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**Borderland Sovereignities.  
Postcolonial Colonialism and State Making in Patagonia.  
Argentina and Chile, 1840s-1922.**

A Dissertation Presented

by

**Alberto Harambour - Ross**

to

The Graduate School

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements

for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

in

**History**

Stony Brook University

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Abstract of the Dissertation

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Analyzing the processes of Argentinean and Chilean colonization of southern Patagonia, a territory that remained unsettled by European powers, this dissertation seeks to understand ‘frontier expansion’ as part of a world-wide imperial impulse in late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Based on metropolitan and local archival work, this dissertation develops a transnational as well as a comparative approach to the regional formation of those States, by following the flow of people and capital to Patagonia. In doing so, it also explores the impact of imperial knowledge in the formulation of national policies, arguing that the region remained a marginal area with very weak State presence, in spite of its centrality in the nationalist imaginaries. Early efforts at penal, administrative, and racial colonization invariably ended in failures. A radical shift took place in the 1880s, however, after an invasion of people and animals from the British colony of Malvinas (Falklands). The landing of sheep meant the start of an accelerated process of State and capital formation, which radically transformed the social and ecological landscape. I argue that it was the articulation of networks of racism and corruption, linking Argentina’s and Chile’s metropolitan oligarchies and European immigrants that defined the pace of colonization. This expansion resulted in the rise of working class and regional identities across a vague border around 1910. The multinational workers’ insurgency challenged the overwhelming power of monopolies and its alliance with local functionaries. Paradoxically, however, discourses of social mobilization were increasingly framed in nationalist terms, and a bloody crack-down in 1920-1922 resulted in a decisive divide between Chilean and Argentine sectors. Overall, the dissertation aims to contribute to borderland studies, addressing the intimate relationship between state and capital accumulation in a colonial/postcolonial setting.

“Among the scenes which are deeply impressed on my mind, none exceed in sublimity the primeval forests undefaced by the hand of man; whether those of Brazil, where the powers of Life are predominant, or those of Tierra del Fuego, where Death and Decay prevail. Both are temples filled with the varied productions of the God of Nature: —no one can stand in these solitudes unmoved, and not feel that there is more in man than the mere breath of his body. In calling up images of the past, I find the plains of Patagonia frequently cross before my eyes: yet these plains are pronounced by all most wretched and useless. They are characterized only by negative possessions; without habitations, without water, without trees, without mountains, they support merely a few dwarf plants. Why then, and the case is not peculiar to myself, have these arid wastes taken so firm possession of the memory? Why have not the still more level, the greener and more fertile Pampas, which are serviceable to mankind, produced an equal impression? I can scarcely analyze these feelings: but it must be partly owing to the free scope given to the imagination. The plains of Patagonia are boundless, for they are scarcely practicable, and hence unknown: they bear the stamp of having thus lasted for ages, and there appears no limit to their duration through future time. If, as the ancients supposed, the flat earth was surrounded by an impassable breadth of water, or by deserts heated to an intolerable excess, who would not look at these last boundaries to man’s knowledge with deep but ill-defined sensations?”

Charles Darwin, Conclusion to *The Voyage of the Beagle* (1839).

Para Camilo, Víctor, y Emilio.  
La historia es vuestra.

Figure 1. Branches of *la Anónima* (1929).



Map indicating the branches of the Sociedad Anónima Importadora y Exportadora de la Patagonia, *Argentina Austral*, 01.08.1929. The journal of the Braun-Menendez's was published in Buenos Aires, for free, starting July 1929. It was an instrument for lobbying in favor of the self-claimed pioneers. From parallel 41 to 55, the SAIEP was by then the unrivaled merchant and moneylender. Patagonia's empty maps of the 1880s were filled by *La Explotadora* and *La Anónima*. To map them was to map the whole Patagonia.

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## Abbreviations.

Archivo General de la Nación (Buenos Aires)	AGN
Memorias Ministerio del Interior.	-MININT
Memorias Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores	-MINREX
Memorias Ministerio de Justicia e Instrucción Pública	-MINJUS
Departamento Documentos Escritos-Fondo Ministerio del Interior	-DDE-FMI
Archivo Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores (Santiago, Chile)	ARMINREX
Archivo Nacional Histórico (Santiago, Chile)	ANH
Fondo Gobernación de Magallanes	ANH-FGM
Fondo Ministerio del Interior	ANH-MININT
Fondo Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores	ANH-MINREX
Fondo Judicial de Punta Arenas, 1890s-1925	ANH-FJM
Memorias Ministerio del Interior	
MMININT(CH)	
Memorias Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores	
MMINREX(CH)	
Memorias Ministerio de Justicia	
MMINJUS(CH)	
Memorias Ministerio de Hacienda	
MMINJUS(CH)	
Archivo Nacional de la Administración – Archivo Siglo XX (Santiago)	ANA
Archivo Histórico Municipal (Río Gallegos)	AHM
Fondo Municipalidad de Río Gallegos, 1913-1923	AHM-MRG
Copiador de decretos, 1913-1917	AHM-CD
Museo Regional de Magallanes, Archivo Histórico Regional	AHR
Correspondencia Mauricio Braun, (CMB) vols. 1904-1914	AHR-CMB
Colección de folletos	AHR-CF
Archivo Histórico Provincial de Santa Cruz (Río Gallegos)	AHP
Fondo Gobernación de Santa Cruz, 1887-1927.	AHP-FGSC
Archivo Instituto de la Patagonia (Punta Arenas)	AIP
Documentación Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego.	AIP-SETF
Gobernación de Magallanes. Copiador de Decretos 1917	AIP-GB.
Colección Rodolfo Stubenrauch	AIP-CRS
Copiador de Cartas de Rogelio Figueroa, 1912-1915	AIP-CC
Federación Obrera de Magallanes	FOM
Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego	SETF
Sociedad Anónima Importadora y Exportadora de la Patagonia	SAIEP

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## Introduction.

“Utopia lies at the horizon. When I draw nearer by two steps, it retreats two steps. If I proceed ten steps forward, it swiftly slips ten steps ahead,” wrote Eduardo Galeano.<sup>1</sup> In the immensity of the Patagonian steppe, the wide horizon combined with an extremely low population density, the availability of land and the regions remote location for providing the historical basis of an imaginary associated with the openness of possibilities. In recent years, Tomás Eloy Martínez wrote of the Patagonian territory as being “the last Dorado,” a centuries-long imaginary of a place where “everything is possible.”<sup>2</sup> Still Patagonia is intimately associated with another extended supposition, recently written about by Ramón Díaz Eterovic. An immigrant character, from his brief novel *Correr tras el viento*, talks about those like himself who comprised most of the population by the 1910s: “To come to these lands you need a past to forget.”<sup>3</sup> The utopia of creating a new life breaking radically from the past characterized the actions of states and peoples, in the first seven decades of Patagonian colonization. The wide horizon of expectations was incubated at and about the steppe. But as Galeano concluded: “No matter how far I walk, I will never reach her [utopia]. What then is the point of utopia? The point is this: to keep walking.”

This dissertation is about the dialectics of building limitations for walking Patagonia’s open horizons and the attempts at keeping them open. Concentrating on the former for reasons that I will later explain, I propose that the fenced perspective emerged out of the entangled processes of capitalist expansion, imperial explorations, and independent State-building, the three of them entangled reproducers of colonial representations. Since the first world circumnavigation by Magallane’s expedition, in 1520, and up to the exploration of FitzRoy and Darwin’s *Beagle* in the 1830s, the southernmost part of America remained a field for European territorial and racial fantasies. The wretched plains inhabited by

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<sup>1</sup> Eduardo Galeano. 1993. *Las Palabras Andantes, con grabados de José Borges*. Madrid: Siglo XXI, p.310.

<sup>2</sup> Tomás Eloy Martínez, “Todo es posible en la Patagonia,” *El País* (Madrid), 15.08.2003.

<sup>3</sup> Ramón Díaz Eterovic. 1997 [2009]. *Correr tras el viento*. Santiago: LOM, p.133.

giants and anthropophagites were barely known by ‘Whites,’ so wilderness and exoticism surrounding the Strait of Magellan fed the postcolonial imagination of Argentina and Chile. Following modern contractualism indigenous sovereignties were radically disqualified, and both countries further developed their territorial claims elaborating on notions of ‘no-man’s land.’ By exploring both countries’ interwoven processes of colonization this dissertation aims to demonstrate that the central role this marginal area played in the construction of their antagonistic official nationalisms was born out of their mirroring expansion. Not only were Spanish and British imperialist arguments reenacted by Argentina and Chile for explaining their ‘legitimate’, ‘immemorial rights’ over Patagonia, but the two countries did it by competing against each other in a struggle for territorial dominion whose main motor was imperial surplus capital, articulated through networks of corruption carried out with the national elites.

Traditional diplomatic, political and historiographical assumptions have proposed that Patagonian colonization was undertaken because of the quest to exercise national rights or sovereignties. Agonizing in his Peruvian exile, the last words of the former Chilean ruler Bernardo O’Higgins are said to have been “Magallanes, Magallanes” –interpreted as a call for colonizing the Strait. Chilean nationalist mythology bonds the patriotic genius of the founding father to a destiny of southern expansion, defining in a person and a territory the glorious basis of nationality. In the Argentinean case, the business and adventures of a marine outcast, Luis Piedrabuena, were transformed in acts of sovereignty over the Atlantic coasts –a single man embodying Argentina’s expansionism. As if coherently planned, occupation and colonization did emerge from the literature, transforming what are rather erratic and heterogeneous historical trajectories. By criticizing the sovereignist literature –which understands Patagonia’s history in exclusively national or local terms, fractioning its processes and locating their origins in essentialist, narrow versions of national expansion, I incorporate Patagonia’s nationalization into a wider realm of imperial impulse and frontier

expansion in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>4</sup> In this sense, the majority of regional history becomes a replica of national history. It reduces the size of the territory while keeping the scale of analysis. In paralleling national historiography, it also keeps alive the homogenizing categories in its geographically concentrated erudition. What interests me about regional history is the possibility of analyzing the inherent complexities of the intersections between global, national and local histories.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Patagonian Borderland.**

*Borderland Sovereignities* considers Patagonia to be a manifold frontier. In epistemological and practical terms frontiers define conditions of possibility for structures of feeling, cultural and/or productive relationships and processes generated in and regarding them. As Peter Sahlins and William Douglas argued, frontier peoples' practices can direct states' policies of delimitation as much as be the objects of centrally planned disjoining, one way or the other further imbricating identity, labor and business networks.<sup>6</sup> A borderland implies exchanges resulting in symbolic and material interpenetrations and overlapping, especially where it is a "contested ground" where "no one has an enduring monopoly of violence."<sup>7</sup> Open and socially fluid as a liminal space, or fortified

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<sup>4</sup> There is a hundreds of thousands of pages long official historiography produced for diplomatic contention in both Chile and Argentina since the 1840s. See chapter 1. Classic nationalist historiography decanted in the voluminous works of Juan H. Lenzi and Mateo Martinic. See especially their respective *Historia de Santa Cruz* and *Presencia de Chile en la Patagonia Austral, 1843-1879*.

<sup>5</sup> Anaclét Pons y Justo Serna. 2007. "Más cerca, más denso. La historia local y sus metáforas." In Sandra Fernández (ed). *Más allá del territorio. La historia regional y local como problema. Discusiones, balances y proyecciones*. Rosario: Prohistoria, 17-30; William Roseberry. 1988. "Political Economy," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 17: 161-185.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Sahlins, "Natural Frontiers Revisited: France's Boundaries since the Seventeenth century," *The American Historical Review* 95 (5): 1423-1451; a translated version in Alejandro Grimson's notable edited volume, 2000. *Fronteras, naciones e identidades*. Buenos Aires: La Crujía; William Douglass. 1998. "A Western Perspective on an Eastern Interpretation of Where the North Meets South: Pyrenean Borderland Cultures," Thomas Wilson & Hastings Donnan (eds.) 1998. *Border Identities. Nation and State at International Frontiers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 62-95.

<sup>7</sup> Donna Guy and Thomas Sheridan (eds.) 1998. *Contested Ground: Comparative Frontiers on the Northern and Southern Edges of the Spanish Empire*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, p.10;



and militarized as a contentious border, frontiers determine border crossing experiences.

In southern Patagonia's liminality, there was a decades-long period after occupation where no monopoly of violence or social boundaries occurred. The precarious statality of the new settler society did not produce the one-sidedness of the Russian or the United States' frontier thesis developed by Solov'ev and Turner; or the "founding fiction" of Argentina's 'Conquest of the Desert' or the Chilean 'Pacification of Arauco.'<sup>8</sup> Rather than the delimited space of a bilateral conflict between the two countries, or between an expanding pioneer spirit and indigenous barbarism, southern Patagonia emerged out of the occupation as a "multidimensional and dynamic field of force" -as William Roseberry defined the dialectics of state and popular culture, or hegemony.<sup>9</sup>

Southern Patagonia, twenty days of navigation from Buenos Aires or Valparaíso, is as central to metropolitan definitions of nationality as it is geographically marginal. This dissertation's starting point considers Patagonia as a triple frontier, where processes of state formation and identity reconfiguration crossed the fictional territorial borders and the national projections of ethnic

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Willard Sunderland. 2004. *Taming the wild field. Colonization and Empire on the Russian steppe*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

<sup>8</sup> Frontier narratives were central to American colonization, reinforcing the epical justification of indigenous conquest and further funding for conquerors. In the General Captaincy of Chile, late 16<sup>th</sup> century epics by Alonso de Ercilla (*La Araucana*) and Pedro de Oña (*Arauco Domado*) highlighted the *indomitable nature* of the Mapuche. The topic became a symbolic trope raised by the creole elite during the period of the Independence. Only in the last third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Mapuche were to be subdued, by the State forces. The environment of the Buenos Aires' frontier produced the 'Gaucho', which was literally reinvented as the matrix of nationality in the late nineteenth century. That is, after their disciplinary transformation in soldiers during the southward expansion. In the 1860s and 1870s both countries launched parallel military campaigns on Mapuche and Pampa sovereignty, aiming to eradicate indigenous presence and control of lands that turned out to be integral part of the state. In Argentina it was accompanied by a massive historiography, which established the canon of national identity. Classic works are those by Alvaro Barros and Estanislao Zevallos. See Pedro Navarro. 2005. "La conquista de la memoria: La historiografía sobre la frontera sur Argentina durante el siglo XIX," *Universum*.20: 1, 88-111; Fernando Operé. 2001. *Historias de la Frontera: el cautiverio en la América hispánica*. México: FCE; José Bengoa. 1992. *Conquista y barbarie. Ensayo crítico sobre la conquista de Chile*. Santiago: SUR.

<sup>9</sup> William Roseberry. 1994. "Hegemony and the language of contention." In Gilbert Joseph and Daniel Nugent (eds.). *Everyday forms of State formation. Revolution and the negotiation of rule in Modern Mexico*, Durham: Duke University Press, 355-366.

delimitation<sup>10</sup>. “The uttermost end of the Earth” –as the “first white man” born in Tierra del Fuego called it, was widely considered to be located at the Antipodes of civilization. In the wave of explorations of the southern seas it was considered to be, as Australia, the *Terra Australis Incognita* -a whole new continent where something similar to the promised land was to be uncovered.<sup>11</sup> It was not. Like Oceania, it became a field for the confrontation between civilization and savagery, where the capacity of modern men for subduing a ruthless nature was to be proven. The ultimate frontier, its untamed geography, and its physical and human wilderness were to be incorporated into, while being excluded from, the realm of civilization.

Though the ‘civilized fantasies’ regarding Patagonia originated well after 1520, they took textual shape and have anchored themselves since then. Their echoes still reverberate; represented as a touristic trademark, or as a leading brand of outdoor merchandise. Firsthand access to a *pristine nature* would, and somehow is, still possible down there. In this sense, Patagonia became an epistemological frontier, an enforced border between a presumed “us” and as a barely imaginable otherness. Its physical remoteness from the imperial, first, and then national metropolis, was intricately tied to the social emptiness associated with the steppe. ‘Lacking’ State, and then political organization, landed property, and production, the native population also ‘lacked’ sovereignty over the land and themselves.<sup>12</sup> So called Patagonians and Fueguians became at successive moments the incarnation of thorough difference, and by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century Darwin transformed them into the “most abject” races, surviving specimens of primitive creatures. The borders between those representations of the civil, the savage and their social interactions were to be played out even before the beginning of the occupation. As Walter Benjamin claimed, “There is no document

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<sup>10</sup> Thomas Wilson & Hastings Donnan 1999. *Borders. Frontiers of identity, nation and State*. Oxford: Berg.

<sup>11</sup> David Day. 2001. *Claiming a continent. A new history of Australia*. Sydney: Harper Collins, pp.11-12, 29-30.

<sup>12</sup> On the constitutive lacks of the colonized see Frantz Fanon. Preface by J.P. Sartre. 1963. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Trans.Constance Farrington. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, esp. 35-55; Dipesh Chakrabarty. 2000. *Provincializing Europe: postcolonial thought and historical difference*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism. And just as such a document is not free of barbarism, barbarism taints also the manner in which it is transmitted from one owner to another.”<sup>13</sup> As a perennial frontier of civilization, Patagonia blurred the anticipated boundaries between civilized and primitive.

Emptied of socio-historical density, and coinciding with the rise of liberal historiographies, the entrance of Patagonia into History was to be into a national one.<sup>14</sup> In the 1840s, the tales told by sporadic European travelers begun to merge with the nationalistic narrative of the occupying State. American independence from Spain was born out of debt with Britain, and so the naval world power increased its interest in trading in Asia throughout the Pacific and its rim. The technological development of steamers permitted forsaking the dangerous, longer route of Cape Horn for the Strait of Magellan. Business proposals found generous support among American and British politicians, and Chile decided to ground its jurisdictional fictions by founding an exclave on the continental coast of the Strait. When the civilizational impulse arrived in Patagonia it combined the economic drive of empires and nations.

The unilateral decision of the Chilean state, in 1843, inaugurated a border conflict fundamental for Chilean and Argentinean oppositional identities, nurturing definitions of nationhood and territoriality. For at least three decades the precarious Penal Colony of Magallanes was a costly and problematic outpost that moved successive governments to evaluate its continuity. As high government officials put it at different times, the temptation of abandoning the colony was dismissed by considering not their own state interests but the neighbor’s “ambitions.” Even though Patagonia was a boundless steppe beginning a thousand kilometers south of Buenos Aires and extending for another two thousand up to the Strait of Magellan or Cape Horn, it became the focus of tensions between both countries and prompted them to consolidate diplomatic and military positions.

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<sup>13</sup> Walter Benjamin, “On the Concept of History”; a good development of the expression’s reach in Michael Löwy. 2001 [2005]. *Walter Benjamin. Aviso de Incendio*. Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 80-96.

<sup>14</sup> Partha Chatterjee. 1993. *The Nation and its fragments. Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, esp. Chapter 2, “The Colonial State.”

Between the 1870s and 1904, and then again in 1978, Chile and Argentina went to war for a territory where their presence was rather precarious. This second notion of frontier, as an international one, pervades Patagonia's history and its integration in official nationalisms. As a territory comprising cultural practices, productive features and property relations across two countries, its trajectory of nation-state formation can only be analyzed comparatively, and transnationally, recognizing the multiples poles of influence interacting in the region.

This also connects to a third notion of frontier. Patagonia as a national frontier refers to its paradoxical location as ideologically central and materially marginal at the same time. As the "Inner frontier," it was the object of a longitudinal incorporation from a metropolis located almost three thousand kilometers away, at the same time that the latitudinal dimension of social and economic displacements pervaded the unsteady efforts of the States to make their presence somehow real. The distant field of the national centers' diplomatic and military contention, Patagonia remained for decades one of the "last boundaries of man's knowledge" -as Darwin put it. Throughout the period I worked on this dissertation – which started with the occupation and spanned up until the massacres of workers from 1919-1922, metropolitan politicians and geographers, officers and officials, as much as the local press, landowners and workers shared a common knowledge about Patagonia: it remained unknown to central decision makers. This condition of triple frontier, at once and permanently civilizational, international and national, defines the peculiarities of Patagonian state-building.

### **Sovereignties and State Building.**

Understanding Patagonia as a multilayered frontier necessarily implies consideration of the interplay between multiple sovereignties. Defined by Jean Bodin and Thomas Hobbes as an "attribution" for exercising "ultimate authority over every other person or institution in its domain," sovereignty was associated with the institution of the State after its divorce from the institution of the

monarch.<sup>15</sup> It involves a triple dimension: first the national state emerges out of a juridical system of national states -as international or westphalian sovereignty. It is then recognized as a juridical entity when it recognizes the delimitation of its jurisdiction and develops diplomatic relations, signs treaties and agreements as well as defines its borders. Finally, the nation state makes itself possible by receiving international recognition.

In a second dimension, the State comes into being as an “internal” organization. It should be formally sovereign by excluding other states from intervention in its “internal affairs.” Exercising its normative power, managing resources, regulating a population and striving to monopolize violence the State must erect/establish itself as a “meta-power” working *within* and *through* the subjects.<sup>16</sup> According to Bourdieu, “The state is the culmination of a process of concentration of different species of capital,” and the resulting meta-capital is able *to state* as a continuum in international relations while its ‘inner’ meanings are subject to permanent, contingent variations (‘bargaining’) according to rearrangements in the social-economic formation of its power shapes and what it is shaped by.<sup>17</sup> This double dimension of State sovereignty necessarily relies on territory, as the regulated space of exercise of the sovereign power.<sup>18</sup>

A third dimension of State sovereignty, usually taken for granted, involves its entanglement with *social sovereignties* -those acting from below and/or below in front of the regulating attempts engineered from above. As the social historian

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<sup>15</sup> J.D. Ford. 1998. “Sovereignty,” E. Craig (ed.). *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. London: Routledge. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from [www.rep.routledge.com.libproxy.cc.stonybrook.edu/article/T024SECT4](http://www.rep.routledge.com.libproxy.cc.stonybrook.edu/article/T024SECT4) For the relation between institutional power and biopolitics, or sovereignty as excerpted over the bare life, Giorgio Agamben. 1995. *Homo Sacer. El Poder Soberano y la Nuda Vida*. Trans. Antonio Gimeno Cuspinera. Valencia: Pre-Textos, esp. 7-92.

<sup>16</sup> Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer. 1985. *The Great Arch. English State Formation as Cultural Revolution*. London: Basil Blackwell, p.200.

<sup>17</sup> Pierre Bourdieu. “Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field,” George Steinmetz (ed.) *State/Culture: State Formation after the Cultural Turn*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 56; I have discussed this notion in “Region, nation, state-building. On the configuration of hegemonic identities in Patagonia, Argentina and Chile, 1870s-1920s,” Sibylle Baumbach (ed.) *Regions of Culture - Regions of Identity / Kulturregionen - Identitätsregionen*. Trier: GCSC-WVT. 49-62.

<sup>18</sup> The territorial basis of state-led identity formation in Argentina was first proposed in a suggestive essay by Carlos Escudé. 1988. “Argentine Territorial Nationalism”, *Journal of Latin American Studies* 20 (1): 139-165.

Gabriel Salazar has stated, “sovereignty does *not* live in the State [...] but, *always*, in the subject communally constituted.” However, Salazar’s proposition escapes the possibilities of historization by limiting social sovereignty to an essentialized, air locked compartment: social sovereignty “can live perfectly outside of the State, far from politics and, even in that apparently marginal condition, it can develop and empower itself, social and culturally. Because social culture, spontaneously hatched, is the matrix where popular sovereignty is born.” That, in sum, “the lack of state oxygen does not kill sovereignty but, fertilizes it anaerobically,”<sup>19</sup> Drawing on the first part and discussing the second, I understand social life and state institutions as distinct historical frontier sovereignties. As state regulations expand while expropriating social power, the task is –in Ana María Alonso’s proposition to “historicize sovereignty rather than make it part of the ontology of the state as Agamben does;” or as an ontology of the ‘popular’, as in Salazar.<sup>20</sup> Social –and/or subaltern - and State sovereignties only exist in the hegemonic tension that makes them alive, rather than in their essential isolation. The dialectics of profitability retarded expansion in/within certain regions and helped people manage to keep themselves free of states, as ‘Patagonians’ and ‘Fuegians’ up until the late nineteenth century. To the sovereignty of regions of refuge, as the anthropologist Aguirre Beltrán called them, we can add the persistence of practical sovereignties or degrees of autonomy in facing encroachment and disciplinization.<sup>21</sup> Despite the assumedly stable notion of sovereignty in most social sciences, and as Jeremy Adelman has demonstrated for early 19<sup>th</sup> century processes of independence, it “was always contested, unstable,

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<sup>19</sup> Gabriel Salazar. 2009. *Del Poder Constituyente de Asalariados e Intelectuales (Chile, siglos XX y XXI)*. Santiago: LOM, pp.12-13. A critique of the binarism social/state sovereignty in my book review published in *Historia* 43: 1 (2010), 290-294.

<sup>20</sup> Ana María Alonso. 2005. “Sovereignty, the Spatial Politics of Security, and Gender: Looking North and South from the US-Mexico Border.” *State Formation: Anthropological Perspectives*, C. N. Krohn-Hansen, Knut G. London, Pluto Press: 27-54, p.44.

<sup>21</sup> On stateless peoples and regions see Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán. 1967 [1991]. *Regiones de refugio*. México: U. Veracruzana - Instituto Nacional Indigenista – FCE; Pierre Clastres. 1974 [2010]. *La sociedad contra el Estado. Ensayos de antropología política*. Trans. Ana Pizarro. Santiago: Hueders; Clastres, Pierre. 1999 [2009]. *Arqueología de la violencia: la guerra en las sociedades primitivas*. Trans. Luciano Padilla. Buenos Aires: FCE; James Scott. 2009. *The art of not being governed: an anarchist history of upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale UP. Curiously enough, Scott’s “anarchism” considers sovereignty as a privative characteristic of the state. He does consider regions of refuge, non-state spaces as “areas of no sovereignty,” 11-13.

and equivocal.” In that sense, the struggle for redefining ‘sovereignty’ was the articulating node of the multiple wars developing around the revolutions for independence in Latin America.<sup>22</sup> Its consolidation, though, depended on the expansion of ‘the national’ as the supreme authority over peoples and territories where control over their own resources had defined history up until then. In southern Patagonia, however, the model could not be replicated.

I understand Patagonia’s colonization as an exceptional part of the ongoing process of territorial expansion. The formation of a national oligarchy and an institutionalized regime relied on the metropolitan capacity to produce the subordination of the regional elites through a pact of co-domination. Based on patronage networks and redistribution of benefits, the political reorganization of the new countries required an expansive affirmation of sovereignty –where it was to operate simultaneously on the three dimensions just mentioned.<sup>23</sup> Nineteenth century military campaigns against Paraguay, the ‘provincial’ federal caudillos and the indigenous populations of northern Patagonia, in Argentina, as well as the civil wars, the wars against Perú and Bolivia and the Mapuche in Chile, defined a model of territorial incorporation, political rule, and social subordination as well as an economic model that defined the structure of both countries well into the 1930s.

The inner dimension of state sovereignty produced a permanent effort to discipline and punish the social sectors that evaded, more or less successfully, the regulatory capacities of colonial and early republican administrations. These postcolonial efforts involved a reformulation of colonial ideology and the adoption of new guiding models from Europe and the United States. As the statecrafters Diego Portales and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento famously proclaimed, the shadows of the obscurantist Spanish regime planned over the *bajo*

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<sup>22</sup> Jeremy Adelman. 2006. *Sovereignty and revolution in the Iberian Atlantic*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p.2. Juan Carlos Chiaramonte. 1997. *Ciudades, Provincias, Estados: Orígenes de la Nación Argentina (1800-1846)*. Buenos Aires: Ariel; Pinto, Julio y Verónica Valdivia. 2009. *¿Chilenos todos? La construcción social de la nación, 1810-1840*. Santiago: LOM; Salazar, Gabriel. 2005. *Construcción de Estado en Chile. Democracia de los pueblos. Militarismo ciudadano. Golpismo oligárquico*. Santiago: Sudamericana.

<sup>23</sup> For the argument of a sharing privileges’ pact constituting the foundational act in the institutionalization of the national Argentinean see also chapter 3.

*pueblo*. Unfit for republican regime, those who inhabited the territory of the State had to be forcibly turned into something different to become progressive citizens. Lacking industriousness, literacy, and notions of individual property, they incarnated the opposite of imperial civilization: barbarianism.<sup>24</sup> Both Argentinean and Chilean history were thus engineered as colonial enterprises. As Frederick Cooper has proposed, colonialism can be characterized by “the institutionalization of a set of practices that both defined and reproduced over time the distinctiveness and subordination of particular people in a differentiated space.”<sup>25</sup> The postcolonial colonialism of the new independent states, the rise of republican (internal) colonialisms, or the “settler decolonization” as Wallerstein called it, modernized the representations and practices for dealing with peoples lacking the prerequisites for modernization.<sup>26</sup> So colonialism emerges out of the necessity for approaching state-sovereignty building combining transnational and national dimensions, grasping it locally and in close relation with another central, sovereign power: capital.

The condition of the possibility for expansion was the revolutionary force of this sovereignty of a different kind. The sovereignty of capital, deterritorialized, defined the momentum of Santiago’s and Buenos Aires’s successful assaults on Indian lands, and the turning point of Patagonian colonization. However, while the pacts between merchant and landed elites sanctioned the double movement of institutional centralization and spatial expansion from Chaco to Arauco, there were neither metropolitan capitals nor local elites available for articulating the occupation of the Patagonian “desert.” Up to the 1880s, southern Patagonia remained unknown to the States –no cartography, no lands grants, no roads- just a growing burden for the States. The national exclaves were nothing but miserable outposts and the Chilean beachhead

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<sup>24</sup> Maristella Svampa. 2006. *El Dilema Argentino: Civilización o Barbarie*. Buenos Aires: Taurus; Domingo F. Sarmiento. 1846 [2006]. *Facundo, o Civilización y Barbarie*. Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de Cultura. On Portales disciplinary dimension see Pinto y Valdivia and Salazar, *op.Cit*.

<sup>25</sup> Frederick Cooper. 2005. *Colonialism in Question. Theory, Knowledge, History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 26. Cooper warns about the usage of the concept of ‘internal colonialism’

<sup>26</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein. 1989. *The modern world-system III. The second era of great expansion of the capitalist world economy, 1730-1840s*. San Diego: Academic Press, 193



of Punta Arenas -a small penal colony- was defined by isolation and rationing. Once the initiative of state officials began bringing sheep from the British exclave of the Malvinas (Falkland Islands), the states' diplomatic contention reignited through a competition for attracting British surplus capital and livestock. The "invasión malvinera" or 'Falklanders invasion' produced the emergence and fast consolidation of an oligopoly controlling millions of hectares, communications and transportation, commerce and labor<sup>27</sup>. Rather than interpreting this penetration of the Patagonian interior and its integration in an international market as the single action of local "protopioneers" or "captains of industry," as traditional historiography has done, this dissertation aims to analyze the mutually constitutive sovereignty of Capital and States. It was as a capitalist enterprise that the states were first tangible in the plains; and it was because of the States' support that in a decade millions of sheep pastured in the "Desert," the indigenous population was exterminated and both Chile and Argentina could claim their territorial possession.

As Fernand Braudel expressed, the modern State did not create capitalism but just inherited it. In this particular case, it did allow capitalism to expand and through it expanded itself. The entangled sovereignty that emerged supports Braudel's statement: "capitalism only triumphs when it becomes identified with the state, when it is the state."<sup>28</sup> I further develop the proposition not to suggest that the State is an executive, juridical object in the oligarchies' hands but that in Latin American postcolonial colonialism the frontier expansion was a joint venture coincidental with worldwide imperial impulse.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Mauricio Braun. Preliminary explanation, notes and epilogue by Armando Braun Menéndez. 1985. *Mauricio Braun. Memorias de una Vida Colmada*. Buenos Aires: Autoedición, pp.78-79.

<sup>28</sup> Fernand Braudel. 1977. *Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism*. Trans. Patricia Ranum. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, p.64.

<sup>29</sup> Walter Nugent. 1989. "Frontiers and Empires in Late Nineteen Century," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 20 (4): 393-408; see also his 1994's "Building the State, Making the Nation: The Bases and Limits of State Centralization in 'Modern' Peru," *American Anthropologist* 96 (2): 333-369.

Throughout Latin America modernization was a dual experience of State *and* capitalism, as Julio Pinto did propose.<sup>30</sup> In the specific colonial context scrutinized here, land assignments, tax exceptions, subsidies, administrative and military resources as well as officials boosted a territorial dominion of foreign companies wrapped in the language of nationalization. The process was crucial in asserting the monopolization of violence (as well as monopolization of land), a relatively effective control of the rural areas (as rationalization of the sheep farming industry) and peopling the pampas (not with people but with living commodities, proceeding thereafter to the extermination of the indigenous populations and native fauna). The common denominator for sovereignty was property; and it was arbitrarily created through intertwined networks of exchange linking Liverpool and Hamburg with Buenos Aires and Santiago and extended back and forth between the extreme south. The national metropolis, at the same time, widened oligarchic networks of corruption, intimately relating politics and economy in familiar social circles.

The radical shift in the pace of explorations and racial relations, productive organization and international integration, state building and proletarianization, coincides with Marx's articulation of the notion of primitive accumulation. For Marx, the starting point of capitalism was "the expropriation of the agricultural producer, of the peasant, from the soil," producing as a double result an expansive accumulation of capital and a dispossessed labor force.<sup>31</sup> In the southern *desert steppe*, as they were considered to be by both Chile and Argentina, the indigenous population was precluded from any recognition as owners of land. The aridity of the soil made them transient hunter populations, and so "Patagonians" and "Fueguians" again *lacked* basic requirements for qualifying as civilized subjects: agriculture and state. As there were neither

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<sup>30</sup> Julio Pinto. 2002. "De proyectos y desarraigos: la sociedad latinoamericana frente a la experiencia de la modernidad (1870-1914)," *Contribuciones Científicas y Tecnológicas* 130: 95-113.

<sup>31</sup> See chapter XXIV of Marx's *Capital*. Unless noted, I have worked with the first ed. of 1867, translated to Spanish by Wenceslao Roces and republished in 2006 as *El Capital. Vol. I. Crítica de la economía política*. México: FCE. Quote from p.609; William Roseberry. 1978. "Peasants in primitive accumulation: Western Europe and Venezuela compared," *Dialectical Anthropology*, 3:3, 59-60.

traditions of economic exchange between ‘whites’ and those ‘indians’, nor delimited, communal lands, liberals simply expropriated the whole territory. Turning the territory into “national land” meant producing a fantasy of emptiness that bordered the ideal of “modern colonization,” as Marx defined the Australian case.<sup>32</sup>

Establishing a price for land allowed the destruction of the earlier small and medium sized *estancias* (cattle ranches) and the easy control of land by a few companies, favored by preferential contacts with politicians and army officers in the national metropolis and British and German merchant houses. With capital coming from Europe, political decisions from Santiago and Buenos Aires, and immense extensions of land available for the introduction of sheep, the only missing element was labor. Free and contracted immigration from Europe and, to a lesser degree, from Chile and Argentina, favored the formation of a mass of free laborers to which hundreds of Chilote seasonal workers were added every winter’s end. In the archipelago of Chiloé, a parallel process of colonization was destroying an agricultural economy based on small family property which “freed” masses of unskilled workers that make/comprise most of the Patagonian population until day. In sum, the sovereignty of capitalism swept Patagonia and produced, an amazingly rapid national formation. This dissertation aims to shed light on that intermixing of international power relations and multiethnic peoples, all of them newcomers that made Patagonian history as if over a liberal *tabula rasa*.

What we can call a dependent, or frontier primitive accumulation took place in Patagonia -as in the Andes and most Latin American borderlands, since mid-nineteen century. A defining feature of the short nineteenth century was its expansive ferocity<sup>33</sup>. As in the classic case Marx used to make his point, the English countryside, it did work producing accumulation by dispossession<sup>34</sup>. The

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<sup>32</sup> Marx, *op.Cit.*, chapter XXV.

<sup>33</sup> Brooke Larson. 2004. *Trials of Nation making. Liberalism, race, and ethnicity in the Andes, 1810-1910*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>34</sup> As should be clear through the text, it seems to me that there are no important differences between primitive accumulation and David Harvey’s notion of accumulation by dispossession. Cfr. David Harvey. 2010. *A companion to Marx's Capital*. London: Verso, pp.389-314. An

dependent economic integration in the world market, though, favored a dispersion of the utilized resources. While the archetypical liberal privatization of lands in Chiloé provided labor for Patagonia, European surplus capital funded state making expansion whose intermediaries were leading national politicians. This integration of Patagonia as “a colony for growing wool,” as Marx referred to Australia or, as Martinic once defined Patagonia’s economic character, as a virtual colony in an “imperial productive scheme” was *also* the way of turning it into part of the *national* space.<sup>35</sup> This paradox is the central line of the argument developed in what follows.

### **Transnational dimensions of local State Building.**

The apparent paradox of the national and the imperial also materializes in terms of liberal ideals of mobility. While capital has often moved without restrictions, peoples are usually forced to settle themselves, respecting class and national boundaries. In Patagonia, the indigenous populations as well as the new settlers were highly mobile –or “nomadic,” as long-lasting colonialism characterized them.<sup>36</sup> In front of the territorializing logic of the reason of state, and the deterritorialized capitalist rationality of the enclosure, hunters and rural merchants as well as gauchos and seasonal workers found themselves within the abhorred category of the wanderer, the vagabond, the nomad. The contradiction between settlement and mobility expressed the tensions of state/capital power accumulation and the strategies for fleeing their normative power; at the same time, though, there emerges the tension between the national and the transnational

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application to Chilean colonialism in Arauco in Thomas Klubock’s forthcoming *La Frontera: Land, Labor, and Ecological Change on Chile’s Southern Frontier*. Durham: Duke University Press. His notion of accumulation by dispossession and nature as value would have had further applications for this text. Unfortunately I only came to know of that discussion when closing this work.

<sup>35</sup> Marx, *op.Cit.*, p.376; Mateo Martinic. 1992. *Historia de la Región Magallánica*. Punta Arenas: UMAG, p.797, citado en Joaquín Bascopé. 2008. “Pasajeros del Poder Propietario. La Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego y la Biopolítica Estanciera (1890-1920)” *Magallania* 36 (2): 19-44, p.21.

<sup>36</sup> On nomadism as a “keyword for prejudice,” signed by the racial negativity of the absence, see Alcida Ramos. 1998. *Indigenism. Ethnic politics in Brazil*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

as they interact in a sensitive area of nationalism. Because the movement and the contention of peoples and capitals marks the history of Patagonia, this text develops –or tries to, both a comparative and a transnational approach to local state building.

On one hand, the chapters provide some degree of comparison between the geopolitical contest of the two states competing for territorial sovereignty, as well as regarding entrepreneurs navigating the networks of corruption that materialized them. Working on documentation mainly produced at both sides of the border and in England, I analyze the States' policies, the pace of their expansion, the logics underpinning them and their reactions in front of the regional and international challenges they confronted. Comparative approaches, rather than “methods,” do appear as crucial when they refer to institutions that actually presented themselves as belonging to an equivalent dominion: that of the legal sovereign<sup>37</sup>. Argentinean and Chilean liberal state building projects, however diverse, contradictory and confrontational, did operate socially and territorially in an interplay of powers that not only exceeded the region, but also their own delimited jurisdiction. In that sense, I dwell on histories that recognize the transnational dimension of economical, ideological and social interdependency. In doing so, I look after the combination of ‘national’ and international forces at the core of the inquiry on the connections that defined Patagonia’s state making turning points.<sup>38</sup>

As many borderlands, southern Patagonia constitutes and encroached ‘region of refuge’, as Mexican anthropologist Gonzalo Aguirre called them. I look after national state and entrepreneurial actions without missing the geographies they were tied to.<sup>39</sup> What I do consider as a missing piece in studies of nation-

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<sup>37</sup> On moves from comparative to transnational history see Micol Seigel. 2005. “Beyond Compare: Comparative Method after the Transnational Turn”, *Radical History Review* (91): 62-90. For Seigel, transnational historiographies necessarily produce anticolonialism and is produced from its framework.

<sup>38</sup> Heidi Tinsman. 2011. “Los estudios latinoamericanos y el giro transnacional,” Manuel Vicuña (ed.) *Cátedra Norbert Lechner (2008-2009)*. Santiago: Universidad Diego Portales, 75-100.

<sup>39</sup> The notion of regions of refuge was postulated by Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán’s homonym book (Washington, 1979), proposing that in Colonial America large, inaccessible areas allowed masses of indigenous peoples to survive barely untouched by the law and commerce of the colonizers.

State building, particularly in the Southern Cone, is the specific pace and shape of the coloniality of power as it presented itself through different ‘regions’. State, discourse and metropolitan-centered studies have dealt with intra-elite conflicts and debates as the privileged focus in histories of State formation. Rather than homogenous, however, State-building processes are deeply uneven and span in irregular times over heterogeneous peoples and territories. The symmetry that emerges out of the consolidation of the national States permeates political histories, reflecting ‘the national’ as a “rhetoric of legitimation” becoming the first hegemonic framework.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, the articulation of a national market and a unified juridical field, the organization of relatively coherent politics of citizenship and even the construction of a disciplined police force only came to be materialized in the early twentieth century. The same can be said about the penetration of national rituals or a public education system: in both Chile and Argentina their impact is radically asymmetrical along lines of class, ethnicity, gender and region. As if hegemony were to be a unidirectional force, elite and state ‘representations’ located at the core of historiography shed their light over their own focus rather than illuminating the popular shadows they projected, being at once the reception, resistance and reutilization of oligarchic discourses.

More nuanced State-building historiography has dealt with its regional particularities. Anthropologists and historians have analyzed geographies of exclusion/inclusion from/to the expanding strength of the national-state, reflecting on the particular location of specific communities or regions in the configuration of modern Argentina and Chile.<sup>41</sup> A good number of books have drawn their

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<sup>40</sup> Key political historiography on southern cone’s State building includes the previously quoted books by Pinto and Valdivia, and Salazar, as well as Enrique Fernández. 2003. *Estado y Sociedad en Chile, 1891-1931. El Estado excluyente, la lógica estatal oligárquica y la formación de la sociedad*. Santiago: LOM; David Rock. 2002. *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina, 1860-1916*. Stanford: Stanford University Press; Oscar Oszlack. 1997. *La formación del Estado argentino. Orden, progreso y organización nacional*. Buenos Aires: Ariel; Natalio Botana. 2005 (1977). *El orden conservador. La política argentina entre 1880 y 1916*. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana. The expression “rhetoric of legitimation” is taken from E.P. Thompson’s 1993 introduction to his *Customs in Common. Studies in traditional popular culture*. New York: New Press.

<sup>41</sup> Diego Escolar. 2007. *Los dones étnicos de la Nación. Identidades huarpe y modos de producción de soberanía en Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo; Sergio González. 2004. *El dios cautivo. Las Ligas Patrióticas en la chilenización compulsiva de Tarapacá (1910 - 1922)*.

attention to crime and punishment, legislation and its local applications, as well as power relations between indigenous peoples, workers, local elites and state officials in Northern Patagonia and to a lesser extent Santa Cruz. Specific works on Tierra del Fuego are rather scarce.<sup>42</sup> This body of literature problematizes the totalizations of nationally informed regional and national historiographies, and has helped me to figure out the specificities of the circulation of ideas, persons and capitals about, in and through Magallanes, Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego.

### **A note on Patagonian historiography.**

In this dissertation there is an emphasis on movements that go beyond national or provincial boundaries. Historiographically this is an original idea, considering the predominance of “autarchy” as a central motif in the construction of Patagonian history. According to Mateo Martinic, winner of the National Price in History and former Governor of Magallanes, from 1885 on there was in southern Patagonia “a unique, autonomous, and supranational integration, which contributed to the region’s political and economic independence from the [Argentinean and Chilean] central governments, and which was carried out with a high degree of harmony and efficiency for a number of decades.”<sup>43</sup> Martinic’s historical vision of the Patagonia, illustrated well in this brief quote, has come to

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Santiago: LOM; Ariel de la Fuente. 2000. *Children of Facundo. Caudillo and gaucho insurgency during the Argentine State-Formation process (La Rioja, 1853-1870)*. Durham: Duke University Press;

<sup>42</sup> Esp. Bohoslavsky, Ernesto. 2009. *El complot patagónico. Nación, conspiracionismo y violencia en el sur de Argentina y Chile (siglos XIX y XX)*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo; Gabriel Rafart. 2008. *Tiempo de violencia en la Patagonia. Bandidos, policías y jueves, 1890-1940*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo; Pedro Navarro. (ed.) 2007. *Paisajes del progreso. La resignificación de la Patagonia Norte, 1880-1916*. Neuquén: UNC; Martha Ruffini. 2007. *La pervivencia de la República posible en los Territorios Nacionales. Poder y ciudadanía en Río Negro*. Buenos Aires: UNQ; Rosario Guenaga. 2006. “Sectores e ideologías en los conflictos sociales del extremos sur argentino (1919-1921),” *Universum* 21 (1); Mario Delrio. 2005. *Memorias de expropiación: sometimiento e incorporación indígena en la Patagonia (1872-1943)*. Bernal: UNQ. In parallel to this book there are others being written on southern Patagonia’s state building. Joaquín Bascopé’s dissertation mainly deals with indigenous peoples in Tierra del Fuego. Crime, public service, and the judiciary in Santa Cruz have been Pablo Navas’ focus. They both have published some articles included in the bibliography.

<sup>43</sup> Mateo Martinic. “Patagonia Austral: 1885-1925. Un caso singular de integración regional autárquica,” en Susana Bandieri (ed). 2001. *La frontera argentino-chilena como espacio social*. Neuquén: CEHIR-UNCo, 459-486, p.477.

form the core of most Patagonian historiography, producing a sense of historical exceptionalism that cuts across all types of historical production on the region, from conservative “*costumbrista*” history to labor history. By recognizing the existence of social classes and racial exclusions it is clear that ideas like “efficiency” and “harmony” quickly begin to be emptied of value and hotly contested, and this has been discussed by a number of authors. However, if we look toward Martinic’s largest, seminal work on Patagonia, *Historia de la Región Magallánica*, we see that he devotes only 12 out of 700 pages to social tensions in the period I address in this thesis.<sup>44</sup> In that sense, then, we could say that the notions of *autonomy* and *autarchy* have been barely contested within the major works on Patagonian history.

Instead of autonomy between metropolitan and local oligarchies, I will argue that there is an intimate connection between these two, a relation which departs from “racial” preferences, articulates economic ties based on corruption, and rapidly evolves into kinship networks. At the same time, State agrarian policy, stemming from *laissez-faire*, liberal economic models, revolved around the total expropriation of indigenous territories and the confiscation of the land rights of small immigrant farmers (*colonos*). Rather than autonomy, I will demonstrate that the local weakness of the State was accompanied by strong expenditures that paved the way for private monopolization of land, commerce, and credit. I will also show that this process of monopolization differed structurally from what is known as “autarchy.” Though Martinic’s concept has been uncritically repeated by many authors, the emergence of a highly concentrated economy throughout Patagonia was based on export-based, dependent production, which relied on external, imperialist capitals and markets.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> See Mateo Martinic. 2006, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. *Historia de la Región Magallánica*. Tome II and III. Punta Arenas: UMAG. Labor historiography includes texts by Ramón Arriagada, Pedro Cid, Ernesto Bohoslavsky, Osvaldo Bayer, Roberto Luis Rodríguez, Rosario Guenaga, Bernardo Veksler, Carlos Vega, Susana Fiorito and myself.

<sup>45</sup> See esp. chapter 3.



With a regional population of less than 20,000 inhabitants in 1906, Great Britain and Germany made up over 70% of Magallanes' foreign trade.<sup>46</sup>

This regionalism of the autarchy is closely related to demographic and cultural exclusion. For Martinic, Punta Arenas' population was defined in the 1890s by an "egalitarian multi-ethnicity" or "cosmopolitanism." Martinic's conceptualization of this territory as a place where a "strong, prosperous, autarchic and satisfied community" was formed disregards the notion of change and conflict in history. Class, national and racial/ethnic identities obviously were expressed through clashes and accommodation. After a deep class divide took form in the 1880s, which was also based on race, judicial archives show a high degree of social conflict, expressed in myriad ways. There was not, thus, anything resembling a harmonious or European-like city in Punta Arenas, although this is what was presented in the travel narratives published by Argentineans, Chileans and Europeans during this period. In post-1870s metropolitan narratives, especially during the 1880s when the sheep-farming tycoons arrived, there was a justified perception of Europeanization in the region. However, these narratives did not refer to social or demographic factors, but rather to the concentration of land –wealth - as a menace to the Argentinization and Chileanization of the disputed territory.

In that sense, the national historiography in both Chile and Argentina has adopted a rather chauvinistic approach to Patagonian history. As a regional history that reduces the territorial framework of analysis and keeps the categories and concepts of traditional historiography, Patagonia does appear as a stronghold of national sovereignty. Subsumed in the national narrative, it was not until Osvaldo Bayer's publication of *La Patagonia Rebelde* in 1972 that a more complex vision of the teleology of nation took shape. Bayer's works exposed the social fractures and violence of the 1910s, dismantling the narrative of social homogeneity and national sovereignty. Bayer stressed the degree of British

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<sup>46</sup> Lautaro Navarro. 1907-1908. *Censo Jeneral de Poblacion i Edificacion, Ganaderia i Mineria del Territorio de Magallanes, Republica de Chile, levantado por acuerdo de la Comision de Alcaldes el dia 8 de Setiembre de 1906. Pasado i presente del Territorio de Magallanes*. Punta Arenas: Talleres de la Imprenta El Magallanes.

control over the territory, denouncing the servile conduct of the political authorities in repressing the labor movement in 1921-1922. His groundbreaking work helped to dismantle a long-lasting myth of chauvinistic historiography: that the strikes were part of a Chilean conspiracy to take over Patagonia. Immediately after the text was published it was made into a movie, in the convulsed Argentina of 1974, and soon censored by the right-wing controlled government of Perón. Even after he was forced into exile, Bayer's research continued to proliferate and a four volume edition of his work came out in the 1990s.

In the two decades, though, many of Bayer's key arguments have begun to unravel. Bayer's notion of a working-class organization led by European anarchists and made up of day-laborers of mestizo origin with "no class consciousness" has become politically and historiographically untenable<sup>47</sup>. This vanguardist, and to some extent, racist concept was literally repeated, however, by Carlos Vega in his well-documented history of the labor movement in Magallanes, published in 1996.<sup>48</sup> Somehow, the linked conceptualization of the State as a class apparatus was reproduced in my own work on unions and political violence, where state institutions were practically indistinct from oligarchic groupings.<sup>49</sup> This is a crucial point, nevertheless, and it does link Argentinean and Chilean wider historiography of the period.

Political histories in the past tended to consider both the State and the nation as entities whose history was somehow connatural. But in the case of the northern provinces of Tarapacá and Antofagasta, in Chile, and of Chaco and sometimes Uruguay, in Argentina, historiography has frequently been centered on the government decisions in Santiago and Buenos Aires, assuming a stable continuity of territory and identity. The dualisms of *Pipiolos* and *Pelucones*, Liberals and Conservatives - and Left and Right, more recently - have defined the

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<sup>47</sup> See esp. Bayer's *La Patagonia Rebelde. Vol. I. Los bandoleros*. Buenos Aires: Planeta. A critique in my article "Racialización desde afuera, etnización hacia adentro. Clase y región en el movimiento obrero de la Patagonia, principios del siglo XX," Rafael Gaune y Martín Lara (eds). 209. *Historias de Racismo y Discriminación en Chile*. Santiago: Uqbar, 369-394.

<sup>48</sup> Carlos Vega. 1996. *La Masacre en la Federación Obrera de Magallanes. El movimiento obrero Patagónico-Fueguino hasta 1920*. Punta Arenas: Atelí.

<sup>49</sup> Alberto Harambour. 2000. *El Movimiento Obrero y la violencia política en el Territorio de Magallanes*. Tesis de Lic. en Historia, P. Universidad Católica.

basic conflicts in traditional Chilean history, while, in the case of Argentina, this typical dualism has centered on Federals and Unitarians, Civilization and Barbarianism, Peronism and Anti-peronism. It was not until the 1980s that historiography decentered itself from the central State paradigm and narratives related to the struggle for controlling *the* “State.” As seen in the first part of chapter 1, the naturalization of space did operate as a logic that preempted the question about the processes of territorial expansion and the particular shapes state and capital adopted in the annexed lands. The development of infrastructure, the organization of taxation and the electoral system, and intra-oligarchic discussions were central themes when dealing with the State. It did not mean, though, that the unequal pace of the spread of “the national” throughout what came to be “national” territory had to be addressed. A similar operation transpired in regional historiography, as it produced empirically rich narratives without dealing with the specificity of difference. This dissertation is intended to contribute to the new body of research by anthropologists and historians I have referred to in the previous sections, by analyzing State formation as a deeply unequal process where ethnic/racial, regional and transnational processes produced specific, non-teleological paths.

Throughout this investigation, I have covered four periods that I consider to be vital to the understanding of Patagonian history; 1843, the decades of 1870 and 1880s, the early 1900 and immediately after World War I. Within each of these periods, I have identified turning points that transformed a “no-man’s land” into a national territory. First, 1843 signaled the beginning of a colonial process that barely survived for more than three decades. Poverty and abandonment defined the period, but it did produce a shift in the relation between the two competing countries of Argentina and Chile. The beginning of a conflict that has defined official nationalisms was characterized by the undertaking of a huge colonial process that invariably faced failure. A radical shift took place in the 1880s, after an invasion of people and animals from the British colony in Malvinas (Falkland Islands). The landing of sheep meant the start of an accelerated process of State and capital formation, which radically transformed

the social and ecological landscape. I argue that it was the articulation of networks of racism and corruption, linking Argentina's and Chile's metropolitan oligarchies and European immigrants that defined the nature and pace of colonization. This expansion resulted in the rise of working-class and regional identities across a vague border around 1910. The multinational workers' insurgency might have challenged the overwhelming power of monopolies and its alliance with local functionaries. Paradoxically, however, discourses of social mobilization were increasingly framed in nationalist terms, and a bloody crack-down in 1920-1922 resulted in a decisive divide between Chilean and Argentine sectors. Overall, the dissertation aims to contribute to borderland studies by addressing the intimate relationship between state-making and capital accumulation in a colonial/postcolonial setting.

### **Organization of chapters.**

This dissertation was originally intended, as usually happens, to be something different. I worked on producing a social history of the frontier experience, focusing on *State formation as a cultural revolution* and processes of identity making in a multinational population in a context of rapid colonization, after the introduction of sheep in the 1870s. As I was working on the organization of the material and writing what was supposed to be chapter one, I realized that I lacked an overarching understanding of the ways states and capital combined their strengths and dealt with their weaknesses on the ground and across their borders. Likewise, I had to figure out the way Patagonia was part of a more general process of postcolonial statecrafting, and the influences of Spanish and British imperial designs and ideologies in configuring hegemonic ideas about the southern territories and populations. References were scattered and for the most part the literature suddenly ended at national borders I barely encountered in the archives. So the writing began to move backwards in time and became rather structural, as to provide a "great arch" from which to understand a general process

of local state building spanning almost a century.<sup>50</sup> My focus on social experiences widened towards territorial representations and strategies of national expansion, policies and juridical fictions, articulations of statality and capital territorialization. The projected book grew out of control, and I decided to apply the guillotine: I cut the head of the research and contrary to what executioners say it was painful. I have now produced what I consider to be a necessary stateocratic narrative which can be a companion for studying the social construction of the state. I also promise to enjoy writing a second part that will basically deal with people.

This dissertation is organized in five chapters, built thematically and through which much temporal overlapping necessarily occurs. The first two chapters focus on the dominant representations and juridical imaginations that played a critical role in defining a metropolitan common language regarding Patagonia. As a body, they aim to demonstrate the incapacities of colonial imaginations and practices for producing the results they claimed to be looking for. I do locate the colonizing effort within a broader narrative of national expansion paralleled by imperial expansion elsewhere. Thereafter, I confront those representations and the local State and capital construction, questioning the driving forces of the practical workings of *the national* on the people/territory. Finally, I analyze the relation between the fixations of State/capital and the continued mobility of population.

In chapter one, I examine the centuries-old colonial representations of Patagonia and “Patagonians” and its influence in the definition of national policies regarding occupation, racial relations and administration. The enduring topic of the unfertile, “no-man’s land” or land of giants and anthropophagites defined the States’ relation with the indigenous populations. Constructing a genealogy of colonial (imperial and then national) imagination, I look at the failed efforts of settlement that preceded Chilean and Argentinean penetration in the

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<sup>50</sup> The notion of a great arch spanning over centuries as the temporal framework for studying English state formation defined Corrigan and Sayer research. First used by Thompson, it also contained an architectural image as “a towering and solid structure of bricks,” in Roseberry’s words in “Hegemony and the Language...,” *op.Cit.*, p.356.

area and the projects and expectations of the elites of both countries deployed in imagining a Patagonian national future. Impregnated by an imitative vocation and looking for models in Europe, I argue, that the national elites reproduced unsuccessful, partial incorporations of Patagonia while concentrated on opposing each other's territorial claims.

Chapter 2 deals with a set of key colonial policies and perspectives implemented by both Argentina and Chile. I argue that colonial policies constituted juridical fictions articulated from the starting point of imitation and the differentiation between the economic and the political spheres, whose practical correlate was nothing but a failure. The provisions of penal, racial, and juridical-administrative colonization did have practical effects on the ground; however, all of them ended up facing an extended diagnosis of 'incompleteness', characteristic of colonial domination of peoples and lands.

In chapters 3 and 4 I argue that capital and nation-state making in Patagonia were joint processes. Divided because of different emphasis, in chapter 3 I analyze the main sources and operations in the construction of an oligopoly that came to control land, commerce, credit and transportation: the system of corruption and oligarchic integration and the imperial capital and commerce networks. The oligarchic logic of the state in Argentina and Chile materialized in Patagonia through social and business integration, securing political support in Buenos Aires and Santiago and making tangible the expansion of the national in the erection of borders for the transit of peoples and capital. Transforming indigenous land into fiscal ("national") territory involved a process of border delimitation that would have achieved a material push forward with its transformation into private, mainly British property.

The making of the State is analyzed in chapter 4 by looking at the social debates and conflicts that emerged in dialectical tension with the institutionalization of the local administration and policies of economic nationalization. Colonial institutions such as municipalities expressed the governmental will of reproducing structures of domination where business and politics were merged fields with certain autonomy. They produced, however, a

widespread social mobilization that put together immigrant laborers and medium sized merchants. The introduction of customhouses further polarized the regional society, and demands for land reform produced the divorce between different groups. The rise of cross-border working class militancy also expressed the formation of a regional identity, which looked to each national state for support against the landowning elite. Throughout the period, though, the attempts to build a monopoly of violence and a legitimate apparatus for policing was marked by precariousness and it was the critical conjuncture of 1919-1922 that was a crucial turning point. The states' repression of workers insurgency, I argue, closed a phase of state and capital formation. The shared interests of entrepreneurs and state officials demonstrated the class content of the national project, but also the impossibility of articulating claims out of the languages of nationality.

### **Sources and Clues.**

“For state makers are papermongers; their files becomes our archives”  
Charles Tilly.<sup>51</sup>

“These documents brought, in their margins, on their back sides, between lines, in the atmosphere they exhaled, an historically silent aura, enigmatic, unexplored, but expressive. Much like a silence that needed to speak. Like pages hidden in another language and in other codes of understanding.” Gabriel Salazar.<sup>52</sup>

If existing sources determine our possibilities for studying the past, the combination of these same sources is capable of producing new knowledge. Particularly when we reduce the scale of analysis and the levels of abstraction, it does allow for “reconstructions of much more dense trauma [...which] makes new phenomena's visible” in relation to the men and women that have made

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<sup>51</sup> Charles Tilly, “Reflections on the History of European State-Making,” in his edited 1975 volumen *The Formation of the National States in Western Europe*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 3-83, p.8.

<sup>52</sup> Gabriel Salazar. 1990 [2006] *Ser Niño 'Huacho' En La Historia De Chile (Siglo Xix)*. Santiago: ERA-LOM, p.88.

history.<sup>53</sup> When independently reviewing similar sources different scholars produce- up to a certain point- different conclusions with respect to similar facts and processes. For the historiography of the Patagonia, the collections of documents most commonly used have been those related to state institutions, mainly metropolitan, and to a smaller extent regional and provincial jurisdictions. They have served as the basis for more or less descriptive chronicles of the early chapters of colonization. More recently the revision of unpublished business correspondence has permitted the reconstruction of a type of pioneer-business epic, related to the colonial exploits in the nationalistic narrative<sup>54</sup> Newspapers and magazines, particularly in Magallanes, where they were numerous and have been well kept, have also been explored. They have provided the opportunity, in most cases, to delve into the everyday life of colonies and towns, but not of their people. In particular, the role of the workers' press has been reduced to providing information for studies of the labor movement, specifically on what are referred to as social conflictivity and classist discourses. Finally, Magallanes's judicial sources have also not been examined except for specific cases, in Santa Cruz for example, some studies are being presently developed using police and judicial documents that are found in provincial government archives- the court proceedings are not available.<sup>55</sup>

In reference to the historiography of eighteen century working class sectors, E.P. Thompson said something that could very well be applied to Patagonia at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century:

“No one is more susceptible to the charms of the gentry's life than the historian [...] Their main sources are found in the archives of the *gentry* or of the aristocracy. It is possible that some of their sources can still be found in the 'room of titles' of an old rustic residence [...] Nevertheless, for the majority of the population their outlook of life wasn't that of the gentry. I could say in stronger terms.”<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Carlo Ginzburg. *Tentativas*. Trans. Ventura Aguirre. Rosario: Prohistoria, 2004, p.127.

<sup>54</sup> See esp. Mateo Martinic's *Menéndez y Braun. Prohombres Patagónicos*.

<sup>55</sup> Santa Cruz's historian Pablo Navas is currently producing a displacement in local state making Studies from education to the police.

<sup>56</sup> E.P.Thompson, *Costumbres en común... op.Cit.*, pp.30-31.



In fact, the traditional historiography about Patagonia doesn't explain the assumptions that reproduce, rather than question, the information that is found in state and business documents written in the land administrator's, police commissioner's (who was usually the same person), the alderman's or the governors offices. Having revised those same sources within the framework of this research, it is necessary to say that within them there are little or no references made to wage-earning women or men except for numbers in terms of the labor force (wages, transfer of workers, land petitions and little else) or criminal records. The indigenous population has slightly more indirect representation, particularly in the form of complaints made to authorities about the depredations that they are accused of or because of laws made concerning public force and those responsible for crimes. In sum, these historiographical omissions reproduce the silences and prejudices of economic and political authorities.

That being said the production of those *papermongers* -despite the lack of information- can be studied, as we attempt to do here, through the shadows projected onto the screen mentioned in the beginning. Much like the light and the shadows that have been cast over it and the trajectory of the bodies that are projected in the margins of administrative saturation. Although the documentation gives us details about the construction of state and economic infrastructure, it permits a relatively detailed outline of this permanent process that is no less certain than the effective social reach of those operations, which are diffuse and require a fundamental critique of the documentation. Of course, this can mean anything, but it is not out of place to mention it and try to clarify the meaning, at least that is my intention, before the 'so called' objectivity and sublime mystification of others.

To critically read the documentation from the ministries responsible for colonization, such as the ministry of the Interior; Foreign relations, Land and Colonialization, or from the local authorities, such as the provincial governance, first means to compare the gaps of information with the ghostly lives of the men and women whose footprints were not registered but who we know existed and

can be traced<sup>57</sup>. Knowing about their lives has to do with methodology but as I have said before it has a lot to do with the historian's determination – or ideology- to search for those stories. In second place, it means stressing the distinction between the narratives of the elite and bureaucrats and the *vision of life of the majority of the population*. Obviously both visions of life exist in relation to each other, but it seems to be a point forgotten by historians who write from above, as well as by those who give priority to the historiographical narrative. In third place, this 'against the grain' interpretation means comparing clues (diverse pieces of evidence) found in publications as well as in official documents. It is my belief that it is there where we can find the greatest value of judicial sources- as marginal notes of the dominant narrative, which in turn helps to 'demarginalize' dehumanized accounts of Capital and State.

Besides the problem of origin, the function and the particular narrative of each group of sources, we must consider the periods that each source utilizes and reflects upon. In such terms, there are three groups of frequently used sources in this study (newspapers, administrative archives and judicial archives). Leaving aside representative and senatorial sessions, this 'third power of the state', means two things, one, that the parliamentary debates concerning the problems, the subjects and the region/time here developed are not so fundamental because they are also expressed (in the majority of cases) through the communication of the ministers and the provincial governments. Told in a different way, the parliamentary imagination doesn't hold much interest for us. In second place, it assumes that the times covered during the series of sources used, constitute evidence of the era, of the processes and the territory that this dissertation attempts to analyze.

### **Time Periods and Sources.**

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<sup>57</sup> Ginzburg, esp. "Huellas. Raíces de un paradigma indicial" e "Intervención sobre el paradigma indicial."

The mainstream press- that today has an unprecedented totalizing capacity- defines a social time of immediacy, in an intimate alliance with the State's agenda (the 'breaking news'). This can cause disagreement within the media and between the media and the authorities, but what is truly fundamental is the removal of certain recent aspects, that function by empowering the press *vis a vis* the State. If in the workers' press there are references of a much more ample historicity than exist today, in the mainstream press there are only several simultaneous present-times that are finally shared: that of the elite and that from western States. The press, in general, has a very bad memory. The series of relations they construct are brief and unilateral: they are briefly connected with the past, with an immediate causality usually limited to the political order. There 'the social', in all of its possibilities, only appears in the form of institutional problems.

Time of administrative sources similarly is that of the immediate, or of the pending: everything is an order, decrees, authorizations, and personal records in order to build a building, pay a debt or demand payment, punish a subordinate, place an order, or to submit a land grant for five thousand hectares of land. They are well related except in the organization of their own texts with the mainstream press. At the same time it's, running in two opposite directions: the order is executive, the debate is rhetorical. Both point to the same set of issues: the administration of territory, and social and economic life. Nevertheless, by doing this, those two directions aren't separated from their daily routine. In the institutional rhetoric, for example, it is not possible to distinguish when government employees are replaced and it is only in relation with other sources that it is possible to learn the dimensions of each executive order.

The time of judicial sources, on the other hand, is multiple. Compared to other archives of the administration of the State and press archives, judicial sources move in time in order to capture the *actions* of different actors (judge and secretary, the accused, the deponent, the police and prison guards), but at the same time judicial sources have their own timing (concerning the rhythm of the investigation- as possible time- and of the ruling- an urgent time). In the distance

of time, the judge and the historian come together one writing, the other one reading, but the historian and the accused also come together, one reading and the other speaking through the judge's pen, which is always present in those encounters between subalternity and academia to condition the answers and to highlight the imbalance of power of those voices.<sup>58</sup> Despite that, it's important to take advantage of those encounters not to merely "date" events from the politics of state or of the owning class, but instead to see them as unique opportunities to hear that sometimes unrecognizable voice (disfigured in the transcription) of a drunken thief, a rebellious worker, a raped child, or of an immigrant prostitute. Although we are not there with them, their lawsuits affect us because of the miseries and solidarities we find within their pages but also because of the density of times they hold and by, "the multiple 'versions of facts' that they gather [...] focusing on the same object from all possible angles."<sup>59</sup> The interpretation of the judicial processes opens the possibility to focus -fleetingly- on the experience of those voices with all of their contradictions, and immense humanities outlined in a spark of monotony. In doing so, we remember that neither human evolution during that time fits into an inventory nor is this "a neutral text," since "even a notarial inventory implies a code, which we must decipher."<sup>60</sup> In decoding and recoding, a fundamental tool is the recognition that different sources choose different times and that the authorship of those sources makes absurd the desire to assume, for different social groups, shared perceptions of their own profoundly unequal existence.

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<sup>58</sup> As Ginzburg warns on trials: "They must be read as the product of a peculiar, utterly unbalanced interrelationship." In "The Inquisitor as anthropologist," p.160.

<sup>59</sup> Cornejo, *op.Cit.*, pp.263-264.

<sup>60</sup> Ginzburg, "The Inquisidor...", *op.Cit.*, p.161.

## CHAPTER I. NATION, IMAGINATION, EXPANSION. POSTCOLONIAL COLONIALISM IN SOUTHERN PATAGONIA.

After four days of exploration through the Santa Cruz river, the southernmost navigable waterway over the Atlantic coast, the young naturalist Charles Darwin wrote in his travelogue: “The country remained the same, and was extremely uninteresting. The complete similarity of the productions throughout Patagonia is one of its most striking characteristics. The level plains of arid shingle support the same stunted and dwarf plants; and in the valleys the same thorn-bearing bushes grow. Everywhere we see the same birds and insects.” It was April, 1834.<sup>61</sup> A hundred and seventy five years after Darwin, and based on high resolution images of the landscape of Santa Cruz and Mars, the Doctor in Planetary Sciences Andrea Pacifici tested a long lasting imaginary: southern Patagonia was strikingly similar to Mars. While for Darwin the land was only good for cannibal rats, in 2009 it appeared to be well suited for space sciences. There, “the terrain morphology and rock composition [...] are similar to those found on the Martian surface. Moreover, the lack of vegetation, climatic condition, and the existence of wide uninhabited areas speak in favor of the possibility that the region could be suitable to train astronauts for future human expeditions to Mars.”<sup>62</sup>

After more than a century of Argentinean and Chilean colonization of southern Patagonia, the question about why its incorporation into to the national

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<sup>61</sup> Charles Darwin, “Chapter IX: Santa Cruz, Patagonia, and The Falkland Islands,” notes of 22.4.1834. The *Voyage of the Beagle*, the best known denomination of his *Journal of Researches into the Natural History and Geology of the Countries Visited During the Voyage of H.M.S. Beagle Round the World*, was first published in 1839 as the third of four volumes edited by the expedition’s captain Robert Fitz Roy as *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of His Majesty's Ships Adventure and Beagle Between the Years 1826 and 1836*. London: Henry Colburn. In the next two decades, *Journal of Researches* was republished at least ten times. The edition here consulted is the original. Quote from p. 215, unmodified in the second, corrected and augmented 1845 edition. See *The Complete Work of Charles Darwin Online*, <http://darwin-online.org.uk/contents.html> (acc.27.01.2010).

<sup>62</sup> Andrea Pacifici, “The Argentinean Patagonia and the Martian Landscape,” *Planetary and Space Science* 57 (2009), 571-578, p.577. See also his “The Southern Argentinean Patagonia as a terrestrial analog for Mars,” paper presented at the 39<sup>th</sup> Lunar and Planetary Science Conference, League City, March 2008.

realm was necessary, possible or 'logical' remains open. Who would be interested in landing on a cursed surface similar to Mars located at 'the southernmost end of the world'? What knowledge and impression of Patagonia did the States have that would inspire them to incorporate this desert into their national realm. Why was the occupation so central to Argentinean and Chilean state making, originating in their myth of immemorial rights and continued as living animosity around their mutual national myths of territorial theft?

This chapter begins by analyzing the centrality of the expansive processes in the configuration of postcolonial Argentina and Chile. Afterwards, it challenges the main arguments about the imagined Patagonia, and proposes that those long lasting fantastic representations contributed to defining the forms that the territorial occupation took. At the same time it supports the argument that from the 1830's the explaining factors of the occupation were mainly commercial and, secondarily were about geopolitical and territorial sovereignty. Finally, it reviews the precarious forms that both states adopted concerning state expansion in southern Patagonia. These 'working sovereignties', oppose each other at the expense of the indigenous, and were mutually reinforced, competing for the same space; in doing so, they propelled the occupation by means of capital and because of that, the concept of internal colonialism is key for understanding the processes of Latin-American State-construction.

### **State and Nation as Expansion.**

The building of independent states in the Southern Cone can be considered to be a single process of institutional consolidation and territorial expansion. The Spanish Crown's jurisdictional definitions were the basis on which newly formed Latin American countries attempted to define their territorial sovereignties in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, those precepts were frequently contradictory; both because they corresponded to administrative divisions that existed inside the 'universality' of the Empire and because of the distance between legislative centers and effectively occupied spaces. According to

Pablo Lacoste, opinions drawn from the resulting coexistence of these precepts in the definition of national territory after 1810 are extracted from three types of frontiers: (1) those that are legally defined; (2) ‘imaginary frontiers’, associated with a combination of desire, tenacity and documents, and (3) “real frontiers,” whose corresponding authority was capable of exercising a certain monopoly of violence. In the case of Argentina and Chile, “the borders were constantly moving,”<sup>63</sup> despite the permanent desire to find the “true defining legacy,” a “natural border” or a historically immanent one. To do that, both States fabricated an image about the border and possible problems resulting from its movement, so they referred to the principle of *Uti Possidetis de jure* in the claims that were made against them.

The territories defined by the Spanish Crown as they pertain to administrative subdivisions constituted the base of postcolonial territorial claims. Contrary to *res nullis*, (something belonging to no one) *Uti possidetis iure* (in Latin, “as you possess by law”) challenged the Europeans powers’ tendency to foster international relations on the basis of the contrary principle of *vacuum domicilium* (unoccupied, uncultivated-indigenous- territory) or “no mans land” that is available for occupation.<sup>64</sup> According to French and English expansionists, “those territories which were not formally and effectively occupied could be claimed by the country that arrived first to colonize them.”<sup>65</sup> The newly formed countries (Brazil claimed a different principle, *uti possidetis de facto*) focused on what the “year 0” would be for the establishment of borders, deciding between the options of 1810 and 1824. These years refer to either the constitution of *Juntas de Gobierno* that led to the wars of Independence and the closing of that chapter with the Battle of Ayacucho. The signing in 1856 of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Commerce and Navigation between the Republic of Chile and the Argentinean Confederation established that the contentious border would be determined by the

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<sup>63</sup> Pablo Lacoste. 2003. *La Imagen del Otro en las Relaciones de la Argentina y Chile (1534-2000)*. Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, pp. 33-35.

<sup>64</sup> Start Banner. 2007. *Possessing the Pacific. Land, Settlers, and Indigenous People from Australia to Alaska*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press; Alfonso Aguirre. 1943. *Relaciones históricas de Magallanes. La toma de posesión del Estrecho, y fundación de una colonia por la República de Chile en 1843*. Santiago, Imprenta Chile, pp.55-58.

<sup>65</sup> Lacoste, *op.Cit.*, p.27.

actions carried out by the Crown until 1810. Therefore, the key for each independent state lay in the documented proof that the Spanish monarchy by the grace of God had demarcated with precision the jurisdictions of the Kingdom of Chile and the Viceroyalty of La Plata.

As the legal fiction spread out along what is today a little more than 5100 kilometers (3200 miles), the agreement produced new conflicts based on a fairly obsolete colonial authority, whose territorial expression was but one of multiple unreachable aspirations. As the Chilean historian and propagandist Alfonso Aguirre pointed out in 1943: they inacted *uti possidetis* “assumed ownership” of the territories at the same time that “many extensive regions were inhabited by irreducible Indians.” Likewise, independence was achieved at different moments and, immense areas remained “uninhabited and unexplored, like Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego.”<sup>66</sup> The resolution of the initial border conflict was related more to the centralized capacity of each new state, than to their effective occupation of the territory.<sup>67</sup> For this reason, the economic and political situation of the old provinces of the Southern Cone was key for the conflict resolution at the end of the 1820s.

In the case of what later became the Republic of Argentina, the relation between sovereignty in and between provinces defined the route to independence. From the British Invasions of 1806-1807 Buenos Aires, the capital of the

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<sup>66</sup> Aguirre, *op.Cit.*, pp.55-56.

<sup>67</sup> “The debate unfolded very slowly” since the Strait occupation: “The Argentinean protest was presented on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1847. The first presentation of the Argentinean case probably was Pedro de Angelis’, *Memoria Histórica sobre los derechos de soberanía y dominio de la Confederación Argentina [...]*, Buenos Aires, 1852. It was refuted by Miguel Luis Amunátegui’s *Títulos de la República de Chile a la soberanía y dominio [...]*, 1853. Amunátegui was, in turn, refuted by Dalmacio Vélez Sarsfield’s *Discusión de los títulos del gobierno de Chile a las tierras del Estrecho de Magallanes*, Buenos Aires, 1854. It motivated a new publication by Amunátegui, a leaflet produced in Santiago in 1855. As a consequence, two new works were published in Buenos Aires, the first one by Manuel Ricardo Trelles [...], 1865, and the second by Vicente G. Quesada, *La Patagonia y las tierras australes del continente americano*, 1875[...]. These Argentinean texts motivated a new response by Amunátegui, maybe the more rigorous and important of this debate, *Cuestión de Límites entre Chile y la República Argentina*, Santiago, 1879. Finally, the work of Amunátegui moved Quesada to publish his ‘Historia Colonial Argentina’ in successive numbers of the *Nueva Revista de Buenos Aires* between 1884 and 1885, that is, after the signature of the Borders’ Treaty of 1881,” in Andrés Cisneros and Carlos Escudé (directors). *Historia de las Relaciones Exteriores Argentinas, 1806-1989*. Tomo I, available at <http://www.argentina-rree.com/1/1-025.htm> (accessed 20.01.2010).



viceroyalty of Río De la Plata created in 1776, faced a permanent jurisdictional fractioning helped by the intervention of Spain, Portugal and Brazil, England and France. The territorial and judicial sovereignties of the old towns and provinces not only faced each other because of economic and political questions among them, but also as they became part of the formation of other centralized independent political units. Río de Plata in the first half of the nineteenth century thus presents “an affirmation of a joining of sovereign entities that [...] are recognized as sovereign States who regulate their relations by international law.”<sup>68</sup> In accordance with nationalist legends, “Argentina” lost some kind of hinterland to Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, England, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. That is to say Argentina is thought to have lost to all of their neighbors and the new dominant imperial power. Until 1853, with the military alliance of the States Entre Ríos, Corrientes and Brazil that put an end to Rosas’ porteño government, the union of the provinces of the Rio de la Plata also known as the Argentinean Confederation was not strictly speaking a state<sup>69</sup>. Only in the 1860s, with the election of Bartolomé Mitre as the first President of the Republic, the centralization process acquired relevance. The two key events of his presidency were his victory in Pavón against Urquiza, that signaled the reintegration of Buenos Aires in the Confederation in order to form the federal unified-state known as the Republic (1861); and secondly, the war of the Triple Alliance (Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina plus England) against Paraguay (1864-1870). In this manner, national unity was built on the basis of military expansion and the domination of “the remnants of provincial autonomy.”<sup>70</sup>

The pillars of *turning the multiple to one* were, as David Rock said, “high export earnings and a matching land boom, foreign investment and handouts from

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<sup>68</sup> José Carlos Chiaramonte. 1999. “Ciudadanía, Soberanía y Representación en la Génesis del Estado Argentino (c.1810-1852),” in Hilda Sabato, ed. *Ciudadanía Política y Formación de las Naciones. Perspectivas Históricas de América Latina*. México: FCE-Colegio de México, p.114.

<sup>69</sup> José Carlos Chiaramonte, 1997, *Ciudades, Provincias, Estados: Orígenes de la Nación Argentina (1800-1846)*, Ariel: Buenos Aires.

<sup>70</sup> Fernando López-Alves, F. 2002 (2003) *Las Formación del Estado y la Democracia en América Latina, 1810-1900*. Trans. Paula Serrano. Bogotá: Norma, p.225. See also Noemi Goldman. (1998). “Los Orígenes del Federalismo Rioplatense (1820-1831),” *Nueva Historia Argentina. Tomo III. Revolución, República, Confederación (1806-1952)*. N. Goldman (ed.). Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 105-125.

Buenos Aires to the provincial landed classes.”<sup>71</sup> The clientele networks that Buenos Aires managed to build meant to articulate an oligarchy with a national reach, which according to Chiaramonte constituted the post Pavón novelty. The ‘local’ sovereignties, by means of the war, favor and marriage, were submerged, into a new sovereignty that was exclusive, supposedly older and materially superior. Before the livestock saturation- or better said, ownership- in the interior, a fundamental element for the growth of land concessions was territorial expansion. A process that Rosas had already begun by moving towards the southern frontier whose border was defined (towards La Pampa, until Bahía Blanca and Carmen de Patagones) by the capacity to generate alliances with indigenous towns of the so-called Patagonia. It was widely considered that Patagonia started where the control of the future capital ended, including the actual provinces of La Pampa, Río Negro, Chubut, Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego. In fact Bahía Blanca, only 600 kilometers from Buenos Aires and founded in 1828, was considered to be the entrance to Patagonia. Until then, and still for a long time after, that part of the south was represented on maps as a giant empty space.

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<sup>71</sup> David Rock. 1988. *Argentina 1516-1987. Desde la colonización Española hasta Alfonsín*. Trad. Néstor Míguez. Madrid: Alianza, p.175. Referring to La Rioja, but pertinent to the whole ‘interior’, Ariel De la Fuente has proposed that “the most important consequence of the lack of state funds [...] was the state’s inability to exercise a legitimate monopoly on violence.” 2000. *Children of Facundo. Caudillo and Gaucho Insurgency during the Argentine State-Formation Process (La Rioja, 1853-1970)*. Duke: Duke University Press, p.20.

Figure 2. Map of Patagonia, by Colton (1855).



Map drawn and published by J.H. Colton, NY, 1855, 1857. As Duncan Campbell and Gladys Grace noticed, “It is interesting that this map is entitled ‘Patagonia’, treating it as a discrete geographical entity. Nevertheless, its political status was less settled. A note at the head of the map reads: ‘That portion of Patagonia east of the Andes is claimed by the Argentine Republic, and all west including the Islands, is occupied by Chili.’” The imaginative course of the rivers is the only penetration into the vast plains. A textbook published by Colton in 1857 included the following questions and answers on Patagonia, independently of those about Argentina and Chile:

“Patagonia: what of its climate?  
 It is cold and inhospitable.  
 Who are the inhabitants?  
 Wandering tribes of Indians.  
 What is the surface of Patagonia?  
 It is a barren and stony waste.”<sup>72</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Georg Fitch and G. Woolworth Colton. 1857. *Colton and Fitch's Introductory School Geography. Illustrated by Twenty Maps and Numerous Engravings*. New York: J.H. Colton, pp.68-69.

Sarmiento's (1868-1874) and Avellaneda's (1874-1880) presidencies strengthened the construction of the State. The "federal wars" lasted until 1880, when a single currency was introduced (1881) and Buenos Aires' federalism and militia were dismantled, after Minister Julio Argentino Roca crushed Carlos Tejedor's uprising. By doing so Roca defeated Buenos Aires' last governor and secured his own presidential election. The 'superminister' of Avellaneda, also victor of Mitres' Unitarian army in 1874 and architect of the 'Patagonian' military conquest, closed a chapter of seventy-four years of wars in favor of the Republic controlled by Buenos Aires. The "State launched" from there to "the conquest of the country crowned it by conquering Buenos Aires." Bringing to a close the conflict between provincial elites, the State also ended military mobilizations through which "the gauchos' political engagement fundamentally shaped political conflict and identities." As Historian Tulio Halperin Donghi says, quoting Avellaneda, "nothing remained in effect in the nation that was superior to the nation itself"<sup>73</sup>. Although the State became relatively defined, the characteristics of Argentina and its territory were far from being so.

This "reduction to unity," in the words of Natalio Botana, supposes that, through coercion and/or agreements, "a certain power sector, of many that acts in a hypothetical territorial space, acquires authoritative control over the rest and reduces it to be part of a larger unit. This sector is, supreme by definition": it does not recognize higher chains of command in its territory; it constitutes a socio-political center that subordinates. Although the concept of 'supreme' is imprecise we will later suggest its replacement with 'sovereign,' the general idea of an armed and fragile coexistence between relatively equal powers is suggestive: Argentina's formation process supposed *merging into one* the powers, they recognized as possible conflicting territorial, ethno-racial, commercial and military forces; but at the same time, it assumed to subdue the commercial and cultural differences and subordinate the number of sources of authority to those of the central State. Those were the three basic problems that Argentina faced,

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<sup>73</sup> Tulio Halperin, *Una nación para el Desierto...op.Cit.*, pp.143-144.

following Botana, between the battle of Caseros (1861) and Roca's coronation (1880-1886): consolidation of "territorial integrity"; construction of a dominant national identity and the organization of a political system.<sup>74</sup> As Escudé argues, however, if the war against Paraguay implied a "territorial, political and military consolidation," it was also crucial to producing, "a turning-point in the competition with Chile over the southern territories."<sup>75</sup>

The war of the Triple Alliance (1865-1870) and the Conquest of the Desert (1879-1884) meant for the central State the amplification of its territory: 40% of Argentina's surface today was integrated by the provinces created after that occupation.<sup>76</sup> As Viñas argues, "the struggles with the Indians of the Patagonia (and from Chaco) need to be seen as an addition to the war against the Paraguayans and against the federal caudillos," that were not only equal to the federalist, guarani, and pampas montonera's, but also show, "the intense strengthening of a centralizing power."<sup>77</sup> At the same, Buenos Aires expands towards the northeast and the south and incorporates an uncultivated space as "national territory," under the direct control of the President of the Republic. This ratified the centralizing process, because it broke the balance between what the provinces claimed for themselves and the territorial growth legitimately controlled by the National Executive power. In economic terms, the northern expansion drove the internal demand, creating a market, "closed until then by the blockage and restrictions imposed by the Paraguayan authorities."<sup>78</sup> The conquest of northern Patagonia permitted in turn the delivery of land to bureaucrats,

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<sup>74</sup> Natalio Botana. 2005 [1977]. *El Orden Conservador. La política argentina entre 1880 y 1916*. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, pp.63-66.

<sup>75</sup> Carlos Escudé. 1988. "Argentine Territorial Nationalism," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 1: 139-165, p.144.

<sup>76</sup> Carla Lois. 2007. "La Patagonia en el Mapa de la Argentina Moderna. Política y 'Deseo Territorial' en la Cartografía Oficial Argentina en la Segunda Mitad del Siglo XIX," in Pedro Navarro (ed.), *Paisajes del progreso. La resignificación de la Patagonia Norte, 1880-1916*, 107-34. Neuquén: Universidad Nacional del Comahue.

<sup>77</sup> David Viñas. 1983 [3<sup>a</sup> ed. 2003]. *Indios, Ejército y Frontera*. Buenos Aires, Santiago Arcos, p.22; Pedro Navarro. (2005). "La conquista de la memoria. La historiografía sobre la frontera sur argentina durante el siglo XIX," *Universum* 20: 1: 88-111, p.95.

<sup>78</sup> Oscar Oszlack. 1997. *La formación del Estado argentino. Orden, Progreso y Organización Nacional*. Buenos Aires: Ariel, p.215. On the role played by the market opened by war and its influence in the Argentinean process of centralization, Oszlack remembers that Mitrismo was also known as "the party of the suppliers" (*el Partido de los Proveedores*).

military and ranchers and opened the period of the oligarchic monopolization of public matters, between 1880 and 1916.

The Argentinean portion of southern Patagonia, formed by the national territories of Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego (both created institutionally in 1884, officially occupied since then), remained as an anomaly for centralization, effective until the 1920s. For the elites, as the conflict set out to be resolved as an ‘internal’ matter, the fight for international demarcation of the south became important. As Bohoslavsky points out, from the 1870s, “none of the regions of the country seem to have generated more concern to the nationalist than Patagonia.”<sup>79</sup> In fact, along with Buenos Aires, the vast region has, “form[ed] the core of Argentina’s geographic imagination” since then.<sup>80</sup> At the very least, at the level of metropolitan interests, only then it is possible to talk about border closures and of an “approximate correspondence between nationally occupied economic space and international boundaries.” For Lewis this meant, “that the national market came to occupy virtually the whole of the national territory.”<sup>81</sup> This nationalization of the National territories is one of the main themes of this text; the nationalization that follows the construction of the nation-state over territories and populations that were not effectively incorporated into State sovereignty starting from the ratification of its national borders.

In Chile’s case, the occupation of the Straight (1843), Tierra del Fuego (1880s), War of the Pacific (1879-1884) and the Occupation of Araucanía (1861-1862, 1867-1869, 1881-1884) meant that the territory effectively occupied by the State more than doubled.<sup>82</sup> The development of Chile, and Argentina affected neighboring countries and native communities, which saw their sovereignties and territories taken away from them. To a large or small degree it landlocked Bolivia

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<sup>79</sup> Ernesto Bohoslavsky. 2009. *El complot patagónico. Nación, conspiracionismo y violencia en el sur de Argentina y Chile (siglos XIX y XX)*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, p. 16.

<sup>80</sup> Gabriela Nouzeilles and Graciela Montaldo, eds., *The Argentina reader. History, culture, politics*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2002, 27.

<sup>81</sup> Colin Lewis. 2002. “The Political Economy of State-Making: The Argentine, 1852-1955.” In James Dunkerley (ed.). *Studies in the Formation of the Nation State in Latin America*. London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 161-188, p.168.

<sup>82</sup> Calculated on the basis of the current Chilean continental surface, and considering only the provinces of Tarapacá, Antofagasta, Aysén and Magallanes.

and Paraguay, and for indigenous populations it meant expropriation of land and genocidal dispossession. For Chile, the annexation of the wealthy nitrate provinces in the north meant an answer to the economic crisis of the 1870s, the definitive opening to its monoproduction dependent economy, based on mining and the demonstration of the soundness of its political institutions. In a war motivated by Chilean and British business interests,<sup>83</sup> nitrates began to make up more than 70% of Chilean national earnings, and from the decades of the 1880s to the 1930s it averaged half of them.<sup>84</sup>

The expansive process that characterized the second half of the nineteenth century were possible given the earlier ‘decrease in unity’ of the original provinces in part because of the closeness between the cities that disputed jurisdictions. Chile originally extended from Copiapó to Concepción (some 1300 kilometers, or 800 miles), with its political and commercial axis in Santiago and Valparaíso during the period of the Captaincy General. The explosion of the independence movement in 1810 opened a period of conflict between the sovereignties of ‘the people’ organized around town councils, transformed quickly in an armed military conflict between liberals and conservatives (“*pipiolos y pelucones*”) that ended in 1829 with the victory of the later. With the victory of the conservatives, they commenced to form a block of power controlled by the military and merchants from Santiago to the detriment of the landowners from the mapuche frontier and the miners of the north.<sup>85</sup> This ‘Authoritarian Republic’, which lasted until 1861, defined the framework of the State with Portales’ Constitution in 1833. This conflict remained latent during the century, and in fact erupted as short and bloody civil wars in 1851, 1859, and 1891. In international terms, it seemed clear that the wars against the Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation (1836-1839) and against Spain (1865-1866) marked milestones in the popular mobilization behind nationalism, acting as an antidote to fractionalism

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<sup>83</sup> Luis Ortega. 1984. “Nitrates, Chilean Entrepreneurs and the Origins of the War of the Pacific,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 16, 337-380.

<sup>84</sup> Patricio Meller. 1998. *Un siglo de economía política chilena (1890-1990)*. Santiago: Andrés Bello.

<sup>85</sup> Gabriel Salazar. 2006. *Construcción de Estado en Chile (1800-1837)*. *Democracia de los “pueblos,” Militarismo Ciudadano, Golpismo Oligárquico*. Santiago: Sudamericana.

and localism. Territorial expansion, therefore, can be considered as following the consolidation- always incomplete and precarious- derived from the legitimate monopoly of power, a consolidation which helped to soothe the possible internal ruptures of an oligarchy self considered as an aristocracy.<sup>86</sup>

As in the case of the Argentinean troops that participated in the war against Paraguay, the Chilean veterans of the War of Pacific went from the definition of international borders to the closing of the so called domestic frontier. After the Nitrate Desert, attention was again directed to agricultural and livestock expansion- towards the fertile mapuche lands from Arauco. South between Concepción and Valdivia, “Mapuche country,” as it was called by O’Higgins, was conquered *manu militari* for the productive and symbolic expansion of agricultural export. The occupied Mapuche lands were distributed among between officials from the military first, owners of large estates and Chilean speculators, afterwards, as well as to foreign colonists with ample privileges. This racist colonial policy was also applied during the colonization of southern Patagonia, though not in the same centralized manner that it was carried out in southern (continental) Chile.

As Walter Nugent expressed, “in the 1870-1914 period, the frontier impulse and imperial impulse were related in source and performance,”<sup>87</sup> Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century the consolidation of the unification process in Europe and the U.S. in addition to the growing surplus of industrial exploitation allowed for new expansionist policies. The age of imperialism became evident through the emergence of a renovated colonialism, the United States affecting Mexico and the Caribbean while Western and central Europe’s hegemony manifested in its scramble for Africa and Asia.

However, if the nation doesn’t have an adequate structure, “for limitless growth, because its genuine consent that comprises its base can not be indefinitely

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<sup>86</sup> A great short introduction to the debate on the definition of the 19th century Chilean elites in Julio Pinto and Gabriel Salazar. 1999. *Historia Contemporánea de Chile II. Actores, identidad y movimiento*. Santiago: LOM.

<sup>87</sup> Walter Nugent. 1989. “Frontiers and Empires in Late Nineteen Century,” *The Western Historical Quarterly*, Volume (4): 393-408, p.394.



extended, and only rarely, it is obtained from conquered people,”<sup>88</sup> what was expressed as imperialism worldwide was translated as “internal” colonialism. This postcolonial colonialism whose aim was to close the material gaps of its founding judicial fiction was expressed from California to the Patagonia, going through Mato Grosso and Goias in Brazil, the Chaco and Arauco in the Southern Cone, Sonora and Chiapas in Mexico and the USA, and the *sierra* in Peruvian and Bolivian Highlands.

Though Nugent has argued that the “New World frontier countries [Argentina, Brazil, Canada and the United States] did not compete with each other, having enough to do with their own boundaries,”<sup>89</sup> they actually did as illustrated by the case of Argentina and Chile. Competition turned violent when indigenous pockets of resistance, relative autonomy or sovereignty made them a crucial subject in diplomatic internal contention. In this sense, there was no contradiction between the age of empire and the reason of state, and the distinction between empire and nation lost meaning. The frontier impulse, national or imperial, enabled the extension, in a number of decades, of the worldwide monopoly of the nation state system. It did so by enabling metropolitan powers to extend their reach even over territories considered up until then “no man’s land,” lands imagined as blessed or cursed, dominated by barbarism and wilderness, territories so distant that they remained blank on maps, at the very end of the world, unexplored and unexploited.

### **Imagining Patagonia.**

The gap between grounded social experience and metropolitan ideas developed over the narrative based on travelogues and began in November 1522. The first encounter between Europeans with the southernmost part of South America profoundly impacted it, even serving as the namesake for the people and

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<sup>88</sup> Hannah Arendt. (2006 ). *Los Orígenes del Totalitarismo*. Madrid, Alianza Editorial, p.215.

<sup>89</sup> Nugent, *op.Cit.*, p.399.

the land. This naming also helped to initiate the fabrication of many stereotypes, which are still around today, about the peoples and the land of the Patagonia.

Antonio Pigafetta, noble Knight of Rhodes, gave the name to Patagonia as it appeared in the first narrative he wrote, about the *marvelous tasks* the expedition he was part of had accomplished<sup>90</sup>. Three years earlier, the Portuguese-born captain, Hernando de Magalhaes' expedition departed from Spain sailing to the West and decimated, returned for the Glory of the Spanish-Catholic Empire coming from the East. The first 'world circumnavigation' opened a whole new area for commercial routes. Pigafetta was commissioned to provide a meticulous description of geographies and peoples, events and details of the discoveries to come. His *Narrative Account* has been labeled not only as the "longest and most valuable narrative of the voyage,"<sup>91</sup> defining an "exotism whose seduction influenced several centuries and multiple narratives,"<sup>92</sup> but as the "corner stone in any [textual] construction relative to travels,"<sup>93</sup> "Naming is equivalent to taking possession"<sup>94</sup> or, as Brian Friel put it, when "we name a thing [...] it leaps into existence!"<sup>95</sup> *Naming power* was one of the most important features of Magalhaes' travel through Pigafetta: he was the man responsible for its name and for putting it on the map.

In the five months the expedition spent in the refuge bay since then called San Julián, Pigafetta described the first encounter when, "the captain, arriving near a river, found the men called Canibali," the giant natives "who eat human flesh" they called *Pathagoni*. Pigafetta's 'account' of those savages was widespread in Europe with the reproduction of his chronicle, which "enjoyed

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<sup>90</sup> Antonio Pigafetta. 1565 [1969]. *Magellan's Voyage. A Narrative Account of the First Circumnavigation*. Translated and edited by R.A. Skelton from the manuscript in the Bainecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University. New Haven: Yale University Press.

<sup>91</sup> Skelton, *op.Cit.*, 7.

<sup>92</sup> Ernesto Livon-Grosman. 2003. *Geografías Imaginarias. El relato de viaje y la construcción del espacio patagónico*. Buenos Aires: Beatriz Viterbo, p.31.

<sup>93</sup> Manuel Ballesteros (ed.) 1957. *Bibliotheca Indiana I. Viajes y viajeros. América en los Grandes Viajes*. Aguilar: Madrid, p.12.

<sup>94</sup> Tzvetan Todorov. 1982. *The Conquest of America. The Question of the Other*. Translated by Richard Howard. Harper Perennial. NY, p.27. For Todorov (p.25) "Human signs, i.e. the words of the language, are not simply associations -they do not directly link a sound to a thing, but pass through the intermediary of meaning, which is an intersubjective reality."

<sup>95</sup> Brian Friel. 1980. *Translations*, p.422, in Brian Friel. 1984. *Selected Plays*. London: Faber, 377-451.

extraordinary success in Europe and which was the root of a long and at times impassioned debate.”<sup>96</sup> This is how the territory developed as, “an extreme desert, populated by giants that constituted the same image of a cultural antipode.”<sup>97</sup> The misnomer that the ‘Patagonians’ were a cannibal tribe of satanic worshippers, who ate raw rats and ran faster than horses, so horrible and unknown to themselves that they were terrified when facing a mirror, started with Magallanes. This stereotype was perpetuated when the given name was also attached to their land, the entire southern tip of America.

As Skelton states, “the name bestowed by Magellan exists, with the sense of ‘dogs with large paws,’ in various romance languages,”<sup>98</sup> the denomination had its basis in the large dimensions of their feet covered with guanaco skins. Another version suggests it was part of a characterization emerging from the magical-medieval literature, which allowed them to be measured by the chronicler as “so tall that the tallest of us only come up to his waist.” As stated by many authors, such a characterization was not real. As testimony of the eighteenth century establishes, “although the height of the said indians was generally 1,75 m., not being rare that some of them could reach to 2 m., today it is indubitable that there were never those who were 3,60 m.”<sup>99</sup> For the average European, who was probably around 1.50m tall, they were big, but the belief that they were giants could not be more than an exaggeration, based on his own cultural imaginary and in the interest of making their own enterprise and level of courage seem bigger. The fantastic discourse of the heathen Patagonian’s adoration of demons is, likewise, the counterpart for European heaven-ness.

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<sup>96</sup> Jean-Paul Duviols, “The Patagonian ‘Giants,’” in *Patagonia. Natural History, Prehistory and Ethnography at the Uttermost End of the Earth*, Colin McEwan et. al. (eds.) Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997, p.127.

<sup>97</sup> Livon-Grosman, *op.Cit.*, p.31.

<sup>98</sup> See Skelton, *op.Cit.*, n.26, p.154, in Skelton, *op.Cit.*

<sup>99</sup> Guillermo Furlong. 1943. *Entre los Tehuelches de la Patagonia. Según noticias de los misioneros e historiadores Jesuitas Diego Rosales, Miguel de Olivares, Nicolás Mascardi, Juan José Guillermo, Felipe Vander Meeren, Armando J. Nyel, Antonio Alemán, José Cardiel, Antonio Machoni y Francisco Enrich*. Buenos Aires: Talleres San Pablo, pp.11-12.

In Pigafetta's text, as in most of the European travelogs, the "narcissism of the difference," as a "pornographic vision of events," was commonplace.<sup>100</sup> Columbus's statements on the *Caribas-Canibals* were directly reapplied to explain the new unknown. There is "neither linguistic nor archeological evidence" supporting the existence of such practices among Island Caribs,<sup>101</sup> nor among the 'Patagonians'. As Philip Boucher states those named as Patagonians became 'ignoble savages par excellence' for centuries.<sup>102</sup> There were only the '*Fuegians*' –*Selknams, Yamanas, Kaweshkars*- who were introduced right before the lowest level of evolution.

The expedition of 1520 inaugurated the coastal mapping of the *Terra Australis Incognita*, that continent that was lost in the extreme south and was partially found in the Patagonia and Australia Australia.<sup>103</sup> It also opened the region to the kidnapping of indigenous 'specimens' to be exhibited in Europe, a long lasting tradition that only ended in the early twentieth century though it was continued as a civilizing mission.<sup>104</sup> European travelers of the following centuries reinforced the monstrous characterization of the indigenous from the steppe, and arriving on their coasts looking for provisions and rest they couldn't but be frightened by the immense nothingness that they found. In 1558 Ladrillero's expedition sent by the Governor of Chile, García Hurtado de Mendoza, took possession of the Strait in the name of the King, the Viceroyalty and Hurtado de Mendoza. Even though his *Descripción y Derrotero del Estrecho de Magallanes* was archived in Spain and remained unknown for two centuries, the expeditions

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<sup>100</sup> Cfr. Olivia Harris, "The coming of the White People. Reflections on the Mythologization of History in Latin America," p.44, in K. Mills and W. Taylor .1998. *Colonial Latin America: A Documentary History*. SR Books, pp. 24-45. The idea of a *pornography of the witness* has been taken from Camilla Townsend's suggestive article, "Burying the White Gods: New Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico," *American Historical Review*, 108:3 (June 2003), pp. 659-687. This article provides a notable account on the myth of the invaders glorification during the Mexica conquest.

<sup>101</sup> Robert Myers, quoted and expanded in Philip Boucher. 1992. *Cannibal Encounters. Europeans and Island Caribs, 1492-1763*. John Hopkins University. Baltimore and London, p.7.

<sup>102</sup> Boucher, *op.Cit.*, p.19.

<sup>103</sup> Mateo Martinic. 2006 [2nd ed.] *Historia de la Región Magallánica. Tomo I*, Punta Arenas: Universidad de Magallanes, pp.157-158.

<sup>104</sup> On the kidnapping of 'indigenous specimens' see Carlos Vega and Paola Grendi. 2002. *Vejámenes Inferidos a Indígenas de Tierra del Fuego. Vol.3. Documentos*. Punta Arenas: CONADI XII Región; Christian Báez and Peter Mason. 2006. *Zoológicos Humanos. Fotografías de fueguinos y mapuche en el Jardín d'Acclimation de París, siglo XIX*, Santiago, Pehuén.

of the early sixteenth century “left a disheartening result” regarding the lands in the extreme south: “in them there weren’t spices [...] nor precious metals as were assured, not even a tolerable climate fit for human life. The idea that was gradually spread by those who returned -and that remained in the popular memory- spoke of wild lands, primitive and poverty stricken men, and an infernal climate.”<sup>105</sup> As pointed out by an official Chilean geography book at the end of the nineteenth century: “With his exploration, Ladrillero demonstrated that the navigation of the Strait, from the Pacific to the Atlantic, was workable, although difficult”<sup>106</sup> and that a permanent settlement would be impossible.

The first attempt to colonize Patagonia was established by Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa’s expedition, also named Governor and Captain General of the Strait of Magellan *for when the area was to be effectively occupied*. After three years of navigation, in 1584 Gamboa left more than 400 people, in two small bays, off the northern coast of the Strait. They founded two settlements, the City of Rey Don Felipe, over the occidental mouth of the strait, and Nombre de Jesus in the eastern part. Few years after, the first would have a more profane name that would remain until today: ‘Port Famine’. Thomas Cavendish, landing in 1587, found survivors that told a story of hunger, scurvy and cannibalism. According to Tomé Hernández’s testimony, the land was infertile and cold, inhabited by giants and with few living animals.<sup>107</sup> In this same place, affected by depression, he would commit suicide in 1828 the first captain of the expeditions undertaken by the *Beagle*. According to one version, the captain wrote in his diary that in Tierra del Fuego what happens is that “man loses his soul.”<sup>108</sup>

The image of Patagonia as the land of misfortune, excessive and infertile, wind swept and populated by giant nomads was perpetuated in the imaginary

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<sup>105</sup> Martinic, *Historia de la Región*, Tomo I, p.180.

<sup>106</sup> Aníbal Echeverría y Reyes. 1888. *Geografía Política de Chile ó sea Recopilación de Leyes y Decretos Vigentes sobre creación, límites y nombre de las Provincias, Departamentos, Subdelegaciones y Distritos de la República. Tomo Primero. Magallanes a Linares*. Santiago, Imprenta Nacional, p.XXVI.

<sup>107</sup> One of the survivors was Tomé Hernández, who left testimony in an interrogatory the Viceroy of Perú Francisco de Borja subjected him to in 1620. In NN (ed.) 1768. *Viage al Estrecho de Magallanes por el Capitán Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa en los años de 1579 i 1580 y Noticia de la Expedición que Después hizo para poblarle*. Madrid: Imprenta Real de la Gazeta.

<sup>108</sup> Quotation without reference in Livon-Grosman, *op.Cit.*, p.78.

constructed by travel accounts. Visited only until the Atlantic coasts and the coast of the Strait of Magallanes, the interior of the south of the continent only started to gain density until the end of the eighteenth century, with the trip of the jesuit missionary, Thomas Falkner. *A Description of the Patagonia, and the Adjoining Parts of South America*, published in 1774 and in Spanish fifty years after,<sup>109</sup> was based on the prolonged coexistence with the Tehuelche at the south of Río Negro and from it was constructed the first map of the interior and of the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts around the 45th parallel. Falkner's ethnography became geopolitically important, since it defined the Tehuelche's capacity for commerce and peace, and established, on the basis of the interviews, the ties between indigenous people, and highlighted their capacity to establish military alliances that could put in check the Spanish dominion from Buenos Aires and from Santiago to the south. At the same time settlers in the Patagonia began to be differentiated and the empty space (the 'desert') transformed into an object of imperial desire, the image projected over Patagonia maintained that central totalization in the postcolonial imagination: a territory homogenized in its vastness, with only one name that describes from the Río Negro until Cape Horn and from the aridity of the Atlantic to the fertility of the Pacific.<sup>110</sup>

As a totalization or emptying of its diversity, this image was reinforced by the disastrous result of the permanent settlement attempts and the lack of cartography. As such this process of homogenization was actualized with the exploratory expedition of the *Beagle*. The trip, narrated in Charles Darwin's research journal, constituted the piece most read and consulted by Argentinean and Chilean state functionaries in the nineteenth century in reference to the coasts in the extreme south, in the same way in which Falkner's text- and later Muster's- was key for everyone who ventured to cross the interior of the southern 'desert.' Chilean and Argentinean admirals also used hydrographic surveys as well as,

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<sup>109</sup> Falkner, Thomas. 1774. *A Description of Patagonia, and the Adjoining Parts of South America: containing an Account of the Soil, Produce, Animals, Vales, Mountains, Rivers, Lakes, &c. of those Countries; the Religion, Government, Policy, Customs, Dress, Arms, and Language of the Indian Inhabitants; and some Particulars relating to Falkland Islands* (London; C Pugh for T. Lewis). The first edition in Castillian was published in 1835, in Buenos Aires, by the Press of the State (Imprenta del Estado).

<sup>110</sup> Cfr. Livon-Grosman, *op.Cit.*, pp.67-69.

charts drawn by Fitz-Roy, commander of the *Beagle* well into the twentieth century. The support behind Chilean and Argentinean authorities were the British Empire and natural sciences. The explorations penetrating until the unexplored confines of the continent, south of a Tierra del Fuego that Falkner only imagined through the accounts of the Tehuelche in the north.

In Darwin's account, biology and culture are undifferentiated, and a certain climate and a particular morphology correspond to a particular specimen. The author- just like his captain Philip Parker King- establishes a clear territorial and racial division north and south from the strait.<sup>111</sup> On one hand, there is the northern coast inhabited by the "so-called giants," the Patagonians, whom it is "impossible not to like," "so thoroughly good-humored and unsuspecting." Darwin states that they enjoyed trading with Europeans, some of whom have received their "genuine hospitality." However, as they "had so much communication with sealers and whalers [...] that most of the men can speak a little English and Spanish" they were already "half civilized, and proportionally demoralized." In the case of the southern Tehuelche, or Aonikenk, there was a gap between them and their land. As the *Beagle* navigated southward from the Santa Cruz coast, Darwin's diary expressed his hatred for the continental territory, as shown in the quotation that opens this chapter and which continued as follows: "The curse of sterility is on the land, and the water flowing over a bed of pebbles partakes of the same curse. Hence the number of waterfowl is very scanty; for there is nothing to support life in the stream of this barren river."<sup>112</sup>

On the other hand appeared "the Fuegian savage, the miserable lord of this miserable land." Those "cannibals" populated Tierra del Fuego and its channels, "one of the most inhospitable countries within the limits of the globe" inhabited

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<sup>111</sup> For the Australian-grown Parker King, the *Fuegians* were "a most miserable, squalid race, very inferior, in every respect, to the Patagonians." 1838. *Voyage of the Adventure and the Beagle. Vol.I. Proceedings of the First Expedition, 1826-1830, Under the Command of Captain P. Parker King*. London: Colburn, p.25. Parker King was the son of an early colonial Governor of New South Wales, Philip Gidley King, in Australia's south East, and his first missions were as a hydrographer during the expansion in Western Australia. He became a major explorer, landowner and shareholder in his father's rich former jurisdiction, through the Australian Agricultural Co. See <http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020053b.htm?hilite=Parker%3BKing> (accessed 12.12.2010)

<sup>112</sup> Darwin, Ch. IX. "Santa Cruz, Patagonia and The Falkland Islands."

by “the most abject and miserable creatures I anywhere beheld.” “Their country is a broken mass of wild rocks, lofty hills, and useless forests: and these are viewed through mists... in search of food they are compelled unceasingly to wander from spot to spot.” According to Darwin, “viewing such men, one can hardly make one’s self believe that they are fellow-creatures, and inhabitants of the same world.”<sup>113</sup> Spurred both in part by their exotism and their abject living conditions, at his own expense, Captain Fitz Roy decided to kidnap and bring four ‘Fuegians’ to England to meet Queen Adelaide.<sup>114</sup> As Livon-Grosman has said about these expeditionaries, for them “the indigenous formed a continuum with the animal world” and fit into their evident collecting effort although, “their descriptions don’t receive the same degree of scientific precision.”<sup>115</sup> As the frontier impulse faced no contention, the Fuegians became subsumed under a totalization (there were at least five cultural groups in and around Tierra del Fuego), which was expanding its domain further south.

From Pigafetta to Darwin explorers “told of its imposing scenery and intricate waterways but gave little except adverse opinion regarding its possibilities as a place to live.”<sup>116</sup> Many travelers shared the same thoughts concerning the land, weaving one negative impression into another. One of them is that of the desert blank, barely eroded by a cartographic expansion that might enable the steppes visual incorporation into the national realm; another is that of the indigenous people, in a north-south axis of imperial gaze, seen as the opposite to Europe’s unicity: polygamous, polytheists, anthropophagite. A third is the assessment of strategic possibilities that the *cursed land* could open for business and colonization; and the fourth, at the core of them all, is that of the abject races

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<sup>113</sup> Darwin, Chapter X. “Tierra del Fuego,” pp.305-306.

<sup>114</sup> As Gillian Beer has expressed: though British nineteenth-century expeditions “were not piratical [...] they were nevertheless an expression of the will to control, categorize, occupy and bring home the prize of samples and of strategic information. Natural history and national future were closely interlocked.” In “Travelling the Other Way: Travel Narratives and Truth Claims.” In Colin McEwan, Luis A. Borrero, and Alfredo Prieto (eds.) 1997. *Patagonia: Natural History, Prehistory and Ethnography at the Uttermost End of the Earth*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 140–52, p.143. The article is also included in the author’s 1996 *Open Fields. Science in Cultural Encounter*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 55-71.

<sup>115</sup> Livon-Grosman, *op.Cit.*, p.77.

<sup>116</sup> George McCutchen McBride. 1936. *Chile: Land and Society*. New York: American Geographical Society, p.342.



whose destiny is to disappear as industrious colonists of European descent are able to reach the uttermost end of the world, waiting to incorporate the wilds of the *Terra Incognita* into the “realm of civilization.” To transition from a state of nomadism to that of settlement and civility, Patagonia would have to become part of an international frontier, which would rid itself of its image as being the savage borderlands of civilization.

Just as the right of British occupation over the Australian continent, “argued from the beginning the fiction of *terra nullius*, that is to say, that the land was unoccupied and didn’t belong to anyone,”<sup>117</sup> Chilean and Argentinean state interest concerning the land that borders the Strait was defined by the interest of putting an end to a dangerous situation for national affairs. In the same way that Falkner moved to the viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata to initiate a timid and frustrated colonization from the north, to prevent English or Portuguese penetration, Chile decided to militarily occupy *terra nullis* so that it would stop France and England from colonizing the area.<sup>118</sup>

According to a broader version, European explorations have moved the Chilean government to undertake the occupation.<sup>119</sup> The southward expansion didn’t take a definitive form until then, at the start of the 1840s, and was constructed upon the fiction that the indigenous, “had no concept of private ownership, did not attempt to convert the land into private property through development, exploitation or settlement and so no property was taken from them or their descendents.” All of it would have been reflected, as Davis and Prescott pointed out in the Australian case, in the presumed inexistence of “territorial boundaries and frontiers between indigenous groups normalized as belonging to a common culture.”<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Mark Harris, “Los australianos y las generaciones ‘robadas’,” *ISTOR* 23 (2005), 13-26, p.13.

<sup>118</sup> Carmen de Patagones, south of the Province of Buenos Aires and over the Río Negro, was first established as a fort in 1779. The only meridional attempt of occupation since Sarmiento’s foundations in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was at San Julián, 1780, and was precariously maintained for three years.

<sup>119</sup> See Diego Barros Arana, “La fundación de una colonia chilena en el Estrecho de Magallanes en 1843 (I),” *El Ferrocarril*, 26.12.1899; Aguirre, *op.Cit.*, chapters IV y V; Martinic, *Historia de la Región Magallánica*, Tomo II, *op.Cit.*, pp.397-408.

<sup>120</sup> S.L. Davis. and J.R.V. Prescott. 1992. *Aboriginal Frontiers and Boundaries*. Malaysia: Melbourne University Press, p.1.

It was only at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the image of the cursed Patagonia began to lose ground in favor of that other image, in which it was presented as land of promise. Crucial roles in redefining the dominant ideas associated with the Patagonia were obviously, exploration, fiscal subsidies and settlements. The publication of Captain Musters' book in 1870, narrating the first "white" longitudinal crossing of the "no man's land," radically changed stereotypes built on Patagonia's topics. Commenting on an article summarizing Munster's book in the *Revue Scientifique*, *The New York Times* wrote in 1873 that Patagonia, "is by no means the desert and rocky country it has always been supposed to be, but, a fertile land."<sup>121</sup> That the Patagonians were actually three different races with different languages and, tall as they were, they were not giants. Up to then, however, there was no cartographic visualization of the interior; likewise, for Tierra del Fuego there was not either until the 1880s.

According to Facchinetti, Jensen and Zaffrani, the image of Patagonia as promised land emerged from the combination of frequently repeated topics from the narrative of travelers and government officials which viewed it successively as cursed land, land of fantasy and chimera and, finally, as a field open to igniting the spirit of progress.<sup>122</sup> A progress marked by reasons of the State and capitalist productivity. For historian Ernesto Bohoslavsky, on the other hand, three successive and independent images dominated the Argentinean State thinking on the southern regions of the Río Negro: the cursed Patagonia, Progress Patagonia and Energy Patagonia. The first image, as we have said, originated with Pigafetta and is characterized by an exotism born of ignorance, concerning a territory where nonetheless all settlement attempts resulted in tragedy. After this long lasting image, the first change would occur, in the late 1870s, where the official colonializing presence took shape from the bordering conflict. Extended until 1910 or 1920 it would highlight, "the saga of the military and the first settlers," and has constructed the dominant interpretive discourse of Patagonian historiography. Lastly, after the discovery of oil fields off the northern coast of

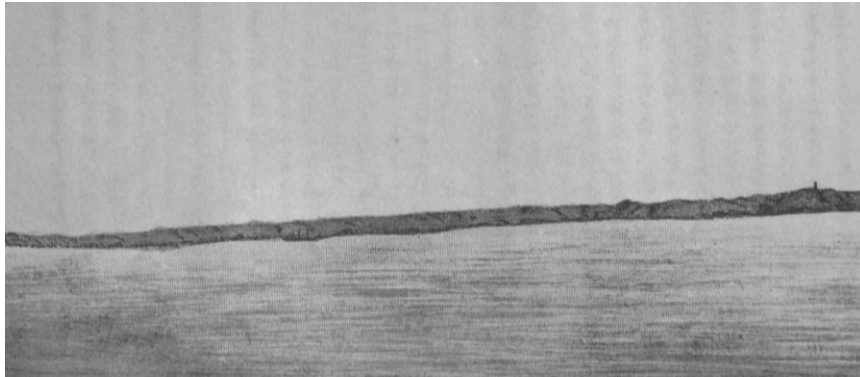
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<sup>121</sup> "The Patagonians," *New York Times*, 28.06.1873, p. 4

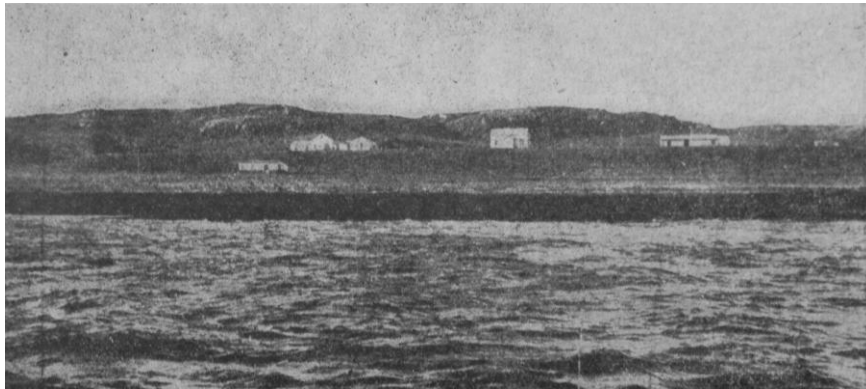
<sup>122</sup> Facchinetti, Graciela; Jensen, Silvina; Zaffrani, Teresita (1997). *Patagonia: Historia, Discurso e Imaginario Social*. Temuco: Universidad de la Frontera, p.120.

Santa Cruz and the south of Chubut, the idea of the Patagonia as a source of, “key resources for the economy, the autarky and the military security of the country” gained strength and would appear throughout the twentieth century.<sup>123</sup>

**Figure 3. Puerto Deseado according to a drawing (1882)<sup>124</sup>.**



**Figure 4. Puerto Deseado in a picture (c.1911)<sup>125</sup>**



The *uncontrollable advance of civilization* over the desert and barbarism showed scant progress on the Atlantic coast. Between Magallane’s visit in 1520 and the Argentinean nationalist Nicanor Larraín at the beginning of the 1880s little had changed:

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<sup>123</sup> Bohoslavsky, “Historia y representaciones de la Patagonia (sobre la factibilidad del complot), in *El Complot*, *op.Cit.*, pp. 29-56, quote on p. 30.

<sup>124</sup> “Vista de Tower-Rock, Puerto Deseado,” in Nicanor Larraín. 1883. *Viajes en el Villarino a la Costa Sud de la República Arjentina*. Buenos Aires, Imprenta de Juan Alsina.

<sup>125</sup> “Puerto Deseado hace 25 años,” in S. Cuaniscú. y A. Planas, colaborador fotográfico. 1936 c. *Santa Cruz. Somera historia de su conquista por la civilización. Estado actual. Descripción física. Histórica. Ganadera. Industrial. Comercial y social. Gráficos y estadísticas*. Territorio Nacional de Santa Cruz, p.291. A great description of the early colonization in the area in Carlos Burmeister. 1900. *Puerto Deseado, Informe sobre las tierras de este punto de la costa del territorio de Santa Cruz y acerca del lugar más aparente para la fundación de un pueblo en él*. Buenos Aires: La Nación.

on the land there were few settlements; Tehuelches were captured on both occasions. Pretension and promise, the national imagination has tended to maintain the crossing over of different representational topics that have been brought up about the southern territory. The demographic vacuum, the cursed and virgin territory and the ample experiential possibilities, much like the horizon, tend to prevail seen from the distance.

This Progress Patagonia, or Promise Patagonia, began to take shape as the State, advancing in a movement that followed the paths opened from the south by explorers and settlers, and advanced from the north with the ‘white raids’, from J.A. Roca and Cornelio Saavedra from Argentina and Chile, respectively. This permitted them to go gradually drawing demarcations and taking on peculiarities inside that immense mass of land situated at the ends of the earth, by necessity excluded from Spanish settlement policies, and the national states because of incapacity or disinterest. By the mid nineteenth century, however, maps continued representing

“the totality of the Patagonia, western and eastern, as a different country perfectly differentiated from the adjoining countries [...] being the accepted opinion that the regions situated at the south of Río Negro until Cape Horn, between both oceans, constituted a vast territory, in large part inhospitable, populated only by a few barbaric indigenous tribes and over which neither nation exercised sovereignty.”<sup>126</sup>

### **Marching sovereignties: Chile and Argentina about the Patagonia.**

“Since emerged from the midst of time, born to Geography and History thanks to the discovery of the Portuguese seafarer, Patagonia has been linked to Chile and Chile to Patagonia”  
Mateo Martinic, 1962<sup>127</sup>

“I have amply reproduced the Kings resolutions [...] and those from the authorities of the viceroyalty, to not let doubt take hold over the indisputable

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<sup>126</sup> Mateo Martinic. 1963. *Presencia de Chile en la Patagonia Austral, 1843-1879*. Santiago: Andrés Bello, pp.28-29.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

right to the Patagonia and southern lands on the part of the Buenos Aires government. It flatters me to have secured this right in the most conclusive manner” Vicente Quesada, 1875<sup>128</sup>

In 1936, a book written by George McCutchen from The American Geographical Society Research Series, said that the Chilean province of Magallanes “appears to continue to be the wild frontier that it has been for four centuries.”<sup>129</sup> Although the State had been present in the area for about one hundred years, there was something that remained exposed in the barely inhabited far south. That exposure was considered a potential threat by the geographer, as we will see in the next section, and he urged the Government “to foster this settlement, if for no other reason than to protect its sovereignty there.”<sup>130</sup> The same recommendation has been made consistently on both sides of the border since 1843 and it has been termed crucial for the decision making process regarding the land development of the States.

Preceding the infamous ‘Conquest of the Desert’ and the introduction of sheep into southern Patagonia by almost four decades, Chile initiated the military occupation of the Strait of Magellan in 1843.<sup>131</sup> The mission was entrusted by President Bulnes to the Governor of Chiloé and resulted in the formation of an expedition to the island for which a schooner was to be built and its crew recruited. Governor Espiñeira demanded “prudential conduct and good sense” from Captain Juan Guillemos by way of his ten-point “Instructions”<sup>132</sup>. He was

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<sup>128</sup> Vicente Quesada. 1875. *La Patagonia y las tierras australes del continente americano*. Buenos Aires: Imprenta y Librerías de Mayo, 1875, p.289.

<sup>129</sup> McCutchen, *Chile: Land and Society*, *op.Cit.*, pp.339-340. The book was translated and published by Universidad de Chile in 1938, and republished by ICIRA in 1970. It argued that access to land, through agrarian reform, was crucial for implementing a peaceful reform and securing development as the alternative to socialist revolution. See Homer Aschmann. 1972. “George McCutchen McBride, 1876-1971,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 62: 4, 685-688.

<sup>130</sup> McCutchen, *op.Cit.*, p.348.

<sup>131</sup> The concept of military occupation, instead of colonization, was more frequently used by local administrative officials –often military themselves. I.e., Schythe, *op.Cit.*, p.455.

<sup>132</sup> “Instrucciones que a Nombre de S.E. el Presidente de la República de Chile don Manuel Búlness da el Intendente i Comandante General de Armas de la Provincia de Chiloé al Capitán Graduado de Fragata de la Marina Nacional don Juan Guillemos, para que le Sirvan en la Expedición que va á hacer de Superior Orden en la Goleta de Guerra ‘Ancud’ al Estrecho de Magallanes,” reproduced in Nicolás Anrique (ed). 1901. *Diario de la Goleta Ancud al mando del Capitán de Fragata don*

ordered to define ports and channels to provide safe navigation for steamers and to assist in the Government's decisions regarding the establishment of a tugboat line in order to help sailboats cross the Strait. Likewise, he was to study the possible erection of fortifications and keep "the best possible harmony" with Patagonians while studying their number, character, and means of subsistence. Once a fort was built named after the President of the Republic, they would have to take formal possession of the area, while collaborating with the contracted Prussian naturalist Bernhard Philippi to collect as much information as possible about the land and peoples. Keeping a detailed account of the experience, Guillemos would return to Santiago to make reports. A main concern expressed in the instructions was the safety of the colonists in Punta Santa Ana. To prevent mutinies, attacks by 'Patagonians' or starvation, the Governor highlighted the need to maintain "subordination and encourage the distraction of the people by way of enjoyment of their work lives." Likewise, the captain ought to ensure the "security and accommodation" for the settlers by equally distributing the fruits of their labors as "to stimulate them and to promote in them a sense of usefulness as settlers in those regions" without engaging "the Patagonians, neither provoking nor mistreating them, regardless of their number."

Although the "Instructions" ended by stating that return from the Strait should be cancelled in the event of a threat to the military position, they also considered the possibility of a total evacuation if a warship had not arrived by December. In that case, the entire settlement was to be packed up, and a formal declaration of protest submitted specifying that the abandonment of the territory was only to be short term.<sup>133</sup> Once the Instructions were given, however, the Governor realized that something important was missing in the detailed plan: What was to be done in the event that a foreign power were had taken military positions on the Strait? The addenda meticulously described the strategy for taking possession even while retreating. A claim of legitimate possession based

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*Juan Guillemos (1843)*. Santiago: Imp. Barcelona, pp.84-91. The expression was "prudencia i tino."

<sup>133</sup>"Instrucciones..." *op.Cit.*, , pp.88-89, 91.

on the Constitution of 1833 should be established.<sup>134</sup> In order to prevent utilization of the argument that Chile was located east of the Andes, Guillemos was instructed to avoid any use of force and to state (three times) that the country's southern end was Cape Horn. In the event that the foreign occupation(s) was or were produced *after* the erection of the Fort, the same steps should be followed, leaving the flag in place and formally explaining that the withdrawal obeyed their command not to use force, that they were leaving "due to violence, but that the Territory of Magallanes belonged to the Chileans."<sup>135</sup>

Launching the conquest of the extreme south was an uncertain enterprise. Material and human resources were scarce, there were no national hydrographic surveys and only good luck supplied Guillemos with partial charts created by Parker King and FitzRoy. At the same time, the ideas about Patagonians were extremely antiquated and unreliable, and no news came in regarding the presence of other armed forces in the area. Despite this desperate attempt to colonize, the saga of the *Angamos*, a national *lieu du memoire* in of itself, has saturated the Chilean imagination regarding the earlier stages of the occupation. The hereditary fiction of *uti possidetis* would have materialized. As a juridical justification, however, it was but one of the conditions for possibly deciding to occupy. The main motivation, however, was economic and preceded O'Higgins' clairvoyance on his deathbed a year before the Instructions were given to Guillemos. The decisive factor for the occupation of the Strait was the organization of the maritime engine of British worldwide expansion: the Pacific Steam Navigation Company.

Starting in the early 1820s, various projects were proposed for opening a steamer route between Europe, specifically the manufacturing center of Liverpool, and the western coast of South America. The first to actually succeed in introducing steam-vessels in Chile was Lord Thomas Cochrane in 1822. Cochrane, a senior English naval officer, nobleman and a radical in the House of Commons for more than a decade, was convicted of speculation (through rumors

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<sup>134</sup> The Chilean Constitution of 1833 imagined the Cape Horn as the southern end of the State.

<sup>135</sup> Domingo Espiñeira, "Apéndice a la Instrucción que precede," Anrique, *op.Cit.*, 92-93.

of Napoleon's defeat) in the infamous Great Stock Exchange Fraud of 1814. Cochrane retained his seat through the end of 1818, however, and then immediately moved to Chile to work as the organizer of the Chilean Navy by request of Bernardo O'Higgins.<sup>136</sup> His tentative new business, this time with steamers, was a failure.<sup>137</sup> However, it did serve as inspiration for a New Englander, William Wheelwright, who had made a fortune in Guayaquil, Callao and Valparaíso. He had also succeeded in becoming consul of the United States in Ecuador, a move he achieved thanks to the intervention of the General Consul for Peru and Chile, and a key actor in the pro Independence movement, Joel Poinsett.<sup>138</sup>

As historian Roland Duncan has stated, "the crucial turning point" for the organization of a company providing mailing and transportation services for British businessmen in Latin America "was a conference of merchants" in Valparaíso. In June 1835, at the house of one of the richest English traders, Joshua Waddington, Wheelwright presented his proposal to a select group that included the Chilean Government's politician and merchants' leader, Diego Portales, Captain Fitzroy of the H.M.S. *Beagle*, and possibly the young Darwin, too. Then, according to Duncan, "Portales assured the entrepreneur that the Chilean government would give immediate attention to granting the required concessions and guarantees for founding the company."<sup>139</sup> President Prieto also supported the project, as did the official press and a National Congress that swiftly approved privileges for what the same US historian called "methods of

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<sup>136</sup> The fraud was discovered as a rumor of the defeat of Napoleon was propagated, causing bonds to rise. A group of conspicuous politicians led by Cochrane had bought a massive number of bonds the week before and sold them during the rise. Cfr. J.B. Atlay. 1897. *The trial of Lord Cochrane before Lord Ellenborough*. London: Smith, Elder & Co.

<sup>137</sup> Graham, Maria. 1824. *Journal of a residence in Chile, during the year 1822, and a voyage from Chile to Brazil in 1823*. London: John Murray, 172-178.

<sup>138</sup> William Wheelwright. 1843. *Letter to the proprietors of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company*. London, as quoted in Fifer, J. Valerie. 1998. *William Wheelwright (1798-1873). Steamship and railroad pioneer. Early yankee enterprise in the development of South America*. Newburyport: Historical Society of Old Newbury, 35.

<sup>139</sup> Roland Duncan. 1975. "William Wheelwright and Early Steam Navigation in the Pacific 1820-1840," *The Americas*, 32:2, 257-81, p.268. See also Enrique Bunster. 1973. "Los primeros vapores: PSNC." In *Bala en Boca*. Santiago: Del Pacífico.



‘lackadaisical’ Latin legislation.”<sup>140</sup> The Decree of the Chilean Government was signed in August. Its terms were to be almost literally reproduced one year later by Peru and Bolivia, in the License given to Wheelwright by President Santa Cruz. Both countries’ laws included the “exclusive privilege” for steam navigation in “our ports or rivers open to the coastal trade” and the right to be dispatched before any other. Only the few national vessels were excluded from the dispositions.<sup>141</sup>

In the meantime, a number of meetings called by British diplomats brought together British traders until they officially endorsed Wheelwright’s project, recommending it to “Her Majesty’s Government” for special privileges. In supporting their claim, the merchants argued for “the expenses incurred [by Wheelwright...] in procuring the privileges [...] and the great value of those services and privileges to the success of the enterprise.”<sup>142</sup> Not even the war between Chile and the Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation, whose unpopularity led to Portales’ execution in 1837, could stop the formation of the Pacific Steam Navigation Co. In England, Wheelwright faced some resistance, but got support from key figures such as Admiral Fitzroy, Lord Cochrane, Lord Abinger and the royal diplomat Peter Campbell Scarlett.<sup>143</sup> As the entrepreneur’s biographer has stated, “persuasion by PSNC directors in commercial and government circles throughout 1839 achieved the desired effect, and a royal charter was awarded” the

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<sup>140</sup> Duncan, *op.Cit.*, pp.269-270. The members of congressional commissions consigned by Duncan are Mariano Egaña and Juan de Dios Vial (senators) and Joaquín Tocornal, Francisco Javier Riesco y Angel María Prieto (deputies).

<sup>141</sup> See “Copy of a Decree of the Chilean Government in favor of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, projected by Mr. William Wheelwright,” 25.08.1835, and “Copy of the License of the Gov of the North and South Peruvian states to Mr. William Wheelwright, granting his or his representatives and exclusive privilege, for ten years, to navigate the coasts and ports thereof, with vessels propelled by steam or any other mechanical power,” 13.09.1836. Compilation identified as [Laws. IV. Separate Laws] *Copy of a Decree of the Chilean Government in favor of the “Pacific Steam-Navigation-Company.* Lima?, 1835, at the British Library.

<sup>142</sup> “Report of the Committee appointed, by a public meeting of British Merchants and Residents at Lima and Callao, to inquire into the expediency and practicability of establishing a periodical intercourse, between Great Britain and the Western Coast of South America, via Panama,” 5.09.1836, in 1836. *Documents relating to the Steam Navigation in the Pacific.* Lima: Printed by Josep Masias.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, Frederick Alcock. 1903. *Trade and Travel in South America.* London: George Philip & Son, pp.13-14, 370-371.

next year. It granted thereby both a subvention and a monopoly.<sup>144</sup> In November 1842, the Foreign Office's official John Bidwell wrote to John Walpole, one of his representatives in Chile, that it would be great to have logistic support at the Strait of Magellan. Over which, he explained, Chile had juridical rights that had to be materialized. If not, he argued, "it will not have any right to give any person any kind of privilege."<sup>145</sup>

Legal privileges had already been granted and, in 1840, William Wheelwright's Pacific Steam Navigation Company's first two steamers arrived in Valparaíso and Callao from England, via the Strait of Magellan. They were named *Chile* and *Peru*, and constituted the basis upon which the world's greatest maritime company was built. Contrary to the claims of official historiography, Chilean occupation was due to the development of steam navigation (Wheelwright's project) and not because of O'Higgins ideas or as a reaction against a possible European occupation.

Indeed, O'Higgins was dealing with another steam navigation project, but British officers presented it to him only after Wheelwright's. Presumably, he was to lobby for it with President Bulnes, his fellow conservative (*pelucón*).<sup>146</sup> The Executive, meanwhile, did secure the conditions for the creation of the company, and in the following decades the State expanded privileges and granted subventions for the routes of the PSNC.<sup>147</sup>

The occupation of the Strait of Magellan resulted from the global expansion of capital. It simultaneously manifested the high seas imperial impulse and the liberal assault on indigenous lands. Well beyond the colonial frontiers, the nation state started defining its territory by appealing to juridical definitions never before enforced and relying on imperial capital. The occupation's immediate goal

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<sup>144</sup> Fifer, *op.Cit.*, 44.

<sup>145</sup> Letter of John Bidwell to the second consul, John Walpole, 14.11.1842, in Foreign Office 16 v.47, as reproduced in Patricio Estellé. 1974. "Documentos Inéditos Referidos a la Ocupación Chilena del Estrecho de Magallanes," *Anales del Instituto de la Patagonia* V: 54-58, p.54.

<sup>146</sup> Ricardo Donoso. 1934. "Don Bernardo O'Higgins y el Estrecho de Magallanes," *Revista Chilena de Historia y geografía* 82, 302-303; correspondence between Captain John Smith and B. O'Higgins, in Aguirre, *op.Cit.*, 284-302; Cfr. Barros, *op.Cit.*, pp.108-109, and Martinic, *Historia de la Región*, Tomo II, pp. 414-424.

<sup>147</sup> The central role played by state subventions in Patagonia's colonization is further developed in chapter 3.

was to keep the State informed as it considered the viability of establishing a line of tugboats to support the steamers' crossings of the Straits, a shorter and safer route than Cape Horn. Indeed, as was explained by President Bulnes in his Message to the Congress in 1844: the decision was taken in the interest of commerce and contact with progressive Europe, a model for the elites. Only secondarily did the rhetoric of the "white man burden" appear, an appeal for missions to civilize the inhabitants of Patagonia. Bulnes did not even mention the necessity of asserting sovereignty as part of the nationalist drive.<sup>148</sup> In 1856, when the Colony of Magallanes was just an expensive little hamlet, the Minister of the Interior expressed that "the line of steamers through the Strait will ever be a matter of life and death,"<sup>149</sup> an opinion shared by his successor Urmeneta in 1859.<sup>150</sup> The tugboat company, however, because of the indifference of the PSNC, did not prosper until 1867, when it initiated its subsidized services calling at Punta Arenas once a month.<sup>151</sup> Chile pursued its colonial project more decisively, pursuing the opportunities for direct commerce between the extreme south and Liverpool, by granting privileges to European immigrants interested in settling in Magallanes.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> N.N. 1899. *El pasado republicano de Chile o sea Colección de Discursos pronunciados por los Presidentes de la República ante el Congreso Nacional al Inaugurar cada año el Período Legislativo. 1832-1900*. Tomo I. Concepción: Imprenta de El País, pp. 135-136. Bulnes expressed he had acted "persuaded of the advantages the expedite navigation of the Strait of Magellan, animating and multiplying this Republic maritime Communications with the best part [la parte más considerable] of the Globe, the Government had wanted to tempt the possibility of the colonization [...to make easier] the enterprise of steam tugs. A few months from now will give us the results of this first essay, which, if positive, as the antecedents we have now announced, will become a germ of population and civilization in countries that appeared as to have rejected them forever."

<sup>149</sup> Department of the Interior (Chile). 1856. *Memoria que el Ministro de Estado en el Departamento del Interior presenta al Congreso Nacional de 1856*. Santiago: Imp. de la Sociedad, p. 18.

<sup>150</sup> Department of the Interior (Chile). 1859. *Memoria que el Ministro de Estado en el Departamento del Interior presenta al Congreso Nacional de 1859*. Santiago: Imp. Nacional, p.34-35.

<sup>151</sup> Department of the Interior (Chile). 1864. *Memoria que el Ministro de Estado en el departamento del Interior presenta al Congreso Nacional de 1864*. Santiago: Imprenta Nacional, p.34.

<sup>152</sup> Department of the Interior (Chile). 2.12.1867. "Decree of the Chilean Government encouraging emigration to the colony of Magallanes on the Straits of Magellan." A version in Castillian was published as "Colonia de Magallanes" in José Antonio Varas' 1872. *Colonización de Llanquihue, Valdivia i Arauco, o sea, colección de las leyes i decretos supremos concernientes a esta materia*,

Misery in the enclave was to endure for quite some time, however. Upon his arrival in 1857, Fort Bulnes' Governor, José Mardones, commented: "there is absolutely not even that smallest possible reason that can justify why they conveniently decided to put the Colony here."<sup>153</sup> After a fire destroyed most of the wooden houses and in light of the overpopulation problem, he decided to move the settlement. A more central position on the northern coast of the Strait was chosen. A small number of Chilotes had already settled themselves in the area, where fresh water was available.<sup>154</sup> In 1851, though, the post was destroyed in the Motín de Cambiazo.

In Chile, a civil war confronted the liberal provinces and Santiago which was dominated by conservative merchants. Violent outbreaks were led by prisoners and soldiers in areas that punished - Vicuña Mackenna would say- some as equally as others, that horrified civilized people and that went to extremes that even the most vicious members of the army didn't usually resort to.<sup>155</sup> According to the Marine Minister, this "frightening echo of revolutionary passions" was carried out on a "meritorious governor," a priest, the captain of a captured North American ship, the "miserable natives" and dozens of other people who were tortured and dismembered, their bodies left hanging, abandoned and burned.<sup>156</sup> The flight by land and sea of more than 200 rioters made the news much more dramatic and upon their capture the ringleaders were tried, executed and quartered in Valparaiso<sup>157</sup>. The deserters were exiled, in the same boats they had fled in, to

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*desde 1823 a 1871 inclusive. Publicada por orden del Señor Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores Don Adolfo Ibáñez. Imp. de la República: Santiago, pp.68-72.*

<sup>153</sup> Governor José Mardones to Intendente de Chiloé, 12.04.1857, quoted in Martinic, Tomo II, p.462. The reference does not allow one to locate the source.

<sup>154</sup> AMI (Chile), Vol.219, quoted in Sergio Vergara. 1973. *Economía y Sociedad en Magallanes, 1843-1877*. Santiago, Universidad de Chile, p.26.

<sup>155</sup> Benjamín Vicuña. *Cambiasso. Relación de los acontecimientos i de los crímenes de Magallanes en 1851 escrita con numerosos documentos inéditos*, Santiago: Imp. de la Librería del Mercurio, quoted in Manuel Vicuña. 2008. "El bestiario del historiador: las biografías de 'Monstruos' de Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna y la identidad liberal como un bien en disputa," *Historia* 41: 1, 189-214, p.192.

<sup>156</sup> Vicuña. *Cambiasso. Relación de los acontecimientos i de los crímenes de Magallanes en 1851 escrita con numerosos documentos inéditos*, Santiago: Imp. de la Librería del Mercurio, quoted in Manuel Vicuña. 2008. "El bestiario del historiador: las biografías de 'Monstruos' de Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna y la identidad liberal como un bien en disputa," *Historia* 41: 1, 189-214, p.192

<sup>157</sup> On Cambiasso's Mutiny see C.H. Brown. 1854. *Insurrection at Magellan. Narrative of the imprisonment and escape of... from the Chilean convicts*. Boston; Robustiano Vera. 1897. *La*

the island of Juan Fernández. They re-inaugurated the island, along with the defeated from the War of 1851, as a prison for criminal and political offences committed by independists, youngsters and liberals.<sup>158</sup> The first missionary expedition to southern Tierra del Fuego met another tragic end. A party of six led by Allan Gardiner, founder of the Patagonian Missionary Society (PMS) in Brighton, died of starvation and scurvy. The PMS then transferred its base to the Falklands and resumed its work with the Yagans, Selkams and Haush in a new Mission in Ushuaia on the Beagle Channel. The port was to be occupied by Argentina in 1884.

Adding to the disrepute of Patagonia, the only colony south of 43<sup>rd</sup> parallel began reconstruction - in spite of the execution of the new Governor by a Tehuelche group – and the Government attempted to accelerate the population of the colony by underplaying its status as a prison and publicizing a judicial stature for a still unfamiliar geographical territory. An 1852 law created the province of Arauco made up of Mapuche territory that would only be occupied by Chileans two decades later and facilitated the Government in colonizing Magallanes, setting it up to report directly to the President of the Republic by way of a Governor.<sup>159</sup> Thereafter Punta Arenas continued to receive a large number of prisoners although it was no longer considered a “penal colony” and defined itself as “dedicated entirely to promoting colonization.”<sup>160</sup> At the same time, the Governor was ordered to strengthen ties with the natives “to find friends amongst them who can serve as supporters of the colony” and “to establish commercial relationships with the *Islas Malvinas* (Falkland Islands)” to attract settlers and

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*Colonia de Magallanes i Tierra del Fuego (1843 a 1897)*. Santiago: Imp. de la Gaceta, pp. 39-70; Vicuña, *op.Cit.*; Armando Braun. 1971. *Cambiazos. El último pirata de Estrecho*. Buenos Aires: Francisco de Aguirre.

<sup>158</sup> Memoria del Ministro de Marina (Chile), 1853, reproduced in Zorrilla, *op.Cit.*, Tomo I, pp.81-85, p.84. The penal colony functioned for at least seven periods between the decades of 1770 y 1930.

<sup>159</sup> Law of 2.7.1852, in FMRE, ANH. Vol. 86. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. Colonización y Civilización de Indígenas. (Notas y Decretos), 1852-1855, s/f.

<sup>160</sup> Decreto Supremo 8.7.1853, in FMRE, ANH. Vol. 86, *op.Cit.*

capital.<sup>161</sup> Although the Government passed legislation to promote colonization, presenting offers which at least on paper looked attractive, Punta Arenas continued to be an encampment in “deserted and useless regions” and “without contact with the civilized world,” as Governor Schyte indicated in 1854.<sup>162</sup> However, the consensus was that despite difficulties “the occupation of the Magallanes Territory could not be withdrawn without putting the country's honor in jeopardy and risking untimely disagreements with other nations.”<sup>163</sup> Or as Minister Varas would come to say in 1856: although this colony “promises little for now,” it is “no longer possible to retreat.”<sup>164</sup> As will be demonstrated in greater detail in the following section, hope was placed on the influence of the *best European races* attracted with “liberal” policies of fostering immigration.<sup>165</sup> These timid efforts were in vain until the 1870s when Chile passed legislation favoring the return of the PSNC to the Strait.

In 1869, the Colony was declared a “minor port” and a “free port.”<sup>166</sup> The first measure was taken to facilitate the work of the Company’s steam ships, recognizing a port which was more imaginary than real and creating a local customs office which reported to Valparaiso not without obvious problems with communication and contraband. The second measure attempted to regulate, with the State's support, a factual situation: tax-free admission of products by the State and private parties to which no tax would be applied for decades. The absence of a Customs, which would go on for five decades, was a key element in turning Magallanes into a sort of economic capital for Southern Patagonia, an entry port

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<sup>161</sup> Note N°30, Ministry of Foreign Relations Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores Antonio Varas to Governor of Magallanes, 29.11.1852, in *Ibid.*, s/f; Note N°49, MinRex Varas to Governor, 12.12.1852, pp.16.

<sup>162</sup> Jorge Schyte. 1855. “El Territorio de Magallanes y su Colonización,” *Anales de la Universidad de Chile*, pp.446, 456.

<sup>163</sup> Schyte, *op.Cit.*, p.475.

<sup>164</sup> Department of the Interior (Chile). 1856. *Memoria que el Ministro de Estado en el Departamento del Interior presenta al Congreso Nacional de 1856*. Santiago: Imp. de la Sociedad, p. 18.

<sup>165</sup> Department of the Interior (Chile). 1859. *Memoria que el Ministro de Estado en el Departamento del Interior presenta al Congreso Nacional de 1859*. Santiago: Imp. Nacional, p.34-35; Schyte, *op.Cit.*, pp.459-470, 474-475.

<sup>166</sup> Decrees reproduced in Ernesto Fernández, *Magallanes desde el Ayer*, pp.110-111.

for people, products and money.<sup>167</sup> When the Customs were eliminated from the Southern Argentina ports in 1899, its effect was minimal over the short term.<sup>168</sup> More than an autarchic region, as Patagonia has been called by a series of researchers beginning with Martinic (a sort of old, semi-mythical geographic entity called ‘Magallania’), Chile’s and Argentina’s possessions in Patagonia took on “the virtual nature of tributary colonies” in “a productive British imperial scheme” – as the same author has suggested.<sup>169</sup> At the same time as it was integrated into that circuit, it was - for the nations that fought to consolidate its geographic sovereignty as a remote exclave - separate from the land effectively known and controlled by the State.<sup>170</sup>

The early 1870s brought about a radical transformation in the possibilities of colonization. First, the commitment of the Chilean State increased by way of the first relatively successful attempts to attract immigrants. The population grew threefold between 1865 (some 200 inhabitants) and 1870, the number of colonists surpassed for the first time the number of soldiers, government employees and exiled.<sup>171</sup> The latter had reinitiated the flow to the south interrupted in 1851 due to the “need to free up space in a penitentiary system that had become too full,” and gave preference to “those who had committed military crimes and the most serious common crimes.”<sup>172</sup> For this reason, a new rebellion was on the verge of an outbreak in 1866, and a new mutiny made up of artillerymen and prisoners

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<sup>167</sup> See chapters 3 and 4.

<sup>168</sup> José María Sarobe. 1935. *La Patagonia y sus problemas. Estudio geográfico, económico, político y social de los Territorios Nacionales del Sur, con un prólogo del Doctor Ezequiel Ramos Mexia*. Buenos Aires: Aniceto López, p.100.

<sup>169</sup> Mateo Martinic. 1992. *Historia de la Región Magallánica*. Punta Arenas: UMAG, p.797, cit. en Bascope, J. 2008. “Pasajeros del Poder Propietario. La Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego y la Biopolítica Estanciera (1890-1920),” *Magallania* 36:2, 19-44, p.21. A wider discussion of these considerations in chapter 3.

<sup>170</sup> The notion of “exclave” was first suggested to me by Anna Karpenko, while she was working on her doctoral research on the successive Russian, German and Soviet position of Kaliningrad/Koeningsberg.

<sup>171</sup> Martinic, *Historia de la Región... op.Cit.*, p.562. According to the author, the number of soldiers and bureaucrats reached up to 170, including their families. The relegates and their families were 150. The number of individuals belonging to families with some sort of entitlement as colonists was 322.

<sup>172</sup> MinRex to Gov. of Magallanes, 07.09.1866, N° 41, s/p.

caused the Colony's partial destruction in 1877.<sup>173</sup> The increase in population slowed down around 1885 after an explosive increase due to the signing of the 1881 Treaty and the onset of gold prospecting and livestock operations: Between the years of 1885 and 1895, the population went from 2100 to 5200 and ten years later tripled to 18,000 in 1907.<sup>174</sup>

Paying no attention to the racist recommendations laid out by the Ministers and several of the Colony's Governors, the highest local authority offered incentives to attract Chileans from Chiloé in 1868. The archipelago where colonization of the Strait started, which reported directly to the Viceroyalty of Peru and later on was the southern royalist's last stronghold, was able to provide manual labor under a plan which favored the settlement. The first "shipment" of 240 colonists arrived with the Governor in 1868 of which two thirds had signed up from Ancud.<sup>175</sup> This repopulation of Punta Arenas was thereby carried out in the same way as that of Fort Bulnes, on a foundation of Chilote workers. However, although the Governor initially attributed them with having changed the colony's appearance, soon he was saying that "they have been the worst people [...] and, as it is the unfortunate custom of our poor people not to concern themselves with tomorrow, they have accomplished nothing over this period of time."<sup>176</sup> Perhaps with less marked prejudice, a traveler, Munster, said at the same time that they "are the most industrious portion of the population: the men are hard working, but also hard drinking."<sup>177</sup> Marked by prejudice, labor and, as the entire region, by alcohol consumption, the "Chilote Problem" defined Patagonia's

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<sup>173</sup> On the so-called Motín de los Artilleros see D. Dublé Almeida. 1878. *Los sucesos de Magallanes. Contestación del ex-Gobernador Señor Diego Dublé Almeida a la vista del Fiscal del Capitán Don Juan Felix Urcullu*. Valparaíso: Del Deber, and J.J Latorre. c.1890. "Diario de la corbeta de la República 'Magallanes', llevado por su comandante," *Anuario Hidrográfico de la Armada*, Vol. VII.

<sup>174</sup> Navarro, Lautaro. 1907-1908. *Censo Jeneral de Poblacion i Edificacion, Ganaderia i Minería del Territorio de Magallanes, Republica de Chile, levantado por acuerdo de la Comision de Alcaldes el día 8 de Setiembre de 1906. Pasado i presente del Territorio de Magallanes*. Punta Arenas: El Magallanes, Tomo I, p.12.

<sup>175</sup> Martinic, *Historia de la región*, p.561.

<sup>176</sup> Memoria del Gobernador Viel, quoted in Martinic, *Historia de la Región...*, p.570, as "Memoria Administrativa 1868-1871," *Gobierno de la Colonia de Magallanes. Correspondencia años 1868 a 1872*, Archivo Nacional" (n.18, p.748).

<sup>177</sup> Musters, p.9.



social characteristics.<sup>178</sup>

Until then, familiarity with the interior of Patagonia had not prospered except when expeditions were sent out from the Colony of Punta Arenas in search of soldiers who had deserted and fugitive prisoners who were searching for the Atlantic Coast confident that they would be able to board ships or find refuge amongst the Tehuelche until they were able to make the trip to Buenos Aires.<sup>179</sup> The territory's lands remained *terra incognita* aside from news of commerce provided by the Aonikenk (known as *Patagones* to the whites and *Tehuelches* to the Mapuche), which was the main economic activity until the beginning of the 1880s. Commerce between these new occupants and the original settlers gave rise to *baqueanos*, indigenous “cowboys” who explored the pampas and would later become guides for official State explorations of the territory.<sup>180</sup>

One of the most important expeditions, in fact the first non-indigenous expedition to cross the “desert,” took place in 1869. Captain Musters traveled across Patagonia, departing from Punta Arenas and heading towards Santa Cruz, under the guidance of a party sent “in pursuit of some runaways from among the deserters who were serving their sentence”<sup>181</sup> and aiming to make it to Rio Negro. The expedition would thus unite for the first time three of four ‘white’ settlements south of the former, the last being a Welsh settlement in Chubut. After Musters’ first encounters with Tehuelche encampments, his group found the convicts near the Argentinean outpost of Santa Cruz. This “settlement,” owned by the honorary Captain of the Argentinean Navy, Luis Piedrabuena, consisted of three houses and

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<sup>178</sup> See Alberto Harambour, “Racialización desde afuera, etnicización hacia adentro. Clase y región en el movimiento obrero de la Patagonia, principios del siglo XX.” In Rafael Gaune y Martín Lara (eds.). 2009. *Historias de Racismo y Discriminación en Chile*. Santiago: Uqbar, 369-394.

<sup>179</sup> Mateo Martinic. 1978. “Exploraciones y colonización en la Región Central Magallánica 1853-1920,” *Anales del Instituto de la Patagonia* 9, 5-42, pp.8-9.

<sup>180</sup> The figure of the *baqueano* is further analyzed in chapter 5. One of the key characters was Augusto Guillaume, who took part in a number of explorations from 1870 to 1900, including ones with a French miner looking for nitrates, plus those of Lista and Moyano, Beerbohm and Dixie. Guillaume restarted his life as a colonist in Punta Arenas, according to some versions after Fleming the repression that followed the Paris Comune, and then moved to making “the common life of the indians,” which later turned into one of the first *estancieros* in Santa Cruz, 1886. See Florence Dixie. 1880 *Across Patagonia*. London: Ricgard Bentley & Son (2a ed. NY with *illustrations from sketches by Julius Beerbohm*).

<sup>181</sup> George Musters. 1871. *At Home with the Patagonians. A Years Wanderings Over Untrodden Ground from the Straits of Magellan to the Rio Negro*. London: John Murray, p.6,

was “only a depot” for Indian trading on the small island of Pavón<sup>182</sup>. The trader had been occupying positions in Cape Horn, Pavón and San Gregorio, where he had pursued exchanges with the Tehuelches and whaling boats since 1859. In Punta Arenas, meanwhile, he was the owner of a small shop which in practical terms operated as a monopoly through its contacts with the Tehuelches and in the Malvinas, Santa Cruz and Punta Arenas<sup>183</sup>.

**Figure 5. Colonel George Muster’s Patagonia (1871).**



Musters’ expedition crossed the Southern Pampa moving in a northeast direction between Punta Arenas and the port of Santa

<sup>182</sup> George Musters. 1871. “A Year in Patagonia,” *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 41, 59-77, p.62.

<sup>183</sup> Riobó, *op.Cit.*, pp.11-13; ARMIN (Chile), Vol.404, 14.01.1865, quoted in Vergara, *op.Cit.*, p.43.

Cruz before entering the mountains along the Chico River. The territory that was explored during this expedition, along with that immediately to the north and that along the coast nearby (the interior regions of San Julián and Puerto Deseado), would be the first to be settled with ranches and regulated by Argentinean laws until 1903.

By 1878, Santa Cruz consisted of a few buildings maintained by 47 “tireless settlers capable of founding future Patagonian provinces” according to the memoirs of Argentinean Minister of the Interior, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento. The following year, Chile's war with Bolivia and Peru began as did Argentina's with the small towns in Northern Patagonia. Meanwhile, the existence of this southern port was announced as well as the fact that it was "fortified" and commanded by an official "who represents the Government's authority and is in custody of the Argentinean flag which covers those territories"<sup>184</sup>. Up until that time, the territory had effectively reached from Punta Arenas “over a discontinuous strip of coastal land [...] measuring not even 50 kilometers”<sup>185</sup> in the same way that the establishment of Argentina did not divert from the Atlantic Coast. The southeastern islands of Tierra del Fuego were frequented by sea lion hunters and only one permanent structure had been erected on Ushuaia Bay. Tierra del Fuego was to remain a “Mission Field” up to the turn of the century<sup>186</sup>.

The competing sovereignties found a new legal point of departure in 1881 when the Treaty between Argentina and Chile was signed. Amidst the backdrop of the consolidation of *porteño* unification in Argentina and the War of the Pacific, advances into Buenos Aires' southern frontier recommenced in 1878 with the creation of the *Gobernación de Patagonia* (Patagonian Provincial Government) – Law 954, 11.10.1878, a reformulation of 1874's Law 686, for

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<sup>184</sup> Ministerio del Interior (Argentina). 1878. Memoria presentada por el Ministro Secretario de Estado en el Departamento del Interior al Honorable Congreso Nacional en 1878. Buenos Aires: De La Tribuna, pp. XXXVI-XXXVIII.

<sup>185</sup> Martinic, Tomo II, p.577.

<sup>186</sup> “Tierra del Fuego as a Mission Field,” *Mission Life*, Vol. VIII (1877), pp. 3-6. Transc. T.Brown, in Project Canterbury, [http://anglicanhistory.org/sa/tierra\\_mission1877.html](http://anglicanhistory.org/sa/tierra_mission1877.html)

Chaco<sup>187</sup>. Situated on the Rio Negro, its jurisdiction reached the end of the continent and, therefore, was another expression of territorial desire. It was a reiteration of colonial will instead of true knowledge about what it meant to control the “desert.” In fact, Governor Alvaro Barros’ first annual report indicated that because “consistent communication with the settlements of Chubut and Santa Cruz is impossible through an extensive, unexplored desert with little water,” the army explorers had concentrated on the immediate area, though still being able to visualize a plan to advance over the imagined south. From Carmen de Patagones,

“will emanate the colonization from a place already rich in resources and [...] submitting the desert to the man, obligating it to become the instrument for the occupation of the southernmost lands. In this way, colonization would reach Santa Cruz and connect this chain of towns, they would serve as a mutual guarantee and their establishments would form a close-knit network without which administration is very difficult and security very precarious.”

In the Coronel’s imagination, the menace of depopulation would depend of the execution of certain tasks. Cultivating agricultural crops on a large scale was “impossible” and in order for ranchers to make use of the land it implied “depriving oneself voluntarily of the benefits of groups of inhabitants”<sup>188</sup>. Despite the warnings, however, the occupation plan did not propose a single possibility regarding what to do about the well-established provinces once the Pampa’s indigenous threat was eliminated. The so-called “Conquest of the Desert,” a foundational epic of the oligarchic Argentinean nation State, developed in 1878 from a negative starting point (the other, monolithic other which allowed the nation to be constructed “as a collective entity that would inhabit the “national territory” and “transform the space into a ‘homeland’.”<sup>189</sup> In this way, when Roca took over for Alsina as Avellaneda’s Powerful Minister, the defensive strategy of digging a barrier on the Pampas (“the Patagonian Trench”) was replaced with an offensive advance from the north over the Pampa, Pehuenches and Tehuelches.

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<sup>187</sup> Juan González (comp.). 2005. *Policía de Santa Cruz*. Buenos Aires: Ámbito Policial, 22.

<sup>188</sup> Report of the Governor of Patagonia Álvaro Barros, in *Memoria del Ministerio del Interior correspondiente al año 1880 (Presentada al) H. Congreso en 1881 por el Ministro del Ramo D. Antonio Del Viso*. 1881, Buenos Aires: Imprenta Especial de Obras, 701.

<sup>189</sup> Walter Delrio. 2005. *Memorias de expropiación: sometimiento e incorporación indígena en la Patagonia (1872-1943)*. Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, p.19.

This movement, however, would not get even remotely close to reaching the commercial settlement on the Santa Cruz River.

Between 1879 and 1885, the 'Campaign of the Desert' fulfilled Sarmiento's desire to finish the work of the *still unfinished* European conquest occurring from Australia to Africa, passing through Asia and Africa, where "strong races exterminate the weak, civilized peoples supplant property from the savages."<sup>190</sup> The Campaign of the Desert, as the final stage of the Spanish Conquest (notably analyzed by David Viñas), strengthens Buenos Aires, destroying the so-called internal frontier and opening up thousands of hectares to landholding speculation, fulfilling the dreams of the liberals between 1837 and 1880, of converting Southern Argentina from the realm of barbarity to that of the capitalist civilization. As a metropolitan traveler would indicate in 1883, "My only objective [...] is to become familiar with the Southern regions [...] and show eager, commercial speculators the sources of wealth available that require only Capital and Work to produce profits of one hundred to one."<sup>191</sup> In this way, Northern Patagonia's indigenous genocide implied effectively creating a desert, emptying it by deporting its population to work in domestic service or agriculture in the north, and bestow upon the Nation an extensive source of benefits (shown in the Military Donations Law) and income (shown by the conversion of indigenous land to national land). The military campaigns, however, which barely penetrated into Chubut in 1883-1884, had nothing to do with the occupation of this other immense space made up of Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego. One can speak of at least two Patagonias: a northern one made up of the future territories of La Pampa, Neuquén and Río Negro with influence over Chubut; and a southern one made up of the areas subject to the influence of the Strait of Magellan.

On the Chilean side, the drive to fill the jurisdictional power vacuum in Araucanía was accompanied by a push to improve the country's negotiating power with its neighboring country and to expand agricultural lands in the south

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<sup>190</sup> Domingo Sarmiento, *Obras Completas, Tomo II*, p.214, quoted in Viñas, *op.Cit.*, pp.64-65.

<sup>191</sup> Nicanor Larraín. 1883. *Viajes en el Villarino a la Costa Sud de la República Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Imprenta de Juan Alsina, p.36.

by way of a plan for them to be colonized by foreigners. This would allow the National Census, circa 1907, to show that the Mapuche if not *extinguished* had at least "ceased to be a strong entity, the nation with definite "borders" that it was up to a quarter century ago"<sup>192</sup>. However, those territories were not considered 'Patagonian.' Only colonization of Magallanes y Tierra del Fuego would receive that distinction in Chile, even though, central to the diplomatic dispute with Argentina, the name 'Patagonia' was used for the first time in Chilean documents around 1870. Until then, it was common to indicate that Patagonia was Argentina, a long extension of Buenos Aires' sovereignty.<sup>193</sup> That which was in dispute was the precise definition of the territories to the east and west of the Andes Mountains, a natural jurisdictional border recognized by the *uti possidetis* of 1810. This legal fiction operated on multiple dimensions. First, regarding the claim to existing territorial rights in 1810, they were just formal, they either hadn't been defined in material terms or they were stuck in jurisdictional limbos whose increasing numbers had heartily sustained government officials and historians. Second, the mountains united, not separated large commercial areas, from southern Buenos Aires to Valdivia, Concepción and even Santiago. This trade substantially stimulated the economy of the Pampa, Tehuelche, Picunche and Mapuche peoples, and fed native settlers in Chile and Río de la Plata with beef and horse meat<sup>194</sup>. Thirdly, the mountain range 'ended' at an undefined point in Patagonia, making it difficult to distinguish how its appearance on land should coincide with its definition of national borders. In summary, in the Strait and Tierra del Fuego there had been no permanent Spanish presence, nor had there

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<sup>192</sup> Censo General de la República de Chile, 1907, p.XXIII, quoted in Leonardo León. 2007. "Tradición y Modernidad. Vida cotidiana en la Araucanía (1900-1935)," *Historia* 40: 21, 333-378, p.335.

<sup>193</sup> Vicente Quesada. 1875. *La Patagonia y las tierras australes del continente americano*. Buenos Aires: Imprenta y Librerías de Mayo.

<sup>194</sup> The economic interactions in the Mapuche-Chilean frontier have been widely researched since the 1960s. Classic texts are those by Sergio Villalobos, *Relaciones fronterizas en la Araucanía*. Santiago: P. Universidad Católica de Chile, and his 1995. *Vida Fronteriza en la Araucanía: el Mito de la Guerra de Arauco*. Santiago: Andrés Bello. Villalobos's central proposition privileged exchanges while downplaying confrontation and cross-Andean social relations, understanding the lack of open war as absence of violence. These aspects were further developed by authors as Susana Bandieri, Jorge Pinto, Leonardo León, Luis Carreño, Walter Delrio, Gladis Varela and Carla Manara.

been fluid commercial interchange between the indigenous people and the formal countries in which they lived. The Andes did not function as a divider, nor were there fixed indigenous borders.

Nonetheless, both nations made aggressive efforts to secure territorial sovereignty continued aggressively in the 1870s and, in fact, they each positioned themselves in areas that later on would come to be defined as the jurisdiction of the other. A key factor in this dispute was the granting of exploration licenses and land concessions although the diplomatic resolution did not occur until 1881. That year's Treaty indicated the demarcation at the 52 parallel south, the highest peaks which divide the waters. This led to the formation of many expert commissions because the demarcations did not necessarily coincide with points at which water flowed either toward the Pacific or toward the Atlantic. From the 52nd parallel towards the south, an arbitrary and fictional border was drawn: a straight line that ran from the eastern mouth of the Strait to the Beagle Channel, dividing the large island of Tierra del Fuego in two. This meant authorizing an exit to the Atlantic for Chile from the Isla Grande and one to the Pacific for Argentina in the Última Esperanza Region. This resurfaced a century later when, in 1979, the conflict reignited, this time regarding possession of the Beagle Channel's islands. The military governments on both sides of this *frontier without mountains* were at the brink of declaring war against one another.

The signing of the 1881 Treaty, occurred during a time of 'vulnerability' for Chile (an economic crisis due to the War of the Pacific) and the strengthening of Argentina (lessening unity of the provincial sovereignties and an end of the expansion towards the south) led to the creation of at least seven new pacts, treaties and protocols over the following twenty years. Until then, both countries had been entwined in a frenetic arms race which expressed itself fundamentally in obligatory military service laws and military acquisitions that ranked their respective warship fleets amongst the ten most powerful in the world.<sup>195</sup> Not even the *Abrazo del Estrecho* which was the Presidents' first visit to the area and a

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<sup>195</sup> George Rauch. 1999. *Conflict in the Southern Cone: the Argentine military and the boundary dispute with Chile, 1870-1902*. Westport: Praeger; Lacoste, "De la Paz Armada a los Pactos de Mayo," in Lacoste, *op.Cit.*, pp.295-335.

meeting, dissipated entirely the ghost of the military confrontation. This would not go away until 1902 with the signing of the *Acuerdos de Mayo* (May Agreements) in Santiago which put a stop to territorial expansion and military acquisitions, and with King Edward VII of Great Britain's arbitration rulings. In this way, Argentina reaffirmed its control of 'Patagonia' while Chile did the same with the lands towards the interior from the Strait, securing "a vast amount of fine forest land and highlands in Patagonia well adapted for raising sheep." With the king's verdict, C.R. Markham commented to the Royal Geographical Society of London, "the two countries are to be congratulated for the settlement of a dispute that had become prejudicial to their business interests."<sup>196</sup>

Indeed, the immediate effects of the conflict's resolution between 1881 and 1902 were the consolidation of the sovereignty of sheep and large-scale landholdings, the depopulation caused by the extermination and marginalization of the indigenous people and the installation of large farming companies based on British capital. The territorial sovereignty that the Nations fought to establish was followed by a new conquest of the desert, this time by the flocks of sheep that were beginning to transform the legal fictions into real settlements. Contrary to territorial nationalistic ideas, sheep, as an instrument of occupation, were introduced by British ranchers from the *Islas Malvinas* and thanks to privileges bestowed by the States. Occupied by England since 1833, the Falklands provided local high-ranking government officials with a source capable of supplementing capital, livestock and colonists scarcities. This movement was started in 1876 by Magallanes' Governor Diego Dublé Almeida, and was followed five years later by the first Governor of Santa Cruz, Carlos María Moyano, who met Ethel Turner, niece of the British Governor, in the Falklands. She went on to become his wife.

Sheep livestock purchases produced a change in the competition between states from one of a diplomatic to one of an economic nature, but always sustained by the state initiative and the state spending. Once the sheep came off

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<sup>196</sup> C.R. Markham. 1903. "The Boundary between Chile and Argentina," *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* 35:1, 69-70, p.69.



the boat, free land proceeded to be granted and the animals were sold at low cost, even though the borders had not yet been established. For this reason, the British colonists on the Falklands rejected Dublé's offers before 1881 and accepted those of Moyano four years later – whose were also met with success by agents and merchants in Punta Arenas. In fact, the 1881 Treaty required the Chilean Government to "modify its policies regarding land" because "interest has been stirred in our neighboring country Argentina"<sup>197</sup>. With this background, the Punta Arenas ranchers widely protested against "our (Pig) Governor," Sampaio (1880-1888).<sup>198</sup> He had imposed previously inexistent land rental rates. At the same time, he requested that a Customs office be installed, a payment for rights to exploit forests and hunt sea lions, strengthening of colonization with Chilean laborers and the establishment of a penal colony in Tierra de Fuego or Dawson Island<sup>199</sup>. In any case, Sampaio's protectionism - according to someone who would soon be one of the owners of Patagonia, Mortiz Braun - basically consisted of "charging a fee of a few cents for each hide that was exported and asking the Government to suspend the hunting of sea lions [...] for a while in order to prevent their extinction."<sup>200</sup> In any case, the first ranchers began to contact influential politicians in Santiago. Removal of this governor, the only one who sought regulatory policies, was not achieved until 1888. In the meanwhile, however, the first regulation of land titles happened during the auctions of 1884. According to Braun, a new era began which would be called the "Malvinera Invasion." This not only affected animals, it was a disembarkation "of sheep, as well as ranchers, shepherds, foremen, sheepshearers and even sheep dogs, of Scottish decent of course. For a long time dogs would not understand commands unless they were shouted in English."<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Mauricio Braun. Explicación preliminar, notas y epílogo de A. Braun Menéndez. 1985. *Mauricio Braun. Memorias de una Vida Colmada*. Buenos Aires: Autoedición, p.78.

<sup>198</sup> Letter from Juan Bitsch to Manzano, Santa Cruz, 20.08.1885. In Manuel Bitsch (recop.). 1995. *Cartas del abuelo [Juan Bitsch]*. Tomo I. Manuscrito inédito.

<sup>199</sup> Lorenzo Massa. 1945. *Monografía de Magallanes. Sesenta años de acción Salesiana en el Sur – 1886-1946. Recuerdo del Noveno Congreso Eucarístico Nacional de Magallanes. 6 al 10 de Febrero de 1846*. Punta Arenas: Escuela Tipográfica Instituto Don Bosco, p.106.

<sup>200</sup> Braun, *op.Cit.*, p.76.

<sup>201</sup> Braun, *op.Cit.*, pp.78-79.

Meanwhile on the Chilean side geography continued to be explored and an occupation “limited to the coast” began to extend into the interior with the lease of lands “whose exact locations remained unclear” until 1896<sup>202</sup>. Lafuente suggested that in the case of Santa Cruz, “the current of colonization *originates* in the *Islas Malvinas*, whose inhabitants [...Moyano] offer at no cost all the land they wish to populate.”<sup>203</sup> Even still an English traveler indicated in 1901 that Patagonia was “practically a *terra incognita*,” and that the port of Santa Cruz was “nothing more than a military post and a forwarding station” of 200 inhabitants, where “if one may judge by appearances, they ‘must eke out a precarious existence by taking in each other’s washing’; for when I was there I could see no other trace of any sort of business, and I think I have scarcely ever seen so lazy and dismal a place.”<sup>204</sup> Therefore, although the Treaty of 1881 internationally legitimized the presence of Chile and Argentina in Patagonia, it lessened both sides’ fear of the risk of a landing of British colonists. This was summarized by Marrion Wilcox in 1910 with the following formula: “The number of shepherds employed steadily decreases as the holdings called *estancias* increase in size”<sup>205</sup>. At the same time, the Treaty fostered the grazing economy while the promise for populating the territory vanished in its own dialectic. This trend continued through the midcentury.

The same depopulation phenomenon occurred to even a stronger degree in Tierra del Fuego. Defining the border resulted in the acceleration of colonization attempts in both countries although their establishment never got beyond good intentions with the exception of Ushuaia. Between 1880 and 1920 numerous towns and ports were founded, but none of them attracted settlers. Argentina restored Ushuaia’s sovereignty in 1884 – lowering the flag at the Patagonian Missionary Society. Between 1885 and 1890, all of the land on the Chilean side most suitable for raising livestock was sold to three companies funded with British capital. In the Argentinean area, something similar happened between

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<sup>202</sup> Horacio Lafuente. 1974. *Santa Cruz, realidad y futuro*. Buenos Aires: Cuadernos Eudeba, p.20. El subrayado es nuestro.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> W.O. Campbell. 1901. *Through Patagonia*. London: Bickers and Son, pp.V, 68, 70.

<sup>205</sup> Wilcox, *op.Cit*, p.828.

1899 and 1902, although a dozen mid-size ranches survived in the areas of Ushuaia and Río Negro. The Selknam, however, did not survive. Their population, depending on which study you consult, was between 3000 and 5000 in 1870, but had been completely exterminated or eradicated by 1920.<sup>206</sup> As Argentinean Militant José Sarobe would denounce in 1935: “if, over the next century, the same demographic progress of the whites registered today continues, in 2034 Tierra del Fuego will have the same population as it had one hundred and fifty years ago when it was occupied by natives.”<sup>207</sup> Meanwhile, during this period of initial population the number of sheep in Argentinean Tierra del Fuego went from just over 7,000 in 1895 to 843,339 in 1930.<sup>208</sup> The fall in human population was even more marked in terms of women. As a frontier, the defining characteristics of the working force were that they were single, immigrant and foreign.

## **Conclusions.**

Even when conditions had changed substantially, the elite of the Southern Cone attempted to maintain their pre-Independence territorial heritage. The provincial sovereignties' problem was resolved in favor of the elites residing in the national capitals. The centralization process meant first, subordination to a superior and exclusive sovereignty and, second, territorial expansion towards the neighboring countryside and territories occupied by “inferior races.” The later, once again, was as much a colonial inheritance as it was an imitation of the imperial ideology of the State model, carried out by an oligarchy characterized by its desire to imitate. The “frontier impulse” was a mirror image of the imperial impulse, and they were both acted out on lands which were not “integrated” but rather their own colonies. It is not possible to call the national closure of “empty

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<sup>206</sup> Martin Gusinde. 1937 [1986] *Los Indios de Tierra del Fuego. Resultado de mis cuatro expediciones en los años 1918 hasta 1924, organizadas bajo los auspicios del Ministerio de Instrucción Pública de Chile. Tomo I. Los Selknam. De la vida y del mundo espiritual de un pueblo de cazadores.* Buenos Aires: CEAEA, pp.134-135.

<sup>207</sup> Sarobe, *op.Cit.*, p.28.

<sup>208</sup> Sarobe, *op.Cit.*, p.102.

spaces” and “deserts” as “internal colonialism,” at least not in the nineteenth century, unless one assumes the existence of the territorial fiction that sought to legitimize the expansion of the Republics.

Filled with imperial imagination, the elites used old and magical -or new and scientific- travel narratives to imagine the territory they believed themselves to have inherited. The imagination constructed by the western world fed the ignorance of the national elites and Patagonia as well as the *Patagones* suffered the expansion which meant being considered part of the State’s territory. Despite the nationalist fervor of politicians, diplomats, historians and journalists that placed the marginality of the extreme south at the center of a competition between neighboring States, the national settlements in Patagonia never were much more than miserable exclaves that painstakingly survived thanks to business with the Tehuelches and ships in transit. During the 1880s, when Chile and Argentina competed for the land by granting colonization rights and subsidizing it to European settlers, there was still no exploration or cartography that had significantly penetrated the “desert.” Therefore, the States’ sovereignties moved forward at a snail’s pace, in contrast to all settler discourses, depopulating and concentrating property.

By 1900 neither customs offices nor drinking water were available in Patagonia and the vast majority of business interchanges -raw wool in exchange any product imaginable, from beans to Worcestershire Sauce, were products that were produced neither in Chile nor Argentina, but rather in England and Germany. From then onward, powerful national discourses began to emerge in the middle class as well as in the oligarchies of Buenos Aires and Santiago, seeking to explain how it could be possible that colonization efforts carried out by the governments could have resulted in a territory that continued to be foreign. The same question began to surface in the working class as both a denunciation and a demand. Just as the colonial imagination in the nations’ capitals constructed imaginaries about the territory and the imperial capital’s expansive logic determined the ways in which sheep, the land and businesses were cultivated, so,

too, postcolonial colonization found that in the recently acquired territories, the dogs, ranchers and natives of Patagonia understood English better than Spanish.

## **Chapter 2: Colonial Fictions, National Frustrations. Penal, Administrative and Racial Policies in Southern Patagonia, 1840s-1910.**

Postcolonial, or republican colonialism, operates upon the continuity of colonial/imperial structures and ideologies re-enacted by independent national institutions. Those legacies range from jurisdictional fantasies to ethno/national/racial hierarchies. They were expressed through the actions of the Latin American states since their very inception in the 1810's. The occupation of southern Patagonia followed the will of modern economic expansion, attempting to replicate the fiction of *uti possidetis* (the Spanish colonial jurisdictional claims), and the actual reach of the central States. The framework assumed, in addition to territorial absorption, extension into the racial hierarchies of previously independent indigenous peoples. Located at the bottom of the Western racial scales, the assimilation of so-called Patagonians and Fuegians was considered impossible and necessitated solutions for repopulating the steppes Darwin epitomized as the 'cursed land'.

The juridical figure both Chile and Argentina utilized for the administration of most of their 'territories of colonization' was that of the National Territory. Mimicking U.S. legislation, the statutes and practices associated with "national territories" were paradoxical. Their paradox is that of the frontier, at once within and beyond reach, moving along the dialectic border of inclusion and exclusion. On the one hand, the frontier highlights the integrality of a region within the jurisdiction of a State; on the other, because of a region's novelty and through its subordination, frontiers are not considered to be national enough. They are frontiers and exist both within and outside of the boundaries of nationality. They are, rather *projectually* national; the (provisory) resolution of a desire. Up until this moment its inhabitants stand on the threshold of nationality, they are subject to a number of duties rather than rights; subjects, rather than

citizens.<sup>209</sup> The Territory is within the sovereignty of the State to the extent that the “white enough” part of it is. But, at the same time, the inhabitants of that space are not allowed to participate within its political community. Stated another way, the State is sovereign over a land and a population considered as national but *still* not an integral part of the nation; the nation is not sovereign. Under the oligarchic framework, the State is the sovereign before it is ‘national’.

The juridical figure does not define a social relationship or an administrative dependency other than to conceive the territory as *being colonized*; neither its codified name nor its intentions aim to regulate the relationship between settlers-subjects. However, in this case, it was made clear to whom the local administration would report. A Governor would be the highest local authority, a government official reporting directly to the President of the Republic. His Excellency, embodiment of the Republic, exercised his power over man and land by way of a type of ministry, subject to change over time. Typically, this destination in the far south was used either as a reward or as a punishment; it almost always opened doors to fortune by way of relatively illicit activity for the official and his circle of friends. At the same time, this ministry’s dependence on the state was also a sign of the geopolitical redefinition of borders made by the State over time.

That which the National Territory’s administrative component encompasses should be understood as a colonial statute: the inhabitants are subject to degraded power. Within the framework of the State’s strategy, they are

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<sup>209</sup> The expression ‘threshold of nationality’, or ‘threshold principle’, is used by Eric Hobsbawm for referring to the requirement, applied to social groupings, of a “certain size to form a viable unit of development” or nation. This certainty is disputable. In Hobsbawm’s *Nations and Nationalisms* it involves a double dimension: as a concept of descriptive properties when studying Western, modern politics of nationality, but *also* as a presumption based on material conditions of the possibility for a nation’s historical viability. In both cases it occludes the high variability of factors intervening in the decision of applying -or not, the principle, by both politicians and social scientists. Etienne Balibar’s threshold of nationality is one of irreversibility in the making of the modern nation-state. As a boundary between simple statality and the superation of kinship by the horizontality of nationality enforced by the State. This is the sense of my usage of it here: as a precondition for vertical assimilation within the imagined community of a state. See Eric Hobsbawm. 1990. *Nations and Nationalisms since 1780. Programme, myth, reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, chapter 1; Etienne Balibar, “The Nation Form,” in Immanuel Wallerstein & Etienne Balibar. 2002 [1988] *Race, Nation, Class, Ambiguous Identities*. London: Verso, 86-106.

subjects-objects without free will.<sup>210</sup> Argentina and Chile, in conflict with one another, assigned little importance to the men and women who populated the territory which the State imagined it had the rights to. In this sense, and as Frederick Cooper confirms, “The colonial situation requires, above all, setting groups of people apart as different, and indicating they are in need of special forms of surveillance and supervision and are unable to participate fully in the projects of modernizing society.”<sup>211</sup> The group of legal fictions which articulated Chile and Argentina’s expansion into Southern Patagonia should also be considered from the following angles: an oligarchic ethos, the colonial, the citizens and as a land which hoped for and promised that it would *become, when it was ready, free of “otherness” and filled with nationality* Until then, it was the settler-state that made history as the territory was incorporated into the central State jurisdiction. And in this way, *history* would begin to be accommodated within ‘national’ borders.

As an ideology and as a state project, postcolonial colonialism is neither clear nor coherent. Quite the opposite, it is made up of many different institutions and mechanisms, expectations and interests which operate, in fact, contradictorily. In spite of this, they are articulated by the coherence the state offers, as an abstraction and as a result which tends towards naturalization. According to Gramsci, it is the State which realized the historical unity of the ruling classes.<sup>212</sup> This duality was consistently evidenced by the limited financial resources made available to the colonial endeavor. Likewise, the same men and women who would help realize the State’s abstraction on the ground were disdained and subordinated. As David Goldberg has stated, State formation is “all about institutionally reproductive homogenization”<sup>213</sup>; it converged classes and national projects to strengthen monopolies: violence, capital, and social boundaries. Since

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<sup>210</sup> The concept of *pornography of the witness* in the suggestive article of Camilla Townsend, “Burying the White Gods: New Perspectives on the Conquest of Mexico,” *AHA 108:3* (June 2003), pp. 659-687. This article provides a notable account of the myth of the invaders’ glorification during the conquest of Mexico.

<sup>211</sup> Cooper, *op.Cit.*, p.26.

<sup>212</sup> Antonio Gramsci, “Notes on Italian History,” in Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Smith (eds.). 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. International Publishers: NY, 44-122, pp.52-53.

<sup>213</sup> David Theo Goldberg. 2002. *The Racial State*. Oxford: Blackwell, p.30.



its very beginning, it was defined as the political subordination of unfamiliar annexed territories and populations. It is deployed by reproducing the oligarchic monopoly that features the period's social relations of production (ranging from the concentration of property to decisions about everyday life) as a National Territory that is State Territory.

Where 'the national' is only a wish that, continuously discovering new *failures* and contaminations in its reproduction, reveals its own inability to make single the multiple, homogeneous the diverse. Internal colonialism, as defined by sociologists Pablo Gonzalez Casanova and Rodolfo Stavenhagen, partially explains the relationship between metropolitan politics and National Territories. The former works by creating economic and cultural monopolies "by means of military, political and administrative dominium," which enforces the inequality of power relations between central and colonial domains.<sup>214</sup> For Stavenhagen, it tends to reproduce original inequality between center and periphery, progressively decapitalizing the region after the peak of primitive accumulation and investment through the transferring of resources towards national and imperial centers<sup>215</sup>. This unequal differential between central and marginal regions of the same country reinforces racial, class, and gender hierarchies resulting in the strengthening of the racial condition. "As much a state or condition of being as it is a state of governance," explains Goldberg, the conquest of enclaves/exclaves reproduces the stality *and* racist practices that the State has at its core<sup>216</sup>.

The colonial state is always a work in progress, achieving coherence as a unique abstraction by *stating*. "States, *state*" and "never stop talking," relay Corrigan and Sayer; and moreover, "the State can never stop speaking itself," as Goldberg says.<sup>217</sup> This chapter examines the ways Chilean and Argentinean metropolitan authorities legally dreamt up the engineering of their colonial expansion and settlement. Envisioning affirmation of sovereignty, the authorities

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<sup>214</sup> González's first statement is based on Gunnar Myrdal. 1959. *Teoría económica y regiones subdesarrolladas*. México: FCE. See Pablo González C., "El colonialismo interno," in 1969. *Sociología de la Explotación*. México: Siglo XXI, 221-250, p.232-234.

<sup>215</sup> Rodolfo Stavenhagen, "Siete tesis equivocadas sobre America Latina," en Stavenhagen. 1981. *Sociología y Subdesarrollo*. México: Nuestro Tiempo, 15-84.

<sup>216</sup> Goldberg, *op.Cit.*, p.98.

<sup>217</sup> Corrigan and Sayer, *op.Ct.*, pp.3-4; Goldberg, *op.Cit.*, p.119.

imagined flourishing, regenerative penal colonies; efficient linkages and honest administration for the colonial outposts. They created institutions and calculated jurisdictions, combining legal faith and secular ignorance; by decree, they promised to realize the modernist utopia of Patagonia entering the realm of civilization. Their dream included occupation by industrious European immigrants, eager to become true Chileans or true Argentines.

By reducing the region's social and geographical complexity to the univocal dictates of statality, the authorities attempted to produce a homogeneous southward extension of their interests. Describing and analyzing the institutional *stating* of Patagonia, I draw a scheme of those policies articulated as "Western" totalizations, in geopolitical reasons and through administrative rationale. The grandiloquence of the provisions shows its naked coloniality in its radical scorn for persons and even geography, as in the abyss between their *Stating* and the precariousness of their local State constructions.

The three sets of provisions I analyze are intermediate connections between the juridical fictions that populated the imaginary of the metropolitan states and, on the other hand, its grounded correlations. Time and time again throughout the second-half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Argentina and Chile envisioned penal, administrative and racial colonization as key devices for *nationalizing* the National Territories. None of these policies followed the imitative tendency of the national elites. All of them faced failure. Despite their practical effects, their long-term diagnosis was one of 'incompleteness', for they reabsorbed the failures forced upon peoples and lands and reproduced the original colonial otherness. Finally, I reflect on the weakness of the States' presence and how unknown the territory remained until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Precariousness and ignorance were demonstrated in long-term attempts to turn Patagonia into what it could never be and to build a local reality that only existed in the State's lasting fantasies.

### **Penal Colonization**

The mechanism by which Chilean and Argentinean colonization in Patagonia originally took place was penal. While Buenos Aires claimed the

projects started in the north as its own, Santiago's government began to settle the northern coast of the Strait of Magellan with soldiers and convicts. Shortly after Fort Bulnes was founded, in 1843, and following the tracks left through the forest by Chilote woodcutters, the decision was made to move the emerging population to an area that was lower and more protected called *Sandy Point* or Punta Arenas. As the Governor José de los Santos Mardones would say upon his arrival at the miserable original location: “There isn’t even the slightest justification for why they would have chosen to start the Colony here.”<sup>218</sup> Towards the end of 1848, penal overpopulation and a fire prompted the occupation of a more central position on the Strait, previously settled by Chilote campesinos who arrived with the schooner *Ancud*<sup>219</sup>. In 1851, while the Civil War in Chile raged between the liberal provinces and a conservative-dominated Santiago, the town of Punta Arenas was destroyed by the so-called *Motín de Cambiaso*. This was a series of violent outbreaks led by prisoners and soldiers in areas directed at - Vicuña Mackenna would say – a variety of people, that horrified the civilized and went to extremes even the most vicious members of the army didn’t usually resort to.<sup>220</sup>

According to the Minister of the Navy, this “frightening echo of revolutionary passions” was carried out on a “meritorious governor,” a priest, the captain of a captured North American ship, the “miserable natives” and dozens of other people who were tortured and dismembered, their bodies left hanging, abandoned and burned<sup>221</sup>. The flight by land and sea of more than 200 rioters made the news much more dramatic and upon their capture the ringleaders were tried, executed and quartered in Valparaíso. The execution ceremony culminated

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<sup>218</sup> Governor José Mardones to Intendente de Chiloé, 12.04.1857, quoted in Martinic, Tomo II, p.462. The source for this reference could not be located.

<sup>219</sup> AMI (Chile), Vol.219, quoted in Sergio Vergara. 1973. *Economía y Sociedad en Magallanes, 1843-1877*. Santiago, Universidad de Chile, p.26.

<sup>220</sup> Benjamín Vicuña. *Cambiaso. Relación de los acontecimientos i de los crímenes de Magallanes en 1851 escrita con numerosos documentos inéditos*, Santiago: Imp. de la Librería del Mercurio, quoted in Manuel Vicuña. 2008. “El bestiario del historiador: las biografías de ‘Monstruos’ de Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna y la identidad liberal como un bien en disputa,” *Historia* 41: 1, 189-214, p.192.

<sup>221</sup> Report of the Ministry of the Navy to the National Congress Congreso Nacional (Chile), 1852, reproduced in Manuel Zorrilla. 1925. *Magallanes en 1925. Obra histórica, geográfica, estadística, comercial e industrial, desde el descubrimiento del Estrecho hasta nuestros días*. Tomo I. Punta Arenas, p.71.

in dismemberment of the bodies.<sup>222</sup> Those who escaped the gallows were deported, in the same ships they had fled in, to Juan Fernandez Island. With this act, Magallanes joined the ranks of another remote place, which combined penal and colonial aspirations. Those defeated in the War of 1851 reopened the prison for the punishment of criminal and political offences committed by independists, youngsters and liberals.<sup>223</sup>

According to the metropolitan authorities, signs of the landscape's devastation seemed to imbue these subjects sent as a guarantee of the sovereignty's claims. As seen in the previous chapter, time and time again they attempted to abandon their occupied position. That same year, 1851, the first missionary expedition in southern Tierra del Fuego met a tragic fate. A party of six led by Allan Gardiner, founder of the Patagonian Missionary Society (PMS) in Brighton, died of starvation and scurvy. A few years later, members of the same organization were killed by Yaghans who had experienced kidnapping and 'civilization' in London. The P.M.S. was thereafter based on the *Malvinas* (Falklands) and worked in matters of trade and religion with Yaghans, Selkams and Haush in their new Mission in Ushuaia. Their flag was to be replaced by the Argentinean one in 1884 when the country managed to realize its southernmost penal project.

Descending from the north and ascending from the south, Argentina's colonization of Patagonia was built on penal colonies. Carmen de Patagones, renamed Viedma once it was designated the first capital of Patagonia's Government in 1879, is located one thousand kilometers south of Buenos Aires. In 1872, the Executive Powers already considered it a key factor in securing the territory, "one of our campaign's towns that we are creating with

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<sup>222</sup> On Cambiaso's Mutiny see C.H. Brown. 1854. *Insurrection at Magellan. Narrative of the imprisonment and escape of... from the Chilean convicts*. Boston; Robustiano Vera. 1897. *La Colonia de Magallanes i Tierra del Fuego (1843 a 1897)*. Santiago: Imp. de la Gaceta, pp. 39-70; Vicuña, *op.Cit.*; Armando Braun. 1971. *Cambiaso. El último pirata de Estrecho*. Buenos Aires: Francisco de Aguirre.

<sup>223</sup> Memoria del Ministro de Marina (Chile), 1853, reproduced in Zorrilla, *op.Cit.*, Tomo I, pp.81-85, p.84. The penal colony functioned for at least seven periods between the decades of 1770 y 1930.

penitentiaries.”<sup>224</sup> More than 2000 kilometers to the south, Ushuaia was thought of as the Argentinean occupation’s beachhead based on a deportation project presented by the then National Senator Nicasio Oroño in 1868.<sup>225</sup> According to Caimiri, the proposal “combined notions of modern punishment, abolition of the death penalty and territorial sovereignty imperatives” which its author defined as indispensable for “maintaining possession of the regions” in dispute with Chile.<sup>226</sup> Three other important public proposals to create prisons in the colony, which did not materialize, were presented by Perito Moreno in 1876 and by the *Oficina Central de Tierras y Colonias* (Central Office of Lands and Colonies) in 1881<sup>227</sup>. According to García Basalo, another project considered sending orphans and problematic children south from Buenos Aires. Whether they were soldiers recruited by force and given no provisions or training, or poor children, or poor prisoners, the move was meant to produce a double healing: on the one hand, the spirits of those transported would be tempered by direct contact with nature, and, on the other hand, the city from which they were expelled would benefit from their absence. In this way, the modern city productively rid itself of disadvantaged, excess people and dangerous elements, transforming punishment into “an introductory population tool for welding remote territories to the main body of the national territory.”<sup>228</sup>

In any one of its variations, the model to follow was that of Great Britain. The deportation of millions of prisoners to the North American Colonies was redirected after their independence in 1776 to the “Australian Desert.” This strategy set a precedent because supposedly it met a triple purpose of casting out

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<sup>224</sup> Caimiri, *Apenas un Delincuente*, p.63. David Day. 2001. *Claiming a continent. A new history of Australia*. Sydney: Harper Collins. I thank Daniel Palma, historian and good friend, who recommended me Caimiri’s work.

<sup>225</sup> Oroño was a prominent politician in the institutionalization of Santa Fe and eventually became its Governor. In 1868 he became a Senator, and one of the leading voices in colonization. In the 1890’s he became the director of the Oficina de Tierras y Colonias.

<sup>226</sup> Nicasio Oroño, cited en García Basalo, J. 1981. *La colonización penal de Tierra del Fuego*. Buenos Aires, Servicio Penitenciario Argentino, p.8.

<sup>227</sup> Francisco Moreno. 1879 [1969]. *Viaje a la Patagonia Austral, 1876-1877*. Buenos Aires, Solar/Hachette, p.158; *La Nación*, Buenos Aires, 19.07.1881, p.1, cited in Basalo, *op.Cit.*, p.9.

<sup>228</sup> Caimiri, *op.Cit.*, p.65.

of society and incorporating into capitalist circuits and the State's authority<sup>229</sup>. As the prestigious journalist Roberto Payró would say in his book *La Australia Argentina*, which includes a prologue by none other than former President Mitre in its first edition of 1898, Southern Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego were similar to this other *Terra Australis* in many ways. Australia and Patagonia were "deserts" far away from metropolitan centers and were populated by "savages" who shared the same destiny of extinction. For this reason, as a penal colony it had the potential to transform the sterile into a *land of progress*. This land, open to expansion by large livestock ranches, would also accommodate workers from around the world, especially those of the "best races."<sup>230</sup> The racial hierarchy of the metropolitan, imperial and national elite put the "northern Europeans" - industrious men from cold countries – at the top and at the bottom the "Fuegians" and "Australians." The meeting of these two extremes of the scale could, however, become dangerous to national sovereignty.

At the beginning of 1883, the lawyer, publicist and school auditor Nicanor Larraín was chosen by the Argentinean Ministry of Foreign Relations to travel to the Patagonian coasts. One of his biggest surprises was an encounter with Tehuelches ("Patagones") who expressed themselves well in English, but did not understand Spanish. In response to his questions, it was explained that the same was true of the Fuegians due to their contact with missions in Ushuaia and Magallanes. A book about the trip, published by Larraín, mentions: "I said to myself, couldn't the same thing happen over time in Tierra del Fuego, where there are English missions, as happened on the Falkland Islands?" It indicated that the best solution would be the construction of a Penal Colony which would encourage Argentina's government and even allow "us to keep an eye on our suspicious neighbors (Chileans) that passed by the northern edge of the Strait."<sup>231</sup> As a result of this order, one small military prison was erected in Puerto Deseado and another

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<sup>229</sup> Caimiri, *Apenas*, p.63; Day, *op.Cit.*, ch. 3-4.

<sup>230</sup> Roberto Payró. 1898. *La Australia Argentina. Excursión periodística á las costas patagónicas, Tierra del Fuego é Isla de los Estados. Con una carta-prólogo del General Bartolomé Mitre*. 2 vols. Buenos Aires: Imp. de La Nación.

<sup>231</sup> Nicanor Larraín. 1883. *Viajes en el Villarino a la Costa Sud de la República Argentina*. Buenos Aires, Imprenta de Juan Alsina, p.54-55.

at the southeastern extreme of the Large Island of Tierra de Fuego.<sup>232</sup> In spite of this, in 1890 “the nation of Argentina in Tierra del Fuego was nothing more than a powerless declaration of principles”<sup>233</sup> along with the British-Yámana coexistence established by Anglican missionaries-become-ranchers, the large Selknam sovereignty and an emerging population of ranchers on the Atlantic Coast, represented during their first stage by the businessman figurehead Julius Popper. The same can be said about the populating capacity of the Puerto Deseado prison for which there were not even written records by 1900, and from which the maritime subprefecture and the State-financed colonists had practically disappeared by 1885.<sup>234</sup> Something similar happened in 1893 with the inauguration of the *Presidio Nacional de Cañadón Misioneros* (Nation Prison of Cañadón Missionaries) that, despite its 80 soldiers, officials and a doctor, held out for only three years. At that point the prisoners were relocated to *Isla de Los Estados* (Island of the States).<sup>235</sup>

Although in discussions about penal colonization projects alternative, free or contracted immigrant colonization costs are rarely mentioned, there is an economic argument for these types of initiatives. The relocation should “regenerate” itself due to its “nature” and also by way of productive trade and subordination to authority. This work should be carried out in set-apart territories which benefit the State not the victim, nor his family; for the State is the creator of the great, and necessary, national family. With this administrative sentence (given that population relocation was a judicially awarded accessory penalty), the Country fed off of a capital gain acquired as territorial sovereignty. In this spirit, the first penal population effort was made in 1884 on the desolate *Isla de los Estados*, an island which inspired Jules Verne to write *The Lighthouse at the End*

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<sup>232</sup> MinInt to Gov. of Santa Cruz, 9.11.1893, “Decreto [del Min. Guerra y Marina] Estableciendo viajes periódicos a las costas del Sud. Buenos Aires. Octubre 13 de 1893,” AHP-FGSC, Exps.127-218, Leg. S/n.

<sup>233</sup> Caimiri, *op.Cit.*, 66.

<sup>234</sup> The State failed to serve the enclave for more than a year in 1882. During this lapse the settlers abandoned the position. Burmeister, *op.Cit.*, p.10; AHP-FGSC, n/n. Governor of Santa Cruz to Min. of the Interior, 17.10.1893.

<sup>235</sup> Álvarez, A. 1970. *Los pueblos santacruceños hasta 1900. Síntesis cronológica y testimonios*. Buenos Aires: Lito, p.70.

*of the World* in 1902. Just as would occur with the Isla Pavón on the Santa Cruz River, the Argentinean State's decision was made based on reports by Luis Piedrabuena - who had received the property title for this unfamiliar place in 1868.

The Military Prison was relocated to Ushuaia due to the scarcity of resources, the difficulties that the distance and climate presented to permanent communications, the brutality of the punishment and the uselessness of colonizing an Antarctic wind-beaten rocky outcropping. Deserters and prisoners convicted of severe military crimes found there a small *Cárcel de Reincidentes* (Prison for Repeat Offenders). As a beachhead for Argentinean occupation in Tierra del Fuego, seat of the Government, it was planned that the prisoners would erect the telegraphic and the road system infrastructure that would connect the former Mission of Río Gallegos, Punta Arenas and Buenos Aires. According to the Governor, this "arrangement of the prisoners" would allow for the development of "public works of general and immediate interest to the Territory."<sup>236</sup> When the prison at Isla de los Estados began to be demolished, a tragic population flight took place. Officers from both the Argentinean and Chilean armed forces attempted to stop it.<sup>237</sup> The violence that was used revived in colonial authorities the ghosts of the mutinies of 1851 and 1877. It was understood as the inherent bad luck that befell prisoners and soldiers time and time again, bastions of national strength.<sup>238</sup>

For the same reason, Argentina quickly constructed a world of cement, a progressive material and design. The *Presidio* (Prison) and *Cárcel de Reincidentes* (Prison for Repeat Offenders) in Ushuaia was considered an historical tragedy until it was closed by Perón in 1947, although it was reopened briefly during a Coup that overthrew him in 1955. By 1908, the Presidio already had 150 prisoners who carried out works which today entertain tourists:

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<sup>236</sup> AGN-MI. 1898. 16, 3510-T. Gobernador TF a ministros de Marina y Justicia. 23.12.1899; AGN-MI. 1898, 16, 3545-T. Gobernador TF a Ministro del Interior, 26.12.1899.

<sup>237</sup> ANH-FGM, Vol. 35. Ministerio de Colonización, 1902-1903. Minister of Foreign Relations to the Governor of Magallanes, 16.1.1903.

<sup>238</sup> A journalist's account of the 1902 jailbreak which shows the metropolitan elites' extreme imagination regarding the damned southern territories, in Alfredo Becerra. 1999. *Los prófugos de la isla de los Estados, según diarios de la época*. Buenos Aires: Caja Editora.



expansion of the prison and port, development of roads and the raising of telegraph cables – acts which were defined as “the extreme economic and administrative wishes of this territory.”<sup>239</sup> This forced labor allowed the State to “economize” and for this same reason Tierra del Fuego’s Governor attempted, permanently, to insure the continual flow of workers. In 1908, for example, he protested to the Ministry of the Interior the decrease in number of military convicts, “because of the recruiting measures and the Military Penal Code reform that no longer punishes with jail time the crime of desertion, where once hundreds were transported to the *Isla de los Estados* today we count only fifty two”<sup>240</sup>.

Because of its architectural design, its anthropometric cabinet, and its grandiloquent projects of moral reform, Ushuaia was, in Caimiri’s words, “a bright lighthouse of punitive modernity at the end of the world.” Effectively, the prisoners razed the railroad and new cells, “cleaned” the forest, erecting telegraph lines in places the elite imagined as providing pure healthy contact with cold nature. As the distance between the north (where the inhabitants came from) and the south (where the indigenous population had been expelled) was insurmountable, “the wall between the prison and Ushuaia became exceptionally porous”<sup>241</sup> – just as Western Australia had experienced. At the jail for repeat offenders, Ushuaia fundamentally housed criminals who had committed property crimes, although there were also some convicted of brutal crimes and some political prisoners, from anarchists to radicals. Given that the sentences of the former were generally very short, it wasn’t unusual for them to finish them aboard “national transport” which carried them out of Buenos Aires, from which they disembarked ‘free’ - essentially prisoners outside of the walls of a jail and beyond the reach of the State. Without family, social networks or work, Ushuaia’s “freedman” formed a notorious if not large segment of the immigrant population. They embodied the ghost of transgression as the uprooted scattered over the land

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<sup>239</sup> AGN-MI, 1908. 17. 3663-T. Gobernador TF a MININT, 1.7.1908. To see a critique of penitentiary tourism, see “Museo del Fin del Mundo,” [www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/suplementos/turismo/9-1308-2008-06-11.html](http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/suplementos/turismo/9-1308-2008-06-11.html) y Saccomanno, Guillermo, “En la Colonia Penitenciaria,” [www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/suplementos/radar/9-48822008-10-19.html](http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/suplementos/radar/9-48822008-10-19.html) (acc.11.11.2011)

<sup>240</sup> AGN-MI, 1908. 17. 3663-T. Gobernador TF a MININT, 1.7.1908.

<sup>241</sup> Caimiri, *op.Cit.*, pp.67-68.

and sea as *permanent* nomads. With time, the press and authorities would start to call them “new Indians” an age-old sign of a migrating threat to stable settlements, property and the State.

Due to outbreaks of violence, a permanent scarcity of resources, and the inconsistent flow of prisoners and contact between the capital and the peripheral colony, a policy of penitentiary sovereignty had little effect on the population. It produced neither a moral healing due to contact with nature, nor a cleaning up of the city by way of the expulsion of convicts. Quite the opposite, the construction of military prisons and penal colonies caused in the prisoners and guards the brutal effects of having been uprooted which were expressed in mutinies. While in Punta Arenas, the Chilean presence was only established once the Penal Colony ended, in Ushuaia’s case the Argentinean penal policy is directly related to permanent settlement. In 1943, the nationalist writer Francisco Suáiter indicated that in Ushuaia “life revolves around the prison and in turn the Government.” That is to say that it was financed by the flow of resources from the State to the colony.<sup>242</sup> The State’s jurisdiction there was “extensive but imaginary,” in the words of the rector of the Universidad de Buenos Aires, a writer and military radical confined in 1934.<sup>243</sup> During the 20th century, the presence would continue to expand, due always to subsidies and tributary tax exemptions offered to large-scale landholders. Despite its infamous and brutal penal history, Ushuaia has transformed, in the last two decades, into an important tourist destination. One of its main attractions is the *Panóptico* (the Penitentiary), now transformed into a Museum.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> Francisco Suáiter. 1943. *Los Territorios*. Buenos Aires, Instituto Joaquín V. González., p.310.

<sup>243</sup> Cited in Suáiter, p.311. Roja’s testimonial was first published in 1947 as *Archipiélago. Tierra del Fuego*, by Losada.

<sup>244</sup> The journalistic and testimonial literature about the horrors of the Ushuaia jail is extensive and was started early on by the anarchist press. Some of the classic texts are Juvenal. (c.1893). *'Ushuaia' y 'Rosetti'. Recuerdos de una prisión*. Montevideo; Payró, *op.Cit.*; Casa Editora M. Rodríguez; A. Del Rié (1933). *Ushuaia. El presidio siniestro. Régimen de Terror. Relaciones de un reporter*. Buenos Aires, Editorial Boston; Rojas, R. (1934). *Archipiélago. Tierra del Fuego*. Buenos Aires: Losada. Critiques of the museographic frivolity of the Ushuaia Jail can be seen in Saccomanno, *op.Cit.*, y Argemí, Raul, “Ushuaia: la cárcel del fin del mundo,” *Cerdos & Peces* 52 (Mayo 1997), 34-36.

## Legal-Administrative Colonization.

Argentina's Territorios Nacionales (National Territory) had a legal system which allowed for the creation of "a platform from which the State could act liberally and use its transforming and homogenizing power," as Martha Ruffini indicated in a recent work focusing on the roles that these territories played in the construction of the national State. In this way, the vacuum was converted into cartography under the auspices of the *Instituto Geográfico Argentino* (Argentinean Geographic Institute) which was formed in 1879 under the direction of Estanislao Zeballos, a powerful landowning oligarchy. He was a xenophobic and ultra-nationalistic diplomat and the narrator of *La Conquista de 15.000 leguas* (The Conquest of 15,000 Leagues) in 1878.<sup>245</sup>

From that moment on, "the cartographical plates' chronological sequence" would mirror the "process of territorial advancement towards the south: Río Negro's is from 1886; Neuquén's, 1889; Chubut's, also 1889; Santa Cruz's, 1892; and Tierra del Fuego and *Islas Malvinas*', 1893"<sup>246</sup>. This strengthened the National Executive Power politically and financially, disturbing the balance among the provinces in its own favor.<sup>247</sup> An 1862 law, called "Nationalization of the Land," established that "all existing territories outside of the limits or possession of the provinces are national, even if they have been alienated" since 1853<sup>248</sup>. Upon this basis, the National Territory of Chaco was temporarily organized in 1872, the first to be regulated until national norms were established for the illusory Government of Patagonia, created in October of 1878 only days after the *Campaña del Desierto* (Desert Campaign) was approved.<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> Marta Ruffini. 2007. *La pervivencia de la República posible en los territorios nacionales. Poder y ciudadanía en Río Negro*. Buenos Aires, Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, p.23,

<sup>246</sup> Carla Lois 2007. "La Patagonia en el mapa de la Argentina moderna. Política y 'deseo territorial' en la cartografía oficial argentina en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX." *Paisajes del progreso. La resignificación de la Patagonia Norte, 1880-1916*. P. Navarro Floria. Neuquén: UNC: 107-134, p.130.

<sup>247</sup> One of the main economic arguments was that "the fiscal incomes [...], because they were national and belonged to the common treasury, were distributed to the entire country, except to the towns in which they were generated."

<sup>248</sup> León Rebollo. 1974. "Reseña histórica de la legislación sobre Territorios Nacionales." *Segundo Congreso de Historia Argentina y Regional. Celebrado en Comodoro Rivadavia del 12 al 15 de enero de 1973*. Buenos Aires, Academia Nacional de la Historia. Tomo III, pp. 83-95.

<sup>249</sup> Rebollo, *op. Cit.*, p.88. Law 947, of Conquest, transcribed in pp. 89-91.

At the head of this Government (the largest in Argentina's history) was Coronel Álvaro Barros, former Governor of Buenos Aires and a prolific occupation propagandist. He knew little about the legal norms that governed his jurisdiction and the geographic and social characteristics of his territory however<sup>250</sup>. Due to the State's ignorance about the territory it occupied, the Government of Patagonia only lasted 5 years<sup>251</sup>. In 1884 it was dissolved by National Territory Law 1532 which managed nine "territories" in the "desert" and maintained vigilance for six decades with few reforms.<sup>252</sup> In 1879, however, Barros introduced a legal instrument that was critical to the consolidation of Argentinean sovereignty: maritime subdelegations. Officer Carlos María Moyano, based on Isla Pavón, was the first subdelegate for the Santa Cruz River. As we have seen, the area consisted only of the meager Piedrabuena factory, the remnants of pioneer Rouquand's (1872-1874) failed business and Minister Avellaneda's colony (1878).<sup>253</sup> Another way the occupation was strengthened was with the creation of an Immigration Office which, along with the Subdelegate, would create propaganda, seek candidates from the colony and assign them land, and keep the public books. In practical terms, Roca's decree was another defeat to the colonial imagination: the office never came to fruition and the only person who remained on the site for some years was the Army's former Lieutenant. A March 1881 decree had the same result. It was authorized by the Ministry of the

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<sup>250</sup> AGN-FMI. 1879.3. S/N°. Alvaro Barros, Gob. Patagonia, a J.A. Roca, Min. Guerra y Marina, 9.11.1878.

<sup>251</sup> The transitional nature of this Government has been studied in detail, primarily with regard to its judicial aspects by Ruffini, *La Pervivencia... op.Cit.*, Chapter V, "La penetración estatal en el sur: La Gobernación de la Patagonia (1878-1884)."

<sup>252</sup> The Law was enacted on October 10, 1884. A tenth National Territory was created in 1900, that of Los Andes which existed until 1943 when it was divided amongst the provinces of Jujuy, Salta and Catamarca. The transformation of the NTs into provinces with all rights was the work of Perón. It began in 1951 with La Pampa and Chaco, continued with Misiones in 1953, and ended with the appeal of Law 1532 in 1954 and the provincialisation of the rest in 1955. In the case of Tierra del Fuego, its provincialization was reverted in 1957, creating the new National Territory of Tierra del Fuego, Antarctica and Islas del Sur – in a new demonstration of colonizing will over the unknown.

<sup>253</sup> Juan José González (recop.) 2005. *Policía de Santa Cruz. Reseña Histórica. Homenaje 121º Aniversario. 1884-2005*. Buenos Aires: Ámbito Policial.

Interior to recruit the Argentinean families of army veterans living in Patagonia in order to establish public financing.<sup>254</sup>

It wasn't until after the border conflict was resolved with Chile in 1881 and the National Territories Law was pronounced "based on the North American ordinance of July 13, 1787," that colonization gained strength<sup>255</sup> As Radical Senator Cooke indicated in 1939, "Once the border dispute was resolved, reconciliation was sought between the inalienable, essential and intangible dominion rights and the reality of possession," by way of assignment of properties.<sup>256</sup> The legislation passed specifically for the internal colonies – a statute that would be cited time and time again in critique of its economic delays and in forming identity – sought effective administration of the territory which would be implemented under the direct supervision of the authority of the Executive Power by way of the President and the Ministry of the Interior. Thereafter, precise jurisdictional borders were assigned –in the extreme south they followed the imaginary lines parallel to the unresolved border with Chile and the Atlantic Coast. In this way they also created powerful local authorities who reported directly to the Capital and the political rights of the inhabitants were firmly established. These measures would be in effect until the Territory would "come of age" with 60,000 inhabitants. Then subordination would turn into full rights, within the framework of a National Province included into the federal regime of the *República Posible* proclaimed in 1853. Meanwhile, and for sixty years, two thirds of Argentina's surface was built up, according to Martha Ruffini, into "a Unitarian appendix in an allegedly Federal country."<sup>257</sup> Under this colonial model, the highest local representatives of the Nation were the Executive and Judicial Powers. The Governor was designated the "supreme local authority" by

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<sup>254</sup> Supreme Decrees numbers 11.1.1880, creating the Comisaría de Inmigración, and 23.3.1881, authorizing financing of the colonies, in González, *op.Cit.*, pp.22-23.

<sup>255</sup> González, *op.Cit.* A noteworthy summary of the projects and discussions mentioned and the assumptions that motivated the creation of Law 1532 in Ruffini, *La pervivencia de la República Posible... op.Cit.*, capítulos I y II.

<sup>256</sup> Cooke, Juan Isaac. (1939). *Hay que Argentinizar la Patagonia: Ferrocarriles, Irrigación y Agua Potable: un Proyecto de Ley y sus Fundamentos*. Buenos Aires, p.16.

<sup>257</sup> Ruffini, Martha. 2007. "Federalismo y Ciudadanía Política en la mirada de los juristas argentinos sobre los Territorios Nacionales," *Nordeste*, nº 26, 3-22, p.5.

the President and for periods of three years, as commander in chief of all the armed forces (army, national guard and police), was responsible for concentrating on missions and "indigenous tribes," and establishing regulations for the "safety, administration and fostering" of the "colonization's development." In addition to a governor, two authorities were appointed by the executive power. The most important one was the Learned Judge with jurisdiction over the Territory and appointed by the President in consultation with the Senate and reporting to the *Cámara de Apelaciones de La Plata* (La Plata Appeals Court) - 2,600 kilometers from Río Gallegos and 3,100 kilometers from Ushuaia. The only requirement for the position was to have practiced law at some point. Still, the candidate needed to have multiple abilities: to understand and resolve "civil, commercial, correctional and criminal" conflicts, carry out appeals cases for Justice of Peace rulings and arbitrate cases between parties.

Smaller judicial administration tasks were entrusted to Justices of the Peace who were designated by the Governor for populations with less than one thousand inhabitants, a common situation in Patagonia during the mid-twentieth century. The only requirements for this job were the ability to read and write and the condition of not being a State employee. Services were applied to civil, commercial and smaller correctional cases and to eviction lawsuits brought on by the absence of documentation, "whatever the value of the suit might be."<sup>258</sup> In this way, the Governor functioned legally – and the law would back this - as a ruler responsible only to the President who would elect him, but whom he could not elect. At times in contradiction with the Learned Judge, this officer was powerful but depended – not legally, but rather practically – on resources that the political and police-related authority could mobilize. At the same time, as Susana Bandieri has noted, the lack of qualified personnel and means of communication complicated the judicial authority's work which usually rested on farmers-peace

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<sup>258</sup> Ley 1532. Organización de los Territorios Nacionales.

tribunals or commissioners without instructions, subordinated to the interests of the large-estate owners.<sup>259</sup>

Because of this, judicial plans ran into numerous problems. For example, Patagonia's Peace Tribunals were considered in the Nation's budget only as recently as 1887 and it wasn't until 1890 that one was formed in Ushuaia, followed by those designated for San Sebastián (1893), Río Grande (1895) and Río Gallegos (1899).<sup>260</sup> As has been mentioned, despite the fact that the Argentinean flag replaced the English in Ushuaia, this city did not become a center of Argentinean territorial sovereignty until after construction was begun on the *Panoptico* in 1902. Meanwhile, Santa Cruz lost its status as the capital of the Territory of the same name in 1888 when it was moved to Río Gallegos in recognition of this town's proximity to Punta Arenas, the Chilean southern metropolis which controlled passage through the Strait.

As previously mentioned, the Colony of Punta Arenas passed through military exclave and penal colony stages and went on to formally become a Colonization Territory in 1853, a status it maintained for 75 years. The Chilean administrative model of subordination was similar to that of Argentina. Their differences lay mainly in that, first, for Chile it was rather exceptional the application of the statute of the National Territory for a long period for present-day provinces of Magallanes and Aysén, separated in 1925; secondly, Chile was organized as a unitary state in which the highest regional office was held by an *Intendente* appointed by the President.<sup>261</sup> The Magallanes Colony, on the other hand, was led by a Governor who reported directly to four different Ministries in

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<sup>259</sup> Bandieri, *Historia de la Patagonia*, pp.158-159; a case study of the difficulties in the 1890's in Belfiori, Martha Celia. 1980. "La Administración de Justicia en Tierra del Fuego," *Karukinka* 24, 12-24, p15.

<sup>260</sup> M. C. Belfiori. 1980. "La Administración de Justicia en Tierra del Fuego," *Karukinka* 24, 12-24, pp.12-15.

<sup>261</sup> In 1927 fue separado Magallanes de Aysén, regiones incomunicadas entre si salvo a través de territorio argentino y por vía del océano Pacífico. No existe una literatura de la subdivisión administrativa del territorio chileno que de cuenta de este estatuto colonial a otras zonas. Aparentemente, Rapa Nui tuvo un estatuto similar entre su ocupación en 1888 por la Marina chilena y el reconocimiento del derecho a voto de los isleños en 1966. El período estuvo marcado por la continuación de la economía ovejera de exportación heredada de esclavistas franceses –que habían asolado la isla hasta la ocupación chilena- y la casa británica Williamson Balfour, que conformaron la Compañía Explotadora de Isla de Pascua. XXX

a span of less than five decades.<sup>262</sup> In practice, the Governor's powers were subject to the will of State secretaries rather than defined by the institution. In general, the office granted power more autonomously exercised with respect to metropolitan powers than in the interest of businesses established in the region. This power was usually reinforced by officials from the Army and Navy who had little familiarity with the territory and who had to, from the time of their arrival, construct a support network. In addition, the Governor was the Territory's highest military authority and led the police. Over long periods of time he controlled the assignment of land and the allocation of contracts and tenders. The "omnipotence of the Chief of the Colony," as lawyer, diplomat and propagandist of the Magellanes elite Robustiano Vera would call it in 1897,<sup>263</sup> extended even into judicial matters. Although an 1876 decree established a Court in Magallanes, it would not exist for two more decades. In 1900, a journalist commented that in 1893 justice "was non-existent because it was not exercised [...]; onerous and detrimental, because it required visits to the Valparaíso tribunals [...]; inconvenient and detrimental to the State because fiscal property was not protected [...leaving] a considerable amount of power in the hands of the governors," powers used for ineffectiveness and injustice.<sup>264</sup>

Up until then, smaller crimes had been considered by the colony's mayors and in some cases passed on to the Court of Appeals in Valparaíso. The mayors were appointed by the Governor from among the "important neighbors," a practice that in 1896 a presidential correspondent considered a generator of

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<sup>262</sup> The journey that the Governorship would take in terms of who to report to started with the Ministry of the Navy, moved to the Ministry of the Interior in 1853 and then to the Ministry of Foreign Relations upon its founding in 1887. For the next two years, it reported to the Ministry of Industry and Colonization, returning to the State Department in 1889. See Echeverría and Reyes, A. (1888). *Geografía Política de Chile ó sea Recopilación de Leyes y Decretos Vigentes sobre creación, límites y nombre de las Provincias, Departamentos, Subdelegaciones y Distritos de la República. Tomo Primero. Magallanes a Linares*. Santiago, Imprenta Nacional, p.5; Vera, *op.Cit.*, pp.50-51.

<sup>263</sup> Robustiano Vera (1897). *La Colonia de Magallanes i Tierra del Fuego (1843 a 1897)*. Santiago: Imp. de la Gaceta, p.287.

<sup>264</sup> Fagalde, A. (1901). *Magallanes. El País del Porvenir*. Tomo I. Valparaíso, Talleres Tipográficos de la Armada, p.387.



“almost absolute power favored by isolation and distance”<sup>265</sup>. Although the Court separated judicial power from administrative power, it also Chileanized the population without increasing guarantees<sup>266</sup>. One single lawyer held both positions between 1894 and 1913. He became so famous for his equanimity and justice that he was the first judge in the country to have a monument erected in his honor. Recent studies show, however, that Jimmy Radburne’s nickname for him at the beginning of the twentieth century, “bribed old judge” was rather indulgent: Waldo Seguel participated in many shady businesses.<sup>267</sup> In collaboration with the secretary, who generally acted as a substitute for the Judge, the tribunal was an example of trafficking in favor of the local elite.<sup>268</sup> Something similar would happen with the Public Prosecutor’s Office which came to be after the establishment of the Court. As an office entrusted with representing public interests, the Prosecutor was to supervise the correct application of the Law, acting by way of a lawyer designated by the central judicial authority. If the Judge was not available, however, the Prosecutor could name his replacement and, in fact, become his successor himself, as came to pass when Seguel died. In this way, the judicial institutions provided justice, but also provided ample opportunities for deal making amongst the highest authorities.

One of the few places where civil rights could be exercised was in the municipal realm. In Argentinean Patagonia, towns with more than one thousand inhabitants could elect their authorities – following a ‘Protected Republicanism’ logic – and this right was recognized in Río Gallegos by the end of 1907. Over the following decade, the Puerto Deseado Municipal Board was established. Electors were made up entirely of men of-age, regardless of their nationality or occupation.

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<sup>265</sup> Bascuñán Guerrero, M. (1897). *Memoria que el Delegado del Supremo Gobierno en el Territorio de Magallanes don Mariano Guerrero Bascuñán presenta al señor Ministro de Colonización*. Santiago, Imprenta i Librería Ercilla, p.250.

<sup>266</sup> Bourdieu, XXX, transfer of the power of appeal to a distant and homogenizing jurisdiction.

<sup>267</sup> Regarding the practical function of Magallanes institutions see chapter 4. Childs, Herbert. (1936 [1997]). *El Jimmy. Bandido de la Patagonia*. Punta Arenas: Universidad de Magallanes, y Mateo Martinic. 2007. “‘Rogelio Figueroa en Ultima Esperanza (1905-1919)’. *Memorias de un buscapelitos*,” *Magallania* 35: 1, 139-155.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid. See also the polemic between the first Court Secretary, Gaymer, and the Public Prosecutor, Adriasola, in AHN-FGM. Vol. 17. Registro Civil. Carta de Promotor Fiscal, Adriasola Cruz, a Gobernador, 23.9.1898.

This translated into a curious demonstration of local citizenry: in contrast with the provincial realm where foreigners had no right to vote and the census restricted the participation of a vast majority, this would not occur in the National Territories. In Magallanes, the *Junta de Alcaldes* continued to be appointed by the President and/or the Governor throughout the entire Colonial Period. Members of the local oligarchy were repeatedly appointed, bringing to a close the demand for participation in local issues. As will be made clear in chapter 5, this quickly radicalized the workers and brought about anti-oligarchic sentiments attributed to the close relationship between political and economic power.<sup>269</sup>

### **Racial Colonization**

The failed attempts of penal colonization, and the judicial formalities used by the administration, were accompanied by a racial ideal of colonization. This ideal had a triple dimension, that involved (1) a dominant idea with respect to the indigenous population, according to which their land should be taken away from them, facilitating (2) the settlement of colonizers, carriers of civilization (3) that, from the elites' anti-American perspective, they should be European. In the Argentinean case, if the Conquest of the Desert was supposed to be the "most important chapter of the Spanish conquest" as Viñas pointed out, this also implied that, the empire represented a past that the nation should rid itself of in order to build its future<sup>270</sup>. That "future is Europe, and the model is the United States" as the "incarnation of progress" expressed in the consolidation of industries and republican institutions, as suggested by Svampa in his shrewd analysis of the founding dichotomies of the generation of 1837.<sup>271</sup> Those dichotomies manifested themselves in an exemplary manner in the masterpieces of the oligarchic fantasy, that aspired to make American nations into European ones, like in Sarmiento's *Facundo, o Civilización y Barbarie* and Alberdi's *Bases y Puntos de Partida para la Organización de la República Argentina*, both written in Chile in the middle of

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<sup>269</sup> See Chapter 4, "The makings of the State."

<sup>270</sup> David Viñas. 1983 [3a ed.2003]. *Indios, Ejército y Frontera*. Buenos Aires: Santiago Arcos, pp.22-24.

<sup>271</sup> Maristella Svampa. 2006. *El Dilema Argentino: Civilización o Barbarie*. Buenos Aires: Taurus, p.39

the century and without both authors having been to the ‘Desert’. As Sarmiento pointed out, the end of the nineteenth century America was all about “being or not being *savage*”.<sup>272</sup> In line with Sarmiento, Alberdi considered that since, “everything that isn’t European is barbaric,” the big jump forwards of civilization in America would not be produced by educating its inhabitants, who were too far from the Atlantic world. “Make the *roto*, the *gaucho*, the *cholo*, the incarnation of the masses, pass through all the transformations of the best educational systems; and in one hundred years you will not make of them an English worker, who works, consumes, lives comfortably and in a dignified manner” -Alberdi exclaimed in front of the obstacles faced by Latin-American education.<sup>273</sup> The “sovereignty” over tastes and style, economic and political models, the language of liberty (English), everything came from the north. For that reason, all institutional plans should pass through the same model represented in the maxim “to Govern is to populate,” in the sense that to settle is to educate, improve, civilize, enrich and enlarge spontaneously and rapidly, like what happened in the United States”<sup>274</sup>. The Argentinean oligarchy detested reality and looked to become independent of the American past by building a new country: the territory is desert, its amplitude disastrous, its inhabitants savage, its past an embarrassment. For the oligarchy it was about cutting down the distance between the main settlements and between them and the coast since distance “is the origin of local sovereignty,” as Alberdi says, and of popular independence, as Sarmiento argues. The promotion of European immigration was the key that would permit the lessening of racial distances with Europe. This would be followed by other measures: disciplinary, by means of a healthy administration; identitarian, through the education, ritual and service to the State; geographical, with transportation and communication.<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>272</sup> Domingo Sarmiento. 1845 [2006]. *Facundo, o Civilización y Barbarie*. Buenos Aires: CEC, p.17.

<sup>273</sup> Juan B. Alberdi. *Bases y puntos de partida para la Organización Política de la República Argentina*. In Posada, Alfredo. 1913. *Organización de la Confederación Argentina por D. Juan Bautista Alberdi*. Tomo I. El Ateneo: Madrid, pp. 11-220, p.58.

<sup>274</sup> Alberdi. 1879. “Bases explicativas” from *Bases y puntos de partida*, *op.Cit.*

<sup>275</sup> Alberdi, *op.Cit.*, p.103; Sarmiento, *op.Cit.*, pp. 56-59.

The promotion of “European immigration” in 1853 reached the rank of constitutional rule in Argentina. The constitution established that it could not “limit nor impose a tax on any entrance [of...] foreigners whose object it was, to work the land, to better industries, and to introduce and teach the sciences and the arts”.<sup>276</sup> Although the Chilean Constitution of 1833 did not introduce a clause of this type, the legislation concerning property, colonization and immigration had identical racial assumptions. As the *Memoria sobre la Colonización* in 1850 noted, in Chile the object looked for was not:

“the increased number of the populace, but the practical education, the moralization of the people, the introduction of domestic economy among workers, the spirit of economizing, of the love of work [...] in conclusion, the inoculation of characteristic activities of northern European people and the assurance of the advantages that result from the mixing of races”<sup>277</sup>.

However, the low number of those who arrived caused the Chilean elite to look with envy upon the results achieved by Argentina, which became the country which received the greater relative number of immigrants during the period. In 1914, 30% of its inhabitants were born abroad<sup>278</sup>. More than 4.2 million people were admitted to Argentina in the period in which the frontier impulse pushed millions of Europeans to cross the Atlantic, two million Italians and more than one million Spaniards, Basque and Galician’s<sup>279</sup>. In the period between 1870 and 1913 the Argentinean population experienced the greatest population increase in Latin America, with 3.3%, while that of Chile was one of the lowest, with only 1.3%.<sup>280</sup>

Many differences between Argentina and Chile arise from Argentina’s larger population increase. Although in Chile as well as in Argentina, foreigners

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<sup>276</sup>Art. 25 from the Constitution of 1853, in [www.biblioteca.jus.gov.ar/constitucionargentina1853.html](http://www.biblioteca.jus.gov.ar/constitucionargentina1853.html).

<sup>277</sup> Ignacio Domeyko. 1850c. *Memoria sobre la Colonización*. Santiago: Imp. Julio Belin, p.5.

<sup>278</sup> Svampa, *op.Cit.*, p.76.

<sup>279</sup> Fernando Devoto. 2003. *Historia de la Inmigración en la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, p.247.

<sup>280</sup> Blanca Sánchez, “Poblaciones, migraciones y cambio demográfico,” in Enrique Ayala (ed.). 2008. *Los proyectos nacionales latinoamericanos: sus instrumentos y articulación, 1870-1930*. Barcelona: UNESCO/Trotta, 59-78, p.60.

who wanted to establish themselves in each country were legally rewarded, in Chile immigrants concentrated in certain regions by nationality. Although this is typical of chain migration, as was predominant in Argentina, foreigners in Chile became influential and were more rapidly integrated with the oligarchy through commerce, specialized work and in certain areas where their settlement was financed. What Carl Solberg termed “a discriminatory frontier land policy,” privileging European colonists over Chilean squatters and Mapuche inhabitants boosted the settlement of Germans and Italians in the continental south.<sup>281</sup> Other cases of concentration were English immigrants that settled in Valparaíso from the beginning of the nineteenth century, while Slav’s coming from the Austrian-Hungarian Empire to Chile settled at the end of the nineteenth century in Magallanes and Antofagasta.

In southern Patagonia, the arrival of foreigners had particular characteristics concerning the migrations that were encouraged from Buenos Aires and Santiago. Even though at the beginning of the occupation the authorities debated which was considered to be the “superior race” and the European religion of the colonies, the initial settlement came from the archipelago of Chiloé. As Torres pointed out, Chiloe’s mestizo society of small landowners became an ‘exporter’ of its unskilled labor force, when Chiloe was designated early on as a colonizable territory by Santiago.<sup>282</sup> Although the money invested by the immigrants allowed a high fragmentation of property, Chilean workers who opened the path to German immigration routes in Llanquihue and fields to the sheep in Patagonia were landless. They were expelled by the racial colonization that had doubly affected them, first in their places of origin and later in their destinations.

The first Chilote settlers were favored by the delivery of rations that allowed the Chilean Colony to survive until the governor introduced sheep into

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<sup>281</sup> Solberg, Carl “A Discriminatory Frontier Land Policy: Chile, 1870-1914,” *The Americas* 26, 2 (Oct.1969), 115-133.

<sup>282</sup> Susana Torres. (2001). “La inmigración chilena en la Patagonia austral en la primera mitad del siglo XX y su inserción en los centros urbanos de Comodoro Rivadavia, Río Gallegos y Ushuaia.” Susana Bandieri (ed). *Cruzando la Cordillera... La frontera argentino-chilena como espacio social. Siglos XIX y XX*. Neuquén: UNCo, 421-459, p.423.

the area, in 1877. Although a specific study of the constitution of urban property in Punta Arenas would be necessary in order to establish the evolution of landholding among the Chilotan pioneer families, archival documentation demonstrates that although they were given property, they tended to progressively lose it, in the same manner that they were excluded from new fiscal resources that privileged European settlement. The main turn of events took place at the end of the 1860s. Moritz (later *Mauricio*) Braun, who later became the main controller of the commercial and ranching movement in all of the Patagonia, gave a clear account of his arrival from Buenos Aires, at the end of 1873. He said that the benefits that the State would give him were discussed with the Chilean plenipotentiary ministry in the Argentinean capital, thanks to a contact with a German. As a result, some 60 settlers arrived at the Strait in 1874, and “a small spacious boat moved to the side of the *Sakkara* where the European colonists destined to colonize this territory were crowded together [...The boat was] dragged by a whaling boat with many oars towards the far coast and when we were close to the shore where the hulls grazed the sand on the beach, [we were] hoisted over the robust shoulders of the Chilote mariners, [and] we were placed on firm land.” Over there waited the governor, the garrison chief and the priest, as interpreter.<sup>283</sup>

*On the shoulders of the Chilotes, the European disembarkation* produced what the Lieutenant Colonel Briceño, Governor in 1891, defined as the necessary “invasion” of culture so Patagonia would be “spurred by the immigrants’ flame of knowledge”<sup>284</sup> In the State’s vision, Northern European knowledge and capital would operate the transformation of open land into industry and would displace or subordinate the “inferior races.” Even when the land and the weather made it

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<sup>283</sup> This book is supposedly an exact reconstruction elaborated by the historian and son of Moritz (who began to call himself Mauricio at some national instances from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century), Armando, from his notebook. See Mauricio Braun. Explicación preliminar, notas y epílogo de Armando Braun Menéndez 1985. *Mauricio Braun. Memorias de una Vida Colmada*. Buenos Aires: Autoedición, p.25,

<sup>284</sup> The complete sentence is as follows: “We need that the Europeans millennial culture invades our Patagonia so that this land [...] is spurred by the immigrant’s flame of knowledge.” Quoted at Comisión Patrimonio Histórico y Cultural del R.I. N°10 Pudeto (2006). “The Chilean military. Its historical contribution in the Colonization of Magallanes.,” *Cuaderno de Historia Militar* 2: 29-45, p.29.

impossible to cultivate, in the knowledge of the state the contracted settlers should demonstrate capacity as farmers, and for that reason of the privileges offered for European families the most attractive was access to 25 hectares.<sup>285</sup> For the Swiss settlers the size of the land offered was great in comparison to what was available in their home country but the land turned out to be useless for farming and the rearing of cattle. The official propaganda carried out in Freiburg, by the recruiting agent contracted by the Magallanes Governor invited those “whose fathers didn’t leave them land to work” to settle in Magallanes, where the “weather [is] healthy and favorable, the pastures are abundant, making Gruyere is easy, [where] the market are large and clientele assured”.<sup>286</sup> Although the production of cheese was

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<sup>285</sup> In 1867, for example, the Chilean Government committed to contributed to contracted immigrants with : “the free passage for themselves, their baggage, and their tools and instruments, in the transports sent by the Government of Magallanes; 2o. A portion of land, the extent of which is to be determined by the Governor, not to exceed twenty-five acres, (*hectáreas*) for each head of a family, and twelve for each one of his male children over fourteen years of age. The land will be sold to the colonists at fifty cents an acre [...]; 3o. Army rations for the period of one year to the father of the family and each son over ten years of age; 4o. An allowance or pension of five dollars a month to each family for the period of one year. The Governor, with the approbation of the Government, may increase this allowance whenever extraordinary circumstances shall afford reason to authorize such increase; 5o. Free importation of the effects, tools and implements of the colonist intended for his own private use; 6o. A collection of seeds, at the choice of the colonists, not to exceed the value of ten dollars; three hundred boards or planks, and a quintal of nails, all being valued at the current prices; 7o. Medical attendance and necessary medicines, and free schooling for their children; Art. 2. The subsidies referred [...] will be advanced to the colonists by the way of a loan. The repayment of this loan is to be made in ten equal parts, in money, by installments at the end of each year [the first one three years after their accommodation]; Art.3. [the deadline for constructions will be of 6 months]; Art.4. The title-deeds of the property shall be given to each colonist whenever, in the opinion of the Governor, he shall have made enclosures and effected a clearing or cultivation; Art.5. [Alter three years, it would be declared the vacancy of any uncultivated land]; Art.6. Every allotment of land will remain hypothecated for the amount in which the colonist is indebted; Art.7. Any colonist may abandon his allotment and take another one whenever, in the opinion of the Governor, the soil of the former one is not easily adapted for cultivation,” in the Department of the Interior (Chile). 2.12.1867. “Decree of the Chilean Government...,” *op.Cit.*, pp.1-4. These conditions were maintained, for more than three decades even for “free” immigration. In 1896, acting jointly with the employers’ Federation of Chilean Industry (SOFOFA) the Chilean state offered passage and free transport from Europe, for men that were head of the family that owned machinery and tools. Access to the land, however, was already blocked by the expansion of large estates. “Reglamento para el servicio de Inmigración Libre” *El Magallanes*, 13.02.1896, p.2.

<sup>286</sup> Among the concessions granted to the Swiss settlers not included in the aforementioned contract was the exemption for 20 years on “all taxes, custom duties and military service.” The offer included an increase of two hectares of land for “the first one hundred settlers.” ANH-FMRE. Vol. 143, Ministerio de RR.EE. Colonization. 18.04.1873. Note to MinRex. To the Governor of Magallanes, fs. 353-354; D. Errázuriz to Ibáñez, 18.4.1873, s/f; and Alberto Conus. 1873. *Comunicado a los Campesinos*, Friburgo: Imp. de Galley. Transc. in Pasquier, Roger (2007). *Los Friburgueses y sus descendientes en Patagonia chilena*. Punta Arenas: La Prensa Austral, pp. 38-41.

not successful, and the local market was reduced to little more than 1,500 people that were not fine cheese aficionados, the Swiss colonies received state benefits for several decades.

Those called on to introduce or produce a *new race* to populate Patagonia took a different direction from the official plan with the beginning of sheep ranching at the end of the 1870s. Moreover, state benefits increased the sense of racial difference between old and new colonists, the first of which began to simply be called “settlers.” Braun, for example, pointed out that in his first stop on his way to Argentina, in Paraguay, “neither the climate nor the atmosphere were favorable for people of our Nordic race accustomed to the cold and to steady activity, always waiting to achieve fortune.” That “race” *could* develop at its peak in the extreme south. He explained that there was a “heterogeneous population where prisoners, the relegated, and soldiers in charge of public order -because of the total absence of policemen- were living together along with the *primitive* Chilote population and the group of foreign settlers, which now swelled to about three hundred, who constituted the only valuable people.”<sup>287</sup>

The ‘racial’ problems turned up in the Colony along with the discriminatory assignation of benefits. While land was given to Europeans the “national settlers” and specifically the Chilotans were excluded. A case published in the press in 1895, for example, noted that one hundred Chilote settlers had received “some hectares” but without any type of monetary or material support, with a result that was “easy to foresee”: the lands continued without fences or crops.<sup>288</sup> Nonetheless, the migratory flow from Chiloé increased while the large Patagonian landowners like Braun and Blanchard expanded towards the archipelago monopolizing more than a million hectares around 1914.<sup>289</sup> With this they completed a colonization policy that dated back many years and which had

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<sup>287</sup> The emphasis is ours. The use of the word “primitive” is not coincidental to refer to the first inhabitants: Braun, *op.Cit.*, p. 21, 32.

<sup>288</sup> An interesting discussion about the inapplicability of the decrees that benefited the national settlers can be seen in *El Magallanes*, January and February of 1895. By then the exhaustion of available land for settlers was already apparent, as well as its concentration by European settlers and the double standard in the supply of rations and materials.

<sup>289</sup> Deputy Rafael del Canto, *La Mañana* (Santiago), transcribed in “Chiloé y Magallanes. El banco de Punta Arenas,” *EMG*, 4.3.1914.



produced ‘racial’ tensions from the beginning. As Mortiz Braun remembered, when he began to attend school with his brother they found

“the hostility of *the natives* or *the Chilotes* towards foreigners or immigrants [...] that we solved from the beginning, [...] without any intervention from the state or the church. When we appeared for the first time at school and we began to be called the ‘damn gringos’, with Oscar we attacked them with our fists leaving our superiority well established.<sup>290</sup>

*European superiority and Chilote primitivism*, from then on will begin to define the local social hierarchies. As I discuss in chapter three, the networks of State and economic power were strictly shaped to those patterns. The new pioneers, European recipients of public benefits, settled in Patagonia around 1875. In the following two decades, they built almost impenetrable oligarchic relations. The concentration of land, credit, commerce and transport were articulated in an oligopoly, whose distinctive elements were their European origin, the administration of European capital, and the commercial and family ties with the Chilean oligarchy first, and the Argentinean oligarchy after.

In Argentina, meanwhile, it was the general Law of Immigration and Colonization, created by Avellaneda and Alsina, which established the basis of the settlement policies concerning the lands “won from the indians”<sup>291</sup>. Just like the Governor of Magallanes, the governor from Santa Cruz initiated his own colonization campaign in the 1880s, asking for capital and settlers in the Malvinas. In 1901, Governor Burmeister was pleased to verify that the ranchers were “mainly Saxon, Scottish, and English”<sup>292</sup>. In Argentina it could be said that the State not only managed to effectively occupy the territory thanks to sheep, as happened on the Chilean side, but because of the sheep they also managed to attract a scant population that grew in its first twenty years.

During this period, food rationing and the generous granting of Tehuelche lands to settlers constituted fundamental instruments in order to assure that the

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<sup>290</sup>The emphasis is ours. Braun, *op.Cit.*, p.37.

<sup>291</sup> Rebollo, 84.

<sup>292</sup> Carlos Burmeister. 1901. *Memoria sobre el Territorio de Santa Cruz*. Buenos Aires: Imp. la Nación, p.55.

colonizers would remain, although poor state presence meant continual problems. A permanent complaint was lack of rations. For example, in 1889 the Commissioner of Santa Cruz said that there were no longer rations left to share, and that the merchant from whom people bought provisions was not willing to continue delivering them, since the authorities had run out of credit. The settlers, for their part, didn't pay for the homes that they had been given.<sup>293</sup> In general, the information from the Argentinean authorities from the initial period of colonization suggested to the Executive the difficulty of maintaining colonization based only on the financial backing of the State. In 1891, Governor Lista reproached the Minister of the Interior pointing out that the colony of Puerto Deseado had languished for years, having evacuated the last five families and later the only government representative. That colonization was made, he denounced, "without any study or knowledge of the land [and in the...] most arid part of Patagonia. They did not even take into account the Spanish failed colonization attempt at the end of the previous century, which occurred despite Spain's generosity in the South of the continent."<sup>294</sup> Although the argument was untenable, it was true that the colonial enterprise in southern Patagonia was effectively carried out by an expansionist will rather than by a well informed planning. The colonial failures were repeated as postcolonial failures.

Given the association between race (European) and progress (industrial), the colonizers, thought of as being crucial for propelling national sovereignty, were foreign. As was the capital they wanted to attract. Moyano's visit to Malvinas and Punta Arenas turned out to be decisive in order to define sovereignty of Santa Cruz: the "Malvinian invasion" that Braun pointed out for Magallanes was reenacted in the 'virgin' Santa Cruz, and given the British seizure of the Islands in the decade of the 1830s this capitalist invasion is paradoxical rather than metaphoric. Moreover in considering Moyano married a politically well-related Falklander. At the same time, however, the British Empire and the Argentinean Republic were related by the decision of occupying distant exclaves.

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<sup>293</sup> AHP-FGSC. 1889. 55. Comisario Carlos Burnett.

<sup>294</sup> AHP-FGSC. 1891.5. Gobernador al MININT, 6.8.1891.

This ‘marriage’ was further emphasized by the local governments’ decisions in the next decades favoring the settlement of British men and capital.

In 1890, Lista divided the nearby territory into districts “in order to facilitate the possible Administration of the Justice of the Peace in his territory”. A rancher was designated in charge of each section: in the northern zone he was José Montes, a Spaniard settler of in Punta Arenas; the Scandinavian N. Sonschigk was in charge of the central zone, and in the southern part the chosen was Hermann Eberhard, a German seaman arrived from Malvinas and settled on the Chilean ‘side.’<sup>295</sup> Lista put Eberhard and other ranchers in charge (two Malvineans, a Spaniard and a French-Swiss) of an office for increasing “the migratory current,” offering food and shelter in the precarious administrative building.<sup>296</sup> So, it is hardly surprising that, in 1894, an engineer sent by Buenos Aires explained that in Río Gallegos “They heard almost exclusively English voices, and you think that you have come to ‘Old England’ or at least to Malvinas; with the exception of the persons employed by the Captaincy, everything is English: money, sheep, language, drinks, the ladies and gentlemen.” Only “some Argentinean flags” made one realize that this was a national territory where State authorities existed.<sup>297</sup>

Australia and the United States were not only seen as models in reference for the administrative aspects of Argentinean colonization. They also determined, at least at the government level, the racialized and class based policy of immigration. As David Viñas wrote, “if the primordial core of the philosophy of the generation of 1880” were the Indians, its “literary leitmotiv [...] was a persistent discomfort at not being considered European.”<sup>298</sup> In her anthropological research on ethnicity, Laurie Nock stated that by 1990 “phenotypical differences are still recognized in Punta Arenas, and there is also an element of biological determinism in the social categorization.” She associated people’s “fair coloring

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<sup>295</sup> AHP-FGSC. 1890.14. G. Dividiendo en distritos el Juzgado Departamental de R. Gallegos. 15.3.1890.

<sup>296</sup> AHP-FGSC. 1895, 13-72. Dirección General de Inmigración a Gobernador, 28.2.1895.

<sup>297</sup> Carlos Siewert. “Río Gallegos en 1894,” *Argentina Austral* N°109 (julio1938)

<sup>298</sup> David Viñas. 1982. “The Foundation of the National State,” in Nouzeilles and Montaldo, *The Argentina Reader, op.Cit.*, pp.168-169.

and relatively tall stature” with European origin and higher social status, “while those who are dark and short are from Chiloé or from southern Chile, and low status.” She concluded that “while light coloring may be an advantage for social mobility, the individual of dark coloring who has achieved education or wealth is not discriminated against.”<sup>299</sup>

A colonial, racial state does not require racial legislation, nor formal social discrimination to be constituted as such. What does constitute a racial state is precisely the radical difference of opportunity for social mobility on the basis of origin, skin tone or cultural practices. Immigration and land grants produced, to this day, the fiction of equality between the foreign and the nationally born. However, both keep the racial functioning of the state fully alive. Not coincidentally a pay slip from 1934 included the biographies of five British men, a German, and a Spaniard, while including the names of 32 other foreigners as “first settlers of the Territory”<sup>300</sup>: there did not exist a place for sovereign indigenous people who were displaced or exterminated, neither for convicts and the infrastructure builders nor for proletarianized settlers -those who were mainly Argentinean and Chilean, dark skinned. They were the ones damaged by the positive discrimination of the colonial settlement.

### **The Frustrated Colonization.**

In the government of Santa Cruz, in 1892, out of fifteen employees on the payroll there were only seven Argentines.<sup>301</sup> In that distant corner of the south, as José María Borrero stated in the mid 1920s, Argentines were looked down upon and “everything is anything but Argentinean.”<sup>302</sup> In the Chilean section of Patagonia, a traveler pointed out in 1897 that the majority of the population was

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<sup>299</sup> Nock, Laurie (1990). *Ethnicity and Economics in Punta Arenas, Chile*. PhD Dissertation, Department of Anthropology Montreal, McGill University, p.88.

<sup>300</sup> S. Cuaniscú. Angel Planas, colaborador fotográfico (1936c.). *Santa Cruz. Somera historia de su conquista por la civilización. Estado actual. Descripción física. Histórica. Ganadera. Industrial. Comercial y social. Gráficos y estadísticas*. Territorio Nacional de Santa Cruz, pp.53-57.

<sup>301</sup> AHP-FGSC. 1892, 8-140, p.28. Dir. Nacional de Estadísticas a Gobernador de Santa Cruz.

<sup>302</sup> José María Borrero. 1928c. *La Patagonia Trágica. Asesinatos, piratería y esclavitud*. Ushuaia: Zagier & Urruty, p.16.

foreign, that “its progress was due to that” and that “the capital is almost all entirely foreign.”<sup>303</sup> Four years later, the British traveler Campbell observed that the Chilean colony “consists for the most part of English and Germans, who are doing well in farming, the country [...] being truly magnificent for livestock.”<sup>304</sup> This was the observers’ generalized opinion on Argentinean Patagonia. In 1908, the real estate agency “Corvera & Peralta Martínez” from Buenos Aires published a brochure offering lands that had escaped the voracity of the companies controlled by the Braun-Menéndez family, which were already scarce. In the ad they announced that the land’s sale was

“the best and most secure investment [for] limited or large capital. In the sheep region: named so because of the large yields of wool and breeding [...] These productions in Patagonia surpassed all expectations [...] because of the astonishing development of the large establishments of ranchers and English companies.”

The advertisement did not exaggerate in publicizing that “over there are no failures” for investors, that the land value increased very rapidly, that it was still cheap, and that “the operating costs were very low and produced immediate profits.” For these reasons, the brochure explained, “everyone aspires to expand his dominions.”<sup>305</sup> In sum, there was “an always growing prosperity” in a territory “monopolized by ranchers and powerful English companies, because here the region is still almost unknown.” Because of that, people were missing great opportunities “for the advantageous investment of capital.” Finally, the advertisement pointed out that acquiring those lands was useful in a number of manners, even as “getaways,” because down there a “summer house, healthy and invigorating, is priceless.”<sup>306</sup>

The transformation of the cursed Patagonia into a promised land necessitated a state affirmation of territorial sovereignty, which was successful mainly due to sheep ranching. This was carried out on the base of ‘liberal land

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<sup>303</sup> Vera, *op.Cit.*, p.XIII.

<sup>304</sup> W. O. Campbell. 1901. *Through Patagonia*. London: Bickers and Son, p.81.

<sup>305</sup> Corvera & Peralta. c.1908. *El Territorio de Santa Cruz. Los Grandes Negocios de Campos*. Buenos Aires, p.3.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6.

granting policies’, as they were called during that time- and later- by the defenders of the great livestock estates. By the mid 1930s, the American geographer McCutchen argued that in the extreme south, as in Llanquihue, “the Chilean is like an alien in his own country and complains that men from abroad are extracting the wealth of the land,” considering that Magallanes’ “conspicuous present development is almost wholly foreign, but the bulk of the laboring population and much of the small business is Chilean [...] and the management of large-scale business is chiefly in the hands of foreigners, English, Yugoslavs, Germans and Spaniards predominating.”<sup>307</sup>

That affirmation of “national sovereignty” was made, as witnesses coincide in pointing out, based on the negation of Chilean and Argentinean rights to the land whose origins lay in a racist immigration policy. The promised land then remained in a paradoxical situation for the imagination of civil society, or forms of local sovereignty that, as we will see in the coming chapters, articulated powerful responses to the state and to the dispossession of the pioneers (the natives, or primitive, as Braun called them) and the precarious proletarianization of the immigrants (the new indians). For the inhabitants of Patagonia, the open frontier, undefined until the 1880s, *could have been a promised land*, but by 1910 it was no longer so. By then an oligopoly based on family ties had consolidated in the control of the regional economy, in a cross-border circuit that territorially extended throughout the entirety of southern Chubut to Cape Horn. Commercially, it reached from Europe, particularly London and Liverpool, to the Río de la Plata and Valparaíso-Santiago, passing through all of the ports of the southern Atlantic to Chiloé and Callao, connecting English colonies from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

This ‘source of capitalist modernity’—whose origin lay in state funding and in the state’s racialized policies of colonization- was built within a few decades, sponsored by the State and in a vacuum of power that its own presence filled limiting the opportunities for independent colonization and self employment: by the end of the nineteenth century, as Vanni Blengino pointed out, science and

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<sup>307</sup> McCutchen McBride. 1936. *Chile: Land and Society*, p.342

occupation transformed “fantastic [Patagonian] giants into defenseless primitive men”<sup>308</sup>; the disinherited looking for land, in turn, became precariously employed workers in the ranching industry.

For the United States and the populations of the rest of the Argentinean and Chilean territories, on the other hand, Patagonia remained a diffuse image, which endured until the end of the nineteenth century. As Maria Wilcox stated in 1910, Patagonia “still remained for Chileans a *terra incognita*” making them believe in “erroneous reports [...] for example, the report that the majority of the inhabitants of the Territory were foreigners.”<sup>309</sup> In the mid 1920s, social problems were attributed by ultranationalist Argentineans like Manuel Carlés to, “the small number of Porteños” who were familiar with the region, and also to the few inhabitants from the national territories who knew the metropolis. This motivated the, Argentine Patriotic League to declare “the cult of the Patagonia,” as a reservation- “as interesting as ignored”- of *national values*.<sup>310</sup>

Because of the ignorance and opportunity for “land agents” –government employees and/or speculators with powerful connections in the state apparatus-, southern Patagonia was transformed into a land of frustrated hope for most of its settlers. This sentiment was later expressed in the regionalism of the 1930s; the socialist identity of the Magallanian electorate, and folklore developed during the second half of the century that reflects the uncompleted promises of the metropolis:

*That future is in the south  
As they told us a long time ago  
And here we are waiting  
A lot of “blah-blah” comrades.  
Deep into the South of the Territory  
A Santacruzán told me:  
This waiting is getting long*

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<sup>308</sup> Blengino, *op.Cit.* p. 88.

<sup>309</sup> M. Wilcox. (1910). “The Territory of Magellan.” *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* 42 (11): 826-831, pp.826-827.

<sup>310</sup> Liga Patriótica Argentina. 1922. *El Culto de la Patagonia. Sucesos de Santa Cruz*. Buenos Aires: Biblioteca de la Liga Patriótica Argentina, p.3.

*A lot of “Blah Blah,” comrade*<sup>311</sup>.

After five decades of Chilean colonization, and two of Argentinean institutional presence, the result was without doubt contradictory for a state nationalism that expanded facing its own Europeanized fantasies. It produced the affirmation of the sovereignty of each State, by means of large estates based on intensive and seasonal in labor that also led to the depopulation of the territory. As Wilcox rightly observed in 1910:

“The number of shepherds employed decreases steadily as the holdings called *estancias* increase in size. Thus, to cite only one example, in the region of Última Esperanza before 1905, when there were many *estancias* owned by different people, the population was greater than it is at the present, simply because all but two or three of the *estancias* have been acquired by a single company, the Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego” directed by the Braun-Menéndez-Behety.”<sup>312</sup>

Although those companies were legally Chilean and were managed by foreign residents, the awareness of their control by British capital, the fact that their managers were all British, and the criticism of large estates made them an object of critical attention. Although, as we have seen, European interests were privileged on both sides of the frontier, with the turn of the century and the expansion of the state apparatus the fears of the elite and the resistance among worker organizations increased. Governmental fears and social criticism no longer related to, as in the nineteenth century, the possible imperial occupation of Patagonia. On the contrary, the ‘foreignization’ of the economy and daily life became critical in a monopolized territory that expected to be “nationalized” (Argentinized and Chileanized) because of its geopolitical significance. According to an economic monograph about the initial period of colonization, as early as 1877 Magallanes “had evolved [...] into a position of well deserved

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<sup>311</sup> I have not been able to date the verse this fragment belongs to. It is Argentino Luna’s milonga “Puro bla-bla,” a claim against metropolitan, centralist promises.

<sup>312</sup> Wilcox, *op.Cit*, p.828.



richness and maturity, but although it stopped being a burden for the Republic, increasingly powerful economic ties were distancing it from a national integration in order to connect it with the European market”<sup>313</sup>. The Chilean exclave in the Strait turned into capital of a transfrontier enclave economy that extended its control until the south of Chubut and the Tierra del Fuego.

There are many examples of the supremacy of the market over the State within the various forms of local power. In June 1900, for example, José Alejandro Muñoz, a Chilean farmhand, found a promissory note on a pier in Punta Arenas from the Bank of Tarapacá & London from Río Gallegos. Issued to Sara Braun, who was born in Courland, the note had been lost by the New Zealander Cameron, administrator of the British *Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego*, in the Kosmos Hotel. The hotel belonged to the ex Captain Grönewold, from the German Shipping Co. that had followed the routes of the Pacific Steam. Muñoz passed the document to Pascual Pino and Adolf Kruger, a German, because he didn't know how to read. Pino and Kruger tried to cash it in the bank, but because of the powerful name written on the document the bank personnel denied the payment of the nine hundred pounds and notified the police. The perpetrators of the unsuccessful scheme were charged with a fine of forty pesos<sup>314</sup>. The policemen who found the check, and the fine applied were Chilean; everyone else involved in this plot were foreigners, starting from the property of the pier and the bank to the money.

Salaries were in pounds, on the ranches they ate Worcestershire sauce, drank scotch, *Old Tom* English gin or *Bols* from Holland, and in Punta Arenas- the first newspaper of the region said in 1894 - “Being the few Chileans that inhabit the colony we find the potatoes, the onions that come to us from Portugal, Germany or France, to be bitter.”<sup>315</sup> Likewise, despite the functioning of *graserías* in Patagonia, the tallow and lard people used came from Buenos Aires, the only milk available was condensed milk from Switzerland and Holland, and the

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<sup>313</sup> Vergara, *op.Cit.*, p.68.

<sup>314</sup> ANH-FJM, Caja 101, Leg. 2. Contra José Alejandro Muñoz, Pascual Pino y Adolfo Kruger. Estafa frustrada. 7.8.1900. See also in the same archive, Caja 313, 6.1916. Por estafa.

<sup>315</sup> “Chiloé y Magallanes,” editorial in *EMG*, 29.1.1894, p.1.

difference in price between butter from Puerto Montt and Danish butter wasn't all that significant, at least in 1895.<sup>316</sup> With the wealth generated in the 1890s, likewise, the members of the new oligarchy dressed as they did in England, Moritz Braun recalled:

“We luckily have on hand the example by permanent and direct contact with Europe [...] We subscribed to the *Illustrated London News* and followed the development of the world events, as well as the dress of the protagonists.” [We also] “received specialized magazines and the catalogs from the big stores [...] For everything, whether they were the big things or the small, even toys, we bought directly from *Galería Lafayette, Au Bon Marchais, Aux Printemps*. The orders arrived with perfect regularity.”<sup>317</sup>

Faced with the simultaneous installation of the sovereignty of European capital and the States' territorial sovereignty, the border defined by the latter didn't apply to the former. The immigrant workers however, could also take advantage of the territorial demarcation for their own benefit. Mobility throughout the region produced a social sovereignty that reinforced metropolitan fears about a region not considered to be sufficiently national. An illustrative case happened in mid 1915. In that year the Ministry of the Argentinean Navy wrote to the Minister of the Interior, pointing out that a certain individual Mateo Trebotic, of “Croatian or Dalmatian nationality,” had established a small business in Punta Dungeness, the sandbar that marks the continental entrance to the Strait of Magellan from the Atlantic just above the border, where a lighthouse and a radiotelegraph station were erected. Trebotic, who came in 1887 or 1888, hired by Julius Popper for gold prospecting in Tierra del Fuego, had bought the small business from a Chilean colonist's widow.<sup>318</sup>

The problem with Trebotic's business was that he had a fishing permit and a cantina license issued by Chile and that he cohabited with a Chilean woman but

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<sup>316</sup> “Revista Comercial,” *EMG*, 28.04.1895, p.3. Butter from Puerto Montt was sold only in 25 pound barrels at a price of CHP 27; Danish butter, on the other hand was sold in one pound cans at CHP 1.6. The bulk price, then, benefited middlemen and ranchers.

<sup>317</sup> Braun, *Memorias...op.Cit.*, pp. 140-141.

<sup>318</sup> Mateo Martinic. 1999. *La Inmigración Croata en Magallanes*. Punta Arenas: Impresos Vanic, p.22.

had built a storage facility on the Argentinean side of the border. With this, “one part of his business was on the Chilean side and the other was in Argentinean territory, thus trying to evade national jurisdiction of both countries, creating with his business problems for the Ministry.” Given that he was effectively escaping all control, more than “try[ing] to evade” it, the Governor sent an official letter to Navy Headquarters, who in turn reported to the person in charge of the border outpost in Dungeness. The answer took three months to arrive, which argued that the effectiveness of the attempt to eradicate the business was debatable. The problems caused by the sale of liquor to the marines stationed in the area, as well as the workers of the Monte Dinero Sheep Farming Co., wouldn’t be resolved. The answer also pointed out that “international claims could not be avoided [either if] the house is moved to this side of the border and a storage unit is left on the Chilean side, or [if the merchant] received certain types of taxed merchandise for consumption in Chile, given the case that he has ties and compatriot suppliers in Punta Arenas.”<sup>319</sup> In that gaps within large British property and the signals of statality, the old gold seeker in a Tierra del Fuego without State or law (but Popper’s law), found a precarious way to exercise settlement and building it as a node of transnational sociability precisely where “the nationality” wanted to be stronger.

## **Conclusions.**

“And it is in this way that British capital and industry dominates in the *calichales* of the northern desert, the Patagonian pampas and the Tierra del Fuego, and the products from those regions go first to supply the markets of London and Liverpool to, convert into gleaming pounds, that later line the pockets of English entrepreneurs.”  
Editorial from *El Magallanes*, 03.24.1895.

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<sup>319</sup> AHP-FGSC. 1915, 140-1005. Min. Marina. Nota sobre establecimiento casa de negocios en Pta Dungenes.

Argentinean and Chilean postcolonial colonialism inscribed a wide circle in Patagonia. The legislation that created the National Territories began with the presumption that there was a territory to convert into national and that, while this didn't occur, the political rights of its inhabitants were suspended. At the end of the first colonial cycle, with the economic crisis that followed the export boom during the First World War, the argument of the *not yet* mentioned in the first pages of this chapter was found to be completely valid. The attempts at constructing the nation unfurled through the penal and racial settlement policies, and the colonial administration policies expressed through special legislation, demonstrated their limitations after decades in operation. The territory to be nationalized was, in the opinion of most witnesses, as foreign as before the colonial endeavor. That is why, when working-class insurgency threatened the local order jointly built by the national state and imperial capital, the answer was violence. This was key, we point out in the final chapters, for the consolidation of a national identity and the unprecedented control of transfrontier movements.

In 1927, a great General Congress of Provincial Governments organized by the Argentine Patriotic League, decided upon the initiative of its brigade in Río Gallegos, to establish that city as its headquarters. It was a symbol of a *national debt* with “that not so much ignored but, forgotten world” that was still to be united to the Fatherland where, thanks to God and the Military a communist and unpatriotic attempt that united the “rebellious” from Magallanes and Santa Cruz had been defeated.<sup>320</sup> The Governor from Santa Cruz was appointed to head the Honorary Commission and, as such, would show the shortcomings of the Territory. Therefore, The League would make them “count before the public authorities as the general desire of the residents.” Among those topics provincialization was stressed, “the nationalization of the border residents; the promotion of primary and special education; the promotion of the arts and the sciences; the economic problems related to the land regime, communication and transport,” “and especially fiscal income that, because it was national and added to the common treasury, were distributed to the benefit of the entire country,

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<sup>320</sup> Liga Patriótica Argentina, *op.Cit.*, p.6.

except the towns which produce it”<sup>321</sup>. The ownership of the land that was moved from indigenous control to the nominal property of the State, and later concentrated in a European oligopoly, was not mentioned. The land was, from the beginning of the twentieth century, the main demand of the middle and working classes.

With the combination of traditional economic liberalism and chauvinistic conservatism found within the ranks of foreign ranchers and national officials, the residents of the southern territories were finally included in a narrative in which the particular interests of a group were presented as the general interests of the population. National hegemony, as class hegemony, was achieved at the four-hundredth anniversary of the “discovery of the Strait” by Magallanes: a region took his name, and a solid bronze and granite statue nine meters tall put him in the center of the local metropolis, facing Tierra del Fuego. Under one of his boots, two figures represent the *Selknam* and *Yagán* Indians, and on the third side a nude mermaid is erected, raising the coat of arms of Chile and Spain. Below the mermaid reads, in the same sized letters, “To Hernando de Magallanes/José Menéndez.”<sup>322</sup> Menéndez had died in 1918, having consolidated economic dominance over the south. Known as “King of the Patagonia,” the Asturian had closed a historical circuit that went from the verification of the emptiness and astonishment at the Patagonian giants by the Portuguese mariner in the service of Spain, to their extermination and the complete occupation of the *Tierra Austral*, as a tributary area of the imperial system.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> AHP-FGSC. Leg.327. Exp.171L. s/t. Manuel Carles y 2 mas Dir LPA a G Vidal, 30.12.1926.

<sup>322</sup> Borrero, *op.Cit.*, pp. 17-18; Astanch defense of Menéndez and of Borrero in Martinic, *Menéndez y Braun... op.Cit.*, n.187, p.330.

<sup>323</sup> At the least in this sense, Argentinean Patagonia was incorporated into a process of national reach: the dependency of British capital. As H.S. Ferns pointed out, “For Great Britain, Argentina (at least during the years 1880-1914) was more important than Egypt or China and, perhaps, even than India as a source of foodstuffs and raw materials, a market and a place for the investment of capital.” See Ferns. 1953. “Britain’s Informal Empire in Argentina, 1806-1914.” *Past and Present* 4: 60-74.

### CHAPTER 3. THE STATE AND THE MAKING OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF CAPITAL.

The two hundred year relationship between the Argentinean and Chilean States has been defined in good part by the fight for sovereignty over Patagonia. In Christmas of 1979, the military dictatorships that ruled both countries narrowly avoided war. In dispute were three unpopulated headlands in the *Canal del Beagle* (Beagle Canal), the most southern islands of the Americas, to the south of which the only land remaining is Antarctica. Since the last third of the nineteenth century, the public memory and the official historiography had been constructed based on the assumption that southern Patagonia 'was robbed' by the neighboring state. Due to the ineptitude of national politicians, trans-Andean envy, historians and diplomats lack of vision, or a weakness brought on by circumstances, Argentina and Chile would have 'lost' a land that nationalism claimed as belonging to their Fatherland since *time immemorial*.

The Chilean establishment of wretched outposts on the northern coast of the Strait began the fight for sovereignty in the early 1840s. This fight involved diplomatic, representational, legal and military capacities. Although the conflict was developed through formal negotiations in the metropolitan centers the results were felt on the frontiers. At the end of the nineteenth century, the conflict had a clear winner: controlling land and credit on both sides of a still nonexistent international demarcation was a recently established European elite. Altogether with the oligarchies of Buenos Aires and Santiago, they had articulated a territory that until then was *unknown* and *wretched*, thanks to corruption and imperial capital.

#### **State Formation, Capital and Sovereignty.**

What came first, the State or the capital? The people. What came to be thought of as customary in the metropolitan centers, however, constituted a radical innovation in colonial spaces. The preeminence and the tradition of subordination to political structures like property or nationality were constructed

from the foundations on which metropolitan centers were built; and they expressed themselves differently in the frontiers. The basic dilemma of any colonization process resides in the categories under which land and recently occupied settlements are incorporated. The ‘savage nomads’ of Patagonia were treated by the States with a contingent and pragmatic racism that divorced them from their territory as much as from the States and the capital that displaced their sovereignty<sup>324</sup>. ‘Patagonians’ and ‘Fuegians’ were subjugated to unstable and changing legal conditions, oscillating between interdiction and being placed as having Underage status, on one hand and on the other their objectification as being ‘savage’, scarcely human and living the nude, ‘Bare Life.’<sup>325</sup> More commonly, natives were considered to be non-persons yet demands were made upon them as though they were legal subjects. Gradually or brutally displaced, deported or exterminated, southern Patagonian natives *themselves* were not colonized but their environment was: the channels and land were converted into jurisdictional territory, without them being converted into colonial subjects themselves.<sup>326</sup>

As a civilizational frontier, the States didn’t recognize any territorial rights established previous to the States arrival to the region. As an international border, Patagonian territory claimed as Chilean or Argentinean was considered to be property of the State and the only restriction of its extension was a jurisdictional demarcation that was waiting to be defined on a diplomatic level. Patagonian’ and

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<sup>324</sup> The recognition of sovereignty and property over land has been denied, by state-centric cultures, to the people without State and not sedentary. A law debated since 1893 in Chile considered as public land (or “wastelands”) those included between the province of Bio-Bio and the Territory of Magallanes that were not protected by registered deed, it was by State concession or by individuals in favor of a third party. See Ramón Briones Luco. 1900. *Glosario de colonización i esposición de las leyes, decretos i demás antecedentes relativos al despacho de colonización, hasta el 1° de enero de 1900*. Santiago: Imp. Nacional, 676-702. In Magallanes it was calculated, not counting the concession of 1,000,000 hectares that gave origin to the Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego, a total of 2.6 million hectares of fiscal land.

<sup>325</sup> Giorgio Agamben. 1995 [2006]. *Homo Sacer. El Poder Soberano y la Nuda Vida*. Trans. A. Cuspinera. Valencia: Pre-Textos. Cfr. Antonio Negri. 2001 [2007]. “El monstruo político. Vida desnuda y potencia,” in Gabriel Giorgi & Fermín Rodríguez (eds.) *Ensayos sobre biopolítica*. Mexico: Paidós, pp. 93-139.

<sup>326</sup> On the mobile status of Indians and New Indians see chapter 5. Regarding the Selknam’s genocide the greatest introduction is written by Carlos Vega and Paola Grendi Ilharreborde. 2002. *Vejámenes Inferidos a Indígenas de Tierra del Fuego. Vol.3. Documentos*. Punta Arenas: CONADI XII Región.

‘Fuegian’ displacement from their land constituted the first symbolic operation in the venture that rapidly joined stationality and capitalist productivity. This venture expressed the oligarchic desire to instill a history that was being written in London, from where coincidentally the capital and the managers of the sheep expansion came from. In Karl Marx words this was: *primitive accumulation*.

In the first volume of *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, published in 1867, Marx defined the process of primitive accumulation as a two-sided movement of expropriation, in which land and peasants were separated and changed: “a process that transforms, on the one hand, the social means of subsistence and of production into capital, on the other, the immediate producers into wage laborers.”<sup>327</sup> This brutal formula “freed” labor and profitable land. Starting from the 1870s, this process took an imperial approach with a worldwide reach, thanks to the degree of development of European capital. This process addressed a breach in Marx’s formula: the effects of the idea projected onto the ‘natives’ by those in power as being *radically unfit*, excluded them from having concrete roles in society (except for being considered as an obstacle to progress) in the new capitalist system. Given the characteristics of the occupation process in Patagonia, at the same time that the land was ‘freed’ in order to make it available for private acquisition, the process of primitive accumulation eliminated the only labor force available. The acceleration of the triangulations of capital through the frontiers of the Empire and the nation achieved to bring, “proprietors of nothing, except their own labor” even up to this *tierra incognita*.<sup>328</sup>

As I have said before, despite state attempts immigration to Patagonia was mainly carried out in a spontaneous or free manner, a process that manifested itself in three migratory currents.<sup>329</sup> First, in the forced seasonal migration of Chilotes, which resulted from the colonization of their land, the saturation of small family owned property in Chiloe and the power of attraction or positive differential of the wages in a Patagonia that was incorporated to a monetary

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<sup>327</sup> Karl Marx. 1867 [2006]. *El Capital. Vol. I. Crítica de la economía política*. Trad. Wenceslao Roces. México: FCE, Chapter 26.

<sup>328</sup> Friedrich Engels. 1894 [1964]. *Anti-Duhring. La subversión de la ciencia por el señor Eugen Duhring*. México: Grijalbo, p. 200.

<sup>329</sup> See chapters 2 and 5.



economy.<sup>330</sup> Secondly, unskilled and semiskilled workers from central Chile and to a lesser extent from Rio de la Plata attracted to Patagonia by diverse factors. Among the workers there was an enhanced feeling of an ‘open frontier’, or freedom that allowed them to partially escape state and labor disciplining. Third, through chain migration as in the case of the Chilotes, European proletarian labor that found in racial privilege another source of attraction. European businessmen, like Chileans and Argentineans, distrusting the “industriousness” of the ‘Americans,’ opted to choose Europeans when they could, even for badly paid jobs. Despite the differences in the pace and motivation of immigration, the range of possibilities found in the open frontier and some short lived ‘gold fevers’, together with chance, bad luck or problems with the law, motivated most new settlers to come.

Politically speaking while the land was divorced from its sovereigns, diplomatic negotiations resolved international demarcation, and labor came from residual waves of immigration, the definitive form that the colonization could and would adopt still needed to be defined. The nationalizing desires of the central States (of the territory, first; of the immigrants then, at the beginning of the twentieth century; and of commerce in the 1910s) should strategically resolve effective forms of occupation of that ‘public land.’ This chapter proposes that European capital and nation State acted symbiotically over Patagonia, and their articulated presence had at least four effects. First, the rapid formation of an oligopoly that controlled trade movements through an international delimitation that was highly disputed and slowly realized. Secondly, that this oligopoly consolidated family and commercial networks with the oligarchies from Buenos Aires and Santiago. Thirdly and later on, that the neighboring State and the local

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<sup>330</sup> Alfredo Weber. 1903. *Chiloé. Su estado actual. Su colonización su porvenir*. Santiago: Mejía; Agustín Torrealba. 1917. *Tierras fiscales e indígenas. Su legislación y jurisprudencia*. Santiago: Universitaria; Agustín Torrealba. 1917. *Tierras fiscales e indígenas. Su legislación y jurisprudencia*. Santiago: Universitaria; Jorge Schwarzenberg y Arturo Munizabal. 1926. *Monografía geográfica e histórica del archipiélago de Chiloé*. Concepción: Wissenschaftliches Archiv von Chile (Scientific Archive of Chile). Philippe Grenier. 1984. *Chiloé et les Chilotes: marginalité et dépendance en Patagonie chilienne. Étude de géographie humaine*. La Calade, Aix-en-Provence: EDISUD; Alfredo Weber. 1903. *Chiloé. Su estado actual. Su colonización su porvenir*. . Santiago: Mejía.

population recognized the existence of a jurisdiction over the land as a consequence of the introduction of the estancia system. Fourth, that in few years the discretionary handing over of lands gave the southern National Territories of Colonization “a virtual character of the tributary colonies” within “an imperial productive scheme,” as Mateo Martinic stated. Or as Marx said about Australia, Patagonia transformed into a “breeding ground of wool for England.”<sup>331</sup>

In the development of this argument I address some aspects that made possible this sudden transformation of an “empty space” into pastoral land for millions of sheep. A land policy based on privileges allocated to European settlers based on a racist criteria, the free influx of European capitals, state subsidies to leading economic groups, and the release of custom rights, that is, the free export of products. I propose that the ‘joining thread’ of these competing sovereignties, while they were mutually constituted (both States and those of States and capital), was corruption.

### **Corruption and State Building.**

The relation between corruption and State building has been central in the English case. The discussion about the ‘Old Corruption’ was renewed by E.P Thompson and was developed by Corrigan and Sayer as a key aspect in the process of the constitution of the State, and by G.S Jones as a key aspect in the formation of the English working class.<sup>332</sup> More recently, Philip Harling has developed an excellent synthesis of the debate and has categorized the ‘Old Corruption’ as it was denounced by ‘radical agitators’, this is, as a ‘parasitical system [...] through which the elite fed its insatiable appetite for power and money at other peoples expense.’<sup>333</sup> In these aspects businesses and politics operated

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<sup>331</sup> Martinic. 1992. *Historia de la Región...* op.Cit; Marx, op.Cit., p.376.

<sup>332</sup> Philip Corrigan & Derek Sayer. 1985. *The Great Arch. English State Formation as Cultural Revolution*. London: Basil Blackwell; Gareth S. Jones 1983. *Languages of Class: studies in English working class history, 1832-1982*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, esp. c.3, “Rethinking Chartism.”

<sup>333</sup> Philip Harling. 1995. “Rethinking ‘Old Corruption’,” *Past and Present* 147, pp. 127-158, 127. See also his book from 1996, concentrating on state reforms that would have put an end to “parasitism”: *The Waning of ‘Old Corruption’. The Politics of Economical Reform in Britain, 1779-1846*. Oxford: Clarendon Press

together, inside of and through a State headed by a king acting as *primus inter predators*.<sup>334</sup> Confronting the ‘moral economy’ were the political economy, sinecures, special interest appointments and fraud.

In Latin America private enrichment through the use of public institutions has been defined as one of the characteristics of the ‘oligarchic period’. This coincides with the critical phase of imperial expansion, whose resources controlled the production of primary materials and their commercialization which for this reason propelled the expansion of the ‘internal’ frontiers, bureaucracy and the growth of public treasuries.<sup>335</sup> In a study of the Chilean case, whose conclusions extend to Argentina, Enrique Fernández identified an “oligarchic State logic.” This logic would have been expressed in two ways: through the utilization of the State as an instrument of social mobility concerning status (“aristocratization”) and the accumulation of wealth (“patrimonialization”).<sup>336</sup>

As Natalio Botana suggested, Alberti’s “Possible Republic” was the Argentinian version of the Chilean Portalean Republic. This was possible once the elites from Buenos Aires settled in their favor the balances of power between the provinces, the tasks of territorial integration and of national unity towards 1880.<sup>337</sup> The *oligarchic logic* inherited from Portales and the “Alberdian formula” was compatible because of their colonialist mindset, this is as Dipesh Chakrabarty stated, as an expression of a *stagist history* that presupposes a righteous aptitude in the elites and a lack of ability or rationality for the greater majority of the people. The governed *then wouldn’t be, yet prepared* to govern themselves- the lower classes and women, as well as indigenous nations, children, peasants or the *true nation*<sup>338</sup>. The logic of the metropolitan elites, patrimonialists and with

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<sup>334</sup> Edward Thompson, “Patricios y plebeyos,” in 1991 [1995]. *Costumbres en Común*. Barcelona: Crítica, pp.29-115, 43. See also his “The peculiarities of the English,” *Socialist Register*, 2: 1965, 311-362.

<sup>335</sup> Walter Nugent. 1989. “Frontiers and Empires in Late Nineteen Century,” *The Western Historical Quarterly* 20: 393-408.

<sup>336</sup> Enrique Fernández. 2003. *Estado y Sociedad en Chile, 1891-1931. El Estado excluyente, la lógica estatal oligárquica y la formación de la sociedad*. Santiago: LOM.

<sup>337</sup> Natalio Botana. 1977 [2005]. *El orden conservador. La política argentina entre 1880 y 1916*. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, p.49.

<sup>338</sup> Chakrabarty’s eloquent expression: “That was what historicist consciousness was, a recommendation to the colonized to wait. Acquiring a historical consciousness [...] was also to

aristocratic aspiration, colonialist and historicist would have ‘naturally’ articulated in institutionalized capitalist social relations: forming the bureaucracy and the Army, conquering new lands, attracting and giving special privileges to private capital, promoting immigration, and disciplining the labor force<sup>339</sup>. This sovereignty of the State, since Hobbes defined by *transcendence* and *representation* in law, separated itself from the ordinary people that it loathed and the territories that it did not know.<sup>340</sup>

What I propose is to analyze the corruption that links the establishment of a joint sovereignty of capital and labor. Sovereignty is the materialization of those abstractions in social relations that are, or try to be, defined according to the terms of a State that wants to territorialize and also by the conditions of deterritorialized capital. Those two factors come together to produce a *joined* sovereignty that ends up prevailing to the extent that the tension between settlement and circulation is concretely and historically resolved over the land and the people that populate the countryside. Corruption appears to be then as an unlawful or illegal mechanism, which public and private interests intertwine. Formally placed above private interests, the State acted through its authorities in favor of them when those interests lined up with those of the authorities. Friendships and the commercial interest community played a decisive role in fundamental decisions regarding the penetration of the territory. Even more so the state apparatus, particularly Navy and Army reconnaissance, mobilized public resources in order to facilitate private expansion. This however didn’t happen as a result of the first settler’s efforts or because of the pioneer’s accumulation of capital, but as part of a global process of

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learn this art of waiting. This waiting was the realization of the ‘not yet’ of historicism.” Dipesh Chakrabarty. 2000. *Provincializing Europe: postcolonial thought and historical difference*. New Jersey: Princeton U.P., pp.8-22, 159, 249ss. Reference on p.8. For Oszlack, this idea was expressed in the construction of Argentina, where “the advances of the State over society completed, consolidating, the process of national integration.” Oscar Oszlack. 1997. *La formación del Estado argentino. Orden, progreso y organización nacional*. Buenos Aires: Ariel.

<sup>339</sup> Oszlack, *op.Cit.*, pp.271-272.

<sup>340</sup> According to Hardt and Negri, “on the one hand, the transcendence of the sovereign is founded not on an external theological support but only in the immanent logic of human relations. On the other hand, the representation that functions to legitimize this sovereign power also alienates it completely from the multitude of subjects.” Michael Hardt and Antoni Negri. 2000. *Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard U.P., p.85.

imperial expansion. Aided by government subsidies, private expansion became unstoppable and extended through the disputed territories by Chile and Argentina.

The close relationships between government authorities and business are difficult to prove. There is an unwritten law that says that criminals shouldn't sign self-incriminating documents or leave behind their fingerprints. Being that neither capital nor State are things but relational processes or, as Corrigan and Sayer pointed out, "regulated forms of social relationship," and considering that it is always easier to identify 'things' rather than signs of interest, I do develop an approach derived from different sources and interpretations.<sup>341</sup> First I worked with fragmented pieces of information left behind from business correspondences and to a lesser extent evidence from government functionaries and criticism of business interests published in the press. Available sources cover only some periods of activity from some businessmen. Through the activity of these businessmen it is possible to see a particular way of understanding business, the relations with the State and behavioral patterns. The demonstration of corruption behind *all* decisions made by government authorities is more complicated: evidence is scarce, sources are limited.

Despite this, analyzing patterns shown overtime in the colonization/privatization of Patagonia, I turn to the genealogies of the most important families, which were ingrained in positions of power in political institutions, the financial sector and in the military. Biographies, and websites from the National Congress that reconstruct family trees, help to establish overlapping interests through marriage and family ties.<sup>342</sup> In closing, I have tried

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<sup>341</sup> Corrigan & Sayer, *op.cit.*, 180. As the authors have stated, "The enormous power of 'the State' is not only external and objective; it is in equal part internal and subjective." Therefore they suggest, "we have to understand state forms through their materialization in the historical experience of different social groups" (p.94).

<sup>342</sup> Among the main printed references found are Pedro P. Figueroa. 1900. From the dictionary *Diccionario biográfico de extranjeros en Chile*. Santiago: Imprenta Moneda; Virgilio Figueroa. 1925-1931. *Diccionario histórico biográfico y bibliográfico de Chile*. Santiago: La Ilustración; Edelmiro Correa. 1950. *Vidas patagónicas*. Buenos Aires: s.n; Ronald Hilton. 1950. *Who's Who in Latin America. Part V. Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay*. Stanford: Stanford University Press; Armando de Ramón. 1999. *Biografías de chilenos: miembros de los poderes ejecutivo, legislativo y judicial*. Santiago: Universidad Católica. Among the most consulted web sites is Wikipedia, of course, the website *lineas genealógicas* [www.genealog.cl](http://www.genealog.cl), *The British Presence in Southern*

to explain the main economic, familiar and political ramifications of power, the repetition of names and the exchange of roles between government authorities and businessmen. As Carlo Ginzburg pointed out in the *Judge and the Historian*, “context, considered as an array of historically determined possibilities, [...] serves to fill in what documents fail to tell us about an individual.” As a field of options, “not necessary consequences”: they do not constitute judgment over subjects, but only the historian’s judgment and the presentation of connections that being derived in “the oligarchic” are forgotten in their specificity and impact.<sup>343</sup>

### **Land and Corruption**

Patagonia appeared in cartographic representations as an immensely empty space until the middle of the nineteenth century; an empty space that was oblivious to the frontiers of the recently constructed national sovereignties. While France and England thought of Patagonia as a land without “known sovereignty and therefore *nullis*, that is, belonging to no one and therefore available,” in Martinic’s words, Argentina and Chile started to imagine Patagonia as claimable based on the principle of *uti possidetis*.<sup>344</sup> The imperial fiction of empty space confronted the post-colonial fiction of the empty: the first pointed to the absence of “regular possession,” that is to say, controlled by the state; the second pointed to the presumed colonial legacy and to the ‘lack of civilization.’<sup>345</sup> Starting from the 1840s, the imperial fiction of the empty started to be resolved and with that so was the postcolonial fiction: *no mans land*, now claimed by the States, started being allocated to civilized people. Until the middle of the 1880s the elites had

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*Patagonia*, <http://patbrit.org>, and the congressional pages of Chile and Argentina, especially [http://historiapolitica.bcn.cl/resenas\\_parlamentarias](http://historiapolitica.bcn.cl/resenas_parlamentarias).

<sup>343</sup> Carlo Ginzburg. 1991 [1997]. *The Judge and the Historian. Marginal Notes on a Late-twentieth Century Miscarriage of Justice*. Trans. A. Shugaar. London: Verso, pp.116-117.

<sup>344</sup> Mateo Martinic. 2006. *Historia de la Región Magallánica. Tomo II. Ocupación Nacional y Colonización (1841-1905)*. Punta Arenas: UMAG, p.397; Alfonso Aguirre. 1943. *Relaciones históricas de Magallanes*. Santiago: Imp. Chile, pp.55-58.

<sup>345</sup> A few days after the ceremony of the occupation of the Strait by Chile in 1843 occurred, authorities complained to the captain of a French steamship because the raising of his flag to which he answered “until today the regions in which I am have not been subjugated to either regular possession, nor covered by any flag,” *El Araucano*, 17.11.1843, transcribed in Aguirre, *op.Cit.*, p.303.

very precarious knowledge of the territory, despite expeditions launched by Buenos Aires and Santiago as part of the ‘demarcation conflict’. Even the Tehuelche’s route that linked the precarious Argentinean settlement of the Río de Gallegos with the growing metropolis of Punta Arenas, was still not mapped. “The occupation remained on the coast,” an engineer stated who was in charge of measuring those lands, and a “vast portion” of which were leased even when “its location was in large part uncertain.”<sup>346</sup> In what was the only urban area, until the end of 1889 the only way of acquiring land was, “the right of voluntary occupation, by way of a tacit tolerance [or the expressed permission] from the provincial government.” In the countryside, until the end of the previous decade, the same principle was used to acquire land.

This principle was changed when the convergence of four events took place: the beginning of the regular navigation between Europe and the Pacific through the Strait in 1867; the introduction of sheep by Magellanian authorities in 1877, the exploration of Tierra del Fuego in 1879, and the diplomatic definition of the southern demarcation in 1881. The periodic navigation flow towards Callao, Valparaiso and Liverpool allowed for the arrival of “numerous settlers attracted by the generous concessions from the Chilean Government,” as the Argentinean explorer Bové stated in 1880.<sup>347</sup> The benefits to Chileans, and Chilotes in particular, started in 1867 and were eliminated in 1869 on a racial basis. For three decades, benefits went exclusively to Europeans, producing small though permanent waves of migration.<sup>348</sup> Receiving food rations, tools and land settlers

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<sup>346</sup> Alejandro Bertrand. 1886. *Memoria sobre la Rejión Central de las Tierras Magallánicas presentada al Señor Ministro de Colonización por Alejandro Bertrand. Ingeniero Civil.* Santiago: Imp. Nacional, pp.3-4.

<sup>347</sup> Giacomo Bové, “Informe VI. De la Isla de los Estados a Punta Arenas,” in *Expedición Austral Argentina, op.Cit.*, pp. 69-81, 80.

<sup>348</sup> The 1874 Law of Colonization excluded Chileans from the category of settlers and, was exclusively dedicated to European and American immigrants. The justification of the position, according to Solberg, would have been the interest of the Chilean elite to prevent migration of agricultural workers out of the central valley.” Only for Magallanes, this exclusion was eliminated in 1893 and for the entire country in 1896. A regulation established in 1895 that the settlers of Magallanes should be exclusively Chilean but “it had no practical effect,” according to Briones, the land was useless to cultivate and insufficient for cattle farming. Although the regulation didn’t attract a significant number of settlers, it drove a migratory cycle to Patagonia from Chiloe, by means of the trips done by the Chilean navy ships *Casma* and *Angamos*, which resulted in the reduction of labor force costs during the shearing season. This tended to reinforce the anti-

had plots of land that were at least 48 hectares (about 118 acres) on the outskirts of the Colony, “exempt from all taxes, custom duties and military service for twenty years”<sup>349</sup>. All of these efforts made towards the creation of official colonies, from San Julián in the Atlantic until Agua Fresca ended in failure. Generally speaking, these pioneering settlers weren’t the ones that turned into ranchers. When these efforts did not produce the expected results, a kind of *productive revolution* that clashed with official explanations concerning the ‘racial deficiency’, assigned to the Chilotes, the soil or the weather, as the Swiss and French complained about, motivated the authorities to rescue a previously failed project: to bring sheep, capital and British settlers from Malvinas<sup>350</sup>.

In 1876, Governor Dublé obtained the authorization from the Government to visit the islands. In Port Stanley “the Governor of Magallanes and the officials from the Chilean navy were the object of the best displays of affection on the part of authorities and the inhabitants,” although they rejected the Chilean settlement offer because “the question of borders’ was not defined yet.”

The government bought sheep, which were transported in the Navy’s ship until Isabel Island, which was granted for free by the government to the English businessman Reynard.<sup>351</sup> The following year, Reynard expanded his flock to Oazy

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immigrant stereotype of chilotans in Magallanes, since 1897, the same year that the Governor Bories formally asked to avoid sending more workers. Ramón Briones. 1900. *Glosario de colonización i esposición de las leyes, decretos i demás antecedentes relativos al despacho de colonización, hasta el 1° de enero de 1900*. Santiago: Imp. Nacional, p.11, 20, 21, 31; Solberg, C. 1970. *Immigration and Nationalism. Argentina and Chile 1890-1914*. Austin: U. of Texas Press, p.163.

<sup>349</sup> Viel-Conus contract concerning exemptions made to recruited (colonos enganchados) settlers, in ANH-MRE. Vol. 152. MinRex. Decretos. D. Errázuriz-Ibáñez, 18.4.1873; Colonization decree 2.12.1867 and colonization contracts for the Swiss, in Mariano Guerrero. 1897. *Memoria que el Delegado del Supremo Gobierno en el Territorio de Magallanes don Mariano Guerrero Bascuñan presenta al señor Ministro de Colonización*. Santiago: Ercilla, Volume II, pp. CLXI-CLXII y CLXVIII-CLXXI.

<sup>350</sup> Already in 1852 Minister Varas pointed out to the Governor the necessity to establish commercial relations with Malvinas, who told him of the islands characteristics. Towards 1870 Chile had established a consulate in the Malvinas and authorized the Governor to “admit” Malvineans “as settlers” to malvinas, giving them land although without ration or pension. ANH-FMRE. Vol. 86. Foreign Office. Colonization and civilization of the indigenous, fs.16; Vol. 140. Correspondence. Consular officials, 1868-70, fs.269; Vol. 143, MinRex. Min. Prats a Gob, fs.18.

<sup>351</sup> Robustiano Vera. 1897. *La Colonia de Magallanes i Tierra del Fuego (1843 a 1897)*. Santiago: Imp. de la Gaceta, 209-210. According to Yrarrázaval, in 1910 Dublé would point out that Reynard also traveled, convinced by the Governor to buy animals. J.M. Yrarrázaval. 1910. *El ganado lanar en Magallanes*. Santiago: Barcelona, 17. Four years after Reynard, “neighbor of



Harbour, and then to Santa Cruz, later becoming British Vice-Consul and founder of the British Club in less than a decade.<sup>352</sup> Double's mission was continued by his successor, who was then Sergeant Carlos Wood.<sup>353</sup> In 1878, according to a participant Wood, "called to his dispatch the most important and powerful among the colonists and urged them to travel throughout the surrounding region [...] without creating problems between them, because there was enough land left for everyone and [told them to] fill it with sheep. He assured the ownership of the land that they could cover through permits subject to a small fee"<sup>354</sup>. In 1881, with the signing of the Boundary Treaty, the requests for land grants multiplied igniting the competition between Santa Cruz and Magallanes to get animals from Malvinas.<sup>355</sup> Land was offered for free in both territories.<sup>356</sup>

In 1833, Great Britain had occupied the Malvina archipelago displacing Buenos Aires, in the search for maritime safety in their quest for global expansion.<sup>357</sup> Curiously, this did not spur Argentinean colonization of Patagonia, although it played some role in the Chilean decision to occupy the Strait.<sup>358</sup> The same year the occupation happened England established a government on the islands, which received growing maritime traffic connecting the Pacific, Australia

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Punta Arenas and English citizen," had accumulated sufficient capital to request the island completely –3 mil hectares- to the Minister, committing to introduce ten foreign families. This was, according to him, "the most that could live there." The concession was granted and followed others, both sides of the border with Santa Cruz. ANH-FMRE. Vol. 256. Decrees. 30.6.1882.

<sup>352</sup> Tom Jones. 1961. *Patagonian panorama*. London: Ouspoken Press, p.46.

<sup>353</sup> Wood's mother, Dolores Ramírez, belonged to a landowning family from Chicureo; his father Charles, was a painter, engineer and an English official who worked for the Chilean army. He designed the national emblem.

<sup>354</sup> Braun, *op. Cit.*, pp.54-55.

<sup>355</sup> The businessman Juan Bitsch produced, for example, a comparative chart of the conditions offered to the ranchers. See "Cuadro comparativo de los términos que ofrecen a sus colonos las Rep. de Chile y Argentina en el territorio Patagónico, y por la Gran Bretaña en las Islas Malvinas," n.d. (probably about mid 1884) in Manuel Bitsch (comp.). 1995. *Cartas del abuelo*. Volume I (1884-1892). Unpublished manuscript, 11-12.

<sup>356</sup> Horacio Lafuente. 1981. *La región de los Césares: apuntes para una historia económica de Santa Cruz*. . Buenos Aires Belgrano, 20.

<sup>357</sup> The archipelago of 12 thousand kilometers squared is made up of three main islands, located a little more than 180 miles/460 kilometers from Patagonia, near Río Gallegos. France, Spain and the United Kingdom disputed its sovereignty since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. After being abandoned by Spain, Buenos Aires exercised sovereignty at the beginning of the 1830s.

<sup>358</sup> Criticizing the delay in occupying the Strait, an influential Santiagan newspaper asked if it would be necessary to "wait for an English man to come to the islas Malvinas to erect a ranch in the strait and to tell ud, that England is already in its possetion?," as had already happened with the archipelago. *El Progreso*, Santiago, 28.11.1842, 1-2.

and Africa with the metropolis.<sup>359</sup> Taking advantage of tax exemptions, in two decades the number of sheep in the Malvinas reached to 600,000, occupying almost the entirety of productive land: more than 850,000 hectares. The extensive exploitation, a legacy of the British wool industry in Australia, replicated the high concentration of land: the Falkland Islands Co. occupied more than 280,000 hectares, seven major capitalists occupied 400,000, and the rest was split “between ten or twelve ranchers.”<sup>360</sup> Being that all the available land had been taken, and that the islands, “already fully stocked and overflowing with surplus animals,” as an English banker pointed out, produced what one of the main businessmen of the Patagonia characterized as the “Malvina invasion.”<sup>361</sup>

The invasion of Patagonia by Malvinian sheep and English capital based in Malvinas was the instrument that allowed the Chilean and Argentinean states to advance their dominion over the continental interior of the territory. Realizing early on the contradictions of this type of occupation, what we have come to call *the sheep sovereignty*, an Argentinean traveler asked as early as 1883 if the Tierra del Fuego wasn't going to have the same luck as the Malvinas.<sup>362</sup> Indeed, the expansion of the islands surplus found ample opportunity in Tierra del Fuego to reproduce the social relations of production of the British enclave. The extensive exploitation and the idea of the monopolistic company were reproduced in Patagonia in the form of a “colossal crab that wanted to take over everything,” according to the eloquent image constructed by a rival rancher, that destroyed the settlers and small producers.<sup>363</sup> And as it happened in Malvinas, it was done mainly under the control of British capital: the *Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego (la Explotadora, or SETF)* and the *Sociedad Anónima Importadora y Exportadora de la Patagonia (la Anónima, or SAIEP)* came to control the credit,

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<sup>359</sup> Barry Gough. 1990. “The British Reoccupation and Colonization of the Falkland Islands, or Malvinas, 1832-1843,” *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 22: pp. 261-287.

<sup>360</sup> Bertrand, *op.Cit.*, 117-118.

<sup>361</sup> Young, Braun, *op.Cit.*, pp.78-79.

<sup>362</sup> Nicolás Larraín. 1883. *Viajes en el Villarino a la Costa Sud de la República Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Juan Alsina, p.55.

<sup>363</sup> R. Stubenrauch a R. Hunneus, 05.06.1908, Archivo R. Stubenrauch, Outgoing Correspondence, 1907-1908, fs.376-377, transcribed in Mateo Martinic. 1985. *Última Esperanza en el tiempo*. Punta Arenas: UMAG, 138.

commerce and land, production, transport and the commercialization of wool and meat, throughout the Chilean and Argentinean Patagonia.

Starting from 1880, in Magallanes as in Santa Cruz the land was virtually monopolized in three ways. First, by way of concessions directly given to private investors, carried out by the Governor with or without consulting any Ministry. This type of discretionary allocation was predominant until 1900, and afterwards was used only occasionally. Secondly, by means of renting or through the public auction to legal or natural people. The auctions were carried out sporadically, starting from 1884 and the mechanism should formally make the allocations transparent.<sup>364</sup> Lastly, the concessions of the largest pieces of land, in *usufruct*, for rent or ownership, were given by direct decree of the Presidency.<sup>365</sup> Even though “all ranching societies” originated from the first concessions of land made between 1878 and 1885, “after the series of deferments, transfers, the buying of rental rights or of concessions, the definitive buying of land, etc., etc,” as a privileged witness pointed out in 1920, all of the forms of possession ended up merging together.<sup>366</sup> Likewise, oligarchic networks operated in the process of property development by influence peddling and information trafficking, bribes and by the speculation of agents and high bidders.

Concessions issued by governors were the first type of land allocations, which mainly favored foreign businessmen that had recently arrived to the Colony.<sup>367</sup> Based on the authorities personal knowledge of the applicant, land allocations were an institution favorable for bribery, the reproduction of privileges and the merging of interests among officials, usually military, and businessmen.

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<sup>364</sup> A law in 1893, specifically enacted for Magallanes, established that the land could only be rented by public auction. Briones, *op.Cit.*, pp.29, 65.

<sup>365</sup> Elsa M. Barbería. 1995. *Los dueños de la tierra en la Patagonia Austral, 1880-1920*. Río Gallegos: UFPA, 88-90. The laws for Argentinean land that were poorly implemented in Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego were those of direct Colonization by the State (applied in 1878, 1880, 1881 in the Colony Puerto Santa Cruz, y 1883, in Colony Puerto Deseado), and Law 1628, of Premios Militares (1885) in order to compensate the soldiers for the ‘Conquest of the Desert’.

<sup>366</sup> Díaz, Contardi y Cia. 1920. *Ganadería, Industrias y Comercio del territorio de Magallanes, desde sus principios hasta la actual época. Año 1919*. Santiago: Universo, p.13.

<sup>367</sup> Nogueira’s case is different from the future oligopolic business men, since he arrived to Magallanes as an illiterate sailor, a decade before the ranching expansion, in 1866. Like them, he became rich as a merchant and a moneylender. His power as rancher fundamentally constructed with the concession of Tierra del Fuego, and not on the continent.

This situation was facilitated by the destruction in 1877 of Magallanes' provincial government archive, whose reconstruction was repeatedly asked for from Santiago, and the non-existence of measurements and cartography until the middle of the following decade, the same as in Santa Cruz.<sup>368</sup> Furthermore, the fields were not fenced in until about 1900 and in the Tierra del Fuego until the 1920s divisions of land weren't apparent.<sup>369</sup>

The method of getting land was simple: a request was sent to the Governor, which expressed the commitment to bring in animals, to build up the land and to bring a certain number of settlers- usually Europeans, on occasion only foreigners- over a specified period of time. In some cases the Governor consulted the capital, but generally speaking to simplify the administrative process, the Governor awarded settlements or permits to exploit the forest. This system of land possession -property of the State and free or semi-free practice of usufruct- continued advancing until the cattle farms from Punta Arenas and Río Gallegos bordered each other. The permits granted in Magallanes by the previously mentioned governors Dublé and Wood, much like the permits granted by Lista and Moyano in Santa Cruz, should have been checked by the mid 1880s because of "the abuses committed."<sup>370</sup> This marked another constant: as the sole

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<sup>368</sup> ANH-FMRE. Vol. 210. MINREX. Magallanes Government, 1878. Note 77, 4.3.1878. Governor to the Minister of the RR.EE. and Colonization; Germán Vispo. 1931. *Tierras Fiscales. Tesis presentada a la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas*. Buenos Aires: Ferrari, p.21. In agreement with Vispo, in the territories of colonization of the Chaco and Neuquén the speculative concession of land, without being examined or measured, was also a constant. On the other hand, the measurements, when they began to do them became a high cost for the State, turned out to be practically useless because of their inaccuracy. As Perito Moreno stated, "The majority of land buyers in the southern territories played the lottery when they choose the numbers of thier lots in the official plans. This explains the relatively low price of the land sales and also the easiness for some to obtain large areas of land whose valuse is ignored by the nation that spends great amounts of money taking these measurements while reaching such noticeably incomplete results." Francisco P. Moreno. 1897. *Apuntes preliminares sobre una excursión á los territorios del Neuquén, Río Negro, Chubut y Santa Cruz*. La Plata: Talleres de Publicaciones del Museo.

<sup>369</sup> Arturo Fuentes pointed out that on his trip around the estates of Tierra del Fuego had found productive internal subdivisions ("sections") so vast that because of that didn't require enclosure. See his book, published in 1923, *Tierra del Fuego: Los Canales Magallánicos. Tomo Segundo*. Vol. 1. Valdivia: Imprenta Central E. Lambert.

<sup>370</sup> Vispo, *op.Cit.*, p.23. In 1936 a Chilean oficial from the Ministry of Agriculture proposed to erect a statute of Dublé, together with thoes of Magallanes and President Bulnes that ordered the ocupation. The statue of Dublé would be justified because he drove the *second occupation* of Patagonia, the sheep occupation. Julio Calderón. 1936. *Historia de la Industria Ganadera en el Territorio de Magallanes*. Santiago: Min. de Agricultura, p.5.

authority in regions in which distance made supervision by their superiors difficult, the Governor was the strong man that controlled everything from administrating justice until the assignment of privileges and special favors, enabling the abuse of power<sup>371</sup>.

In the case of Magallanes the regulation attempt showed the power acquired by European businessmen in only a few years time. Among those that attended the meeting organized by Governor Wood in 1878 were Elias Braun, Moritz's father, as well as Emilio Bays and Marius Andrieu, who all came to be official settlers over the last four years<sup>372</sup>. Also attending the meeting were Henry Reynard, Guillermo Bloom<sup>373</sup> and José Nogueira, who made his fortune trading with the Tehuelches, hunting seals, lending money to miners and in the rescue of or the plundering of shipwrecks.<sup>374</sup> In only three years, the earnings made by the distribution of land decided during that meeting were so considerable that the new Governor, Francisco Sampaio, criticized the scarce increase of the population and the high cost that the Colony meant for the State. In his first meeting with the ranchers Sampaio expressed to them that he "considered it to be outrageous that they were using for free the lands that belonged to the State. After his compelling

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<sup>371</sup> In the case of Magallanes, as an example, it is worth it to notice the monopoly of liquor sales to the Aonikenk which was established for Schythe's personal profit, in 1862, the warning to the governor for selling breeding animals belonging to the state for the consumption, in 1864, and Duple's abuses of power that triggered the mutiny of 1877. In the case of Santa Cruz, Piedra Buena- who wasn't governor-acted as a liquor trafficker, the first political leaders, Moyano and Lista, had equally profited with the permits for the comercialization of distilled liquor.

<sup>372</sup> Andrieu Marius' status as a settler was approved by a petition sent by Wood to the Ministry of Settlement, and was applied only in the lands referred to. ANH-FMRE. Vol. 205 (1878). Note Ministro to the Governor, 28.11.1878.

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<sup>374</sup> About the origins of Nogueira's fortune see chapter 4, and Mateo Martinic. 1986 [2a.ed, 1993]. *Nogueira el Pionero*. Punta Arenas: Universidad de Magallanes. Wood sold the first 300 hectares of land that Nogueira received, at 0.50 cents the hectare, 20 km. north of the Colony. ANH-FMR. Vol. 210. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. Gobernación de Magallanes, 1878. Governor to the foreign office, 18.05.1878, s/f. Reynard built his fortune very quickly and founded the influential British Association of Magallanes. See their *British Association of Magallanes. Report and Balance Sheet for the Year ended December 31st. 1942*. Punta Arenas: Yugoslava, published 1943. Bloom was a Russian, married to a Chilota, and early warehouse keeper that participated in the *habilitación* of miners. In the property of his warehouse he joined with German merchants from Valparaíso, Schröder & Co., who later on entered into a partnership with Wehrhahn.

declaration, which left everyone flabbergasted [...] sharp break” between the parties occurred.<sup>375</sup>

The Governor on his part stopped granting concessions and instead gave simple permits for sheepherding and proposed to the Government that the land should be rented by means of auction.<sup>376</sup> The merchants, turned ranchers, chose José Menéndez to act as their representative in Santiago, an action that the Governor would deem to be conspiratorial.<sup>377</sup> In the capital, Menéndez acted through the press, meeting with the Ministry of Colonization, and getting the support of the influential senator Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna and of Samuel Ossa Borne.<sup>378</sup> Ossa was the son of one of the richest moneylenders in Chile, having started gold mining in Magallanes and also having represented the interests of Juan Bitsch. In October 1885 Bitsch told Ossa that they should rush to fix any pending matters concerning land by contacting deputy Julio Bañados, and that he was, “ready to pay whatever fees and extra costs as soon as you advise me.”<sup>379</sup> These actions nevertheless, proved to be futile. “The Pig” Sampaio, as Bitsch called him, resisted the pressures that called for his resignation but had to negotiate with the merchants the conditions for the auctions of land.<sup>380</sup>

Except for the early stage of ranching development during Sampaio (1881-1888) and Briceños’ (1891-1892) terms, the relationship between governors and businessmen were characterized as being one with out problems and “of

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<sup>375</sup> Braun, *op.Cit.*, p.77.

<sup>376</sup> Francisco Sampaio, “Memoria que el Gobernador de Magallanes pasa al señor Mininstro de Relaciones Exteriores i Colonización,” en MINREX (Chile). 1883. *Memoria presentada por el Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores i de Colonización de Chile al Congreso Nacional de 1883*. Santiago: Nacional, pp.237-247, p.244.

<sup>377</sup> Díaz, Contardi y Cía., *op.Cit.*, p.11.

<sup>378</sup> Braun, p.78; Fernando Durán. 1943. *Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego*. Valparaíso: Director of the SETF, chpt. 1. In this oficial publication of la Explotadora recorded that Vicuña “he brought these complaints to the Senate, delivering a memorable speech in which he defended the future of Magallanes and linked that to the encouragement from ranchers efforts.”

<sup>379</sup> J. Bitsch’s letter to S. Ossa, 12.10.1885, in Bistch, *op.Cit.*, Volume I. Bañados was member of parliament between 1885 and 1899, with the interruption of the proscription of the *balmacedistas* between 1891 and 1894. In the Balmaceda presidency he was the Minister of Justice in 1888-1889 and between May and August of 1890, he was also Home Secretary. In 1891 he took up the post of Home Secretary again, together with the Ministry of War. Durring the Errázuriz presidency he was the Minister of Industry and Public Works, in 1897-1898.

<sup>380</sup> Bitsch’s Letter to Manzano, 20.8.1885, and “Bases aceptables y equitativas para ambas partes que podrían servir de fundamento para llegar a un termino definitivo al fomento de bienestar y riqueza de la Colonia de Magallanes,” Bitsch, *op.Cit.*, Volume I, pp.15 y 10.

reciprocal interests” as Moritz Braun described them.<sup>381</sup> For the local merchants, the Governor offered access to “well known Chilean families and we earn their consideration and support,” at the same time authorities found, “European settlers, many of them already rich and others on the way to being so, were worthy and civilized people.”<sup>382</sup> Governors and secretaries, judges, public prosecutors and officials from the Armed Forces who had resided in the region for an extended period of time were among the founders of the Fire Department in 1889, were members of exclusive clubs, like Club de la Unión and the Magallanes<sup>383</sup>. The borders of the local oligarchic sociability were “racially,” politically and economically defined and were strengthened by the appointments made by the Governor. The committees to decide the fate of the indigenous, *Junta de Beneficencia* (charity boards) and the Junta de Alcaldes were all made up of members from the same circle. Foreign consulates also had a role in the strengthening of positions and the acquiring of appointments that would enable people to ascend to positions of privilege in the competition for commercial contacts and to enjoy that status before metropolitan politics.

All of these factors made a network of favors that sometimes included the Governor, but that soon reached to include the authorities in the Legislative and Executive powers in Santiago as well as in Buenos Aires. For example, a land request in 1890 was brokered through Córdova the public notary of Punta Arenas and the Governor, General Samuel Valdivieso, who at that time was in the north. In the first letter, written by Bitsch and signed by Córdova, it pointed out that “our friend Bitsch” had made strong investments and that “in light of the good will of the Governor to protect capitalists” an order of 100 hectares shouldn’t be a

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<sup>381</sup> Señoret’s provincial Government (1892-1897) was also marked by tensions, but these were attributed less to conflicts between ranchers than to the policies concerning indigenous deportation policies. See with respect to chapter 5.

<sup>382</sup> Braun, *op.Cit.*, pp.61-62.

<sup>383</sup> The foundation of the Fire Department constituted the opening of formal space for sociability between a small burgoise of officials and rising foreign businessmen. See a complete list in [segundapuntaarenas.cl/opensite/uploads/pdf/reglamento-general-cuerpo-de-bomberos.pdf](http://segundapuntaarenas.cl/opensite/uploads/pdf/reglamento-general-cuerpo-de-bomberos.pdf) (acc. 05.08.2010). In the case of Santa Cruz, the organization of social spaces came later. A club was not founded until in 1901, Governor Burmeister pointed out, for “people of a certain representation, both from military and business circles.” Carlos Burmeister. 1901. *Memoria sobre el Territorio de Santa Cruz*. Buenos Aires: Imp. de la Nación, p.5.

surprise. Less than a month later, Córdova thanked the General for “the service rendered” with the granting of the concession.<sup>384</sup> The notary, who shortly after became secretary of the only Territorial Court, was a key figure in the land requests but according to Bitsch was somewhat “lazy,” since he delayed business errands. This “laziness” put Bitsch’s earnings at risk because it annoyed other ranchers. Bitsch warned him that, “they won’t always have the same compassion for you as true friends will.”<sup>385</sup>

Around the same time, the former employee of the Argentinean Ministry of the Interior who was also the accountant for the government of Santa Cruz, Juan Aubone, became the Governor’s secretary and occasionally carried out his duties. From that position he managed land requests, obtaining in February of 1892 two plots of land for Bitsch, which meant that the government official received a substantial payment -that took place in Montevideo. Two years later, Aubone had established himself as a rancher on land he bought from one of the speculators of the Grunbeim concession, Luis Linck. Later on Aubone incorporated into the *Sociedad Las Vegas* (Las Vegas Society) that was eventually absorbed by the Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego.<sup>386</sup> Each one of these transfers managed to avoid Argentinean laws that, on paper tried, to a certain extent to stop the concentration of land.

In Magallanes Rómulo Correa, who was on several occasions secretary and interim governor, acted in the same manner. On a visit to Santiago, he was in charge of “taking the steps” in order to procure land for Bitsch, Diz and others, submitting reports under his name or that were signed by José Antonio Soto Salas, an influential Army General who briefly served as governor of Patagonia in 1891 and who also was associated by marriage to the estate owners that settled on Mapuche land.<sup>387</sup> All of the “tips” that must be paid, Bitsch informed Correa would be returned to his “complete satisfaction.” For that reason, he should look

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<sup>384</sup> F. Córdova a Gral. Valdivieso, cartas de 22.09.1890 y 29.10.1890, Bitsch, *op.Cit.*, T.I.

<sup>385</sup> Bitsch a Córdova, 05.07.1891, Bitsch, *op.Cit.*, T. I.

<sup>386</sup> Bitsch a Aubone, 19.02.1892, Bitsch, *op.Cit.*, T. I.; Edelmiro Correa. 1950. *Vidas patagónicas*. Buenos Aires: s.n, pp.27-28.

<sup>387</sup> Soto was married to a daughter of José Bunster, a main landowner in Araucanía after the Chilean occupation. Turning into one of the richest men in the country, he became a senator and a banker. A daughter of Soto married René Smitmans, a German settler of Los Sauces.



upon these matters with “genuine interest,” trusting that the “said gentlemen [the ranchers] would be very thankful.”<sup>388</sup> As Aubone, Correa became an important landowner. In 1890 Balmaceda gave him, without public auction, 20 thousand hectares that he later transferred to the London-Malvinian group Waldron & Wood.<sup>389</sup> In 1897 as Acting Governor Correa drove the formation of the Electric Light Company that had been proposed by Menéndez and Braun. Built over “a block of land” given by the Government, it opened in 1898, with Correa as vice-president.<sup>390</sup> At the same time, the Municipality into which Correa was designated as mayor by the Governor signed a contract for street lighting.<sup>391</sup> In 1907 the Company became part of *Sudamericana de Servicios Públicos*, owners of the generation and distribution of electricity throughout the Atlantic Coast and a good part of Chile. By then, Correa had been president of the Bank and Club of Magallanes, council of Portugal and was responsible for delivering the toast at the silver wedding anniversary of José Menéndez, the then called King of Patagonia.<sup>392</sup>

As a result of the complaints from those affected by the expansion of large estates Santiago implemented the mechanism of auctions, regulating the sizes of land to be auctioned. The auctions in 1884 were made with lots that were as big as 30 thousand hectares for a maximum period of 20 years, with a gradual payment plan that would increase every five years. The plots of land auctioned were between 100 and 30,000 hectares. However, none of the 26 plots of 100 hectares that were auctioned managed to survive for more than ten years. The economic-political networks of power tended to consolidate: small and medium sized ranchers remained tied to the conditions imposed by large landowners, whose control of the production and of commerce only allowed for the survival of the

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<sup>388</sup> J. Bitsch a R. Correa, 22.03.1892, Bitsch, *op.Cit.*

<sup>389</sup> Guerrero, *op.Cit.*, T.I., p.13.

<sup>390</sup> Maria T. Izquierdo Valdés. 1995. *Don José Menéndez y Menéndez (1846-1918). Vida y obra.* Licenciatura thesis in Historia, P. Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago, pp.94-95; Braun, *op.Cit.*, p.177.

<sup>391</sup> Luka Bonacic-Doric. 1937-1939. *Resumen Histórico del Estrecho y la Colonia de Magallanes.* Punta Arenas: La Nueva Epoca Yugoslava, 421-422, 408.

<sup>392</sup> *EMG*, 24.03.1898, p.2. Correa acted as Governor on at least on three ocasiones, in 1886, 1891, 1897-1898.

highest bidders. Among these Menéndez and sons, with 90,000 hectares, the English from or connected to the Malvinas with 223,000 hectares; Mauricio Braun and his partner Gastón Blanchard with 20,000 hectares respectively and José Nogueira with 33,500 hectares.<sup>393</sup> The auction of public land- still then, in fact, Tehuelche lands- transformed the ‘empty’ space into land for speculation. The speculation raised land prices, consolidating the positions of the big ranchers and driving them towards Santa Cruz, over land still somewhat free.

The consecutive auctions didn’t produce different results: through different legal mechanisms, approved based on the arguments of transparency and Chileanization, the concentration of land consistently increased. For the auction of 1905, the metropolitan and local press reported the suspiciousness of broad sectors with respect to the usefulness of the mechanism. This auction mainly considered borderlands in Última Esperanza. The ‘first settlers’, as the Germans who were the first to receive concessions called them selves, presented a Report to the Government presenting themselves as “discoverers and settlers.” In their report they stated that it took months for the plans and the technical specifications to arrive to Punta Arenas and in that manner tried to evict them in order to favor a metropolitan trust.<sup>394</sup> The newspaper *El Magallanes* asked: “Doesn’t it seem that influences from Santiago would have arranged things to outwit those interested from Magallanes?,”<sup>395</sup> while the Governor, Alberto Fuentes, limited himself to saying, “hopefully the Government acts with freedom with this second

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<sup>393</sup> “Arrendamiento de Terrenos en la Patagonia,” Guerrero, *op.Cit.*, T. II, pp-II-XIII,

<sup>394</sup> “Memorial presentado al supremo gobierno por los descubridores i ocupantes de Ultima Esperanza,” *El Magallanes*, 15.03.1905, p.2. Herman Eberhard and Augusto Kark, with Von Heinz and Stubenrauch, *discoverers* of the land for nine years before, expressed their anger at the intensions to drive them out overnight and asked that previously written documents be respected, be compensated for the shortages suffered and for the improvements they made in the region. See Hermann Eberhard. 1892 [1922]. *El Descubrimiento de la Región de Ultima Esperanza. La expedición del Capitán Eberhard*. Trans. Wener Gromsch. Punta Arenas: El Magallanes; Mateo Martinic. 1974. “Reconocimiento geográfico y colonización de Última Esperanza, 1870-1910,” *Anales del Instituto de la Patagonia* V (1-2): 5-53.

<sup>395</sup> “El remate de tierras del Seno de Ultima Esperanza,” *El Magallanes*, 14.02.1905, 2. The complaints about disinformation continued. See *El Magallanes* y *La Unión*, 15 y 16.03.1905.

Tarapacá.”<sup>396</sup> As an English banker stated, the Chilean Government acted, “in the interests of a certain gang of Scotch and Chilean landgrabbers.”<sup>397</sup>

In fact the liberality of the state with the oligopoly continued thanks to the support of key authorities from the oligarchic metropolitan regime. From 1906 onward, most of the auctioned land fell under the control of the *Sociedad Explotadora*, with influential *Santiaguinos* taking part as shareholders.<sup>398</sup> On its board of directors was Superintendent of Customs Valdés Vergara, the leading Chilean political authority since the beginning of the occupation of Tarapacá, between 1882 and 1884.<sup>399</sup> As such he had ‘liberalized’ the nitrate trade (as State monopoly under Peruvian administration) in an operation that drove that industry under British control.<sup>400</sup> As Superintendent, in 1904 Valdés wrote the technical reports that indefinitely delayed the installation of the Customs office in Magallanes -a move that was strongly resisted by the SETF. Nationalization through customs was a demand from Chile’s Manufacturers’ Association (SOFOFA), a business organization that represented metropolitan interests, who were largely represented in parliament, because the competition meant the free importation of manufactured goods through Magallanes.<sup>401</sup> The free port, in Magallanes and Santa Cruz facilitated, to a large extent, the European mercantile monopolization that the companies Braun & Blanchard, heir to Nogueira, and Menéndez Behety. Both, merged since 1908 formed the commercial and credit

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<sup>396</sup> “Las tierras rematadas,” *El Magallanes*, 17.03.1905, 2.

<sup>397</sup> Young, *op.Cit.*, p.XXX

<sup>398</sup> A complete description of the lands from 1905-1906, with abundant transcriptions of documents, in Martinic, *Última Esperanza... op.Cit.*, especially “La fiebre fundiaria y los remates de tierras (1905),” 106-139.

<sup>399</sup> Francisco Valdés Vergara was legal representative of his first Salvador, son and heir of José Francisco Vergara. This radical politician, several times minister and architect of the occupation of Lima, had founded the city of Viña del Mar over his wife’s land. Salvador Vergara was married with a daughter of Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna. Both Francisco Valdés and Francisco Vergara were potential presidential candidates from the los partidos liberal y radical, and members of congress on varying occasions.

<sup>400</sup> The Peruvian state established its monopoly by the buying of the Nitrate production in 1873. The main beneficiaries of the reprivitization of Nitrate were the Casa Gibbs, Agustín Edwards y J.T. North, the ‘king of nitrate’. Alejandro Soto, “¿En que consistió la influencia británica sobre el salitre chileno?,” in 1998. *Influencia británica en el salitre. Origen, naturaleza y decadencia*. Santiago: USACH, pp.49-92.

<sup>401</sup> “Telegramas,” *El Magallanes*, 10.01.1904, 2; “Reportaje al Sr. Francisco Valdes Vergara,” *El Magallanes*, 19.01.1904, 2.

empire of the Sociedad Anónima Importadora y Exportadora de la Patagonia (*la Anónima*), that had interests from Patagonia to Buenos Aires and that still exists in Santa Cruz although weak.<sup>402</sup>

The critique of the “internationalization” and concentration of property, along with the demands for its’ division, spread in the manner in which the power of *La Explotadora* increased and also as the information that people from Santiago had about Patagonia increased as well. The influential *El Mercurio* de Santiago, owned by Agustín Edwards, started an editorial campaign in 1909 alerting people about the “excessive” amount of property in the hands of foreigners, wondering if Chileans had not noticed it, and suggesting that auctions and concessions should facilitate the *Chilenization* of land holdings. The answer came from the director of *El Magallanes*, Lautaro Navarro, who pointed out that the proposal demonstrated the metropolitan ignorance, as multiple publications existed that showed that the auctions as well as the concessions, between 1903 and 1906, had strengthened the territorial control of seven companies, which belonged to “only 25 individuals.” All of the demands about cultural Chileanization of a region *excessively cosmopolitan* should start from “avoiding monopolization.”<sup>403</sup>

The concentration of land not only didn’t stop, as I have pointed out, but was favored by the corruption concerning the assignments. Consequently, people believed throughout the entire nitrate period, which coincided with the oligarchic political order and the ‘golden years’ of ranching in the south, a widespread

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<sup>402</sup> La Anónima was founded with an initial capital of 180 thousand pounds sterling, increased in 1912 to 250 thousand, and to 400 thousand in 1914. In 1918 it moved from Chile to Argentina, setting its capital at 5 million (sealed gold) that in two years was multiplied by 4 paying a dividend of 100%. In 1924 it had 27 branches in the Argentinean Patagonia, the main credit entity, and 5 steamships with 14 thousand tons of cargo. Its buying offices were in Barcelona, Nueva York, Berlín and Punta Arenas. Edelmiro Correa y Luis Klappenbach. 1924. *La Patagonia Argentina: estudio gráfico y documental del Territorio Nacional de Santa Cruz*. Buenos Aires: s.n, 160-161.

<sup>403</sup> “Trust of tierras en Magallanes. ¿Los nacionales no habían visto sus peligros? Respuesta a ‘El Mercurio’,” *El Magallanes*, 5, 7 y 9.06.1909, p.2. In 1899 an interesting debate generated in the press, and through the publication of brochures, about the significance of the Chileanization of the territory. For some, nationalization meant keeping the ownership structure of the land but in the hands of Chileans. For others, nationalization meant to settle and therefore subdivide the property. See the brochures titled *La constitución de la propiedad rural en Magallanes*, published by Ramón Serrano (Santiago: Imprenta Cervantes) and Juan Contardi (Punta Arenas: El Magallanes). The controversy fed mass and middle class identities in Magallanes, in contradiction to the large estates and Santiago.

opinion in 1895: that “in the *calichales* of the northern desert and in the pampas of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego British capital and industry dominated,” linking the northern desert and the Southern steppe with London and Liverpool instead of linking it with ‘traditional Chile.’<sup>404</sup>

Figure 6. Land auctions’ cartoon (1905).



“Today’s special” that is being fought over is the fertile region of Última Esperanza, where you find the Torres del Paine and the village of Puerto Natales, developing since then. “The back and forth/the money is played/the back and forth/ gambling their money/ The back and Forth/ they’re going to auction it off.” The “united ranchers” of Magallanes, characterized as workingmen, dispute a large piece of land with an oligarch that represents “Santiago’s unions.” The auctions of 1905 and 1906 that permitted the awarding to mid-sized local bidders, ended with the quick transfer of almost all of the land to the Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego. The Sociedad managed to reunite thanks to their British controller, Duncan & Fox, Santiaguinos and local influential people through shareholding in the public limited company. Front page of the first issue of the magazine *La Polar*, Feb. 26, 1905.

<sup>404</sup> The notion of Traditional Chile refers to the territory that extended between Copiapó and Concepción, an area effectively occupied towards the end of the existence of the Capitanía General. “Los artículos que un viajero que pasó una veintena de días en la región Magallánica en 1890 dedicara en *La Ley*”, *El Magallanes*, 24.03.1895, p.1.

In the Argentinean Santa Cruz, the renting of land by means of auction was also the answer to the *liberality* in the concessions of the first governors. The navy officer Carlos María Moyano followed the path embarked on by his Magallanean peers Wood, in 1870, and Dublé in 1881, organizing ranchers and traveling to Malvinas in 1884 and 1885. Like Wood, he initiated meetings in Punta Arenas with the “most notable ranchers,” the same that benefited from the offer to choose land in 1878. Braun, for example, recalled the luck of having “met” him and exchange a “pleasant and profitable correspondence that bore fruit: I obtained a first renting of 20,000 hectares.” Along with him, the rest of his family and commercial network, initiated the occupation of land among which was his sister, his brother-in-law, his administrators and some partners.<sup>405</sup> In 1885, following the orders of the Minister of the Interior Yrigoyen, Moyano didn’t find any geopolitical impediments to obtain the arrival of settlers and animals from Malvinas, and in fact sealed an alliance by marriage with a niece of the British Governor.<sup>406</sup> The benefits offered secured the settlement of three shepherders from the Falkland Island Co. and three Spaniards from Punta Arenas, in Río Gallegos’ interior; of Malvinas and Punta Arenas’ settled Germans, connected with the shipping company Kosmos, and of British and Scottish Falklanders south of Gallegos and up to the Chilean border and beyond. Besides, British and Scottish formed Waldron & Wood, up to then business with the bigger capital. W&W was thereafter associated with Scot Greenshields in the The Patagonian Sheep Farming Co., owning the immense *estancias Cóndor* in Santa Cruz and *Cullen* in Tierra del Fuego, and starting frozen meet exports.<sup>407</sup>

Captain Moyano was replaced in 1887 by Ramón Lista, a military man who had led the first Argentinean expedition to the north of Tierra del Fuego the year before. In 1888, in an attempt to halt corruption, Buenos Aires forbade land

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<sup>405</sup> Braun, *op.Cit.*, pp.166-167.

<sup>406</sup> Moyano’s report in AGN. MinInt. Territorios Nacionales, Exp.1500-9. 1887, transcribed in Rosario Guenaga’s “La inmigración colonizadora en Santa Cruz entre fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX,” [www.cehsegreti.com.ar/archivos/FILE\\_00000338\\_1316804795.pdf](http://www.cehsegreti.com.ar/archivos/FILE_00000338_1316804795.pdf) (acc. 3.12.2011). The best description of the wedding is in Marcelo Luis Vernet’s “Malvinas: towards an integrating conception,” [www.cancilleria.gov.ar/portal/seree/malvinas/docs/09-Marcelo\\_Luis\\_Vernet\\_en.pdf](http://www.cancilleria.gov.ar/portal/seree/malvinas/docs/09-Marcelo_Luis_Vernet_en.pdf) (acc. 2.12.2011)

<sup>407</sup> Barbería, *op.Cit.*, 98-99, p.203.

concessions by the sole will of the Governor.<sup>408</sup> “The consequences were scandalous,” according to Braun: “Now there were no more direct agreements but through intermediaries, and it was full of dealers, politicians and profiteers.”<sup>409</sup> According to the correspondence between Bitsch and his agents, both Lista and Carlo Battini, his chief of Police and acting governor in 1888-1889, took advantage of their positions to enrich themselves. Around mid 1889 Bitsch wrote to influential friends, among them the acting Governor of Magallanes, Lautaro Navarro, looking for confirmation of a comment attributed to Battini during a visit he did to Punta Arenas.<sup>410</sup> According to Bitsch’s information -whose answer is unknown to us, the policeman would have said: “I came [...] to make money and it doesn’t matter to me the way I do it,” adding that “if Lista had taken 50,000 national pesos I want to take at least 80,000.”<sup>411</sup>

Bitsch, representative of the Casa Schröder & Co. (a company that was creditor of the Chilean State), traveled to Buenos Aires to meet the Secretary of the Interior and the Foreign Secretary, protesting the supposed abuses of Lista before the ambassador of Germany. In the capital, Bitsch was visited by Greenshields and Lista, who had asked him to withdraw his complaint threatening that they would “accuse him of being a smuggler.” The customs office in Santa Cruz was directly dependent on the Governor; so the payment- or not- of duties depended on his will to do so. Bitsch said he had proof that showed that he was not the only one that did not pay his taxes and that in reality his shipments of

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<sup>408</sup> To those favored by the first concessions he gave a period of 3 months to “take possession of the lands.” Otherwise, the concession would expire. Apparently this did not invalidate any concession. Presidential Decree 30.05.1888, *Memoria presentada al Congreso Nacional de 1888 por el Ministro del Interior Doctor D. Eduardo Wilde*. Buenos Aires: Imp. de Sud-América, pp.298-299.

<sup>409</sup> Braun, *op.Cit.*, p.167. The original sentence is as follows: “ardió Troya. Ya no hubo contrataciones directas sino a través de intermediarios y menudearon los gestores y los políticos y los aprovechadores.”

<sup>410</sup> Note from MinRex to Governor, 27.12.1888, ANH-FGM. Vol. 9, Minister of Exterior Relations and Colonization , 1888-1892, s/p.

<sup>411</sup> J. Bitsch to C. García, 24.06.1889; Félix Córdova, 25.6.1889; Lautaro Navarro, 25.06.1889, in Bitsch, *op.Cit.* Volume I. In other letters, Bitsch assured that Battini was part of Guillaume’s (Braun’s partner) businesses in the trafficking of alcohol to the tehuelches, which was supposedly prohibited, and that he had offered the same deal to another merchant in exchange for a horse. The complaints were published by *La Prensa* de Buenos Aires, in August 1889, evidently from information provided by Bitsch.

brandy were admitted through the free port in Punta Arenas.<sup>412</sup> Despite Lista's insistence to recuperate legal authority over the land concessions, the Government gave that power to the Directorate of Land.<sup>413</sup>

The effect that this action had was the introduction of powerful new intermediaries, outside the region, for the decisions in which bribery and friendship were fundamental. In 1899, eighty-five "ranchers and merchants" from Santa Cruz, among which the Malvinians were more notable, wrote President Roca protesting against Governor Mac Kinley, accusing that:

"both he and his subordinates [...] were a hindrance to the healthy and true progress of the Territory, since during his years as Governor has only transcended as a product of his action the sale of land that the National Government donated, and the unlawful collection of nonexistent taxes, applied to the settlers for whatever motive or cause, without doing any good or making significant progress with those unlawful funds."<sup>414</sup>

Disregarding the petition of the few inhabitants of Santa Cruz, Roca extended Mackinley's office term. He completed, notwithstanding, the promises made to the ranchers during his visit to the area, setting up telegraphs, courts, jails and navigation routes financed by the State. Even more importantly, Roca eliminated Customs, trying to stop illegal trade, which mostly flowed from Punta Arenas.<sup>415</sup> In Santa Cruz between 1886 and 1895, this state support helped multiply the number of sheep by 23, going from 9,800 to 277,000, and later by six between 1895 and 1905, going from between 277 and 360 thousand to a little more than two million.<sup>416</sup> The land was given under excellent conditions, among them free choice and the absence of competition, high profitability and no or

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<sup>412</sup> J.Bitsh, Buenos Aires, a Cifré, Río Gallegos, 09.07.1889, en Bitsh, *op.Cit.*, Volume I.

<sup>413</sup> AGN-MinInt. Territorios Nacionales. 1890, Leg. 13, Exp.2885.

<sup>414</sup> AGN-MI. 1898. 16. 3514-V.

<sup>415</sup> Juan Hilarión Lenzi. c1972. *Historia de Santa Cruz*. Río Gallegos, 490.

<sup>416</sup> Dirección General de Inmigración. 1896. *La Gobernación de Santa Cruz*. Serie Noticias útiles para inmigrantes, trabajadores y capitalistas. Buenos Aires, pp. 187-248, 225; Segundo Dutari. 1906. *El Territorio de Santa Cruz: su presente, su futuro, y los problemas vinculados á su desarrollo*. Buenos Aires: T.G. Penitenciaría Nacional, pp.10-11.



small fee and, in Santa Cruz, expedited access to ownership certificates.<sup>417</sup> In summary, between 1880 and 1900 more than 3.7 million hectares were distributed in Santa Cruz that went from indigenous sovereignty to private property thanks to the judicial intervention of the State and the economic intervention of the British Empire. Only ten percent of those lands were rented, and more than 2.7 million hectares were included only in the Grünbein Concession.<sup>418</sup> The dimensions of this, as well as its speculative base, resembled the manner in which property was established in Tierra del Fuego.

The Concession, granted by President Pellegrini in 1892, constituted the base for land speculation in the territories of Santa Cruz and Chubut and had as its figurehead Adolfo Grunbein, a German moneylender related by marriage with the intendant of Buenos Aires Francisco Seeber, a veteran of the Chaco War and businessman.<sup>419</sup> Grunbein was just the agent of the land transfers having as a reference price the land privatized by Argentina after the occupation of Chaco, the lower quality of the land in Santa Cruz and the ‘need to populate’ or the demand for land. The Bank of Amberes and Linck Hermanos together with the Malvinians John Hamilton and Thomas Saunders initially participated in the society as the main investors.<sup>420</sup>

The great concession -studied in detail by Carcano, Barbería and Guenaga, was ratified by the Law 3.053 and established the property over more than a million hectares towards 1898.<sup>421</sup> Its direct beneficiaries were the financiers, and in particular the Bank, since the monopoly rights of sales of those lands permitted

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<sup>417</sup> Barbería, *op.Cit.*, p.159. “Sampaio introduced the ranches, as it was him that obtained from the Government the renting of the lands of the Chilean Patagonia. And due to his constant opposition to the selling of land, the prices of land appreciated due to ranching and the treasury to obtain the prices that the land had reached in the 1903 auctions and the years following.” “Injusticia olvidada,” *El Magallanes*, 28.1.1911.

<sup>418</sup> Barbería, *op.Cit.*, p.105. Transcriptions of the laws pertaining distribution of taxed lands in Edelmiro Correa and Luis Klappenbach. 1924. *La Patagonia Argentina: estudio gráfico y documental del Territorio Nacional de Santa Cruz*. Book I. Buenos Aires: s.n.

<sup>419</sup> Years later, one of Seeber’s nieces married with a one of Moritz Braun’s children, niece of Sara Braun, Nogueira’s widow, and grandchild of José Menéndez.

<sup>420</sup> Susana Bandieri. 2005. “Del discurso poblador a la praxis latifundista: la distribución de la tierra pública en la Patagonia” *Mundo Agrario* 6: 11, 1-25, p.15; Guenaga, *op.Cit.*, 193-199; Barbería, *op.Cit.*, 99-102.

<sup>421</sup> Miguel Angel Carcano. 1972. *Evolución histórica del Régimen de la tierra pública: 1810 - 1916*. Buenos Aires: Librería Mendelky-Augusto Sabourin e Hijo.

them speculative gains since the very moment that the law was enacted. By going from renting to ownership of the property the beneficiaries were 19 British ranchers, the majority of whom were Malvinian, nine Germans, four from France, six from Spain one American, a Uruguayan and a Chilean. Not one Argentinean.<sup>422</sup> This correlation repeated in the following decades, at the point that a Governor would have expressed that, “At the pace that we go, the Argentineans in Río Gallegos will need consuls.”<sup>423</sup> While in 1910 in Malvinas all the inhabitants were British, according to the Anglican bishop, towards 1920 in Magallanes as in Santa Cruz, they were small minority (4 and 4.6% respectively). Despite this, both the *Sociedad Rural de Magallanes*, and the one from Santa Cruz, powerful associations of the large landowners were exclusively controlled by the British.<sup>424</sup>

The mechanisms of corruption for land allocations that operated through bribes, influence peddling, the combined interests between political and military authorities, the representatives of the economic powers, as well as the expansion of family ties, constituted the private property over Tehuelche land transformed into fiscal land by administrative will. First through the governors, and through metropolitan political contacts after, recent immigrants with European commercial contacts defined a pattern of land concentration that reproduced itself since it started in the 1880s. Although metropolitan discourses that pointed out to

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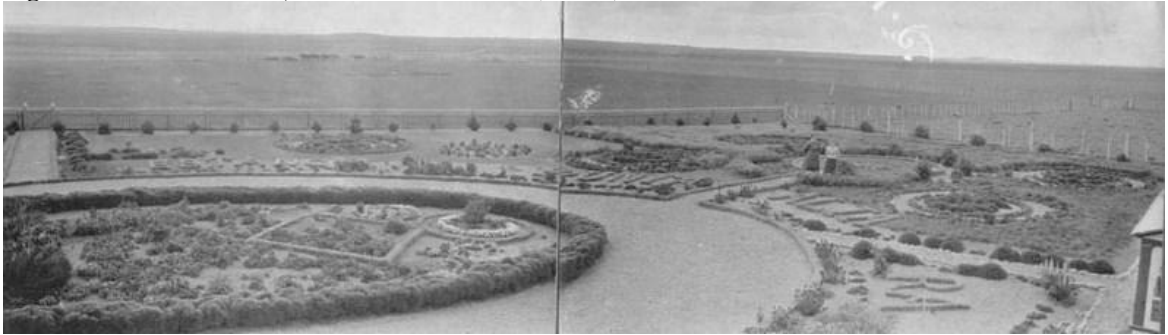
<sup>422</sup> Edelmiro Correa. 1966. *De la llanura del bosque y de la montaña*. Buenos Aires: Ciordia, 72.

<sup>423</sup> José María Borrero. c.1928 [1997]. *La Patagonia Trágica. Asesinatos, piratería y esclavitud*. Ushuaia: Zagier & Urruty, 37.

<sup>424</sup> The Sociedad Rural de Río Gallegos was presided over in 1921 by the English man J. Hamilton, and participating as members were H.Felton, M.Bianchi, A.G. Jamieson, C.L. Reynard, H.J. Elbourne, dos Stipicic, L.Carrera, D. L. Cameron, A.Walker, E.Rudd, S.Halliday, J. Bitsch, J. Frazer, E. Von Heinz, G. MacGeorge, A.Kark, A. Halliday, C. Suárez, A.N. Gallie, M.Gigera, P.Lezner, P. Ross, JJ. Albornoz, D. MacClay, W.Patterson, J.I. Hegui, F.J. Smith, I.Noya, M.Segovia. The Magallenean equivalent, on his part, was presided by the Spaniard Francisco Campos, with E. Hobbs (Brit) as vicepresident, M. Iglesias (Spanish) as secretary, and as directors José Menéndez Behety, J. Montes, Moritz Braun, A.M. McDonald, J.Grenade, F.Jacobs, Th. Saunders, T.R.D. Burbury. See Juan Bautista Baillinou. 1985. *Centenario de Río Gallegos*. Municipalidad de Río Gallegos, p.436, and Diógenes Valenzuela. 1921. *Álbum Oficial de la Exposición Ganadera e Industrial Centenario de Magallanes. Diciembre 1920*. Punta Arenas: El Comercio, p.6; E. Every. 1915. *The Anglican Church in South America*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, chapter 2. At the same time, the Patriotic League of Río Gallegos, formally constituted about the middle of 1921, it was directed by the rancher Noya and the policeman Ritchie.

populate, “chilenizar” or “argentinizar” the “desert” weren’t successful, both Argentina and Chile managed to bring to territories until then unknown forms of exploitation over which its presence on the land would materialize. In the Tierra del Fuego, the expansion of capital was produced over similar origins.

**Figure 7. British Garden, Estancia Punta Alta (c.1930).**



Estancia Punta Alta, Santa Cruz, c.1930. The radical transformation of the landscape affected only the area surrounding the British administrator’s house and the original inhabitants of the steppe whom had been displaced even from their last hideouts in the Santa Cruz area mountains. Photograph taken from “The British Presence in Southern Patagonia,” <http://patbrit.org>.

**Figure 8 Former subsection of Estancia Cerro Castillo (2009)**



In the center can be seen a vestige of *la Explotadora* in Última Esperanza, some dozens of kilometers north-east of Punta Alta. Author’s photograph, February 2009. The radical transformation is only visible in the wilderness: forests dredged of their trees due to their use as lumber or the freeing up of lands to raise more sheep. The grassland remains the same.

## Tierra del Fuego.

Occupation of Tierra del Fuego began in England. The most extensive study of the area was done by the *Beagle* in 1833-1834 and a decade later the South American Missionary Society was established on the Islas Malvinas (Falkland Islands) the ‘most extensive diocese in the world’, covering all of Latin America. From there, Bishop Stirling began the religious-commercial infiltration of Ushuaia in 1869 with Anglican pastors and Malvine sheep. In 1884, the Missionary Society requested lands in a territory which was as little known to Argentina as its inhabitants, the Selknam, with whom the missionaries had not even established contact. After 16 years, during which “neither Chile nor Argentina has shown active interest in” Tierra del Fuego, the Lasserre’s *Expedición Austral Argentina* (Southern Argentina Expedition) arrived at the Canal Beagle.<sup>425</sup> Replacing the mission’s flag (“which looked like the Union Jack to avoid suspicions that the Mission had imperialistic aspirations”), the rite of occupation was carried out.<sup>426</sup> The Expedition sparked a measles epidemic that quickly killed half of the indigenous population who had been sedentarized by the missionaries. In the following two years, half of the survivors died as well. From the north, Ramon Lista began Argentinean exploration with the slaughter of 26 Selknams.<sup>427</sup> In the south, the campization experiment caused famine, and the death of Yamanas and country folk. The catastrophe facilitated the first ever construction in Tierra del Fuego, when the head missionary established himself as a livestock farmer thanks to his “good friends” in the Navy and the *Museo de La Plata* (La Plata Museum). Thomas Bridges explains that he was “known by many influential people” in Buenos Aires and had savings from English missionary

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<sup>425</sup> Expedición Austral Argentina. 1883. *Expedición Austral Argentina. Informes preliminares presentados a S.S.E.E. los Ministros del Interior y de Guerra y Marina de la República Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Imprenta Departamento Nacional de Agricultura, esp. Giacomo Bové, “Informe VIII,” 81-105.

<sup>426</sup> Lucas Bridges. 1948 [2008]. *El último confín de la Tierra*. Trans. María Briano. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 44, 107, 117-118.

<sup>427</sup> The slaughter caused the protest of two expeditioners, Captain Spurr and Giuseppe (José) Fagnano. As the head of the Prefectura Apostólica de Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego y Malvinas, Fagnano had transnational jurisdiction, typically colonial and a monopoly guaranteed by catholic order. He was the main promoter of the deportation and concentration of “Fuegeans.”

donations, and so he established himself in lands “previously occupied by the Yágnas.”<sup>428</sup>

On a visit to Buenos Aires, Bridges was a guest of Perito Moreno, who “introduced him to many influential friends, including his uncle Antonio Cambaceres, President of Congress,” and to Rufino Varela, his father-in-law, who, as the Minister of Economic Affairs, imposed a conversion from the gold standard to paper money in 1889, selling it to himself and triggering the economic crisis which started in 1890.<sup>429</sup> Through these friends, Bridges interviewed parliament members and ministers, with Bartolomé Mitre and President Roca<sup>430</sup>. This, indicated Thomas’ son Lucas, caused the appreciation of “the value of this humble soldier who had served in the territory of an equally savage people” that of the “Conquest of the Desert.” In the interview, Roca inquired about the south until they “brought him a map that indicated the solicited territory.” Roca promised the Minister of Land’s signature, but he had to pass a law in congress by which Bridges “supported by his efficient good friends,” obtained 20,000 hectares upon which he constructed the Haberton Ranch. With Yagána workers, English pigs and Malvine sheep, the ranch managed to satisfy the demand generated by ‘gold fever.’<sup>431</sup> With this, the traditional equation of primitive accumulation was imposed upon the world’s southernmost extreme.

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<sup>428</sup> Bridges, *op.Cit.*, 120-121, 132-133.

<sup>429</sup> Julio Nudler, “La crisis de 1890,” *Página12*, 7.03.2004, at [www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/sociedad/3-32345-2004-03-07.html](http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/sociedad/3-32345-2004-03-07.html) (acc. 26.07.2010); Héctor Petrocelli. 1988. *Historia Constitucional Argentina*, chapter 8.2 (available at <http://argentinahistorica.com.ar>, acc.10.06.2011); Rock, *op.Cit.*, chapter 3; Oszlack, *op.Cit.*, chapter 4.

<sup>430</sup> In the temporal transcendence of the Argentinean oligarchy, the involvement of the sons of both presidents in the expansion of British capital is worth nothing. They did so by the way of specific instruments designed for these results: the Mitre Law of 1907, proposed by Emilio Mitre, representative and director of *La Nación*, which freed railways from paying taxes, key to English control; in 1933, the Roca-Runciman Pact, signed by Vice President J.A. Roca (son), who obtained shares in the British meat sector in exchange for preferential prices and a monopoly in meat lockers and transportation. The corruption lawsuits between the Government and the meat lockers, by Senator De la Torre, caused an attempt on his life by bodyguards of the Minister of the Interior, Federico Pinedo. The gunshots killed Senator Bordabehere. Pinedo’s father was the Public Administer of Buenos Aires and a senator. His son began his political participation along with ultraliberal Alvaro Alzogaray, in 1972. Víctor Bulmer-Thomas. 1994. *The economic history of Latin America since Independence*. Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 143, 218, 238.

<sup>431</sup> Bridges, *op.Cit.*, 133-135, 172.

‘Being known’ continued to increase the Bridge family fortune. Competing with the large companies located in the Eastern and northern areas of the Island, Bridge expanded his operations until 1902. His requests for land were in vain until he contacted what he referred to as “our old friends.” Among them was the subprefect who had arrived in Ushuaia in 1884, the then “manager of an important bank,” and an official from Lasserre’s Expedition who had become the Minister of the Navy: “From this moment on, things began to move efficiently.” It took years to legalize the land titles, when “with luck finally they were presented to Ronald Tidblom, a businessman and real estate agent.” Tidblom, Bridges and Reynolds, his brother-in-law, solicited 20,000 hectares each. An old land surveyor was sent from Buenos Aires who claimed it impossible to carry out the measurements and left them in the hands of Bridges. The plans, with the official’s signature, were quickly approved by the Ministry. At the same time, Bridges agreed with another land surveyor to do the work himself, dividing the profits into equal parts. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Viamonte ranch covered more than 100,000 hectares, but Bridges thought that in the future it would not be easy to obtain new lands because of the interest that “rich and important people”<sup>432</sup> had in them.

In the Chilean part of the Fuegian Archipelago, accumulation had a similar destiny. Lieutenant Ramón Serrano led the first Chilean expedition in the summer of 1879, confirming the rumors about the presence of gold and the suitability of the land for raising sheep.<sup>433</sup> This started the influx of small and mid-sized mines, which were enabled by and had their product commercialized, in a semi-monopolistic way, by José Nogueira, in the north, and Bridges, in the south. This fleeting gold rush only made fortunes for the businessmen.<sup>434</sup> During its best years, 1881 to 1888, Governor Sampaio acted as Nogueira’s intermediary or

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<sup>432</sup> Bridges, *op.Cit.*, pp. 336, 446-449, 464.

<sup>433</sup> Ramón Serrano. 1879 [2002]. “Diario de la excursión a la isla grande de la Tierra del Fuego durante los meses de enero i febrero de 1879 por el Teniente 2º de la Armada de Chile Ramón Serrano Montaner,” in Mateo Martinic (ed.). 2002. *Marinos de a caballo. Exploraciones terrestres de la Armada de Chile en la Patagonia austral y la Tierra del Fuego, 1877-1897*. Valparaíso: UMAG-UPLA.

<sup>434</sup> By 1892, said Martinic, “the main buyer of Tierra del Fuego gold was Nogueira” and then his successor, Braun & Blanchard, along with Meidell and Máximo Gilli.

agent, in agreement with Martinic. The keys continued to be, given the distance, staying in favor with authorities and in contact with international markets. The concessions operated bringing to an end one of the most important characteristics of the frontier: that of a space open for social mobility, based on ‘popular business ownership’ or ‘pioneer entrepreneurship’. Commercial markets, family and politically organized, impeded regional productive accumulation.<sup>435</sup>

Temporary gold fever was followed by ranching, which arrived to stay. Even when Sampaio himself tried to prevent the consolidation of large estates on continental land, the Chilean presidency granted an equal amount of land to the Grumbein Concession. This involved the usage of public resources for private profit and favor granting. Over half of Chilean Tierra del Fuego, a million and a half hectares, fell into the hands of three private parties and one company. The first 123,000 hectares were granted to Hamburgo Wehrhahn Hnos.’s Commercial House in 1883, “without any particular plans for them, establishing the lots with general references.”<sup>436</sup> Its capital came from the Malvinas, consolidated as the Sociedad Ganadera Gente Grande. Two of the concessions, 350,000 hectares each, benefited Nogueira in 1889. Their petitions were based on the information submitted by Capitan Serrano, and he obtained them (according to SETF’s own official history) thanks to his “excellent connections with high-ranking officials and members of President Balmaceda’s administration”<sup>437</sup>. In the words of Young, the banker cited previously, the lease was “upon the usual generous terms granted by the Chilean Government to their friends who know how to work the oracle.”<sup>438</sup>

Among President Balmaceda’s inner circle, then Magallanes Governor Samuel Valdivieso, who had authorized the urban property land grants, stood out. Among these properties were the Fiscal Treasury’s land, “a gift he made” to Government administrator and Bitsch’s close friend, Baldomero Menendez, and

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<sup>435</sup> Gabriel Salazar. 1976 [2003]. *Historia de la acumulación capitalista en Chile (apuntes de clase)*. Santiago: LOM, esp. 4.3, 90-99.

<sup>436</sup> Alberto Fagalde. 1901. *Magallanes. El País del Porvenir. Tomo I*. Valparaíso: Talleres Tipográficos de la Armada, 22.

<sup>437</sup> Durán, *op.Cit.*, chapter 2.

<sup>438</sup> Young, *op.Cit.*,

two others for Braun and Menendez right on the Plaza de Armas. Although the following Governor denounced that these lands had been awarded for bribes, the concessions were not reviewed and the Governor was removed from office.<sup>439</sup> As Borrero would say in the 1920s, it was commonly known that “the public employee who could ‘not be bought’ [...] was removed in one way or another,” besieged locally or by starting “slanderous and defamatory campaigns” in the capital.<sup>440</sup>

Nogueira sold the first concession to The Tierra del Fuego Sheep Farming Co. of London for three thousand pounds. The company was founded with a capital of twenty one thousand pounds, contributed in equal amounts by five business partners, including Nogueira who paid his part in animals and transport rentals.<sup>441</sup> The second concession, under Moritz Braun’s name (which in 1880 had been “turned over” by Nogueira to his son as a dependent) followed a similar path, creating The Philip Bay Sheep Farming Co.<sup>442</sup> In this way, the procedures for obtaining land concessions and the fiscal authorization necessary to turn them over to third parties were fundamental to the formation of the property as well as monopolistic reproduction. The procedure for lands turned into a kind of ‘authorization’ where speculative contacts with politicians and military personnel could be parlayed into a capital asset that insured an immediate multiplication in profits.

The third land concession consisted of a little over one million hectares and gave rise to the *Explotadora*, a British capital based company that united

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<sup>439</sup> The lots were obtained by Nogueira, according to him by a “publicly known” agreement with Briceño, “for a certain amount that made it easy for the ex General Governor,” that is, by bribing a corrupt authority, a crime punished by our Penal Codes.” On the other hand, he registered the lots under the name of Moritz Braun and sons, because “this gentleman is single,” and in the same document three fiscal buildings are listed for which he paid rent starting in 1890. ANH-FMRE. Vol. 537. Gobernacion de Magallanes, 1892. Governor Briceño to Minister of Foreign Relations, 19.3.1892.

<sup>440</sup> Borrero, *op.Cit.*, 37.

<sup>441</sup> ANH-FMR. Vol. 477. Decretos, 1890. José Nogueira’s Petition, 17.11.1890. According to Martinic, “Colonización de Tierra del Fuego...” pp.12-13 and *Nogueira*, pp.122-123, the society consisted of 25,000 pounds of capital, a fifth of which should support Nogueira and the rest Waldron & Wood. The source of information is not cited.

<sup>442</sup> The contract between Elias Braun and Nogueira indicates that he “submits” to his son “so he can serve as a commercial dependent” for a year in exchange for a monthly payment and prohibition from firing from or abandoning the job. Transcribed in Martinic, *Menéndez y Braun...* *op.Cit.*, 74-75.



various members of the political class as shareholders. Shortly after being turned over to Nogueira by Balmaceda in 1890, Braun claimed that the other ranchers “scratched their heads trying to figure out how in the heck he had obtained so many concessions, practically one on top of the other. (And) They say that the Government doesn’t know what it is doing.” Nogueira responded that he was in agreement with this statement and Serrano recommended they “get rid of” the concessions quickly, by passing them off to third parties, because the unrest could cause their cancellation.<sup>443</sup> It seemed that after the Civil War which overthrew Balmaceda in 1891, the new Government shared the same suspicions about the concession. ‘The influences of friendship’ of one of the administrators, Mariano Egaña, had legalized the SETF, which was created with the capital of Duncan, Fox & Co.<sup>444</sup>

At the time *la Explotadora* was set up, it was led by a president and a vice president, designated by Duncan & Fox (D&F), and three directors: a prominent German importer-exporter, a Minister from the Appeals Court in Valparaiso (which Magallanes reported to) and a member of one of the “so-called “traditional families,” Mariano Egaña). In Punta Arenas, Moritz Braun acted as Managing Director.<sup>445</sup> When Nogueira died, in 1893, the problem of who was to succeed him opened up. Confirming the importance of Captain Serrano in the management of the million dollar concession, the widow Sara Braun indicated to her brother that one third of it belonged to her.<sup>446</sup> Mauricio, however, wasn’t aware of the agreement and offered to pay Serrano, before he left the society, something “reasonable” “for his services” as he ought to “reward the person or people who

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<sup>443</sup> Correspondence Braun-Nogueira, cited by Martinic, “Colonización en TF,” 15-16, y *Nogueira*, 125-127.

<sup>444</sup> MRM-Fondo Mauricio Braun, Correspondence received. Letter from Mariano Egaña, Valpo., to Mauricio Braun, Punta Arenas, 11.08.1893.

<sup>445</sup> Another of the company’s original directors’ pay slips indicates they were McClelland, Wilms, Rodríguez, Benjamín Edwards a G. Oehninger, in addition to Braun. Adolfo Ortúzar. 1907. *Chile of To-Day. Its commerce, its production and its resources (1907-1908)*. New York: Chilean Government, p.45: “its earnings rose from \$65,229 in 1897 to \$2,049,185 in 1905 [...and] \$4,309,351” in 1906.

<sup>446</sup> Braun to Menéndez, 22.09.1893, MRM-Archivo Mauricio Braun, Dispatched Correspondence, V, pp.199-200, cit. Martinic, *Nogueira*, p.154. See also Martinic, “La colonización...,” 17, n.24.

are very cooperative.”<sup>447</sup> With this, Braun treated Serrano only as an agent and not as he who had first explored the lands, proposed the idea to Nogueira and negotiated the clauses with Santiago politicians.

Presidential intervention also determined Menendez and Braun’s expansion throughout Argentinean Patagonia. Roca, during his second presidency, consolidated the power of monopoly that extended from Punta Arenas. The first conference held between the presidents of Argentina and Chile, known as the *Abrazo del Estrecho*, occurred in that city in order to discuss a new disputed territory, this time in the north annexed by Chile.<sup>448</sup> The *Abrazo* is ‘celebrated’ for its success in (momentarily) sealing the deal over this controversial territory, a decision to invoke international arbitration. At the same time, however, the presence of the authorities served to increase the power of the local oligarchy that already had powerful connections with the metropolitan elite. Chilean president Federico Errazuriz Echaurren, commandeered into port by Former Governor Señoret’s Squadron, ate at Sara Braun’s palace upon his arrival; Julio Argentino Roca slept in the Menendez palace after the gala offered him by the merchants, in a Government where Sara Braun and her sister-in-law Josefina Menendez acted as “housewives.” The next day, Roca, his Minister of the Navy, his Minister of Foreign Relations and some representatives had a private lunch at the same palace. They were invited, remembered Braun, “to settle and open our businesses and industry in Patagonia, and we were assured the entire support of the Government.”<sup>449</sup>

According to the Buenos Aires newspaper *La Nación*, Roca promised to increase the governors’ power, relax restrictions on land possession, deforestation and seal hunting, and thereby found new towns and implement methods of communication. In this way, as Pedro Navarro would explain, groups comprised of those with “local power” became spokespeople for the national elite, making

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<sup>447</sup> Braun to Serrano, 22.03.1893. Response transcribed in Martinic, *Nogueira... op.Cit.*, 155.

<sup>448</sup> About the lawsuit and effects of the battle for Puna, a current interpretation by Alejandro Benedetti. 2005. “La puna de Atacama como construcción geopolítica. Transformaciones territoriales posteriores a la Guerra del Pacífico,” *Si somos americanos* VII: 2.

<sup>449</sup> *La Nación*, Buenos Aires, 22.02.1899, 4, cited in Navarro, “Visitar al Soberano... *op.Cit.*,” 7-8; Braun, *op.Cit.*, 191-193.

decisions “in function of the interests of those sectors” and decreasing the influence of the local political authority.<sup>450</sup> In August of 1899, Roca authorized the auction of all the land in San Sebastian Bay. Waldron acquired 4 lots, Moritz and Sara Braun 5, the Menendez 8, in addition to the large estates 1st and 2nd Argentina, and 3 other private lots.<sup>451</sup> For Santa Cruz, said Susana Bandieri, this indicated the emergence of “a legion of agents in Buenos Aires – one of the most prominent was its first Governor, Moyano<sup>452</sup>. In this way, in the construction of Braun & Blanchard and Menendez’s monopolies of Argentinean lands, as Beato suggested, Roca was the key agent,<sup>453</sup> just as Balmaceda had been regarding the Chilean part of Tierra del Fuego.

Even though the concessions in Argentinean Tierra del Fuego were originally more moderate, by 1910 the control exercised by Braun and Menendez’s extended family was almost complete. Lucas Bridges, for example, moved from great concessionaire to administrator of Braun’s immense speculative enterprise in Aysen.<sup>454</sup> At the same time, Braun and Menendez’s Frigorific (meat packing plant) in Río Grande, was located among the ranches *1st* and *2nd Argentina*, belonging to Menendez, *Sara*, of the *Explotadora*, and *Cullen*, belonging to Waldron & Wood. While associated with different businesses, they exercised a monopolistic buying power in addition to the commercial monopoly

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<sup>450</sup> Navarro, *op.Cit.*, pp.12-13. Roca in Punta Arenas, according to Martinic’s interpretation, “upon capturing the vital energy of its inhabitants, economic businessmen in particular [...] he didn’t hesitate to extend to them an invitation so that their creative dynamism would extend beyond the border.” *Historia de la... op.Cit.*, Tomo II, p.798. A similar opinion from the same author in “Expansión económica...,” 20.

<sup>451</sup> Juan Belza. 1975. *En la isla del fuego. Tomo 2. Colonización*. Buenos Aires: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas Tierra del Fuego, 265-267.

<sup>452</sup> Bandieri, *Historia... op.Cit.*, 247.

<sup>453</sup> Guillermo Beato, “La constitución de grupos sociales dominantes en Chubut,” Beato et.al. *Grupos sociales dominantes. México y Argentina (siglos XIX-XX)*. Córdoba: UNC, pp.77-100. As Alfredo Fiori remembered, the issue of nationality was expressed in this way “Mate was everywhere, a symbol of the Argentinean identity while conserved vegetables, fruits and even meats had English labels. The same can be said regarding clothing and beverages that were imported directly from England aboard English ships on their way to pick up wool, meat and leather free-of-charge because there was no such thing as customs.” Alfredo Fiori, *La conciencia en el arte (y otros ensayos)*. Buenos Aires: Alfi, 56-57.

<sup>454</sup> From the exploitation of a gigantic concession that was passed from Contardi to Tornero and then to Braun, the Sociedad Explotadora del Baker was formed with the participation of most of the Patagonian businesses. See Danka Ivanoff. 2004. *Lucas Bridges, 'el señor del Baker'*. Padre Las Casas: FONDART.

of the *Anónima*. The monopoly which arose in the Chilean part with concessions for Wehrhahn and Nogueira tended to blend in, more gradually, with the building up of Menendez's lands and the recipients of small lots on the Atlantic. As Belfiori indicated, "in Tierra del Fuego there are no cases of small-scale farmers or ranchers renting property and surviving as a business, rather seasoned, efficient creators of reliable fountains of wealth investing their assets until their properties have become highly profitable [without turning the area into...] an attractive settlement area."<sup>455</sup> They did, however, attract enormous herds that freely crossed the frontier to be butchered, frozen and shipped out from the Frigorífico in Río Grande. The entire frontier, at that time, had the same few companies in possession of its lands.

### **The Imperial Capital.**

The "Malvine invasion," a result of the "free" awarding of lands, had more consequences than the colonizing deployment of sheep. The extinction of the indigenous sovereignty, which included the radical displacement of the Tehuelche and the extermination of the indigenous in Tierra del Fuego, and the transformation of "open space" into livestock pastures were its other results. The German and English empires shared, and at times disputed, control of wool and meat businesses, bank credit and insurance, commerce and transportation. Expanding the geography of capitalism Bitsch, Braun, Cameron, Campos, Menendez, Reynolds, Stubenrauch, Waldron, and Wood all operated as agents of German and/or English commercial businesses, and sometimes of several simultaneously.

Functioning through them, imperial capital expanded its businesses and developed relationships in Rio de la Plata and Valparaiso, the key port in the Pacific for the transport of European goods and Chilean commercial goods. In fact, strongman Portales had promised the State's support in Valparaiso for what

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<sup>455</sup> Martha Belfiori. 1977. "Tierra del Fuego. Destino de la tierra pública," *Karukinka* 19-20, 4-16, p.6.

was by 1890 the largest navigation line in the world, the Pacific Steam Navigation Company.<sup>456</sup> Beginning in 1877, this line had connected the colonial and postcolonial markets of Australia, South Africa, Montevideo and Buenos Aires, Punta Arenas, Valparaíso and Callao<sup>457</sup> with the Malvinas and the commercial wool industry centers of London and Liverpool. The excess British capital invested in Patagonia arrived by way of this route during a period of expansion which coincided with that started by Germany with its *Deutsche Dampfschiffahrts-Gesellschaft Kosmos*, which travelled from Hamburg to Callao passing through Valparaiso and the Malvinas.

Unfortunately, there are no studies in economic history analyzing the international networks of Patagonian sheep industry, neither in relation to Perú and Argentina, which had experienced an important expansion in wool exports earlier in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, nor to the British empire of mutton, wool and fabrics. The businesses historiography, for example, has minimized the relationship between Duncan & Fox and *la Explotadora*, even when the former elected the president of the later, always its own president and an Englishman, from the time of its founding in 1893 until 1918. From then on, Banco de Chile's president took over. Carlos Van Buren, a millionaire moneylender associated with "the richest man in the History of Chile," the moneylender Agustin Edwards, became head of *la Explotadora*. In this line of analysis, the origin "tender annals" of the capital generated in Patagonia has been attributed to a *special lineage* (when not attributed to a race) of *industry captains* like Menendez and Braun.<sup>458</sup> Even when foreign investments were mentioned or fiscal valuations and appraisals were carried out, the origin and destination of exterior commerce, we have ignored the true importance of the imperial networks. Just as in the case of Tarapaca, where the British influence was not limited to the office property, in Patagonia it was not limited to land possession<sup>459</sup>. Control mechanisms included access to credit and to

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<sup>456</sup> See chapter 1.

<sup>457</sup> The line was modified in 1883, moving the landfall at Ciudad del Cabo to Suez. See [www.theshipslip.com/ships/lines/orient.html](http://www.theshipslip.com/ships/lines/orient.html) (acc.09.09.2011)

<sup>458</sup> Marx, *El Capital...op.Cit.*,

<sup>459</sup> A documented review of the depth of British control of nitrate by Alejandro Cárdenas. 1998. *Influencia británica en el salitre. Origen, naturaleza y decadencia*. Santiago: Universidad de

target markets, methods of administration, and the language used in transactions and technical and managerial jobs.

Although there is some agreement regarding the inception of the circuits linking Valparaiso, Punta Arenas, Río Gallegos, Buenos Aires and Liverpool, cross-referencing family, politics and businesses genealogies with entrepreneurial documentation goes beyond the scope of this chapter. In the following pages we will, however, describe the beginning of one of those relationships, proposing that one key condition for the formation of the Patagonian oligarchy was the influence peddling between the representatives of imperial capital and the political authorities. In this way, the original accumulation in Patagonia coincided with the moment of maximum expansion of capital accumulated in England, according to Marx, some two centuries before. The initial “Patagonic” capital, supporting the State administration, was nothing but an expression of the penetration of the imperial mercantile capital, reproduced now in the periphery. In this way, it benefited public and private administrators and assumed that in national terms each State would penetrate the territory at the rate at which centers of cash flow (Stations, and *estancias*) were established on the steppe.

Patagonian colonization can be defined as the setting up of an expansive joint movement between of sovereignties: that of capital, that of state. On Malvinas, for example, it gained strength when Great Britain stopped considering the islands to be a military enclave and began a “commercially guided colonization” by way of the Lafone Concession in 1846. Samuel Lafone “was perhaps the most important man in British business” during the Rio de la Plata era. Agent for colonization and owner of most of the area surrounding Montevideo and Punta del Este, he became rich as moneylender and supplier of the State during the blockade of the Guerra Grande.<sup>460</sup> Lafone’s first businesses

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Santiago de Chile, esp. Chapter II. The discussion about the political role played by British imperialism after the war as explained by Harold Blakemore. 1974. *British nitrate and Chilean politics, 1886-1896: Balmaceda and North*. London: U. of London, y Hernán Ramírez, esp. *La Guerra Civil de 1891. Antecedentes económicos*. Santiago: Austral.

<sup>460</sup> Julio Sánchez. and José Santos (eds.) 2010. *De urbe indiana. Ensayos sobre ciudades y urbanismo en Brasil y en la América hispana*. Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, p.159, n.53. Regarding Lafone’s businesses in Río de la Plata see Alba Mariani. 2009. “La familia y las empresas de Samuel Fisher Lafone, 1805-1871,” paper presented at the 6th Jornada de

were developed in Buenos Aires where he represented his family's Liverpool tannery business: exporting charqui (jerky), leather and tallow; and importing English fabrics, Sheffield hardware, Birmingham toys and Worcester crockery.<sup>461</sup>

To obtain the rights to fish and hunt sea lions, whales and wild livestock on Malvina Oriental's (known as *Lafonia*) 600,000 acres /242,000 hectares, the Colonial Office required both money and the introduction of British livestock and settlers.<sup>462</sup> Later on, settlers were introduced, but not livestock. Only the depredation started by Lafone "precipitated a shift toward the sheep industry," under a system of exploitation characterized by "absentee landlords and speculative investors from the mid-1840s onward."

Official plans to subdivide other lands "of the Crown" were frustrated when Lafone sought backup in London and organized the Royal Falkland Land, Cattle, Seal and Fishery Company. *The Company*, as it was called, received "a royal charter in December 1851, giving it control over merchant shipping on the islands and making the company answerable only to the British government." The following year, Lafone sold his shares in the FIC which, under such monopolistic conditions, raised sheep at such a rate that by 1877 it could no longer continue to expand.<sup>463</sup> The visit of Governors Dublé and Moyano was the perfect opportunity to raise limitless numbers of sheep, and employ exploitation methods and capital on "the boundless pampa stretching away from Magellan Strait hundred of miles to the north."<sup>464</sup>

Punta Arenas, "the world's jumping off-place," became the beach head for the colonization of southern Patagonia for the imperial capital being unloaded from Europe by way of the Malvinas and Valparaiso.<sup>465</sup> The British and German

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Investigación en Historia Económica, Montevideo, available at [audhe.org.uy/sextas\\_jornadas/Samuel\\_Fisher\\_Lafone\\_1.doc](http://audhe.org.uy/sextas_jornadas/Samuel_Fisher_Lafone_1.doc) (acc. 09.09.2011)

<sup>461</sup> Mariani, *op.Cit.*, pp.7-8.

<sup>462</sup> Shannon Warnick. 2008. *The reluctant colonization of the Falkland Islands, 1833-1851. A study of British Imperialism in the Southwest Atlantic*. M.A. in History Thesis, University of Richmond, p.99.

<sup>463</sup> Warnick, *op.Cit.*, p.154.

<sup>464</sup> William Conway. 1902. *Aconcagua and Tierra del Fuego. A book of climbing, travel and exploration*. London: Cassell & Company, p.213.

<sup>465</sup> The expression is taken from this case by Frederick Cook. 1900. *Through the first Antarctic Night, 1898-1899*. New York: Doubleday & McClure, p.60.

merchants, who had established themselves there midcentury, built their networks of influence in the same way as Lafone, thanks to credit and import/export businesses. Just as he did, they extended their business down to Patagonia once the governors began to offer lands, establishing locally their international networks with the support of their “important neighbors” and their own employees, because with this support they could become very important landowners themselves.

One of the cases that has been mentioned is that of Juan Bitsch. Born in Hamburg in 1854, Bitsch arrived to Punta Arenas in 1880 as the accountant for the *Casa alemana* (German House) with a branch in Valparaiso Schröder and Co. This company’s business in the Strait arose from its association with Russian-German Guillermo Bloom and apparently it was the largest until 1877. During the Mutiny that year, when the “offices and stores” and many homes were burned, the Society, along with the German Meidell & Co., claimed to have been most affected. Both of them received 30,000 of the 80,000 pesos paid by the State in indemnities, among 73 affected. Governor Duble was the fourth best compensated with 4,800 pesos.<sup>466</sup> Coinciding with his payment, Bitsch received the legal power from “the brother of his superior,” Karl Schroder, “to invest in that which appeared to be the best option and to administrate and manage what had been acquired.” With the 15,000 pesos received, in 1885 he came to manage a concession of 10,000 hectares with buildings valued at 6,000 pesos and 600 cows and horses for 30,000 pesos.<sup>467</sup>

With new German capital made available for the 1884 auctions, Bitsch indicated to the Government “se exige en seguridad la propiedad,” “an increase of five thousand hectares” and in “liberal payment terms, fifteen thousand hectares [...] offering to import five thousand English pounds to the country.”<sup>468</sup> Having acquired new lands, Schroder sold his business to Wehrhahn & Co., also German,

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<sup>466</sup> ANH-FMRE. Vol. 256. Decretos, 1882. Decreto Supremo 13.04.1882.

<sup>467</sup> The sentence in the original is “unable to keep secure the lands of his estate which were scattered everywhere, he asked for and was granted land of about 10,000 hectares from the governor.”

<sup>468</sup> A request from Bitsch unaddressed, but surely meant for the Governor of Magallanes, 1.04.1884, en Bitsch, *op.Cit.*, s/p.



who designated Rudolph Stubenrauch, of the Kosmos shipping company, as its local representative in charge of business. Married to one of Bloom's daughters, Rudolph Stubenrauch became "the first inhabitant of Chilean Tierra del Fuego"<sup>469</sup> representing Wehrhahn, Hobbs & Co., awardees of the first large Selknam land concession made by Balmaceda. *La Sociedad Ganadera Gente Grande* (The Great Society of Livestock Investors) combined German and British capital, bringing Ernest Hobbs to work on the Malvinas for a family-owned ranch and contracting marriage with another of Bloom's daughters. The brothers-in-law Stubenrauch and Hobbs began the systematic extermination of the Selknam, kidnapping girls who they trained as maids. Along with Bitsch, other Germans connected to Kosmos –like Von Heinz and Eberhardt, a former captain living on the Malvinas- expanded their ranches up to the border without demarcating them from the area of Última Esperanza. All these men were named, within a decade, to posts in the Chilean or Argentinean governments, or to both at different times.

Juan Bitsch, for example, expanded his business to Santa Cruz and transferred money in exchange for favors from Ministers in Santiago and Buenos Aires. Locally, he exercised enough power from his position to threaten the stability of the governor posts of Sampaio, in Magallanes, and Lista, in Santa Cruz, strengthened by the support of the German Ambassador. In 1889, Bitsch formed part of the first directory of firemen, along with other major businessmen and state employees.<sup>470</sup> Four years later, the first newspaper in Patagonia, *El Magallanes*, was distributed from one of his properties. It was founded by the Governor, his secretary Juan Contardi and the Colony doctor, Lautaro Navarro.<sup>471</sup>

In the conflicts regarding the best way to do away with the indigenous populations in Tierra del Fuego, the owners of the newspaper, the Salesian Missionaries and the ranch-owning elite, appeared as the owners of the warehouse

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<sup>469</sup> Roberto J. Payró. 1898. *La Australia Argentina. Excursión periodística á las costas patagónicas, Tierra del Fuego é Isla de los Estados. Con una carta-prólogo del General Bartolomé Mitre*. Tomo I. Buenos Aires: Imp. de La Nación, 136.

<sup>470</sup> The first members of the Magallanes Fire Dept. director were registered as: Director, Lautaro Navarro; Captain, José Menendez; Secretary, Felix Cordova; Treasurer, Gaston Blanchard, First Lieutenant, Juan Bitsch, Second Lieutenant, Bolívar Espinoza. See note xx. Search for with Sociability and Firemen

<sup>471</sup> Martinic, *Historia de la region... op.Cit.*, Tomo III, 777.

for the deported. They were some of the few mentioned in the published rulings for the flagellation of the indigenous, rulings which were never carried out.<sup>472</sup>

A few years later, Bitsch formed the first *Comisión de Alcaldes* (Mayors Council) with Navarro and Romulo Correa, both of whom had served as stand-in governors on various occasions, and his first job was to appraise the real estate properties, which were to become the basis of municipal income.<sup>473</sup> By 1904, Bitsch had also become an ad-honorem commissioner of Tres Puentes (Three Bridges) where he built his sawmill, and as such resolved, for example, debates over his neighbors' property lines regarding the road that to Gallegos that passed through their lands, valued for "the formation of a diligent business." Fenton and Wood, at the latitude of Cabeza del Mar, were obliged to let him through.<sup>474</sup> At the beginning of the 1920s, Bitsch himself obtained one of the highest valued urban properties in Punta Arenas (232,000), a sawmill (215,000) and a ranch in Tierra del Fuego (1,280,000).<sup>475</sup> On the Argentinean, side he also obtained several other properties, represented by his nephew, a board member of the Sociedad Rural (Rural Society).<sup>476</sup> The power that Bitsch had accumulated, more than a phenomenon, should be considered to be part of the expansion of the German Empire. In Chile's case, interaction with the Second Reich increased 590 percent between 1895 and 1913, and in this last year Germany was the main supplier of manufactured items.<sup>477</sup>

Despite this, domination by the British Empire was the constant during this period in Chile as well as Argentina. In addition to the surplus of capital from the Malvinas more capital, in equal or greater amounts, flowed from Valparaiso.<sup>478</sup> Duncan, Fox & Co. operated from there –a company formed in

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<sup>472</sup> ANH-FJM, Leg. 75. *Sumario sobre vejámenes Inferidos a Indígenas de Tierra del Fuego.*

<sup>473</sup> *Ibid.*, 782.

<sup>474</sup> Bitsch to Governor, 5.01.1907, ANH-FGM. Vol. 40. Colonización, 1904-1906.

<sup>475</sup> Punta Arenas Mayor Commission 1920. "Rol de propiedades evaluadas en más de \$150.000," Vol. 43. Intendencia de Magallanes. Minister of the Interior. 1908-1921, pp. 835.

<sup>476</sup> Baillinou, *op.Cit.* See note 90 [definite location, search for it under Jamieson]

<sup>477</sup> Hernán Ramírez. 1966. *Historia del imperialismo en Chile.* La Habana: Ed. Revolucionaria, p. 183.

<sup>478</sup> See David Fieldhouse's thesis on the importance of colonial surplus capital, reproduced in the marginal territories, in his 1973 [1990]. *Economía e Imperio. La expansión de Europa, 1830-1914.* Mexico: Siglo XXI.

1843 by the sons of a Liverpool merchant.<sup>479</sup> Twenty years later it had a branch office in Lima, with partial property and cross directorships with large producers of cotton, cotton oil and textiles. In Chile, it also passed from commerce and involvement in the mine industry to industrial production. It controlled sugar refinery in Viña del Mar (where the Public Administrator was Valdés Vergara), in the mill industry in Concepcion (where Jose Bunster was the main landowner) and in the Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego –its “largest affiliate.” Although “cross-directorships were much rarer among the traders and the domestic banks,” there was a “notable exception” in the relationship between Duncan Fox and the North & South Wales and the Midland banks. Frederick Hynde Fox was D&F’s (Duncan & Fox) “largest shareholder” and director of the N&SW until its merge with the Midlands.<sup>480</sup> In a few decades, it became, in the words of the aristocratic mountaineer Sir William Conway, “one of the main English houses in South America.” When Conway arrived to Valparaiso in 1898 with the intention of climbing Aconcagua and Monte Fitz Roy in Tierra del Fuego, it was impossible to find him logistical support. Conway knocked on the D&F’s door and was able to meet with the “senior partner,” McClelland, “and from that instant all my perplexities vanished. He extended the aegis of his influence over me [...and in] less than half an hour the telegraph wires were carrying messages to several people, and my expedition was definitively set on foot.”<sup>481</sup>

A similar, heroically self-constructed story about a casual encounter that leads to the founding of a company is narrated by Brown in his annual reports and was repeated most recently by Martinic at what is believed to be the time the SETF is formed. The origin “seems like a chapter from a novel, novel forgotten by modern minds for which the Magallenes wealth makes it impossible to remember that only fifty years ago the prosperous countryside of today had just

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<sup>479</sup> Baldomero Estrada. 2006. “La colectividad británica en Valparaíso durante la primera mitad del siglo XX,” *Historia* 39 (1): pp. 65-91.

<sup>480</sup> Geoffrey Jones. 2000. *Merchants to multinationals. British trading companies in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Oxford: Oxford U.P., pp. 29, 64, 171, 233. La Compañía Molinera El Globo was the owner of eight mills between Traiguén and Penco. Leonardo Mazzei. 2008. “El empresariado mercantil de Concepción a fines del siglo XIX,” *Atenea*: 97-125, p.103.

<sup>481</sup> Conway, *op.Cit.*, p.6.

been crossed by legendary conquistadors or heroic expeditionaries of our race.”<sup>482</sup> According to Braun, the million hectares delivered to Nogueira were a problem because he needed to raise an enormous amount of capital in little time. His personal efforts in Punta Arenas and London had been insufficient. So, one night Braun boarded the ship in which McClelland had recently arrived to the Strait. McClelland, getting out of bed, had accepted the business deal. And so began the construction of a “livestock empire” that according to Martinic “should be entirely attributed to the incredible drive and tenacity of Mauricio Braun, organizer and producer.”<sup>483</sup>

Even though the Brauns were the majority shareholders when the *Explotadora* was founded, it was then run by the president of Duncan Fox for 25 years, and was set up on Serrano’s concession located on lands which he had explored using State funds. D&F doesn’t show any shareholder participation in the SETF until 1909, however, all of its supplies were provided by this House in England, which cornered the wool market in London and chose its ranch administrators in Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand; whose correspondence was in English; and who achieved control of other Group Braun investments. Additionally, in the *Explotadora* books, its main debts were credits secured in London, Magellanic land mortgages and negative balances in the checking account of Duncan & Fox.<sup>484</sup>

In 1904, in Tierra del Fuego, D&F became the majority shareholder of the companies built on lands with Nogueira’s concessions. In 1905, these lands were acquired by the *Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego* (SETF).<sup>485</sup> Controlled by the British, employing British agents and administrators, and contracting its

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<sup>482</sup> Durán, *op.Cit.*, chapter 1.

<sup>483</sup> Braun, *op.Cit.*, pp.122-125; Martinic, *Menéndez...*, *op.Cit.*, 103-105.

<sup>484</sup> In 1915, for example, on a debt of 153,132, 58% was credit in London and 38% a debt with D&F; in 1917, the debt with London had been paid and with a debt of 120,652 contracted with D&F debt rose 86%. SETF. 1909. *Memoria y Balance presentados por el Directorio á la Asamblea General Ordinaria de Accionistas el 15 de Setiembre de 1909*. Valparaíso: Wescott y Co.; SETF. 1915. *Memoria y Balance presentados por el Directorio a la Asamblea General Ordinaria de Accionistas el 22 de Septiembre de 1915*. Santiago: Universo, p.2; SETF. 1917. *Memoria y Balance presentados por el Directorio a la Asamblea General Ordinaria de Accionistas el 24 de Septiembre de 1917*. Universo, Santiago, 6.

<sup>485</sup> Martinic, *Historia de... op.Cit.*, Tomo II, 697.

debts in England, by way of a D&F on the sidelines, *Explotadora* remained a “Chilean” company that had offices for legal purpose in the areas where almost all of its shareholders resided (Valparaiso, 47%, Santiago, 25%, and Punta Arenas, 15%, in 1909) although it imported Worcestershire sauce, candy, engineers and English locomotives through D&F.

Control of credit, originally exercised by moneylender-enablers like Nogueira in the 1860s and by Menendez in the following decade, united the metropolitan elite with the Londoners from that point on. The first foreign bank in Chile was the Banco de Tarapacá y Londres (Tarapaca & London Bank), organized in London and operating in Iquique as part of the ‘King of Nitrate’ empire in 1890.<sup>486</sup> Its offices multiplied in a short period of time, cropping up in Punta Arenas (1895) and in Rio Gallegos (1899), where it displaced the Banco de la Nación.<sup>487</sup> Its first directors in Patagonia were the English Vice Consulates J. Meredith and P. West, and Francisco Campos, a Spanish nobleman who made his career in London and Iquique. The bank, by way of acquisitions, entered Buenos Aires under the name Anglo-Argentino, multiplying its assets sixteen times between 1890 and 1913, before becoming the Anglo-Sud-Americano.<sup>488</sup> This growth spurred the ex-directors to form, along with Braun, Stubenrauch, Correa and Menendez, in 1900, the Banco de Punta Arenas.<sup>489</sup> One of Menendez’s daughters married Campos in 1904 who was then incorporated as a shareholder and a member of several boards of directors in his father-in-law’s companies. The largest of these was the *Sociedad Anónima Importadora y Exportadora de la Patagonia* (Importing and Exporting Company of Patagonia, Public Limited),

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<sup>486</sup> Ricardo Couyoumdjian. 1986. *Chile y Gran Bretaña durante la Primera Guerra Mundial y la Postguerra, 1914-1921*. Santiago: Andrés Bello, 34. According to Jones, *op.Cit.*, 24. “Leaving aside the many speculative ventures, the new waves of British overseas banks founded in the 1860s and 1870s went to the settler economies of the economies of the southern hemisphere [...] They were frequently launched at times of booms in minerals or commodities.”

<sup>487</sup> Having preceded the Banco de la Nación in its establishment, el Banco De Tarapacá was awarded land as an “enabling bank” during the crisis between Argentina and Chile from 1899 to 1902, lowering interest rates and offering more credit while the Banco de la Nación “restrained it [...] to an extreme.” Dutari, *op.Cit.*, p.40.

<sup>488</sup> The Banco Anglo-Sudamericano absorbed other British Banks in Argentina, Central America and Mexico and in 1920 A. Edwards’ bank. Jones, *op.Cit.*, pp.69, 80, 404.

<sup>489</sup> Izquierdo, *op.Cit.*, pp.96-98.

which expanded his control of the land by controlling credit along the entire Atlantic coast.

As indicated by banker Walter Young, inspector of the offices of Banco de Tarapaca in Punta Arenas and Rio Gallegos during the 1910s, the small and mid-sized ranch owners and merchants had, from the beginning, contracted credit with “ruinous interests” granted to the so-called “rascally storekeeper.”<sup>490</sup> A publicist from *La Anónima* complimented this in 1929, suggesting that “the main factor influencing the “putting down of roots by the population and the formation of ranching establishments [...] has been the employment of credit.”<sup>491</sup> Controlling it, along with supplies and transportations, the SAIEP became “the largest shipping and trading company in the South.”<sup>492</sup>

Once the credit and wool industries were under control, the meat industry became important, a new commodity that added value to the sheep heretofore exploited only for their wool. The Falkland Islands Co. started to ship frozen meats to England, without much success. In 1886, Spearing, Waldron and Wood sporadically shipped it out with a refrigerated ship that traveled to New Zealand. The same businessmen from Malvinas formed The Straits of Magellan Frozen Meat Co., in 1896, with a pontoon-refrigerator. The results were mediocre; the majority of the sheep were used for wool production until they were too old to obtain a good price as food. However, shipments from the Strait were sent in Houlder Brothers outfitted ships, which sailed the route to Australia and New Zealand.<sup>493</sup> In 1903, this same company established the first meat processing plant

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<sup>490</sup> The text is “money owing at ruinous interest to the rascally storekeeper,” en Young, *op.Cit.*, p.194.

<sup>491</sup> Manuel Lezcano, “El crédito en la Patagonia,” *Argentina Austral* 5, 1.11.1929.

<sup>492</sup> S. Cuaniscú. c.1936. *Santa Cruz. Somera historia de su conquista por la civilización*. T.N. de Santa Cruz: s/e, p.128. For Manuel Lezcano, after the crisis of 1919 the “noble minds of true statesmen,” in the “patriotic spirit,” should collaborate with a settlement that owed little to laws and to the State and much to “the initiative of private capital and work,” made possible due to credit. For this reason, he asked the State to help the indebted settlers and the “credit institutions can recover what by law belongs to them, without bankruptcies that cause their ruin without benefitting anyone.” Two years later, the same magazine suggested that credit should be channeled through the “Official banks, because the private businesses were no longer in a situation to continue their lavish credit offers.” See “Xenofobia inexplicable,” *Argentina Austral*, 1.05.1931.

<sup>493</sup> James Critchell & Joseph Raymond. 1912. *A history of the frozen meat trade*. London: Constable, 86-87; Jones, *op.Cit.*, 12-14, 48.

in Patagonia and in Chile in Rio Seco, under the name The South American Export Syndicate, of which it was three-quarters owner. Braun and Bermudez were also involved, although to a lesser degree.<sup>494</sup> Their managers and engineers had among them so many British that in 1909 a cadet indicated that “Punta Arenas seemed like a British colony.” English was spoken as often as Spanish was and the pound was the currency used for salaries and for commerce. The Rio Seco Meat Works took “a leading part in improving the breeds by importing rams every year from England,” in order “to convince people of the vast possibilities of Patagonia becoming a meat exporting country.”<sup>495</sup>

The combination of the exportation of wool and leather along with frozen meat inferred an increase in profits and the extractive capacity of the large estate owners associated with British capital. A second meat packing plant was erected upon the lands granted to Menendez in San Gregorio, the construction of which began after Chilean President Pedro Montt laid the first stone. Its owner, The *Compañía Frigorífica de la Patagonia* (Meat Packing Plant of Patagonia), had its headquarters in London and its capital was supplied by The Patagonian Sheep Farming, Waldron, Stubenrauch, Townsend, Menendez and Weddell & Co. Although its president was German Consul Stubenrauch, its administration was exclusively British.<sup>496</sup>

In Santa Cruz, the first meat packing plant was opened in 1910 on the grounds of a British meat canning company. The New Patagonian Meat and Cold Storage consisted of one-third participation by Patagonia Meat Preserving and two-thirds by ranching groups, *la Anónima* among them. Shortly after its startup, however, it was evicted for debt equivalent to 4/5 of its capital. Its only creditor was its London headquarters which reabsorbed it. In accordance with the well-informed Edelmiro Correa, later on “it is assumed that the Swift Beef Co.

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<sup>494</sup> “Nuestro grabado,” *La Polar*, 23.5.905; Jones, *op.Cit.*, 14, 55.

<sup>495</sup> Jones, *op.Cit.*, 13-14.

<sup>496</sup> Critchell & Raymond, *op.Cit*; Martinic, “La participación de capitales...,” *op.Cit.* Weddell & Co. was established with English, South African and Australian capital as it was an important merchant of frozen meat. It was first owned by Berisso, then sold to Swift. During World War I, it controlled the British Army’s supply orders from Australasia. Critchell and Raymond, *op.Cit.*, 391.

acquired all of its shares [...] the maneuver had been successful.”<sup>497</sup> In summary, the original British company had transformed into a new company, increasing its capital with local businesses, contracting debts with itself and selling its control to a third company, Swift, which was building a meat packing empire from Chicago.

This expansion through the south started in Berisso with La Plata Cold Storage, a company with Swift and British capital participation, based in Ciudad del Cabo, which erected a new meat packing plant in San Julian on the lands of the New Patagonian. Between 1895 and 1908, the sheep population in Santa Cruz grew six fold and in Argentinean Tierra del Fuego, where Menendez had started large-scale ranching as recently as 1896 when his operations commenced there were more than 1.3 million sheep.<sup>498</sup> The meat packing plants strengthened the power of large-scale ranches as long as they controlled meat buying power. The meat was largely shipped off to England where the demand for meat was so high in the mid-1910s that there was little left for the settlers. This is considered to be one of the reasons for the rise of a powerful workers movement.<sup>499</sup> With the meat packing plants, the *Explotadora* increased its power, constructing one of Patagonia’s largest industrial complexes in Puerto Bories— upon lands occupied until 1905 by German settlers. Like the SETF, Bories’s plant was formally controlled by capital located in Chile, but its directors and technicians, its supply and its exportation were all done through Duncan & Fox and towards Great Britain.

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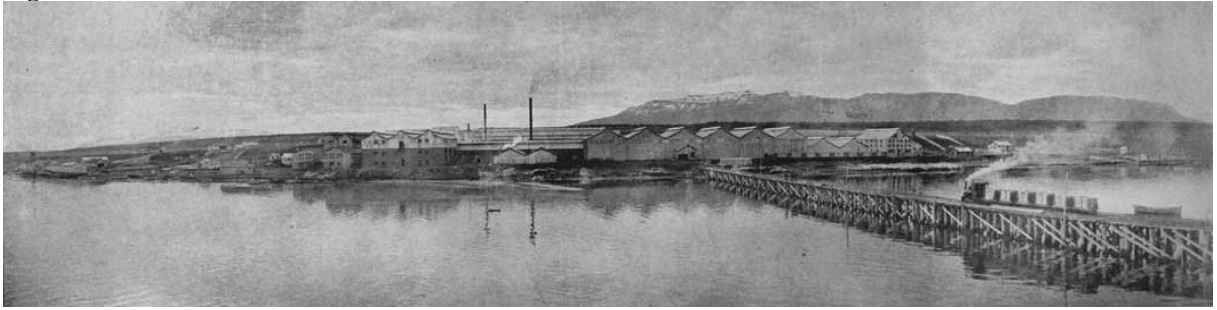
<sup>497</sup> Correa y Klappenbach, *La Patagonia, op.Cit.*, 112-113.

<sup>498</sup> Simon Jackson. 1938. *Argentine Meat and the British Market: Chapters in the History*. London: Oxford University Press, 120-121.

<sup>499</sup> See chapter 4.



**Figure 9. Puerto Bories (c.1924).**



The SETF's Puerto Bories industrial complex started operations in 1915 and included a fat refinery, a slaughterhouse, a meat locker and a port in addition to the electric plant, a cooperage and an armory for the small train line. It is located 4 kilometers from Puerto Natales, a town of workers from primarily Chiloe, and less than 20 km from the Argentinean border. Photograph by Carlos Foresti, c.1924, "Vista del Muelle Grande"<sup>500</sup>.

Since English was the administrative language of the ranches, businesses and meat packing plants, it is easy to understand the rupture that was caused by the outbreak of World War I, particularly in the realm of the elite. In 1914, the Governor was obligated to prohibit public meetings of foreigners in order to avoid confrontations.<sup>501</sup> For the time being, reports from the Foreign Office considered the British to be owners of 25% of the region's land and 40% of SETF's shares – something which, as has been indicated, was not included in the books<sup>502</sup>. The blacklists were greatly increased and made it difficult to supply German businesses. According to rumors, a series of shop robberies were carried out precisely to supply those German merchants.<sup>503</sup> But even "neutral companies" had problems. Duncan & Fox decided that its bank in Punta Arenas, that of Menendez and Braun, should fire four of its directors for being German.<sup>504</sup> The Pacific Steam Navigation Co. retracted the representation of the influential Stubenrauch (ex imperial consulate) and his father-in-law, although English, had to leave his

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<sup>500</sup> Carlos Foresti. c.1918. *Vistas del Frigorífico Puerto Bories*: Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego, 3.

<sup>501</sup> *El Mercurio*, 07.08.1914, cit. in Couyoundjian, *op.Cit.*, 58.

<sup>502</sup> Couyoundjian, *op.Cit.*, 30.

<sup>503</sup> ANH-AJM. Caja 305, Leg. 2. against Pedro Ruiz and José Martínez for robbery, October 7, 1919.

<sup>504</sup> Couyoundjian, *op.Cit.*, p.142. Among those on the blacklist were José and Mateo Pasinovich, Frey & Elkan, Ignacio Anguita Greene (employee and figurehead for Stubenrauch), Brickman & Co., Koster & Volmer, Dubrock Co. and Natalio Foretich.

position as British Consulate.<sup>505</sup> The *Explotadora* had problems with supplies: from cheddar cheese to copper tubes, they ran into problems securing permission to export due to rationing in Great Britain. For this reason, when the Metropolis could no longer provide, even candy began to be imported from the United States.<sup>506</sup>

## Conclusions.

In the 1890s, Moritz Braun suggested that “Punta Arenas’ native youth rival against the imported youth or “outsiders,” many of whom arrived with “the increase in public services that the bureaucrats bought with them: judges, secretaries, lawyers, treasurers, professors.” One way to emphasize the difference between them was for the newly rich European immigrants to adopt European behaviors. In “the males of the family and the close friends, it was the English type.” Subscribing to *Illustrated London News* and the “large department store” catalogs, Braun and his circle followed “worldwide goings-on like the fashion trends of the famous,” sending for “large and small products, even toys” from the *Galería Lafayette*, *Au Bon Marchais* and *Aux Printemps*.<sup>507</sup> Children were sent first to study in Buenos Aires or Montevideo, then to Europe<sup>508</sup>. The Braun, Suarez and Van Peborgh children, for example, were sent to study at Le Chateau de Lancy, “the most famous school in Europe.” Located near Geneva, anyone from members of the Ottoman Dynasty in Egypt (the Khedivate, 1867-1914) to William Vanderbilt, the US multi-million dollar heir who transported Tuthmose III’s obelisk, gifted by a khedive, from Suez to Central Park, had passed through it.<sup>509</sup>

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<sup>505</sup> Couyoundjian, *op.Cit.*, 60, 59.

<sup>506</sup> AIP-Vol.79. Copiador de Circulares de la SETF (1913-1918), Gen. Manager a Admn. Secciones, 2.05.1916, fs.116; Gen.Manager a Admin.Puerto Bories, 12-1916, fs.152; Gen. Manager a todas las secciones, 27.06.1917, fs. 205-207; Gen.Manager a Secciones, 25.02.1918, fs. 260-61.

<sup>507</sup> Braun, *op.Cit.*, pp.140, 142.

<sup>508</sup> Manuel Señoret, “Memoria del Gobernador de Magallanes,” *Memoria del Ministro de Colonización presentada al Congreso en 1895*. 1896. Santiago: Imp. Mejía, 223, 206-207.

<sup>509</sup> Braun, *op.Cit.*, pp.255-257; “War closes a famous Swiss School,” *The New York Times*, 30.06.1918; [www.centralpark2000.com/database/obelisk.html](http://www.centralpark2000.com/database/obelisk.html) (acc.12.08.2010) With this

The settlers, however, would not have been able to do anything if it had not been for the constant intervention of the State in their favor – as stated by the Chilean *Agencia General de Colonización* (General Colonization Agency), referring to the Germans in Valdivia.<sup>510</sup> Contrary to Mateo Martinic’s erudite work about Patagonia, “the agglutinative and dynamic factor of [...] southern economic development” can not be attributed to the “pioneering entrepreneurship push” of Menendez and Braun. The reasons for the transformation of Patagonia and livestock raising in the national territory escape the supposed individual temperament of those “outstanding men” or “industry captains,” as Martinic calls them.<sup>511</sup> In this same sense, Patagonia can not be understood as a self-sufficiently integrated region that emerged out of an expansion coming *from Punta Arenas*<sup>512</sup>. On the contrary, the material colonization, the occupation of Patagonia carried out by way of millions of sheep, should be understood as the ferocious expansive processes of the combined forces of imperial capital and the nation-state. Punta Arenas was “an intersection point in the orbits of many” and the “place of export and supply” for sheep farmers whom “the Chilean government favored [...] in every way.”<sup>513</sup> With Punta Arenas as the beach head, thanks to the benefits and favors granted by the Chilean state, first, and that of Argentina on its heels, and part of a global imperial and national expansion processes, capital made its way into the depths of the steppe in the form of sheep.

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anglophile school, “the English disease,” soccer, had its beginnings in Switzerland <http://emagazine.credit-suisse.com/app/article/index.cfm?fuseaction=OpenArticle&aoid=36210&lang=EN> (acc. 10.12.2011)

<sup>510</sup> ANH-FMRE. Vol. 314. *Agencia General de Colonización en Europa*, 1885. Report by Dávila Larraín (manuscript).

<sup>511</sup> Martinic, *Menéndez y Braun... op.Cit.*, 163.

<sup>512</sup> The concept of “autarchy” is widely used in Patagonian literature. In most of the usages it can be easily replaced by monopoly. Cfr. Martinic. “Patagonia Austral: 1885-1925. Un caso...” *op.Cit.*; Susana Bandieri (ed.). 2001. *La frontera argentino-chilena como espacio social*. Neuquén: CEHIR-UNCo, 459-486, y “La expansión económica de Punta Arenas sobre los territorios argentinos de la Patagonia y Tierra del Fuego, 1885-1925,” *Anales del Instituto de la Patagonia* 7, 5-42; Susana Bandieri. 2005. *Historia de la Patagonia*. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, p.219; María Teresa Luiz y Monika Schillat. 1998. *Tierra del Fuego. Materiales para el Estudio de la Historia Regional*. Ushuaia: Fuegia, p.15; Joaquín Bascopé. 2009. “De la exploración a la explotación. Tres notas sobre la colonización de la Patagonia Austral,” *Nuevo Mundo, Mundos Nuevos*.

<sup>513</sup> Conway, *op.Cit.*, p.212, 163.

“The clever machinations of the land grabbers” allowed them to accumulate in a short time a fortune that the banker Young didn’t dare translate into numbers because “I should not be believed [...] Nor would it be wise to ask them how they managed to get possession of all those leagues of land.” The question can only be answered by doing reference to corruption. The separation between the political, on one hand, and the economic, on the other, is a liberal fallacy that doesn’t apply when analyzing the State’s construction processes. During Chilean and Argentinean oligarchic regimes, Avellaneda’s *República Posible* (Botana’s *República Restrictiva*), the political monopolization of the State was tied to the formation of economic oligopolies. Internally-practiced colonialism, expressed as electoral fraud and bribery, and classist and racial restrictions of civil rights including land access, did not only expose the Europeanized ideology and the authority of the elite. It was, also, a guarantee of economic privileges that were produced *thanks* to the control of the political institutions among the main families.

The fortunes generated by the exploitation of sheep in Patagonia strengthened the mercantile, political and familial circuits which subsidized them. The transformation of indigenous territory into fiscal land involved a process of border definition which was characteristic of the national states’ system, at the same time that the transformation of “fiscal land” into private land, was a process that demarcated capital sovereignty. Thanks to the Chilean and the Argentinean diplomatic, scientific and military expenditures, whose efforts to consolidate their territorially their sovereignty were mostly futile, “the rediscovery of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego by the sheep farmers” became the actual materialization of that desire. For the first time on the steppe, through ranchers-sheriffs, capitalism and State started to be experienced.<sup>514</sup> This was, however, a global process that the previously mentioned explorer called by 1900 “one of the end of the century wonders.”<sup>515</sup> At that time, in the words of Alberto Fagalde, “the movement and

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<sup>514</sup> On the joint experience in Latin American modernization see Pinto, “De proyectos y desarraigos,” *op.cit.*, p. 130.

<sup>515</sup> Cook, *op.Cit.*, p.60.

life in the territory revolved around the foreigners who had capital and its influences”<sup>516</sup>.

As Rosemary Thorp has indicated, following Díaz-Alejandro’s argument, Argentina “is the Latin American country that best adapted itself to the traditional perspective” of staple theory. According to this, economic growth – and Argentina and Chile were the countries that grew the most between 1880 and 1920- would be the product of the export of natural resources obtained “by intensive use of the land, which had a very low opportunity cost.”<sup>517</sup> This expansion was only possible when the states put their activity at the service of the massive introduction of foreign capital and small technological advances (barbed wire, the most significant), which allowed them to finance exclusive policies while avoiding major fissures in their expansive economic capacity (except in 1890-91 in Chile and 1893 in Argentina).<sup>518</sup> In Fernandez’s terms, which we considered at the start of this chapter, the oligarchic state’s logic expressed as aristocratization and patrimonialization fed the connection between the State authorities in Santiago and Buenos Aires and the Patagonian representatives of imperial capital, who, according to the well-informed expert Francisco Moreno, monopolized everything from credit to land, which was “mostly obtained at a vile price and patronized by their friends in the Government.”<sup>519</sup>

Corruption networks, as political and commercial relationships between authorities and local businessmen, characterized this period from the northern border of Mexico to the Beagle Canal. The deepening of this connection made it historically possible to transform the frontier into national borders from what was conceived of as an empty space into a space emptied of its original inhabitants. The 1880s marked this tragic break in which sheep began to define its sovereignty, that of capital. Upon these tracks the nation state would advance, defending a new order arising from private property. The *civilización latifundista*

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<sup>516</sup> Fagalde, *op.Cit.*, p.378.

<sup>517</sup> Carlos Díaz-Alejandro. 1970. *Essays on the Economic History of the Argentine Republic*. New Haven: Yale U.P., p.11, as quoted in Rosemary Thorpe. 1998. *Progreso, pobreza y exclusión. Una historia económica de América latina en el siglo XX*. Washington: BID, pp.65-66.

<sup>518</sup> Thorp, *op.Cit.*, pp.67-69.

<sup>519</sup> Francisco Moreno, cited in Roberto Hosne. 2011. *Perito Francisco Moreno. El que pensó la Patagonia*. Buenos Aires: Albatros. p.8.

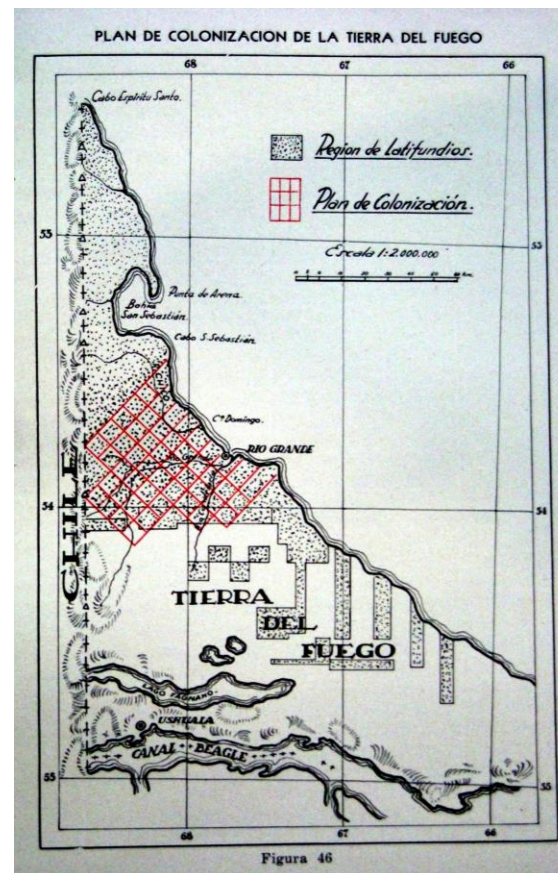
(large-estate civilization), as David Viñas would call it, was capable of solving the equation that Marx would define as primitive accumulation. Encouraged by the State and permanently subsidized, it *emptied* the lands, converting them into speculative capital and repopulating them with commodities obtained by the seasonal work of precarious wage-earners, attracting cheap labor from the furthest corners of the globe, another effect of its combined expansion.

Figure 10. Land grants, Argentinean Tierra del Fuego (1917)



Official map of Argentinean Tierra del Fuego, 1917. Included in Col. José Rodríguez's 1921 *Bellezas y Riquezas Australes*. Cullen, Sara, 2a and 1a Argentina belonged to the Menéndez – Braun conglomerate. After the crisis of wool and meat prices that followed the end of World War I, a growing nationalistic tendency between military officers aimed to argentinization by subdivision and improvements in transports and communications. First interventions were undertaken by Perón in the late 1940s.

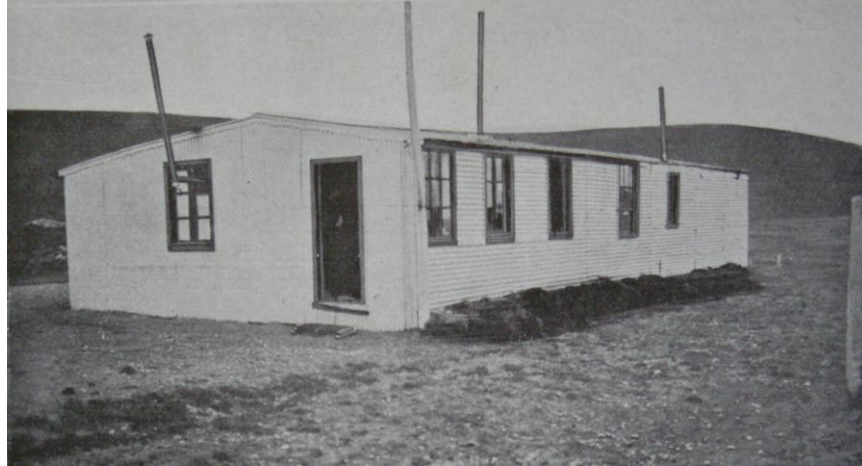
Figure 11. Latifundios and Plan of Colonization (1935)



1935's Argentinean "Tierra del Fuego's Colonization Plan," as imagined by Col. José María Sarobe: "many times the concept of national sovereignty vanishes, and the Argentinean sentiment appears attenuated or colorless" in front of foreign property and Magallanian prosperity. For Sarobe, subdivision was the possibility to settle Argentineans, ideally former members of the military. Neither agrarian reform nor massive colonization have ever been implemented.



**Figure 12. “A police detachment closet o the Chilean border” (c.1923)**



“Un destacamento policial cerca de la frontera chilena”

**Figure 13. “Brigade of the Patriotic League in a sheep farming station.”**



“Brigada de la Liga Patriótica en una estancia” no identificada.

Possibly a summer game room for the station manager’s family, this solid, modern building used as a para-military quarter does contrast with the precariousness of the housing for border guards erected after the strikes of the summer 1921-1922.

Pictures taken from Edelmiro Correa Falcón y Luis Klappenbach. 1924. *La Patagonia Argentina: estudio gráfico y documental del Territorio Nacional de Santa Cruz*. Buenos Aires: s.n, pp.94, 98. A good online version in <http://patlibros.org/lpa/indexeng.htm>



## **Chapter 4. The Makings of the State. Politics, Customs and the Monopolization of Violence in Magallanes and Santa Cruz, 1890-1922.**

At its narrowest point, four kilometers separate the end of continental America from Karukinka, home of the Selknam, Tierra del Fuego. Despite this, after only four decades of occupation on the continental coast, the Chilean State launched a reconnaissance mission to Isla Grande. Passing the Navy's information on to merchants, the State granted four companies half of the 2.9 million hectares which belonged to Chile in accordance with the Treaty of 1881. Only twenty years after ranches were introduced, the Selknam had either been assassinated or deported and 800,000 sheep occupied the lands. The Chilean State made its presence known by founding Porvenir, which, in 1896, was still "in development [...] due to a lack of competent personnel" to whom to assign lots. It was completed the following year, but the neighbors pleaded for government help for a "settlement that had just been born into a life of progress and civilization and today was encroached upon by ranching concession properties."<sup>520</sup> This happened again in 1904 (when the town was *suffocated* "by a ring of large properties"); and a decade later, when *El Magallanes* denounced that 60% of the houses were abandoned because the Government "with its complacent attitude towards the societies," didn't enforce laws regarding fiscal land and caused commerce to drown<sup>521</sup>. At the beginning of the 1890s, however, the State took steps to affirm its authority and control the "indian" and "white indian" nomads (small-scale miners, hunters, shepherds) who evaded regulations by naming a Subdelegate.<sup>522</sup>

In practical terms, the power of the new state employee designated by the President of the Republic was limited. In 1898, his office consisted of a precarious building, a rubber stamp, six chairs "in poor condition," four fountain pens and four administrative books. One of these was meant to register the land concessions and was

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<sup>520</sup> Neighbors to Subdelegate Rozas, 7.10.1897, in the National Historic Archive-Government Fund of Magallanes (FGM). Vol. 21. Subdelegación de Tierra del Fuego, 1892-1900, n.n.

<sup>521</sup> "Atendible solicitud de los vecinos de Porvenir," *El Magallanes*, Punta Arenas (EMG), 06.02.1904; "La ciudad de Porvenir. Su próxima ruina. Los trusts ganaderos," *EMG*, 21.01.1914.

<sup>522</sup> M. Señoret, manuscript, later published as *Memoria del Gobernador de Magallanes. La Tierra del Fuego y sus Naturales*, FGM. V. 21, *op.Cit.*, n.n.

blank<sup>523</sup>. A year later, the Police Station was granted four mountings for 3 horses and 6 Winchester rifles, although two of them were unusable.<sup>524</sup> In 1900, it had only 3 rifles, all in poor condition and six guards who were useless, complained the Subdelegate, “for assisting and watching day and night the many lackadaisical miners [...] the majority of whom had terrible histories and were fond of drinking” and many of whom were “lower class Chileans with no education who tried at every opportunity to offend the calm and hardworking foreign residents.”<sup>525</sup>

In Rio Gallegos, the capital of the Argentine *Territorio Nacional de Santa Cruz* (Santa Cruz National Territory), the Police Station, in 1887, consisted of “a rented house with a room for the troops, a room for the officers, a pantry, a kitchen, a stove and an unused economy kitchen.” To make the national integrity respected and to monopolize the use of violence in the 240,000 square kilometers of the Territory, the police had four Remington rifles and four broken sabres.<sup>526</sup> In Santa Cruz Port, the chief of police complained to the Governor in 1894: “the Station I am in charge of has only one gendarme, due to a lack of personnel, to maintain order and public safety.” Recently, he denounced, the Presidio soldiers had started a huge fight with knives and public disorder is happening “frequently” and is “more severe every day.” In fact, he assured, “public order, lack of property violation and individual safety,” are at risk so “the neighborhood is restless and some prefer to get rid of their assets or look for an isolated area which will protect them from what is sure to happen.”<sup>527</sup> The pampa was safer than the port, the desert more organized than the national State during its brief existence.

At the same time, the possibility of a war between Argentina and Chile, due to the dispute over Patagonia, implied that both countries would enter a multi-million peso arms race that would rank their navies amongst the eight largest in the world. For this same reason, they reorganized their Armies, patriotized the schools and made it obligatory for young men to enlist, deploying expensive teams of experts, diplomats and

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<sup>523</sup> “Inventario del Archivo de la Oficina de la Subdelegación de Tierra del Fuego,” 16.11.1898, in FGM. V. 21, *op.Cit.*, s/n.

<sup>524</sup> “Inventario,” 27.8.1899, in ANH-FGM. V. 21, *op.Cit.*, s/n.

<sup>525</sup> Subdelegate to Governor, 09.06.1900 and 25.08.1900, in ANH-FGM. V. 21, *op.Cit.*, s/n.

<sup>526</sup> Historic Archive of the Provincia de Santa Cruz-Fondo Gobernación de Santa Cruz (AHP). Leg. 1887-1888. Exp. 1. Comisario Río Gallegos.

<sup>527</sup> AHP. Leg. 1894. Exp. 42C. Comisaría Santa Cruz, 20.2.1894.

scientists in defense of dignity and the land. They even strengthened their negotiation abilities, until 1902, when King Edward VII of Great Britain, who had reliably resolved the Treaty of 1881's loopholes, failed at arbitration.<sup>528</sup> Even when it fell behind schedule, diplomatic-cartographic border making happened before borders were practically observed on Darwin's wild and damned land where life escaped regulation by the State. Despite this, although border commissions roamed the steppe's interior and the mountains and installed pyramids which marked the line between national and foreign territory, people, sheep and capital crossed these borders with little more in their way than nature. A paradox of postcolonial colonialism, *Patagonia was key* in the strengthening of Argentina and Chile's coercive ability and in the establishment of a border identified as "the Chilean" and "the Argentinean" while simultaneously it was *marginal* for the States. In Patagonia, there were but a few sabers and some broken chairs.

This chapter analyzes certain practices by way of which the State made itself 'really exist' in southern Patagonia. In agreement with Bourdieu, the State should be understood as "the culmination of a process of concentration of a variety of types of capital," "a sort of meta-capital granting power over other species of capital and over their holders."<sup>529</sup> As was indicated in the previous chapter, the State constructed itself upon unexplored lands by way of a legal mechanism that, first, decreed that the lands of the indigenous were 'national territory'. After having spread out by way of Tehuelche indigenous commerce, first, and then "mercantile" control, it assigned the privilege of enjoying the land to private parties who were connected to the State via corruption networks.<sup>530</sup> This oligarchic State, made a nation by way of centralized expansion (chapter 1), adopted legal dispositions that served the interests of imperial commercial

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<sup>528</sup> George Rauch. 1999. *Conflict in the Southern Cone: the Argentine military and the boundary dispute with Chile, 1870-1902*. Westport: Praeger, pp.150-157; Pablo Lacoste. 2003. *La imagen del otro en las relaciones de la Argentina y Chile (1534-2000)*. Buenos Aires: FCE, chap. 10; BAGS. 1903. "The Boundary Between Chile and Argentina," *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* 35, 69-70; Robert Talcott. 1967. "The Chilean Boundary in the Strait of Magellan," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 47: 519-531; Richard Perry. 1980. "Argentina and Chile: The Struggle for Patagonia 1843-1881," *The Americas* 36: 347-363.

<sup>529</sup> Pierre Bourdieu. 1999. "Rethinking the State: genesis and structure of the bureaucratic field." In George Steinmetz (ed). *State/Culture: state-formation after the cultural turn*. Ithaca: Cornell U.P., 53-75, pp.57-58.

<sup>530</sup> "Mercantile" is understood here as a wealth extraction mechanism that does not produce value as added labor. The commerce-credit made up the first accumulation basis in Patagonia.

groups before those of the general public, sovereign only in their abstraction. What interests us here is to analyze how this founding act, a legal fiction, managed to materialize *within* the people in a determined time-space which constituted, as Corrigan and Sayer suggest, a dimension central to the State's power.<sup>531</sup>

In this way we can distinguish, for analytical clarity, two spheres, building and exercise of state sovereignty (westfalian), and a third sphere of social sovereignty<sup>532</sup>. First the national State is historically possible only in a legal environment of relationships with 'peers' in a states-nations system like 'international sovereignty; or westfalian.'" It recognizes itself when it is recognized by others: when it strikes up relationships; creates commitments, defines borders and negotiates the limits of its territory. The nation State becomes possible when it is recognized by other nation States. Likewise, there should also be an internal order, excluding other states by way of sovereignty from making decisions regarding 'internal issues' that should be regulated by the people, that manages resources, exercises control, and works to monopolize violence and obtain Bourdieu's 'meta-power' to have the national power function *within and through* its subjects. This process of State construction is constant, dynamic and contradictory, occurring locally in the living space of its subjects. Finally, and generally in the third place *temporary*, the State that becomes naturalized in interstate relations, that exists as an abstraction and that materializes in its normative imposition regarding social relations, relates permanently with social sovereignties that act *from below* when faced with the definition of experiences *from above*. In this dialectic tension, as an open hegemonic process, state-making (*policies*) and the living power, the historicity of the social (*the political*), interact or in words of Charles Tilly, "the acquisition and loss of rights by different segments of the population being a product of that interaction" between State-making and mobilization.<sup>533</sup>

In this sense I share Gabriel Salazar's proposition that "sovereignty does *not* reside in the State [...] but rather, *all* the time, in the subject created by a community";

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<sup>531</sup> Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer. 1985. *The Great Arch. English State Formation as Cultural Revolution*. . London: Basil Blackwell, p.200. "A central dimension [...] of state power is the way it works within us."

<sup>532</sup> About the definitions of sovereignty in the perspective of a States system. See Stephen Krasner. 1999. *Sovereignty. Organized hypocrisy*. Princeton: Princeton U.P.

<sup>533</sup> Charles Tilly "Reflections on the history of European state-making." In Tilly (ed.) 1975. *The formation of the National States in Western Europe*. Princeton: Princeton U.P., 3-84, p.38.

but, at the same time, I think that the last part of this proposition escapes the grasp of historization: “in the sense that the subject can live perfectly outside of the State, distant from ‘the political’ and, still in an apparently marginal condition, can develop and empower itself socially and culturally. Social culture that erupts spontaneously is the womb from which popular sovereignty is born, stays and is developed.” In summary, “the lack of state oxygen does not kill sovereignty but rather, anaerobically, fertilizes it.”<sup>534</sup> On the contrary, I sustain that the state’s social and institutional life exist in intimate relationship, relating as bordering sovereignties and that state sovereignty only expands expropriating social power. Likewise, social sovereignties, in a world in which ‘national’ borders expand and close quickly, only exist in relation to States. Whether they be imperial or national, colonization exists only to the degree that social power dialectically determines.

The ways in which populations subject to the State’s authority “confront, get comfortable with, or resist their domination are molded by domination processes,” defining a material and meaningful framework which is, “in part, discursive: a common language or way of speaking about the social relationships which establish the central terms around which, and about which, contestation may occur.”<sup>535</sup> As many others have proposed departing from Roseberry’s reading of Gramsci, those contents define specific historic conditions for specific actors on specific lands. In this chapter, I analyze the emergency conditions on the Patagonian frontier of ‘statiality languages’ and ‘authority’ as defined by Hansen and Steputtat. These languages are one of the frameworks which create the conditions that make possible national hegemonization in social relationships. This hegemony is not sustained by force or by property ownership, exclusively: “it is inevitably sustained by lived culture, also,” Raymond Williams indicated.<sup>536</sup> That

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<sup>534</sup> Gabriel Salazar. 2009. *Del Poder Constituyente de Asalariados e Intelectuales (Chile, siglos XX y XXI)*. Santiago: LOM, pp.12-13. A critique of these propositions in my summary of the same book, *Historia* 43: 1 (2010), 290-294.

<sup>535</sup> “the ways in which [...] subordinate population [...] talk about, confront, accommodate themselves to, or resist their domination are shaped by process of domination itself”; “in part, discursive: a common language or way of talking about social relationships that sets out the central terms around which and in terms of which contestation can occur.” William Roseberry, “Hegemony and the language of contention.” In Gilbert Joseph and Daniel Nugent (eds.) 1994. *Everyday forms of State formation. Revolution and the negotiations of rule in Modern Mexico*. Durham: Duke U.P., 455-366, pp.360-361.

<sup>536</sup> Raymond Williams. 1975. “Es usted marxista, ¿verdad?,” 2008. *Historia y Cultura Común. Ed. de A. García*. Madrid: Libros de la Catarata, p.124

‘national’ culture, articulated to the State and to a distant population, bordering and civilizational, internal and international, is analyzed here as it pertains to the expansion of the state apparatus as a form of social relationship. In this way, we try to, as Corrigan and Sayer propose, “understand the ways of the state via its materialization in the historic experience of different groups.”<sup>537</sup>

### **Politics without Nation.**

Colony lands, the National Territories of southern Patagonia, were subject to direct control by the Executive Power. The new settlers didn’t have the right to elect representatives locally or ‘nationally’. Electoral participation and political representation fell outside of the rights and responsibilities of new inhabitants born in Chile or Argentina. To the contrary, the privileges granted based on racial criterion quickly produced a market segment that became the landowner class, made up almost exclusively of Europeans. Its economic capacity was expressed as political capacity, articulated at two levels: (1) the metropolitan, where corruption networks established an interest identity between ‘national’ oligarchical politics and local capital, which translated into family and commercial mergers; and (2) the local, where this community made up of a specific class and origin monopolized the state and parastate institutions that began to emerge in the 1890s. Until then, the Governor functioned as a lever of favors, but also as the only authority, without the counter balance of a Judicial branch or public service administration.

### ***Municipalities: State Employees and Business Owners***

*La Comuna Autónoma* (The Autonomous Municipality), the result of a law approved by the Chilean Congress in 1891, came to be as the result of an attempt to democratize the elections by taking away the control of the process from the Executive Power and giving it, along with control of the Police Station and public services, to a City Council of 9 members. The Municipality emerges as an organ of local power,

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<sup>537</sup> Corrigan & Sayer, *op.Cit.*, p.94.

administering the resources generated from local taxes, as business licenses and property taxes. The discussion regarding its application to the National Territory of Magallanes' only city gathered strength in 1893 with opposition to the city's only newspaper, owned by the Governor.<sup>538</sup> Many people criticized the formation of a *Comuna Autónoma* with the colonial argument: there were not enough *prepared people*. For this, the institutional organization adopted a *Junta Municipal* (Municipal Board), already used as an administrative instrument in the Chilean occupation of Tarapaca. Aside from representation and election, this board maintained the administrative functions of the municipality. Its three members were not elected, but rather designated by the President with input from the Governor.<sup>539</sup>

Punta Arenas was then the home to fortunes of millions, but it lacked paved streets, a cemetery, health services and even drinking water, because the water was contaminated by nearby sewers<sup>540</sup>. As the Governor reported in 1892, "from a hygiene standpoint, Magallanes is at the same level as the most miserable village"<sup>541</sup>. From that moment on, all public Works were developed by the Government, resorting to a limited budget and the collaboration of neighbors. So, two of Jose Menendez's daughters were put in charge of fundraising for a cemetery, and by "popular subscription" the streets were fixed and two bridges were built. In 1897, coffins were still carried by hand or in a wagon, and they asked for help from benefit societies to acquire a funeral car.<sup>542</sup> Finally, the Governor designated four of his partner-collaborators to form a provisory Comisión de Alcaldes in 1896, which two years later became the Junta Municipal.<sup>543</sup> The Governor maintained his discretionary power during all these Chileanization

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<sup>538</sup> FGM. V. 6. Ministerio del Interior, 1887-1901. MinInt P. Montt to the Governor, 11.11.1893.

<sup>539</sup> See in *EMG*, "Editorial," 12.08.1894; "La Comuna Autónoma," 23.09.1894 y 11.11.1894; "Memoria del gobernador de Magallanes," 15.12.1895; "1895," 29.12.1895.

<sup>540</sup> Alberto Fagalde. 1901. *Magallanes. El País del Porvenir. Tomo I*. Valparaíso: Talleres Tipográficos de la Armada, pp.382-383; Manuel Zorrilla. 1925. *Magallanes en 1925*. Tomo I. Punta Arenas, pp.108-109; Luka Bonacic-Doric. 1937-1939. *Resumen Histórico del Estrecho y la Colonia de Magallanes*. Punta Arenas: Nueva Epoca Yugoslava., p.407.

<sup>541</sup> "Memoria Correspondiente al Año de 1892," FGM. V. 20. Intendencia de Magallanes, p.40.

<sup>542</sup> "Cementerios," *EMG*, 11.02.1894; "Alumbrado público" and "Cementerio," *EMG*, 18.02.1894; "Una idea," *EMG*, 08.07.1897.

<sup>543</sup> They were Lautaro Navarro, state official, doctor and co-owner of *El Magallanes*; Romulo Correa, business partner and secretary of the Government; Juan Bitsch, representative of German capital and administrator; and Juan Contardi, merchant and Government secretary. They all belonged to Señoret's inner circle. See Chap. 3.

maneuvers, extending the state presence and the representation, although designated, of local interests.

The community formed by the State employees and the “most important and wealthiest” neighbors, as Moritz Braun called them, allowed for the emergence of types of political actions where there had been no “political” sphere before. The Junta de Alcaldes institutionalized the participation of state employees and business people in ‘public issues’. In accordance with the Decree that created it, such noteworthy regional commercial development merited the establishment of local administration but not an elected municipality, considering its isolation and the “excess of foreigners.” Paradoxically, it made due with three resident neighbors for at least a year, independent of their nationality and *ad-honorem* (that is, sufficiently wealthy to work for free). Its functions included making decisions about foreigners' applications for citizenship and about local public issues. It was financed with income from (property) taxes and licenses (mines, alcohol, professions, industries and carriages). With this, taxing-extractive power began along with the regulation of local commercial activities for which the primary municipal function was to set the price of properties<sup>544</sup>. Once wealth was quantified and the statistics necessary for designing public policies were gathered, social differences had a formal correlation in the State.

There first three members of the Junta were Romulo Correa, Luis Aguirre and Rudolph Stubenrauch.<sup>545</sup> Contardi, Señoret's right hand man, was the secretary for a long time. One of his first acts was to sign a contract with the *Compañía de Luz Eléctrica* (Electricity Light Company) initiated by Correa as Acting Governor, and for which he became shareholder and president, to establish public lighting. The contract between the partners guaranteed payment in pesos with an exchange rate that

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<sup>544</sup> “Reglamento sobre cobro i administración de las contribuciones establecidas en el territorio de Magallanes i organización de la Comisión de Alcaldes,” in FGM. V. 29. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 1898. Decreto Supremo 661, 7.06.1898. See also “Contribuciones para Magallanes,” Art. 2 de Ley 17.07.1896, Ramón Briones. 1900. *Glosario de colonización i esposición de las leyes, decretos i demás antecedentes relativos al despacho de colonización, hasta el 1º de enero de 1900*. Santiago: Imp. Nacional, p.103, y Mariano Guerrero. 1897. *Memoria que el Delegado del Supremo Gobierno en el Territorio de Magallanes don Mariano Guerrero Bascañan presenta al señor Ministro de Colonización*. Santiago: Ercilla.

<sup>545</sup> Decreto Supremo 01.07.1898, FGM. V. 29, *op.Cit*; Editorial, *EMG*, 10.07.1898, p.2. A year later, the three mayors established a ranch on the last Tehuelche lands, claimed by Chile and Argentina, on Palique Hill. See Chap. 5.



maintained its value even in the face of sustained devaluation.<sup>546</sup> In the following years the situation repeated itself: between 1898 and 1923, a total of 33 men worked as mayors. Of them, 24 were foreign large-scale business owners, 7 had worked first as state employees and only 1 was a long-standing colonist turn merchant. This exception was Santiago Diaz who exercised his position only briefly until he was removed from office by the Governor for being too close with the labor organizations.<sup>547</sup> The Braun-Menendez family, part of the norm, was represented by 7 of its immediate members and, over the course of a quarter century, there were only 5 years during which one of them was not mayor.<sup>548</sup>

In this way, the main institution for the expansion of state presence was dominated by rancher-merchants, born abroad, which reinforced the ties between imperial capital and the Chilean State. In fact, the administrative and commercial ‘community’, which began with the Electricity Light Company contract, turned into another unwritten rule: the contract of services from certain people who, generally speaking, were used repeatedly and exclusively. The Junta also administrated resources obtained from the taxes of those who belonged to it. A structure predominated which extended towards the public administration the certainty that the public is a continuation of the private.

After the first valuation was carried out in Punta Arenas, the municipal budget was designated for office costs, a slaughterhouse, street repair, canalization of drinking water and public lighting.<sup>549</sup> Likewise, the Junta acted as a local legislature, dictating orders to regulate social spaces that had previously been uncontrolled. The municipal regulations attempted to regulate brothels, the consumption and sale of alcohol, transit of vehicles, cleanliness and health, building specifications and the use of national flags on public roads, and even censorship: the Junta reserved the right to sanction “excesses” in the theaters, “for the benefit of good manners.”<sup>550</sup> Obviously, while the will to

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<sup>546</sup> Bonacic, *op.Cit.*, p.422. Aguirre was a partner of Señoret and Braun, just as the powerful Stubenrauch, representative of German capital. See Chap. 3.

<sup>547</sup> “Meeting de protesta,” *El Socialista* (Punta Arenas, ES) 12.07.1913. Díaz was the founder of radicalism in Magallanes and the tie to socialist groups in Santiago. In 1914, he left Patagonia with the recognition of the Chilean and the Agrupación Socialista. *LU* (RG), 26.03.1914.

<sup>548</sup> “Comisión de Alcaldes de Punta Arenas,” Zorrilla, *op.Cit.*, pp.271-273

<sup>549</sup> Bonacic, *op.Cit.*, p.408.

<sup>550</sup> Bonacic, *op.Cit.*, p.417.

regulate is one thing, in practice it is another and according to information contained in judicial proceeding documents, it does not appear to have been too successful. The characteristics of frontier societies (with a large majority of men of working age, prostitution and immoderate consumption of alcohol) defined – and continued to define – fundamental sectors of sociability. Likewise, public health problems stemming from the lack of medical services, drinking water, passable roads and neighborhood clean-up continued to be severe for three decades in the urban center.

It is difficult to calculate the real extractive abilities of the fiscal evaluations, towards which the same members of the elite reacted negatively.<sup>551</sup> In 1903, for example, the mayor Alejandro Menendez – who had replaced his brother-in-law Braun in the post – sued the Municipality in the name of his father as he considered the evaluations to be excessive. His three properties in the Plaza de Armas, for example, jumped in value from 130 to 200 thousand pesos when, he felt, they were not worth more than 50 thousand. Another of his properties had gone from 6 to 8 thousand and a third from 9 to 20 thousand. Braun and Stubenrauch, with the same argument, joined the lawsuit. The verdict of Judge Seguel, whom we refer to further on, maintained the former valuations, reducing the principal to 50 thousand pesos.<sup>552</sup> Because property taxes were the only taxes that large property owners had to pay, the limited collection maintained mechanisms of charity and debt with a fiscal guarantee to undertake public works.

The first loan was secured in 1903 to gravel the street, submitting bonds from the Banco Tarapaca that “were reintegrated into the Municipal Treasury for payment of contributions.”<sup>553</sup> A drinking water project, created in 1902 by a Chilean engineer, had a budget of 340 thousand pesos. However when the mayor-ranchers preferred financing through the sale of fiscal lands, the Government rejected this idea. The Municipality then attempted to secure another credit form the same bank, whose manager was Francisco Campos, brother-in-law to Alejandro Menendez. After submitting the budget for consideration, it was considered unviable due to the high salaries of the workers. A

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<sup>551</sup> National Historic Archive-Magallanes Legal Fundo (FJM). 1898, Leg. 97, 2<sup>nd</sup> series and Leg.88, 2<sup>nd</sup> series.

<sup>552</sup> FJM. Caja 110, Leg. 1. Demandante José Menéndez, 15.07.1903.

<sup>553</sup> Bonacic, *op.Cit.*, p. 418.

condition was set that the headquarters would grant credit if the business executing the plan was also Pearson & Son (of England), one of the largest construction businesses in the world. The Junta Municipal took out a loan of more than 40 thousand pounds (more than 500 thousand pesos), guaranteeing the exchange rate for 15 years and 7% interest. The cost of construction, however, was more than 70 thousand pounds with exclusively English technicians and workers ‘found’ in Chiloe, transported by Pacific Steam and Braun & Blanchard, respectively, with state subsidies.<sup>554</sup> Eight years later, after the works were completed, the Municipality had to secure a new credit in London, to cover its debts and expand its services, of 50 thousand pounds for 21 years, to which an annual state contribution of 75 thousand pesos was added.<sup>555</sup>

In Santa Cruz, the municipalities were formed with a later developed and apparently more democratic process than in Magallanes. In accordance with Argentinean law, foreigners had electoral rights only on colonized or National lands and for Municipalities, which were formed when a town had more than one thousand inhabitants and invoked a masculine electoral pattern with independence of offices. In 1905, Santa Cruz’s population reached 3,300 people, half of whom were in Gallegos.<sup>556</sup> Despite this, only in 1912 was the *Consejo Municipal* (Municipal Council) formed after an intense campaign by the conservative newspaper *La Unión*.<sup>557</sup> The candidates were chosen unanimously in an assembly of “neighbors, commercial and bank representatives,” from a unique list whose propaganda indicated it was “sponsored” by a “characteristic group of neighbors and merchants”.<sup>558</sup> According to the patterns of 1912, 1916 and 1920, the vast majority of the voters were foreigners, primarily Spanish,

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<sup>554</sup> Bonacic, *op.Cit.*, pp. 425-426.

<sup>555</sup> Law 3105, 04.08.1916, FGM. V. 43. Intendencia de Magallanes, 1908-1921, p.234.

<sup>556</sup> “Resumen general del censo del Territorio,” en Segundo Dutari. 1906. *El Territorio de Santa Cruz: su presente, su futuro, y los problemas vinculados á su desarrollo*. Buenos Aires: Penitenciaría Nacional, p.43.

<sup>557</sup> One of the arguments was the bad impression of the travelers that arrived in Gallegos because of the “lack of public hygiene, street lights, property lines and generally (poor) urban services” that made a municipality necessary. *La Unión* (RG), 16.03.1911, p.3.

<sup>558</sup> The candidates were the owner of *La Unión* and the telephone company, Picard; the lawyer and merchant Usher Blanco, the pharmacologist Borgialli, the canning company president Rithvel Hood and the merchant Loewenthal, “Los candidatos para municipales,” *La Unión* (RG), 18.04.1912.

Italian and English<sup>559</sup>. The Municipal Council was led by a President, a position held by commercial figures and public employees, alternately. During the critical period of 1918-1923, coincidental with the insurgence of the working class, representation fell largely to large property owners for the first time, organized by the *Sociedad Rural* – represented in Buenos Aires by Alejandro Menendez- and the *Liga Patriótica*<sup>560</sup>. Among the presidents of the Municipal Council were the Spaniard, Ibon Noya (1918, 1920-1922), the German, J. Bitsch (1919) and the American-Malvine, Enrique Clark (1922). Among the key employees were the Argentine, E. Correa Falcón (1923-1927), ex commissioner of Chaco and Santa Cruz-turned-rancher, director of *La Unión*, president of the *Sociedad Rural* and interim Governor, a man key to the repression of the labor movement during the summer of 1922.<sup>561</sup>

With the fusion of interests between political and commercial authorities, Buenos Aires tried to reestablish the eroded hierarchies in the growing bureaucracy of the National Territories, establishing by decree in 1905 that the Governor would act as the public administrator for all dependent districts.<sup>562</sup> Despite the fact that the Governor made use of this instrument outside of the law to intervene in the Municipal Council, a potential obstacle to the discretionary exercise of his powers, also in the truncated electoral sphere, institutionalized a public debate that hardly existed in Magallanes and Tierra del Fuego. At the same time, it legitimized the attempts at urban regulation that had taken place in Punta Arenas: in 1913 the first orders were declared for traffic, public hygiene, animal transport and the sale of licenses to finance the Corporation.<sup>563</sup>

Public disorder, or social liberty, began to wind down once faced with the fiscalization of a state institution made up of residents. Intervention by the police in brothels, building permits and commercial operations, copies of statistics and military

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<sup>559</sup> Historical Municipal Archive of Río Gallegos (AHM). Leg. 5, Exp. 17J. Juzgado Letrado; Leg. 8-1916, Exp.4. Padrón electoral. Leg.13-1922, Exp.12-2. Juez Letrado; “El padrón electoral,” *LU* (RG), 13.03.1913; “Padrón,” *LU* (RG), 08.09.1915.

<sup>560</sup> The ranchers Bonvallot, Clark, Ness, and Bridges participated along with the inheritor Menendez in the Ranchers Commission before the Argentinean Congress in 1912. “Lo que piden nuestros pobladores,” *LU* (RG), 07.03.1912. Alejandro Menéndez played a key part in deciding with Yrigoyen in favor of the repression of the Santa Cruz strikes at the end of 1921. *LU* (RG), 26.11.1921.

<sup>561</sup> Lenzi, *op.Cit.*, p.523; *LU* (RG), 22.04.1915.

<sup>562</sup> “Estableciendo la Superintendencia de los Gobernadores,” Decreto Supremo 21.01.1905, transcribed in Juan Belza. 1975. *En la isla del Fuego. Tomo 2. Colonización*. Buenos Aires: IIHTF, pp.303-304.

<sup>563</sup> Lenzi, *op.Cit.*, p.523.

records, theater price fixing, authorizations to celebrate important birthdays or national festivals, the bringing together of people to discuss the growing ‘social question’, the granting of credits to unemployed workers as solicited by the *Federación Obrera* (Workers’ Federation)... all of these were responsibilities of the Municipality of Rio Gallegos. In addition, the frequent ‘civic festivities’, fundraising, designation commissions, authorizing spaces, flag raisings and parades were tasks assigned to the small troop which was generally transitory and under the command of a Governor who functioned both civilly and militarily.

In addition, once the municipalities were formed, the patriotic rituality of the immigrants multiplied, resulting in activities which celebrated the countries they had come from as well as their new country. Between 1894 and 1897, for example, the Commission organized the Chilean *Fiestas Patrias* (Independence Day Celebration) in Magallanes which was presided over by the Asturian José Menéndez and whose main contributors were the houses Wehrhahn, Heede and Glinmann, Bitsch, Dobree, Menendez and Braun & Blanchard, along with the Chilean, Austrian, German, Italian, French and English colonies.<sup>564</sup> This continued even through 1910, when the so-called Chilean Centennial was commemorated in Punta Arenas. The Committee consisted of the municipality and the Portuguese, Cosmopolitan, Spanish, Italian, Austrian, French, German, Chilean, English, Croatian and Swiss benefit societies.<sup>565</sup> With the protection of the municipalities, State intervention in the regulation of daily life increased as a symbolic connection of local communities with the city and country of origin. Despite its class constitution, the municipality was key for the articulations between the nation of origin, the receiving nation-state and the multinational urban centers of steppe life, and it did open up the field of public issues.

### ***Solidarity, Sociability, Class.***

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<sup>564</sup> In *EMG*, see “Fiestas patrias,” 19-8-1894; “Lista suscriptores Fiestas Patrias,” 26.08.1894, p.3; “Fiestas Patrias,” 29.09.1895, p.3.

<sup>565</sup> “El Centenario i las Sociedades,” *EMG*, 23.04.1910, p.2; See also “El Centenario Arjentino en PA,” 11.05.1910, p.3; “Las Colonias Etranjeras i el Centenario,” 15.06.1910, p.2; and the editions of 1.06.1910, 10.06.1910, 16-28.09.1910.

During the same period other state and parastate instruments emerged from public administration, like the *Junta de Beneficencia de Punta Arenas* (1892) and the *Comisiones de Fomento* in Río Gallegos (1905), Puerto Santa Cruz (1910) and San Julián (1918), the latter sporadically.<sup>566</sup> Opportunities to plan and intervene for the city were developed by a varying number of state employees and merchants designated by the Governor.<sup>567</sup> For this reason, the oligarchic constitution of the municipalities was repeated, offering an opportunity for the public display of charity. Punta Arenas' Charity Organization concentrated its efforts on the administration of the cemetery and precarious Hospital, granting (with the Municipality) subsidies for asylums, the Red Cross and schools.<sup>568</sup> In Santa Cruz, the first hospital opened as late as 1911, financed exclusively by donations from the major families and foreign colonies mutually organized and represented by consuls.<sup>569</sup>

From early on consuls were desirable to the commercial sector. Becoming a consul required little work, such as granting loans to the Government or ministries, and looking for information about immigrants or offering support for travelers. At the same time, consuls used their position in favor of their own demands and for access to social ceremonies with a privileged status. Menendez, for example, was Argentine consul in

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<sup>566</sup> E. Correa, "Memoria de la Gobernación," 16.03.1920, in *LU* (RG), 08.07.1920, p.3.

<sup>567</sup> As in the case of the City Council, the Governor acted as an elector de facto. In 1892, the Council debuted with partners Blanchard and Menéndez, followed by partners Stubenrauch and Braun. In practice, the Council did not function until 1893 when the construction of the Cemetery began. Its costs were, however, higher than its income and it requested, unsuccessfully, 200 hectares to sell to finance the project. In 1898, H. Adiazola and J. Menéndez were named for three years. The group was thus composed for a long time. In 1914, the Counsel was made up of Braun, Campos and I. Anguita, along with G. Perkins and E. Manns, before the Hospital, and E. Hobbs and A. Cameron, before the cemetery. In this way, property owners and employees of *la Explotadora* led all the state institutions. FGM. V. 6. Ministerio del Interior, 1887-1901; MinInt. a Gob, 27.08.1898. Ibid., MinInt a G., 20.04.1892; Ibid., MinInt a G., 16.06.1894; "Memoria del Gobernador de Magallanes" 31.04.1914, FGM. V. 20. Intendencia de Magallanes, pp. 199-236.

<sup>568</sup> In 1914, for example, the Municipality granted 38 thousand pesos in subsidies, most of which to the hospital and Firemen (12 and 10 thousand), The Red Cross (3.5 thousand) and Popular Instruction Society (3 thousand). Smaller amounts were received by Asoc. Sportiva, Soc. Dolores, and Orphan and Elderly Asylums. Five private schools, among them the British and the German, received 500 each. "El presupuesto," *EMG*, 10.11.1914. Donations by companies, published by the press, were sporadic but key to the function of those institutions. In 1912, a critical year for the establishment of Customs, The Patagonian Sheep Farming donated 4,500 to the hospital and Menendez 15,000 to the Junta de Beneficencia that he himself directed. *LU* (RG), 25.01.1912 and 15.02.1912, p.2. In 1913, the Junta was in crisis so it sent out "a pamphlet soliciting donations from the ranchers" *LU* (RG), 20.02.1913; the following year, Montes gave 500 to The Red Cross and Sarah Braun gave 2 thousand to the Hospital, 1000 to The Red Cross and 500 to firemen. *LU* (RG), 02.04.1914, 15.01.1914, and 02.04.1914.

<sup>569</sup> "Hospital," *LU* (RG), 14.12.1911.

Punta Arenas starting in 1888, and Spanish beginning in 1895, Gaston Blanchard represented France in 1890, Stubenrauch the German Empire, Carlos Heede, Portugal, and Moritz Braun that of the United States.<sup>570</sup> Designated after becoming millionaires, the title made them creditors of exequatur by the President that required the Governor to recognize “the faculties and privileges which corresponded to the character” of official interlocutors<sup>571</sup>. In this way, for example, faced with the deportation and humiliation of indigenous people in 1895, the Foreign Office asked for a report that included “testimonials by respected and impartial people from that area, for example, the consuls.”<sup>572</sup> Far from impartial, the previously named were those primarily involved in the crimes, starting with Stubenrauch, appropriator of Selknam girls.<sup>573</sup> Regarding the issues which the State deemed important, the consular statute did not contradict public functions and consolidated the oligarchic character of the ‘civil society’. In 1904, on the 18th of May, the newspaper *El Comercio* reported that Governor “Bories and the consular dean [...] Mr. Stubenrauch, passed by yesterday to greet the Spanish consul Sir J. Menendez to commemorate the anniversary of King Alfonso XIII.”<sup>574</sup> Starting in 1908, Menendez passed on to his son-in-law, the banker Campos, the privilege to celebrate Borbon’s birthday.

Both in Magallanes and in Santa Cruz it was typical to have a reception banquet to celebrate the new authorities – like the arrival of a new governor in Rio Gallegos – which focused, in 1913, on “all upper administration, Judicial Powers, Banks, large business, industries [and] ranchers who were residents of the city” and, among them, the consuls. Participating in the welcome banquet for another governor (who “did not know

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<sup>570</sup> FGM. V. 9, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 1888-1892. MinRex to the Governor, 23.05.1888. Give J. Menendez exequatur; Ibid., 20.08.1890; Ibid., 16.10.1891; Ibid., 30.10.1891; Ibid., FGM. V. 13. Foreign Consuls, 1888- 1901. C. Heede a G., 3.05.1893; Ibid., FGM. V. 27. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 1896-1897. MinRex to G., 14.3.1896. A partial list of the first consuls in Magallanes in “Cónsules del Servicio Diplomático Extranjero, 1826-1945.” In *Gobierno de Chile Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. Archivo General Histórico. II. Listas de Representantes*, <http://163.247.50.16> (acc. 6.8.2008)

<sup>571</sup> FGM. V. 9. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 1888-1892. MinRex a Gob., 18.06.1892. In this sense, *exequatur* is the validation o the naming of a foreign authority in the receiving country. Immunity does not appear to have been applied, although claiming rights to honor was allowed.

<sup>572</sup> MinRex to Governor, 5.12.1895, FGM. V. 22. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 1893-1895.

<sup>573</sup> Contardi and Commissary Barra made up the Comisión Repartidora de Indios, in 1895, with Stubenrauch, who the decade before had already kidnapped at least one Selknam girl. He made Hobbs his partner. See chap. 5.

<sup>574</sup> *El Comercio*, 18.05.1904, cit. in María Teresa Izquierdo. 1995. *Don José Menéndez y Menéndez (1846-1918). Vida y obra*. Tesis Lic. in Historia P. Universidad Católica de Chile, p.67.

the territory nor the elements which made up its population; [why] he had never been in the region before”), were managers from the Nación and Anglosudamericano Banks, the *Anónima Exportadora e Importadora de la Patagonia*, The Patagonia Meat Co., as well as Silvano Picard (mayor, owner of *Telefónica* and The Electric Light Company, director of the *La Unión* newspaper and the *Sociedad Cosmopolita*), John Duncan, simultaneously Chilean and British consul in Gallegos; the German consul and the manager of the *Barraca Ambareense*, Schroeder, in addition to Jose Fernandez, merchant, mayor and Spanish consul.<sup>575</sup>

**Figure 14. Postcard: M. Braun Palace and US Consulate in Magallanes (c.1910)**



Moritz Braun’s home, inaugurated in 1903, just steps from Punta Arenas’ Plaza Central. It housed simultaneously the United States consulate, the Mayor’s residence and the Director’s office of the largest company in Patagonia controlled by the British Duncan & Fox. Braun left the US consulate in 1911 for that of Tsarist Russia.

In National Territories, with minimal taxes, no basic services, few inhabitant families, and only recently formed solidarity networks and where, like in the rest of the national territory, social laws and worker regulations didn’t exist, job insecurity implied life insecurity. National ties did not constitute, for the same reason, an elitist mechanism for funding positions. Benefit societies were organized beginning in 1893 with the

<sup>575</sup> En *LU* (RG), “Recepción,” 08.01.1914; “El nuevo Gobernador,” 28.09.1911, pp.1-2; “Banquete,” 26.10.1911. Only at the end of 1915 did Chile establish that its consuls must be Chilean, *LU*, RG, 16.09.1915.



Portuguesa and the Cosmopolita (extended to Porvenir in 1904), and within seven years the Italian, Austrian, French, German, Chilean, British and Croatian, Swiss, the *Marítima Internacional* (of War Veterans) and the Carpenters' Union had been founded<sup>576</sup>. These “cultural and civic centers” as they were called by Bonacic-Doric were not organized by occupation like those in Santiago and Valparaíso since the 1850s<sup>577</sup>. However, these as well as those in France constituted the most prominent organization of workers in the nineteenth century<sup>578</sup>. Participation in them was not restricted to paid employees and some of them were controlled by strictly nationalist criteria, primarily in the high and middle-income sectors<sup>579</sup>; however, the shared main goal was the creation of a common fund to provide medical assistance and economic support to those facing unemployment, an accident, illness or death. One of their guarantees was the lending of legal services approved by the Executive Power.<sup>580</sup>

There were 206 benefit societies in 1906 in Chile and 547 in 1913 with more than 90,000 associates.<sup>581</sup> Still, it is surprising that by 1910 around 8% of the benefit societies were found in Magallanes when this area's population was no more than 0.5% of the nation's total.<sup>582</sup> This might be explained by the fact that the overwhelming majority of the population was made up of immigrants who had recently settled in the extremely unequal Territory. Among the Benefit Societies, the Cosmopolita was the most active. It claimed that its only function was the procurement of mutual assistance, a requirement for it to be legal, and that it established the admission of members regardless of religion, nationality and social class while at the same time prohibiting

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<sup>576</sup> *EMG*, 1 and 19.02.1907; Bonacic, *op.Cit.*, pp.387-389.

<sup>577</sup> Bonacic, *op.Cit.*, pp. 387-389. See Sergio Grez see “La trayectoria histórica del mutualismo en Chile (1853-1990). Apuntes para su estudio.” *Mapocho* (1990): 293-315, and 1997. *De la 'Regeneración del pueblo' a la Huelga General. Génesis y evolución histórica del movimiento popular en Chile (1810-1890)*. Santiago: DIBAM-RIL, Chap.IX, pp.377-387.

<sup>578</sup> William Sewell. 1980 [1997]. *Work and revolution in France*. Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., p.163 ss.

<sup>579</sup> This was the case with benefit societies organized for representation by citizens or imperial subjects: Great Britain, Germany, France and Spain. In the Chilean, public state officials predominated.

<sup>580</sup> Sewell, *op.Cit.*, p.164. Grez, *op.Cit.*

<sup>581</sup> Statistics from 1890 and 1913 in Fernando Ortíz. 1985. *El movimiento obrero en Chile (1891–1919)*. Madrid: Michay, p.129; for 1906 see J.C. Jobet, *El movimiento social obrero*, n.d p. 57, cit. in Alberto Harambour. 2000. *El Movimiento Obrero y la violencia política en el Territorio de Magallanes*. Tesis Lic. Historia, P. Universidad Católica, Santiago, p.39.

<sup>582</sup> The Magellanic population was estimated at 18,000, according to the Municipal Census of 1907, and the Chilean 3,300,000, according to the National Census of 1910.

honorary members and benefactors.<sup>583</sup> Both elements are significant: the latter because merchant-ranchers had institutionalized cronyism mechanisms by naming honorary presidents; the former, because the simple mention of class without nationality distinction underlined the preferential inclusion of wage earners.

Shortly after its founding, Cosmopolita's building housed the constitution of the first organization made up exclusively of workers. In March of 1897, the *Union Obrera* was formed following the first strike which occurred in February<sup>584</sup>. At only a few months, the Union commemorated, for the first time in the extreme south, the 1st of May, with an evening vigilance followed by help granted to prisoners.<sup>585</sup> A month later, the Union had procured a "great social salon" where puppet shows were put on<sup>586</sup>. The emphasis on creation of social events for families was as strong as concern for prisoners would be in the following decades, like the tensions between the mutualists and socialists that caused their bankruptcy and reconstruction "upon a new (classist) basis" in July.<sup>587</sup> The new directive motivated the offering of "elementary education" classes, and the creation of an employment office, the first public library and the first workers newspaper<sup>588</sup>. Appearing at the end of 1898, *El Obrero* defined itself as "the Union's voice [...] and defender of the class"; considering "possession of political power for the working class and [the] transformation of work instruments into collective, social or common property, just like "all the working societies in the world." At the same time, debates regarding immigration appeared, criticizing government stimuli because the now famous regional wealth was the product of a "mimicking of industries," "mediocre and disorganized commerce, and hunting of seals whose entire product is for the capitalist ogre."<sup>589</sup>

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<sup>583</sup> S.C.S.M. 1894. *Estatutos y Reglamento de la Sociedad Cosmopolita de Socorros Mutuos de Punta Arenas*. El Magallanes: Punta Arenas.

<sup>584</sup> "Unión Obrera," *EMG*, 25.03.1897, p.2; *Ibid.*, 1.04.1897, p.2. The directory includes: Enrique Gómez, as secretary and José Jordana, Miguel Díaz, and E. Sobrino. Auxiliaries: C. Espiro, E. Garrido, A. Ruiz, José Contardi and M. Le Blanc. Qualifying Commission: G. Peñalver, J. Carrasco and C. Casunni.

<sup>585</sup> "Unión Obrera," *EMG*, 6.05.1897, p.3.

<sup>586</sup> "Marionettes," *EMG*, 6.6.1897, p.2.

<sup>587</sup> The new directory maintains Gómez and Jordan as directors, in addition to A. Ruiz and J. Carrasco; Vital Ruiz, L. Lafranconi, M.J. Miranda, O. Kermann, J. Montaldi, V. Diaz, and Martínez joined. The majority withdrew. *EMG*, 13.7.1897, p.2.

<sup>588</sup> "Unión Obrera," *EMG*, 25.07.1897; "Oficinas de colocación," *EMG*, 29.7.1897, p.2; Vega, *op.Cit.*, pp.19-22

<sup>589</sup> "Nuestro Programa" and "Aníbal Ad-Portas," *El Obrero*, 26.12.1898, p.1.

Workers' organizations and press proliferated over the following years. In 1902, the *Sociedad Internacional de Obreros* (International Society of Workers) was founded, which resumed the activities of its predecessor: popular education, family sociability, organization of workers and socialist propaganda.<sup>590</sup> Its voice, the *1° de Mayo*, prompted the formation of the first guilds and *resistance societies* and the first strikes and sustained boycotts of bakeries and construction companies. The Centro and the newspaper ceased to function in 1906, debilitated by the disagreements. According to one of its founders, the Belgian social-democrat Alfonso Peutat, the first crisis happened when the Board of “small industries and employees and not in part, but rather proportional to, true workers” was created. The second occurred due to the tension among mutualists, like he himself, supporters of legalizing the society, building cooperatives and employment institutions and left-wing socialists who pushed for classist organization and whose discourse was antagonistic towards nationalism, religions and capitalism.<sup>591</sup> In 1909, this role was taken up again by the *Nuevo Centro Social Unión Internacional de Trabajadores* (New International Union Social Center for Workers) – again at the “la Cosmopolita” location – edited by *La Voz del Obrero*.<sup>592</sup>

In Rio Gallegos, the Cosmopolita Society functioned inconsistently from 1909 onward<sup>593</sup>; later the Spanish was organized – by far the most influential, the Italian and Chilean were poorer. In 1913, all but the Chilean participated with the Municipality, the Sociedad Obrera and the commercial houses in a discussion regarding the lowering of prices.<sup>594</sup> Like in Punta Arenas, the benefit societies organized themselves first by nationality, creating social events and debates and producing the conditions necessary for the emergence of classist organizations, intervening in the articulations of demands from the merchants, and the metropolitan and local governments. From this, a correlation can be observed between the creation of the municipalities (state employees and business owners), benefit societies (as colonial institutions), workers' organizations

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<sup>590</sup> The directory was made up of Maffat, Valverde, De la Puente, V. Cuccuini, B. Espinoza, F. Peutat, Quezada, L. Varela, Rivero. Vega, *op.Cit.*, p.23.

<sup>591</sup> Alfonso Peutat. 1929. *El Patagón*. Punta Arenas: El Nacional, pp.8-9.

<sup>592</sup> *La Voz del Obrero*, 19.12.1909, pp.1-3.

<sup>593</sup> “Sociedad Cosmopolita de SM,” *La Unión* (RG), 23.05.1912.

<sup>594</sup> AHM. Leg. 5, Exp.25S. Various Applications. Chabbert and Rodríguez to PCM Borgialli, 23.12.1913; AHM. Copiador H. Consejo Municipal, 22.4.1913-10.1917. Municipality to Grte. SAIEP, 5.10.1914, p.361.

(as classist organizations) and the local press. The municipalities partnered with the metropolitan State and the local elite and through them increased urban intervention. The benefit societies strengthened the national communities as cultural and power exchange groups throughout all of Patagonia and also with the debates in their countries of origin. The worker organizations institutionalized a ‘modern sociability’ demonstrated by working families in a population whose majority was male and throughout Patagonia and for municipalities, merchants and employers by way of a socially horizontal and geographically latitudinal and transborder perspective. The press, for its part, expanded the local debate and increased the availability of national and international information, facilitating the cohesion of groups of readers separated by immense distances.<sup>595</sup>

Between 1889 and 1925, newspapers circulated that were published in the city, in small towns and in the country by editors who belonged to a variety of interest groups<sup>596</sup>. Those with the greatest continuity were *El Magallanes* (since 1894), *El Comercio* (1900-1919, 1922), *Chile Austral* (1908-1945) and *La Unión* (1912-1928), along with the workers’ newspapers *El Socialista* (1913-1920) and *El Trabajo* (1911-1920, 1921-1923)<sup>597</sup>. While the first three were sure to be published because they belonged to state employees and business people, *La Unión* was the voice of the powerful Salesian order, financed by ranchers seeking to arrest the growing socialist propaganda.<sup>598</sup> Newspaper production doubled between 1914 and 1921 from 9 to 18.

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<sup>595</sup> See the argument about the country’s homogenous time production in “Las aprehensiones del tiempo,” Benedict Anderson. 1991 [1993]. *Comunidades imaginadas. Reflexiones sobre el origen y la difusión del nacionalismo*. México: FCE.

<sup>596</sup> Press sources were particularly diverse and numerous in Magallanes. See Zorrilla regarding the subject, *op.Cit.*, pp.243-270; Bonacic, *op.Cit.*, 394-406; this information is reproduced in Martinic, “Sociedad y Cultura en Magallanes, 1890-1920,” *Anales del Instituto de la Patagonia* 12 (1981).

<sup>597</sup> To these add *The Magellan Times* (1914-1932), of the British, Croation and Yugoslavian colony *Male Novina* (1905-1906), *Domovina* (1908-1916), *Jugoslavenska Domovina* (1916-1921) y *Slobodna Jugoslavija* (1918-1919).

<sup>598</sup> Museo Regional de Magallanes- Mauricio Braun’s Correspondence (CMB), Caja 38, Letters from 30.06.1912-31.12.1912. F. Campos to M. Braun, 16.08.1912. “On the 18<sup>th</sup> of the next month, a new newspaper ‘La Unión’, will begin production in whose foundation the Salesian Fathers are interested. This new newspaper will be a serious publication, devoid of all sarcasm, and it will take it upon itself to defend the well understood interests of the Territory. José [Menéndez], Alfonso, [Ernesto] Hobbs, [Emilio] Crisóstomo and I, have come together to help the new company with capital; we hope that you will support us, once you understand the project. I believe a newspaper [...] will contribute greatly to arresting the movement of a socialist nature which has long been sensed in these parts, seconded by current newspapers that don’t waste an opportunity to kick the town in the people in the face.”

The increase was primarily due to an awareness of the “possibilities” of growing social mobilization<sup>599</sup>. This expansion of civil society also explains the large percentage of literacy in the population. In 1907, 70% of Magallanes’ inhabitants knew how to read when the average in Chile was 40%<sup>600</sup>.

In Santa Cruz, the growth of the press was also delayed and followed a similar pattern. After a few irregular publications, *La Unión* appeared in 1906, property of the Governor, the Judge and a merchant. Just a decade later, other newspapers followed representing the positions of the Sociedad Obrera, the powerful Spanish community and, later on, during the social conflict which was unleashed in 1919, that of local radicals.<sup>601</sup> In addition to propaganda, until 1920, the axes around which the media turned were large estates and the subdivision of large properties in Magallanes, and the security of property and increases in extensions in Santa Cruz. Issues they had in common included the colonial status of the Territory and the possibility of having their political rights recognized, a customs office installed, infrastructure erected and nationalization measures promoted by the Government; debates concerning living and working conditions and temporary immigration were ever increasing. Also, with the outbreak of World War I, tensions between the Germans and the English were expressed through positions taken in the news media, except that of the workers.

The *Federación Obrera de Magallanes*’ (FOM) (Workers’ Federation of Magallanes) constitution introduced, as perhaps in no other part of Chile, the workers’ movement as a relevant factor in local life. Founded in 1911, on the basis of the Butcher’s Guild of the Cosmopolita Society, the interest in participation prompted the formation of the FOM, its extension to Santa Cruz (where its delegates founded the *Sociedad Obrera de Río Gallegos* in 1913) and the founding of *El Trabajo*.<sup>602</sup> In addition, in 1912, the Federation was among the organizers of the *Liga de Resistencia Regional* (Regional Resistance League) that soon adopted a more moderate name:

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<sup>599</sup> “Publicaciones periódicas,” OCE. 1916. *Anuario Estadístico de la República de Chile*. V. V. Instrucción. 1914. Santiago: Universo; 229-230; “Publicaciones periódicas por provincias,” OCE. 1923. *Sinópsis estadística de la República de Chile*. Santiago: Universo, p.60.

<sup>600</sup> OCE. 1923. *Sinópsis estadística de la República de Chile*. Santiago: Universo, p.49.

<sup>601</sup> Lenzi, *op.Cit.*, pp. 539-541.

<sup>602</sup> Gregorio Iriarte. 1915. *La Organización Obrera en Magallanes*. Punta Arenas: El Trabajo; Harambour, *op.Cit.*, pp. 81-85; “Federación Obrera,” *LU* (RG), 01.05.1913; “El 1° de Mayo” y “Federación Obrera” *LU* (RG), 08.05.1913.

*Unión Cívica de Magallanes* (Civic Union of Magallanes) - made up of a wide range of workers, some state employees, and small and mid-sized ranch owners and merchants, including the Chamber of Commerce.<sup>603</sup> With demands to suppress customs and the subdivision of lands, others joined the directory, including representatives of the press, the Chamber of Commerce and the worker and benefit societies<sup>604</sup>. The latter, grouped in a Committee, promoted price control of consumables and the democratization of the municipality.

In this way, the establishment of Customs – demanded by the Chilean group *La Sociedad de Fomento Fabril (SOFOFA)* (Society for the Promotion of Manufacturing) - produced an outbreak of demands. Just as it got under way, however, tensions arose in the interclass alliance. Demands for the Government to regulate high prices collided with the Municipality led by consul Stubenrauch and by the Braun-Menendez group who were also affected by the request for subdivision. The government's reaction to the mobilization of workers and benefit societies, on the one hand, and press from Santiago's reaction regarding the Civic Union, on the other, only served to increase friction. Many discredited deploying troops, appealing to a particular civic culture attributed to the Magellanic workers. They also pleaded for admitting to the Union, as no less than honorary president, a former mayor and Governor, consul from Portugal, regional founder of the Radical Party, and land and business manager: Romulo Correa<sup>605</sup>. The FOM, for its part, accepted the Civic Union's mediation during the first

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<sup>603</sup> Cámara de Comercio de Punta Arenas. 1913. *Inconvenientes del Régimen Aduanero en Magallanes. Memorial presentado por la Cámara de Comercio de Punta Arenas a la Honorable Comisión*

*Parlamentaria, constituida en visita en este territorio en febrero de 1913.* Punta Arenas: El Magallanes.

<sup>604</sup> "Organización de la Liga de Resistencia," *EMG*, 30.09.1912; "Fundación de la Unión Cívica," *EMG*, 14.10.1912; His first annual report was based on the conclusions of a street assembly or elections and was sent to the Senate on 19.09.1911 with the signature of the pro-subdivision of lands Commission and the Cosmopolita, Austrian, German, Spanish, Portugues, Italian and Marítima Internacional societies, along with that of the Butchers and Sheepshearers Guild and "workers and people of Magallanes." "Las tierras magallánicas," *El Mercurio (ElMer)*, 20.06.1911, p.12.

<sup>605</sup> "Unión Cívica," *EMG*, 11.11.1912. Along with Correa, the following participated in the formation of the local Radical Party: N. Sanhueza (State Attorney, director of the Liga Patriótica in 1920), Mayer Braun (Moritz's brother), S. Díaz (mayor, merchant, friend of the Socialist Party), Camilo Feliú (lawyer and judge), Claudio Acuña (administrator of the Concesión Tornero) and Leoncio Valenzuela (second husband of Sarah Braun, Admiral and director of SETF), "PA," *LU*, RG, 03.10.1912. Regarding the corrupt business among Juez Letrado Seguel, Sanhueza, Acuña and Feliú see Mateo Martinic. 2007. "Rogelio Figueroa en Ultima Esperanza (1905-1919)." *Magallania* 35: 139-155. After the organization of the PR, attempted the formation of the Democratic and Liberal parties. "Punta Arenas," *El Mercurio* (S), 14.05.1912, p.13.

general strike, at the end of 1912, which extended to Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego and ended with the signing of a new work agreement.<sup>606</sup> With this, the Federation became the only institution able to impose regulations on ranchers and merchants; this norm, disclosed by federal delegates to ranches and meat lockers in Spanish, English and Croatian, formed the basis of the ranch and property businesses until 1920 when the Federation was destroyed due to the combined repression of national employees, the armed forces and ranchers.

From that time on and for a decade, demand activity was polarized and regional demands were incorporated into classist demands. On the one hand, the Federation widened its representation, bringing together thousands of workers and housing the largest family recreation center in Patagonia, the *Teatro Regeneración* (Regeneration Theater). In general, the pioneer demand for subdivision of lands gave way to demands for improving work conditions. Regarding political rights, there was a variety of divergent opinions. On the one hand, the Alliance between state employees and merchants tended to be reinforced by the municipality, the National Congress itself and institutions like the Patriotic League. In Santa Cruz, and to a lesser degree in Magallanes, this became a powerful common interest for estate owners and authorities that neither Yrigoyenism nor Alessandrism contained. Towards the end of the decade, however, with the lands and commercial opportunities monopolized, the main business owners moved to Buenos Aires and Santiago and the State strengthened its presence. For this same reason, the debate nationalized, acquiring more relative importance in the Chilean and Argentinean presses' "political" news. This was motivated by different bodies. (1) The State, first and foremost, which sought to increase its economic presence with Customs, its cultural presence with a school system and its repressive presence with troops. (2) By the elite, who strengthened their political, familial and commercial ties. (3) By the labor organizations, finally, that tended to look to the northern Workers' Federation of Chile and the Workers' Federation for the Region of Argentina for solidarity which was growing ever more complicated due to the reality of the frontier on the steppe.

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<sup>606</sup> "La huelga," *El Trabajo (ET)*, 21.12.1912, p.4.

As Bonacic indicated, since the formation of the City Council in Punta Arenas, “the Colony does not depend on only one ministry, nor is power centralized in the Government,” and so “public administration diverges and is diluted in a variety of ways.”<sup>607</sup> The opening up of the decision-making atmosphere was clear during the first two decades of the century, and public debate was influenced by a power struggle for which the parties were in agreement regarding the defense of regional interests, but divided when it came to class positions. Where they once tended towards unity, centripetal forces were generated which had to increasingly adhere to the nation’s checkbook.

In 1900, a Chilean traveler said that in Magallanes there was a “happy bourgeoisie of all nationalities” that controlled “the estates, the industry, the commerce, the banks, the printers [and] even part of the local government” and whose relations “of all types are exclusively with the Atlantic and whose community with the rest of Chile is reduced to sending representatives to the government with the goal of obtaining land concessions and help of all sorts to develop its industries without limitations or taxes.”<sup>608</sup> Once this corrupted relationship (and dependence regarding legal affairs, favors and metropolitan subsidies) was established, the demands which emerged from below could *also* only refer to that force field expressed as the nation State. In this way, when the large-estate property produced “the emancipation of the private property of the community” with which “the State becomes a separate entity, on the side and outside of the civil society,” it could only demand within the state discursive framework. Even when the nation State appeared to be, theoretically and practically, the “organization of the bourgeoisie [...], it opted for internal as well as external purposes, for the mutual guarantee of its property and interests.”<sup>609</sup> This capacity of the State to guarantee, achieved consolidation only to the extent which the city moved towards the country, bringing to life a frontier which until then had only fictitiously divided the movement of people and capital.

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<sup>607</sup> Bonacic, *op.Cit.*, p. 410.

<sup>608</sup> Fagalde, *op.Cit.*, pp.371, 378.

<sup>609</sup> Karl Marx. 1847 [2001]. *The German Ideology*. Ed. by C.J. Arthur. New York: International Publ., p.80.



### **Nation and Commerce: Customs.**

“In Punta Arenas commerce is neither Chilean nor Argentinean in this territory,” reported *La Union* in 1907 from Rio Gallegos. According to the weekly, “all of the big businesses (in southern Patagonia) and almost all of the small businesses are foreign”<sup>610</sup>. Actually, by distributing immigration stimulus packages and land occupation privileges according to racial criteria, the recently-arrived Europeans had created an oligopoly which extended from the control for credit to that of land, transportation and commercialization. State support, achieved through corruption, was expressed in the maintenance of a very free version of the free market. One of the few “distortions” was the Chilean state subsidy of the shipping company Braun & Blanchard, starting in 1897. On the one hand, since the end of the 1860s, Magallanes had been declared a free port, an act which all of the participants identified early on as a key factor for the “extraordinary progress” of the territory. Not having to pay exportation or importation rights, tax free until 1898 and income tax free until the 1920s in Chile and the 1930s in Argentina, representatives of the imperial capital living in Magallanes around 1880, were able to expand rapidly towards Santa Cruz.

The explosive increase and concentration of wealth in foreigners caused surprise and restlessness in metropolitan travelers and politicians, and the emergence of protective tendencies. The establishment of a custom’s office was proposed in Magallanes by two governors, in 1880 and 1890, with open opposition from the local press and merchant-ranchers.<sup>611</sup> In Santiago, in 1894, the SOFOFA began to advocate for the regulation of capital flow that the Patagonian sheep industry had produced. The general opposition in Punta Arenas, which was “the commercial center not only of the Chilean part [of Patagonia], but also that of a large portion of Argentina” contributed to the “enjoyment of the widest-ranging commercial exemption.”<sup>612</sup> Despite this, the Chilean congress approved the introduction of Customs just before President Federico Errazuriz was to meet with his peer Julio Argentino Roca and with the merchant-

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<sup>610</sup> “Derechos aduaneros,” *La Unión* (RG), 21.02.1907, p.2.

<sup>611</sup> Lorenzo Massa. 1945. *Monografía de Magallanes. Sesenta años de acción Salesiana en el Sur – 1886-1946*. Punta Arenas: Instituto Don Bosco, p.106; Vera, *op.Cit.*, p.272.

<sup>612</sup> Editorial, *EMG*, 16.12.1894.

ranchers of Punta Arenas during the “Abrazo del Estrecho”<sup>613</sup>. At that event, Errazuriz promised to halt the installation of Customs and Roca *abolished* those that existed to the south of the 42nd parallel.

According to a “nationalist” Argentinean official in the 1930s, once “the Fiscal agents were eliminated, foreign merchandise was freely introduced [...], provoking a noticeable decrease in the cost of living and an intensification of activities and businesses” in Chubut and Santa Cruz.<sup>614</sup> They had to blend in, however, indicating that foreign products already circulated freely, given the “freedom” of the Chilean colony and the inexistence of land controls and that in the Atlantic ports fiscal personnel was scarce and corrupt. The lowering of prices also did not cause an increase in local business on the Atlantic coast, nor anything like a “nationalization” of business: the commercial firms, consolidated in their monopoly of the “Chilean side,” extended into the “Argentinean” in a movement which reinforced the identity between Magallanes and Santa Cruz. Due to this, exchange between national territory and national capital, along a north-south axis, continued to be insignificant compared to the east-west and towards the south: the Magallanes colony towards the Atlantic and Tierra del Fuego.

The “nationalizing” tendencies, interested in reinforcing the presence of the metropolitan market, were able to hire in Magallanes, in 1902, a Statistics Official. This state official was to review the merchandise introduced to and exported from Punta Arenas, providing a certificate which would be used in the Chilean customs office to determine whether or not taxes applied to the product, depending upon its origin. This non-financial regulation of merchandise flow was systematically sabotaged. First, by the governor who for many years exercised his power over the statistician by personally reviewing the documentation<sup>615</sup> and later, by the merchant-ranchers who denied the information, or submitted it with changes, taking advantage of the limited fiscal ability of the Office<sup>616</sup>. As a reaction, in 1903, the powerful SOFOFA reactivated its protest of the “contraband” introduced into the Chilean territory from Punta Arenas. In its complaint, it denounced the fact that European manufactures and agricultural

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<sup>613</sup> Governor Chaigneau to MinInt. 24.12.1913, FGM. V.20, *op.Cit.*, p. 185.

<sup>614</sup> José María Sarobe. 1935. *La Patagonia y sus problemas*. Buenos Aires: Aniceto López, pp.225, 110.

<sup>615</sup> Governor to Merchants, 20.11.1902, and Custom’s Office to Governor, 6.7.1906, FGM. V. 18. Ministerio de Hacienda, 1888-1927, pp. 57 and 91.

<sup>616</sup> Central Statistics Office to Governor, 3.12.1914, FGM. V. 18. Ministerio Hacienda, 1888-1927, p.235.

products used Punta Arenas as a distribution center for the entire national territory without having to pay taxes because, having been reloaded onto ships heading towards the north –and towards Argentinean Patagonia, they were considered local production. The national market was oblivious to Magallanes, protested the Society, which was contributing to the destruction of the agricultural and industrial sectors.<sup>617</sup> The argument was partially settled by the visit to the area of the Superintendent of Customs, Francisco Valdes Vergara, who assured that the application of tariffs would not be profitable for the State.<sup>618</sup> Valdes was a shareholder in the *Sociedad Explotadora* since 1900, and would become its Director-CEO upon leaving his position at the superintendency in 1905.<sup>619</sup>

From this position, Valdes exercised a powerful lobby during the following decade, trying to detain nationalization by way of customs that members of Congress were in favor of. Even in *El Mercurio*, fervent supporters of the privatization of lands adopted an incipient nationalization and compared Magallanes with Central African colonies who were dependent on north Atlantic interests and whose wealth flowed towards Europe.<sup>620</sup> SOFOFA reactivated its campaign in 1908, with a new custom's chief, Salvador Zegers, who repeatedly criticized the contraband coming from Magallanes.<sup>621</sup> In Congress and in the metropolitan press, at the same time, tobacco and soap impresarios denounced the damage, the limited control of the State over the markets and the necessity to use manufacturers to “Chileanize” commerce in Magallanes. In 1910, they had their first triumph when a tax was applied to tobacco and

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<sup>617</sup> “Damos el alerta (*La Lei*),” *EMG*, 29.09.1904; “Derechos Aduaneros en Magallanes,” *EMG*, 10.10.1904; “El Comercio de Punta Arenas,” *EMG*, 17.10.1904; “Aduana,” *EMG*, 20 and 28.10.1904. As has been pointed out in Chap 3, the immense majority of products consumed in Patagonia arrived from Europe.

<sup>618</sup> “Reportaje al Sr. Francisco Valdés,” *EMG*, 19.01.1904.

<sup>619</sup> Fernando Durán. 1943. *Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego*. Valparaíso: Directorio SETF; “Reseña Biográfica Parlamentaria. Francisco Valdés,” [http://biografias.bcn.cl/pags/biografias/detalle\\_par.php?id=1440](http://biografias.bcn.cl/pags/biografias/detalle_par.php?id=1440) (acc.10.10.2010).

<sup>620</sup> *ElMer*, 15.10.1912, p.3, in Carl Solberg. 1970. *Immigration and Nationalism. Argentina and Chile 1890-1914*. Austin: U. of Texas Press, pp.164-166.

<sup>621</sup> “La vieja cuestión,” *EMG*, 24.06.1909; “En pro de Magallanes,” *EMG*, 15.07.1909; “Aduana,” *EMG*, 16.07.1909; “La aduana en Magallanes,” *EM*, 26.07.1909.

cigarettes in transit in Punta Arenas,<sup>622</sup> a measure which was considered in the region to be “an attempted threat against the Territory’s commerce.”<sup>623</sup>

Despite a transverse regional opposition that swept from the Explotadora to the Benefit Societies the Chilean State decided to introduce Customs. In a celebrated meeting in April of 1911, the Government, with participation from the “secretary of the superintendence of customs, the bank managers and major merchants [...] came to agreement regarding the establishment of customs without charging for the rights.”<sup>624</sup> However, after having operated briefly, this agreement was modified in Santiago: a group of articles was taxed 2.5% - half of the rate applied in the rest of the Chilean customs.<sup>625</sup> At the same time, between March and June of 1911, the Workers’ Federation of Magallanes was founded, and the Territory was paralyzed by a general strike in October in solidarity with the demands of a raise in salaries and price control for the ocean and beach workers – longshoremen, dockers and sailors. The opposition to Customs in those months became more and more active along a common front in which participants ranged from merchant-ranchers, like Rudolph Stubenrauch, German consul and first mayor, to Natalia Tobar, an apparently anarchist leader of the workers from the *Lavandería Modelo* (Model Laundry). Although economically customs did not appear to have had an effect on nationalization during this transaction, politically, it did have an effect. Considered apart from the truthfulness of the ‘national’ complaints by controllers of the oligopoly and from the patriotic rhetoric, which adopted contradictory meanings according to the local press, SOFOFA, the National Society of Agriculture and customs nationalized the discussion terms in southern Patagonia.

In February of 1912, the oligarchic State’s decision was materialized in prices. The unitary block of the opposition cracked: even when the *project* to establish customs affected the inhabitants of Patagonia, its function affected them in a completely

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<sup>622</sup> En *EMG*, “El impuesto a los tabacos, cigarrillos y cigarros en tránsito,” 07.10.1910; “Superintendencia de Aduanas,” 15.11.1910; “Impuesto a las mercaderías en tránsito,” 03.12.1910; “El impuesto a los tabacos,” 07.10.1910; “Superintendencia de Aduanas,” 15.11.1910; “Impuesto a las mercaderías en tránsito,” 03.12.1910; “Impuesto a los tabacos, naipes, cigarros i cigarrillos,” 24.01.1911; “Impuesto a los tabacos, naipes, cigarros,” 17.2.1911: “Y traerá como consecuencia el desviar una buena parte de la corriente comercial por Punta Arenas hacia Buenos Aires o para esos puertos argentinos del sur.”

<sup>623</sup> “Impuesto a los tabacos, naipes, cigarros, etc. en tránsito,” *EMG*, 17.2.1911.

<sup>624</sup> “Punta Arenas. Establecimiento de la Aduana,” *LU* (RG), 27.04.1911.

<sup>625</sup> “Aduana en Punta Arenas,” *EMG*, 4.7.1911

different way. According to *La Unión* of Rio Gallegos, the only news source which published calculations regarding the impact of tariffs in the “neighboring” city, a 5% drop in profits for merchants was expected along with a rise in prices for the consumer anywhere from 5 to 10% on *certain* products.<sup>626</sup> Once customs was established, and despite the accumulation of stocks, the companies raised their prices for retailers and consumers by 30 to 40%. The press and the merchant-ranchers believed that customs only succeeded in “taking away from Punta Arenas its commercial predominance, its role as the metropolis at this extreme of South America, Argentina and Chile.”<sup>627</sup> As for the workers, however, the measure made them incapable of feeding their sons and daughters. Because Patagonia lacked cattle, condensed milk was consumed, imported, for the most part, from Holland.<sup>628</sup> According to the press, the government and Stubenrauch, the milk and footwear taxes were those that most directly affected the “needy classes.” Stubenrauch claimed that to ascertain this, one just had to see “the cemetery with its thousands of graves for babies and the great number of emaciated children due to the lack of milk.”<sup>629</sup>

Stubenrauch’s discourse had results in his communications with London business owners to whom he complained that the customs “appears to have the main goal of bothering the foreigners or people who want to work & get ahead,” and in his activities before the metropolitan press. Likewise, he was active in the formation of a variety of commissions that travelled to Santiago to lobby Congress.<sup>630</sup> However, just after the importation rights were implemented he was involved in raising them as the owner of one of the largest companies. The Workers’ Federation claimed they were in the presence of a “silent violation” of the local merchants, protected by Mayor Stubenrauch and corrected by the intervention of the President of the Republic. A

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<sup>626</sup> “El comercio del Territorio de Santa Cruz,” *LU* (RG), 14.09.1911.

<sup>627</sup> “Aduana en Magallanes,” *EMG*, 8.7.1911. Other media refer to the Argentinean national territories as “immense and rich [...] tributaries” of Punta Arenas: Swart and Collao (eds.) 1912. *Guía Comercial é Industrial de Magallanes, Llanquihue y Chiloé y Puertos de la Patagonia Argentina*. Concepción: Imp. Concepción, p.13.

<sup>628</sup> Iriarte, *op.Cit.*, p.40

<sup>629</sup> R. Stubenrauch to the Customs Administrator, 15.04.1918, in FRS. Copies of private letters, March 1916-September 1918, p.393; “La Aduana y el gobierno,” *EMG*, 18.8.1914; “Proteccionismo mal entendido,” *EMG*, 14.9.1914; “Cuestión aduanera,” *EMG*, 27.05.1918; Gob. Chaigneau a MinInt., 24.12.1913, *op.Cit.*

<sup>630</sup> R. Stubenrauch to F. Alcock. 30.05.1912, FRS. Copies of letters, 1906-1914. pp.304-5.

respectful telegram to Ramon Barros Luco from the *Cámara de Comercio de Santiago* (Business Council of Santiago) presented him with three options for stopping the high costs: the complete termination of customs, the control of prices by state officials or the establishment of new businesses because it was “impossible to expect anything from resident merchants.”<sup>631</sup> Nothing came of this.

A new manifestation against Customs led by the benefit societies, the FOM and the anarchist *Asociación en Resistencia Oficios Varios (AROV)* faced a difficult scenario.<sup>632</sup> As the Association’s discourse became radical, the benefit societies left the group. As legal societies, heightening the conflict with the Government was counterproductive to its own goals. For the Workers’ Federation, likewise, breaking the alliance with the benefit societies, with whom they shared members, meant losing somewhat strategic sectors in regional battles. Isolated, the Association tried to negotiate with the Government and the first Mayor, but the latter refused to lower the prices and the former confirmed that those issues were outside of his domain. Both appealed the laws (of the market). “Everyone is conspiring,” indicated the Association in a pamphlet which identified the unity of interests of big businesses, business owners and local authorities. Just after the quote was released, members of the Association began to ruffle the feathers of business, workshop and meat processing plant workers, attempting to declare a strike. The chief of police informed the judge, asking him to resolve “what he thought to be convenient.” The following day, the magistrate found the strike was already underway and cited the company heads. Everyone agreed that the “agitators” acted without respect for the property owners and uniformed employees dispatched by the Government. So, the Judge ordered detainments for “public disorder” and “slander of the Army and Navy.” In a few hours, several leaders were captured. During the following months they were gradually freed and the AROV dissolved. Four

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<sup>631</sup> Iriarte, *op.Cit.*, pp.46-47.

<sup>632</sup> Regarding the concept of the anarchist horizon see, by my authorship, “‘Jesto y palabra, idea y acción’. La historia de Efraín Plaza Olmedo,” *Colectivo Oficios Varios*. 2004. *Arriba quemando el sol. Estudios de Historia Social Chilena: experiencias populares de trabajo, revuelta y autonomía, 1830-1940*. Santiago: LOM, 137-194, and “La Sociedad en Resistencia de Oficios Varios y el ‘horizonte anarquista’,” in Lucía Stetcher y Natalia Cisterna (eds). 2004. *América Latina y el mundo. Exploraciones en torno a identidades, discursos y genealogías*. Santiago: UCH, 189-204. Cfr. Grez, Sergio. 2007. *Los anarquistas y el movimiento obrero. La alborada de ‘la Idea’ en Chile, 1893-1915*. Santiago: LOM.

years later, none of the accused lived in the Territory any longer to hear that the Judge had determined that no charges were to be pressed.<sup>633</sup>

Stubenrauch maintained both his position as mayor and the prices, along with his complaints against Customs. The Workers' Federation, without competition from the anarchists, maintained its alliance with benefit societies and at times with important people who, like Stubenrauch, agreed with the necessity to eliminate importation rights. At least three delegations were sent north, with every sector being represented. When they managed, in 1913, to get the House of Representatives to vote on the elimination of customs, the result was unsuccessful<sup>634</sup>. The following year the congressional motion didn't come to a vote, and a section of the FOM started to demand political representation for Magallanes. For the Federation, the direct transfer of import duties to the "common consumer" was typical of indirect taxes and it was thought therefore the State should replace them by taxing the "businesses that don't do anything to benefit the [state]"<sup>635</sup>. For FOM's newspaper, the application of tariffs to wool, meat and lard exports would produce new revenues, which together with increasing national cabotage and the subdivision of land would steer the economy towards "Chilenization." In the opinion of one of their columnists, Braulio Sutil the classist protests represented through the strike were the means by which to replace duties through substantive measures.<sup>636</sup>

Aside from supporting the strikes, the newspaper *El Magallanes* shared the same opinion of the situation: duties were a product of a "misunderstood protectionism" of metropolitan elites that were ignorant of the "ideas, tendencies and the desires" of inhabitants from the south. Only the poor paid for Chilenization, while "luxury items, unnecessary, superfluous" continued to not be taxed and therefore, "the capitalists have suffered almost nothing from the taxes." Vindicating the *well-worn* "concept of nationalization," the newspaper argued that the concept "entails the fundamental idea of

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<sup>633</sup> FJM. Caja 207, Leg. 4. Against Luis Pérez and others for public disorder and slander of the Army and Navy, 29.02.1912.

<sup>634</sup> Voting in favor of the elimination were 20 members of congress, 26 opposing and 3 abstentions. "El discurso del señor Bañados," *EMG*, 03.09.1913.

<sup>635</sup> "La carestía de la vida," *EMG*, 28.09.1913; "Medida que se impone" *ET*, 12.01.1913.

<sup>636</sup> *ET*, 27.07.1913 y 28.09.1913.

populating national land with inhabitants from the country.”<sup>637</sup> Because of this the Civic Union revived Alberdi’s maxim: “to Govern is to populate.” For some however, the flux of Chilean settlers should be encouraged through the granting of public land. This idea was supported by some members of the Pro-Subdivision of Land Committee, which found itself taking that same position.<sup>638</sup> Other members of the committee, which included the Workers Federation, claimed that the expiration of concessions given to the monopolistic companies was the central Government’s opportunity to discontinue them.

As Juan Verdades, a regular columnist of *El Trabajo* stated: “poor Chileans, you don’t have anymore rights in this country than a small piece of land, so small that it will be received at the moment of death when paying human tribute: a common grave”.<sup>639</sup> For the Federation, “Subdividing the land among the Chileans that enforce respect to [what] by natural law belongs to us is the way to Chilenize.”<sup>640</sup> The agrarian reform was debated in Congress, but a big blow was dealt when land concessions were renewed in the Tierra del Fuego for fifteen years.<sup>641</sup> Added to that, both the report from a congressional committee that visited Magallanes and the regional demands to replace import with export duties remained buried when the President of the Republic denied the possibility of introducing modifications to the customs regime.<sup>642</sup> As the FOM suspected, and Stubenrauch knew and said in private, the attempts were “knocked on the head by Congress, whose members are mostly shareholders of that big concern called the *Explotadora*.” The concessions continued benefiting members of the oligopoly. As Stubenrauch informed in a letter, in English, he sent to an investor in London, in occasion of a travel of Moritz Braun to Santiago:

“He then will see influential men at Santiago, to get them to work for us to get a convenient concession, after the present one expires. This of course mean money, because at Santiago they do nothing without good pay, as we are seeing in the Aduana question; they do not even take Chilean currency, these gentlemen of the leading or Government people but require Sterling guaranteed. Our idea is to give

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<sup>637</sup> “Proteccionismo mal entendido,” *EMG*, 14.09.1914.

<sup>638</sup> “Colonización de los campos fiscales,” *EMG*, .5.1912.

<sup>639</sup> Juan Verdades, “Yo... acuso!,” *ET*, 13.04.1912.

<sup>640</sup> “La Sociedad Explotadora chilenezará nuestra región (?),” *ET*, 5.01.1913, p.4.

<sup>641</sup> Stubenrauch to F. Alcock, Liverpool, 30.03.1913, FRS. Copiador de Cartas, 1906-1914, p.334.

<sup>642</sup> En *EMG*, “Subdivisión de tierras y Aduana,” 3.7.1914, y “La Aduana y el gobierno,” 18.8.1914.



them shares if they can get a convenient concession for us, which of course would be worth a lot of money”<sup>643</sup>

As one might imagine the effects of the duties-which didn't help develop manufacturing or local dairy industry, nor increased the exchange between Chilean ports and Punta Arenas-were passed onto consumers. This managed to start the dreaded “independence” of Patagonian territories in Argentina, which had been free from duties until 1918. Between 1913 and 1914 FOM membership went from three to four thousand, and increased to six thousand in 1916.<sup>644</sup> Initially, the installation of customs obligated the FOM to translate its universalist discourse into national terms, appealing to a *true* Chileanization that favored workers and poor settlers, as opposed to one that was *false*, Eurocentric and pro oligarchic. Opposition from the metropolitan centers of Santiago and Buenos Aires to review the situation, as well as the argument of the scientific traits of the economy supported by the local oligarchy, reinforced class identity at the same time that it reinforced the need to articulate that discourse within national borders.

This in turn strengthened Magallanian identity, instead of Patagonian: in defense of the duties “the false argument of patriotism” was raised, as being “the most objectionable and unpatriotic act with respect to Magallanes that the government could have committed”- *El Magallanes* stated<sup>645</sup>. The Civic Union's maxim “to Govern is to populate” came accompanied by a “Coat of Arms of the Territory,” in what was a rare full-page advertisement with images. Aimed at congressmen, the insertion demanded “the incorporation of the Territory into the constitutional regime,” emphasizing “the culture and civic-mindedness of the people” and warned that with the land monopolization “Magallanes would become English or an African factory” preventing that, “if you want healthy children for the nation, give us milk to help them grow.”<sup>646</sup>

The “invisible line that is the border”-as it was defined in 1911 by a newspaper from Santa Cruz- started to take shape during this time. The border became visible more so in its articulation of demands and the alliances formed than in its visible

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<sup>643</sup> Stubenrauch to F. Alcock, Liverpool, 07.12.1913, FRS. Copiador de Cartas, 1906-1914, pp.444-6.

<sup>644</sup> “El principio del fin,” *EMG*, 5.02.1913; “La Aduana de Magallanes y la Federación Obrera,” *EMG*, 7.07.1914; L.E. Recabarren, “La Federación Obrera de Magallanes,” *La Aurora* (Taltal), 24.06.1916.

<sup>645</sup> “La mistificación del patriotismo,” *EMG*, 06.06.1914.

<sup>646</sup> “Gobernar es poblar,” *EMG*, 05.02.1913.

manifestation over the land. After a decade of debates over customs, it started operations in a small storehouse, administratively disorganized and incapable of safeguarding the cargo<sup>647</sup>. Furthermore, in the words of a Governor, to stop “smuggling in Magallanes is completely impossible,” by land, “a large and well paid body of guards,” would be needed and the “expanded coasts of the Strait” made maritime surveillance more difficult.<sup>648</sup> For *El Magallanes*, a demand that gathered strength was for the improvement of service, with an increase in the budget, of personal and of facilities. The central Government, should, pay attention to this demand for “the prestige of the Government and [for] the good and efficient service to the public”<sup>649</sup>. Only in 1921 did the discussion over the operative capacity of customs gain momentum within governmental bodies. By then the only thing officials could do was to verify that the introduction of livestock was a customary practice, and that the so-called Border Controls (*Resguardos Limítrofes*) should function as a point of entry and exit, but that they didn’t exist.<sup>650</sup> Huge flocks of sheep from Santa Cruz supplied the meat processing plants of Magallanes, without paying import duties: milk, on the other hand, would continue paying duties until the following decade. Meanwhile, smuggling became more profitable, to the benefit of exporters- importers, who at the same time were the leading landowners and proprietors of transport.

In this manner, the merchant-ranchers maintained their business structure - extensive ranching- without major changes. As the following table shows, the import earnings were minimal in comparison to the magnitude of the exports that, tax free, were shipped out through Punta Arenas. According to the 1920 Chilean census, Magallanes represented 0.8% of the national population. The following year, the local customs office collected 0.5% of national taxes, at the same time that its exports represented 7% of the national total. Being that wool and meat were the only products exported tax free from Magallanes, and that their production was highly concentrated, it

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<sup>647</sup> “Aduanas de Punta Arenas,” *EMG*, 13.09.1912; “En la aduana,” *EMG*, 11.101.1913;

<sup>648</sup> Gobernador Chaigneau a MinInt., 24.12.1913, FGM. V. 20, *op.Cit.*, pp.186-187.

<sup>649</sup> “Necesidades en el servicio aduanero,” *EMG*, 02.05.1918.

<sup>650</sup> See Aduana y Tesorería Fiscal de Magallanes a Superintendente de Aduanas, 11.04.1921; “Comercio terrestre de la República Argentina en el Territorio de Magallanes,” *Boletín Oficial de la Superintendencia de Aduanas*, Volume XVI, N°315, July 1921, p.541; Aduana y Tesorerías Fiscal de Punta Arenas a Gobernador, 27.03.1925, FGM. V. 19. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 1911-1927, pp.330a, 330c and 479.

could be it said that while 0.5% was paid basically by the workers, the 7% -not counting salaries- was mainly taken by 48 landowners that controlled 97% of all “Chilean” land in the southern region .<sup>651</sup>

Tax collections in Punta Arenas’ Customs office <sup>652</sup>				Exports (pesos 18d.) <sup>653</sup>		
Year	Customs Tax Collection Punta Arenas (pesos 18d.)	% Chilean Customs Earnings	Customs Ranking	Amount Exported (pesos 18d.)	% Chilean Exports	Port Rankings
1913	346.370	0.2%	13/18			
1914	357.430	0.3%	12/18	17.771.000	6%	9/36
1917				33.494.198	4.7%	8/36
1918				39.484.185	5.1%	9/36
1919				28.562.400	9.5%	4/36
1921	432.390	0.5%	11/19	29.985.700	7%	8/36

### The establishment of “legitimate violence.”

In November of 1906, on a street in Punta Arenas the Urrutia brother’s assaulted a police officer with sticks. The cause of the incident is unknown, but with the arrival of backup the trio was arrested. Among those who made the arrests was Officer Pantoja, “of whom the Urrutia brother’s vowed to take revenge.” Bartolo, Pedro and Luis Urrutia were born in Ancud (Chiloé), and lived in a house with their grandfather, mother, their aunt and their aunt’s husband and child. Six months after the fight they ran into Pantoja and completed their promise. Suffering a head injury after being beat with brass knuckles, the now Deputy Inspector looked for help and went after them. He went

<sup>651</sup> OCE. *Anuario Estadístico de la República de Chile. V. VII. Agricultura. Año 1920-21.* Santiago: Universo, 1922, pp.20-21.

<sup>652</sup> “Rentas recaudadas por las aduanas de la República durante el año 1914,” OCE. 1916. *Anuario Estadístico de la República de Chile. V. VIII. Industrias. Año 1914.* Santiago: Universo, pp.352-353; “Rentas de las Aduanas,” OCE. 1922. *Anuario Estadístico de la República de Chile. V. XI. Comercio Exterior. Año 1921.* Santiago: Universo.

<sup>653</sup> OCE. 1923. *Sinópsis estadística de la República de Chile.* Santiago: Universo, p.151; OCE. 1922. *Anuario Estadístico de la República de Chile. V. XI. Comercio Exterior. Año 1921.* Santiago: Universo.

to their house and according to his version no one answered the door, so he ordered that the house be surrounded while he with another officer continued to move toward the house going through an empty plot of land. Then, he stated they were attacked “with metal rods” until they were unconscious. Another officer Emilio Banda, who had just gotten off his horse, was also attacked. According to Banda, he fired a shot “into the air” and Luis Urrutia fell dead. According to one of Luis’s brother Pedro Urrutia, who was a literate 19-year-old carpenter, they were sitting quietly at home until their uncle arrived and went out to relieve himself on the patio, where he was attacked by strangers. When he took refuge in the house he was followed by various men that, “began hitting [...] us all,” provoking a fight.

For the Judge, there were two charges: the assault against Pantoja and the murder of Luis Urrutia. With respect to the first charge, Luis was absolved of the charges for obvious reasons, and there was no proof against his brother Pedro. Two other suspects skipped town, making it impossible to find them. Regarding the second crime a defense lawyer took the case, an uncommon privilege in 1907, when charges were resolved with statements made before the judge or his secretary, and sometimes payed attention to presentations made by the District Attorney. In this case, however the lawyer Oscar Feliú made a lengthy and well-worded argument: with “the duty to make people respect authority,” the accused Banda, had confronted armed individuals and if he had fired into the air or at a person, “the act was perfectly justified” and he should be acquitted. Furthermore, “innumerable deaths” occurred daily, because of the “damaging environment of settlements and for hundreds of other reasons.” If those deaths go unpunished, there are even fewer reasons to punish “an honorable man that had chivalrously resisted the assault of three suspiciously acting individuals”; if authorities were attempting to give the “judgment an imminently social implication,” an acquittal would bring “more beneficial results.”

The lawyer insisted over and over again about the strategic need to free Banda. Rather than an act of justice, an argument not mentioned by the lawyer this was about Banda being the embodiment of the state and the act of the shooting itself being a representation of order. For Feliú, the social context had to be considered as well as the necessity to establish once and for all authority, in a distant region that Banda loved,

where he arrived to institute order and build a home.<sup>654</sup> The lawyer ended his argument stating that,

“nor Punta Arenas, or Magallanes have to try and defend themselves from Emilio Banda [...] because its necessary not to forget that Magallanes, while it is considered to be prosperous, from an economic, administrative and commercial point of view, it is hardly more than a prison, a penal colony in a flourishing state. The courts throughout the Republic make sure to increase the penal population of the colony sending every year a small contribution of delinquents; the vagabonds from America, Europe, Africa and Australia; adventurers with obscure pasts, deserters of ships, convicts from Ushuaia come to this region looking to make easy fortunes in an environment in which they would be able to act freely and without scruples. In this social environment, more than in any other, public institutions should maintain its prestige unscathed. Here the authority needs to forcefully emphasize their role if they want to prevent future problems due to the accumulation of a combination of social factors that would surely lead to an explosion. To this the safety of the honest people of Punta Arenas rests in the eighty policemen. The damaged reputation that would fall on the Police the day you sentence a police officer because he defended himself, would completely bring to a state of helplessness this institution of guardians of the public good. [In that case] maybe half of twelve-thousand inhabitants would need to arm themselves in order to be able to defend their own lives.”<sup>655</sup>

Feliú’s strategic discourse was not successful. The deputy inspector was sentenced to 200 days in jail, prohibited from holding public offices, and had to assume cost of the trial and pay Urrutia’s expenses. The Prosecutor- representative of the State’s interests- appealed the decision: he asked to increase the sentence to five years and one day. Transferring the case to the Court of Appeals of Valparaíso, of which the local court was dependant. The higher court considering all of the extenuating circumstances raised the sentence to one year.

Around the same time, there was a party at Moritz Braun’s mansion. A fan “made from English lace” was passed around so that the powerful guests could admire it, from Josefina Menéndez to Ernesto Manns and then to Carmen Correa, Jorge Matta’s wife. Someone left it on the table and the fan disappeared. It belonged to María Menéndez, wife of Francisco Campos. They suspected the servants since, “ on the table, when they talked about the fan, they spoke of its possible value so the waiters were able to know what it was worth,” as Josefina said when the Court came to her mansion to

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<sup>654</sup> Banda resided in the territory since at least 1898 when he held the position as a Corporal . FGM. V. 17. Registro Civil. Promotor Fiscal, A. Cruz a Gobernador, 23.09.1898.

<sup>655</sup> FJM. 149-6. Muerte de Luis Urrutia. 15.05.1907, p.123.

take her statement. This unprecedented act, which was repeated in Matta's house, was a testament to both the status of the witnesses and the value of the stolen object, equivalent to 1.7 times the salary of the city attorney or four years and two months rent of a room in a tenement, with a view of the street<sup>656</sup>. Despite the suspicions, the case was dismissed and we don't know who ended up fanning themselves with the aristocratic fan.<sup>657</sup>

As useless as a fan in the pampa, Justice in Patagonia operated mainly in the limited space of the cities and from the ranches, submitting to the scrutiny of the laws of the Republic, and the conduct of its agents, and the conduct of its residents. Its capacity to do so was determined less by legal bodies sanctioned by authorities than by available resources and the local infrastructure, by the motives and the interests of the secretary, judge and the commissioners, by the efficacy of the police and the respect that the people felt for them. Although the administration of justice expresses a central capacity to sculpt the internal sovereignty of the State, according to the testimony of attorney Feliú after 55 years of occupation, the population of the Strait was divided between possible convicts and possible vigilantes.

That division had formally ended in 1877, after the Mutiny of the Artillerymen that practically destroyed Punta Arenas and ended its status as a military penal colony. The bulk of the troops were withdrawn in 1883, arguing that the distance corrupted their discipline, but a small detachment was kept, sporadically, until the establishment of a Battalion in 1911.<sup>658</sup> Initially there were moments in which the Governor didn't have any armed forces, and from the Home Secretariat he was asked to contact "the intendants of Valdivia and Chiloé" to provide him with gendarmes.<sup>659</sup> Two years later, this troupe had 30 men, "hardly sufficient to serve the city," and a jail didn't exist but an "unsafe cell" for a number of detainees that, although small, increased "more rapidly than the [city's] population."<sup>660</sup> The precariousness remained, obligating the jailor of

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<sup>656</sup> Zorrilla, *op.Cit.*; "Artículos de consumo" y "Habitaciones obreras," *EMG*, 17.8.1915.

<sup>657</sup> FJM. 149-9. Francisco Ortiz. Hurto, 3.5.1907.

<sup>658</sup> MinRex. 1883. *Memoria presentada por el Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores i de Colonización de Chile al Congreso Nacional de 1883*. Santiago: Nacional, p.CXLV; FGM. V. 12. Archivo Ministerio de Guerra. Note MinG. a Minint, 19.12.1890.

<sup>659</sup> FGM. V. 12, *op.Cit.*. MinG a Governor, 26.9.1891.

<sup>660</sup> "Memoria Correspondiente al Año de 1892" y Nota de Alcaide a Gobernador, 15.01.1893, FGM. V.20, *op.Cit.*

the nonexistent jail to make a group of guards with 4 civilians, without uniforms or guns, until he could get 17 policemen from cities in the north.<sup>661</sup> Only towards the beginning of the next century the police force in Punta Arenas increased considerably, arriving to 100 guards.

Outside of the city, a police force didn't exist until the State started to delegate its authority to ranchers. In 1899 Governor Bories established twelve "Rural Police stations where landowners and ranch administrators served *ad-honorem*"<sup>662</sup>. They were effectively implemented from 1902, designating before the Home Secretary people "of known honorability and prestige within the respective section"<sup>663</sup>. With this a delegate of economic power exercised police authority inside a jurisdiction coinciding with the vague borders of each ranch, reinforcing the sovereignty of capital along with that of the State. In 1909, for example, Juan Bitsch was commissioner in Tres Puentes, Juan Braun in Cabo Negro, Walter Harries in Última Esperanza, Percy Hobbes in Tierra del Fuego, Alexander Cameron on Caleta Josefina, G. Wood in San Sebastián, Von Maltzen in Punta Delgada<sup>664</sup>. The destinations of each administrator-commissioner changed in the following years, following the switching of the employees from the companies. In 1915 the list of commissioners of the provincial government said that Von Maltzen had been moved to Cerro Castillo, and that in Punta Delgada George Cameron would replace him. Archibald Cameron became the commissioner of San Gregorio, Alejandro Ross of Morro Chico, and Juan McKay of Cabo Negro.<sup>665</sup> Even in 1925 the commissioner-rancher maintained its strength, expanding the number of jurisdictions to 27.<sup>666</sup>

In the 'Chilean' Tierra del Fuego the situation was similar. The police force went from 4 to 35 agents between 1896 and 1903, but its material conditions continued to be scarce and the number continued being insufficient in order to stop "the frequent

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<sup>661</sup> Alcalde a Gobernador, 30.03.1896, Archivo Nacional Histórico-Fondo Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores (FMRE). V. 8. Agricultura e Industria; Gobernador a Minrex, 04.06.1896, FMRE. V. 743. Promotores.

<sup>662</sup> Zorrilla, *op.Cit.*, p.231; Carlos Levicoy. 1992. *Partido Regionalista de Magallanes: una propuesta de gobierno federal, 1931-1941*. Tesis Lic. en Historia, P. Universidad Católica, p.15;

<sup>663</sup> FGM. V. 35. Ministerio de Colonización. MinCol aGobernador, 19.03.1902.

<sup>664</sup> Zorrilla, *op.Cit.*, p.204;

<sup>665</sup> MinInt a Gobernador, 29.2.1916, FGM. V. 43, *op.Cit.*, p.190-191.

<sup>666</sup> Zorrilla, *op.Cit.*, p.233.

crimes” attributed to the “the permanent drunkenness” of a ‘white’ and nomadic population. That’s why, a jurisdictional reform tried to rationalize the distribution of the police force, dividing the territory in three parts that would correspond to “the borders that the company Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego had set” to their ranches and sections, and in each one police sent from Punta Arenas would operate, “under the orders of the respective Commissioner ad-honorem”<sup>667</sup>. With the new distribution of the police force an old demand from the companies was finally completed, one that a Subdelegate had conceptualized as a “voluntary service of the ranchers under the direction of the provincial government.”<sup>668</sup> Such a desire from the ranching community to do this had been present in the archipelago of the Tierra del Fuego since 1880 to protect ranching interests, as were mainly groups of watchmen hired by companies, which killed or captured the Selknam population. In this manner, the only thing the state rationalization of potential police force accomplished was to adhere to the exploitation techniques of the ranchers.

A mixed logic operated in Santa Cruz. One of the key problems in the centralization of the Argentinean State was the monopolization of violence facing the armed power of the montoneras and provinces. Furthermore, in terms of configuring a national elite the bureaucratic apparatus had expanded to supply metropolitan officials capable of limiting the sovereignties of cities and provinces from the beginning of the independence process. Both processes of the ‘reduction to unity’ tended to strengthen after 1880, with the suppression of the Buenos Aires rebellion and the increased spending on police and military operation. Therefore, officials posted to the interior of Santa Cruz were generally speaking policemen or career civil servants. Despite that, their installation would depend on the rancher’s approval, as at the start of the twentieth century the police didn’t even have “simple huts” where to live and were “almost itinerant.”<sup>669</sup>

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<sup>667</sup> Subdelegado de Tierra del Fuego a MinCol, 21.8.1903, and Decreto Supremo 15.3.1904. FGM. V. 35. Ministerio de Colonización.

<sup>668</sup> Subdelegado a Gobernador, 7.03.1898, FGM. V. 21. Subdelegación de Tierra del Fuego.

<sup>669</sup> LU (RG), 25.04.1907, in Aixa Bona. 2010. “Estado y sociedad civil en la conformación de las identidades colectivas en el extremo austral,” *4as Jornadas de Historia de la Patagonia*, Santa Rosa, 20-22 September 2010, p.5.



The creation of the rancher-commissioners in Magallanes helped to somewhat solve this shortage, as by then the Sociedad Explotadora's properties were so vast that they extended without any limits except for their own demarcation. In 1908, the administrator of the sections Cerro Castillo, in Chile, and Cerro Palique, in Argentina, Thomas Burbury, informed the Governor of Santa Cruz that one of his dependents, Walter Harries, was also Chilean commissary and subdelegate and that the company had its own telephone line between the sections and to Punta Arenas. Due to that, he asked the Governor to establish an Argentinean police station on Cerro Cazador, where the *Explotadora* would provide housing, pasture for the animals and free meat<sup>670</sup>. In 1911, when for the first time an outpost was built in Lago Argentino, it was on Carlos Hanstock's ranch and the 10 gendarme's were lodged in another place, given by another rancher named Podestá.<sup>671</sup> And even when the State sent specific remittances for the buying of horses and food, those funds disappeared and animals, food and shelter were provided by ranchers who began to complain about the requests from the police<sup>672</sup>. Towards 1918, a proposal to send gendarmes from Buenos Aires with their families conflicted with the lack of infrastructure to receive them, and with salaries that were still miserable even for bachelors, in Santa Cruz as well as in Magallanes<sup>673</sup>.

The lack of a police force, equipment and infrastructure, the subordination of police authority to rancher's power, adding to that the miserable salaries and the recruitment of 'inadequate' personnel, produced an ample critique of police action. For diverse and sometimes opposite reasons, several interest groups put pressure on the police force in the 1910s -from the Rural Society to the Patriotic Legues and the unions. For the liberal-conservative press, "the absolute lack of discipline" reigned in the police force of Santa Cruz, with workers "suspended, exonerated, convicted or warned" because of abuses and diverse crimes.<sup>674</sup> In 1913 alone for example, *La Union* of Río Gallegos denounced, more than a dozen cases of excessive violence, cover-ups of murders and the sale of favors that brought the suspension of the commissioners from

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<sup>670</sup> T.D.R. Burbury to Governor, 3.2.1908, AHP. Leg.75. Exp.177S. SETF (Sec. U. Esperanza)

<sup>671</sup> *LU* (RG), 29.06.1911, p.2.

<sup>672</sup> "La policía y los estancieros," *LU* (RG), 28.12.1911.

<sup>673</sup> *LU* (RG), 03.01.1918, cit. in Bona, *op.Cit.*, p.5.

<sup>674</sup> "La policía," *LU* (RG), 03.08.1911, p.2

the Ports of San Julián, Caleta Olivia and Deseado.<sup>675</sup> In 1920 it was still frequent to find denouncements of assaults instigated by police, bribes demanded by commissioners and extrajudicial evictions.<sup>676</sup> In summary, as the ex Commissioner and Acting Governor Correa Falcón informed, “the Police is very bad and it does not even moderately fill the complex and honorable mission that it is assigned,” due to a “lack of selection [...and] the meager pay.”<sup>677</sup>

The poor pay and the constant movement from place to place were characteristics shared by the police and those from popular sectors. In southern Patagonia, where social relations were characterized by the seasonality of wage contracts, scarce family relations and high territorial mobility; control outside urban and productive centers was practically impossible. Even settlements were affected by the common practices of the countryside, for example the use of arms. While in 1910 the night police from Punta Arenas tried to effect a prohibition of carrying arms, in Río Gallegos it was legal, according to the National Territories legislation. According to the newspaper *La Union*, this was a “such a deeply-rooted custom [...] that the revolver, carried in a more or less obvious manner” was considered to be one more piece of clothing for men.<sup>678</sup> In 1920, the Argentinean Congress rejected a project presented by Yrigoyen to prohibit the carrying of arms in the Territories. Facing to the eruption of the labor movement, the Santa Cruzean elite adopted Feliu’s assessment of Punta Arenas in 1907: facing “the abundance of threatening and disruptive elements [...] we will have the absolute necessity to live completely confined or to go out into the streets armed to the teeth, [...] threatened our lives and interests by a band of adventurers.”<sup>679</sup>

For the labor movement, on its part, both the police and the Military became the focus of criticism, for ideological reasons (the military as a “school of crime”) but above all because of their practices. As previously said, the workers pointed out the

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<sup>675</sup> “Sigue la racha” and “Suma y sigue,” *LU* (RG), 04.09.1913, pp.2-3; “Santa Cruz,” *LU* (RG), 04.12.1913.

<sup>676</sup> “Nuestra famosa policía” *LU* (RG), 1.01.1920; “Atentados policiales,” *LU* (RG), 15.01.1920; “La pocilga denominada Cárcel Local,” *LU* (RG), 15.04.1920; “El capitán Ritchie pide viático,” *LU* (RG), 20.05.1920; “Otro atropello incalificable de la Policía,” *LU* (RG), 01.07.1920.

<sup>677</sup> E. Correa, “Memoria de la Gobernación,” *op.Cit.*

<sup>678</sup> “Punta Arenas,” *LU* (RG), 08.06.1911; “Portación de armas,” *LU* (RG), 07.03.1912. Still in 1920 *La Union* considered that the police statistics showed until “what point going around armed is rooted in our character,” “La estadística policial,” *LU* (RG), 15.04.1920, p.3.

<sup>679</sup> “La portación de armas,” *LU* (RG), 22.07.1920; “Inquietudes que flotan,” *LU* (RG), 17.06.1920.

corruption, but in a growing manner emphasized the fact that material dependence makes them “domestic servants” of the commissioner-administrators.<sup>680</sup> The concentration of duties favored that ranch administrators turned into, as the *El Socialista* said, “the lords of gallows and knife” (señores de horca y cuchillo) firing and imprisoning on a whim.<sup>681</sup> That’s why the workers affected by thefts didn’t find support from the police- that being scarce concentrated its energies on serving the needs of the owners.<sup>682</sup> The complaints against police classism increased precisely when classist mobilization from below became massive and its effects began to threaten the social order, provoking the police to focus their repression on the organized workers before addressing crimes<sup>683</sup>. In September 1918, in Puerto Natales, elections were held specifically to protest against police abuses in a territory of the Sociedad Explotadora- a territory that the 1920 Census qualified it as its “fundo.”<sup>684</sup> According to the Workers Federation, two of its members were “barbarically tortured” in the police headquarters, under the orders of a lieutenant, after being suspected of robbery by a “foreign citizen”- possibly Corfitz Anderson, manager of B&B and until recently subdelegate and commissioner in Ultima Esperanza.<sup>685</sup> The federation also denounced the death of worker Pedro Alvarado, after being put on a bar and beaten in the police station on the Cerro Castillo ranch, the attempted rape of “José del Carmen Mancilla’s wife” in a rural place, and a robbery on a rural path against a “post messenger” from the Federacion, all crimes comitted by police.<sup>686</sup> Police that received bribes, delinquent-guards, troops acting as private guards of the administrator of La Explotadora, were all denounced

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<sup>680</sup> M. Von Femal, “Los comisarios ad-honorem,” *El Trabajo*, 11.05.1912, p.2.

<sup>681</sup> “Huelga en Dawson,” *ES*, 31.05.1917.

<sup>682</sup> According to a rural worker, “in a ranch in which the administrator was also the commissioner, a theft of horses ocured [... Everyone] went to ask the commissioner to send a policeman in pursuit of a thief that had been traveling for no more than one hour, but the ‘authority’ knowing that the stolen horses belonged to the workers and not to the ranch didn’t send a policeman who served the interests of the rancher more than his own people- in pursuit of the accused, in order to not deprive the ranch of the work the guard provided. The article denounced many similar cases, where “commisioners used guards which they place at their disposition, in assignments different to security.” U.R.S., *El Trabajo*, 31.07.1911, p.3.

<sup>683</sup> Federation members and socialists would have been object of a systematic policy of harassment by foremen and police, since 1911. See “Las provocaciones de un policía,” *ES*, 21.10.1915, p.2; “En San Julián,” *ES*, 4.11.1915, p.1; *ES*, 25.03.1919; “La policía es un peligro,” *ES*, 16.05.1919.

<sup>684</sup> Censo 1920, *ob.Cit.*, p.229

<sup>685</sup> “Punta Arenas,” *LU* (RG), 13.08.1914.

<sup>686</sup> “Resoluciones del Comicio del Domingo 1º de Septiembre de 1918. A S. E. el Presidente de la República,” FGM. V. 43, *op.Cit.*, p.472. About Ventura’s assult see J. Catrileo, “Mirando hácia atrás,” *ES*, 01.03.1917.

countless times in the workers' press that were acknowledged, to a small extent of course, by successive 'purges' in the police forces<sup>687</sup>.

The weakness of the police force was correlated with the nonexistence of the Military nor control over transit through the border. Regarding the armed forces, only the Argentinean and Chilean Navies had a periodic presence when transporting cargo and expedition groups. The Army, as pointed out, only had a permanent presence in Magallanes in 1911, and in Santa Cruz in 1942<sup>688</sup>. The decision to form a regimen in Punta Arenas, at any rate, was not because it was looking to defend a sovereignty threatened by foreign property or by the threat of Argentina, but because it was an attempt to try to economize transport expenses, as the Magallanians had to complete obligatory military service in the north<sup>689</sup>. The installation of the Magallanes Battalion, welcomed by the elite as a contribution to order, was ideologically resisted by the labor press. In a short time, all of their fears were confirmed, with the mistreatment of subalterns, the use of soldiers as strike breakers, the detentions carried out by the Military, the confinement to barracks, and the use of military as a labor force on occasions of conflict.<sup>690</sup> As *El Socialista* deduced in 1915:

“What is the mission of the Military? To defend the Homeland. If it is so, lets make this deduction: the Military defends the Homeland, the Homeland is private property, therefore the Military defends private property.

If the Military defends private property and the worker or the proletarian does not have any, this means that the Military doesn't defend them, but defends the property of others.”<sup>691</sup>

This impression was reinforced towards the end of the decade, as much for the military's conduct as for the change in the argument with which the elite demanded greater “security.” The threat of savage Indians and delinquents without borders was replaced in the elites discourse by the danger of the “subversives” and “bandits” being equally nomadic. The state's incapacity to face the threat of the order became evident,

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<sup>687</sup> *ES*, 13.07.1916; “No hay derecho para quejarse,” *ES*, 14.09.1916; “Carabineros” y “La Policía de Punta Arenas,” *La Opinión* (S), 16.10.1916; “Resguardando la propiedad,” *ES*, 18.01.1917, p.3.

<sup>688</sup> The Argentinean Army had troops in Santa Cruz in 1901-1902, because of the tension that preceded the arbitration by the British king. Lenzi, *op.Cit.*, p.532.

<sup>689</sup> Waldo Zauritz. 2003. *Historia militar de Magallanes*. Punta Arenas: El Magallanes, p.210.

<sup>690</sup> “Punta Arenas,” *LU* (RG), 19.10.1911.

<sup>691</sup> “Nuestros comentarios,” *ES*, 02.12.1915.

according to the elite, in the permissiveness towards a “foreign agitator” that, in difference to a foreign landowner, weakened instead of strengthened nationality. “Anarchism” served in this regard, from the establishment of the Workers Federation, to demand better salaries for the police<sup>692</sup>, while its organizational capacity expanded, it also strengthened the elite’s demands to repressively control the relationship between capital and work.

As the Governor of Magallanes in 1914 said in his Memoir: “ranchers, industrialists, and neighbors” demanded more police, so I supported this demand “in all of my reports” to the Government; because of the strikes I “requested an increase of the police force as an indispensable measure to maintain order, and avoid these periodic shakeups from the workers, that in Magallanes happened without interruption and without cause.” Since the Bories Meat processing plant was in operation, the governor considered that the key was to have sufficient horses to “assure in whatever moment of tumult, strikes or disorders, the protection of the ranchers, merchants and the industrialist’s general interests.”<sup>693</sup> Although the number of guards increased, the salaries continued being miserable. The officers were the “most terrible” and the deficit of horses remained.<sup>694</sup> As still in 1919 the Government could not afford to provide the police with horses, the “Rancher [provided them] for free.”<sup>695</sup>

By then, the nearness of the working season meant taking up the negotiations between the FOM and the ranchers again. For authorities the negotiations were synonymous with strikes, and *insubordination* strikes. As the Subdelegate of Última Esperanza said in 1919, each time that they began “a new working season, a new movement with subversive characters [starts] ”; that is why the Governor expressed that before a labor stoppage they had to take “all of the necessary precautions to be able to react at the first sign [of a disturbance] a squad of soldiers from the Magallanes

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<sup>692</sup> “The police force first, in a written statement to the Minister asking for a raise in salary, establish that in that city there were a great number of anarchists who they need to watch and of whose vigilance would make the increase in pay that they asked for worthy; later a correspondent, to bring himself into favor with a soldier[...] distorted the truth [...] saying that the population is alarmed by the great increase” of “the anarchist element.” “Un caballo de batalla,” *ET*, 24.08.1912, p.2.

<sup>693</sup> F. Chaigneau, “Memoria del Gobernador,” 31.04.1914, FGM. V. 20, *op.Cit.*, pp. 248-9.

<sup>694</sup> Gobernador a MinInt, 6.2.1919, FGM. V. 20., *op.Cit.*, p.416.

<sup>695</sup> Gobernador a Subdelegate U. Esperanza, 29.3.1919, FGM. V. 20., *op.Cit.*, p. 510.

Battalion”<sup>696</sup>. This militarization of the social conflict increased as the labor movement reached its maximum mobilization capacity. Only between August 1918 and January 1919 the Workers’ Federation staged 9 “elections,” 5 strikes (two of them were general strikes) and two days of protest. The elections and the strikes brought attention to labor and police abuses, denounced the arrival of troops and supported the nonviolent resolution of a conflict in Perú that generated rumors of war fed by Santiago’s elite. This coincided with the anarchist Simón Radowitzky’s escape attempt from Ushuaia, which was organized in Buenos Aires, supported by militants from Punta Arenas and Río Gallegos and which ultimately failed because of the joint action between the Chilean and Argentinean Navy.<sup>697</sup> The increase of social mobilization on a national level, characteristic of the postwar period, was countered by the States with an increase in “patriotic” and xenophobic propaganda as well as an increase in the use of police.

In Patagonian protests the labor movement encountered for the first time open repressive violence. In Punta Arenas, at the end of December police charged against strikers from the union Mar y Plata killing one worker. Moreover, three leaders from the FOM were detained in a warship and one, a Spaniard named Eduardo Puente, was deported to Río Gallegos and from there to Ushuaia. The response in the city was a general strike along with a night protest that included warning shots fired in working class neighborhoods and the Military being confined to their barracks. The following day one of the few police officers that had gone out to patrol was found shot dead<sup>698</sup>. A month later after the strike a dispute between Federation leaders and the administrator of the Bories meat packing plant ended in a shootout, which turned into an armed uprising. Four workers and four police who worked for *la Explotadora* died, some twenty people were wounded and buildings from the company Braun & Blanchard were set fire to.<sup>699</sup> The executives of the companies escaped together with the Army Mayor

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<sup>696</sup> Gobernador a MinInt?, Confidential Communication, 21.8.1919, and Gobernador to Subdelegat Ú. Esperanza, 11.12.1919, FGM. V. 20, *op.Cit.*, pp. 884 y 711.

<sup>697</sup> The young Ukrainian anarchist Simón Radowitzky killed the chief of police from Buenos Aires, in retaliation for the repression of the workers May 1<sup>st</sup> 1909. He was sentenced to life in prison Ushuaia, where he left only in 1930.

<sup>698</sup> Harambour, *El Movimiento Obrero... op.Cit.*, p.94.

<sup>699</sup> About the take over of Natales see Ramón Arriagada. 2010. *La Rebelión de los Tirapiédras. Puerto Natales 1919*. Punta Arenas: UMAG; Harambour, *El Movimiento Obrero, op.Cit.*, pp.101-121; Vega, *op.Cit.*, 107-153.

Luis Bravo (the first sub delegate who was not a rancher) and “the people,” as *El Trabajo* stated, “ became the only authority”<sup>700</sup>. Only after two days, and negotiations between the FOM and the Red Cross, did the Chilean official return with the Argentinean military to resume command.

The violence during the working season of 1918-1919 was also expressed within the Worker’s Federation in the tension among anarchists and socialists, increased by the debates surrounding the Bolshevik Revolution and the adoption, by the Workers Federation of Chile (FOCH) of a class-based line of action. Even when negotiations for the 1919-1920 season in Punta Arenas led to the signing of collective contracts for field workers, workers from the Loreto mine and for bread makers, the tensions between the FOM and the local elite rose as the result of national and international events. Nationalist in addition to anti- Peruvian military mobilization as well as anti-anarchists repression, driven around the mid 1920s by conservatives in Santiago, Valparaiso, Antofagasta and the mining zone of Arauco, moved to Patagonia. This setting made it easier to gain support from political and economic authorities, to the Patriotic Leagues in Magallanes and in Santa Cruz.

In the Chilean case, the Leagues were regionally active, particularly in Tarapacá and in Magallanes, meanwhile in Argentina they followed a centralized structure, having a strong influence in Buenos Aires which was opposition to the labor movement, the immigrants and Yrigoyen’s radical government. In one case or the other, the leagues represented oligarchic interests against revolution and reform attempts, and permitted the demands of the local elites to be articulated in a political movement with a national reach. In the case of Magallanes and Santa Cruz, the Patriotic Leagues incorporated ranchers and government officials, especially military or ex military into the core of their organization.<sup>701</sup>

In July 1920, following the “patriotic” protests organized by the Patriotic League in Punta Arenas, a group of civilians and military assaulted the locale of the

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<sup>700</sup> *ET*, 26.01.1919, p.1.

<sup>701</sup> About the Patriotic League in Magallanes see Ernesto Bohoslavsky and Alberto Harambour. 2007. “El miedo rojo más austral del mundo. Discursos y actuaciones de la clase dominante local y los Estados frente a los trabajadores en la Patagonia argentino-chilena (1917-1922),” in Enrique Masés y Lisandro Gallucci (eds.) *Historia de los Trabajadores en la Patagonia*. Neuquén: UNCo. A good introduction to the Leagues in the Southern Cone in Sandra McGee Deutsch. 1999 [2005]. *Las derechas*. Buenos Aires: UNQ.

Magallanes Workers' Federation and set fire to it. The shootings were followed by censorship of the press, the detention and torture of worker leaders and the closing of the workers printing presses. This temporarily destroyed the organization, imposing a monopoly on public debate and limiting social mobilization *through violence*<sup>702</sup>. As *El Trabajo*- the newspaper of the FOM that disappeared for seven months after the assault- pointed out "the police force turned into an autocracy inside the State itself. There was no Governor, or authority capable of stopping the violence of this aristocratic body. The police force was sovereign."<sup>703</sup>

A similar situation occurred in Santa Cruz. In the summer of 1918-1919, the detentions related to Radowitzky's escape attempt and the transfer of Puente to the Ushuaia prison provoked strikes and new raids on the *Sociedad Obrera in Río Gallegos*. The failure to reach an agreement for the negotiations of the 1920-1921 working season also provoked mobilizations at the same time that the elites were outraged because of the effectiveness of boycotts and strikes ordered by the workers. "All values have been subverted and the most solid principles of equity have been twisted, substituting them for disorder, chaos and defamation, all factors of destruction"- protested *La Union* in October 1920, after celebrating the organization of security guards and patriotic brigades in Puerto Deseado and Gallegos.<sup>704</sup> Facing the shortage of police and feeling that their needs were neglected due to Yrigoyen's reform plans, ranchers promoted private action in defense of public interests. *Respectable* Argentines and foreigners had to feel, regardless of class, "the necessity to eliminate those damaging and antipatriotic elements, even when it concerns their fellow countrymen, was not because of hostility or being deliberately against nationality but was seen as the sanction of a right imposed by the need for order and by the laws of the nation."<sup>705</sup>

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<sup>702</sup> About the FOM's assault see the organization's pamphlet edited by Marcolín Piado. 1922 [c.1995]. *Los horrorosos sucesos del 27 de julio. Incendio del local de la Federación Obrera de Magallanes y otros crímenes cometidos el año 1920*. Atelí. Punta Arenas; also Harambour, *El Movimiento... op.Cit.*, pp.137-156; Vega, *op.Cit.*, pp.190-247.

<sup>703</sup> *ET*, 17.03.1921, p.1.

<sup>704</sup> "Círculo Argentino en Puerto Deseado," *LU* (RG), 15.07.1920; "Policía particular," *LU* (RG), 30.09.1920; "Liga Patriótica Argentina," *LU* (RG), 14.10.1920; "La situación creada responde a elementos perturbadores," *LU* (RG), 21.10.1920; "La guardia ciudadana," *LU* (RG), 17.02.1921.

<sup>705</sup> "La huelga y la especulación del sentimiento de nacionalidad," *LU* (RG), 28.10.1920.



Once repression brought political action to a close in Magallanes the subsequent expansion in the mobilization of workers in Santa Cruz was denounced as “terrorism.” This “banditry” “subverted the principles of authority” because of “the arrogant attitude of the Federation” and it added to “the lack of armed forces needed to contain [...] subversive elements”<sup>706</sup>. The transformation of the civilization’s discourse against barbarity stressed the pressure over the National Executive Branch to contain the economic-political hegemony that had lost control. The increase of police could be positive, *La Union* pointed out, but it would be better to send in the Army.<sup>707</sup> In Buenos Aires representatives of the *la Anónima*, the Sociedad Rural and the Sociedad Rural and Santa Cruz Patriotic League Alejandro Menéndez and the ex Acting Governor Correa, were going in the same direction. Forming part of a united and powerful opposition front, headed by Joaquín de Anchorena, leader of the Asociación del Trabajo and the Sociedad Rural of Argentina, and Manuel Carlés, the ‘caudillo’ of the Patriotic League, the representatives of the ranches got Yrigoyen to send troops.<sup>708</sup>

Sent by the President, the Lieutenant Colonel Héctor Varela landed in Santa Cruz with 50 soldiers, welcomed as much by the Sociedad Obrera as by the Sociedad Rural and used his authority to position the State as a mediator capable of imposing on all a collective agreement. This power, situated above the class conflict and particular interests, was in keeping with the - brief and impotent- logic of radicalism in Argentina and of early Alessandrism in Chile. Shortly after the return of Varela’s troops to the north, however, the agreement was ignored by ranchers, who reinitiated their attacks on the “tolerant” behavior of the Governor, the Judge and the official, linked with radicalism, upon considering that the social mobilization threatened owners authority.

From the first semester of 1921 the demand for repressive action was shared between Gallegos and Buenos Aires, and was articulated by the newspapers *La Union* and *La Nación*. Both had editorials pressuring the government to resend troops. In Buenos Aires Moritz Braun joined with Menéndez by then situated in the city and who directed the majority of the businesses in Meniciados by his brother-in-law Nogueira

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<sup>706</sup> “El terrorismo en el Territorio,” *LU* (RG), 06.01.1921.

<sup>707</sup> “Los territorios del sur progresarán cuando existan garantías,” *LU* (RG), 20.08.1921.

<sup>708</sup> “Se apresura el envío de fuerzas militares a la Patagonia,” *LU* (RG), 06.08. 1921.

and his father-in-law Menéndez.<sup>709</sup> In their fight against “terrorism” *La Nacion* and *La Unión* published an article in August of 1921 that expressed the synthesis created by landowners and exporters, which served as the base of their restoration program. Attributing “The abnormal situation of the Territory [...] due to the lack of official action,” that encouraged social disobedience and retarded the full incorporation of Patagonia into the nation, the editorials illustrated a series of obstacles, which provided within them an outline of workable solutions:

“After the conquest of the desert [...] the ranchers, farmers and settlers [...] discovered a fearsome enemy: the bandit.

Bandits substituted the nomadic savage Indian, and the settler that ventured with women and children, in the fertile territories of the south, were frequently their victims. The rural police that occasionally patrolled these regions, rarely managed to eradicate them [...] and banditry was in this regard one of the reasons that slowed colonization.” Later, “general progress, easier communication and the increase of police were ending the plague, and the most comfortable place that fugitive criminals could live was in jail.

Now telegraphic news that arrives from Santa Cruz [...] appears to signal the appearance of a new danger: the evil striker.

In fact the news speaks of laborers who don’t want to submit themselves to regular work in the fields, of groups of individuals that settled themselves in known establishments demanding that they be accommodated and supported, without working during the winter and other gangs that penetrate other ranches cutting fences. [...] With this] the type of banditry almost extinguished reappears under a new form: the evil striker. Both, perhaps, are on the path to merge into only one type of enemy of society, if we relate this case with the violence perpetrated in Misiones, during the strike in the Mate fields. [...] the evil striker and the murderous striker are a phenomena that emerge due to government apathy. A sufficiently sized armed force to watch over workers and avoid new delinquency that attempts to infiltrate workers from Misiones and Santa Cruz would promptly put an end to [this disgrace]. But this simple and easy measure to protect property, has always been a matter fraught with difficulty” for the Executive .<sup>710</sup>

In November 1921 the troops from the 10° Cavalry Regimen directed by Varela, disembarked again in Río Gallegos but now with 300 soldiers. This time the Official’s behavior was radically different: he demanded the surrender of the strikers, banned workers organizations and collective bargaining in work places, prohibited the carrying of arms under the threat of severe punishment, and established that whatever attack

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<sup>709</sup> “Persisten los temores de que se reproduzcan las depredaciones anteriores,” *LU* (RG), 08.12.1921.

<sup>710</sup> *LU* (RG), 24.08.1921.

against the ranchers interests would be considered as an attack against the Military<sup>711</sup>. From Magallanes, it troops of police and the military were also mobilized towards the frontier<sup>712</sup>. Situating the power of the State *inside* the logic of class warfare, Varela fulfilled the expectations of the elite from Buenos Aires and Santa Cruz, united against the “maximalist” danger. The change from negotiation to repression, however, surprised labor leaders. While workers were debating between negotiation and confrontation, the Military destroyed labor organizations, as the Sociedad Rural and the Patriotic League demanded. Which provided material support for the campaigns in the interior. The military operation ended with captures along with massive executions and disciplinary actions.<sup>713</sup> According to Ernesto Bohoslavsky, approximately 7% of working age men could have died in Santa Cruz.<sup>714</sup> As a result the labor organization in Santa Cruz was defunct for a decade and collective contracts disappeared for a quarter of a century.<sup>715</sup>

The repressive cycle in southern Patagonia, which occurred between January 1919-1922, permitted that for the first time since the beginning of the occupation the States could reclaim the monopoly of violence. Even when the press, the ranchers and the authorities had asked for decades to increase the police force and to investment in equipment and infrastructure, this was not produced facing the supposed threat of the indigenous, nor facing the migratory patterns of the labor force that paid little respect to state and private territorial borders, not even facing the imminent danger of a war between Argentina and Chile. The exercise of sovereignty *inwards* was produced *only* as a response to the threat against the oligarchic order, and the specific social relations of production that the elite considered embodied in- or perhaps better *from-* the State.

At the same time, the repression permitted the States to materialize the international demarcation, not anymore as a mere capacity to assign land but as control of movements. Not anymore as an essential discursive mark for the articulation of the peoples demands but also as a *legal and territorial framework* to regulate the workers

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<sup>711</sup> H. Varela, “A los señores estancieros y mayordomos de estancias,” *La Unión* (RG), 23.11.1921; also published in Susana Fiorito. 1985. *Las huelgas de Santa Cruz (1921-1922)*. Buenos Aires: CEAL.

<sup>712</sup> “Las tropas chilenas guarnecen la frontera,” *LU* (RG), 05.11.1921.

<sup>713</sup> Osvaldo Bayer. 1993, 2nd. ed. *La Patagonia Rebelde. V. I. Los Bandoleros y V. II. La Masacre*. Buenos Aires: Planeta.

<sup>714</sup> Ernesto Bohoslavsky. 2009. *El complot patagónico. Nación, conspiracionismo y violencia en el sur de Argentina y Chile (siglos XIX y XX)*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, p.89.

<sup>715</sup> Bohoslavsky y Harambour, *op.Cit.*, p.216

bodies. As Carlo Ginzberg pointed out, in Europe during the nineteenth century the new systems of identification were implemented as a result of “the tendency to criminalize class struggle”<sup>716</sup>. If in spite of the *transversal* demand the Executive couldn’t/didn’t want to finance a photographic record that showed the image of delinquents that traveled through the steppe<sup>717</sup>, a decade later in 1910 it was *only* because of the complaints of the elite that produced the installation of the Military in order to put a stop to foreign agitators (or more precisely foreignized).

On the occasion of the strike in Natales, in January 1919, for the first time troops were deployed in order to stop “the entrance into the Territory of all people traveling from Argentina that didn’t have papers in accordance with the law, obligating the suspicious to go back or detaining those that resisted orders to return.” In order to do this, *la Explotadora* had “given to the SS. Administrators of their Ranches, the necessary instructions to help officials and guards to complete their mission [as] well as to provide them accommodations and food.” Shipping companies, the owners of ships and small vessels were obligated, under the threat of seizure of their vessels, to prohibit the disembarkation of any foreign passenger that doesn’t present their personal documents in the correct manner.”<sup>718</sup> Numerous documents started to be required: to prove ownership of horses, cars, and the origin, number and destination and sheep.<sup>719</sup> At the end of 1919 outposts were established at the border crossings of Río Pescado and Cancha Carreras, establishing a checkpoint in the former “that prevented the passage” of those who did not meet “the requirements of the Residency Act” and at the latter a “border patrol.”<sup>720</sup> The border guards extended far until the area of Río Baker, while the “inhabitants of the Territory” were informed that police were posted at different points on the international demarcation:

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<sup>716</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, “Huellas. Raíces de un paradigma indiciario,” en 2004. *Tentativas*. Rosario: Prohistoria, 69-115, p.105.

<sup>717</sup> Ministro de Justicia to Gobernador, 03.10.910, en FGM. V. 42. Ministerio de Justicia, 1907-1927, p.111.

<sup>718</sup> Gobernador a Prefecto Policía, 22.1.1919, y Gobernador a Gob. Marítimo, 22.1.1919, FGM. V. 20, *op.Cit.*, pp.402-3.

<sup>719</sup> “Ley de residencia,” *LU* (RG), 1.01.1920.

<sup>720</sup> Gobernador a MinInt?, 18.10.1919, Gobernador al Subdelegado U. Esperanza, 22.11.1919, Gobernador a Jefe Carabineros P. Natales, 22.11.1919. FGM. V. 20, *op.Cit.*, pp.805, 853-4, 857.

“With the object of not allowing the entrance into the country of people that could not verify their identity, and a clean record in the case of foreigners, as well as for the security of the fields. Therefore, it is recommended to all people, being nationals or foreigners, to have the documents necessary before leaving the country or simply crossing the border, so in the end as to not encounter problems upon their return, as it is encouraged to those entering through ports.”<sup>721</sup>

The zeal to protect the border reached such a point that even ranchers began to protest. *La Union* of Río Gallegos commented in April 1920, “it is not clearly explained what is the authorities purpose when placing barriers to the free transit of people between two cities like Punta Arenas and Río Gallegos that had close relations with each other and where settlers had established themselves in both places.” In the case of a Uruguayan merchant settled in Gallegos that had traveled to Magallanes only to be turned away by the police suggests that the level of vigilance reached “alarming proportions”<sup>722</sup>. After the acts of repression that occurred in July 1920 in different Chilean cities, the Home Office ordered the police precincts to open a mandatory registry for foreign residents or those in transit as part of the Residency Act.<sup>723</sup>

Santa Cruz’s provincial government, once they noted an increase in the mobilization of workers, immediately took preventative measures. *La Union* stopped asking about the reasons behind the restrictions imposed in Magallanes and demanded the *immediate application* of the Social Defense Law.<sup>724</sup> The prohibition on carrying arms, which failed in 1911, 1913, and 1920, became effective in April 1921. The provincial Government established that the police would open an arms deposit so that those who would enter town from the country could leave them there and pick them up upon exit, companies would also report the names of buyers, restricting possession to ranches and rural businesses<sup>725</sup>. Traveling merchants, on their part, should register with

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<sup>721</sup> Gobernador a Comisario Río Baker, 5.12.1919, FGM. V. 20, *op.Cit.*, p. 874.

<sup>722</sup> “La odisea de los pasaportes,” *LU* (RG), 01.04.1920. The Uruguayan merchant, obtained a booklet and an identification card at his consulate, with which he received a certificate of good conduct at the Police Headquarters, that later was endorsed in the Chilean consulate for 6.85 pesos. In Punta Arenas however he was kept on board for six days, requiring a medical certificate (10 CHP), and a report from the local Commissioner which had to be endorsed in the Argentinean Consultae (5 AP). Furthermore, he was advised that for each trip new documents would be required. The same situation repeated on the trip from Santa Cruz to Río Grande, at the stop in Punta Arenas.

<sup>723</sup> MinInt a Gobernador, 20.07.920, FGM. V. 43, *op.Cit.*, exp.639, p. 753.

<sup>724</sup> “La situación creada responde a elementos perturbadores,” *LU* (RG), 21.10.1920; “La huelga y la especulación del sentimiento de nacionalidad,” *LU* (RG), 28.10.1920.

<sup>725</sup> “Resolución prohibiendo la portación de armas,” *LU* (RG), 21.04.1921.

the police, prohibiting them from carrying alcohol even for personal consumption<sup>726</sup>. In May 1921 a new decree showed the growing power of conservative and nationalist groups. With the establishment of an aggressive policy of identity checks in the ports, on the frontier between the city and the country and between Magallanes and Santa Cruz, the Governor argued:

“due to the increase of people from different backgrounds that easily disperse throughout settlements of relative importance, it is of urgent necessity to by whatever means available differentiate those that are normally qualified from those that for whatever physical stigma or individual defect constitute a danger to the public health or welfare.”<sup>727</sup>

Finally at the closing of 1921, the president signed a decree that created the *cuerpos de gendarmería* that is, a border guard detachment<sup>728</sup>. Later after the 1922 executions, an order from Varela turned in to a decree from the National Executive Power. This decree established that “all workers” should “have an identity booklet at the police station”<sup>729</sup>, that recorded their personal records as a requisite to ranch employment. Administrators and ranchers besides asking to see it, should “note the date of entry into work, activity, the pay they were given; and upon leaving, the termination date of employment and the form in which their salaries were paid, how long they have worked with their previous employer and the cause of unemployment, certified by the patron”<sup>730</sup>. In this manner they built for the first time a tangible frontier splitting up travel throughout the pampa. The document of identity would be issued and controlled by the armed bodies of the State. It would be the patron’s responsibility to fill in the necessary information.

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<sup>726</sup> “Gobernación,” *LU* (RG), 27.08.1921.

<sup>727</sup> “Decreto de la Gobernación,” *LU* (RG), 19.05.1921.

<sup>728</sup> “Ha sido firmado el decreto de creación de los cuerpos de gendarmería,” *LU* (RG), 16.11.1921.

<sup>729</sup> “Las libretas de trabajo,” *LU* (RG), 10.12.1921.

<sup>730</sup> Varela, *op. Cit.*

## Conclusions. Dialectics of Sovereignty.

**Figure 15. First Argentinean troops on the border. Cancha Carreras (1919).**



January 1919: “Captain Ritchie’s troops [from the Argentinean Army] on the Chilean-Argentinean border (Cancha Carreras) hidden in the valley behind the Hills waiting for the result of the expedition sent in order to advance against the revolutionaries” from Puerto Natales. Picture included in Colonel José Rodríguez. 1921. *Riquezas y Bellezas Australes*. Buenos Aires.

The first motorized military convoy in Patagonia’s history went out from Río Gallegos to the Tapia Aike ranch, owned by Stubenrauch and Von Heinz and later on by Braun. The convoy spoke to Mr. Edwards, manager of the Cerro Castillo ranch, owned by *la Explotadora*, using the *Explotadora*’s phone line. Afterwards, the convoy went to the Fuentes del Coyle ranch, owned by *la Explotadora*, in order to speak with Mr. Kidd, who had run away from Puerto Bories where he was manager. It was the main industrial complex in Patagonia, owned by *la Explotadora*. At that very moment the deputy administrator of Cerro Castillo, Mr. Fells, asked for help: 50 to 60 “strikers armed with Winchesters” were trying to take this ranch, which was *Explotadora*’s main ranch in the area. Some of the troops stayed nearby, in Rostempek, property of Sarah Braun de Menéndez. The car that headed the convoy was driven by the Scottish volunteer Archibald Lauder, a reservist from the Argentinean Army. The tractor trucks were owned by the Garage Patagonia, which belonged to the *Sociedad Anónima Explotadora e Importadora*, from the Braun-Menéndez Group.

As Oszlack had suggested, in the second half of the nineteenth century Latin American States faced a crucial problem: on one hand they tried to establish order (oligarchic) and progress (capitalist), which supposed a “capacity to institutionalize their authority, differentiate their control and internalize a collective identity,” but at the same time their instability impeded their “presence” from being effective<sup>731</sup>. The language of statehood, a common hegemonic framework inside which local discourses were articulated, emerged from that long temporal arch and divided Patagonia into Chilean and Argentinean areas. The seventy years between the Chilean occupation in 1843 and the collective execution of insurgent workers in 1922, describe a colonial cycle in which, as we saw in chapter 3, private property was established thanks to State action. As we saw in this chapter, through the privatization of land, which until then was cursed if not savage, owners, together with the State, made their presence felt over the immensity of the steppe. On both sides of the frontier that divided Chile and Argentina the dominions of the *Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego* were built. From them and through them, the States resolved the problem suggested by Oszlack. The institutionalization was present in municipalities, customs and industrial promotion committees while the military, police and guards replaced the rancher-commissioners. Even with all the previous resources combined, it was still a social necessity to internalize a language, a practice and a nationally-defined identity.

The dialectics of the sovereignty of the State and of capital, were built over the expropriation of social sovereignty. This permitted that even when the territoriality of the State began to strengthen (with the establishment of border customs) the territoriality of capital also increased, given the rise in earning rates that came with the avoidance of the border. For Víctor Bulmer-Thomas, the outward growth of Latin American produced three models whose development was usually intertwined. They were: (1) a “destructive model of expansion” that lied in the transfer of resources from one sector to another (from silver to tin, in Bolivia); (2) a “transformative model” which had a strong impact over the non-export sector (meat and wheat in Argentina before 1914); and (3) an “additive” model in which the “resources were attracted into the

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<sup>731</sup> Oscar Oszlack. 1997. *La formación del Estado argentino. Orden, progreso y organización nacional*. Buenos Aires: Ariel, pp. 29, 103-104.



export sector without reducing output elsewhere.” According to the author, the requirements of this model were that the land “had a zero opportunity cost,” that capital was foreign and that labor was “provided in large part by migrant workers [...so] the impact on the rest of the economy was minor”<sup>732</sup>. In the postcolonial colonialism over Patagonia these three models were present, in a political and financial business that was convenient for businessmen, mediators and State agents. The dialectics of property and jurisdiction, sovereign spaces of capital and statehood, transformed “no mans land” into rich estates and national territory.

As well as in northern Patagonia, as Rafael Balart concluded, “the State had comprehensive plans when it came to monopolizing violence,” but “civil society also tried to maintain some control over the monopoly for their benefit [...] to resolve the majority of their conflicts”<sup>733</sup>. In southern Patagonia fencing of land and the formation of the oligopoly implied the destruction of indigenous sovereignty and a swift collapse of the pioneering expectations of immigrants. The disciplining produced by the experience of the market, or of capitalism, in Pinto’s expression, was *followed* by the expansion of the experience of what it meant to be a State. The mutualist movement first, and, later on, more forcefully, the labor movement, intervened in what was the oligarchy’s exclusive space and were capable of transforming their own working conditions in a way not seen in other industries throughout the Southern Cone. In the words of Marx, nevertheless, “the criminal produces not only crime but also criminal law”<sup>734</sup>. And over the tombs of the labor movement, a multinational movement that extended throughout all Patagonia, the order of the State was re-imposed strengthening large landowners. It would be a question of time, however, for that order to be challenged again.

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<sup>732</sup> Victor Bulmer-Thomas. 1994. *The economic history of Latin America since Independence*. Cambridge: Cambridge U.P, pp.83-84.

<sup>733</sup> Gabriel Rafart. 2008. *Tiempo de Violencia en la Patagonia: bandidos, policías y jueces, 1890-1940*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo, p.221.

<sup>734</sup> Karl Marx, 1860-1862 [2008] “Elogio del crimen,” in *Elogio del crimen*. Madrid: Sequitur, p.29.

Figure 16. Condensed milk advertisement (1921).



Illustrations were scarce in the period's press. Even rarer were those published in Río Gallego's *La Unión*. This one appeared by the end of the strikes of 1920-1921, when commercial houses were under the boycott of the *Federación Obrera*. **Legend:** The work of *La Lechera* [the milkwoman]. Kids who drink *Leche Lechera* [Dairy Milk] grew up robust, rosy, healthy, smart, strong, looking like a painting. They are charming." **Can:** "Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Co. / Prepared for export." *La Unión* (Río Gallegos), March 20, 1921, p.2.

In the article that frames advertisement the editor criticized organized workers, and the national Government as passive in front of foreign agitators, "delegating its faculties in the workers' entity." The struggle for cheapening the prices of consumption goods had as one of its main arguments the lack of milk for feeding the children, as there was no local production and the recently implanted tariffs impacted the price of the European-imported. By the time, Argentina may have been the world's largest beef producing country. The Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Co. had already merged into Nestlé, the world's largest food producing company.

## Epilogue.

In January 2011, a powerful movement of protest spread through the current Chilean province of Magallanes. Involving all sectors of the population, from public transport drivers to wealthy tourism entrepreneurs, the main cities, Punta Arenas and Puerto Natales, were completely paralyzed for a week. The airport was blocked, as was the main highway leading to the Argentinean port of Rio Gallegos. The Assembly of Citizens emerged as the main local power in their demands to maintain the State subsidy of natural gas, used for heating throughout the year. Shortly before, the government had announced that the National Oil Company (ENAP) would be eliminating this subsidy and that natural gas prices would skyrocket 20%. Facing its first expressions of massive unrest, the right-wing government of Sebastian Piñera resorted to special police forces and a nationalistic discourse, contrasting the exceptionally low local prices of gas with those paid by the rest of Chileans. There was “a party that must end,” declared Minister of Energy, Ricardo Raineri. Magallanians’ responded that they, *indeed*, were in a special position. The arguments ranged from geographical isolation to high transportation costs and their sacrifices in peopling a rugged, difficult territory of geopolitical significance, because of the strategic proximity to Antarctica and a bigger and wealthier Argentinean Patagonia. As negotiations were broken, barricades erupted with demonstrators waving regional flags. A Magallanian national deputy claimed that if there was no solution they could begin waving the Argentinean one. Even though merchants and entrepreneurs dismissed the class alliance after receiving the first offer of the Government, the movement finally succeeded in halting the increase and producing Raineri’s resignation.<sup>735</sup>

The January 2011 Gas Strike, as it came to be known, reinforced Magallanians’ identity.<sup>736</sup> Half joking discourses about the Independent Republic of Magallanes

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<sup>735</sup> See “Deal ends Chile Magallanes gas protest,” BBC news, [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-12222392](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-12222392); “Chile gas subsidy dispute far from over as talks resume,” [www.upi.com/Business\\_News/Energy-Resources/2011/03/09/Chile-gas-subsidy-dispute-far-from-over-as-talks-resume/UPI-96841299698648/#ixzz1kPOz6x4u](http://www.upi.com/Business_News/Energy-Resources/2011/03/09/Chile-gas-subsidy-dispute-far-from-over-as-talks-resume/UPI-96841299698648/#ixzz1kPOz6x4u) (acc. 23.01.2012).

<sup>736</sup> An initial poll on Magallanes identity in Walter Molina. 2001. “Identidad regional en Magallanes, sus expresiones simbólicas y territoriales,” *Magallania* 39:1, 59-68.

gained confidence. The regional flag became a nationally-well known symbol, an expression of difference and empowerment. Not in vain, the Strike was to inaugurate a year signed by street demonstrations, the strongest in two decades. And the flag was to be invariably present. In Valparaíso, a Magallanian student was fined by her building's administrator after she hung it off her balcony in a case that received broad media attention<sup>737</sup>. However, that flag was a rather new invention, dating from 1996.

**Figure 17. Demonstration in Punta Arenas (January 2011).**



Black flags of mourning intermixed with those ochre-yellow and light blue of the region. As usual, in this demonstration over the Strait of Magellan's waterfront there is only one Chilean ensign in the multitude. From: <http://centroschilenos.blogia.com/2011/enero.php>

Designed by historian Mateo Martinic, the flag shows the “regional colors” representing that of the steppe and the sky -on the few days it is not crossed by fast clouds. Over the blue there is the Southern Cross –the main nocturnal guide for sixteenth and seventeenth-century navigators. The jagged edge of the horizon, though,

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<sup>737</sup> “Multan a estudiante por colgar bandera magallánica en la ventana,” *Las Ultimas Noticias*, <http://www.lun.com/lunmobile/Pages/NewsDetailMobile.aspx?dt=2011-11-24&BodyId=0&PaginaID=2&NewsID=164830&Name=I3&PagNum=0&Return=R&SupplementId=0> (acc. 14.12.2011)

seems to resemble the snow-crowned Andes Mountains, a rather more northern image that most southern Patagonians only exceptionally visually experience. As the dominant regional landscape is that of the *unbound plains* of the steppe, the mountainous design may suggest the natural frontier erected as an impassable natural border between Magallanes and Chile. In this case, “natural” is really *natural* – considering that the delimitation with Argentina impedes Chilean terrestrial communication with Magallanes. It may also resemble, though, what has been conceptualized in Chilean and Argentinean official nationalisms as their own “natural frontier,” but those Andean peaks do not mean much in the south. Considering the decree that created the regional symbols it is possible to imagine of this last meaning as intentional, as it was imposed by the *efemérides regionales* or regional days.

The dates selected by the historian were (1) September 21<sup>st</sup>, in commemoration of “the national occupation of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego,” in 1843; (2) September 29<sup>th</sup>, after “the incorporation of Patagonia to the jurisdiction of the Province of Nueva Extremadura or Chile,” in 1554; and (3) October 21<sup>st</sup>, “Day of the Magallanian Region, remembering the Discovery of the territory and of Chile in 1520”<sup>738</sup>. In sum, in the invention of the ephemerides the three dates considered were those that would have meant that Magallanes was Chilean since 1520, with its joint “discovery” (3); its imaginative jurisdictional incorporation into the never materialized internal administrative division of the Spanish Captaincy of Chile (2); and, finally, the Chilean occupation of Fuerte Bulnes in 1843 (3). To say it another way: the whole history that has been through the current territory of Magallanes refers to the European explorations, the Spanish empire and the Chilean state. For Martinic, as he declared in an interview, “the true Chile is in Magallanes,” because “it is the place where Chile was born to geography and history”<sup>739</sup>.

Despite the anachronism of ‘the national’ masked behind the invention of regional symbols and days, the inscription of the regional past into the rigid delimitations of the national teleology is not but another show of colonial

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<sup>738</sup> Gobierno Regional de Magallanes, “Reglamento de símbolos expresivos de identidad regional,” 15.10.1996, [www.leychile.cl/Navegar?idNorma=60733&idVersion=1997-02-05](http://www.leychile.cl/Navegar?idNorma=60733&idVersion=1997-02-05) (acc. 10.10.2011)

<sup>739</sup> Magaly Arenas, interview, “Mateo Martinic: el verdadero Chile está en Magallanes,” *El Mercurio* (Santiago), 31.12.2006.

“incompleteness.” On the one hand, those symbols are used to incarnate a feeling of difference, an *identity of the distance* between Magallanes and Chile expressed in the half-serious banner of “The Independent Republic of Magallanes.” On the other, it does allow Magallanians to claim from the State preferential treatment, in recognition of their land and their own exceptionality *within* and *beyond* the margins of the nation. As Hansen and Steputat put it, “The decisive step in the invention of the modern nation-state was exactly when the sovereign state became entrusted with expanding tasks of managing the social and economic well-being of its people”<sup>740</sup>. As I hope this dissertation makes clear, the referred *entrusting* is neither a *something* external to the State, nor *an abstract thing*, but a historical, everyday task of accumulating power. It does works as a meta-power working *within* and *through* the subjects, as in Corrigan and Sayer, as a “culmination of a process of concentration of different species of capital,” as in Bourdieu’s definition.<sup>741</sup>

The extended sense of exceptionalism in Magallanes is the historical product of its annexation by Santiago’s elite and the design of a centralist and unitarian State, which has barely changed its distribution of power between the territories in 200 years. In the current Argentinean provinces of Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego, the last national territories in gaining full integration within the federal State, the path became different. In Santa Cruz, the wealth produced by the first state-run oil company in the world defined a different route since its foundation by President Yrigoyen in 1922 -the same year he had sent the punitive expedition of the 10<sup>th</sup> of Cavalry so crucial for state-building. Even though in the Chilean region the National Oil Company had a strong social and economic impact between the 1940s and the 1980s, it did not ever produce the same level of employment and infrastructure as that of its Argentinean counterpart. Seasonal work, landowning structure and exports of wool and meat continued on into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the so-called “Golden Age” of 1880-1920.

Then, an extremely rapid process of State and Capital formation took place. Borders that had never existed came to divide the wide horizon of the steppes into sections of dozens of thousands of hectares. The inner subdivisions of the great sheep

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<sup>740</sup> Hansen and Steputat, *op.Cit.*, p.8.

<sup>741</sup> Corrigan and Sayer, *op.Cit.*, p.200; Bourdieu, *op.Cit.*, p. 56.

farming *estancias* marked for the first time the possibilities of displacement. Since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Europeans were the passing witnesses to a landscape their colonial narrative defined in terms of “gigantism,” as the *Terra Australis Incognita*, the image “through the looking-glass” of European races and modes of production. All of the Spanish efforts to settle colonies in the Patagonia faced tragedy, as failure and partiality were the primary tropes of early Chilean and Argentinean attempts in the area. The impossibility of turning Patagonia into something different –of building a permanent State presence from the negatively-signed “indigenous”- determined that the construction of “State” became possible only through the building of private property. And, as I trust to have shown, sheep were the sovereignty-carrying instruments, “bleating,” in a sense, the nationalisms that they could be said to have represented.

Sheep sovereignty expresses the tensions between borderland sovereignties. The presence of many actors –different indigenous peoples, two states confronting each other, competing British and German capitals, multicultural immigrants divided across lines of nationality, class, time of arrival, race/ethnicity and partnership - generated a conflicting landscape where the dialectics of civilization and barbarianism were played out. Transforming the ‘no-man’s land’ into a sheep-populated steppe meant driving out the indigenous population in gradual, relatively peaceful campaigns (in the continental part) and fast, violent strikes (in Tierra del Fuego). Hitherto, the weaknesses of the States, and the colonists’ confinement to the town of Punta Arenas and smaller settlements on the Atlantic coast, had allowed for their rather pacific coexistence with Tehuelches. Indeed, Tehuelche productions were the main resource for the Magellanic economy up to the 1870s. It was only after what Moritz Braun called the invasion from Malvinas (“la invasión malvinera”) that coexistence was broken. Tehuelche territories were penetrated by sheep, achieving territorial depths that neither Chileans nor Argentineans had ever before reached. A fence, both real and symbolic, was erected, enclosing territories and delimiting social possibilities.

In Patagonia’s borderland, the expansion of capital was itself the condition of possibility for settling the sovereignty of the States, built over social sovereignty. By expropriating indigenous lands, first, and immigrant’s rights, thereafter. The dialectics of State and capital sovereignties even produced a phenomenon wherein these two

expropriations built off each other. After the expropriation of indigenous lands and strengthening their regional advantages, through special policies of economic nationalization and the professionalization of the bureaucracy, the ability to confiscate small immigrant farmers' rights also improved, as profit rates rose by eluding the emerging state border.

As Victor Bulmer-Thomas has proposed, this model may be called “additive,” based on “a zero opportunity cost,” foreign capital and immigrant labor<sup>742</sup>. And State subsidies, I should add, configuring a political and financial business highly profitable for merchants, entrepreneurs, brokers and authorities. It was the dialectic of private property and jurisdiction, as sovereign spaces of capital and statality, what created *estancias* and *Territorios Nacionales* out of the *boundless plains* that for Darwin bore “the stamp of having thus lasted for ages, and there appears no limit to their duration through future time.” The millions of sheep and hundreds of thousands of meters of barbed wire that crossed Patagonia five decades after *The Voyage of the Beagle* recalls a worldwide frontier impulse of nation and empire making. As in northern México, the western United States, or the Ecuadorian and Bolivian Andes, late nineteenth-century expansion of the export-oriented economy combined a new round of racialization and land grabs. In Sonora, the Yaqui territory was expropriated and privatized, with landholdings of up to 547,000 hectares -the California-based Richardson Construction Co.<sup>743</sup> In and around the conquered El Chaco, The Forestal Land, Timber and Railway Co., *La Forestal*, controlled at least 2,000,000 hectares of *quebrachales*, quebracho forests<sup>744</sup>. Probably nowhere a company grabbed as much as the Sociedad Explotadora de Tierra del Fuego, which by itself (not counting Braun's and Menendez's lots) held some 3,000,000 hectares.<sup>745</sup>

By redirecting discussions on nation formation from the center outward, or from the metropolitan elite's discourse analysis to the processes of grounding statality on a marginal territory, it seems that the stability of the nation as the main hegemonic

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<sup>742</sup> Victor Bulmer-Thomas. 1994. *The economic history of Latin America since Independence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 83-84.

<sup>743</sup> Alan Knight. 1986. *The Mexican Revolution. Vol. I. Porfirians, Liberals and Peasants*. Lincoln & London: Cambridge University Press, pp.110 and ss.

<sup>744</sup> Bulmer-Thomas, *op.cit*, p.93.

<sup>745</sup> Martinic, *Ultima Esperanza... op.Cit.*, p.136.



framework loses strength. Passing from being an imagined “no-man’s land,” whose native population was exterminated, to an intensely sought after territory where overarching projections of nationhood were defined meant that giant estates allowed weak states to exercise a geopolitically successful but socially challenged sovereignty. As millions of hectares were granted to a handful of British companies, immigrants found their hopes for proprietorship broken. Converted into salaried workers, they turned Patagonia into a locus of class conflict. As trans-class, regional subjects contesting the designs of the metropolitan oligarchy first, and, as regional workers organized against the local elite, immediately thereafter. As a critical site of border conflict and boundary reconfiguration, immigrants’ labor was forced into the languages of nationality, reconfiguring received degrees of racialization they were subjected to and the agents of, as well as the cleavages produced by cultural and class differentiation, while tailoring a regional identity growingly nationalized as a result of their own contestation.

Though obvious, it has usually been ignored that traditions and institutions of the nation-State do play different roles and incarnate unequal meanings throughout the national territory. As seen from the southern margins, Argentinean and Chilean mirroring of the colonial politics of space and race produced similar results in an area of interpenetration. Their apparently diverging historical paths appear as extraordinarily similar, considering administrative devices, land regimes, recognition of rights and nationalist rhetoric. It does emerge from the comparative history the common continuity of colonialism regarding the National Territories that comprised a great part of each State national territory by 1900. It does leave open, at the same time, space for a transnational approach.

Social, economic, and class structures - and so regional life - were organized in an eminently transnational fashion. Frontier nationalism, meanwhile, increased its metropolitan appeal as the border conflict between Argentina and Chile emerged out of their Patagonian contestation. It did not mean much locally, though, until contestation from below threatened the monopolization of power by the European entrepreneurs supported by Chilean or Argentinean administrators. The long-lasting alliance between the national elites and a selected group of Europeans, including *malvineros*

(Falklanders) did constitute –as I hope this dissertation has demonstrated- the actually existing Chilean and Argentinean State in Patagonia. That State emerges as a meta-capital, as Bourdieu would say, able to display an expert, abstract knowledge, opposed to social, local, and practical knowledge. To borrow Giddens’ conceptualization, the State’s “authoritative” resources *decreed* a process of dispossession for which colonial and postcolonial metropolitan imaginations worked together<sup>746</sup>. However, the process of primitive accumulation only took *place*, became *grounded* as the transnational strength of capitals accumulated everywhere else arrived. It was *then* that the “allocative” power of the State took shape, wrapped in the allocative power par excellence: that of the capitalist market. Up to then, nationalist rhetoric was not but representation, wishful thinking, or diplomatic claims. Up to then, everyday life for Patagonian populations, indigenous or migrant, went by practically untouched by regulations. Faced with the combined force of State and capital, however, everything was rapidly transformed. The process of State/Capital expansion did develop one relation, a combined experience: that of disciplining/proletarianization – or, in the words of Julio Pinto, that of the “experience of modernity.”<sup>747</sup>

As frontier literature has highlighted, borderlands are zones of interpenetration and “connectedness.”<sup>748</sup> There, in the middle and “contested ground” where “no one has an enduring monopoly of violence,” State and capital disputed attributions in a mainly non- confrontational struggle decided by alliances, ruled by corruption, and solved mainly in favor of the entrepreneurs.<sup>749</sup> It seems clear that in the civilizational, national, and international frontier of Patagonia the contentious sovereignties were multiple, and many coexisted at different levels. Even though the growth and repression of militant working-class movements and the rise of metropolitan middle-class populisms encouraged the fracture of class-based, pluri-ethnic identities along ‘national’ lines that had tended to recede in front of mobilization, the transformation of disenfranchised

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<sup>746</sup> See Anthony Giddens. 1995, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism. Vol. I.* Malaysia: Stanford University Press.

<sup>747</sup> Pinto, “De proyectos y desarraigados...” *op.Cit.*

<sup>748</sup> Howard Lamar and Leonard Thompson (eds.) 1981. *The Frontier in History. North America and Southern Africa Compared.* New Haven: Yale University Press, p.8; Cronon, William, Miles, George and Gitlin, Jay. 1992. “Becoming West; Toward a New Meaning of Western History.” In Cronon, Miles, and Gitlin (eds.). *Under an Open Sky. Rethinking America’s Past.* New York: Norton, p.9

<sup>749</sup> Guy and Sheridan, *op.Cit*; Sunderland, *op.Cit.*

residents into differentiated citizens has never been a finalized process. In some ways, as the critical conjuncture of 1919-1922 (in Magallanes, first, and Santa Cruz, thereafter) suggest, each side of the just then existing border defined an inclusion for the workers, where each one's nation was the one that persecuted them. In the shadows of the repression of working-class empowerment, it was the ultimate way of nationalizing.

As you know, though, history continues.

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