on the before mentioned criteria, the absence of Panama and Uruguay stands out. While the former received migrants from Asia in different periods, the latter has been among the most developed Latin American countries in per capita levels since the late 19th century. Despite of this, we decided to exclude these countries given the difficulties that their roles as entrepôt countries represent in terms of trade allocation (see Tena-Junguito and Willebald 2013). We consider that, given their relatively small size, the gains that could be obtained by their introduction were lower than the bias that reexports flows could generate. Likewise, our sample of six Latin American countries does not allow to consider some relevant exchanges (both in goods and people) that took place between Asian countries and different Caribbean economies. We excluded these countries given that they were predominantly based on colonial premises, particularly those of the United Kingdom (Blakely 1998; Fatah-Black 1972; Postma 2003; Winn 2023).

We also decided to study trade relationship from the point of view of Latin American countries, that is, to use their sources and not the Asian ones. This is explained by the fact that during this

[4] Data from Federico and Tena-Junguito (2018), "Federico-Tena World Trade Historical Database: Asia", https://doi.org/10.21950/05CZKM.
[5] Data from Federico and Tena-Junguito (2018), "Federico-Tena World Trade Historical Database: America", https://doi.org/10.21950/UILNQU.

period, trade between Asia and Latin America could took place through transit ports (as Hong Kong) or transit countries (United States). Given that, at least in the Chinese case, export data was recorded according to ports of arrival instead of destination countries (Wang Forthcoming), the use of Asian sources would lead to an underestimation of trade. By contrast, previous studies on Latin American trade sources suggest that they were reliable during the periods under scrutiny (Carreras-Marín and Badia-Miró 2008; Peres-Cajías and Carreras-Marín 2018).

Trade information on Latin American countries was obtained from different publications. Data for the period 1962-2020 are available in the United Nations Comtrade Database. As for the previous period, it has been necessary to combine different primary and secondary sources. Latin American exports to Asia come from the RICardo Database. Imports from the three Asian countries in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Peru are also from the RICardo Database.[6] Import data for Ecuador was directly obtained from official Ecuadorian trade sources.[7] Finally, Mexican import data were compiled from official trade sources published either by the Secretary of State, the Department of Finance, Public Credit and Commerce, or the Department of National Statistics.[8] All disaggregated data on Latin American imports from Asia are collected and complied from official Latin American foreign trade yearbooks for specific years.[9]

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[6] The original sources in RICardo Database are "Anuario del Comercio Exterior de La Republica Argentina_1913-1937"; "Commercio exterior do Brasil. Anos 1913-1936. Directoria de Estadística Comercial. Ministerio da Fazenda. Rio de Janeiro. 1923-1937."; "Estadística Comercial De La República De Chile. 1844-1913"; "Anuario Estadístico De Chile Comercio Exterior. 1915, 1927, 1928, 1931-36."; "Extracto estadístico del Perú. 1923. Ministerio de Hacienda y Comercio. Lima. 1924."

[7] Export and import data for Ecuador between 1909 and 1950 were compiled by Reyna Pérez (2023) and were obtained from the following official sources: *Anuarios de Comercio Exterior* (1910, 1911, 1914, 1917a, 1923b), *Boletines Mensuales de Recaudación Fiscal y Comercial* (1931, 1933), and the report *Ecuador en Cifras* (1944), published by Ministerio de Hacienda del Ecuador.

[8] "Estadística fiscal. Importación. Años fiscales de 1893-94 y 1892-93. Noticias formadas bajo la dirección de Javier Stavoli. Tomo I. Mexico. 1897."; "Anuario de Estadística Fiscal. 1911-12. Secretaría de estado y del despacho de Hacienda, Crédito Público y Comercio. Mexico. 1913."; "Anuario Estadístico. Comercio Exterior y Navegación. 1923-1924. Volumen I. Departamento de la Estadística Nacional. Mexico. 1925."; "Anuario Estadístico del Comercio Exterior de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos. Mexico. 1939."

[9] Sources for Argentina are "Anuario de la Dirección General de Estadística correspondiente al año 1905. Tomo I. Buenos Aires. 1906", "Anuario del Comercio Exterior de la República Argentina años 1921, 1922 y 1923 y noticia sumaria del periodo 1910-1923. Buenos Aires. 1924.", "Anuario del Comercio Exterior de la República Argentina año 1927 y noticia sumaria del período 1910-27. Buenos Aires. 1929.". Sources for Brazil are "Importação e Exportação. Movimento maritimo, cambial e do café da Republica dos Estados Unidos do Brazil em 1905. Rio de Janeiro. 1907.", "Commercio exterior do Brasil. Anno 1915. Rio de Janeiro. 1923.", "Commercio exterior do Brasil. Anno 1925. Rio de Janeiro. 19290". Sources for Chile are "Estadística Comercial de la República de Chile correspondiente al Año de 1889, 1895, 1899, 1902, 1910. Valparaíso. 1890, 1896, 1900, 1903, 1911.", "Anuario Estadístico de la República de Chile. Vol. XI. Comercio Exterior. Año 1920. Valparaíso. 1921.". Sources for Ecuador are "Boletín de Estadística Fiscal y Comercial. Año de 1909, 1915. Ministerio de Hacienda y Crédito Público. Quito.". Sources for Mexico are "Estadística fiscal. Importación. Años fiscales de 1893-94 y 1892-93. Noticias formadas bajo la dirección de Javier

The study of international trade requires to use the same unit of measurement. While data in the RICardo Database is expressed in sterling pounds, data in local sources are kept in their original currency. Therefore, to grant comparability, all trade data was converted into current US dollars and constant 1913 US dollars. The conversion was carried out using international trade data in current US dollars from the Federico-Tena World Trade Historical Database and the US Consumer Price Index (CPI) data from Measuring Worth (Federico and Tena-Junguito 2019; Officer and Williamson 2024).[10]

The use of these different sources allows measuring the evolution of trade relationships between Asian and Latin American countries from 1876. Furthermore, it offers evidence on the composition of Latin American imports from Asia in this period. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first time that this information is provided.

Stavoli. Tomo I. Mexico. 1897.", "Anuario de Estadística Fiscal. 1911-12. Secretaría de estado y del despacho de Hacienda, Crédito Público y Comercio. Mexico. 1913.", "Anuario Estadístico. Comercio Exterior y Navegación. 1923-1924. Volumen I. Departamento de la Estadística Nacional. Mexico. 1925."; The sources of Peru are "Estadística del Comercio Especial del Perú en el Año 1902, 1904, 1905, 1927. Lima. 1904, 1907, 1928." (for more details, see section of References).

[10] Federico and Tena-Junguito (2018), "Federico-Tena World Trade Historical Database: America", https://doi.org/10.21950/UILNQU; Officer and Williamson (2024), "The Annual Consumer Price Index for the United States, 1774-Present", *Measuring Worth*, http://www.measuringworth.com/uscpi/.

3. Trade between Asia and Latin America in the long run

During the Latin American colonial period (1492-1820s), the Manila Galleon was central in terms of the distribution of goods, people and ideas (Bonialian 2011; Cervera Jiménez 2020; Schurz 1939; Slack 2012; Yuste 1984). This route, connecting Manila and Acapulco (in current Mexico), facilitated the exchange of goods between the Old and New Worlds (Dobado-González 2013). This trade was significant in both scale and continuity. Typically, galleons sailed twice annually from Manila to Acapulco, transporting between 300 and 1,000 tons of merchandise, with some ships reaching capacities as high as 2,000 tons (Yuste 1984; Schurz 1939). And large amount of American silver was sent back to Asia in exchange for goods (Flynn and Giraldez 1994).

Indeed, from the late 16th century until the first half of the 18th century, New Spain could turn to Asian countries as a reliable source of imports when wars between European powers impacted trade in the Atlantic (Fernandez de Pinedo and Thépaut-Cabasset 2021). However, rather than substitutes, the Manila Galleon prompted the convergence of three intercontinental flows: the transpacific route between the Philippines and Acapulco, the Atlantic fleet that connected Spain with Veracruz (also in current Mexico) and the intercolonial and illicit circuit from Mexico to Peru (Bonialian 2011). As a result of this convergence, Mexico became a "neuralgic center" for the movement of Asian and European goods in Latin America and for the distribution of American silver on the fleets back to Asia (Bonialian 2011, 2014; Dobado-González 2013).

As for imports from Asia, the most important items were textiles, which accounted up for three-quarters of total imports (Dobado and Fernández de Pinedo 2023; Grasskamp and Juneja 2018). Apart from silk and cotton textiles, the import basket also included food commodities like rice, spices, tea, as well as decoration products such as porcelains, lacquerware, religious marfil images, fans, furniture (Cervera Jiménez 2020; Dobado and Fernández de Pinedo 2023). Moreover, there is evidence that objects, people and ideas that arrived from China to the Americas had an extensive and powerful cultural impact that was reflected in aesthetic dimensions and daily life practices (Bonialian 2014).

Thus, like the intensification of the consumption of new products in Europe in the 18th century (De Vries 1994), these transpacific exchanges via Manila Galleon influenced consumption patterns and the daily life of Americans. This "soft globalization" and innovation in consumption patterns

were first adopted by the elites and spread soon after to the middle classes and eventually to the common people (Dobado and Fernández de Pinedo 2023; Gasch-Tomás 2018; Pierce 2016). For instance, Ibarra (2016) found that even in the remote Intendencia of Guadalajara in New Spain, consumption of Asian products was high, not only among the wealthy elites who consumed luxury goods such as porcelains and biombos, but also among the indigenous and peasant population, who wore clothes with printed silks and cottons. In the same vein, Bonialian (2014) suggests that products that were initially perceived as elitists, soon became products of wide-ranging massive use. Therefore, Asian imports had a double impact on Latin American consumption patterns: one that was characterized by exotic products and exclusive to the elites, and another one that was accessible and affordable for mass population.

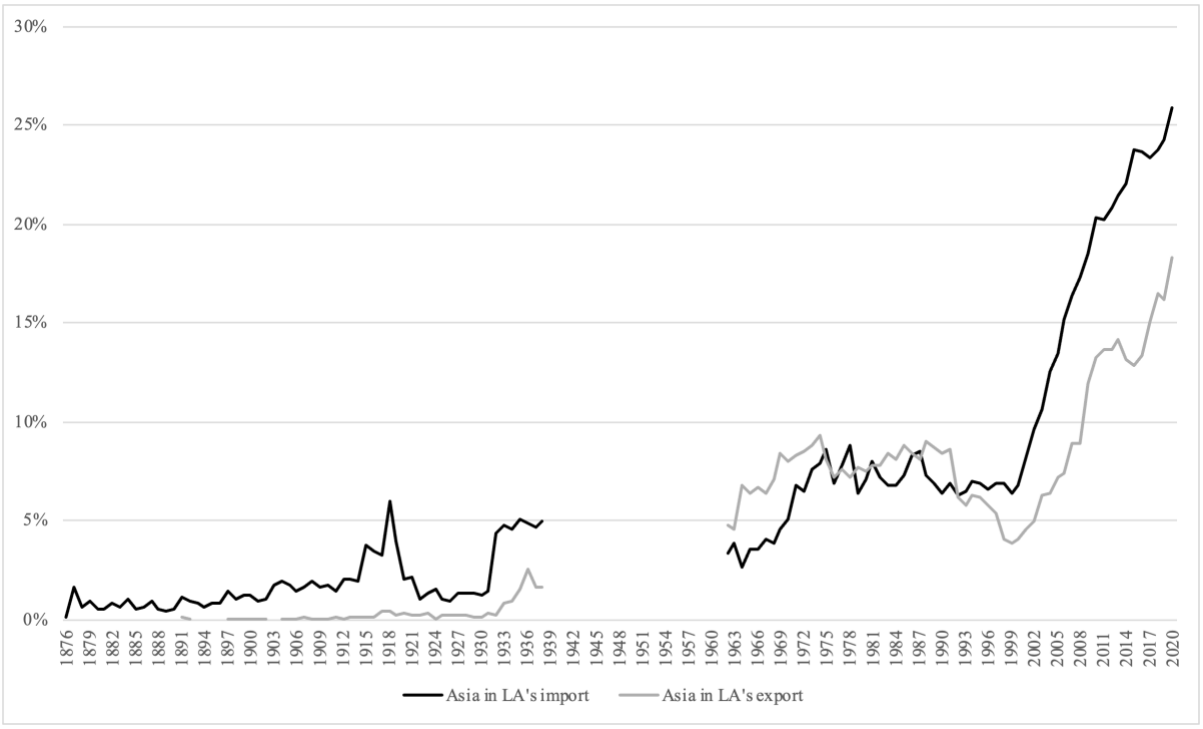
The relevance of Mexico as a neuralgic center of this trade network decreased since the mid-18th century. Competition from Peninsular trading companies over the Hispanic Pacific rim and the opening of the Cape Horn route (1740), closed the Peruvian market for foreign goods that arrived in Acapulco and Veracruz (Bonialian 2017). Thereafter, independence wars in Latin America (1810s-1820s) and incessant post-independence tensions (1820s-1850s) fostered political unrest and economic problems (Bulmer-Thomas 2017). Meanwhile, Asian countries started to feel the pressure of European expansionism and countries such as China and India reduced dramatically their economic independence. Thus, throughout the 19th century, the transpacific trade became fragmented and more dependent on the English economy (Bonialian 2017).

This crisis explains in part the limited research on trade relationships between Asia and Latin America after the colonial period. The work by Kuntz Ficker (2020) stands out among the few exceptions. Using Mexico's foreign trade data from 1821 and 1870, reconstructed through the re-exportation data of the United States and the United Kingdom, along with consular reports, the author portrays the products, routes, ports and intermediaries in Mexican imports from Asia during this period. The study suggests that well-established consumption patterns from the colonial era and the persistence of strong demand led to a continuity in Mexico's trade with Asia. This is evident in the importation of Asian products such as spices, tea, raw silk, porcelain, and cotton and silk textiles (Kuntz Ficker 2020).

Our archival research allows to offer evidence on the evolution of trade relationships between Asian and Latin American countries since 1876 (Figure 1). It is evident that Asian markets were

marginal for Latin American exports, making up less than 0.5% of the total exported from 1891 to 1929. Whereas there was a gradual increase during the 1930s, the ratio remained below 3%. Data from 1962 to 1974, which includes information just on China and Japan, shows that the share of Asian countries for Latin American exports grew from 4.8% to 9.3%. Despite the inclusion of India's data since 1975, this relative importance remained stagnated and even decreased until 1999. Since then, a dramatic increase took place.

Figure 1: Asia in Latin America's foreign trade (in percentage), 1876-1938, 1962-2020



Sources: Own elaboration based on UN Comtrade Data, RICardo Database and official trade data yearbooks of the sample countries, for more details, see "Data Sources" section.
Note: Trade data prior to 1938 cover different periods for different trading partners due to variations in data availability.[11]

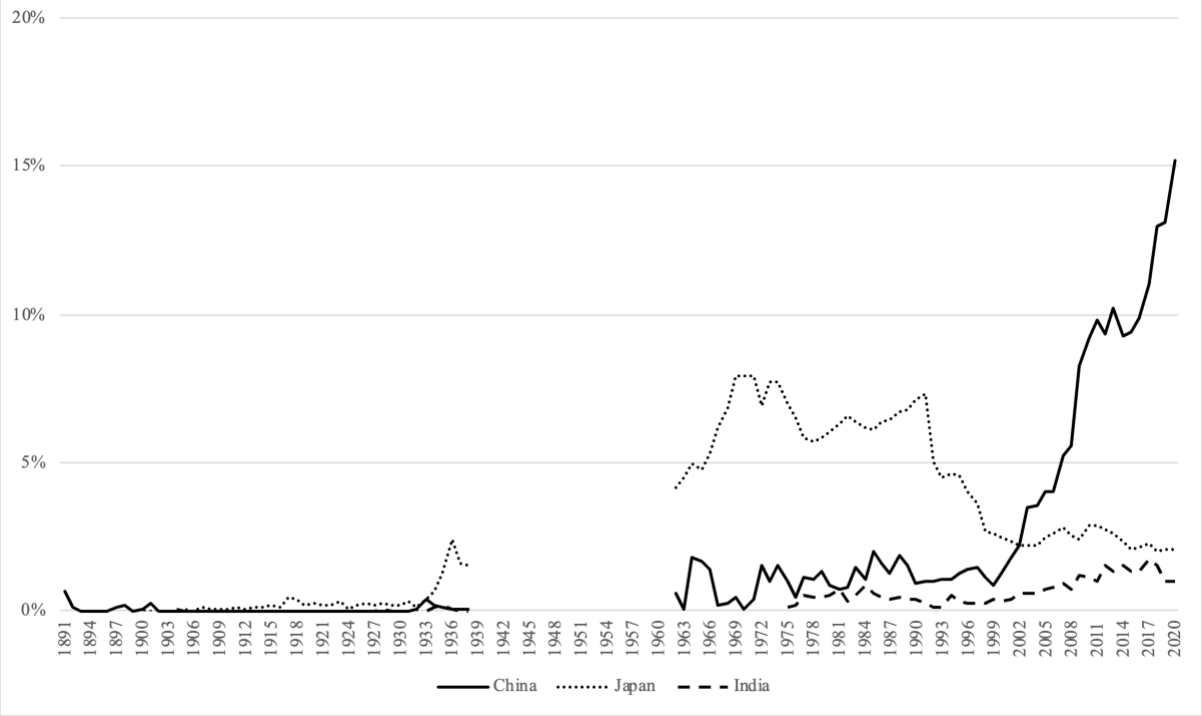
The analysis of imports shows a slightly higher relevance of Asian markets and more oscillations during the first period. Generally, imports from Asia remained below 3%. However, this figure was exceeded during the years of the First World War and from 1932 to 1938, when imports from Asia accounted for 5 to 6%. This ratio increased during the1960s and remained stable until the end of the 20th century. Once more, a notable acceleration took place during the 21st century, with an increase in the share of imports from Asia from 10% to 25%.

It becomes evident that changes in the relative importance of Asian markets were driven by specific

[11] Trade data include Argentina's import data from China (1910-1938), India (1904-1918, 1932-1938), Japan (1910-1938); Brazil's import data from China (1915-1938), India (1903-1913, 1915-1938), Japan (1913, 1915-1938); Chile's import data from China (1876-1918, 1924, 1927-1938), India (1876-1924, 1927-1938), Japan (1898-1924, 1927-1938); Ecuador's import data from China (1900, 1903-1904, 1906, 1908-1912, 1915-1926, 1928-1931, 1938), India (1912, 1915-1926, 1928, 1930-1931, 1938), Japan (1909-1912, 1915-1926, 1928-1931, 1938); Mexico's import data from China (1889-1890, 1893-1913, 1918-1938), India (1893-1913, 1918-1938), Japan (1889-1890, 1893-1913, 1918-1938); Peru's import data from China (1877, 1891-1892, 1897-1914, 1917-1923, 1927-1938), India (1891-1892, 1900, 1903-1938), Japan (1877, 1899-1901, 1903-1938).

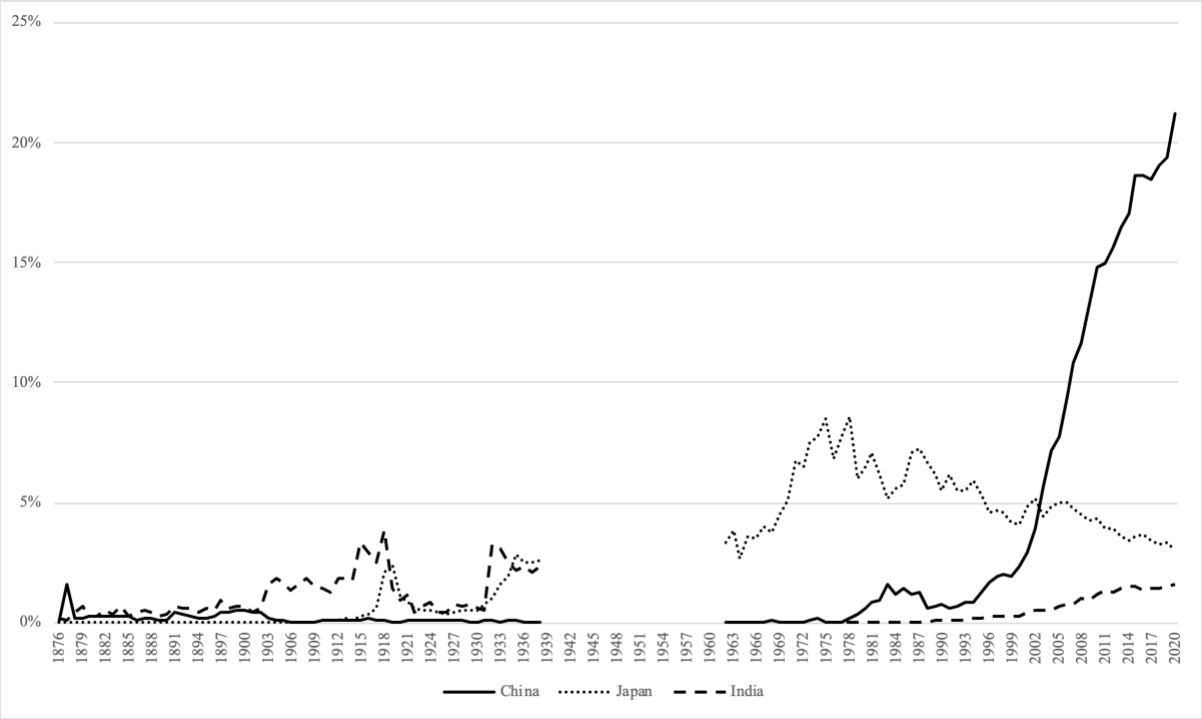
countries (Figure 2 and Figure 3). During the First Globalization and interwar periods, there were changes in the relevance of India and Japan. These were marginal given that Asian and Latin American trade engaged primarily with the United States and Europe. From the 1960s onwards, trade relations between Asia and Latin America expanded (Dosch and Jacob 2010), initially driven by Japan. This country exported manufactured goods, electronics and machinery to Latin America, while Latin America supplied it with raw materials, agricultural products, and minerals (Berríos 2001; Hosono 2019). This trade was also facilitated by multilateral trade agreements and regional cooperation frameworks that sought to diversify trade and reduce dependency on traditional markets (Hosono 2019). Thereafter, the economic opening of China and its subsequent rise as a global manufacturing factory further intensified trade between Asia and Latin America. In fact, China is today one of Latin America's largest trading partners (Devlin, Estevadeordal, and Rodríguez-Clare 2006; Fornes and Mendez 2018; Peters 2005).

Figure 2: Asia in Latin America's export (in percentage), 1891-1938, 1962-2020



Sources: See Figure 1.

Figure 3: Asia in Latin America's import (in percentage), 1876-1938, 1962-2020



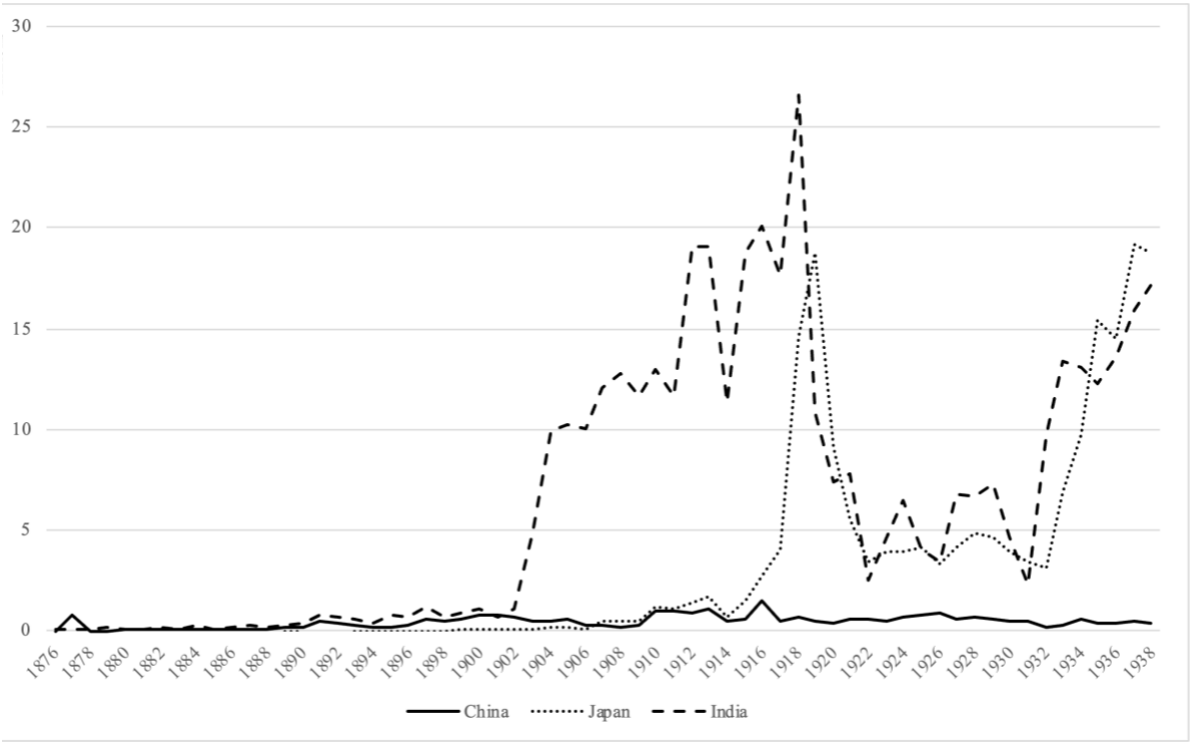
Sources: See Figure 1.

This long-term trade review suggests a contrast between the vigor of the trade between Asia and Latin America during the 17th and 18th centuries and the marginal role of Asian markets in the First Globalization and interwar periods. The latter, however, can be explained by two different forces: a reduction in trade relations in absolute terms or a reduction in relative terms due to a faster increase of other trade connections. Furthermore, as suggested by the literature on complex economies (Hidalgo 2023), the understanding of long-term trade trajectories sometimes requires looking at the evolution of the quantity and products composition rather than their value (Peres-Cajías et al. 2021). Indeed, the limited evidence available shows that in the first decades following independence (1821-1870), Mexico continued to import the same types of products as during the colonial period (Kuntz Ficker 2020). The next section will explore in detail Latin American imports from Asia at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

4. Latin American import composition from Asia, 1876-1938

This section provides information on the composition of Latin American imports from Asia from 1876 to 1938 based on the archival research before described.[12] We focus on imports from Asia given that, during this period, they were more relevant than exports to Asia (see Figure 1). To begin with, total imports show some differences between the three Asian countries (Figure 4). While imports from China remained practically stagnated, imports from India increased from the beginning of the 20th century to the early 1920s. Likewise, imports from Japan increased during the years of the World War I. Then, whereas imports both from India and Japan reduced during the 1920s, they recovered their upward trend during the 1930s.

Figure 4: Latin American import from Asia (in millions of 1913 US dollar), 1876-1938



Sources: See Figure 1.

Secondly, the composition of imports highlights a persistence in the types of products imported

[12] Post World War II information is already available in the UN Comtrade Database and in open outlets like the Atlas of Economic Complexity database (https://atlas.cid.harvard.edu/).

from Asia to Latin America since the colonial period (Table 1). The table shows that Asian products transported to Latin America in the Manila Galleon (first column in Table 1) persisted during the post-independence period of 1821-1870 (second column in Table 1), primarily through re-exports from the United States and the United Kingdom (Kuntz Ficker 2020). In the import basket some products stand out: tea, rice, opium, spices (cinnamon, cloves, pepper), silk and cotton textiles, porcelain, and furniture. During the period between 1876 and 1938 (third column in Table 1), these products were still the main articles in Latin America's import from Asia, while some new products, such as machinery, began to appear in this trade flow.

Table 1: Latin America's imported products from Asia, 1565-1938

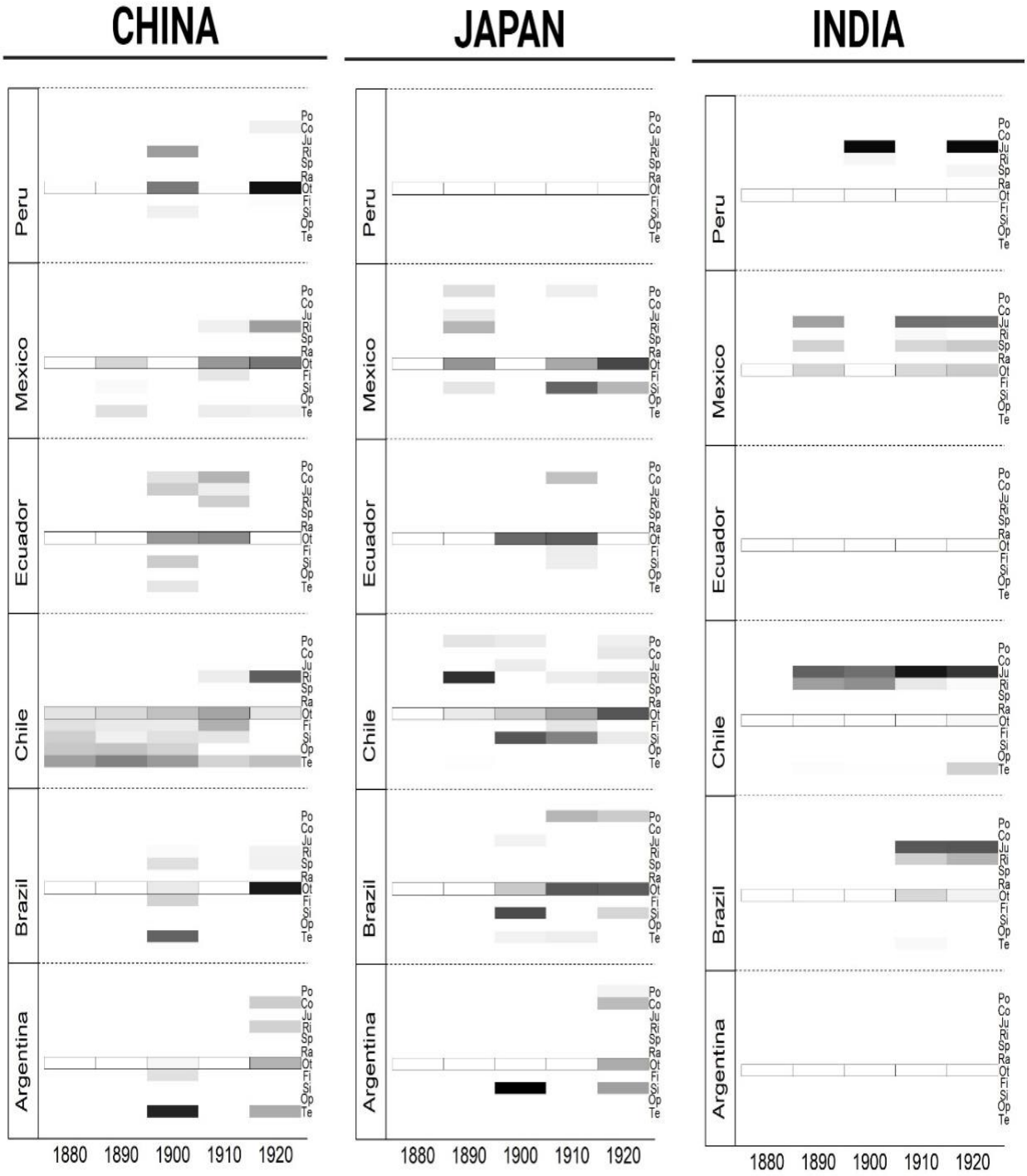
Latin American colonial period: Manila Galleon 1565-1815	**Latin American post-independece period 1821-1870**	**First Globalization and Interwar periods 1876-1938**
Tea	Tea	Tea
Food and beverage *rice, sesame, coconut, mango, tamarind*	Food and beverage *rice*	Food and beverage *rice, cocoa, vegetables, fruits, licor*
Agricultural products *opium, hemp*	Agricultural products *opium, rubber*	Agricultural products *opium, rubber, jute, hemp, tobacco*
Spices *cinnamon, cloves, pepper, ginger*	Spices *cinnamon, cloves, pepper*	Spices *cinnamon, cloves, pepper, ginger*
Textiles *silk textiles, cotton textiles*	Textiles *silk textiles, cotton textiles*	Textiles *silk textiles, cotton textiles, wool textiles*
Porcelain	Porcelain	Porcelain
Furniture	Furniture	Furniture
Artifacts and curiosities *fans, lacquerware, artifacts of ivory and wood, mirror, biombo*	Artifacts and curiosities *combs of ivory and bamboo*	Artifacts and curiosities *fans, artifacts of wood, paper, metals, iron, leather, stone, ceramic, glass*
		Others *machinery, toys*

Sources: Data in 1565-1815 are from Cervera Jiménez (2020) and Schurz (1939); data in 1821-1870 are from Kuntz Ficker (2020); data in 1876-1938 are from Latin American countries' annual foreign trade yearbooks (see section of "Data sources").

Figure 5 shows each year share of the main products (Porcelain; Cotton Products; Jute and Hemp; Rice; Spices Products; Raw Silk; Fireworks; Silk Products; Opium; and Tea)[13] and other goods (this category has been framed with lines in the middle of each country box) in Latin America's import from Asia from 1880s to 1920s. A darker cell means a higher share, i.e. more concentration, meanwhile a less dark cell shows lower shares, i.e. less concentration. For instance, the Peruvian import from India in 1900 is highly concentrated in Jute and Hemp, but it is more diversified in the case of imports from China. It should be noted that there are some years with no data information, especially for imports from India. A more diversified color scale indicates more products imported, i.e. more diversification, which can be interpreted as more complexity in trade. In this sense, it is interesting to see how Indian imports are less diversified than Chinese or Japanese ones, and Chile seems to be the importer with more complex trade.

[13] These products have been identified as traditional based on the literature on the colonial trade.

Figure 5: Composition of Latin American imports from Asia, 1880s-1920s

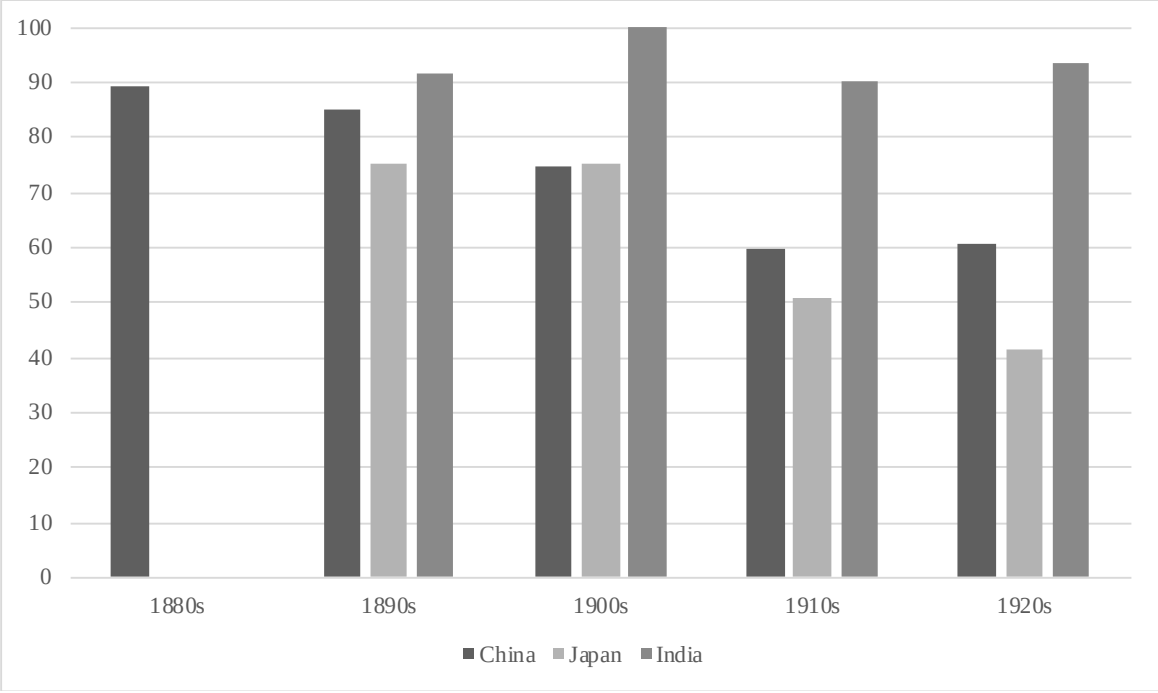


Sources: See Figure 1.

Notes: Po=Porcelain; Co=Cotton Products; Ju=Jute and Hemp; Ri=Rice; Sp=Spices; Ra=Raw Silk; Ot=Others; Fi=Fireworks; Si=Silk Products; Op=Opium; Te=Tea. The grey scale indicates the share of each product, white being 0 and black being 100%, for each year and each country. For instance, for 1900 regarding the Chinese exportation to Argentina almost 100% was Tea.

Focusing on traditional imports we can inferred the persistence of colonial trade and its evolution from 1880 onwards (Figure 6). India remains the country with the highest persistence of traditional trade with mean shares over 90% for the whole period. This may be explained by the negative effects of colonialism on this country. Regarding China and Japan, it is surprising that things do not differ so much. Both countries have a high share of traditional goods exported at the beginning of the period and both decreased it over time. It is true that Japan is slightly under the Chinese, showing a higher weight of new products. But meanwhile new products in the Japanese case were manufactures, in the case of China they were mainly agricultural goods as tobacco (to Brazil) or food (to Peru and Mexico). This result can also be explained by the fact that our items are quite aggregated, and we cannot differentiate within textiles in different stages of finishing. It has also to be pointed here, that trade volumes are also radically different in both cases. Taking all that into account, Figure 6 shows the persistence of traditional colonial imports in Latin America in the period, as well as the emergence of a new pattern of trade at the same time.

Figure 6: Share of traditional Asian products imported by country of origin, 1880-1920



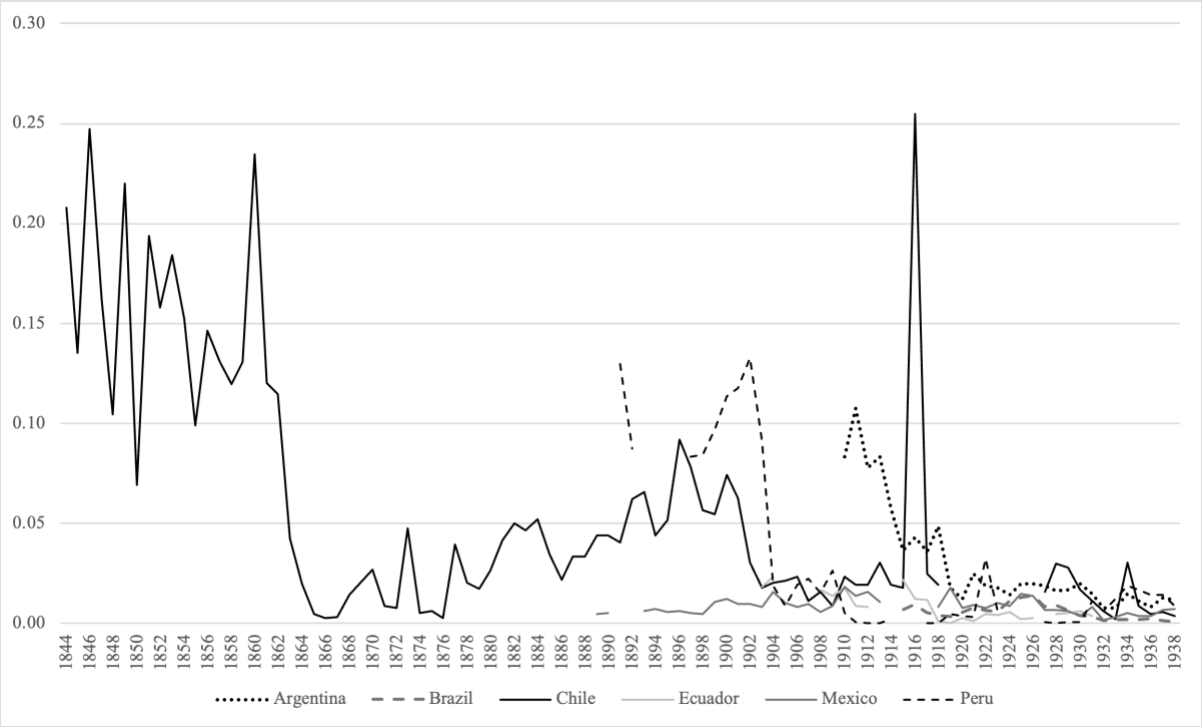
Sources: See Figure 1.

Notes: Mean of the shares of the data available each year for Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru.

Although Chinese trade in the region had a complexity in trade composition similar to that of Japan, its volumes remained relatively low (Figure 7). In the case of Chile (the only country with available evidence since the mid-19th century), imports per capita from China decreased during the turbulent

years of the Opium wars (1839-1860). Then, a timid recovery was followed by another decline. Interestedly, this decreasing pattern repeats in Peruvian imports, the second most important market for Chinese products in the region in per capita terms, on the eve of the 20th century. Indeed, except for a temporal increase of imports in Argentina and Chile during the 1910s, per capita imports from China remained stagnated at very low levels throughout the first third of the 20th century.

Figure 7: Latin American imports from China (in 1913 US dollar, per capita), 1844-1938



Sources: See Figure 1. Population data are from Maddison Project Database 2023 (Bolt and van Zanden 2024).
Notes: Given the significant size differences of Latin American economies, trade flows are studied in per capita levels.

The most important product imported from China in Chile from 1880s to 1900s, for Brazil and Argentina in 1900s, and for Argentina still in 1900s and 1920s, was tea (Table 2). In Argentina, tea dominated its imports from China during the 1900s, comprising 85.6%. Chile also recorded high imports of tea from China, particularly during the 1880s (38%), 1890s (49%) and 1900s (39%). Fireworks were notably present in the import baskets of Chile and Brazil, making up 17% of Chinese products in Brazil in 1900s and 31% in Chile in 1910s. Silk products from China were more significant before 1920s, representing 19% in Chile in 1880s, 14% in Mexico in 1890s, and 25% in Ecuador in 1900s. Cotton products began to gain importance from 1900s, making up 11% and 30% in Ecuador in 1900s and 1910s, and 17% in Peru's in 1920s. Other key Chinese products are mainly agricultural products, such as rice (63% of Chile's import from China in 1920s), opium (58% of Mexico's in 1890s), spices (78% of Chile's in 1920s), and tobacco leaf (85% of Brazil's in 1920s).

Table 2: Chinese products imported by Latin American countries (in percentage), 1880s-1920s

	Argentina		Brazil		Chile		Ecuador		Mexico		Peru	
Years	**Product**	**%**	**Product**	**%**	**Product**	**%**	**Product**	**%**	**Product**	**%**	**Product**	**%**
1880s					Tea	37.63						
					Opium	21.40						
					Silk products	18.64						
					Fireworks	11.58						
					Others	*10.74*						
1890s					Tea	48.83			Opium	58.11		
					Opium	23.15			Silk products	14.33		
					Fireworks	7.95			Tea	11.87		
					Silk products	5.40						
					Others	*14.68*			*Others*	*15.69*		
1900s	Tea	85.60	Tea	60.98	Tea	39.32	Silk products	25.17			Rice	59.45
	Fireworks	11.46	Fireworks	17.24	Opium	17.02	Jute and Hemp	19.64			Vegetables	15.82
			Spices	12.12	Silk products	11.69	Cotton products	10.71				
			Rice	1.56	Fireworks	7.71	Tea	9.64				
	Others	*2.95*	*Others*	*8.09*	*Others*	*24.25*	*Others*	*34.84*			*Others*	*24.73*
1910s					Fireworks	30.78	Cotton products	29.22	Opium	26.93		
					Tea	17.23	Rice	19.17	Silk products	15.40		
					Silk products	9.54	Jute and Hemp	6.49	Fireworks	9.47		
					Rice	6.77	Silk products	3.82	Tea	6.68		
							Tea	3.36	Rice	5.65		
					Others	*35.68*	*Others*	*37.94*	*Others*	*35.88*		
1920s	Tea	32.66	Tobacco leaf	85.09	Rice	62.90			Rice	37.80	Spices	77.87
	Cotton products	19.57	Spices	5.22	Tea	24.44			Food	13.88	Cotton products	16.76
	Rice	17.99	Rice	4.85	Opium	2.64			Tea	5.56		
									Silk products	3.61		
	Others	*29.78*	*Others*	*4.83*	*Others*	*10.02*			*Others*	*39.15*	*Others*	*5.37*

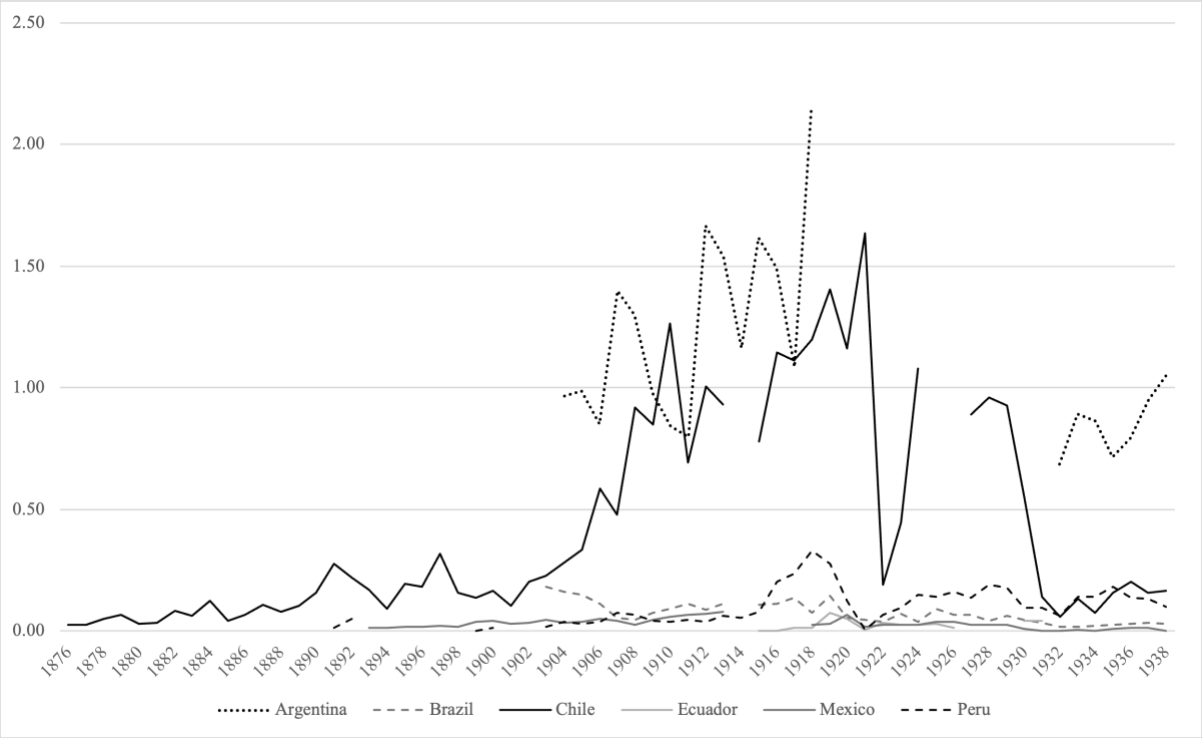
Sources: See Figure 1.

Notes: Data for Argentina are from the years 1905 and 1925; for Brazil, 1904 and 1925; for Chile, 1889, 1895, 1902, 1910 and 1920; for Ecuador, 1909 and 1915; for Mexico, 1893, 1912 and 1923; for Peru, 1905 and 1927. Due to limited primary sources at the disaggregated product level, data for certain years and countries are not available. Additional data will be collected in future research.

The study of Latin American imports from India shows the existence of two groups: one composed

by most countries where imports per capita remained stagnated at lower levels and another composed by Argentina and Chile (see Figure 8). In these two countries, imports per capita increased from the early 20th century until the early 1920s. Thereafter, the trend of these two countries diverged: while imports per capita in Argentina remained stagnated at higher levels, imports per capita in Chile decreased systematically to low levels.

Figure 8: Latin American imports from India (in 1913 US dollar, per capita), 1876-1938



Sources: See Figure 1.

The study of imports from India highlights the dominance of jute and hemp (Table 3). These products accounted for over 55% of Latin America's imports from India across most decades and countries, reaching over 90% of Peru's import in 1900s and 1920s and Chile's in 1910s. Moreover, this centrality tended to maintain across time. In the case of Chile, this category largely consisted of empty sacks that were used to collect saltpeter. Thus, unlike many products imported from China, this shows how the consolidation of a new product in Latin America generated new links with Asian economies. In fact, the fluctuations in Chilean per capita imports from India, as shown in Figure 8, can be partially explained by the nitrate export cycle, which had a crisis in the early 1920s and throughout the 1930s. The second most important product imported from India was rice

(37% and 44% of Chile's import in 1890s and 1900s, 18% and 29% of Brazil's in 1910s and 1920s). In the case of Mexico, the presence of opium (11% in 1910s) and spices (15% in 1910s and 21% in 1920s) also stands out.

Table 3: Indian products imported by Latin American countries, 1890s-1920s

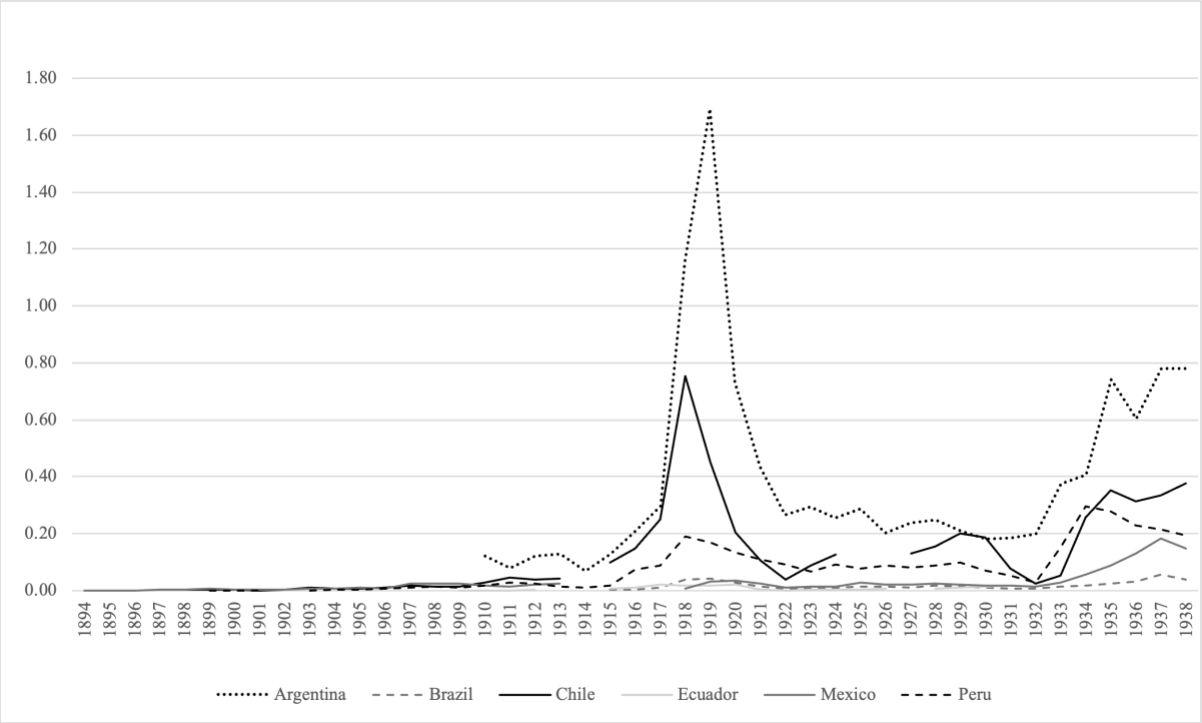
	Brazil		Chile		Mexico		Peru	
Years	**Products**	**%**	**Products**	**%**	**Products**	**%**	**Product**	**%**
1890s			Jute and Hemp	58.00	Jute and Hemp	36.78		
			Rice	33.74	Cocoa	29.57		
					Spices	17.32		
			Others	*8.26*	*Others*	*16.33*		
1900s			Jute and Hemp	55.95			Jute and Hemp	96.56
			Rice	43.77			Rice	3.26
			Spices	0.19				
			Tea	0.09				
			Others	*0.00*			*Others*	*0.19*
1910s	Jute and Hemp	64.97	Jute and Hemp	91.33	Jute and Hemp	56.01		
	Rice	18.04	Rice	8.32	Spices	15.43		
	Tea	2.08	Tea	0.28	Opium	11.49		
					Rice	2.34		
	Others	*14.91*	*Others*	*0.07*	*Others*	*14.72*		
1920s	Jute and Hemp	66.15	Jute and Hemp	78.59	Jute and Hemp	55.12	Jute and Hemp	96.10
	Rice	29.15	Tea	17.94	Spices	20.61	Spices	3.77
			Rice	1.33	Cocoa	4.35		
	Others	*4.70*	*Others*	*2.14*	*Others*	*19.92*	*Others*	*0.13*

Sources: See Figure 1.
Notes: Data for Brazil are from the years 1915 and 1925; for Chile, 1895, 1902, 1910 and 1920; for Mexico, 1893 and 1912; for Peru, 1905 and 1927.

Finally, imports per capita from Japan show very low levels before the First World War (Figure 9). The war years saw a sudden increase, that lasted until the early 1920s, in Argentina, Chile and Peru. This suggests that the restrictions on Latin American imports from Europe due to the international conflict fostered new trade ties with the Asian economy.[14] Thereafter, imports per capita reduced and converged with those of other Latin American countries although at higher levels than before the war. However, from 1932 onwards they began to increase in the same countries previously identified, along with Mexico.

[14] These restrictions also explain a temporal increase of intraregional trade in South America (Carreras-Marín, Badia-Miró, and Peres Cajías 2013).

Figure 9: Latin American imports from Japan (in 1913 US dollar, per capita), 1894-1938



Sources: See Figure 1.

During the pre-World War I years, most Latin American imports from Japan were concentrated in silk products, rice and porcelain (see Table 4). For instance, rice made up 81% of Chile's import and 28% of Mexico's in the 1890s. In the 1900s, silk products presented respectively 100%, 43%, and 25% in Argentina, Brazil, and Peru, respectively. These products were traditionally imported by Latin American countries from Asia. However, imports from Japan exhibited a higher diversification. For instance, around 45% of Brazilian imports from Japan in 1915 and 1925 were manufactures such as toys, buttons, articles made of various materials such as glass, paper and wood. While silk products, rice and porcelain remained important during and after the World War I, the importance of cotton textiles grew in the 1910s. For instance, in 1915, cotton products, including shirts and underpants, made up 24% of Ecuador's total imports from Japan. Similarly, 14% of Chilean imports in 1920 consisted of cotton products, including cotton socks and stockings, satins, as well as cotton trimmings and cords. In Argentina, cotton products presented 26% in the 1920s. In Peru, cotton products constituted 52% of imports from Japan in 1927. In Mexico, the import basket in the 1920s also included artifacts, machinery, vehicles, and pharmaceutical

products.[15]

Table 4: Japanese products imported by Latin American countries, 1890s-1920s

	Argentina		Brazil		Chile		Ecuador		Mexico		Peru	
Years	**Product**	**%**	**Product**	**%**	**Product**	**%**	**Product**	**%**	**Product**	**%**	**Product**	**%**
1890s					Rice	81.20			Rice	28.41		
					Porcelain	10.48			Porcelain	12.93		
					Tea	0.27			Silk products	9.70		
									Jute and Hemp	7.24		
					Others	*8.05*			*Others*	*41.72*		
1900s	Silk products	100.00	Silk products	43.35	Textiles	65.97	Porcelain	41.38			Silk products	25.29
			Fans	26.80	Porcelain	7.65	Wood products	58.62			Cotton products	4.31
			Tea	4.69	Jute and Hemp	6.99						
			Straw	4.36								
	Others	*0.00*	*Others*	*20.80*	*Others*	*19.39*	*Others*	*0.00*			*Others*	*70.40*
1910s			Manufactures*	46.82	Silk products	48.71	Cotton products	24.11	Silk products	60.02		
			Porcelain	28.41	Fireworks	9.58	Silk products	10.89	Porcelain	5.92		
			Tea	6.31	Rice	6.69	Fireworks	6.96				
			Cotton products	3.60								
			Silk products	3.46								
			Others	*11.40*	*Others*	*35.02*	*Others*	*58.05*	*Others*	*34.05*		
1920s	Silk products	36.94	Manufactures	44.96	Cotton products	13.98			Artifacts**	36.73	Cotton products	51.58
	Cotton products	26.10	Porcelain	20.17	Rice	11.13			Silk products	28.22	Silk products	17.05
	Porcelain	4.42	Silk products	18.68	Silk products	7.64					Spices	13.79
					Porcelain	5.81						
	Others	*32.54*	*Others*	*16.19*	*Others*	*61.44*			*Others*	*35.05*	*Others*	*17.58*

* This category "Manufactures" includes toys, buttons, pencils, manufactured articles of wood, paper, glass, etc.
** This category "Artifacts" includes artifacts made of ivory, coral, leather, pearls, etc.

Sources: See Figure 1.

Notes: Data for Argentina are from the years 1905 and 1925; for Brazil, 1904, 1915 and 1925; for Chile, 1889, 1902, 1910 and 1920; for Ecuador, 1909 and 1915; for Mexico, 1893, 1912 and 1923; for Peru, 1905 and 1927.

Summing up, at the end of the 19th century, the three Asian countries had relatively low shares in Latin America's imports. Since 1900, imports from India experienced an upward trend, and imports from Japan increased during the years of World War I. They both decreased in the 1920s but rose again in the 1930s. Meanwhile, imports from China remained quite stagnant in the whole period, with occasional fluctuations. Despite changes in the relative importance of Asian suppliers, the composition of imports shows continuities with the colonial period. Products such as tea, silk textiles, rice, spices, opium and porcelain were constantly present in Latin American import baskets from Asia. At the same time, items like non textile manufactured goods gained increasing relevance. This suggests that colonial trade patterns persisted during this period, albeit with gradual decline. At the same time a new trade pattern was emerging at this very moment, characterized by imports of diversified agricultural goods from China and Japanese manufactured industrial goods due to its rapid industrialization. In contrast, Indian products remained relatively stagnant and less

[15] Some of these products are not listed in the Table 4 due to their low percentage. However, their presence highlights the diversification of Latin America's imports from Japan. So, we put this evidence in the text.

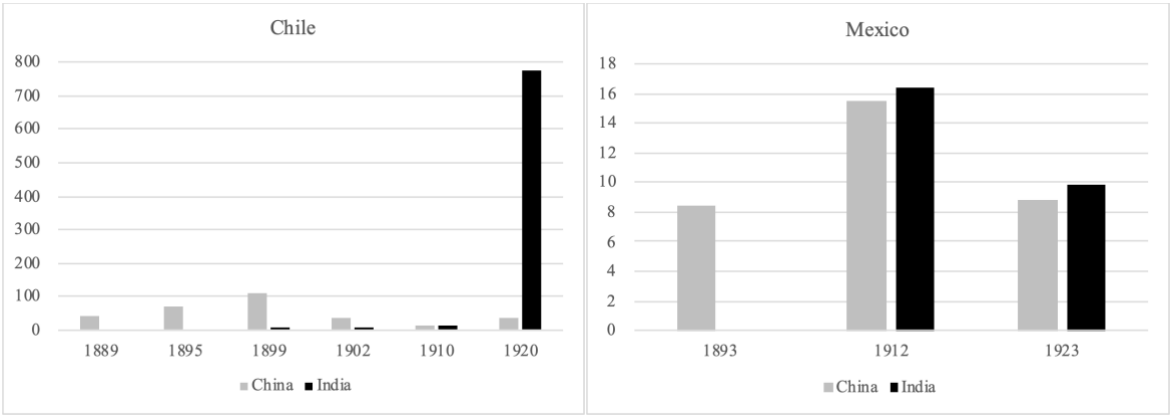
complex, likely a consequence of its colonial status. Conversely, Japan and China demonstrated higher levels of trade complexity, though with radical distinct characteristics, industrial in the Japanese case and primary in the Chinese case.

5. Supply and demand factors into Asian-Latin American trade

5.1 Supply factors: disparities in Asian industrialization

This section looks at supply and demand forces to understand the continuities and changes in Asian-Latin American trade during the period 1876 to 1938. The relevance of supply-side dynamics can be seen through the evolution of Latin American tea imports from Asia. Following the colonial pattern, China remained the primary Asian tea exporter to Latin America through the late 19th century. However, by the early 20th century, tea from India began gaining importance, particularly in Chile and Mexico (Figure 10). In 1920, Chile's tea imports from India approached $800,000 (1913 US dollar) —twenty times the value of tea imported from China. In 1912, India had already caught up with China in the Mexican tea market. Although Mexico imported a greater quantity of tea from China (35,852 kgs) than from India (19,127 kgs), Indian tea had a higher total value. In 1923, Mexico imported 155,000 kgs of Chinese tea—nearly ten times the 18,000 kg from India (see Appendix: Table A.1 and Table A.2). However, Indian tea maintained a higher value. This suggests that in the Mexican market, the price per kg of Chinese tea was much lower than that of Indian tea, indicating a relatively lower quality of Chinese tea compared to Indian tea.

Figure 10: Chilean and Mexican imports of tea (in thousands of 1913 US$), 1880s-1920s



Source: Official foreign trade yearbooks of the sample countries (see section 2 "Data Sources").

When Great Britain is included, China's share in Latin America's tea market diminishes over the

entire period (see Table 5). Assuming that British tea predominantly originated from India,[16] Chinese tea only surpasses British/Indian tea imports in Argentina in 1905. The British/Indian tea is clearly dominant in the Chilean imports, representing a maximum share of 93% in 1889 and maintaining a 92% share in 1920. The Mexican case is quite different as the role of the United States is more important (it may also include re-exportation from other countries but this is hard to be identified). China's share in Mexican tea imports shows a declining trend, dropping from 38% in 1893, to 31% in 1912, and 22% in 1923. The relevance of Great Britain could be also explained by its imperial expansion in Asia and its growing control over global trade routes. It is hard to know if some Chinese tea was also traded via Hong Kong to Latin America but recorded as originating from Great Britain.

Table 5: Main exporters of tea to Latin America (in percentage), 1890s-1920s

	1890s	1900s	1910s	1920s
Argentina				
China		46%		
Great Britain		18%		
Brazil				
Great Britain				96%
Chile				
Great Britain	93%	80%	92%	19%
China	6%	13%	1%	1%
India			1%	73%
Mexico				
United States	52%		22%	43%
China	38%		31%	22%
India	1%		33%	25%

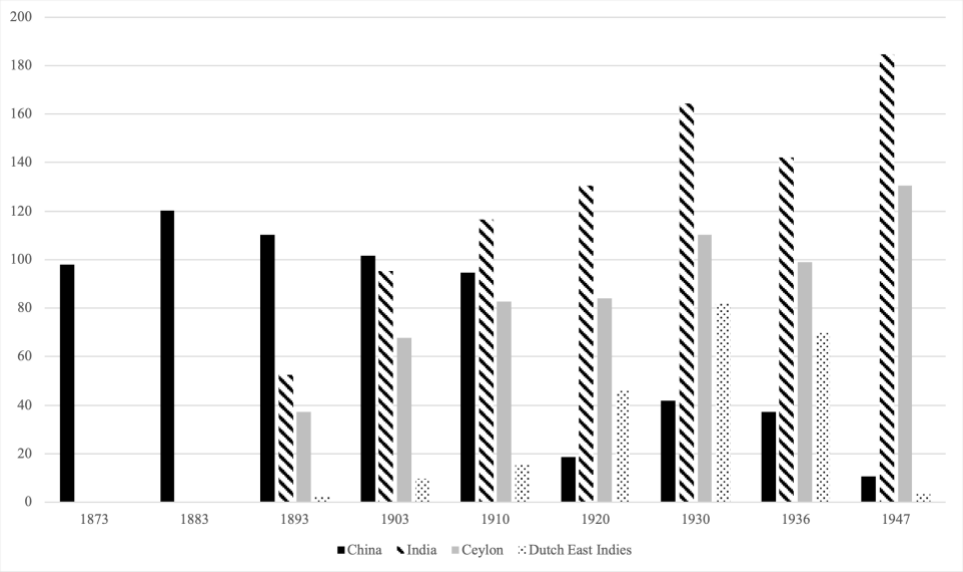
Sources: Official foreign trade yearbooks of the sample countries (see section 2 "Data Sources").
Notes: Data for Argentina is 1905; for Brazil, 1925; for Chile, 1889, 1902, 1910 and 1920; for Mexico, 1893, 1912, and 1923.

Whereas tea was among the most important Chinese exports, its importance began to decline toward the end of the 19th century (Wong 2007; Yan 1955). Figure 11 shows that China was the world's largest tea exporter until the late 19th century. However, British India, Ceylon, and the Dutch East Indies gradually gained a stronger presence in the global tea market. By 1903, India's

[16] Indeed, in 1910-1911, 71% of Indian tea were exported to Great Britain. This data is from *Statistical abstract relating to British India from 1903-04 to 1912-13.* Forty-eighth number. London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1915, available in South East Asia Library (https://dsal.uchicago.edu/statistics/).

tea exports quantity almost caught up with that of China. By 1920, all other three exporters had surpassed China, with India's tea exports reaching six times larger than China's. The contrast between the decline of China's tea industry and the growth of India's tea industry in this period is related to the obsolescence in cultivation and processing methods in China.

Figure 11: Tea exports of major producing countries (in millions of kg), 1873-1947



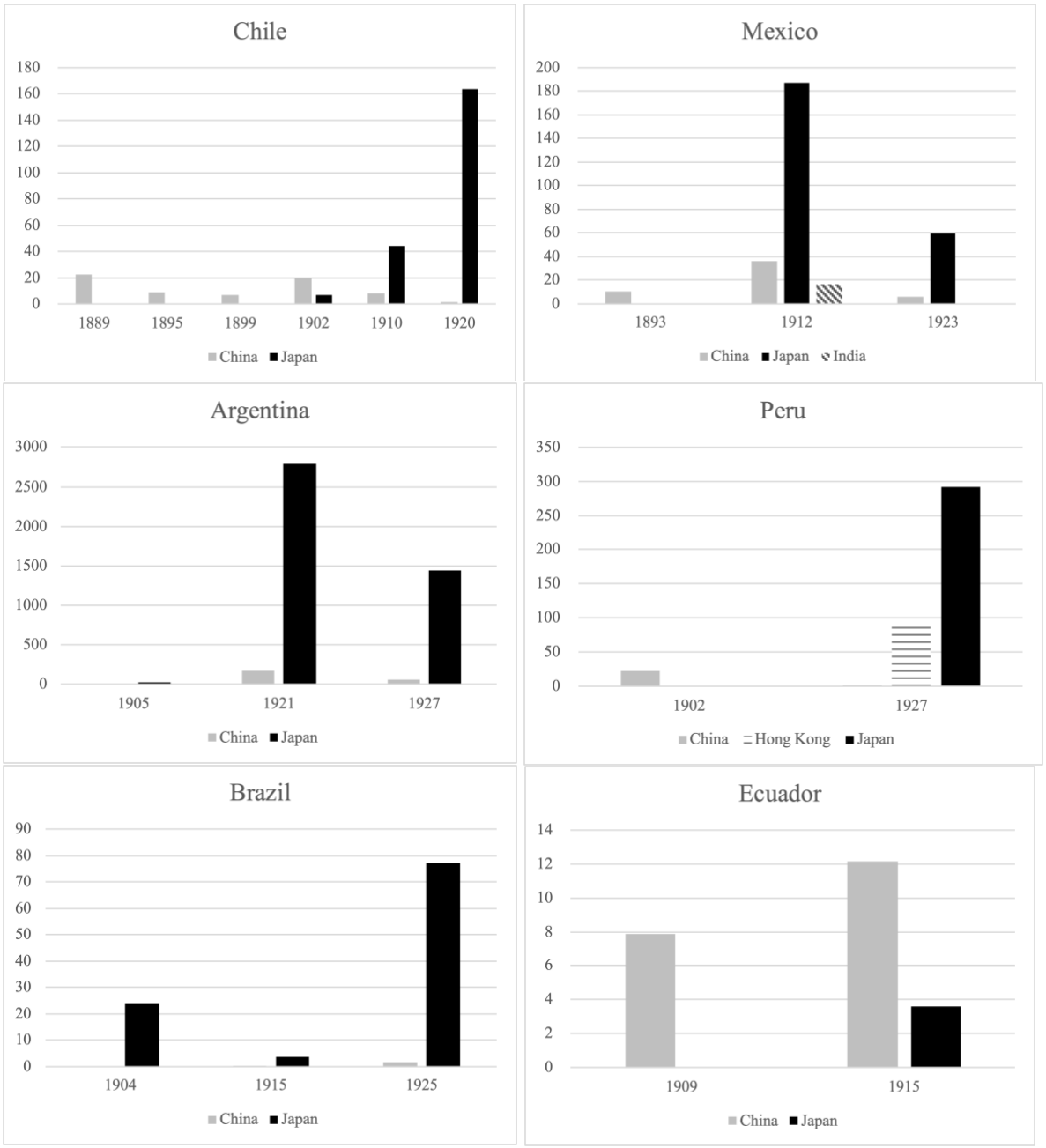
Sources: Yan (1955)

In China tea production was fragmented into small plots and tea leaves were picked and processed manually, leading to inefficient production and inconsistent product quality (Zhong 2021). In addition, the tax burden on domestic tea transportation damaged the price competitiveness of Chinese tea in international markets (Zhong 2021). In contrast, since early 20th century, the tea industry in India overtook China's tea industry due to more advanced production methods. Driven by considerable capital investment, the use of mechanized technology, and the efficient management of Europeans, the Indian tea industry benefited from scientific practices for seed selection, intensive cultivation in large plantations, and mechanized processing (Gupta 2008; Sarkar 1972; Zhong 2021).

There have also been changes in Asian suppliers in terms of textiles. During the last decades of the 19th century, Latin America's imports of Asian textiles, particularly silk products such as shawls, fabrics, sashes and scarves, came mainly from China (Figure 12). Japanese silk and cotton textiles

began to gain increasing importance from the late 19th century. By the 1910s, Japan had replaced China as the leading Asian supplier of textiles to Latin America, offering a wider range of products, including silk linings, silk scarves, dyed or painted silk fabrics, cotton socks and stockings, cotton trimmings and cordage, satins, and other cotton fabrics. In 1920s, Chinese textiles almost disappeared from the import baskets of some Latin American countries, maintaining only a modest presence through raw silk. For example, in 1921, Argentina imported silk and cotton products from Japan worth $2.8 million (1913 US dollar), sixteen times the value of its imports of silk, wool, and other textile fibers from China. In Brazil, this shift began in the 1900s, with textiles coming almost exclusively from Japan (Figure 12). By 1925, the value of Japanese silk manufactures in Brazil reached $77,414 (in 1913 US dollar), far exceeding that of Chinese imports. Ecuador is a different case, as China remained its primary Asian supplier of textiles in 1915. The contrast between Japan's growing raw silk exports and China's relatively stagnant status between 1880 and 1935 further highlights this shift in the international textile market (Figure 13).

Figure 12: Latin America's import of textiles from Asia (in thousands of 1913 US dollars), 1880s-1920s



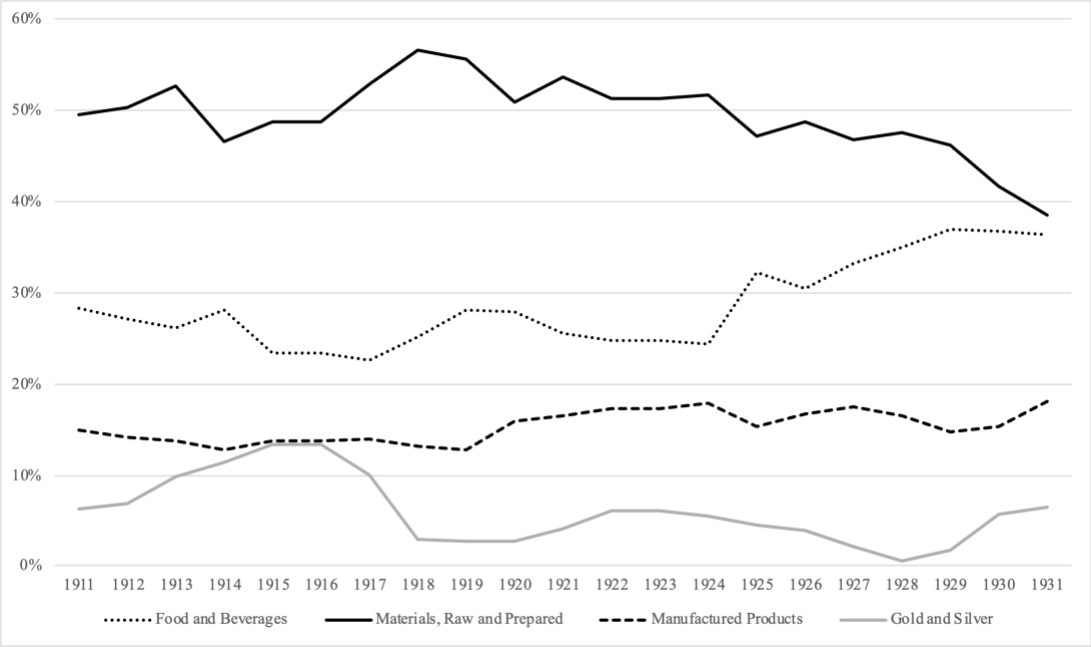
Sources: Official foreign trade yearbooks of the sample countries (see section 2 "Data Sources").

Figure 13: Raw silk exports of China and Japan (in millions of kg), 1880-1935

Sources: Yan (1955)

The fluctuation in the prominence of China, Japan, and India reflects disparities in industrial development and foreign trade policy strategies in these Asian countries. In China, the early 20th century was marked by political instability and the decline of the Qing dynasty. Despite attempts on modernization and industrial reform, such as the Self-Strengthening Movement (1861-1894), China remained as a predominantly agrarian economy (Ma 2021). The 1911 Revolution, led by Sun Yat-Sen, overthrew the Qing dynasty and the Republic of China was established. However, internal conflicts continued and hindered progress toward industrialization. Additionally, China remained subject to various "unequal treaties" that granted trade privileges and extraterritorial rights to foreign powers, which restricted China's autonomy over its trade policies and tariffs (Chen 2002). The situation worsened during the Warlord Era (1916-1928), when the country was fragmented into regions controlled by local military leaders. Figure 14 shows that from 1911 to 1931, approximately 80% of Chinese exports products consisted of raw and low processed materials as well as food and beverages, while manufactured goods made up around 15% of the total exports. Furthermore, the invasion and subsequent occupation of parts of China by Japan, especially after the 1931 Manchurian Incident, further disrupted Chinese trade.

Figure 14: Main products in China's exports (in percentage), 1911-1931



Sources: Hsiao (1974)

Meanwhile, India's industrialization policies were restricted by the rules imposed by British colonial rule. Thus, despite certain industrial developments in sectors such as textiles, jute and tea, British trade restrictions impeded autonomous industrial growth (Appleyard 2006; Mahajan 2015; Roy 1999; Sethia 1996). In this context, Indian raw materials, such as cotton, jute, and tea, were exported to Britain, while British manufactured goods were imported into India (Roy 2016). Between 1890 and 1920, nearly 80% of British India's exports were concentrated in a few raw materials and agricultural products, primarily raw cotton, rice, raw jute, and jute manufactures (Table 6).

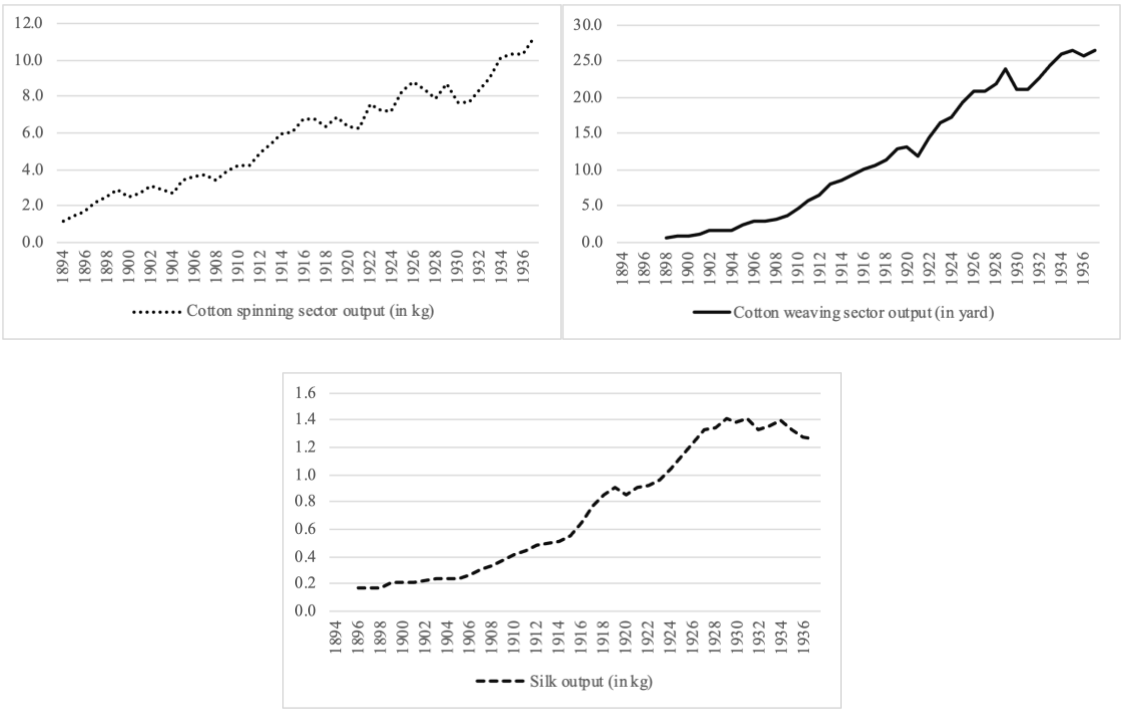
Table 6: Main products in British India's exports (in percentage), 1890-1920

Products	1890-1891	1900-1901	1910-1911	1919-1920
Cotton, Raw	17%	10%	18%	19%
Cotton, Twist and Yarn	7%	4%	4%	6%
Rice	13%	13%	11%	3%
Jute, Raw	8%	10%	8%	8%
Jute, Manufactures	2%	8%	8%	16%
Opium	9%	9%	6%	1%
Seeds	9%	9%	13%	9%
Tea	5%	9%	6%	7%
Hides and Skins, Raw	5%	7%	4%	8%
Sum	*75%*	*78%*	*78%*	*76%*

Sources: *Statistical abstract relating to British India from 1894-95 to 1919-20*, available in Digital South Asia Library (https://dsal.uchicago.edu/statistics/).

In contrast to the two before mentioned cases, industrialization was promoted in Japan in the Meiji era (1867-1912) and further intensified during the Taisho period (1912-1926) and Showa period (1926-1989) (Lockwood 2015). Textile industry stands out in the industrialization, with cotton textile industry remaining as the largest manufacturing sector from late 19th century through 1950s (Smitka 1998). Figure 15 shows an increasing trend of the cotton spinning and weaving sector output, as well as silk output per capita from 1894 to 1937.

Figure 15: Cotton spinning, cotton weaving, and silk output per capita in Japan, 1894-1937

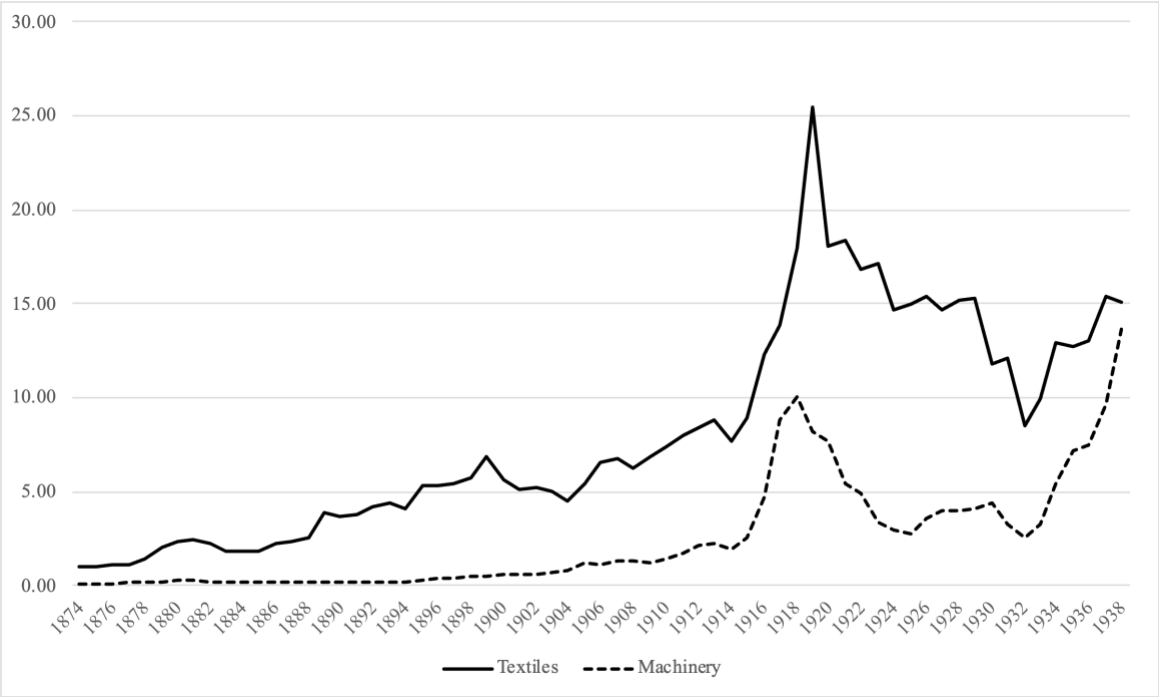


Sources: Long-Term Economic Statistics (LTES) Database (Japan)[17]

Moreover, Japan's colonial imperialism, initiated in 1895, promoted regional trade integration and positioned Japan as the center of Asia (Badia-Miro, Carreras-Marin, and Martinez-Taberner 2022). This process of regional integration, which particularly affected South and Southeast Asia, created more resilient markets to external disturbances like World War I (Ayuso-Díaz 2022; Ayuso-Díaz and Tena-Junguito 2020). By the 1920s, Japan had consolidated its presence in Asian markets and begun expanding into global markets by leveraging higher manufacturing productivity and advanced industrialization (Badia-Miro, Carreras-Marin, and Martinez-Taberner 2022). For example, the textiles and machinery production per capita in Japan increased from 1874 to the pre-WWI period, and during the years in WWI, textiles production per capita increased by 231% from 1914 to 1919, while the machinery production per capita rose by 430% from 1914 to 1918 (Figure 16).

[17] Long-Term Economic Statistics (LTES) Database (Japan) is a systematic collection of estimated and processed historical statistics of early modern Japan on economic activities in various fields based on the System of National Accounts (URL: https://d-infra.ier.hit-u.ac.jp/English/ltes/a000.html).

Figure 16: Japan's textiles and machinery production per capita (in 1913 US dollar), 1874-1938



Sources: Long-Term Economic Statistics (LTES) Database (Japan)

Industrialization also led to a diversification of Japan's exports composition from 1880 to 1939, marked by a decrease in the share of agricultural products (crude foodstuff) and an increase in the importance of textiles and machinery (Table 7). By the eve of WWI, Japan already became a major exporter of manufactured goods (Meissner and Tang 2018). By the 1930s, the export of manufactures (including textiles, chemicals, metal products, wood products, ceramics, machinery, etc.) accounted for around 90% of Japan's exports. In correspondence to these changes, Japan's exports to Latin America changed during the years of World War I and its aftermath, evolving from primarily silk and tea to a more diversified basket of manufacture and industrial goods (Badia-Miro, Carreras-Marin, and Martinez-Taberner 2022).

Table 7: Main products in Japan's exports (in percentage), 1880-1939

Products	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1939
Crude Foodstuff	28%	15%	7%	5%	2%	2%	3%
Textiles	35%	36%	46%	53%	55%	53%	38%
Chemicals	7%	9%	7%	7%	8%	8%	11%
Metal and Metal Products	4%	11%	6%	6%	4%	5%	10%
Machinery	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	4%	13%
Sum	*73%*	*70%*	*67%*	*71%*	*72%*	*73%*	*73%*

Sources: Long-Term Economic Statistics (LTES) Database (Japan)

By the 1930s, Japan had reached an advanced stage of industrialization and sought to expand its international trade relations, looking for new markets for its manufactures and new sources of raw materials (Sugihara 2005). Additionally, the geopolitical tensions prior to World War II and Japan's expansionist policies in Asia, isolated it from its Western trading partners and forced the country to seek alternative markets (Baranowski 2014; Watanabe 2018). This context helps to understand the growing importance of Japan in Latin American imports during these years. According to Japan's foreign trade data, although Latin America was not a primary export destination, its percentage in Japan's exports rose from 1% to 4% between 1930 and 1937.[18]

5.2 Demand factors: consumption patterns and Asian immigration

The understanding of Asian-Latin American trade requires also to consider demand forces. The consumption of luxury oriental goods among the upper classes and the consumption of more accessible goods, such as textile products of different values, among popular classes, rooted in the colonial period (Bonialian 2014, 2022; Dobado and Fernández de Pinedo 2023; Dobado-González 2013). These patterns persisted in the period under analysis here. The previous section showed that the highest consumption of Asian products in per capita levels were found in Argentina, Chile and Brazil and, to a less extent, Peru and Mexico. The relevance of Argentina and Chile appears as a new feature of Asian-Latin American trade compared to the colonial period. While Chile's geographic location may have played a role, the relevance of these countries can be largely explained by their economic dynamism during the period. Indeed, both Argentina and Chile, along with Uruguay, were the most dynamic Latin American economies during these decades (Bulmer-

[18] Data are from Long-Term Economic Statistics (LTES) Database (Japan).

Thomas 2017; Kuntz-Ficker 2018).

In contrast to Argentina and Chile, the presence of Mexico and Peru appears as a continuation of a consumption pattern from the colonial period. In this vein, the composition of Latin American imports reveals the continuous presence of Asian items such as porcelain, ivory and lacquer artifacts. For instance, some Asian products, especially Chinese porcelain, remained popular among the upper classes in Mexican society. In the 1920s, the Mexican newspapers *El Porvenir* and *El Nacional* reported on the wedding of upper classes people and listed the gifts they received. These included items such as Chinese porcelain for salad, Chinese porcelain tea set, and finest Chinese porcelain breakfast set (see Picture 1). This suggests that, much like during the colonial period, Latin American upper classes continued consuming these products. Moreover, a detailed examination of the import baskets reveals that the range of Asian products extended well beyond luxury items for elite consumption. In fact, most imports comprised mass-consumption goods such as textiles of various qualities, rice, and tea. As observed during the colonial period, this indicates that Latin America's middle and lower classes also consumed Asian products.

Picture 1: Newspapers *El Nacional Revolucionario* (March 4, 1930) and *El Porvenir* (October 5, 1928)

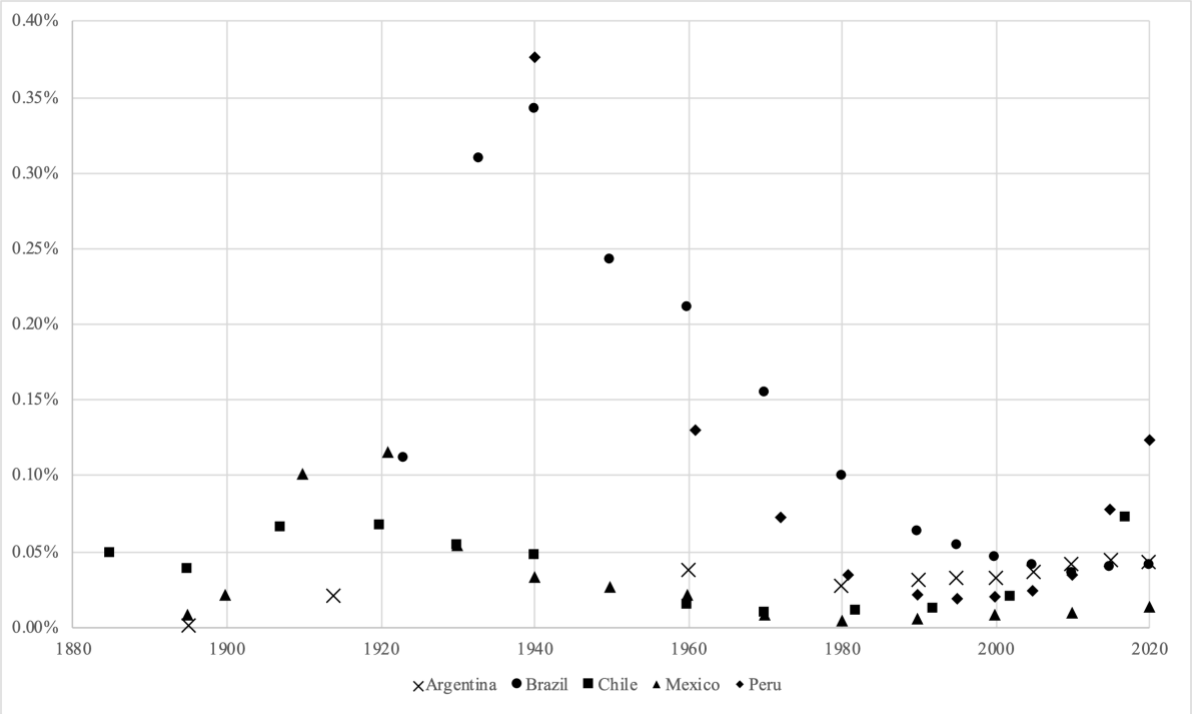
Sources: Hemeroteca Nacional Digital de México

Notes: Left picture: The news reported on the wedding of Julio Muller and Eloísa Masoareñas, with the headline "Ayer se celebró un brillante matrimonio de distinguidas personas de nuestra sociedad" ("Yesterday a brilliant wedding of distinguished persons of uur society was celebrated"). Among the extensive list of gifts there were "juego porcelana china para ensalada" (Chinese porcelain salad set) and "juego porcelana de té" (Chinese porcelain tea set). Right picture: The news reported on the wedding of Sosa and Diaz, registering a "finísimo juego de porcelana china para desayuno" (finest Chinese porcelain breakfast set) among the listed gifts.

Beyond the apparent long-term continuity in consumption patterns among local elites and general population, it is essential to consider the impact of massive migration flows from Asia to the Americas during this period (Hu-DeHart and López 2008; Sato 1993). Between the mid-19th century and the early 20th century, approximately 250,000 to 300,000 Chinese laborers (known as coolies) and 18,000 Japanese contracted laborers, emigrated to Latin America, particularly to countries like Cuba and Peru that actively promoted labor immigration (Chang 1956; Sato 1993). From the early 20th century until the Great Depression, more free Chinese immigrants arrived, such as artisans and small-scale merchants (Liu 2015).

Between 1908 and 1961, around 237,466 Japanese migrants settled in Brazil, driven by the Brazilian government's interest in populating and exploiting its territory by opening new agricultural lands and addressing the labor demands of coffee plantations (Saito and Rocha 1989; Sato 1993). When looking at Asian immigration (mainly Chinese and Japanese) in different Latin American countries, it becomes clear that its relative importance was marginal and much lower than other immigrant flows, particularly those from Spain and Italy. However, the proportion of Asian immigrants in the total population of Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Peru shows an increasing trend in this period (Figure 17).

Figure 17: Asian immigrants in Latin American population (in percentage), 1880-2020



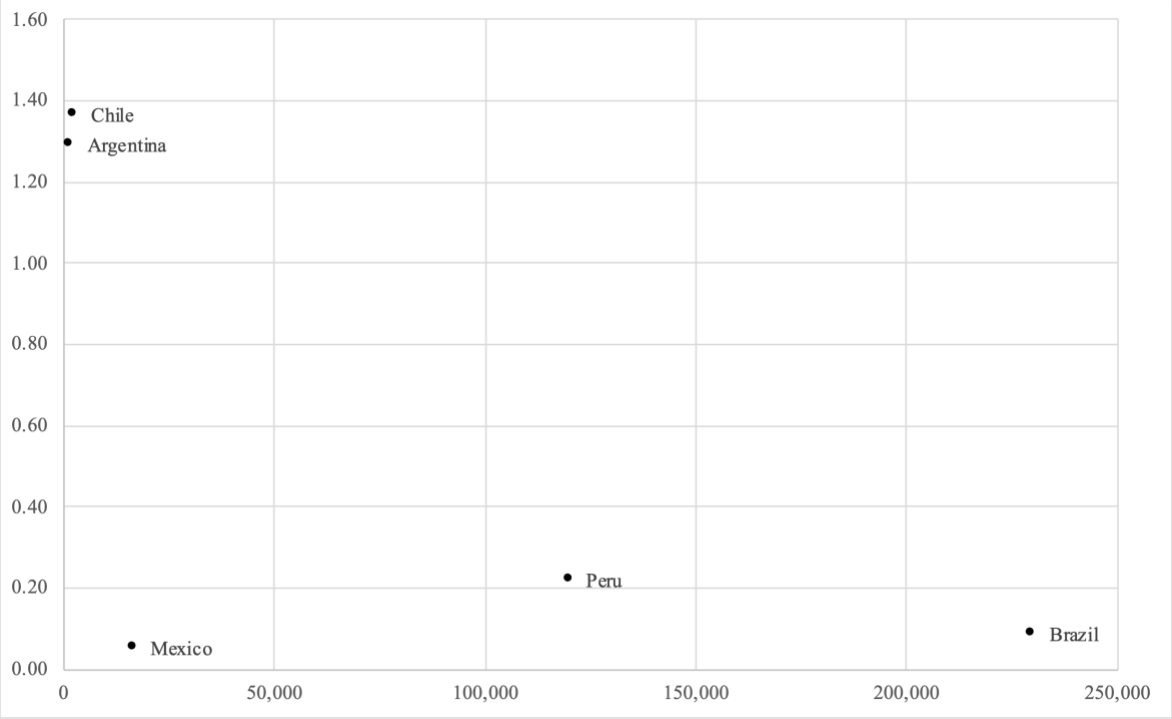
Sources: The data of Asian immigrants are from the censuses of Latin American countries.[19]

Notes: 1. These data represent legally registered Asian immigrants recorded in the official censuses of Latin American countries (except for Brazil). They do not include illegal immigrants or Asian descendants. As a result, the figures likely underestimate the actual Asian population in Latin America. However, they provide valuable insights into the intensity of the Asian immigration wave in the region. 2. In 1876 Peruvian census registered nearly 50,000 Asian immigrants, accounting for 2% of the population. This data is not included in the figure because it's relatively too high comparing to others.

[19] The data of Argentina are from "Segundo Censo de la República Argentina 1895, Decretado en la Administración del Dr. Saenz Peña", "Tercer Censo Nacional 1914. Ordenado por la ley 9108 bajo la presidencia del Dr. Roque Saenz Peña", "IV Censo General de la Nación 1947. Dirección Nacional del Servicio Estadístico", United Nations International Data Base 1991; the data of Chile are from "Censo General de la Población de Chile 1885, 1895. Oficina Central de Estadística. Santiago"; "Censo General de la República de Chile 1907. Comisión Central del Censo"; "Censo de Población de la República de Chile 1920. Dirección General de Estadística"; "Censo Nacional de Población 1930, 1940, Dirección General de Estadística"; "Censo Nacional de Población 1960 Dirección de Estadística y Censos"; "Censo Nacional de Población 1970. Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas"; "Censo Nacional de Población 1982. Ministro de Economía, Fomento y Reconstrucción"; "Censo Nacional de Población 1992, 2002, 2017. Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas"; the data of Mexico are from "Censo General de la República Mexicana 1895, 1900", "Tercer Censo de Población de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos 1910", "Censo General de Habitantes 1921", "Quinto Censo de Población 1930", "Sexto Censo de Población 1940", "Censo General de Población 1950, 1960, 1970", "Censo General de Población y Vivienda 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020"; the data of Peru are from "Censo General de la República del Perú de 1876", "Censo Nacional de Población y Ocupación de 1940, Ministerio de Hacienda y Comercio, Dirección Nacional de Estadistica", "Censos Nacionales de Población, Vivienda y Agropecuario 1961", United Nations International Data Base 1991; the data of Brazil are from Sato (1993).

Figure 18 plots the Asian population in Latin America (horizontal axis) versus imports from Asia per capita (vertical axis) in some years between 1910 and 1930. It seems that there is no clear trend between these two variables, and it is difficult to establish any relation as we have too few data. Nonetheless, certain products, such as opium, highlight a connection between Asian migration and specific trade items if we look at the qualitative evidence.

Figure 18: Asian population in Latin America versus imports from Asia per capita, 1910-1930



Sources: The data of imports are from the official trade statistics of the Latin American countries. The data of Asian population are from Gao (2012); Rodriguez Pastor (1989); Saito and Rocha (1989); Sato (1993).

Notes: Data for Argentina are of the year 1914; for Brazil and Chile, 1920; for Mexico, 1921; for Peru, 1925.

Despite prohibition efforts against opium consumption in China during the first half of the 19th century (Bello 2020), this product continued to circulate domestically, and its use persisted among the Chinese diaspora. During the Second Opium War, opium trade was legalized in 1858 in China (Feige and Miron 2008). While the opium trade in Asia was largely dominated by Arab, Portuguese, and British merchants, in Western countries, opium trade and consumption were often associated with the Chinese diaspora (Capó Valdivia 2015; Escohotado 2000).

The link between Chinese migrants and opium consumption relates, initially, to the arrival of Chinese laborers, known as coolies who were almost exclusively male, to Cuba and Peru between 1847 and 1874 (Hu-DeHart 2005). Opium was an intrinsic part of this movement of people since landowners encouraged its use to control and manage the coolies, but opium consumption also generated productivity problems and posed serious social challenges (Hu-DeHart 2005).

The presence of Chinese coolies was also relevant in Chile, specifically in those nitrate-abundant regions annexed after the War of the Pacific (1879-1884), which were previously under Bolivian and Peruvian sovereignty. Indeed, opium consumption was widespread among the Chinese community in northern Chile during the saltpeter boom (1880-1930). This explains the relevant presence of opium in Chile's imports from Asia. For instance, in 1902, Chile imported 1,333 kgs of opium worth $37,324 (1913 US dollars) from China, representing 17% of its total imports from China that year (see Appendix: Table A.3).

Similarly, Rodríguez Pastor (2017) cites a 1920 document reporting the closure of opium dens in Iquique, a northern Chilean city where roughly 30% of the Chinese population were opium consumers. Despite this closure, the Chinese community adapted other commercial establishments under their control, such as canteens, butcher shops, and gambling houses, to continue consuming opium (González Pizarro, Llanos Reyes, and Lufin Varas 2020; Rodríguez Pastor 2017). This may explain why opium was seen as harmful to the social reputation of Chinese immigrants (González Pizarro, Llanos Reyes, and Lufin Varas 2020).

The previous section highlighted the significant role of opium in Mexico's imports from Asia. For example, in 1893, Mexico imported 4,934 kgs of opium valued at $41,450 (1913 US dollars), which made up 58% of the total value of imports from China. In 1912, Mexico imported 2,677 kgs of opium from China (27% of the value of imports from China) and 4,566 kgs from India (11% of the value of imports from India), with a total value of $186,374 (see Appendix: Table A.1 and Table A.2). These figures reflect the opium consumption in Mexico at the time. Lugo Viñas (2022) describes a disused premises owned by a Chinese man, Liú, where basements concealed rooms dedicated to opium consumption during the 1940s: "between walls tattooed with Chinese characters and imperial dragons and a small table with utensils for smoking, Chinese and Mexicans of middle or upper class, reclined on wooden boards that served as bunks to indulge in poppy" (Lugo Viñas 2022, 52). These establishments, along with the prevalent stereotypes that linked the

Chinese community to opium, explains in part the xenophobia of the era and the association between opium consumption and the "contamination" of society by the "vices" of the Chinese (Pérez Montfort 1997; Recio 2002).

Moreover, the trade data may be an underestimation of Mexican imports of opium. This is because opium trade and smuggling developed in Baja California in Mexico since the late 19th century. By the early decades of the 20th century, international networks and ships sailing from Macao, Hong Kong and Singapore had been established in northwestern Mexico for the transit of raw opium to the United States (Capó Valdivia 2015). According to some scholars, the geography of Chinese migrants in Mexico and the smuggling networks that were developed during the early 20th century are important to understand the current geography of cartels and drug trafficking in Mexico (Murphy and Rossi 2020).

The relevance of the 19th century and early 20th century Asian migration to understand Asian-Latin American trade goes beyond opium. The most evident examples are culinary traditions in Brazil and Peru. The former is represented by the integration of Japanese food in Brazilian cuisine, which is reflected in the proliferation of Japanese restaurants; the latter becomes evident when looking at the popularity of restaurants of Chinese origin -the so-called *chifas*- across Peru (Saito and Rocha 1989; Yuan 2018). The consolidation of these culinary traditions reflects both the ability of Asian migrants to influence their host societies as well as the continuous consumption of Asian products by the Asian descendent population. To this respect, García Maya (2012) interviewed Mexicans of Chinese descent from three different generations, focusing on their tea consumption and their perceptions of this tradition. Participants included the first generation of Mexicans of Chinese descent, the descendants of the large migration wave of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, those born between 1950 and 1970, and the third generation that was born after 1970. Through these interviews, García Maya observed a continuity in tea consumption among Mexicans of Chinese descent, although with variations in preparation methods and attitudes towards Chinese cultural heritage.

Therefore, the arrival of Asian migrants during the 19th century and early 20th century would help understanding Latin American imports from Asia. Another illustration of this phenomenon relates to the impact of Asian immigrants on local economies and their contributions to long-term transpacific trade relations (Palma and Strabucchi 2019). For instance, according to the

International Chinese Business Directory of the World of 1913,[20] there were 2,166 Chinese business operating across 242 cities in Latin America and the Caribbean. Peru was at the top with 557 business establishments, followed by Mexico (554) and Panama (499) (Kin 1913; Palma and Strabucchi 2019). 80% of these Chinese businesses specialized in the sale of groceries, general merchandise and silk goods, followed by restaurants and laundries (Palma and Strabucchi 2019). Some of these businesses contributed to the transpacific trade by opening large commercial houses that imported manufactured and food products from China. They also exhibited decorations and sold luxury products such as Chinese porcelain ornaments, furniture and ivories (Lausent-Herrera 2009, 2011).

Furthermore, the formation and consolidation of Chinese clan associations and fraternities in Latin America during the early 20th century facilitated the establishment and growth of Chinese businesses in the region (Hu-DeHart and López 2008). These family ties and local networks provided crucial support, including capital raising, market access, and informal guidance on business opportunities, which helped the Chinese merchants to thrive in local economies and develop strong transpacific trade (Hearn 2012; Palma and Strabucchi 2019).

[20] *The International Chinese Business Directory of the World in 1913* in complied and published by Wong Kin in San Francisco. The objective is to promote the commercial relationship among Chinese businesses in China and around the world. It is a list of prominent Chinese firms and individuals in parts of China, Japan, the United States, South America, and other countries overseas.

6. Conclusion

This chapter offers a novel trade data set between Asia and Latin America between 1876 and 1938. This provides insights into the interactions between both regions highlighting the persistence of some colonial trade as well as the emergence of new trade patterns. Archival research shows that Asia's role in Latin America's foreign trade remained marginal, accounting for less than 5% of the region's exports and imports. However, despite this limited share, the composition of Latin American imports from Asia showed continuities with colonial consumption patterns, such as the ongoing demand for tea, textiles, porcelain, rice spices and luxury artifacts.

Asian countries experienced a different prominence throughout the period. While imports from China remained stagnated, imports from India increased from the early 20th century until the early 1920s. Likewise, imports from Japan increased during the years of World War I. Although imports both from India and Japan reduced during the 1920s, they recovered their increasing trend during the 1930s.

The composition of imports reflects continuities rooted in the colonial era. While traditional products like textiles, tea, rice, and porcelain maintained a consistent presence in Latin America's import baskets, differences emerged among the three Asian countries. Imports from India were heavily concentrated on agricultural raw materials such as jute, rice and spices. Imports from China, while also saw a high share of agricultural products, like tea, opium, rice and spices, showed some diversification. This included the maintenance of silk products and the increasing share of cotton products in 1900s and 1910s. In contrast, since the early 20th century, the imports from Japan featured even higher diversification, including more new manufactured goods such as toys, artifacts and machinery.

We look at supply and demand forces to understand the continuities and changes in Asian-Latin American trade. The relevance of supply-side dynamics is exemplified by the evolution of Latin American tea and textiles imports from Asia. Following patterns in the colonial period, through the late 19th century, China remained the primary tea and textile Asian exporter. However, in the first two decades of the 20th century, Indian tea and Japanese textiles began gaining importance and surpassed China in the Latin American market.

The change in the relevance of China, Japan, and India in Latin America's imports reflects the

disparities in their industrial development and foreign trade policy strategies. In China, this period was marked by political instability and restrictions on its trade policies and tariffs. Despite attempts on industrialization, China remained as a predominantly agrarian economy, and its exports mainly consisted of raw and prepared materials as well as food and beverages, with a share around 15% of manufactured goods. India's industrialization policies were also restricted by the rules imposed by British colonial rule. Although there were certain industrial developments in sectors like tea, jute and textiles, around 77% of its exports were concentrated in a few raw materials and agricultural products, primarily raw cotton, rice, raw jute, and jute manufactures.

In contrast, in this period Japan underwent rapid economic takeoff, fostering the manufacturing industrialization, which led to a diversification of Japan's exports composition, marked by an increase in the importance of manufactures, including textiles and machinery, to around 90% of its exports by the 1930s. Additionally, the geopolitical tensions and Japan's expansionist policies in Asia in the 1930s forced the country to take a strategy of international market diversification, which helps to understand its growing importance in Latin American imports during these years.

The demand-side factors also help to understand the continuities and changes in Latin America's import from Asia. The consumption of luxury oriental goods among Latin America's upper classes persisted, while more affordable textiles remained popular among broader social classes. Additionally, the massive Asian migrants to Latin America in this period maintained their consumption in specific products, such as opium and tea. Moreover, the Asian communities and socio-economic associations in Latin America contributed to the long-term transpacific trade between the two regions.

In conclusion, although trade volumes between Asia and Latin America were relatively modest, the period represent a transition when historical dynamics are maintained, and at the same time, new trade patterns emerge. These continuities and changes were rooted in the colonial period and to some extent stimulate the transpacific trade boom in subsequent eras.

Appendix

Table A.1: Mexico's imports from China (in quantity, value and percentage), 1890s-1920s

Years	Products	Quantity	Unit	Value	%
1893	Opium of all kinds and its extract	4,934	kilog	41,450	58.11
	Raw or unprocessed silk, of all kinds	2,167	kilog	9,055	12.70
	Green or black tea of all kinds	20,583	kilog	8,464	11.87
	Unspecified seeds and edible grains	98,293	kilog	3,830	5.37
	Silk fabric of all types of weave	173	kilog	1,165	1.63
	Preserved fruits, vegetables, legumes, and tubers	2,819	kilog	1,047	1.47
	Mats made of hemp, jute, coconut, palm, or henequen	5,435	kilog	895	1.26
	Unspecified artifacts made of paper or cardboard	1,127	kilog	699	0.98
	Saltpeter or potassium and sodium nitrate	25,657	kilog	671	0.94
	Fireworks	2,741	kilog	484	0.68
	Total			***71,326***	
1912	Opium and opium extract	2,677	kg.l.	62,226	26.93
	Raw and unprocessed silk of all kinds	4,850	kg.n.	25,364	10.98
	Fireworks	78,379	kg.b.	21,875	9.47
	Tea	35,852	kg.n.	15,440	6.68
	Rice	214,462	kg.b.	13,057	5.65
	Lard	61,331	kg.b.	11,756	5.09
	Preserved fruits, vegetables, legumes, and tubers	77,534	kg.l.	10,486	4.54
	Silk fabric of all types of weave	913	kg.n.	10,213	4.42
	Straw braids for making hats	6,644	kg.l.	6,908	2.99
	Unspecified fixed oils for industrial use	25,194	kg.l.	5,268	2.28
	Total			***231,096***	
1923	Rice	1,287,640	kg.b.	60,018	37.80
	Preserved fruits, vegetables, etc.	76,714	kg.b.	12,963	8.16
	Straw braids, etc., for hats	8,609	kg.l.	10,520	6.63
	Tea	154,573	kg.l.	8,826	5.56
	Raw unprocessed silk	566	kg.l.	5,737	3.61
	Medicinal drugs, pharmaceutical specialties, and chemical products	5,676	kg.l.	5,469	3.44
	Fruits preserved in brine	71,491	kg.b.	5,104	3.21
	Paper waste and scraps, and unbleached vegetable fiber sheets for manufacturing	84,370	kg.b.	4,894	3.08
	Animal food preserves	12,271	kg.l.	3,966	2.50
	Vegetables for medicinal use, unspecified	13,344	kg.l.	3,850	2.42
	Total			***158,771***	

Sources: Official yearbooks of foreign trade of Latin American countries (for details, see section 2)
Notes: Values are in 1913 US Dollar

Table A.2: Mexico's imports from India (in quantity, value and percentage), 1890s-1920s

Years	Products	Quantity	Unit	Value	%
1893	Sacks made of jute, pita, henequen, and burlap	792,318	kilog	54,999	36.78
	Cocoa of all kinds	115,352	kilog	44,223	29.57
	Cinnamon of all kinds, including Cassia	88,441	kilog	22,005	14.71
	Unspecified seeds and edible grains	196,262	kilog	13,541	9.05
	Pepper	31,039	kilog	3,902	2.61
	Sacks made of jute, pita, henequen, and burlap	39,492	kilog	3,881	2.60
	Fixed, liquid, or concrete oils for industrial use	9,821	kilog	1,973	1.32
	Clove spice	8,244	kilog	1,160	0.78
	Starches of all materials and those that are milk-based or prepared	15,142	kilog	975	0.65
	Gum arabic, copal, damar, greasewood or sandarac, lacquer	2,419	kilog	627	0.42
	Total			***149,547***	
1912	Jute, abacá (Manila hemp), pita, ixtle, henequen, and New Zealand flax (phor	5,663,277	kg.b.	605,093	56.01
	Cinnamon of all kinds, cassia, and vanilla	291,092	kg.n.	166,739	15.43
	Opium and opium extract	4,566	kg.l.	124,148	11.49
	Caraway and green anise, almond, cocoa, and pepper	284,173	kg.n.	97,826	9.06
	Rice	411,168	kg.b.	25,324	2.34
	Tea	19,127	kg.n.	16,375	1.52
	Dirty fleece wool and regenerated wool	25,647	kg.b.	10,352	0.96
	Sacks made from the fabrics of jute, abacá, pita, ixtle, henequen, New Zealan	54,083	kg.b.	7,609	0.70
	Raw and unprocessed silk of all kinds	809	kg.n.	6,253	0.58
	Sacks made from the fabrics of jute, abacá, pita, ixtle, henequen, New Zealan	35,772	kg.b.	5,409	0.50
	Total			***1,080,304***	
1923	Jute, abaca or Manila hemp, pita, etc., raw and combed	2,488,473	kg.b.	209,370	55.12
	Cinnamon, cassia, and vanilla	230,371	kg.b.	62,094	16.35
	Sacks or bags	220,016	kg.b.	19,766	5.20
	Cocoa	81,349	kg.l.	16,533	4.35
	Unspecified spices	81,433	kg.l.	16,195	4.26
	Tea	17,840	kg.l.	9,875	2.60
	Total			***379,815***	

Sources: Official yearbooks of foreign trade of Latin American countries (for details, see section 2)
Notes: Values are in 1913 US Dollar

Table A.3: Chile's imports from China (in quantity, value and percentage), 1880s-1920s

Years	Products	Quantity	Unit	Value	%
1889	Tea	31,716	kilos	47,576	37.63
	Drugs (Opium)	694	bultos	27,059	21.40
	Silks	31	bultos	23,567	18.64
	Rockets	39,602	kilos	14,646	11.58
	Various merchandise	156	bultos	7,558	5.98
	Provisions	259	bultos	2,991	2.37
	Silk fabric	32	kilos	972	0.77
	Silk sashes	46	kilos	954	0.75
	Items for dressmakers	6	bultos	495	0.39
	Pickles	604	kilos	202	0.16
	Total			***126,432***	
1895	Tea	43,351	kilos	65,033	48.83
	Drugs (Opium)	40	bultos	30,829	23.15
	Rockets	27,792	kilos	10,583	7.95
	Silk handkerchiefs	269	kilos	7,188	5.40
	Various merchandise	52	bultos	5,679	4.26
	Rice	48,263	kilos	4,344	3.26
	Various merchandise	39	bultos	2,189	1.64
	Provisions	145	bultos	1,354	1.02
	Silk sashes	54,185	grams	1,156	0.87
	Provisions	78	bultos	1,076	0.81
	Total			***133,181***	
1899	Tea	124,118	kilos	248,236	67.95
	Drugs (Opium)	36	bultos	46,687	12.78
	Rockets	16,559	kilos	15,564	4.26
	Rice	77,571	kilos	10,860	2.97
	Medicinal wine	6,208	kilos	9,941	2.72
	Silks	4	bultos	8,222	2.25
	Silk fabric	81,610	grams	4,570	1.25
	Cigars	189	kilos	3,780	1.03
	Silk handkerchiefs	46,380	grams	3,257	0.89
	Furniture	57	bultos	2,793	0.76
	Total			***365,314***	
1902	Tea	107,811	kilos	86,247	39.32
	Opium	1,333	kilos	37,324	17.02
	Rockets	17,995	kilos	16,914	7.71
	Silk cloaks	183,100	grams	12,854	5.86
	Handkerchiefs for the hand	192,175	grams	12,785	5.83
	Scarves, shawls, and scarves	178,684	grams	11,769	5.37
	Fabric for dress or lining	179,230	grams	10,079	4.60
	Furniture	39	kilos	4,256	1.94
	Pepper	6,784	kilos	3,279	1.50
	Various drugs	5	bultos	2,990	1.36
	Total			***219,321***	
1910	Rockets and fireworks	57,951	K.B.	57,951	30.78
	Tea	21,632	K.N.	32,448	17.23
	Handkerchiefs for the hand. Silk	293,200	G.N.	17,956	9.54
	Peanuts	82,810	K.B.	16,562	8.8
	Rice	91,000	K.B.	12,740	6.77
	Vegetable preserves	10,095	K.B.	6,057	3.22
	Sauces of all kinds	3,355	K.B.	2,684	1.43
	Mats	4,340	K.B.	2,604	1.38
	Barks, roots, leaves, flowers, and medicinal seeds	2,614	K.B.	2,508	1.33
	Fabrics for dresses or linings. Silk	76,900	G.N.	2,405	1.28
	Total			***188,289***	
1920	Rice	501,519	K.B.	203,217	62.90
	Tea	27,045	K.N.	78,953	24.44
	Opium in paste or powder	124	K.L.	8,533	2.64
	Barks, roots, leaves, flowers, and seeds, for industrial or medicinal uses	1,894	K.B.	4,476	1.39
	Mushrooms	644	K.B.	3,574	1.11
	Cotton socks and stockings	536	K.L.	3,555	1.10
	Peanuts	22,213	K.B.	3,393	1.05
	Fresh or dried fish naturally or simply salted	973	K.B.	2,537	0.79
	Sauces and condiments	5,637	K.B.	2,008	0.62
	Beans	5,051	K.B.	1,863	0.58
	Total			***323,087***	

Sources: Official yearbooks of foreign trade of Latin American countries (for details, see section 2)
Notes: Values are in 1913 US Dollar

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