# CATTLE, CAPITAL, AND CANNON: WAR-MAKING AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A LIBERAL ACCUMULATION REGIME IN THE PLATINE BASIN

STEFAN SUBEN

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTRY OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN POLITICS

YORK UNIVERSITY

TORONTO, ONTARIO

October 2025

© STEFAN SUBEN, 2025.

Abstract: This thesis historicizes the emergence of nation-states in the Plata region of South America during the half-century of civil and international chaos which followed independence. Drawing on several approaches within the broad ambit of historical materialism, it argues that Latin America became part of global capital accumulation with the conquest but that the (geo)political framework of its incorporation has been substantially remade over the following centuries. Case studies of the Argentine Civil Wars (~1810-70) and the related War of the Triple Alliance (1864-70) demonstrate how nineteenth-century conflicts had economic dependency as a central outcome. This was so because export-oriented agrarian and commercial elites succeeded in defeating internal and external obstacles to their class rule. As a result, the Plata became incorporated into the "informal empire" of British capital, with harsh lasting consequences for its economic development. This argument contributes to bypassing a general opposition or lack of constructive engagement between "world-systemic" and "geopolitical" Marxisms. It is contended that both approaches have crucial lacunae in explaining the patterns of postcolonial nation-building in Latin America and especially the Plata. Also addressed are broader methodological and theoretical questions about the task of historicizing the nation-state, modern geopolitics, and capitalism.

*To Sonia and Nadia, my sisters*

*Acknowledgements*

Obligatory caveat that I have too many interlocutors to thank them all by name here, but some nevertheless deserve specific mention:

Jeff Webber proved to be the most intellectually rigorous supervisor I could have asked for. He rescued me from a number of conceptual blind alleys early in the conception of this work and pushed me to greatly strengthen its argument even on points where we disagreed.

Nicola Short was immediately enthusiastic to serve as a committee member and stuck with this project through numerous twists and turns, for which I am grateful.

Anna Zalik provided highly perceptive comments and questions as external examiner.

Jason W. Moore, comrade, mentor, and friend.

My father, Eric D. Suben, who taught me about distinguishing between good writing and bad, and has always believed in the value of historical inquiry.

Finally, my mother, Marina C. Szteinbok, my grandfather, Dr. Mauricio Szteinbok, and grandmother, Paula Szteinbok. Without the language and certain feeling of *argentinidad* which they gave me in childhood, none of this work would or could ever have been written. Aunque no pretendo mantener ilusiones sobre cuan de acuerdos estarán ustedes con una obra cuya orientación política es tan claramente troska, espero que reconozcan en sus páginas el hombre que criaron – honesto, pensador crítico, y con algunos valores humanísticos. Y que, todo lo mismo, les he podido dar algo de *nachas* en mi vida, hasta en un esfuerzo tan humilde para acercarme un poco más a la realidad. Los quiero más que hay palabras para expresarlo.

*Contents*

# *Introduction*

*How else, dear reader, do you suppose I'd have learnt there was a God in heaven if those soldiers hadn't wrecked dad's house, taken me prisoner, and forced me into the company of folk I'd only been told about before? Until that day I'd neither known nor imagined there was anyone on Earth except for dad, mum, us kids and the servants. I'd never met any strangers, and I knew no other human habitation than the one I went out from and came home to each day. Very soon, though, I learnt how folk, having come into this world, had to leave it behind.*

--*Grimmelshausen,* The Tales of Simplicius Simplicissimus

The foregoing epigraph is taken from a notable literary account of the three decades of fractal, gory conflict in Central Europe which culminated in Westphalia and the ostensible birth of modern geopolitics. This thesis contributes to an ongoing debate about the historicity of international relations by tracing the social and geopolitical origins of contemporary nation-states in the Plata region of South America. As is well-known, the Thirty Year's War was fought over seeming theological arcana – transubstantiation, adult baptism, whether Biblical legitimacy was denied to music, stained-glass, and Christmas. The supernatural played a relatively minor role in the state-building wars of independent Latin America, replaced with an ideological object of struggle – liberalism – still subject to an arguably quasi-religious type of devotion. Liberalism is the binding glue which links (geo)political modernity, as embodied in the nation-state, to the worldwide spread of capitalist commodity relations (see further Wallerstein, 2011a). A brief exegesis on the terrain of political theory, with which this work is otherwise not concerned, is thus in order before proceeding to its overall ambitions and structure.

Liberalism is associated with two distinct historical legacies. First, there is the political one of representative government, individual freedoms (to life, speech, person, faith, etc.), the rule of law, and so on. Economic liberalism is generally understood as the maximal expansion of

the scope of activity of the self-regulating market, a task which because of its frequently coercive nature has existed in tension with the enlightened principles of political liberalism. A number of recent works of historical materialist political theory demonstrate this paradox convincingly. It has made liberal thought, for most of its history, able to exist symbiotically with explicitly colonial and racist political violence (see Losurdo, 2014). The logic of economic liberalism lends itself perfectly well to the establishment of fascist or other illiberal *political* regimes where capital faces an especially stiff challenge from labour or stands to benefit from imperialist expansion (see Landa, 2010). Liberalism is primarily discussed below with what may appear to be the most crudely economic meaning, a reduction which both conforms well to the historical conjuncture examined by this work and simplifies the task of conceptual elaboration.

Historically, there was rarely an explicit bifurcation between representative/constitutional ideals of government and free-market capitalist economics in the nineteenth-century Plata. The civil wars between Argentine Unitarians and Federalists created a basic geopolitical matrix for this part of South America during several decades, one which fully encompassed neighbouring Uruguay and had profound effects upon Paraguay and Brazil. *Contra* perhaps a caricatured idea of Argentina's so-called "revisionist" historiography (see e.g., Rosa, 1965; 1970; Scalabrini Ortiz, 2001), these conflicts were not just about free-trade versus some primordial economic nationalism. The Unitarians favoured a constitution which would make Argentina a democratic republic on the model of the United States or France (see further Adelman, 1999), to which their heterogeneous Federalist opponents most often counterposed various forms of personal rule. Yet to view Federalism purely as reactionary in this way is misleading and possibly offensive, since some of the first popular-class and racialized mass mobilizations in Argentine history occurred under or at least claimed its banner. *Contra* Sarmiento, behind the Federalist *caudillo* was not an

unthinking mass of hero-worshippers but real people who sought to preserve a rural world which often afforded them a great deal of personal liberty already. The "popular economy" (see Grabois, 2022) of *gaucho* pastoralism which preceded independence gave rise to a fierce individualism which the market threatened far more than any despotism.

In one obvious sense, the Argentine Republic which came into being from the 1860s onwards -- reflecting an effective Unitarian triumph in the decades-long factional struggle – less than ideally embodied the promise of political liberalism. This was so because elections to all levels of government were decided through pervasive fraud until the second decade of the next century, and at again at several moments thereafter (see additionally Peña, 2012: 200-204). Yet the empirical reality that liberals made a state which was substantively undemocratic only underlines how liberalism *itself* reflected a particular project of class domination and rule. This leads back into liberalism in the second, economic sense, and into its primarily conceptual relevance to the current thesis. Henceforth, liberalism appears less an ideal for the organization of national political economies as a *method* of doing so that has real material force, which is propelled by and redounds to the benefit of a historically specific constellation of pecuniary interests on both the local and international stage. *Neo*liberalism is frequently referred to in this sense (see e.g., Harvey, 2005), but dropping the prefix allows for the set of policies that were pioneered by military dictatorships in the 1970s to be seen in their *longue durée* association with certain phases of Latin American integration with the world capitalist economy.

Trade and financial "openness" characterized most Latin American economies during the late nineteenth century at least as much as at the close of the twentieth. The present vogue terminology of "re-primarization" (Mempel, et. al, 2024) implies in some sense a return to a prior phase. Here is, finally, the main intervention which the present work seeks to make within

historical materialism. Particularly in the first chapter and Conclusion, it extensively interfaces with the classic "internalist-externalist" debate about the origins of capitalism, including in colonial Latin America, with special reference to the dueling traditions of world-systems analysis (WSA) and Political Marxism (PM). Deciding to treat the Conquest as a "capitalist" rather than "feudal" colonization, though helpful for rejecting intellectual Eurocentrism and in line with certain traditions of the Latin American progressive left, could logically imply erasing the massive social, economic, and political heterogeneity of the five centuries hence. The transition debate itself, however, is an ancillary concern of this thesis, whose position there is as a result noncommittal. It only chooses to take seriously the idea that capitalist "laws of motion" were at least sometimes relevant in forging the Ibero-American colonial world, without glossing that radical social and geopolitical reordering(s) that took place in the nineteenth century and afterwards. If historical materialism consists of examining "totality," as in the famous definition of Lukács (1971), it becomes imperative to show the relevance of vastly different institutions and social forms to capitalism without mutilating its history.

In other words, the importance of liberalism below is always as a sort of mid-range concept, not the essence of a "mode of production" but a certainly a (geo)political framework within which the capitalist one has at times been organized. Terming "liberal" the structures that emerged from the Latin American nineteenth century has the advantage that it avoids getting bogged down in the conceptual straightjackets of "capitalist" versus "non-capitalist" that afflicts huge swathes of past writing in the Marxist tradition (cf. Bagú, 1949; Beckert, 2014; Banaji, 2018). Capital reached the New World through the expansion of a state and social order (that of Spain) which still bore heavy medieval imprints, because the Conquest early both reflected and gave an enormous stimulus to novel strategies of ruling-class accumulation that were only barely

emergent at the landing of Columbus. Seeing capitalism in *longue durée* perspective does not diminish the historical inflection point of independence -- or the struggles which followed – so much as require a refined conceptual apparatus that can account for geopolitical transitions which are *internal* to capitalism. For lack of better terminology," the rise of liberal capitalism" or of a liberal "regime of accumulation" at least permits narrativizing this approach.

This brief essay has discussed the theory and practice of liberalism and alluded to the fairly distinct conceptual issue of the "regime of accumulation" which will be discussed further in the Conclusion. What unites these two lines of exposition is solely that "liberal" labels the moment in capitalist development which occasioned state-making efforts in the Plata, discussed below. It then must be asked why the term is used at all, insofar as this could produce immediate confusion when moving off the terrain of political philosophy. First, because the historic bloc that made modern Argentina, and thus also shaped indelibly the destinies of Uruguay and Paraguay, self-identified as philosophically liberal. Second, to implant subtly in the mind of the reader an association with the notionally "liberal world order" under which capitalism flourished in the twentieth century, which is now undergoing a prolonged and bloody senescence.

What made the American Century a qualitatively greater re-capitulation of liberal values on a world-scale – i.e., what changed from previous world orders – was its promise of "self-determination" and the political organization for the first time of most of humanity into a system of formally equal nation-states (cf. Wallerstein, 1995). Very quickly it became apparent that the granting of colonial independence had done little to end the *economic* domination of the South by the North, a fact which in the postwar decades drove a re-engagement with the theory of imperialism among Marxists. For reasons which are somewhat hard to understand, the work of "imperialism theorists" (see e.g., Nkrumah, 1965; Frank, 1969; Emmanuel, 1972; Amin, 1976;

Wood, 2005; Panitch and Gindin, 2012) has been kept at something of a remove from what passes for the main body of Marxist international relations theory (see e.g., Rosenberg, 1994; Teschke, 2003; Lacher, 2006). Latin America can help to bridge this gap; insofar as any world region should be paradigmatic for historical materialist views of "the international," it is at least as important as the more heavily studied case of early modern Europe (cf. Grandin, 2025). For it was here that the very first postcolonial nation-states were consolidated, and their ensnarement by the "informal empire" of British capital provides the master key to several interconnecting historical processes. Not just capitalist development and underdevelopment, but also ecology, food, and the demise of hegemonic powers (cf. Otter, 2020).

In sum, this thesis basically invokes – from a different disciplinary perspective and with hopefully much greater theoretical rigour – the "*el liberalismo*" which appears as the epic villain of Argentine revisionist historiography. "Middle-class economic nationalists" viewed openness to trade and foreign investment on unequal terms as the basic cause of Argentine stagnation and underdevelopment (see further Bergquist, 1986: 145-149). As a result, they launched scathing attacks on the state-building project of the late nineteenth century -- for which free trade, as well as the marketization of Argentine land and labour, were sine qua non – as well as on the revered historical figures who drove it forwards. But even aside from the wildly uneven scholarly quality of their work, the revisionists were generally associated with a politics – first Radicalism, later Peronism – that was tragically incoherent when confronted with major social questions of class and empire. Nevertheless, the revisionist literature is worth revisiting, not because it critiques liberal ideas so much as empirically describes a form of world-economic integration under which modern Argentina was formed *as a liberal state*. Echoes with the *liberalismo* of Javier Milei do not have to line up perfectly in order to glimpse *similar* social and material forces at play – a

declining and financialized hegemonic imperialism, free-market ideologemes, agro-extractivism, and rural class warfare, among many others. The point is not that history is repeating itself so much as that the oscillation between "liberal" and "nationalist" economics in the capitalist periphery is socially rooted in the conflicts which produced nation-states there to begin with.

---

Methodologically, this is a comparative-historical work which takes up the challenge offered by Charles Bergquist (1986) to take seriously both export structure and labour relations as the long-term shapers of Latin American reality. Early incorporation into a "capitalist world-economy" (Wallerstein, 2011b) under Iberian colonial rule formed Latin America as subordinate to the international market demand for primary commodities. But *what* primary commodities these were has successively changed, and never automatically with the rise and fall of industries and patterns of consumption outside Latin America. The often drastic, socially disruptive re-organizations of land and labour required to take advantage of new export opportunities were spearheaded or resisted by real Latin Americans, who made and unmade political realities *of their own* in the process. Here, we have already anticipated the immanent critique of world-systems analysis (WSA) which Bergquist offers at the end of his own magisterial *Labor in Latin America*, evincing broad sympathy while pointing out that local or national particularities are often irreducible purely to international market factors. This work adds a geopolitical thrust to his injunction. Global capitalism is mediated through a community of unequal nation-states which do not however arise in a predetermined form but are *produced* via class struggles. In the Plata, the construction of externally subordinate economies required first that the "winners" of agro-commodity export production impose themselves on the "losers" by fire and sword.

Chapter 1 begins to outline a theoretical approach to the origins of capitalism and modern international relations from the perspective of New World colonialism. It immanently critiques and then internalizes aspects of three major historical materialist approaches: world-systems analysis (WSA), Political Marxism (PM) and uneven and combined development (UCD). While the conquest of the Americas was a *capitalist* colonization, Spanish imperial policy favoured Andean metallic mining to the virtual exclusion of other regions and sectors. The rise of an agro-export economy on the Argentine pampas would eventually generate interest in new forms of political rule. This historical reconstruction indicates how an expansionary world-market, class struggle, and uneven geographical development all converge(d) to produce and continually remake global capitalism. A modified world-systems framework using the method of incorporated comparison (IC), is potentially able to account for these various levels of analysis and break historical materialism out of a long hangover from "the non-debates of the 1970s," per Arrighi (1998), Dale Tomich (2016), and Philip McMichael (1985; 1990).

Chapter 2 turns to focus on the popular classes. It is argued that while in the Argentine far interior and in Paraguay a peasantry existed which was often heavily invested in indigenous and/or Jesuit forms of social organization, in the coastal grasslands labour was overwhelmingly that of the *gaucho*. These mobile horsemen at times were herders for large proprietors, but their overall mode of life centred on harvesting feral cattle. The deepening of agrarian capitalism in present-day Argentina thus required, depending upon the region, classic forms of peasant expropriation or a struggle against the *gaucho* to make him submit to wage-labour and a fenced rangeland. A further antagonism existed between the Buenos Aires agrarian and commercial bourgeoisie and its counterparts farther inland, due to the monopoly held by the former on customs and external trade. These class struggles overlaid each other, unevenly patterning the

split between Unitarians and Federalists which characterized the Argentine Civil Wars. The long political hegemony of Juan Manuel de Rosas (1829-52) is understood through Gramsci's concept of Caesarism as an attempt to balance many class and regional antagonisms whose ultimate failure opened a final zero-sum cycle of warfare in which the Unitarian side decisively prevailed.

Chapter 3 examines the very different trajectory of Paraguay. Under José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia, this geographically and culturally isolated province managed to consolidate itself as an independent nation-state and embark on a social revolution arguably without precedent in the modern world. The Euro-descendant landed elite essentially ceased to exist as a class, an early form of agrarian state-socialism appeared, and literacy was widely propagated using the indigenous Guaraní language. Francia was succeeded by Carlos Antonio López, who strategically opened Paraguay to some external trade and launched an industrialization drive which resulted in the construction of railway, telegraph, and manufacturing facilities. The chapter will then engage the debate about whether or not the policies of López, father and son, led to a degree of oligarchic restoration. It closes by examining in detail the geopolitical antagonisms between Paraguay, its neighbours, and the globally hegemonic power of Great Britain, which had a catastrophic denouement in the War of the Triple Alliance, or Paraguayan War (1864-70). This conflict was vital to the final phase of state-consolidation in Argentina and to securing the overall dominance of British capitalist imperialism over economic development in the Plata.

The Conclusion revisits the overall relevance of this study for historicizing capitalism, the nation-state, and international relations. It introduces the concept of "regime of accumulation" as a possible means of accounting for the transformation of political forms at certain junctures in the long historical unfolding of capitalism. Starting possibly with an

unsettled debate over the theory of the state in Marx, historical materialism has provided mostly quite oblique guidance for the study of politics. One possible solution is to reduce states and their interactions to a functional outcome of the abstract logic of capital, which is both intellectually unsatisfying and assumes the object in need of explanation. Another might be to restrict the historical timeline of capitalism in a way that provides intellectual coherence at the cost of a deep Eurocentrism. Radical historicism instead should start by emphasizing the diversity of political frameworks through which capitalism has been articulated, and their evolution in response at once to local or national (class struggle) and global (export market demand, imperialism) economic transformations. To show that capitalist social relations have been far from resistant to change historically is to undermine the idea of their inevitability, and hopefully to give heart to those hoping to make progressive change in the present.

# *One*

## *Colonialism, Capitalism, and Modernity*

*The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the indigenous population of that continent, the beginnings of the conquest and plunder of India, and the conversion of Africa into a preserve for the commercial hunting of black-skins, are all things which characterize the dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief moments of primitive accumulation. Hard on their heels follows the commercial war of the European nations, which has the globe as its battlefield.*

-- *Karl Marx*

Nowhere else in the world did the twentieth-century debate within Marxism concerning the origins of capitalism have a more immediate political valence than Latin America. Indeed, it could justifiably be argued that this debate might happened in a substantially different form were it not for the work of Latin American intellectuals and left-wing militants. Andre Gunder Frank's classic study substantially popularized *dependentismo* in the English-speaking world and initiated the *problématique* of the "development of under-development" (see Frank, 1969). That the stagnation, political chaos, and poverty of Latin American societies might not represent a prior stage of social evolution to industrial capitalism but were actually its concomitant in a single evolutionary process, was, however, an idea already quite well-anticipated in works produced by Latin American, especially Argentine, dissident Marxists. Sergio Bagú's *Economía de la sociedad colonial* put forth the notion of a "colonial capitalism" established in Latin America by the Conquest prior not only to the publication of Frank's own *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, but also that of the first volume of Wallerstein's *The Modern World-System* and even of any of the three volumes of Braudel's *Civilization and Capitalism* which served as the grounding for both. His student, Milcíades Peña, understood the

colonial era as beginning the structuration of Latin American development by *capitalist* forms of empire and class exploitation, a national case study of which Peña*'s* magisterial *Historia del pueblo argentin*o carried all the way into the middle of the twentieth century.

Before proceeding to examine the validity of "colonial capitalism" and similar formulations, its intellectual background should be briefly noted. In the hands of scholar-militants like Bagú and Peña, the latter a particularly committed Trotskyist, the notion of a *longue durée* of Latin American capitalism served as a political weapon against the dogmas of official Communist Parties. In spite of the Bolshevik Revolution itself serving as apparent proof that revolution could and would take place outside the most economically advanced societies, and ample writing by Lenin and Trotsky to this effect, the Soviet party soon adopted a rigidly evolutionist or "stageist" theory of history which was forced on its homologues in Latin America. This held that various social realities more often present in the global South and East, such as coercion of labour, large estates, or a peasant strata, meant that these societies had not yet fully entered into capitalism and retained some "feudal" features. Ergo, it was the responsibility of Communist parties to support the forces of a "progressive" capitalist modernization in order to advance industrialization as the necessary condition for a future socialist revolution. The most grotesque political line taken as a result of such a view was possibly the support given by the Argentine Communist party to the initial coup by Videla, but lesser examples abound (see further Niebuhr, 2021: 298-299). In almost all cases it turned official Communist parties into passive organizations, divorced from the real struggles and concerns of the popular classes, and liable to align with unpopular ruling elites, including when these opted for dictatorial regimes or allied with external imperialisms like that of the United States.

The idea of development and underdevelopment, wealth and poverty, existing in relation to one another is most often associated with world-systems analysis, to be examined further below. In the meantime, what of non-Marxist studies of historical development in Latin America? The other great school of the historical social sciences, the neo-Weberian, had not yet entered its renaissance when the debates about dependency first began, with many influential works only appearing in the 1970s and 80s. Though world-systems analysis has gone through extensive polemics with other Marxist or *Marxisant* approaches (to be examined below), the neo-Weberian tradition has had the deepest and best-known critiques of it from a non-Marxian perspective (see Skocpol, 1977). However, the neo-Weberian approach has remained less influential in the Latin American social sciences than Marxism, with the studies applying it to the region being few in number, mostly recent, and largely in English (see for example Centeno, 2002; Mazzuca, 2021). Part of the reason for this may be that Latin American states, appearing relatively weak, corrupt, and inefficient in comparison to their European, North American, and in some cases Asian counterparts, do not exactly give the impression of comprehensively ordering society by modern, bureaucratic methods. Latin American societies appear much more defined by undiversified commodity-exporting economies, in which private capital is the most significant actor, especially when it is highly repressive of labour and easily able to escape state oversight through corruption. However, it is a mistake to view the Latin American state as simply weak and relatively less significant compared to capitalism. Rather, economic dependency is concomitant with a particular type of state, which fulfills different functions from its counterparts in the wealthy countries but is no less present for doing so.

On the right, the underdevelopment of non-Marxist social science in Latin America has ensured an outsize role for neo-classical economists or historical accounts influenced by them

which spills across disciplines. Hernando de Soto (no relation) has made his global academic celebrity by arguing that the problem of Latin America is precisely *under-integration* into the world-market, and valorizing the informal economic sectors developed by entrepreneurial slum-dwellers as the solution to all of its historical woes (see de Soto, 1989; 2007). One might add to de Soto's name that of the ultra-suave *dependentista*-cum-neoliberal Fernando Henrique Cardoso, though the latter is probably less influential as a thinker for having abandoned scholarly activity to serve two terms as President of Brazil – with ultimately rather mixed results for both democracy and economic development. In any case, the obvious lacuna for the Latin American economic liberals is the same one which inspired Marx to come up with his account of primitive accumulation as a reply to Adam Smith, even if their fundamentalism might in fact have perplexed the latter. The Panglossian view of the market as a realm of free social intercourse, unmoored from the weight of history, omits any account of how organized violence set the conditions for its existence. But, as will be argued below, such violence was a major historical task of Latin American states and probably their major reason for coming into existence.

*Thinking the pampas world-historically: An incorporated comparison*

Comparative-historical methodology necessitates an immediate specification of the object of inquiry. If the focus is on the nation-states which eventually came into being in the Plata, it makes sense to start at the level of this region, rather than prejudging its articulation with some larger ("over-determining") force, global or otherwise. Thus:

> An alternative to a preconceived concrete totality in which parts are subordinated to the whole is the idea of an emergent totality suggested by "incorporated comparison." Here totality is a conceptual procedure, rather than an empirical or conceptual premise. It is an imminent rather than a prima facie property in which the whole is discovered through analysis of the mutual conditioning of parts. A conception of totality in which parts (as relational categories) reveal and realize the changing whole (cf. Green and Fairweather

> 1984) overcomes the rigidity of world-system theory and builds on its insights. In constructing a holistic interpretation of an historical process, the unit of analysis need not be simultaneously the empirical whole. (McMichael, 1990: 391).

Conventional (classic?) world-systems analysis *a la* Wallerstein will be encountered in greater detail over the following section. In the meantime, what matters in "incorporated comparison" is that this is a procedure of explanation which at no point risks *presuming the object which it seeks to explain*. Capitalism appears as an overall systemic totality, but re-constructed from the ground-up, its form and inner logic becoming clear out of the many moments and particular spaces of global accumulation. Spiritually, this method appears distantly kindred to that used by E.P. Thompson (1966), where British industrial capitalism becomes described in the struggles of workers *themselves* to negotiate proletarianization, rather than from the perspective of masters or markets. Where it differs from Thompson is, of course, in his unabashedly national focus, where working-class consciousness emerges in England out of cultural and political traditions *immanent* to that society without the influence of any others. In particular, Britain's vast colonial empire is totally omitted in from Thompson's great *Making of the English Working Class*, even though it decisively influenced the course of metropolitan labour struggles and politics (for a critique see van der Linden, 2015; see also Cope, 2019: 23-29; 136-142). But a historical narrative which takes this into account should only mean also starting from the ordinary Indian *ryot* as well as the British textile worker and proceed to demonstrate empirically their connection in a single world-historical unfolding – not presuming or denying the existence of nor omitting the possible existence of such a totality in advance.

` To further clarify the issue, historicizing global capitalism must mean choosing foci that are both large enough to illustrate some aspect of its *systemic* unfolding but small enough to be analyzed in their many particularities. Nation-states are not an option, because in addition to not

existing in a vacuum from one another they are of fairly recent historical provenance (more so than capitalism itself, it is argued below) and their very being and its relationship to capitalism is part of what needs to be historicized. Dale Tomich (1994; 2016), in studying New World slavery, chose to focus on individual Caribbean islands whose contribution to world capital accumulation – via plantation profits remitted across the Atlantic – was huge, but which formed – culturally, environmentally etc., -- manageable enough units to be analyzed in context. In the process, the world-historic whole actually emerges more fully because such an approach is able to account relationally for *why* the same overall processes – falling prices on the global sugar market – had different effects on plantation production and thus on slavery in, for instance, Martinique and Cuba. The unit studied in this work is, as mentioned above, the Plata. In the broadest sense, this is a single region because it is constituted by the drainage basin of the La Plata estuary. Aside from this topographical commonality, what is now Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, and Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil) represents a coherent unit because of the totally overlapping and at times indistinguishable civil and international wars which led to the constitution of nation-states in the region, as covered in the second and third chapters of this work.

The main initial impact on the Plata from Atlantic imperialism was biological. Because the pampas steppe has few native species of large mammal, the horses and cattle which conquistadors abandoned near the future site of Buenos Aires after unsuccessful battles against local Indigenous people found themselves in an environment where food was plentiful but competition and predators scarce. Feral ungulates thus survived and multiplied at a spectacular rate, with numbers of pampas cattle having by the early seventeenth century having apparently come to rival those of bison in precolonial North America (see Crosby, 2004: 177-179). Calories and protein on the hoof came to be the primary sustenance of nomadic pampas Indigenous

peoples, who also became formidable equestrians. But also, as in Marx's parable of the Mr. Peel who moves an entire factory and its workforce to Australia only to see his employees run off into the bush to set up as independent farmers (see Marx, 1990: 932-935), the abundance and relative freedom of the pampa grasslands tended to undermine social hierarchies brought from outside. Women from Indigenous nations, Spanish deserters, and kidnapped Africans all mixed their cultural and genetic material to create a new subject, the Argentine *gaucho*, who will be of central importance in the following chapter.

The Ibero-American colonial economy was based on exploitation of a very small group of resources for which there existed demand on the pre-industrial European market, and which geology and climate had necessarily fixed somewhat in physical space. Silver did not exist everywhere, but gargantuan lodes of it were discovered at the infamous mountain of Potosí and in the mining districts of Zacatecas in northern Mexico. Sugar can only grow in tropical climates, and within that category the soil and weather conditions for it are better in some regions -- Cuba, Hispaniola, northeast Brazil – than others. The result was to leave huge swathes of territory, and not just those which were still occupied by unconquered Indigenous peoples (Patagonia and the western reaches of the Amazon, among others) basically marginal to the colonial productive economy. But the largest such region was the area roughly between Tierra del Fuego and the upper reaches of the Paraná river, on the eastern side of the Andean cordillera. A major factor drawing would-be accumulators to the Andes was the preexisting labour force and infrastructure in what had been after all one of the great world centres of agricultural civilization (see Bagú, 1949: 17-19). The vast but sparsely populated grasslands of the River Plate delta lacked both mineral riches to exploit and enough potential labourers to incentivize subordinating them by fire and sword (Peña, 2012: 77-79). As a result, for both Spain and Portugal the only relevant interest

in this zone was to delimit territorial claims and to police them against the intrusions of the other, or any other, European power.

Further inland, links existed to the main colonial productive centres basically from their inception. The Argentine northeast was from early on the primary source of mules for the Potosí mining complex, as well as providing it with some foodstuffs. Córdoba textiles, Mendoza wines, and mate from the Misiones and Paraguay were also exported to the colonial economic foci of Potosí and Lima (Assadourian, 1982: 18-22; 110-121; Barsky and Gelman, 2009: 60-71). This trade was carried on by a mixture of large private ranchers or *estancieros*, by *encomenderos* (a frequently overlapping category, discussed in the following section), by small producers, many of an Indigenous background, and the Jesuit missions which will be discussed further in a subsequent chapter. But the extraordinary growth of Potosí caused sharply rising biophysical demands on the surrounding continent. A mine labour force of many tens of thousands needed to be fed and clothed to be minimally productive even over what was a horrifically short working lifetime. At a harsh altitude, with the Inca irrigation system which had once made it habitable having fallen into ruin, and with the surrounding land and waters poisoned by the mercury used to process silver, only a tiny degree of self-sufficiency was possible for Potosí even once it had become one of the largest cities on Earth (see further Moore, 2010a). The production of the Argentine northeast and of Paraguay increased with demand, but so did pressure on wild cattle herds as far afield as the Banda Oriental (present-day Uruguay, see further Sarreal, 2011). One result was increasing competition between mission communities, *gauchos*, and large landowners over this resource, a foreshadowing of the class conflict that followed independence.

What emerges here, then, is the colonial Platine Basin as a zone of largely un-commodified land, labour, nature, and life. The large-scale extractive production based on forced

labour which Conquest produced in the Andes, *Nordeste*, and Caribbean were not much in evidence. This is not to say that either African slavery or the *encomienda* (Indigenous forced-labour draft) were absent from the Spanish Plata, just that their economic centrality was less than elsewhere. Rather, it is to note two connected developments over the colonial (pre-)history of the region's fuller engagement with capitalism and the Atlantic market. One, the existence of a number of sui generis social types out of European and Amerindian admixture (cultural as well as genetic), which prevailed without reflecting the same degree of colonial *intentionality* as economy and society elsewhere in the Latin American space. Most unique was *gaucho* pastoral nomadism, which differed from any recognizable Old-World type in that it lacked clan, tribal, or any other meaningful organization (cf. Barletta and Duncan, 1978). The ambiguous colonization of Paraguay (see Chapter 3) is also notable. Second the difficulties – geographic, military, social – which Spanish colonial authority faced in enforcing a particular regime of law, trade, or agrarian practice, to the extent it desired to do so. In spite of its marginality, the colonial Plata supplied food and resource inputs to an Andean mining complex of undoubted global significance, which brought increasing commercialization and social conflict by the eighteenth century. It is now possible to proceed and view this larger totality.

### *Three* Marxisant *models of the Iberian Atlantic*

Both world-systems analysis (WSA) and its bête noire within historical materialism, Political Marxism (henceforth PM) arose in a similar historical moment (the 1970s), with similar political motivations (to go beyond Old Left orthodoxies in accounting for global inequality) and with an essentially shared intellectual telos of historicizing capitalism, in a way which no mainstream approach has yet been willing or able to replicate. However, they diverged substantially in both conceptual means to this goal and in emphasis. World-systems analysis, of

which the work of Frank on Latin America is an early but by no means definitive exemplar, focused on economic imperialism and a hierarchical but evolving international division of labour. For Wallerstein (see i.e., 2004: 23-24) capitalism is defined by the uncontroversial though very broad differentia specifica of "endless accumulation." PM has a somewhat more selective understanding, which centres on theoretically system-specific "rules for reproduction" that developed *immanently* out of western European societies:

> Both direct producers and landlords came to depend on the market in historically unprecedented ways just to secure the conditions of their own self-reproduction. These rules produced their own distinctive laws of motion. The result was to set in train a new historical dynamic: an unprecedented rupture with old Malthusian cycles, a process of self-sustaining development, new competitive pressures that had their own effects on the need to increase productivity, reconfiguring and further concentrating landholding, and so on. This new dynamic is agrarian capitalism (which will be discussed in greater detail in Part II), and it was specific to England. (Wood, 2002: 53).

Neither of these definitions explicitly departs from (as opposed to arguably fudging) the Marxist definition of capitalism as a system of extracting surplus-value in order to reinvest it and thereby produce a *larger* surplus. Central to Wallerstein's argument in the first volume of his *The Modern World-System* is that capitalist production has historically involved a variety of forms of labour arrangements – slavery, peasant farming, etc. – other than wage-payment (on which Marx obviously centres his exposition of surplus-value in *Capital*). They are connected in a worldwide systemic totality by international trade, where political intervention by the dominant capitalist states produces unequal renumeration across geographic space, creating a situation of a net exploitation for most of the planet. Logically, then, the origins of capitalism are coterminous with the territorial expansion of European powers into the Atlantic and Indian Oceans (see e.g., Wallerstein, 2011b: 37-52), as spearheaded by the Iberian powers and their Conquest of the Americas. Both predecessors of (see e.g., Cox, 1959; 1964) and those influenced by (see e.g.,

Robinson, 2000) Wallerstein have noted that basically similar processes were already occurring in the late Middle Ages with Latin (i.e., Western) Christian colonial projects around the Baltic and in the eastern Mediterranean, a historiographic disagreement whose conceptual significance will be revisited momentary

One response to Frank and Wallerstein, particularly from their Latin American critics (see e.g., Laclau, 1973; Cueva, 1979) was to characterize colonial social formations as consisting of non-capitalist modes of production (feudalism, "slave society," etc.,) which existed alongside or were even *reproduced by* early Atlantic capital accumulation. In spite of the Political Marxist emphasis on the "radical singularity" of capitalist rules of reproduction, Wood (1995: 197) ends up appearing to take such a view when discussing plantation slavery. Proponents of the broadly so-called "articulationist" perspective argue that it the most conceptually precise, as it ascribes significance to New World colonialism while still adhering to a purported Marxist definition of capitalism based on relations of *production* rather than *exchange*. It must be acknowledged that a line which negates the idea of Iberian "colonial capitalism" is not pro forma reducible to the conservative Party orthodoxies described above, making an earlier (e.g., pre-1930s) appearance in sophisticated critical works by Latin American Marxists (see notably Mariátegui, 2005). In his replies to Laclau et. al., it remains unclear how Frank defines capitalism or understands it to be different from trade and markets stricto sensu (which of course, also existed in precapitalist societies). Some later work from his *dependentismo* phase indicates a partial concession or at least vacillation on the question of "modes of production" (see further Banaji, 1980). In any case the issue ceased being relevant when Frank (1998) took up an openly circulationist position and declared that "capitalism" had existed for millennia, ever since the appearance of markets in the

first agricultural civilizations of East Asia. A full rebuttal of this view cannot be presented here for reasons of space, but it is obviously rather eccentric.

Wallerstein presented a more sophisticated, if frustratingly implicit, response to the idea of "articulation of modes of production." He argued consistently that the inner logic (one is tempted to write "rules of reproduction") of societies – seigneurial Poland, the Caribbean, or highland Peru – was irrevocably altered by their "incorporation" into expanding capitalism and the attempt to continue specifying other "modes" here is an exercise in pure formalism without historical justification. But the exact mechanism of such a great transformation is often left unspecified over Wallerstein's breathless historical elaboration, opening him to the criticism of having written a circulationist account where societies "become" capitalist upon contact with the international market (see e.g., Brenner, 1977). This accusation is less than entirely fair, since a full chapter (6) of *The Modern World-System*, volume I, is devoted to clarifying which trading partners of early modern Europe over the "long sixteenth century" were being "incorporated" into capitalism – i.e., transforming their economies towards "endless accumulation' – and which remained "external" – i.e., supplying commodities produced via a form of surplus extraction that could however reproduce itself without these sales. Nevertheless, the account of "incorporation" certainly reads at times like a process of the market seamlessly imposing capitalist production relations on "peripheries," which are differentiated from "external arenas" seemingly by the quantitative depth of their participation in international exchange. Returning to McMichael, this misreading is possible because of Wallerstein's methodological choice to *begin* with a systemic totality (the capitalist world-economy) and then seek to demonstrate its *undivided* existence rather than *building* one out of some number of constituent units.

An electronic word search of *The Modern World-System*, volume I, returns very few usages of the terms "commercial capital/commercial capitalism," while "merchant capital/merchant capitalism" appears only in direct quotations and footnotes. Such a near-omission is curious, given that Wallerstein's great influence, Fernand Braudel, let this concept make up the connective tissue of his own "incorporated comparison" (Leitner, 2007) between segments of the early modern world-economy. Wallerstein here demonstrates a basic intellectual similarity with Frank that is, however, self-defeating for the project of reconstructing capitalism across sharply differentiated geographic and historical contexts:

> On rare occasions Frank enumerates three types, succeeding each other in time, of capitalism: commercial, industrial, and financial. But upon attributing greater importance to the continuities than the changes he elects to relegate differences to the side and speak of capitalism as such … Marx concedes a fundamental importance to commercial capital and to the formation of the world market … to the appropriation of the surplus social product of the colonies in the formation of European capitalism, but ... rejects defining an economic-social formation based on the simple presence of commercial capital … This entire problematic by recourse to the term simply of capitalism. It is the consequence of an exclusive focus on the phenomenon of circulation and of his thesis of continuity without elaborating, in this case, that the transition between two specifically distinct *regimes of production* has ended up rupturing [such] a state of continuity. (Assadourian, 1973: 67-69, emphasis added).[1]

Assadourian goes on to formulate what might be described as an "articulationist" perspective, but one which gingerly rejects the idea of coherent, distinctly non-capitalist *social formations* in colonial Latin America. Instead, he prefers simply to state that feudal "relations" of production *were imposed on the continent during its incorporation into an overall world-capitalist totality* (Ibid.: 74-75). By this Assadourian is referring only to the coercion of rural direct producers. In other words, it is not clear how much daylight there really is between his formulation and Wallerstein's of "coerced cash-crop labour" as a type of agrarian servitude

[1] Translated from the Spanish by author.

specifically produced under *capitalism*, with feudalism instead "a misleading concept in the sixteenth-century context" (Stern, 1988: 847). Where the two converge is in rejecting the idea that feudal "rules of reproduction" prevailed at any point in the colonial context, though Assadourian seems indecisive as to which other ones might have instead. He is unable to accept the idea of a purely "colonial capitalism," both because of lacking specific terminology[2] with which to reference servile agrarian relations except in relation to "feudalism" and due to being wedded to two preconceptions that will be encountered further below. One is that capitalist production *definitionally* necessitates the use of free wage labour, and the second is that commercial capital belongs strictly to the sphere of circulation. Nevertheless, the use of the more neutral term "regime of production" in his contribution to a collection whose very title specifies *mode* of production can only be a deliberate choice. Assadourian is skeptical of the idea that colonial social formations were discrete *modes* of production with an internal logic distinct from that of capitalism, at the same time as he does unambiguously reject their equation to capitalism pure and simple. Part of the latter is undoubtedly a result of his definition of capitalism, which at a certain level is incommensurable with that of Wallerstein. But more intriguing is the criticism made of Frank that he offers and then does not elaborate upon distinct *stages* of capitalism which could, Assadourian implies, explain how capitalism can be seen operating in vastly different contexts. Wallerstein replicates this usage of an overarching, singular "capitalism" without subdivisions across the entire panorama of *The Modern World-System*. Another historian, Steve J. Stern, echoes Assadourian:

[2] Although much of *The Modern World-System* built on or was synthesized from the work of Latin American (e.g., Bagú) or Black (e.g., Oliver C. Cox) radicals, "coerced cash-crop labour" is a coinage original to Wallerstein himself. It is difficult to think of a better-known term – "rural proletarian," "serf," "slave," etc. – that could be used in this same context without prejudging the relevant historiographical issues.

> Third, the interpretation of early colonial America as a mere variant of world capitalism becomes historically misleading if one adopts a perspective that looks ahead to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Two anomalies or paradoxes from the later period would require explanation. One of these I have already mentioned. The classic picture of transitions to capitalism, wherein earlier subsistence strategies and coercive labor strategies are replaced by wage labor and growing internal markets for basic subsistence goods, is recognizable in various regions of Latin America in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Conceptualizing colonial Latin America as "capitalist" masks the rupture and strife provoked by this great transformation (Stern, 1988: 866).

Said great transformation is the subject of the bulk of this thesis, which argues precisely that the qualitative extension of capitalist social relations and resistance to it is not the equivalent of their very *genesis*. In the meantime, whither the theoretical status of Conquest and colonization? Political Marxism rejects the idea of a “commercial capitalism,” or one based upon forced labour. Insofar as “rules of reproduction” are basically synonymous with capitalist “laws of motion” a la Marx, they are uncontroversial here. But Wood, quoted above, identifies not just an imperative to “endlessly accumulate” under capitalism but also a number of historically quite specific strategies for doing so that in her reading are dictated by this form of surplus extraction stricto sensu. However, laws of motion have found quite distinct articulations in time and space. In particular, the tendency of capital to reduce outlays on labour-power through investment in productivity-enhancing machines – and a theory of crisis built on this fundamentally technological starting point – is far from universally valid (Knafo and Teschke, 2020: 60-68; 75-78). The “historical and moral element” which determines if the value of labour-power is high or low – encompassing local, cultural, ecological, and class-struggle factors, among many others – plays a decisive role in assigning rationality to a particular investment choice (Emmanuel, 1972: 107-108; Marx, 1990: 274-280; see also Marini, 1981: 35-38; Tomich, 2016: 34-39). Where the value of labour-power is already low enough, due either to repressive factors or its sheer abundance, so as to negate any productivity disadvantage, additional outlays on machinery cease

to make sense according to the rules of reproduction themselves. Such a scenario is far from abstract, in fact being characteristic even of global South manufacturing sectors down to the present day (cf. Smith, 2016) and was even more so of extractive industries under direct colonialism.

Much of the power of Political Marxism derives from Ellen Wood's critiques of the "commercialization model" of the origins of capitalism, which she detects in the bulk even of Marxist historiography and takes to task for naturalizing capitalist social relations. The idea that capitalism emerged out of the quantitative expansion of market exchanges in late medieval or early modern Europe, Wood points out, "assumes what needs to be explained" because trade and markets have existed in most sedentary societies. "Commercial *capital*," is then, if not oxymoronic, then not a category which helps to explain the rise of *capitalism*. This social totality only appears when the market becomes an "imperative" rather than a choice, forcing producers to follow growth-oriented "rules of reproduction." Free wage labour is therefore a sine qua non of capitalism because it makes workers dependent upon the cash nexus for their needs. Wood traces the historical "Origin" – notably singular – of capitalism to changes in agrarian tenure in early modern England, which over time made lords dependent on cash rents and in turn forced tenants to turn their production to the market in order to make payment. Though she manages to thoroughly denaturalize capitalism, the apparent historical rigour of Wood's argument is deceptive:

> Ellen Wood's critique of the so-called 'commercialisation model' hinges on a notion of large-scale trade that divorces it radically from production, as if big merchants were uninterested in either accessing supply-sources or ensuring financial control over producers. Moreover, she seemed to think, astonishingly, that 'the long-distance trade characteristic of pre-capitalist economies [was not] driven by competition'. On the issue of whether world-economy mattered to capitalism (= England) her response was,

> ‘capitalism indeed in one country, albeit within a network of international trade’, which is a bit like saying, okay, let’s throw in international trade for good measure. Even after the seventeenth century, ‘nowhere, neither in the great trading centers of Europe nor in the vast commercial networks of the Islamic world or Asia, was economic activity ... driven by the imperatives of competition and accumulation’. The world-market that fuelled the rise of the West was founded on ‘non-capitalist commerce’. To Wood, the English East India Company epitomised ‘non-capitalist extra-economic exploitation in the form of tax and tribute’, which contrasts sharply with Cain and Hopkins’s altogether more accurate description of the Company as an ‘advanced form of commercial capitalism’. Wood’s is a world without mining, shipbuilding, textiles, domestic industry, putting-out networks, sugar plantations, etc. None of this matters to her because all of it belongs to a world where markets are quintessentially ‘non-capitalist’ (not driven by the imperatives of competition and efficiency) and no true capitalists exist, since true capitalism only starts in the English countryside in some vague interval between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. Not only is this an abstraction from substantial swathes of history, but it is an abstraction from the way markets themselves are organised and from the way they ‘work’. (Banaji, 2018: 145-146).

To paraphrase Mao on pebbles and eggs, commerce has the immanent possibility of birthing commercial capital*ism* but can only do so under determinate circumstances. Brenner and Wood are correct to emphasize market *dependence* (though it is unclear what student of Marx’s Capital would disagree here pro forma), but the dichotomy they create between commerce and production in driving its emergence is imperfectly historical and arbitrary. It is true that the market, in itself, cannot contain some primordial human impulse towards capitalism waiting to be “liberated,” pace Wood. What changed in late medieval Europe was a socio-ecological crisis in the existing, non-capitalist mode of surplus extraction, which gave merchants and markets a new articulation with *production* which they had never successfully consolidated in any other society. Banaji’s mentions of “mining” and “sugar plantations” on the one hand, and “shipbuilding” on the other, indicate the centrality of transformations in both means and rationales of using armed violence to make it possible for commercial capital to impose itself on activities outside of the sphere of circulation pure and simple:

> When a feudal seigneur went east as a Crusader and seized land on Cyprus or elsewhere, he found that these restrictions no longer applied. As a conqueror, he was above the local customary law … It was therefore easier here than it was in northern Europe for the lord over conquered land to plan production. Most agricultural workers on Cyprus were local and semiservile, but they were not slaves. The lord could, however, buy imported slaves to supply additional labor, and the new labor force had no rights against the lord in law or custom. He could put them to work at anything he wanted them to do. The feudal seigneur thus had the option of becoming something like a capitalist plantation owner in his relationship to agricultural enterprise, though he might remain a feudal seigneur in his relations with other members of the upper class (Curtin, 1990: 6-7).

The above description of proto-colonial expansion only indicates the *possibility* that feudal lords could assume a new social position, rather than if or why they were *compelled* to do so. Nevertheless, the early experiments with sugar and slavery on Mediterranean and Atlantic islands, which provided the template for the later plantation complex of the Americas (cf. Moore, 2009, 2010b) are indicative. Lords turned to the market for reproducing their wealth qua capital because its previous source, coerced land rent, was undergoing a Europe-wide and ultimately permanent contraction. The response of European elites to demographic collapse (the Black Death) and climate crisis (the "Little Ice Age") was to move towards a qualitatively new means of extracting surplus, via the market, transforming land and labour-power into tradeable commodities rather than subjects of peasant rights and lordly prerogative. Wood appears to rule out the possibility of any systemic crisis which could have altered the functioning of feudal "rules of reproduction," instead insisting on a quasi-evolutionary birth of capitalism out of class struggles internal to feudalism itself. But surely some kind of rupture had to occur before peasants developed a special ability to undermine structures that had functioned over the *longue durée* of an entire post-Roman millennium. It was ecological (e.g., the Black Death and climate change), and above all, *geopolitical*:

> As early as the first half of the 16th century, some 16,000 workers employed at the state-run Venetian Arsenal were 'becoming disciplined to the demands of integrated wage

> labor'. Constructing standardised galleys using assembly line production methods, the Arsenale Nuovo (established in 1320) may rightly lay claim to being one of 'Europe's first modern industrial factories', preceding the Industrial Revolution by four centuries. The Arsenal also employed sophisticated managerial and accounting discourses, and practices exemplary of modern forms of 'management through accounting' … It was not simply the building of ships that employed and promoted forms of wage-labour, but also the organisation of the maritime workforce itself. Between 1700 and 1750, the concentration of capital in merchant shipping required the amassing of large groups of formally 'free' waged-labourers, numbering anywhere from 25,000 to 40,000 at any one time. As Marcus Rediker writes, this exceptionally large and concentrated workforce 'represented a capital–labor relation quite distinct from landlord-tenant, master–servant, or master–apprentice relationships'. War-making and the industries it spawned were therefore crucial factors in the long transition to capitalism (Anievas and Nişancıoğlu. 2015: 29).

European feudalism was moreover a system of "geopolitical accumulation" (Teschke, 2003). Stagnant or only intermittently rising agricultural productivity meant that the only competitive advantage lords could gain vis-à-vis one another was to appropriate territory and its associated incomes through war. But the idea that territorial militarism and conquest was therefore a specifically feudal dynamic does not hold up to historical scrutiny. Teschke and Wood, in addressing colonization, are unable to explain *why* the arena of feudal war-making should suddenly become so gigantically expanded in the sixteenth century after it had otherwise occupied essentially the same space since the fall of Rome. Conceptually as well, the dynamic of feudal competition wherein sovereigns sought to monopolize valuable (European) agricultural lands admits of no particular incentive to suddenly direct attention and resources into uncertain ventures abroad. Atlantic expansion only begins to make sense in the context of a new set of "rules of reproduction," mediated through the market and indebtedness to commercial capitalists. External conquest became a vehicle no longer for the struggle to appropriate a relatively static agrarian surplus, but to expand the scope of commodity relations worldwide and to turn extra-European wealth into pure money begetting more of itself (Moore, 2010c: 36-40).

Anievas and Nişancıoğlu understand this ambiguous moment of precapitalist traders, sovereigns, and landowners becoming modern capitalists through the concept of "uneven and combined development" (UCD). Originally coined by Trotsky (1957; though cf. Lenin, 1967), the term denotes a concept of historical "stages" in the mode of production as ideal types rather than actual realities. Different features of each "unevenly" appear based on capitalist imperialism and the globalization of the market, but then also "combine" to create qualitatively unique developmental paths. Peripheral or "backward" areas are therefore able to proceed to socialist revolution without first passing through the same process (e.g., Industrial Revolution and the full proletarianization of labour) which Second International Marxism viewed as only making it possible in western Europe. *Some* technical and social preconditions for the new society are produced everywhere out of the global totality of capitalism, in configurations however with a great deal of local specificity. This idea is a fairly obvious political challenge to the conservative line of Soviet-aligned Communist parties met above, especially those in Latin America, which viewed their political role as supporting *capitalist* industrial development (see Löwy, 2010: 88-99). UCD prevents a certain variant (or precursor) of the articulationist perspective already critiqued above. Moreover, Anievas and Nişancıoğlu's application of it to pre-capitalist societies, e.g., in order to explain their transition into capitalism, is of an unclear theoretical status given the unambiguous presentation of UCD by Trotsky as a tendency associated with capitalist development. To read unevenness and combination backwards into history risks imposing a much more deterministic structure, of vague historical specificity, than even the one Anievas and Nişancıoğlu (Ibid.: 16-22) accuse Wallerstein's capitalist world-system of being (cf. Medved, 2018).

UCD can be a useful analytic in the process of incorporated comparison provided that the social forms in "combination" are never reified, but examined not only in their historical contribution to the systemic whole but also their *constitution* as part of it:

> This approach, applied to historical analysis of capitalist expansion in the world-economy, suggests a way in which to combine a theory of capitalist accumulation with those generative processes whereby capitalist social relations spread. They are capitalist social relations, not because they look like metropolitan capitalist relations (which they more often don't), but because metropolitan relations (deriving, for example, from the self-expansion of industrial capital and its politico-military vehicles of expansion) form and/or reformulate social relations elsewhere. These in turn react back (via the market or politics) on metropolitan relations. But the fundamental dynamic underlying the structure of the world-economy remains the rhythms of industrial capital accumulation. In other words, an abstract conception of the central principles of the capitalist mode of production does not just produce an ideal-typical wage-labor relation, because that relation itself is a historical concept and already presumes a "world-embracing commerce," and indeed "for its pedestal, slavery pure and simple in the new world." Applying that conception to a world-historical analysis of class formation allows us to bring such extensive processes into relation with the theoretically dominant form of capital precisely because that is how the historical processes of capitalist expansion unfold.
>
> These processes of capitalist expansion do not unfold in the tidy logical sequence suggested in the theory of capital and its expanded reproduction, however. Social reality is more complex. But such processes do unfold in relation to the dominant form of (world) capital for political as well as economic reasons, this is precisely the meaning of the process of uneven and combined development (McMichael, 1985: 300-301).

What, finally, was the 'theoretically dominant form of capital' involved in New World colonialism? At least in the early modern Atlantic, capital existed in a multiplicity of forms which are difficult to separate from one another. Commercial capital has been temporarily privileged above, with the caveat of its increasingly direct intervention into production. In the colonial context, this can be grasped for instance in the "putting-out" system which Chilean and Peruvian merchant intermediaries imposed on household weavers in Tucumán or Córdoba (see Assadourian, 1982: 253-256). But dependence on merchant finance and partnerships also pushed

colonial landowners into following capitalist "rules of reproduction" in new tropical agrarian and mining enterprises (Braudel, 1992: 272-278). Sergio Bagú's "*capitalismo colonial*" captures well some of these relational complexities, incorporating in particular the juridical guises used to mobilize forced-labour – often, as with *encomienda*, clearly inherited from the *Reconquista* or other medieval precedents – with their totally novel relational content. Even the Andean *mita* (labour-draft) was to a substantial degree characterized by the payment of wages and clearly bore no resemblance to the Inca system for which it was named (Bagú, 1949: 124-127; see also Stern, 1988: 149-154). Both mining and plantation economies contained pressures towards technical upgrading, as with the adoption of mercury amalgamation at Potosí, responsive not only to market demand but the cost of labour as determined by both its supply and quiescence (cf. Assadourian, 1994). Moreover, the policy of Madrid to curb the emergence of an independent feudal class in the New World led in fairly short order to restrictions on tribute and personal service as part of the encomienda, stripping the seigneurial airs from what increasingly resembled a market in forced-labour – i.e., a capitalist form of slavery (Bagú, Ibid.: 107-109).

African slavery – that is, "slavery pure and simple" – operated according to capitalist laws of motion in that the (often small) profit margins of planters were typically plowed back into the plantation itself – via the purchase of more slaves, expansion of cultivation, or payment of creditors (see Braudel, Ibid.). Whether English, French, Hispanic, or Luso-Brazilian, a planter depended clearly upon the market for reproducing himself socially, even if in a role with some (pseudo-)aristocratic flavour bestowed by opulent consumption, respectable marriages for his children, and ideally the purchase of metropolitan property. None of these were attainable without a continual and moreover *increasing* profit of enterprise. Chattel slavery represents an institution which was largely absent from post-Greco-Roman (that is, "feudal") Europe until its

dramatic revival with the age of Atlantic expansion. Moreover, the absolute commodification of the person of the labourer and their total dehumanization on account of "race" were features of New World slavery not at all recognizable in the earlier, classical versions (Wood, 1995: 267-269). Later industrialization in western Europe seems impossible without not only slave-produced raw materials inputs – cotton, sugar, and so forth -- but also the huge commercial profits of slave-trading which initially financed large fixed-capital investments (Williams, 2021; cf. Beckert, 2014). Nevertheless, colonial slavery also demonstrates the actual historical diversity of competitive strategies laid down by capitalist "rules of reproduction," since the low cost of an unpaid worker frequently ensured a decoupling of her productivity from growth and profit. But this depended on the resistance and/or scarcity of the slaves themselves, and no investment choice was universally rational across the entire plantation complex (cf. Tomich, 2016: 39-48).

Whither the Plata in this whole picture? The prior section has already examined this matter in some detail; basically, the protean operations of commercial capital in the region did not do much to diminish its overall marginality. Closest to having large-scale capitalist relations of production were the economies of *Cuyo*, and possibly those in northeastern Córdoba and Tucumán, with direct supply links to the Potosi mining complex (Peña, 2012: 80). A "great transformation," to paraphrase Polanyi (2001), in the direction of the commodification of everything, had to await multiple wars between the great powers, sea changes to imperial policy, and the emergence of new markets (which, after all, must exist before it is possible to be "dependent" on them). Even then, the future Argentine Republic would begin to appear only in faint outline. As in western Europe, commercial capital led the way towards a new social reality.

*Conclusion: Towards the nineteenth century*

In spite of the simultaneity with which it occurred nearly across the entire Americas, no single force or dynamic was responsible for the end of colonial rule, and such an outcome was far from preordained. Certainly, the retrospective mythologies propounded by both Marxist and liberal authors that independence resulted from 'bourgeois' revolutions against a decadent feudal tyranny are just that. The most immediate triggers for Spain to lose its empire were at once and inseparably the spectacular denouement of a decades-long European power struggle and its result, which saw Great Britain become totally hegemonic in the world arena. International relations comprehensively restructured in the orbit of British capitalist expansion, which was supported by the most powerful state and military that had ever existed up to that point. Probably it was in no way *necessary* that Latin America become independent for British capital to extend its reach there, but once the Spanish intermediary began to totter there was also no incentive to maintain it in place. Napoleon's armies shattered the state that had conquered and ruled over much of the Americas for three centuries. After 1807, administration of the colonies from Madrid virtually ceased, while the 'Continental System' and British counter-blockade prevented Latin American exports from traveling through the empire-wide monopoly port of Cádiz. Waterloo found Spain a devastated nation, struggling to put the local insurgencies that had resisted French occupation back in the box (Adelman 1999: 75-78; 2006: 177-180; see also Ramos, 2006: 23-27). As the guns fell silent in Europe, though, a century of war began in the colonies.

The initial transformation of Buenos Aires from backwater into leading city occurred via a process so obviously inimical to Spanish authority that it need not be theorized in overmuch depth. Both physically closer to and much more accessible from Potosí than was the official exclusive port of Lima, Buenos Aires was virtually irresistible for those seeking to make huge profits from shipping silver out of the New World. Smuggling got a further boost from the piracy

practiced on a large scale by other European powers, above all by Great Britain, against the fleets which brought Andean bullion to Cádiz. By helping to supply some of the specie that became an initial investment fund for the Industrial Revolution, the Platine connection to Britain and British hegemony substantially predates the heyday of Anglo-Argentine trade and investment (Pomer, 1987: 17-20; Adelman, 2006: 20-21). Curiously, few if any works on British 'informal empire' in the region seem to emphasize this early eighteenth-century prehistory wherein smuggling fueled capital accumulation in both Britain and the future Argentina. In any event, the Bourbon decision to legalize trade from Buenos Aires by making it the seat of the new Viceroyalty of the River Plate does not appear as much more than adaption to a state of affairs which already existed.

This chapter has said a great deal about the political *economy* of colonial rule but rather less about the political *philosophy* which underlay it. Until now it has also been relatively silent on Spanish colonial *governance*. "Colonial capitalism" unquestionably – at least in its Iberian variant -- came in trappings derived from earlier historical experience, particularly the Reconquista (cf. Bagú, 1949: 101-104). No abstract necessity of capital dictates that it be attached to a specific political *form*, though some are probably more conducive to accumulation in a particular time and place than others. Late medieval ideologies were symbiotic to some degree with accumulation in the traditional growth poles of colonial capitalism, above all in the Andes, where feudal-type values of religion and martial overlordship served to justify the repressive exigencies of a society defined by extreme racial stratification. It is this which fundamentally explains the strength of royalism in Peru (Adelman, 1999: 84-85). Furthermore, while the attempted modernization of colonial rule which the Bourbons propounded after acquiring the Spanish throne was wide-ranging, its fundamental goal was to *revitalize the mining economy* and as such did not represent a break with the accumulation regime previously

established by Spanish empire. The Bourbon reforms kept in place the heavy bias of colonial policy towards the interests of highland silver concessionaires and the metropolitan customs office, and did nothing to politically assist, or even remove barriers to, the development of agrarian capitalism on the pampas. Uprisings by the Indigenous labour force and a long-run decline in yields had reduced the importance of the Andean market for producers in the Platine delta, while transatlantic demand surged for cattle hides as a result of the use of leather in a wide variety of industrial applications during the early nineteenth-century (Ferns, 1950: 213-214).

Growing opportunities in external trade no doubt spurred frustration with the absurdity of forcing all colonial exports through Cádiz, where colonial agricultural products were additionally discriminated against in order to protect the inefficient farmers of metropolitan Spain. Milcíades Peña is nevertheless entirely correct when he emphasizes “el mito del librecambio como origen de Mayo” (see 2012: 104-107). For trade was the area in which the Bourbons were probably most helpless in reinstating Spanish primacy, the famous *asiento* monopoly of trade in slaves given to the British being just one example. The general transformation of the colonial political framework into an intermediary for the British, as previously was for Continental merchant capitalists, was seamless enough that it is hard to see why a revolution should be necessary if the only elite anti-colonial grievances centred on trade. A commercialization model of independence, in other words, which has the mere fact of increased marketization of hides and other products driving social change, does not work. The issue was less the inability to trade agrarian commodities than it was to establish the basic conditions of their capitalist production, namely, the commodification of land, labour, and cattle. Though the private ranch (*estancia*) notionally existed on the pampas, the exact legal basis of private property in rangeland was opaque and in practice extremely difficult to have enforced. A baroque system of guilds and politically

sanctioned trading enterprises also limited the mobility of new merchant capitals that had sprung up around the Atlantic export trade (Adelman, 1999: 28-31).

While the absence of secure land title could for stock-raisers be made up for to some extent by investment in larger and larger wandering herds, it posed a larger barrier to the development of any other agrarian exports for which the pampas were well-suited (Adelman, 1999: 34-40; 60-68). Thus, even the unquestionably lavish port revenues provided by viceregal reform could not whet the appetite of a rising *porteño* elite for political change. The absence of private property in grazing land was not due to a non-capitalist nature of colonial rule, since such appears to have been rather better delineated in the north of colonial New Spain, and in fact became threatened during the Bourbon reforms (see Tutino, 2011: 54-57; 142; 164-171). It was rather because the colonial regime, obsessed with visions of silver, did nothing to aid capitalist rationalization of pastoralism specifically in the Platine grasslands. The "free gifts of nature" of the Pampas were, for the most part, entirely available to the mining complex without having to expend any administrative and military resources. Possibly this bias was due to the greater immediate significance of specie for Crown revenues. In any event, independence meant that the main barrier to agrarian capitalism was no longer the policy of distant Madrid but rather one posed by plebian forces in the Platine region itself.

# *Two*

## *Class and Geopolitics in the Argentine Civil Wars*

*[Estimado Sr. Mitre]…no trate de economizar sangre de gauchos. Este es un abono que es preciso hacer útil al país. La sangre es lo único que tienen de seres humanos esos salvajes.*

*-- Domingo F. Sarmiento*

Nation-building in Argentina did not have a completely unpromising start. The badly planned and executed British invasions of 1806-07 inspired a popular resistance that transcended divides of race and class, twice forcing the Royal Navy into a humiliating submission by slaves and unlettered cattlemen. Nevertheless, the centrifugal tendencies that sabotaged the dream harboured by both Bolívar and San Martín of a continental *Patria Grande* also rapidly made themselves felt within the former Viceroyalty of the River Plate. The royalist stronghold of Alto Peru almost immediately refused to have anything to do with the revolutionary currents diffused outwards from Buenos Aires, and upon being liberated still emerged in complete political independence from it as the state of Bolivia. Upriver of Buenos Aires, Paraguay followed a course that was completely singular in both Latin America and the broader nineteenth-century world, and which will be the subject of the following chapter. The territorial behemoth of Portuguese-ruled Brazil, which later became independent virtually as a successor polity, was constantly threatening to expand across a frontier that had never been properly delineated. But internal class tensions were decisive in the formation of an Argentine state and ultimately served to condition all of its responses to external geopolitics.

Roughly four major axes of contention can be detected across the multifarious and confusing Argentine Civil Wars. One was the general antagonism of *gauchos*, who depended for

survival upon access to an open range populated abundantly with semi-feral cattle, towards clear-cut assertions of private ownership regarding land or herds. Second was the bitter dispute over the distribution of customs revenues which pit the various elites of Buenos Aires against their counterparts in upriver provinces like Entre Rios and Corrientes. This feud was fundamentally a holdover from the viceregal era, although its inner content may have changed somewhat in the period after independence. Third, the free-trade dreamed of by urban bourgeois and cattle baron alike represented an existential threat to primitive textile, leather, and metalworking industries in the Argentine northeast and far interior. However, actual protection was mainly a demand of peasants and artisans, one not categorically shared by local elites, a class dynamic which helps to explain otherwise incomprehensible political outcomes in the interior.

These first three axes of contention were filtered through the rural-urban, racial, regional, educational and cultural divides which went into the composition of dueling Federalist and Unitarian political identities. Supporting or opposing liberal constitutionalism on the United States, British, and French models became a fourth issue which subsumed all the rest. If the intellectual output of a Rivadavia or Sarmiento was somewhat arcane to the average *gaucho*, its implications regarding his place or lack thereof in a national polity could not help but become crystal-clear. Thus, a ready-made plebian constituency existed for elites who for one reason or another desired a looser codification of national governance. In turn, this allowed for the creation of Federalist coalitions whose actual political and class content, however, changed depending on time and place. Traditional dependency analyses would also include the involvement of British, French, and other imperialisms as a conditioning aspect of the civil wars. However, as political leadership on all sides mostly did not meaningfully oppose the beginnings of economic dependency, especially that relative to Great Britain, it is unclear if the imperialist dynamic

should be treated in isolation from others. A regional conflict formation thus arose on the territory of present-day Argentina and Uruguay that would continue to operate until roughly the year 1870, though with substantial aftershocks even into the next decade.

*Geography and class structure*

The comparative-historical character of this work makes it unnecessary to review, blow-by-blow, the events of Argentine independence. Nevertheless, the roots of an extended cycle of civil wars that began almost immediately after the defeat of Spain can be glimpsed early on in the different forms and social bases of anticolonial revolt in the Plata. For a time, two cities glowered at each other across the vast estuary. Buenos Aires was the primary regional hub of both commerce and revolutionary ideas. Montevideo, significantly smaller but with a natural port theoretically favourable to trade, became both the last redoubt of Spanish royalism in this part of the Americas and a site of collaboration with the designs of third powers. Outside of this increasingly fortified city, however, the heavily rustic Banda Oriental strongly favoured the patriot cause. *Gauchos* flocked to the banners of José Gervasio Artigas, celebrated by Galeano and other left writers as the prototypical Latin American revolutionary for his promise of an end to large estates and to divide land among a new free peasantry (see Galeano, 2006: 152-157). It is however dubious that agrarian socialism could have meant or did mean much to pampas-dwellers, whose *gaucho* culture strongly looked down upon both settled agriculture and indeed any occupation that required spending a significant amount of time on foot. Less than putting Artigas' radicalism in doubt, how his decrees were understood among the *gauchos* themselves must be seen in relation to a larger overall reaction against the commodification of land, cattle, and social existence (Peña, 2012: 124-126).

E.P. Thompson's methodological warning that popular classes are always *present at the site of their own making*, and that resistance to capitalist labour-discipline (or its advent) takes on hues drawn from pre-existing culture and historical experience (see Thompson, 1966: 9-11) is relevant here. *Gaucho* resistance to the encroachment of capitalism was not guided by any political vision or ideology which could have found articulation outside of the traditional society of the pampas. It was structured rather by devotion to the freedom afforded by the open range and the ability to survive hunting wild bulls, veneration of horsemanship and skill with lance or bola, and a sense of (male) honour which found the idea of spending more than a few hours daily out of the saddle to be extraordinarily humiliating (cf. Baretta and Markoff, 1978: 602-609; Peña, Ibid: 93-94). Leaders who could convincingly adopt these cultural scripts, while rarely in fact of plebian backgrounds, meshed their own *horizontal* class struggle against the urban Unitarians of Buenos Aires with the *vertical* one waged by the *gauchos* against oncoming capitalism (see Wood, 1999). The result was neither the nightmare which Sarmiento depicted in his racially fraught if poetically striking *Facundo*, where the *caudillo* is a callous murderer at the head of a mob of unsophisticated barbarians, nor was it the hagiography of the revisionist historians who have made various Federalist leaders out to be valiant nationalists fighting against *porteño* and English perfidy. It was rather an *unevenly patterned* resistance, in which neither intra-elite nor popular class struggles could exist in parallel to each other, at least not for very long. Different levels and genres of class conflict are possibly to identify, and doing so is certainly a useful exercise, but it must be stressed that their political existence tended to fuse under the single cry of "*¡mueran los salvajes unitarios!*"

Artigas represents a useful reference figure with which to begin unraveling the dynamics of Federalism, both because of his genuinely popular platform (Artigas himself was nevertheless

from an elite family background, see Machado, 1972: 29-30), and because his *Liga Federal* or *Liga de los Pueblos Libres* represented the first iteration of the ostensible Federalist political party. That Artigas did not succeed in forming a free *gaucho* republic is due to the effective survival of colonial military organization in the Luso-Brazilian context. The invasion and subsequent annexation of the Banda Oriental by Portugal in 1816 inaugurated a half-century of Portuguese, and after independence, Brazilian, military interventionism in the Hispanic countries of the Plata. Argentine patriotism was as yet at its most meaningful when placed against a foreign crown – British, Spanish, French, or Luso-Brazilian – and a subsequent conflict in the 1820s between the newly independent Empire of Brazil and the nascent Argentina saw the former fare more poorly than might have been expected. It should be noted that this conflict (the Cisplatine War, 1825-28) was fought under the leadership of a decidedly Unitarian government in Buenos Aires. Artigas being at least as unwelcome to the liberal Unitarians as he was to the monarchist Brazilians, he took no part and remained in exile in a remote corner of Paraguay. The Cisplatine conflict ended with British mediation and the creation of the Banda Oriental as the new independent republic of Uruguay, which would henceforth function as a geopolitical flashpoint until the end of most large-scale regional conflict around 1870.

North of the Banda Oriental but sharing with it a location on the east bank of the Rio Uruguay, was the notional Argentine province of Entre Rios. With territories composed largely of fertile pampa, Entre Rios and the adjacent Santa Fe shared ecological characteristics with Buenos Aires that were spectacularly favourable to agrarian and pastoral exports. The economies of the inland *Litoral* provinces thus came to bear a strong resemblance to that of Buenos Aires, though heterogeneously so and with a delay relative to the latter of about ten years (Barsky and Gelman, 2009: 130-131). *Litoral* provinces with more varied landscapes, like Corrientes, also developed

productive structures quite different from those found in both Buenos Aires and the rest of the named region (Whigham, 1991: 175). Starting in the 1830s wool became a relevant Argentine export, and sheep-rearing was somewhat focused on the *Litoral*. But this is only a tentative differentiation, as wool also flowed from Buenos Aires, and furthermore to attribute to sheep an importance even comparable to that of cattle prior to about 1850 would be quite difficult.

While freed from colonial trade regulations, the *Litoral* was however faced with the exactions of a metropole closer to home. Buenos Aires retained its privileged viceregal role as an intermediary port after independence, a position enshrined in law but also maintained through various practical and political barriers the city successfully created to exports through the alternative outlet of Montevideo (see Burgin, 1946: 34-40). This monopolistic position allowed Buenos Aires to effectively appropriate the revenue from exports produced further inland, without providing anything in return, while demands for customs-house nationalization were strongly resisted by *porteños* both Unitarian and Federalist. It is not necessary, however, to view maintaining these privileges as either to a clinging to colonial institutions, nor as at odds with Unitarian economic liberalism, or as an expression of some third, non-capitalist logic of power. For Unitarians, generally swift to condemn provincial customs barriers, the monopolization of trade revenues was nevertheless a necessary expedient in order to fund desired military unification of the national space, particularly before British loans on a large scale could be reliably secured (see Mazzuca, 2021: 58-59). *Porteño* Federalists, who tended to be cattle producers, used the customs-house to create a monopoly rent for themselves and disadvantage those provinces which had competitive pastoral economies, above all Entre Rios. It is additionally interesting to observe here the attempt to erect a political mechanism of "unequal exchange," which far from being a unique feature of long-distance, precapitalist trade also

appears where strong capitalist economies benefit at the expense of weaker ones through extractive infrastructures and asymmetric barriers to migration and trade (see further Emmanuel, 1972; Bunker, 1985: 38-48).

Argentina's interior -- the Andean *Cuyo* region along with Jujuy, Mendoza, Catamarca, and so on, as well as the respective north-wests of Córdoba and Santiago del Estero – became following independence a zone of intense poverty and armed conflict. Unitarian government in the 1820s, though relatively brief, introduced free-trade policies with immediate, devastating consequences for the interior due to the influx of industrially-produced British woolens and textiles which ensued. The traditional woolen poncho produced in Lancashire rather than locally became a poignant symbol, for both local Federalists and later dependency authors, of the self-destructive consequences for Argentina of liberal economic development. Migration from the interior to the booming economies of Buenos Aires and Entre Rios resulted in considerable demographic loss (Barsky and Gelman, 2009: 132-134), even though pastoral production did probably not absorb much labour. Interior societies, especially *Cuyano* ones, were at least somewhat more racially stratified than those of the pampas and featured some of the same types of post-Inca communal land tenure found in other parts of the Andes. Dispossession of these lands from their resident producers[3] appears to have mainly occurred after Pavón and the defeat of Federalism in Buenos Aires and the *Litoral*, prior to which the ability of any national government to project armed force there would have been limited. At that juncture, the veneration of Facundo Quiroga -- a native of La Rioja and early Federalist hero – in regional

[3] Although the classic study of interior revolts by de la Fuente (2000) refers to *gauchos*, this appears to be a case of locally different meaning as he applies this term to a demographic engaged in agriculture which rarely ate meat (see 41-44; 94-95), features diametrically opposite to those which characterized a *gaucho* mode of existence on the pampas.

culture served as fuel for a series of major revolts both immediately prior to and during the Paraguayan War (see further de la Fuente, 2000).[4]

Finally, the wealthiest and most populous province, Buenos Aires, was far from homogeneous politically even as it sought to confront the interior and *Litoral*. Its rural hinterland (*campaña*) was home to the wealthiest *estanciero* class to be found anywhere in the Plata, with *gaucho* labour relations here being largely similar to those which prevailed further east in Entre Rios or the Banda Oriental. The city of Buenos Aires, then as now, housed the most devoted cadres of economic liberalism in Argentina. However, the loose assortment of merchant capitalists, local agents for British and French trading houses or banks, and their well-educated sons which was quick to embrace both the revolution, and soon afterward the Unitarian movement, constituted a miniscule demographic element in postrevolutionary Argentina. Nor did they have much power in the productive economy, which was dominated by *estancieros*, who, though symbiotic with the traders were far from absolutely dependent upon them. To be very precise, then, the early Unitarian movement held political aspirations out of all proportion to its real social base in the country it sought to rule, which were in part fueled by using Europe and North America rather than Argentina as a frame of reference (Burgin, 1946: 89-96; see also Peña, 2012: 133-136). Rounding out the picture in Buenos Aires were the popular classes made up of slaves, sex workers, domestic servants, peddlers, demobilized revolutionary troops and militia combatants, and the cultivators of market gardens (*chacras*) who played a vital role in feeding the city (see additionally Adelman, 1999: 36). A high proportion of the *porteño* popular classes

[4] Involved briefly in the movement for independence, Quiroga led the earliest revolt of the interior provinces against the Rivadavia government. He demonstrated a certain degree of political catholicism, initially rebelling under the banner of religion (in protest against Unitarian anticlerical measure and later assimilating his movement to the wider provincial and popular demands for a Federalist constitution. Facundo later attempted to mediate between various provincial Federalisms until his murder in 1835, an event turned him into a martyr figure particularly revered in his native La Rioja.

were of African descent, creating an additional layer of mutual distrust with their largely Unitarian social betters, who were obsessed with cultural and political Europeanization (see further Burns, 1980a: 20-24). Urban plebians thus formed an additional group whose grievances an astute and culturally sensitive leader might be capable of welding to the Federalist movement.

*The 'rules of reproduction' of pastoral capitalism*

*Estancias*, in their development as capitalist enterprises at least from the late eighteenth century, reflected a "*maldición de la abundancia fácil*" (Peña, 2012: 77-79) that was produced out of both ecological and political conditions. The superabundance of fertile *pampa* usable as pasture allowed cattle production to continue relying on the "free gifts of nature" even once feral herds had been mostly hunted out. Moreover, the *enfiteusis* law of 1826 formalized the condition of bounty by opening all land not previously held in fee simple directly to grazing. Platine cattle exports mainly consisted of either or raw or lightly processed hides, for which the market remained vigorous well into the nineteenth-century, or of *charqui* (dried/jerked beef). The latter item was primarily sold in Brazil and the Caribbean for its use as a slave ration, making its sale decoupled from end consumer preference. *Criollo* cattle raised on the open steppe with a minimum of human supervision were thus easily brought to market, even though they produced meat of a generally low quality. Animals that were untamed, often sickly, and which died easily during bad weather and from disease were economical to produce as long as the cost of an individual head remained extremely low. Fencing, selective breeding, and any other nineteenth-century means of technological upgrading in livestock production were as a result far from incentivized (Djenderedjian, 2008: 579-580). With labour costs high and property rights in land hard to enforce, it became rational to invest only in acquiring more and more bovines.

Therefore, the term *agrarian* capitalism, used up to now for convenience, should be qualified. First, because the English language invests "agrarian" and "agriculture" with two distinct meanings, one specifically referring to *cultivation*. Ellen Wood's definition of agrarian capitalism has already been met in Chapter 1 (20) in the context of a broader critique of Political Marxism which argued that much of potential value in the "rules of reproduction" concept is lost through its fairly Eurocentric exposition. PM authors conflate Marx's "laws of motion" with a specific *investment choice*, e.g., labour-productivity upgrading technology, which is neither logically nor historically sine qua non of capitalist accumulation. The result is a borderline economic determinism where only the power of dictating production *technique* can drive expanding quanta of surplus-value, when in fact those of bodily violence (cf. Beckert, 2015: xv-xviii) or over nature (cf. Moore, 2015) have been at least comparably significant. Wood observes a strong *tendency* of agrarian capitalism writ large, but not an absolute "rule" (cf. Heller, 2011: 4-5). Even in the quintessentially capitalist goal of producing higher foodgrain surpluses that drive down the cost of hiring wage-labour, coercion has played no small historical role (see further Davis, 2002: 223-226; Patnaik and Patnaik, 2016). But to dwell on *agriculture* is to move rather far from the case at hand, that of an open steppe populated by untamed horsemen. *Gaucho* labour was scarce, expensive, and fiercely recalcitrant, as discussed above. Ecological conditions were instead pivotal to shaping the rules of reproduction followed by newly capitalist *estancieros*.

Even if *capitalist*, the estancia in the first half of the nineteenth century was clearly a distinct "regime of production" from the Argentine rural economy of its latter half, which *did* resemble Wood's description of agrarian capitalism. Wheat and maize clearly introduced a set of competitive pressures associated with rising technical inputs into production (Hora, 2001: 173-175). Accumulation in the early nineteenth century, though, occurred not by leveraging the

technical or labour inputs into production, but simply by *having more cattle*. This does not mean that *estancias* were outside the Marxian categories of "constant" and "variable" capital, but merely that their expansion took the form mainly of investment in new capital stock and this, in turn, took the form mainly of *quantitative* investment in bovines. Specifying "capitalist animal agriculture," which conjures up images of the industrial feedlot and meatpacking plant, is also unsatisfactory. *Pastoral* capitalism might be a term capturing the radically singular competitive strategy forced on Platine *estancieros* by the Atlantic trade in cattle products. Their self-reproduction depended, like that of perhaps some nomad chief of old, on accumulating vast herds, but as *capital* more than a source of power or prestige.

How – or why – did cattle function as capital? First because no feudal or other coherent landed property regime had ever been imposed on the open pampa previously; Rivadavia may have hoped initially that *enfiteusis* would function as a transitional stage *en route* to universalizing fee-simple ownership, though later Unitarians would rue the system. Second, large *estancieros* were distinctly market-dependent. Commercialization of pampas cattle was not in itself something new. A vigorous trade in hides dated at least to the seventeenth century, when it primarily catered to expanding leather-goods markets in viceregal metropoli like Lima and across the colonial boundary in Brazil. It resulted in *gauchos* turning to hunt cattle for skins which could be traded for metal tools/weaponry, yerba, tobacco, or alcohol, often discarding the entire rest of a carcass. Overhunting had driven feral herds largely to extinction by the end of the next century (Pomer, 1985: 179-183; Ramos, 2006: 38-40). This, however, was still the market experienced as opportunity rather than mainly as imperative, since gauchos in theory could still make the turn back to primarily subsistence harvesting of cattle. A large *estanciero*, by contrast, depended on income to pay off debts and expand his holdings of cattle and land, in other words

for survival *as an estanciero*. While internal markets, particularly that of Buenos Aires, absorbed a relatively large number of beeves per-capita, these outlets were limited by a small population. Endless growth in herd numbers only made sense in the context of domination by an Atlantic market, driven by European industrialization and the rapid expansion of slave economies in Cuba, Brazil, and the southern U.S. states (cf. Donghi, 1963: 58-61).

Pampas realities thereby created a fundamental gap between the Unitarian political project and the actual motor of the capitalist economy whose development it sought to drive forward. At a basic level, the *estancieros* of Buenos Aires could have no meaningful interest in military outlays to subdue recalcitrant provinces, since these were necessarily made at the expense of campaigns to seize land from the Mapuche in southern Buenos Aires Province. If frontier expansion was the sine qua non of *estanciero* reproduction, the construction of a national economic space was basically dispensable to *porteño* cattle interests, if not a positively alarming development that would force them to compete with *Litoral* producers on an equal footing. Any transmutation of the functions of government to the level of an Argentine nation implied the nationalization of customs revenues. But, in light of the similarity in ecological conditions already noted between Buenos Aires and the Litoral, the only competitive advantage which the former could enjoy was the politically-constituted one of port monopoly. Finally, the social base of the Unitarian party – merchant capital – was symbiotic with but also antagonistic to the *estanciero* class. Strong and reliable levels of external demand for cattle products meant that the merchant capital was able to provide adequate commercial outlets for the *estancieros* at its post-independence level of development, while any increase of its strength would only shift the terms of exchange at the latter's expense (Burgin, 1946: 21-22; Peña, 2012: 142-144).

More prosaically, almost every outcome which the Unitarian platform aspired to produce – enclosures, foreign capital inflows, and European agricultural colonization of the pampas – was undesirable from the *estanciero* perspective insofar as it would raise land values and thus increase the cost of pasturing large herds of animals. It was thus that the patrician interests of the cattlemen could come to vaguely coincide with that of the gauchos in preserving individualistic subsistence lifestyles, of the interior in preventing the entry of foreign manufactures, and of the Afro-Argentine and urban popular classes in a general defence against Europeanization. Once the Unitarian attempt to effect rapid modernization from above came to an ignominious end in the summer of 1827, it became inevitable that the development of capitalism in Argentina would continue on pastoral bases. Here is the fundamental basis for the emergence of the *caudillo*, a political leader who was invariably a rural man of standing but who held power with support from the equally invariably non-white, rural masses and so who nonetheless found abundant depictions as an enemy of Western, capitalist civilization (see Peña. 2012: 126-128). But the inevitable outcome of rule by these class coalitions was to drive further integration into the Atlantic economy and thus undermine the bases of the very "traditional" society which it was trying to preserve (see further Burns, 1980a: 5-13; 47-50). In turn, under conditions of political disempowerment externally-oriented commercial capital strengthened until finally in subsequent decades it could launch a renewed bid for political hegemony.

The singularity of pastoral competitive incentives can best be glimpsed through a brief comparison with "true" agrarian capitalism, which in the Argentine context developed most vigorously in the period after 1850. Slave markets for jerked beef began a decline across the Atlantic, while that of Brazil specifically became less accessible to Argentine production owing to protectionist measures implemented in the aftermath of the *Farroupilha* (1835-45). Leather

increasingly found substitutes as an industrial material, cutting into the hide trade. At the same time, both the overall expansion of industrial textile production and a reversion in the British Isles from pasture back to arable created a new market for wool grown in the Southern Hemisphere (see Barsky and Gelman, 2009: 174-176). The result was to drive investment from cattle into wool production, undermining the extensive-pastoral regime of accumulation. Unlike tough *criollo* cattle, sheep were unable to digest the tough indigenous vegetation of the pampas and required pastures transformed by human intervention to convert them to soft grasses such as alfalfa. With wool came for the first time an export market with major pressures to improve quality, particularly as Argentine fleeces fought for market share against British colonial production from Australia (McMichael, 1984: 55-66; Sabato, 1989: 33-35). This reduced the competitive advantage of the most gargantuan *estancias*, which in many cases were too large for sheep to be practicably watched over. As in the Scottish Highlands, with sheep came enclosures. The pampa of the *gaucho* and traditional *estanciero* became increasingly fragmented, though it would take further export booms and several decades for this phenomenon to become fully apparent in the Argentine context. Enclosures, in turn, created the demand for a state capable of enforcing the more formal private property rights necessary to make them viable.

Sheep-rearing relied on access to detailed consumer intelligence, European investment capital and the importation of costly breeding stock from abroad; thus, this sector favoured capitals with close linkages to British trading firms or directly with the major purchasers in newly-industrializing France and Belgium. The economic base of the Unitarian movement was therefore empowered, while its interests came to converge with those of traditional *estancieros* where these adapted successfully to "wool-fever." Such a class coalition was to finally lead the creation of an Argentine state which could provide for the consolidation of an intensive-agrarian

capitalism where the primary direction of competitive investment was towards productivity increase. To be sure, the contrast with extensive grazing is greater in later export booms than it was with wool. Cattle and sheep *estancieros* were not infrequently the same person. The different competitive logics prevailing in cattle and sheep nevertheless illustrate the singularity of the one that has here been termed *pastoral*, in the true sense because it incentivized increasing the size of herds and their room to roam. Sheep thus provide a window only into the earliest forces, external as well as internal, which pushed towards the establishment of an intensive-agrarian model of accumulation (Burgin, 1946: 29-33).

*A man on horseback: Juan Manuel de Rosas*

Rivadavia's decision to resign in July of 1827 as president of the first Argentine republic must be seen less as petulance than a belated acknowledgement of reality. Total resistance by the provinces to each and every one of his policy proposals, as well as the gathering storm clouds of unrest among the *gauchos* of Buenos Aires itself, had made Unitarian governance an obviously unrealizable prospect. The rear-guard action mounted by party war chief Juan Lavalle, which ended in the summary execution of Federalist provincial governor of Buenos Aires and interim president, Manuel Dorrego, constituted an act basically of political suicide (see Burgin, 1946: 107-111). It radicalized the Federalist movement, yet supported by a large majority of the population, and played into the moral-political delegitimization of "savage Unitarians" which had by then already been in gestation. After this singular act of political violence in independent Argentina, though soon to be repeated many times over, it became temporarily impossible for the never-popular Unitarian movement to take part in any peaceful democratic process. It was banished from its cultured hometown in Buenos Aires to the decidedly more violent and marginal political arena of Montevideo. Here, the classically *rosista* argument that all liberal

figures in Argentina acted as the proxies of foreign imperialist powers finds a ring of truth. Without external sponsorship and naval protection, it is unlikely that the last redoubt of Platine liberalism would have survived for long. Nevertheless, it was the process of capitalist development internal to Argentina, which accelerated under their most dedicated foe, that actually created the possibility of a triumphant Unitarian return later in the century.

This initial setback for the liberals, and their ham-fisted though gruesome attempt to reverse it, made it possible for the flesh-and-blood *id* of a larger backlash against social and economic liberalism to assume near-total mastery over Argentina for the better part of two decades. Corresponding across the Atlantic with one Jeremy Bentham, Rivadavia took the helm of a state whose design was in no small measure co-authored between himself and the great English liberal (Adelman, 1999: 98). This personal relationship, slightly comical as it may appear, is a revealing window into the concerns of the men behind the first, failed Argentine constitutional experiment. The obsession with Euro-American models of the constitutional republic appears both quixotic and totally bizarre in a society still dominated by the wild bull and the *gaucho*, and it did in fact reflect the hypnotizing influence of French- and English-language intellectual culture upon a certain strata of Argentine society. However, the popularity of these ideas also reflect the material interests of those who imbibed them, as well as to a lesser degree the early signs of influence upon the River Plate by the first, British-dominated "liberal world order." The issue is thus not that the Unitarian movement lacked a real social base in early-nineteenth-century Argentine society so much as that this group had no real ability to struggle for hegemony, and in fact was easily defeated when it tried to. Into the breach stepped a tall, striking, and charismatic "man on horseback;" *gaucho* and *estanciero*; diplomat and Indian-

fighter; fluent in Spanish, English, French, and Auracanian: Juan Manuel de Rosas (see Fradkin and Gelman, 2015: 24-25; 33-38; 42; 402-409).

Gramsci writes famously of "a situation in which the forces in conflict balance each other … in such a way that a continuation of the conflict can only terminate in their reciprocal destruction, " in which "a great personality is entrusted with the task of 'arbitration' over a historico-political situation characterised by an equilibrium of forces heading towards catastrophe," giving rise to the phenomenon of Caesarism (see Gramsci, 1971: 219-223). Rosas represents just this kind of figure in the context of a point of the Argentine civil wars where both popular variants of the independence movement (e.g. Artigas) and the class project of the liberal, externally oriented Unitarian bourgeoisie had been defeated. His outwardly pompous, self-accorded title of "Restorer of the Laws" nevertheless reflected a real position as saviour of the social order. As *El Restaurador* ceaselessly hoped to impress upon foreign interlocutors, it was only his personal rule which prevented the Plata from descending into an "anarchy" in which no rights of private property would be safe (see Cady, 1969: 10). Where the long quasi-dictatorship of Rosas appeared to take on democratic characteristics, these were the result of successfully conciliating popular elements, above all *gauchos* and Afro-Argentines, to the section of the dominant classes of which Rosas himself was a member.

Beyond this very general characterization, few sweeping descriptions of the Rosas period would appear to be useful. The longtime Governor of Buenos Aires and first President of the Argentine Confederation, was neither an anti-imperialist radical, as has sometimes been claimed or implied by the dependency literature; nor a reactionary, as would have some perhaps exaggerated reactions against it. It is undeniable that Rosas was intensely supported by the popular classes throughout much of his career, most of all by Afro-Argentines and the *gauchos* of

his home province, although not without a base of admirers further afield. Although rural life in the Rosas period may have been less exclusionary than afterwards (see Burns, 1980a: 146-147), he also inaugurated extraordinarily repressive measures in order to proletarianize *gauchos*. The Governor produced a constitutional arrangement which allowed for broad provincial autonomy but also hoped to recreate the old viceregal space by conquering the independent Republic of Paraguay (see Fradkin and Gelman, 2015: 426). He implemented sweeping tariffs to protect the interior from foreign manufactures but also imposed brazen economic strangulation on Entre Rios and the *Litoral*. To the outrage of Europeanizing Unitarians, Rosas flaunted his alliances with pampas Indigenous tribes but also acquired much of his heroic popular reputation from years spent as their genocidal persecutor. He was a tribune of Latin American nationalism who nevertheless received a twenty-one-gun salute on arriving at an English exile for the "kindness" which he showed British merchants while in office (see Lynch, 1981: 336). A blonde-haired, blue-eyed ultraconservative Catholic, *El Restaurador* nevertheless accorded positive recognition to Afro-descendant culture and ceremonies as did few other leaders in nineteenth-century Latin America (see Fradkin and Gelman, 2015: 299-304).

Neither did the years of Rosas show a relapse into some sort of primordial Hispanic despotism. Aside from his constitution-making efforts, Rosas provided strong if rudimentary legal guarantees for the security of merchant capital and foreign investments, which were so because they were usually enshrined in his person rather than body of written law (see Adelman, 1999: 115-120). He demonstrated a certain level of national consciousness for the Patria Grande, as shown by the links which the Rosas regime formed with the similarly populist, mainly Indian-backed one of Manuel Belzu in neighbouring Bolivia (see Burns, 1980a: 109). Contra many later revisionist authors (see for example Rosa, 1970), the Restorer was for most of his tenure

basically accepting of British pre-eminence over Argentine trade, something to which he could in any case not be entirely indifferent given that his own *estancia* properties made him a major producer of hides. It is nonetheless true that the primary linkage of Rosas' own interests with American slave markets meant that his government was able to act with a certain degree of autonomy with regards to European capitalist powers. His military campaigns against the Indigenous peoples of the southern pampas drove forward the accumulation of capital via extensive grazing, while the regime maintained overall social peace by politically and to a lesser degree economically incorporating the *gauchos* as its main support. The relatively loose labour control and paternalistic relationships typical of the large *estancia* allowed for a measure of non-market access to land and cattle, even as Rosas also began to persecute free horsemen by fire and sword (Peña, 2012: 150-154; 163-169).

It is thus that the caustic judgement of Milcíades Peña that leaves both the Unitarians and Rosas belonging to a common "civilization of rawhide" must be qualified. Only Rosas and other Federalists authentically represented this civilization, defending an earlier set of capitalist production relations typical of the hides boom, which allowed rural "folk" to maintain a somewhat tolerable quality of life by remaining partially outside the circuit of capital, against the more total commodification sought by the Unitarians. The latter was a qualitatively different civilization, if not that of Manchester as its epigones so greatly like to suggest, then certainly one diffused outwards from there. The many paradoxes of the Rosas period represent a successful balancing act, in which ensuring the subordination of the popular classes became secondary to repressing a section of the bourgeoisie whose quixotic and extreme plans for rapid modernization threatened to become self-destructive for the entire *porteño* elite. Mass mobilizations, such as the

terror waged against "savage Unitarians" by the infamous *Mazorca*,[5] should be fundamentally understood with reference to this class triangulation. Rosas thus incarnated a mildly progressive Caesarism, which headed off the drastic worsening of rural stratification while aiding the development of a section of national capital relatively more autonomous from external imperialisms. Certainly, some policy measures, above all the protectionist tariffs of 1835, are difficult to see as *El Restaurador* acting purely in the interests of his own *estanciero* class. Nevertheless, in a faint echo of the progressive Caesarisms of later centuries in Latin America, the *pax rosista* was based fundamentally on an unsustainable and increasingly uncompetitive form of export production, whose qualitative technical and social development it failed to push forward (Galeano, 2006: 237-244; Fradkin and Gelman, 2015: 218-220).

*Caseros and Pavón in world-historical perspective*

Rosas' fall derived from the underlying incoherence of *porteño* Federalism, as well as from the Plata becoming a complex theatre of imperialist geopolitics. Although soundly defeated after 1815 in the struggle for overall world hegemony, France continued to make less dramatic efforts to assert itself vis-à-vis Great Britain, mainly by competing for entry into extra-European markets (see further Wallerstein, 2011c: 116-123). The British response was a meticulously calculated one of trying to make France into a junior ally, with the free-trade world order

[5] Notionally, only the separate armed wing of a larger *Sociedad Popular Restauradora*, a group created to support Rosas. This fascinating organization seems to diverge rather significantly in its significant Afro-descendant membership and intensely militarized character from other "political clubs" in nineteenth-century Latin America, typically associated as these were with some variety of elitism, and tempts the use of anachronisms like "paramilitary" or even "secret police" to describe it. The origins of the name "Mazorca" ("corn cob" in Spanish) are obscure; it has been interpreted variously a menacing pun (because pronounced similarly to "más horca," meaning "more strangulation/hanging" in Spanish) or a reference to anal violation inflicted on opponents with said item (see Lynch, 1981: 215). Whatever the veracity of such a lurid practice, the Mazorca was undeniably brutal in its methods, a fact which substantially aided the demonization of Rosas in later Argentine political culture, and which has perhaps inhibited even critical/Marxist studies of the period from focusing on it specifically as a vehicle for joining the political aspirations of racialized and popular-class men to *estanciero* power.

enforced by the Royal Navy providing opportunities for French capital while military and political balancing on the Continent headed off another full-throated attempt at French aggrandizement (see Wallerstein, 2011a: 38-43; 130-131). When French merchants began to look towards the Plata, however, the net effect was to disrupt the preexisting modus vivendi between the British and Rosas. As a second-tier imperialist power, France was less well able to accept the protectionist flirtations of *El Restaurador*; it needed most-favoured nation status and equal treatment with domestic producers in order to gain any type of foothold in this most promising of what might anachronistically be termed "emerging markets." This Rosas steadfastly refused to give. French naval vessels blockaded the Buenos Aires port in response, while both uniformed land forces and a motley assortment of allied European adventurers prevented the Governor from reconquering the Unitarian enclave at Montevideo. Eventually, the blockade escalated into a form of simple piracy, with the French military forcing all trading ships to pay taxes directly to an occupying force garrisoned at Montevideo.

How Britain responded was ultimately determined by European power politics, above all the necessity of keeping France integrated pacifically into the London-centred liberal world order. British participation in the blockade, which began in 1845, was thus motivated more by the hegemonic exigencies of serving as a guarantor of subordinate French interests, in order to keep them so, than it was by any underlying antagonism to Rosas. What resulted was basically similar to, if only somewhat less farcical, than the similar French intervention some decades later in Mexico. The countryside rallied to patriotic symbols, of which the most prominent was the figure of Rosas himself. Against this resistance, and unlike in the Mexican case, the French came to fear a direct military confrontation with Rosas. It is this recalcitrance which fundamentally accounts for the failure of another revolt by Juan Lavalle, in 1840-41, undertaken with the faulty

assumption of French backing (see Fradkin and Gelman, 2015: 275-276; 286-289). The Anglo-French understanding, as would also happen with regards to Mexico, slowly began to drift apart as Britain feared that the French intervention was a pretext for establishing a colony in Latin America. Other external storm clouds gathered. In spite of repeated appeals by Rosas to the Monroe Doctrine, the United States lacked much appreciable interest in the Plata and had its own reasons to disapprove of the Restorer stemming from a caustic dispute in 1831 related to fishing and whaling rights in the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands. Brazil, meanwhile, resented Rosas as a barrier to its own territorial expansion and influence in Uruguay (see Cady, 1969: 9-21; 34-37; 124-136; 183-192; 228-230; 268-271). The rising Liberal party, which regarded the Empire of Brazil as charged with a "civilizing mission" in the war-torn Platine countries, additionally served as a strong voice pushing the organs of Imperial foreign policy to favour military intervention to overthrow the Restorer (see further Cardozo, 1961).

The true antinomy of *rosista* commercial policy was the closure of the Paraná River to virtually all traffic. Although given justification as a response to the foreign threat, one which the British and French navies took up on its offer by forcing upriver passage in 1845, this was in reality a discriminatory trade measure enacted against the competitive pastoral economy of Entre Rios. As soon as *Litoral* cattle producers found themselves cut off from the Atlantic marketplace, they ceased to be a support for the Rosas regime. *Porteño* Federalism provided as the flip side to provincial autonomy the inability of the provinces to interfere with any aspect of state organization in Buenos Aires, including the inherited viceregal privileges which caused them disproportionate harm. Tariffs on foreign manufactures were an annoyance for, but did not fundamentally strike at the interests of, *porteño estancieros* since they mainly protected interior provinces which did not compete in the production of hides and jerked beef. Buenos Aires' port

monopoly was, however, sacrosanct and Rosas greatly tightened its functioning over the course of his rule. The inevitable result, magnified by a context of overall crisis in the *estancia* sector caused by the Anglo-French blockade, was to pressure the *Litoral* towards revolt. If the two decades in which Rosas ruled Argentina cannot be explained with reference to a single class interest, *El Restaurador* ultimately fell because of the fealty which he showed his own. Justo Jose de Urquiza, one of the wealthiest improving *estancieros* in Entre Rios and a titan of provincial politics there, swept him from power with Brazilian support at the 1852 Battle of Caseros (Peña, 2012: 177-183; Mazzuca, 2021: 163-169).

The 1850s were a decade of rapid, export-driven growth, which both reflected the positive legacies for capital of *rosista* national organization and presaged qualitative advances under the totally distinct one which was soon to emerge. Urquiza's assumption of the presidential role in the confederal structure created by Rosas had as its corollary the promulgation of a new, somewhat more-legalistic constitution which enshrined freedom of navigation on the Paraná and other rivers. The growth of export volume shifted somewhat to the north, as Entre Rios became a major producer of wool and Urquiza himself took some interest in promoting experiments with the large-scale cultivation of wheat, which was soon to have a spectacular career in Buenos Aires and the *Litoral* (Djenderedjian, 2008: 580-584; see further Scobie, 1964). With its natural endowments and privileged British links, Buenos Aires was far from eclipsed, however. The immediate response of the *porteño* ruling class after the fall of Rosas was to re-embrace the Unitarian movement against Urquiza and the loss of commercial privilege (Peña, 2012: 197-200). Failing a satisfactory agreement with the Confederation, Buenos Aires would form a separate country that would reap intermediary rents and be a favoured destination of foreign investment.

Thus, the final piece of the puzzle of Argentine state-formation – before moving on to examine what exactly it was that came into being – is why Urquiza decided to retreat from the battlefield at Pavón (1861) despite having apparently superior forces, a moment which marks the end of the struggle on the pampas and the inauguration of Unitarian-led national construction. A number of inferences can be made. First, the opening of river trade and the prospect that once victorious the Unitarians would finally be in a position to make good on their liberal promises to federalize port revenues and get rid of interprovincial tariff walls, must have made accepting their leadership easier if not downright appealing (see Mazzuca, 2021: 176-180). Second, the changing Argentine export structure tended to reconcile the previously divergent interests of pastoral, merchant, and foreign capital. A nineteenth-century economy specializing in sheep – and soon thereafter, grain and premium beef cattle – required investment capital for enclosures, railroads, maritime transport and imported breeding stock which only Britain, with its enormous surpluses plundered from India, was in any position to provide (Patnaik and Patnaik, 2016: 184-186; see also Rock, 2018). Argentina was thus incorporated as one of the main alimentary supports of British world power as it consolidated a "food regime" able to mollify working-class discontent in Europe through rising consumption standards, with enduring and dramatic ecological consequences (Baraibar Norberg, 2020: 59-72; see also Otter, 2020).

In short, then Urquiza – here both a uniquely powerful oligarch and a metonymy for the *estanciero* class as a whole – surrendered out of rational self-interest, after the basis for the class alliance between large *estancieros*, *gauchos*, and urban semi-proletarians against commercial capital had already dissolved. The key to this change was that the dominant basis of *estanciero* reproduction began to shift from one, rudimentary form of capitalist landed property – the grazing extension – to another, the rationalized, productivity-increasing *latifundio*. It is

important, however, to emphasize the continuity of large estates, which is significant to the divergence between Argentina and other states blessed in the nineteenth century by external demand and British investment, above all Canada and Australia. European immigrant herdsmen and farmers arriving later in the nineteenth century did not set up as independent small proprietors who could form the basis of an internal market but rather were consigned in most cases to tenantry or a lesser status (Scobie, 1964: 40-49; 58-61; 83-88; Baraibar Norberg, Ibid: 65-66; see also Belich, 2009: 534-540). Furthermore, in part as a result of land concentration the Argentine countryside early on became labour-expelling and thus both the immigrant and native-born working classes came to be increasingly concentrated in urban slums. No doubt, those who, like Sarmiento, were Unitarians out of Benthamite-liberal idealism would have preferred a pampa settled with free white yeomen in the North American fashion. But preserving, and consolidating at a new level, the latifundium was the essence of the compromise by which the Unitarian party finally came to and held power (Peña, 2012: 211-220).

Thus, it is necessary not only to historicize capitalist property relations *themselves*, but also their transformation across time and space. Substantial differences can exist, as has been demonstrated above, within the general category of a landed estate and these seeming minutiae are absolutely vital to making sense of rural social change. World-systemic factors did not ensure national construction in Argentina, but they decisively worked to change the incentive structure within which all participants in its civil wars operated to favour such an outcome (Pomer, 1985: 283-292; 1988: 54-57). The proto-state of the Rosas period had as its corollary a thinly consolidated type of capitalist landed property, in which estates competed by becoming near-comically oversized in order to disguise the fact that their owner was unable to exercise a full monopoly over the pasture and water resources which he supposedly owned. Perhaps a

transitional stage in Argentine capitalist development, this was nevertheless a rural world with some space for the wandering or "vagrant" *gaucho*, something which ceased to be the case when extensive grazing was replaced with other forms of export production. It became rational for the *estanciero* to transform himself from a rustic patron, dependent on but linked indirectly to the Atlantic market, into a fully cosmopolitan, market-savvy capitalist producer of farm products (see further Hora, 2001: 8-20; 56-68). Those who were unable to do so, like Rosas, perhaps trapped by the role he had constructed for himself as a hero to the *gauchos*, faded away. Rural elites quietly assented to the creation of a state structure they had hitherto resisted, one capable of driving forward the primitive accumulation of capital on the pampas and beyond in a way that had not been achieved under the confederal form of national organization.

*Conclusion: Mitre's Argentina and after*

Why, as he succeeded in bringing the entire potential wealth of the pampas under the enlightened authority of a single nation-state, did the "victor" of Pavón and first president of the Argentine Republic, Bartolomé Mitre, still feel the need to also struggle for the arid and impoverished provinces of western Argentina? The question is not simply academic, or even one of only historical interest. If the account of state-formation given in this chapter has appeared slightly economistic up to now, this is necessarily because it was really so; elite politics did largely follow the newest sources of export profit. This is what it means to say that Argentine, or any other Latin American capitalism was born as a dependent exemplar; economic development and the aspects of politics downstream from it were joined completely to external market demand. Had either Unitarians or Federalists taken up a project of competitive industrialization in order to equal or surpass wealthier capitalist states in the world arena, a more sophisticated accounting of the interaction between economics and the political might be necessary (see

Lacher, 2006: 79-83); in any event they did not. An extraordinarily credulous faith in the powers of comparative advantage marked Argentine policy-makers from Mitre onwards, with primary export production being seen as a stage in the inevitable path to lasting national wealth.

It would be misleading to see Mitre, Sarmiento, and other liberal politicos and thinkers as either insincere in their proclaimed desire for North American-style industrial development or as following any coherent vision to bring this about. Argentina had no intelligent cynics like Alexander Hamilton to lead it to national wealth, or more accurately none who achieved lasting political power; its leading men were absolute believers in the hegemonic ideology of British imperialism and though that to provision the first industrial nation with sufficient enthusiasm would necessarily produce transformation in its image. Industrial policy, especially that of a protectionist flavour associated with the anti-market "barbarism" of Rosas, was rejected out of hand (Scalabrini Ortiz, 2001: 116-124; 270-271; Stein and Stein, 1970: 190-198). This ideological edifice was strengthened enormously in the period of extremely high per-capita incomes during which the Argentine and British economies were also most tightly intertwined; it did not really begin to crumble until after 1929.

The limits of an explanation based primarily on immediate economic incentives for state-making become apparent, however, once the Argentine Civil Wars enter their last decade. At this time, the new state made very large expenditures in blood and treasure to bring under fully under its sovereignty areas with little to no significant export potential. Argentine liberal nationalism was, as has been argued thus far, an ideo-political project at the core of which was the extension of capitalist social relations in space. But in order to be successful or indeed coherent, it had to be animated on some level from the inside, in ways not entirely reducible to the abstract economic logic of capital. The irreducibly singular, internally-generated principle of the state-

making project was the unification of the former Viceroyalty of the River Plate or failing that the constituent parts of the Argentine Confederation, into a single political space.

Thus far the argument has proceeded at a very high level of abstraction, but it is self-evidently absurd to imagine La Rioja or Mendoza being abandoned to some kind of notional independence (or perhaps more likely, annexation to Chile or Bolivia) simply because they were not profitable. Attachment to the idea of an Argentine nation between the Atlantic and the Andes was strong not just among *rosista* Federalists but also the core intellectual and political figures of Unitarian liberalism, even those who were not from the interior – and a large percentage were. It is no accident that Sarmiento wrote *Facundo* about Facundo, and not a different exemplar of *caudillaje*. Not only, then, was liberal thought in Argentina connected to the Andean interior through the birthplace of its greatest intellectual but formed in no small part through revulsion to the imagined qualities of that region compared to Europe and North America. The apparent nationwide victory of "barbarism" during the Rosas period only further encouraged exiled writers to transmute their anti-popular critique onto the country as a whole (see further Adelman, 1999: 184-189). In short, the entire political edifice of liberal state-making rested on eventually making the interior a "civilized" part of the nation, regardless of the costs.

Both as an intellectual and a president, Sarmiento also displayed a certain antipathy for the interests of the *porteño* oligarchy where these seemed to run up against his hyper-idealized national vision (see Peña, 2012: 289-290; 381-408). Nevertheless, there was some degree of political materiality which pushed the two logics into symbiosis. Buenos Aires and Entre Rios were yet far from being bourgeois Edens. Fragments of the old *rosista* social base coalesced in the Mitre era around the so-called Autonomist movement, which opposed to the liberal nation-building project by demanding the secession of Buenos Aires. This was on the tamer end of

discontent in the province. That the bizarre figure of Gerónimo "Tata Dios" Solané was able to accumulate a not insubstantial *gaucho* following some years later is but a particularly farcical and sanguinary reminder of what forms of revolt remained on the table well into the "era of Mitre" and beyond (see Rock, 2002: 80-88).[6] In Entre Rios, Urquiza appears to have inspired intense personal devotion among the *gauchos* and other popular classes of the province, a phenomenon which has not received nearly the same degree of scholarly attention as is the case for his opponent Rosas. After his assassination in 1870, two major revolts led by Ricardo López Jordan swept the province, but were suppressed by the national army of a state which by this time no longer had to launder its rule through any great *caudillo*.

In short, then, the new state which Mitre created could not consolidate its monopoly of violence over the pampas breadbasket without also doing so in the interior. Once born, the idea of Argentina took on a life of its own. The interior also offered some partners to the Unitarian (now the Liberal) Party, most notably the Taboada patrimonial family of Santiago del Estero, who were both ideologically aligned and could bring significant military resources to the task of national construction. Fundamentally, though, no state which did not fully control the entire territory which it (or at least, several other states of the same name) had been claiming in general outline for several decades could fully embody the claims to modernity at the heart of the liberal-Unitarian project. Economics were in the last instance, not really separate from these political stakes. Foreign investment would not flow to a nation that could not persuasively demonstrate on

[6] [6] Chilean-born, Solané spent some years wandering the pampas as a faith healer, during which he developed a violently xenophobic syncretic religion out of folk Catholicism, various different Indigenous traditions, and old Federalist symbology. In this new role as a "prophet," he began warning that the arrival of "Masonry" to Argentina would cause millenarian earthquakes and flooding to descend on southern Buenos Aires province and urged *gauchos* to "exterminate" the "foreigners" who were its vector. As a result, several dozen Basque and Italian immigrants were murdered in the area before Solané's followers were suppressed by the federal army and the prophet himself was killed by the vengeful relatives of a victim.

the world stage to have achieved internal peace and order, at least in sufficient measure to fulfill the basic prerequisites for statehood (Mazzuca, 2021: 196-199). This does not mean the powerful desire among Liberal partisans to see Argentina recognized among the family of "civilized" European nations simply reflected the priorities of the export elite to which many of them belonged; rather, in the last instance ideology and dependent capitalist development co-constituted one another. A cattle and sheep-driven export economy where *montoneras* from the west posed a constant threat to the security of privately-held livestock, not to mention the political integrity of the country as a whole, could not develop very far. But the issue of national dismemberment was bound up with the ambiguity of where "Argentina" or any other regional state actually began and ended, a problem stemming from the incomplete and contested division of the former viceroyalty. In trying to resolve this question, Mitre led his new country directly into the teeth of a continental disaster.

# *Three*

## *A Great Unknown War: The Guerra Guasú and Lost Alternatives*

*¿De qué me acusan estos anónimos papeleríos? ¿De haber dado a este pueblo una Patria libre, independiente, soberana? Lo que es más importante, ¿de haberle dado el sentimiento de Patria? ¿De haberla defendido desde su nacimiento contra los embates de sus enemigos de dentro y de fuera? ¿De esto me acusan? Les quema la sangre que haya asentado, de una vez para siempre, la causa de nuestra regeneración política en el sistema de la voluntad general. Les quema la sangre que haya restaurado el poder del Común en la ciudad, en las villas, en los pueblos; que haya continuado aquel movimiento, el primero verdaderamente revolucionario que estalló en estos Continentes.*

-- *Augusto Roa Bastos,* Yo, El Supremo

If the account of Platine state-formation up to now has seemed to privilege Argentina, it is no less by necessity than design. Argentina is the largest of the nation-states which eventually developed in the River Plate basin and thus its internal processes cannot be avoided even in a study ostensibly focused on the whole of this region. Moreover, as is by now abundantly clear, conflict dynamics in Argentina and Uruguay during the postindependence decades were one and the same, in the most literal sense that the same actors fought out their differences on both sides of the notional border created in 1825. Brazil is a Platine state only at one point of its vast geography, and a social formation marked by its colonial history of mining and plantation agriculture as well as the large-scale arrival of African slaves. As discussed in the first chapter, it is the relative absence of all three that characterized the colonial history of the Plata with irreducible effects on its postcolonial development. With the imposed economies of space making an overall study of Brazil impossible here in any case, it will be treated primarily as an external power intervening frequently in the region, which in any case it essentially was. Rio, the nineteenth-century Imperial seat, is a very long way from Buenos Aires and Montevideo. Rio

Grande do Sul will be discussed only insofar as developments occurred there that are germane to the eventual fates of its Hispanic neighbours.

That leaves Paraguay, which is relevant both as a comparative case study and because the geopolitical cataclysm which cut short its path to independent development also formed the irreducible backdrop of the final wave of *gaucho* armed challenges to the emerging liberal nation-state in neighbouring Argentina. Outside of the Plata and Brazil, the War of the Triple Alliance, Paraguayan War, or *Guerra Guasu* is perhaps most frequently discussed as a bizarre outlier of military history (see e.g., Pinker, 2012: 197), in which Paraguay lost 50% or more of its entire prewar population.[7] Both the pre- and postwar demographics of Paraguay remain the subject of significant controversy, of the scholarly as well as the nationalistic flavour, and in any case are very far outside the scope of this work beyond briefly noting that both archival studies and a vast array of contemporary accounts support the idea of a demographic catastrophe (see Warren and Warren, 1978: 31-33; 152; 160; Whigham and Potthast, 1999; Uriarte, 2019). Yet the

[7] This would make it much deadlier than other modern conflicts. For comparison, Soviet demographic losses resulting from the extremely genocidal Nazi invasion and partial conquest between 1940-45 are estimated at around 10% of prewar population (see Whigham and Potthast, Ibid.: 174). While under-researched, the Paraguayan anomaly may be neither as great nor inexplicable as it appears. If the relevant comparison is shifted from interstate wars *stricto sensu* to the other "Late Victorian Holocausts" of famine and epidemics accompanied colonial and agrarian capitalist penetration of the global South during the latter half of the nineteenth century, Paraguay stands out less. Indian states of equivalent or larger size and population to the South American republic recorded equally astonishing mortality levels due to a series of manmade famines under British rule, as did Ethiopia, Sudan, and several large Chinese provinces in their own respective socio-natural disasters during this period (see Davis, 2002: 6-11; 21-22; 41-47; 65-71; 128-140).

. The *Guerra Guasu* took place in a rare geographic and temporal window where one of the first "industrial" wars "met very high, preindustrial levels of morality from contagious disease. Mass starvation also set in when peasant food production in Paraguay collapsed during the final stages of the war. Like the American Civil War with which it nearly coincided, this was one of the earliest conflicts to feature mass conscription, rifled artillery and small arms, land mines, barbed wire, ironclad vessels, railroads, telegraphy, and aerial surveillance (via balloons). Although combat deaths were not the majority, they were clearly very high as evidenced by the massive sex imbalance found in postwar Paraguay (Warren and Warren, Ibid.). It should need no saying that that famine and disease do not exonerate the Allies of the charge of genocide, any more than they do the Spanish conquistadors. "Total" warfare against the civilian population and economy, mainly in rural areas, produced vulnerability to or simply caused these catastrophes in the first place.

Paraguayan conflict has also been treated as exceptional for the less morbid reason of its massive incongruity with the relatively pacific history of interstate relations in Latin America compared to other areas of the world (see e.g., Centeno, 2002: 56). To make the war into curiosity is, however, to implicitly avoid most of the need to explain it, and there are valid reasons to object to such a dismissal beyond simply historiographic or moral qualms. For at the end of the Triple Alliance conflict lies the end of deep contestation over the shape -- if any -- of Argentina, the abolition of monarchy and slaveholding in Brazil, export-driven political consensus in Uruguay, and the contemporary dysfunction and marginality of Paraguay itself. Regardless of the general peacefulness of Latin Americans in aggregate then, the Plata rang in the long twentieth century with arguably one of the first of its many genocides (see Chiavento, 1989; Civitillo, 2020), not to mention the largest interstate war ever fought in the Western Hemisphere. Why was this so?

*Indigenous and Jesuit preludes*

Explaining nineteenth-century Paraguay and the catastrophe that engulfed it with reference to much earlier history has a long and somewhat distasteful lineage. First, there are the usual risks associated with transhistorical reasoning. Second, when made contemporaneously and by Paraguayan and Argentine liberals well into the twentieth century, recourse to the Jesuit past comes via the clearly racist notion of a natural Guaraní "submissiveness" to authority. The extraordinary self-immolation of Paraguayan manhood in the 1860s here comes from total and unquestioning obeisance to a secular political leader (Francisco Solano López) just as was given to the priests of yore. Third, the significance of this chapter for the overall argument about political development comes from stressing what it views as the singularity of a social-revolutionary break that occurred in 1811. Nevertheless, three aspects of the precolonial and colonial history of Paraguay should be briefly discussed.

In spite of the general argument made in Chapter 1, it must be said that any *specifically Paraguayan* argument for a capitalist colonization seems extraordinarily difficult to justify, even with some definition of capitalism purely as commercial linkage. Colonial Paraguay had no export sector of any significance prior to the eighteenth century. Military, not economic, competition was the original reason for its settlement. Paraguay lacked mineral resources and was replete with severe obstacles to overland transport, but it was geographically-well placed to serve as a barrier between Spain and recalcitrant Indigenous nations further north, mainly the Guaicurú, and above all between Spain and Portugal (Whigham, 2018: 6-11). It is the garrison character of colonial Paraguay, as well as the absence of mineral resources there, that accounts for both the relative pacific treatment of the Guaraní and absence of capitalist social-property relations imposed from above by colonial authority. To recruit troops from an area of extremely low European population necessitated that its other residents be at least somewhat conciliated to Spanish rule and not overly hindered in their biological reproduction. Both ends were better-served by allowing the Indigenous peasant cultivator to retain access to land, rather than creating forced-labour *latifundia* which in any case would find nothing worthwhile to grow.

Paraguay is well-known for the distinction of being one of the few areas of colonial settlement where "language shift" entailed the adoption of an Indigenous language by Europeans, rather than vice versa. Explanations for why exactly this occurred must be left to linguists and historians. What must be noted in brief not just the trite observation that the imprint of Indigenous culture, community, and language on colonial society makes Paraguay unique, but also and more importantly that these probably provided an underlying basis for social cohesion that most other areas of Latin America were lacking on the eve of independence. Neither the extreme racial stratification of the Andes nor *gaucho* rugged individualism were very conducive

to nation-building, as has already been seen at length. Paraguay was born with a "national language" (see further Anderson, 2006: 132-140) which was in few areas made to compete with other languages or with Spanish, as the overwhelmingly rural population tended to be monolingual in Guaraní. The peasant-communitarian economy of rural Paraguay was not substantially undermined by market forces until the last century of colonial rule, creating, it can be assumed, an ingrained cultural memory of the more solidary forms of action which would subsequently be marshaled to great effect in building the new state.

Although the *encomienda* evidently made an appearance in colonial Paraguay, as the largely *mestizo* (though Guaraní-speaking) population is testament to the sexual prodigality of individual *encomenderos*, this form of landholding was secondary to ecclesiastical property. The famous Jesuit missions concentrated the majority of both population and arable land prior to the eighteenth century. These communities, of which Guaraní was the lingua franca, featured intensely paternalistic social relations centred on maintaining a notional three-way harmony between Indigenous societies, faith, and colonial geopolitics. Spain received loyal hearts and minds to garrison its frontier outpost, the Jesuit order managed to save a considerable number of souls, and the Guaraní retained access to traditional lands and resources while being insulated from the worst forms of colonial exploitation. While the reality was no doubt not so idyllic, the mission Guaraní quality of life probably compared quite favourably with that of other Indigenous populations in the post-conquest Americas. Moreover, it is difficult to assimilate the missions to capitalist, feudal, or otherwise-defined class society and the balance of evidence would suggest that they represented a genuinely sui generis bundle of social relations. Labour was not commodified – excepting that of African slaves, very much a secondary component of the mission workforce – resources were pooled collectively, and land was held either as peasant

freehold or in trust by the fathers (Garay, 1921). The phenomenon of export production by the missions is interesting but does not appear to have greatly altered the paternalistic arrangement.

While the torrent of anti-Jesuit measures on both sides of the Atlantic during the eighteenth century would seem to point to the Society being involved more broadly in political controversy, its expulsions from Brazil (1759) and Spanish America (1767) were not unrelated to the export-driven growth of commodity relations. The expansion of trade in hides brought long-standing mission communities into conflict with rising private *estancieros* on both sides of the ill-defined border between the Banda Oriental and Brazil's Rio Grande do Sul over the right to harvest diminishing feral herds (see further Sarreal, 2011). In Paraguay, land-grabbing at the expense of the missions arose as a supply response to increasingly market-mediated social reproduction in the Andean mining economies. Yerba mate was consumed much more widely in South America during the colonial period than in the present day, and like the coca leaf was appreciated by *mitayos* for its stimulant effects during shifts of unfathomably brutal labour (see Sarreal, 2022: 70-72). As the plant was not yet cultivated, it was essentially a stationary resource, limited to forests on mostly mission-held land in Paraguay and the Misiones, in recognition of which fact colonial regulations treated yerba incongruously as a "mineral" and the forests where it grew wild as "mines."

The secularization of the missions was followed by increased extraction of yerba via coercive labour arrangements, resulting in a major loss of population both as living standards worsened and flight from these communities increased among the Guaraní (White, 1975: 422-433; see also Anderson, 1992: 367-368). Yerba exports produced via a rudimentary planation-like economy helped the Spanish colonists of Paraguay, who had always been devoted enemies of the missions, to become what Chapter One termed colonial capitalists. However, this

population was small, and the profits to be made were modest compared with those in silver, sugar, or even hides. Some peninsular or otherwise European-born merchant capitalists also made their way to Asunción, although their presence was infinitesimal compared to at Buenos Aires, with its viceregal monopoly on all Platine Basin trade.

*Blanquism victorious, 1811-40*

On the eve of the unraveling of Spanish rule across the Americas, Paraguay had a profile which made it superficially resemble Andean societies, insofar as a minority of peninsular- and native-born whites derived its wealth and power from "mining" at the expense of a *mestizo* or Indigenous majority. However, to make such a comparison is to underplay the geographical isolation of the Paraguayan elite as well as the huge relative gaps in political acumen, education, military leadership, cultural sophistication, wealth, money, and demographic weight which separated it from its Peruvian counterpart. Additionally, the stark geographic isolation to which Asunción was perhaps uniquely subject compared to any city of similar size in the Americas bred even among its patricians an intense provincialism, with consequent apathy and naivete about world outside of Paraguay. All of the foregoing facts reflect the comparatively late origins and generally underdeveloped nature of capitalist class formation in colonial Paraguay.

Paraguayan elites remained somewhat passive, loyalist observers as revolution and civil war erupted all around them. Upon becoming conscious of the extent to which Spanish power in South America had become completely debilitated, Paraguay's colonial governor Bernardo de Velasco attempted to swear allegiance to Carlota Joaquina, the Portuguese queen then-resident in Brazil, so as to preserve some type of monarchic order. Such a plan ran into the intense anti-Brazilianism which pervaded all levels of Paraguayan society, and proposing it caused Velasco to be firmly if discreetly pushed out of office. In a country where possibly less than two dozen

adults had any experience of secular higher education (see Williams, 1979: 14-15), the various provisional governments which followed the soft coup of Velasco found themselves dependent upon a rare native-born attorney, Dr. José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia, for basic administrative functions and to carry out negotiations with Buenos Aires. Francia's clear indispensability restricted the range of options which his more conservative governing colleagues had to contain an influence which they quickly began to find distressingly radical.

Francia made a number of extended tours of the Paraguayan countryside in the years which followed de facto independence, part of what one sympathetic biographer calls a "political education" campaign. By 1813, he had become one of two governing consuls alongside a creole liberal, Fulgencio Yegros, although it rapidly became clear that any governing powers of the latter man existed in name only. His position now solidified, Francia began to make his social-revolutionary sympathies evident. A law of March 1814, which prohibited the *intra-racial* marriage of whites, represents a clear if strikingly original attack on both the social and biological reproduction of a Paraguayan landed elite. Later that year constituent assemblies organized by Francia officially declared the country an independent republic and made him its head of state and government, holding the post of Supreme Dictator. In 1816, another popular congress changed Francia's title to that of Perpetual Dictator and thus elevated him to lifetime office (see White, 1978: Chapters 3 & 4).

In spite of his prominence and favourable treatment in left-wing "revisionist" scholarship on nineteenth-century Latin America (see e.g., White, Ibid.; Trías, 1975; Burns, 1980a; Guerra, 1984; Pomer, 1987; Chiavenato, 1989; Galeano, 2006), no existing study provides information on the ideological matrix within which Francia operated except in fairly general detail. He obsessively consumed works associated with the more progressive wing of the French

Enlightenment, being particularly fond of those of Rousseau; and this fact presumably bears some kind of relation to the highly egalitarian thrust of his twenty-nine-year rule. Nevertheless, as neither the French nor most other Atlantic revolutions influenced by the same ideas moved very far towards a comparable *social* leveling, and thus the *Franciata* must be seen as a sui generis and above all *Paraguayan* development.

The concept of uneven and combined development provides one means of possible interpretation; once diffused to an extreme periphery like Paraguay, the leading edge of contemporary egalitarian thought could be carried much further than utopian socialists and Jacobins had been able to do in Europe (see Trotsky, 1957: 4-5). Dr. Francia here appears as reaping the advantage of "backwardness," specifically of a severely underdeveloped form of class rule which was unable to adapt and rearticulate itself following the collapse of Spanish power in the Americas. The fundamental weakness of the Paraguayan dominant classes allowed Francia to begin a social revolution from the top-down using the personal coup or conspiracy, a tactic which in subsequent decades would come in Europe to be associated with the name of Auguste Blanqui and face heavy deprecation from Marx. Paraguay, however, was not France; indeed, it was not even very much like the neighbouring Argentine province of Corrientes. A unique historical heritage provided an opportunity, rare if not equally unique, for a revolutionary project which would be more in place alongside the Soviet 1920s, or the China of the 1950s, than in the nineteenth-century world.

It is here that the vague formulation "ruling class" used throughout this section must be justified. Chapter Two strongly argued for the existence of a primarily capitalist landed elite in Argentina at the time of independence at the basis of most large property being dependent upon the Atlantic market for its reproduction as such. Whether this was the case in Paraguay, which

had no export sector of significance other than yerba, is substantially more debatable. No doubt many estates produced primarily for local consumption and were in the hands of men who were more interested in achieving and retaining local power through terror and paternalism exercised towards peons, than in making a profit on any market. Nevertheless, rather than make the analytically risky choice, heavily criticized in Chapter One, of reaching back four centuries and across an ocean to assimilate such dynamics to Iberian feudalism, it would be more judicious to issue two qualifications on the possibility of non-capitalist landed property in Paraguay. One, it may be safer to speak *of sui generis* forms of such property in Paraguay (or elsewhere in the New World) than to lean on medieval categories; particularly as lacked most of the social institutions that made up European seigneurialism and operated in a rural context where Guaraní ethical-political frameworks probably remained more powerful than imported ones. Two, a large wave of primitive accumulation surely did take place in Paraguay, less during the Conquest than much later with the secularization of mission lands. It was this late start, combined with the class struggle through flight waged by the Guaraní peasantry, geographic isolation, and the beginning of major political instability nearly in all export markets for yerba shortly after the first step in capitalist development had been achieved which account for absence of sustained capital accumulation in Paraguay.

The underlying weakness of inherited colonial property relations, absent either colonial rule or new support from the Atlantic market, paved their all-out dismantling in the era of Francia, a task to which he set with enthusiasm. The 1820 “conspiracy,” in which Yegros and a circle of wealthy creoles were discovered planning to depose Francia, provoked a harsh response in which Francia executed or threw into a dungeon most adult male members of the elite families of Asuncion. Such measures represented an effective classicide in effect of landed or commercial

property-holders in Paraguay, as this group was small and heavily concentrated in the capital (see further Williams, 1973). The following two decades were ones of internal peace and rising rural living standards, as Francia nationalized large estates and let their holdings to peasant cultivators in exchange for a nominal rent and commitment to work the land. Yerba, hardwoods, and cattle products were produced in rising quantities from "fatherland *estancias*" somewhat reminiscent of Soviet *kolkhozy*. Francia restricted the activities of the Catholic Church in the country, replacing its educational role with secular, Guaraní-language literacy campaigns aimed at the Paraguayan rural masses (White, 1978: 6-8; 69-72; 112-125; see also 76-79). Doubtlessly the practical impact of some of these policies has been overstated by later sympathetic authors, but they still represent a singular break with both old and rising systems of class rule in decolonizing Spanish America (Maestri, 2016: 246-250).

*Carlos Antonio López and issues of restoration*

Contemporary porteño and European authors were wont to describe Francia's Paraguay as an "inland Japan" in reference to the notorious and total isolation which that latter country maintained from the outside world until 1868. Nevertheless, argument that Paraguay was cloistered during the period of Supreme Dictatorship because of a single, tyrannical individual is both unprovable and dubious. Francia elaborated an extensive system of trade licensing, and at least some concessions were granted to private merchants for exporting the yerba production of state *estancias* (White, 1979: 9-11; see also Williams, 1972). This was means available to raise state revenues in the long-run once the supply of confiscable properties was exhausted, given that Francia was acutely sensitive to the impact higher taxation might have on his otherwise near-universal peasant support (see White, 1978: 108-109). Regardless of what policies were made in Asunción, however, both markets and commercial outlets for Paraguayan yerba severely

contracted with the end of colonial rule and this state of affairs did not much improve until some time after Francia's death. As with the provinces of the Argentine interior, the balkanization of the Viceroyalty of the River Plate cut Paraguay off completely from Andean markets. All exports downstream necessarily transited the Argentine province of Corrientes, a competing yerba producer which at various points subjected the Paraguayan product to prohibitive taxation. Most decisively, the regional entrepôts of Buenos Aires and Montevideo were mired in violent conflict for most of the first two decades that Francia held office, and the former was also controlled by Unitarian governments who generally opposed the recognition of Paraguayan independence. The later stabilization of Argentina under Rosas was only accompanied by a hardened irredentist line towards Paraguay, while the draconian restrictions on riverine navigation which Rosas enacted could not but have Paraguay as one of their major casualties (see Chapter Two).

Milcíades Peña interprets the Paraguayan developmental path during the period between independence and the *Guerra Guasu* as one of initiating "the assimilation of industrial capitalist civilization" under state control (Peña, 2012: 228). Before proceeding to examine this thesis of a state-capitalist "monopoly for development," a measure of critique is in order of any attempt to generalize from the later López governments to the Francia period. The idea of state capitalism seems of dubious interpretive value not only the context of a state committed to radical class leveling, but also one with little investment capital available to it (see further White, 1978: Appendix A). Peña's description does not fit the era of *El Supremo*, when whether by design or the absence of a favourable external conjuncture the state did not become a meaningful accumulator of capital but rather focused its developmental planning efforts inward on ending the domination of the Guaraní peasantry by a small *asunceño* elite. No doubt the redistribution of human resources thereby effected favoured industrial development by creating a stratum of small

producers well-off enough to eventually constitute an internal market. Other than some public works projects, however, the evidence for technical upgrading or infrastructural development under the Francia government is minimal. Instead, the "popular dictatorship" (White, Ibid.) was marked by an attempt to compensate for a distinct lack of capital and technology by deploying an egalitarian re-organization of rural class relations to better mobilize internal resources.

Revisionist accounts seem curiously unnoticing of the differences separating the regime of Francia from that of his successor, Carlos Antonio López, even though these are clear whatever the political significance accorded to them. The proto-industrialization for which prewar Paraguay is famous did not begin, and likely could not have taken place, in the time of *El Supremo*. Mario Maestri notes with some irony that the idea of a *francista* industrialization is oxymoronic, since creating an industrial proletariat requires basic separation of small agrarian producers from their means of subsistence, i.e., exactly the opposite goal from that which the Supreme Dictatorship tried to achieve (Maestri, 2016: 247). The case for a state capitalist model of development, in short, must rest on the López period in which state policy became increasingly oriented towards Paraguayan insertion into foreign trade and some compromise with the rigid egalitarianism of the Francia period likely occurred. López was one of the few wealthy creoles who escaped the post-1820 purges, possibly because he was a nephew of the Dictator. He spent the bulk of the *franciata* bunkered down in a country estate, re-emerging after El Supremo's death whereupon a popular congress elected him president. This, notably, represented a defeat for the unapologetic *francista* candidate Norberto Ortellado and thus signals at least a moderation of the revolutionary course in Paraguay (Maestri, Ibid: 244-245).

Although statistical data on prewar Paraguay is frustratingly lacking, it is likely that social stratification increased under López. The new president demonstrated a greater

appreciation for the benefits to be had from his office for himself and his family members than the notoriously austere and single Dr. Francia. The extended López clan steadily increased their private landholdings after Carlos Antonio assumed power, though the exact line between these and state property was usually somewhat unclear. Blatant, nepotistic privatization mainly occurred later with the massive wartime granting of state lands by Francisco Solano López to his notorious Irish mistress, Elisa Lynch, at a time when such decrees had already become totally meaningless. No doubt, several López children also received sinecures allowing some degree of rent-seeking behaviour (see Williams, 1979: 133; 174-175). But the absence of marked rural discontent under either López, combined with the loyalty which the Paraguayan popular classes later showed their government under truly extreme circumstances, indicate that the revolutionary advances made under Francia largely remained untouched.

The considerable diplomatic talents of Carlos Antonio were put to use reconciling various regional imperialist powers to the idea of an independent Paraguay, particularly Brazil but also Britain and France. Paraguay participated at least nominally in the Brazilian-led military effort against Rosas, whose ouster redounded sharply to its benefit as the Plata river system finally was reopened to trade. Profits from the ensuing boom in exports, mainly of yerba, were reinvested in various infrastructure projects including railroads, telegraph lines, shipyards, arsenals, and the state-owned iron foundry at Ybycuí. As part of this modernization drive, López the elder also imported at least several dozen British technicians via a contract with the engineering firm Blyth Brothers, tasked with training young Paraguayans to use and then replicate these pieces of industrial modernity (see further Williams, 1977). Here, then, Peña's argument that the state acted as a "collective capitalist" to move the Paraguayan economy beyond agro-commodity exports and thus have it "escape from the periphery" (Batou, 1993) takes on some valence. If

such a thing as capitalist development without external dependency in Latin America is indeed possible, Szlajfer (1986) may be correct to see in the López family the nucleus of the future capitalist class of a strong, autonomous Paraguay.

While the *quantitative* extent of Paraguayan "industrialization" has been clearly exaggerated by later revisionist authors, its story nevertheless deserves a central place in any discussion of what progressive alternatives were available to the newly independent states of Latin America. The railroad infrastructure built under López, for instance, was lesser in terms of sheer kilometres of track laid to that of neighbouring Brazil at the same time. But unlike the Brazilian or Argentine railways, those of Paraguay were constructed with the end goal of linking together a national economy rather than simply to move primary commodities to market faster and in larger quantities. Capitalist growth in Brazil and most other countries in Latin America covered up the underlying absence of real *development*, of technological and economic improvements propelled by a force other than the diktats of wealthy foreign markets (Burns, 1980b: 206-212). Ybycuí had begun to produce an increasing range of civilian goods and machine tools by the late 1850s, anticipating import-substitution by almost a full century (see further Whigham, 1978). Whether Paraguayan capital accumulation under the state aegis would have eventually resulted in the restoration of capitalist relations in the rural sector is a question which is impossible to answer, as its "developmental state" (used anachronistically, see i.e., Johnson, 1982) was consumed in blood and fire long before such questions became pressing or indeed relevant.

*Brazil, a 19$^{th}$ century sub-imperial power*

If for Marx, tsarist Russia was the "gendarme" of reaction in Europe, the Empire of Brazil played a curiously similar role, albeit on a smaller stage, in South America. Both were

territorially vast polities with uncertain frontiers. Their political systems were dominated by an emperor, and societies by a titled aristocracy that seems bizarrely out-of-place in a post-French Revolution world. Less speciously, the dominant political and social issue by far in both societies was how the clearly inevitable abolition of longstanding forced-labour regimes – African slavery and serfdom, respectively – might be managed so as to have a minimal cost for elites (Baronov, 2000: Chapter 3). In both empires, agro-export booms – wheat in Russia, coffee in Brazil – both greatly accelerated capital accumulation and undermined traditional productive organizations in agriculture. More pertinent for the present purpose is that in stark contrast to later narratives of its pacific history, during the "Second Empire" of Pedro II (Burns, 1980b), Brazil displayed no small willingness to intervene militarily in and against the surrounding new republics of Spanish America. Its counterrevolutionary military campaigns against Artigas, and later the Rosas government in Argentina, have already been discussed at some length (see Chapter 2: 40-42; 57-59). Though Rosas was evidently no revolutionary, it is doubtful that the intervention in support of Urquiza was motivated by freeing the people of the Argentine Confederation from "tyranny" so much as by preventing any other power from asserting control of the Plata river system. This was the core interest of Brazilian imperialism in the region, to which Pedro II devoted vastly more attention than any of the Empire's many other frontiers and their associated disputes.

Revisionist authors have left themselves open to being called "conspiratorial" through making the well-known charge that Britain provoked and benefited from the Paraguayan War without producing studies that explain how precisely its hegemonic world role interfaced with local capitalist development in Brazil and Argentina. While in Paraguay, the revindication of Francisco Solano López has come at least since the Stroessner years to be associated overtly with right-wing nationalism (see Blair, 2024: 245-247), the lineage of Argentine revisionism is both

less obviously problematic and more complex. It is a historiographic tradition intimately bound up with a politics of "middle-class economic nationalism" which Marxism both in the national academy and in the Argentine street has greatly struggled to define its separate existence from (Bergquist, 1986: 145-149; 187-188). In Brazil, revisionist views have penetrated far less than in surrounding Hispanic countries and "patriotic" apologism for the Imperial war effort remains relatively normative, particularly in times of increased political revanchism (Maestri, 2016: 330-331; see also Haddad, 2018).

Nevertheless, a historical materialist reading of the War of the Triple Alliance offers much in the way of capping off the account of interconnected capitalist and political development laid out thus far and helps to relate both to a broader *problématique* of imperialism and world order. The conflict did have a proximate economic trigger, less in any direct British machinations related to cotton (see e.g. Hobsbawm, 1996: 142) than in the rapid growth of capital accumulation in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul in the years immediately prior to its outbreak. Rio Grande's separatist revolt, the so-called *Farroupilha*, ended in the mid-1840s by a combination of central military suppression and generous protectionist concessions to the rebels. Previously, *Riograndense* jerked beef had been non-competitive within the Empire itself with that of Buenos Aires, Entre Rios, and the Banda Oriental, where land and other production costs were significantly lower (see Mazzuca, 2021: 264-268). Political intervention to create a favourable market position for Rio Grande coincided fortuitously with a sharp increase in the cost of reproducing labour in the Brazilian slave economy, as the global British anti-slavery campaign whittled down the shipment of replacement captives and eventually forced the Empire to ban the slave trade outright in 1850. As profits soared, *Riograndense* ranchers expanded their enterprises southwards towards the cheaper and

richer grazing lands of Uruguay. By the late 1850s, domination of the Uruguayan economy from Rio Grande had become an established fact, the cause of both sharply rising rural inequality in the former and of political tensions between Brazilian expatriate landowners and the nationalist Uruguayan *Blanco* government. When the exiled warlord Venancio Flores launched his peculiar "crusade" against the *Blancos*, almost certainly with backing from the Mitre government in Argentina, it provided a golden opportunity for the Empire to install a Uruguayan regime more conciliatory towards Brazilian capital (Pomer, 1987: 59-61; Peña, 2012: 236-239).

The Brazilian invasion of Uruguay carried the implicit threat to Paraguay of Brazilian territorial expansionism, which possibly accounts for Francisco Solano López's curious rhetoric about upholding a regional "balance of power," and the explicit one that Paraguay could be deprived of the port access which the friendly Blanco government provided it through Montevideo (Guerra, 1984: 135-138). The logic which motivated Solano López to preemptively attack Brazil and Argentina in response is outside the scope of this work, other than to note that it was likely based much more on faulty assumptions about the rising Argentine polity than some sort of Napoleonic delusion. Common wisdom that Urquiza remained antagonistic to and would in the future "break" (see Mazzuca, 2021: 196-197) the *porteño*-led state-building project was reinforced in the mind of Solano López by his somewhat extensive personal correspondence with the *entrerriano* leader. As made clear in the last chapter, and proven by subsequent events, there was however no incentive in terms of rational self-interest for an operator such as Urquiza to break with the Mitre government after 1861. Indeed, Urquiza reaped huge profits from the destruction of Paraguay as a sort of nineteenth-century "defence contractor" who supplied the Allied armies with food and horses. Although some anti-war *gaucho* resistance appears to have taken place in Entre Rios (see Pomer, 1985: 37-43), it was disorganized in comparison with the

revolts of the impoverished Andean interior. Here, the struggle against commodity relations in the rural economy led by Ángel Vicente "Chacho" Peñaloza earlier in the 1860s was recapitulated in the context of forcible recruitment of *interiorano gaucho*-peasants into an overwhelmingly unpopular war. Felipe Varela, a Chilean-born cattle-rustler, was the perhaps unlikely figure who sparked the fire of a last great *montonera* that was especially strong in the provinces of La Rioja, Mendoza, and Catamarca, and which forced Mitre to reallocate much of his army away from the war theatre with Paraguay (de la Fuente, 2000: 169-176).

Brazil never accounted for less than an absolute majority of the forces brough to bear against Paraguay and almost all of them after the disastrous Battle of Curupayty in 1866,[8] as well as internal unrest, caused Argentina and Uruguay to downgrade their participation. The majority of its troops were either freedmen or recent slaves, some "donated" to the Imperial military by patriotic owners. It is not accidental that the greatest war fought by Brazil coincided with arguably its most dramatic historical inflection point, the crisis and slow demise of slavery. The intransigence of Pedro II and his councilors, which along with ferocious Paraguayan resistance prolonged the conflict far beyond all predictions, may have been related to a desire to delay the return of thousands of militarily experienced Black men who justly felt that service entitled them

[8] Similarly to the Charge of the Light Brigade, or perhaps more to the assault led by Confederate General Pickett at Gettysburg during the U.S. Civil War ("Pickett's Charge"), this was one of those poignant moments of nineteenth-century warfare in which a traditional infantry/cavalry advance was annihilated by artillery at close range. Allied losses were some 4-5 thousand, while Paraguay suffered only a few dozen casualties largely in a Brazilian naval bombardment preceding the battle. This was intended to destroy the strong Paraguayan defensive position at Curupayty, but as a result of commanding Adm. Tamandaré's fear of anti-naval fire from the upstream Paraguayan fortress of Humaitá, the Brazilian vessels did not sail far enough for the Curupayty artillery park to be in range of their own guns and thus caused it minimal damage. Substantial Paraguayan ingenuity was also displayed in the placing and concealment of guns.

In spite of their prior (if narrow) defeat at the Battle of Boquerón del Sauce earlier in the year, and the if unsuccessful then undeniably extraordinary display of Paraguayan defensive mettle at the First Battle of Tuyutí – the largest in South American history – Curupayty deeply shocked the Allies. It led to bitter recriminations between the Argentine and Brazilian military and political leaderships, the resignation of Bartolome Mitre as Allied supreme commander and his replacement with the Brazilian Marquis de Caxias, the substantial radicalization of anti-war opinion in Argentina and Uruguay, a marked decline in martial enthusiasm in Brazil itself, and the unofficial pausing of Allied offensive operations for over a year (see Whigham, 2017: 108-118).

to full citizenship (see Leuchars, 2002: 216). But ultimately, domestic politics cannot provide the full explanation for why it was Brazil that waged a war of conquest out of any proportion to the early Paraguayan violation of its frontiers and eventually proceeded to colonial-type genocide in order to liquidate Paraguayan resistance (Civitillo, 2020: 103-104).

Ruy Mauro Marini, writing in the context of a different century, nevertheless offers one possible means of conceptualizing the Empire of Brazil's armed intervention:

> …the relatively autonomous exercise of an expansionist policy, which is not just accompanied by deeper integration with the imperialist productive system, but which also remains within the framework of imperialist hegemony as exercised on an international scale. (Marini, 1977: 208).[9]

London banks reliably furnished the Allies with very large loans throughout the war years, allowing them to continue to grind down Paraguay in even as the economies of all three contracted severely in the face of external and internal conflict (Pomer, 1987: Chapter 8; see also 236-240). These can roughly be mapped onto the intensity of fighting and the scale of individual war efforts; thus, Brazil contracted the largest absolute debt, and the largest disbursements were made in 1867, when the Allied war effort appeared in crisis after the crushing Paraguayan victory at Curupayty. Such debts are one indication that the *Guerra Guasu* accelerated "the integration of the River Plate basin into the British world economy" (Hobsbawm, 1996: 78), and to see them as far from incidental to the conflict does not require an instrumentalist belief in sinister plots cooked up by Whitehall. All of the Allies understood and explained their war goals through the hegemonic discourses of British imperialism; thus the "barbarism" of Paraguay consisted precisely in its having adopted a development model incompatible with private property and free trade (Peña, 2012: 247-252).

[9] Translated from the Spanish by author.

Peace saw the Paraguayan economy substantially denationalized and brought under the control of British or Anglo-Argentine capital (Baraibar Norberg, 2020: 69-72; see also Abente, 1989), though any idea that British interests in the War of the Triple Alliance lay mainly in the slim prize of Paraguay *itself* is risible. Also dubious is the thesis that Ybycuí would have made Paraguay an industrial competitor to Great Britain in anything besides the very long term (see further Pastore, 1994: 309-311). The goal of the Allies was simply to destroy the prewar Paraguayan state, which coincided with the interest of Great Britain in creating the geopolitical conditions whereby South America could supply the cheap agro-food commodities that were sine qua non of expanded capital accumulation in its world-beating industrial sector (see Marini, 1981: 16-27). Thence the finance, arms and diplomatic support – the argument that Allied loans were given by private actors (see e.g., Abente, 1987: 38-39), not Whitehall, only demonstrates further the expansionary thrust of British capital in the Plata, aside from being overall a non sequitur rebuttal to the "imperialist thesis." However, the Argentine and Brazilian states interfaced with British imperialism in somewhat different ways.

The wars of primitive accumulation which the Argentine state fought in order to precipitate an "informal empire" (Panitch and Gindin, 2012: 5-7) of British capital in South America were mainly directed against its own recalcitrant population. It has already been discussed at length why this was the case. Imperial Brazil, by contrast, owing to its far larger demographic size, greater political stability, and the extraordinary dynamism of accumulation in its major export sector (coffee), was capable of forming a sub-empire in relation to its own continent and to London. The Imperial government practiced a "relative autonomy" vis-à-vis the hegemonic power if its diktats clashed with local capitalist interests, as they did most prominently in the demands for an immediate cessation of slavery and the slave trade, which

Brazil resisted actively for several decades. Nevertheless, the dependent export economy created by slavery was owned by British investors and dependent on British consumers until the twentieth century, when British predominance in Brazil gave way to that of the United States (Burns, 1980b: 302). British informal empire in Argentina, however, survived until at least the First World War, and in the decades separating that "Great War" from its lesser-known South American counterpart Argentine grain and beef exports continually increased their relative importance in the British consumption basket.

*Conclusion: The three genocides of Platine modernity*

León Pomer succinctly describes the Paraguayan War as:

> …a decisive moment in the constitutive process of the [Argentine] state. It accomplishes the dual function of exterminating internal resistances and external models incompatible with the state under construction. (Pomer, 1985: 253).[10]

Thus, there is a direct link between the annihilation of the Guaraní Republic and the elimination of the *gaucho* – not of the occupational category, but as an independent social force which he represented, the pampas nomad outside of capitalism. Jorge Niebuhr (2021) recapitulates these two moments of eliminationist violence and adds a third – the genocidal removal of the remaining Indigenous people of the pampas in the so-called "Conquest of the Desert" of the early 1880s. After breaking down resistance from its own *criollo* population, and seeing Paraguay reduced to ruins, the interlocking political, military, and agro-export elites of Argentina turned their gazes south to sweep their new nation of its last group resisting the expansion of commodity relations – its original inhabitants. *La Campaña del Desierto* occurred after the liberal state-form had finally come into being in Argentina. Its edifice was established after 1861 and faced a final great challenge from internal rebellion during the War of the Triple

[10] Translated from the Spanish by author.

Alliance (1864-70). Nevertheless, the Desert campaign – led by a veteran of the Paraguayan battlefields, Julio A. Roca, and conducted with the most modern British and North American firearms -- is an appropriately sombre place with which to end the tracing of events. In its wake came a level of prosperity from the export of primary commodities – at least other than oil – that has never been replicated, and which would serve to obscure the dependent reality of Argentine capitalism until the third decade of the following century (cf. Bayer, 1980; Webber, 2015).

# *Conclusion*

*For by art is created that great LEVIATHAN called a COMMONWEALTH, or STATE (in Latin, CIVITAS), which is but an artificial man, though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defence it was intended; and in which the sovereignty is an artificial soul, as giving life and motion to the whole body; the magistrates and other officers of judicature and execution, artificial joints; reward and punishment (by which fastened to the seat of the sovereignty, every joint and member is moved to perform his duty) are the nerves, that do the same in the body natural; the wealth and riches of all the particular members are the strength; salus populi (the people's safety) its business; counsellors, by whom all things needful for it to know are suggested unto it, are the memory; equity and laws, an artificial reason and will; concord, health; sedition, sickness; and civil war, death.*

-- *Thomas Hobbes*

This thesis has sought to offer a relational perspective linking state-formation, local class struggles, and the shifting dynamics of capitalism on a world-scale through an examination of how and why nation-state organization came to the Plata region of South America. As has been seen, independence from Spain did not lead to the formation of stable polities anywhere except for Paraguay. Here, the curious fusion of Jacobin ideals with a possibly unique survival of Indigenous socio-linguistic heritage led to the rise of a sui generis non-capitalist modernity which was annihilated with the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-70), after which Paraguay assumed its present marginalization in the global political economy. Argentina saw a specifically *liberal* state erected by the late-nineteenth century. This designation refers not so much to the actual presence of representative democracy – Argentine elections were massively fraudulent until after the secret-ballot law of 1912 – as the extraordinarily credulous commitment of policy-markers to the free play of market forces. Argentine leaders of all parties, from Mitre until the rise of Unión Cívica Radical in the next century, accepted the self-serving ideology of free-trade propounded by hegemonic Britain to a far greater degree than their counterparts in the United

States or the self-governing Dominions (Canada and Australia). Basic aspects of industrial policy, such as coordinating a national railway sector, which occurred in the latter were happily ignored by successive Argentine governments (see further Scalabrini Ortiz, 1995).

Thus, an earlier history of state-formation explains why the global boom in temperate agrarian exports of the late nineteenth century gave way in Argentina to external dependence and stagnation, while birthing high-wage consumer economies in other parts of the Americas and in Oceania. To inflict a degree of torture upon Tilly's (1990) well-known formulation, it might be said that the Argentine state made peripheral capitalism, and peripheral capitalism made the Argentine state. Both the form and content of nation-building under Mitre reflects the victory of a landed and commercial capitalist bloc which stood to benefit from a "growth without development" (see Burns, 1980b) linked to external rather than internal demand. An internationally stratified world-system explains the impetus for such a political project, but not its specific content or how and why it succeeded. This basic finding is relevant not only to the study of Latin American states and political economies but also may contribute to the resolution of enduring methodological questions within historical materialism. Some of its implications for future research agendas are summarized in what remains of this Conclusion.

*States, war, and global integration*

Capitalism, a systemic *totality* which Marxian scholarship contends can provide for the coherent organization of empirical data, has appeared here in a series of prefixes – commercial, colonial, agrarian, pastoral, industrial, peripheral. "Phases," or some version thereof of conceptual breaks *internal* to capitalism, will be discussed in the following section. But the above study began with a *geographic* rather than *temporal problématique* concerning capitalist development, even if the former logically follows some of its arguments. We return, then, to

where we started – with the drainage basin of Earth's widest river, created as the Parana and Uruguay rush down from highland forests, through the fertile steppe, until finally they join and flow together towards a meeting with the Atlantic. The great controversy within Argentine historiography – one that extends far, far beyond scholarly debate, and really subsumes all the others – is why commodity-driven growth and massive immigration during the late nineteenth century did not translate into enduring wealth as they did elsewhere:

> in the advanced countries, although the supply of labor was relatively less excessive than in the underdeveloped ones, progress was not reflected until about 1880 in stable prices and increasing wages: throughout the nineteenth century prices went on falling at the center of the world system. in the formations of central capitalism the predominant form of income is capitalist profit, whereas in those of peripheral capitalism it is often the rent drawn by the landowners, who form the class that mainly benefits from integration into the international market. In a capitalist economy, profits constitute the elastic income that responds most readily to variations in the conjuncture. The exceptional profits realized in a period of prosperity are reinvested. The release of labor due to technical progress is partially compensated by the extra demand for labor for producing capital goods. (Only partially, for the entrepreneur is interested in making an innovation only if the saving of labor is greater· than the additional expenditure of capital.) In an agrarian economy integrated into the international market, the situation is different. The rents of the landowners, which rise in a period of prosperity, are not invested but spent (and, to a very large extent, spent on imported goods). Progress in agricultural productivity is not compensated, even partially, by an increasing demand for labor for the making of capital goods. The latter, which are imported, are ·paid for by part of additional exports they make possible. The surplus of labor is therefore relatively larger. Added to this fundamental cause of relative underemployment are other causes closely connected with the nature of the system, such as the ruining of craftsmen by foreign industry, a catastrophe that is not made up for by the development of a local industry, so that the system has to recover its balance by excluding a large proportion of the population from production. (Amin, 1976: 170-171).

Pause. Amin is here quoted for a concise definition of the distinction between core/centre and periphery under capitalism, the categories which form the very *essence* of world-systems analysis. Its great merit is to convincingly argue that capitalism is polarizing on an international scale, and to have given this simple insight a great degree of theoretical rigour that it did not

have when originally articulated by Raul Prebisch and the dependency school. Amin's definition is obviously an ideal type; it is also somewhat schematic, as might be gleaned from the historical case study. Investment and rent, productivity and plunder, technology and "backwardness," wage and coercion have existed and coexisted in a dizzying variety of combinations depending on time and place. He certainly echoes some essential feature of Argentine capitalism today: high differential rent, low industrial productivity, and underemployment in large measure drive its continued cycles of economic stagnation and political crisis (cf. Carrera, 2006). Still, to stereotype the Argentine dominant elite of today as parasitic landed rentiers a la Perón would clearly be an absurd oversimplification; it would even be so in Paraguay where twentieth-century industrialization was minimal and rural land concentration is potentially the highest in the world (see Baraibar Norberg, 2020: 241). But the issue which hangs over everything is why Argentine capitalist development was *peripheral* to begin with.

The historical case study ends off before the Argentine economic boom of the late nineteenth century and resulting massive inflow of European immigrants. Their legacy is most visible today in the country's demographics and the Parisian architecture of Buenos Aires, but per-capita incomes are no longer the highest in the world; nor clearly higher even than elsewhere in historically impoverished Latin America. And yet other countries which received similar human and capital inflows from the Old World during the same time period remain opulent. The relevant comparison here seems to be less the United States, which industrialized much earlier relying upon, and later excising an *internal* periphery in the slave South. But the so-called "White Dominions" of the British Empire, Canada and Australia were similar to Argentina in growing on the basis of European demand for food and raw materials. If Victorian Britain was the greatest consumer market of its age, it is not obvious that having a shared linguistic heritage

and direct political linkage made all the difference. Argentina was described as an "honorary Dominion" by late Victorian contemporaries for its share in British overseas investment (Belich, 2009). Yet the latter are today high-income members of the global North, while Argentina is decidedly not. One explanation for the divergence lies in social-property relations:

> Land distribution was a basic difference in those countries, especially in Argentina, in comparison with the case of North America. While in the United States the distribution of land happened in a less concentrated way over a long period, in Argentina the extreme concentration of land possession, particularly lands taken from indigenous peoples, made impossible any type of democratic social relations among the whites themselves. Instead of a democratic society capable of representing and politically organizing into a democratic state, what was constituted was an oligarchic society and state, only partially dismantled after World War II. In the Argentinean case, these determinations were undoubtedly associated with the fact that colonial society, above all on the Atlantic coast (which became hegemonic over the rest), was lightly developed, and therefore its recognition as seat of a viceroyalty came only in the second half of the eighteenth century. Its rapid transformation in the last quarter of the eighteenth century as one of the more prosperous areas in the world market was one of the main forces that drove a massive migration from southern, eastern, and central Europe in the following century. But this migratory population did not find in Argentina a society with a sufficiently dense and stable structure, history, and identity to incorporate and identify themselves with it, as occurred in the United States. (Quijano, 2000: 562-563).

Quijano refers to the United States, but his essential point holds true in the aforementioned Dominions. Australia developed "democratic land distribution" following the abolition of convict labour and state action against the system of large graziers "squatting" on public land (McMichael, 1984), which notably resembles Argentine *enfiteusis*. In Canada the route was possibly more circuitous, but if the unique national, Church, and baronial oppressions of Quebec are left aside momentarily a similar picture emerges. The smashing of the Métis in 1885 was the key moment which opened a different New World steppe to settlement and created a large stratum of smallholders, whose demand could form an internal stimulus to economic development (see Schmidt, 1981). Here a particular history of war and state-formation reemerges

as decisive, even though this study does not purport to comparatively analyze the Dominions in any depth. It merely demonstrates, if successful, that the Argentine civil wars and deeply related international conflagration of the Paraguayan War led to the victory of a historic bloc consisting of the beneficiaries from a peripheral form of capitalist development.

Therefore, the identification of a *colonial* starting point for peripheral development in the Plata is something of a red herring. Milcíades Peña caustically dismisses the "superiority" of English over Spanish colonization en route to arguing that both were "capitalist" (see e.g., 2012: 70-73). This characterization was substantially affirmed in chapter 1, but colonial social relations were not *evenly capitalist everywhere*. It is difficult to see the pampas, at least before the late eighteenth century, as much other than one of Wallerstein's "external arenas:" involved in some level of commercial interchange with capitalism, but ultimately independent of it. This was the sparsely-populated realm of *gaucho* and Indigenous subsistence economies, whose defeat by fire and sword was coterminous with the story of Argentine nation-building. Peripheralization was a quintessentially political and geopolitical process, in which the agency of local actors within a global systemic totality is what made all the difference. For Andre Gunder Frank et. al., the difference between colonial and peripheral capitalism is only that the latter is a broader reality which does not necessarily involve direct political domination. And that may be somewhat truer in the Andes or Central America, where the *latifundio* and racialized labour coercion were consolidated under Spanish rule and survived independence. For the pampas, however, the story of postcolonial state- and war-making is also that of incorporation into global capitalism.

Finally, whither liberalism? This thesis opened by describing the narrative of anti-developmental trade and economic openness promulgated by the "revisionist" historiography of Argentina that was later mostly adopted by the dependency school. If revisionist arguments have

been heavily challenged on factual grounds, especially by the robust Anglophone economic history of Argentina, this is about more than just neoclassical bias. Revisionist literature is polemic and populist, and many of its conclusions are questionable; laudatory treatments of Juan Manual de Rosas as an economic nationalist are especially at odds with historical reality. It describes *class* realities which "middle-class economic nationalism" sometimes fails to name as such; the adoption of free-trade was the outcome of victory by a specific set of agrarian export interests in an earlier struggle for state power during the nineteenth century. Paraguay might have followed the example of contemporary Japan, mobilizing peasant surpluses for industrialization beyond a heavy protectionist wall, had it not been for the *Guerra Guasu*. Liberalism is a vague term borrowed from revisionism, but it effectively labels a specific moment of incorporation into global capitalism and the type of state which oversaw it in the Plata.

*The conceptual necessity of accumulation regimes*

The divide within historical materialism between Political Marxism (PM) and world-systems analysis (WSA) stems from debates which took place during the 1970s concerning the origins of capitalism. This work has approached the question of periodization only gingerly. It agrees with the world-systems account in seeing capitalist social relations as distinct by the early modern period of western European history, as opposed to much later, and in describing the first colonial "discoveries" as both cause and outcome of the emergence of capitalism. However, a profound influence from the opposing camp should also be visible, in the emphasis on how concrete struggles, rather than any abstract "systemic" logic, have been responsible for particular historical outcomes in the modern world. What emerges, then, is a world-systemic account which refuses to take the functionalist "out" of implicitly conflating an overall model of international economic stratification with one of geopolitics and the interstate system, appropriate for all times

and places where capitalist relations are present. Utility in periodizing geopolitical transformations over the past five hundred years of human history must therefore fall to some sort of mid-order concept that is not simply capitalism or non-capitalism.

Where referring to such a concept by name was unavoidable, this thesis has used the phrase "regime of accumulation," originated by Aglietta (1979) mainly in reference to changing economic policy in the United States. The same English term can nevertheless be used fruitfully with a geopolitical, rather than narrowly "institutionalist," meaning:

> Historically, growth along a single developmental path and shifts from one path to another have not been simply the unintended outcome of the innumerable actions undertaken autonomously at any given time by individuals and the multiple communities into which the world-economy is divided. Rather, the recurrent expansions and restructurings of the capitalist world-economy have occurred under the leadership of particular communities and blocs of governmental and business agencies which were uniquely well placed to turn to their own advantage the unintended consequences of the actions of other agencies. The strategies and structures through which these leading agencies have promoted, organized, and regulated the expansion or the restructuring of the capitalist world-economy is what we shall understand by regime of accumulation on a world scale. The main purpose of the concept of systemic cycles is to describe and elucidate the formation, consolidation, and disintegration of the successive regimes through which the capitalist world-economy has expanded from its late medieval sub-systemic embryo to its present global dimension. (Arrighi, 2010: 9-10)

An obvious drawback of the Arrighian "regime of accumulation" is its conceptual articulation only at the level of a global "capitalist world-economy." Nevertheless, its use at the level of individual Latin American realities finds precedent in the work of Bolivian sociologist Lorgio Orellana Aillón (2006), who periodizes three distinct eras of the Bolivian export economy and finds them giving rise to specific forms of state and external integration. Following Aillón, we can roughly distinguish five such "regimes" over the history of what is now Argentina. The first regime would be that of the colonial period, in which *gaucho*, peasant, and artisan producers in the Argentine northeast – as well as non-capitalist Jesuit communities further north – supplied

some inputs to the Potosí mining complex. While present-day Argentina therefore had an umbilical with early modern capital accumulation, a condition of actual market dependence (see Wood, 2002) was uncommon, especially on the pampas. Here, superabundant wild or easily stolen beef on the hoof obviated the need for an income to survive and gave rise to a moral economy of *gaucho* individualism which would serve as the basis for subsequent resistance to the imposition of capitalist labour discipline. Second was an extensive-pastoral regime based on the export of raw hides and whose central institution was a capitalist *estancia* (ranch) that was, paraphrasing Braudel, "vast but weak." As the lever of accumulation in extensive grazing was to further expand the size of herds, rather than to enclose or "improve" land, the *gaucho* was able to survive in its interstices. Pastoralism thus mitigated the antagonisms between gauchos and *estancieros* while intensifying their mutual hostility to urban commercial capital, creating the multiclass social base which sustained Juan Manuel de Rosas in power for a quarter-century.

Wool began to replace hides in the mid-1840s and was an early demonstration of how the singular incentives of extensive grazing posed a hindrance to the development of other rural export sectors. After the Unitarian victory at Pavón, a state which was able to guarantee the twin pillars of British capital and European immigration oversaw the development of an intensive-agrarian regime of accumulation based on the export of wool, grain, and eventually premium beef. Under this regime, Argentina experienced very rapid demographic and population growth which slowed as commodity prices declined through the interwar period and then stopped when they collapsed altogether in 1929. Argentine industrialization had begun earlier in the century with the rise of premium-beef exports and consequently of a local meatpacking sector, which concentrated the urban working-class base of Peronism. Import-substitution under Perón responded to a widespread disillusionment with economic liberalism against the lower and

middle orders of Argentine society and created protected market space for the development of national, primarily light, industry (see Bergquist, 1986: 87-101). The succeeding "neoliberal" military dictatorships represented crucial continuities in industrial accumulation in Argentina, which could not be sustained absent state interventionism. Right-wing "developmentalism" was similar under Frondizi, Onganía, and the sinister *Proceso de Reorganización Nacional*, resting on the effort to increase defence exports and crush labour unrest in the faltering auto sector (see further Gómez, 2019: 44-48). The fifth, and latest regime has been one of "re-primarization" that began with comprehensive privatization and market opening under Menem and was later supercharged by Chinese demand. Its defining features – loss of industrial jobs, a steep rise in informal labour, and the monocultural production of Roundup-Ready soybeans for export – have been reinforced in different ways by the Kirchner, Macri, and now Milei governments (Mempel et. al., 2024; see additionally Baraibar Norberg, 2020).

*Coda: Incorporated comparison, Marx, and historicism.*

Chapter One's account of colonial capitalism in Latin America differs at least from that put forth by Frank in its refusal to make sweeping truth claims (e.g., that Latin America "was" or "became" "capitalist" at a certain point in time). Following Thompson (1966), it conceives of capitalist social relations as everywhere the outcome of a specific historical process, rather than as a quantifiable "thing." If the foregoing study is at all convincing to skeptics of the world-systems account, it will hopefully be so due to this difference. More broadly than its choice of periodizing regimes *internal* to capitalism, this work has been premised on a somewhat syncretic version of historical materialism. Capitalist social relations probably emerged first in the late medieval Mediterranean; they were evident in post-conquest Latin America on a far larger scale than contemporaneously anywhere else via African slavery and the Andean mining complex. To

say so is *not* to anachronistically classify all social and political dynamics adjacent to these early frontiers as "capitalist;" or at least it need not be so. It has been seen above how every stage of the expansion of commodity relations into the South American continental interior generated new political regimes and ways of allocating violence. But throughout, the narrative seeks to avoid treating states as *functionally* capitalist and instead links their emergence to specific historical struggles of groups of people located at a particular time and place.

The method thereby followed is not original but a take on McMichael's "incorporated comparison" (1990). What results is consonant with the considered treatment Sergio Bagú and Perry Anderson's (2013) give to the complex interplay of feudal and capitalist relations in driving colonial expansion by the Absolutist state, and with Jason W. Moore's (2015) argument that capitalism relies on the constant presence of an "outside" or "frontier" into which it is can expand in the event of falling profitability. Capitalism has a differentia specifica or set of "rules of reproduction," but these are concretely renegotiated by actors in real time rather than forming an abstract set of competitive strategies (cf. Knafo and Teschke, 2020). Equally, the great and enduring merit of world-systems analysis is that it historicizes the enormous global polarization of wealth and power as a constitutive element of capitalism. But perhaps in the process of tracing this geographical unevenness, which necessitates returning to the earliest moments of colonial expansion, some of the temporal and political unevenness of capitalist development has dropped out of sight. Incorporation into the world-system cannot appear as something which "happens" to nations and social groups; it was or is one possible concrete outcome of their struggles against external forces and one another. Reclaiming the historicist legacy of Marxism requires letting capitalism emerge from specificity, rather than imposing a set of categories on social reality in a given time and place. A *total* picture is under no obligation to *determine* everything.

# *Bibliography*


Abente, Diego. "Foreign Capital, Economic Elites and the State in Paraguay during the Liberal Republic (1870-1936)." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 21, no. 1 (1989): 61-88.

Abente, Diego. "The War of the Triple Alliance: three explanatory models." *Latin American Research Review* 22, no. 2 (1987): 47-69.

Adelman, Jeremy. *Republic of Capital: Buenos Aires and the Legal Transformation of the Atlantic World*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999.

Adelman, Jeremy. *Sovereignty and Revolution in the Iberian Atlantic*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.

Aglietta, Michel. *A Theory of Capitalist Regulation: The US Experience*. London: NLB, 1979.

Aillón, Lorgio Orellana. "Oligarquía capitalista, régimen de acumulación y crisis política en Bolivia." *Nómadas (Col)* 25 (2006): 261-272.

Amin, Samir. *Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism*. Translated by Brian Pearce. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976.

Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. (Benedict Richard O'Gorman). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised ed. London: Verso, 2006.

Anderson, Perry. *A Zone of Engagement*. London: Verso, 1992.

Anderson, Perry. *Lineages of the Absolutist State*. London: Verso, 2013.

Anievas, Alexander, and Kerem Nişancıoğlu. *How the West Came to Rule: The Geopolitical Origins of Capitalism*. London, England: Pluto Press, 2015.

Arrighi, Giovanni. "Capitalism and the Modern World-System: Rethinking the Nondebates of the 1970's." *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* (1998): 113-129.

Arrighi, Giovanni. *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times*. [New updated ed.]. London: Verso, 2010.

Assadourian, Carlos Sempat. "La economía colonial: la transferencia del sistema productivo europeo en Nueva España y el Perú." *Anuario IEHS* 9 (1994): 19-31.

Assadourian, Carlos Sempat. "Modos de producción, capitalismo y subdesarrollo en América Latina." In *Modos de producción en América Latina*. Córdoba: Cuadernos de pasado y presente, 1973.

Assadourian, Carlos Sempat. *El sistema de la economía colonial: mercado interno, regiones y espacio económico*. 1ra. ed. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1982.

Bagú, Sergio. *Economía de la sociedad colonial: ensayo de historia comparada de América Latina*. Buenos Aires: El Ateneo, 1949.

Banaji, Jairus. "Globalising the History of Capital: Ways Forward." *Historical Materialism* 26 (2018): 143-166.

Banaji, Jairus. "Gunder Frank in retreat?." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 7, no. 4 (1980): 508-521.

Baraibar Norberg, Matilda. *The Political Economy of Agrarian Change in Latin America: Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay*. 1st ed. 2020. Cham: Springer International Publishing, Imprint Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.

Baretta, Silvio R. Duncan, and John Markoff. "Civilization and barbarism: cattle frontiers in Latin America." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 20, no. 4 (1978): 587-620.

Barsky, Osvaldo, and Jorge Gelman. *Historia del agro argentino: desde la conquista hasta comienzos del siglo XXI.* 3. ed. actualizada. Colección Historia argentina. Buenos Aires: Ed. Sudamericana, 2009.

Batou, Jean. "Nineteenth-Century attempted escapes from the periphery: the cases of Egypt and Paraguay." *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* (1993): 279-318.

Bayer, Osvaldo. *La Patagonia rebelde*. 1a ed. México, D.F: Editorial Nueva Imagen, 1980.

Beckert, Sven. *Empire of Cotton: A New History of Global Capitalism*. London: Allen Lane, an imprint of Penguin Books, 2014.

Belich, James. *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Angloworld*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2009.

Bergquist, Charles W. *Labor in Latin America: Comparative Essays on Chile, Argentina, Venezuela, and Colombia*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1986.

Blair, Laurence. *Patria: Lost Countries of South America*. London: The Bodley Head Ltd., 2024.

Brenner, Robert. "Agrarian class structure and economic development in pre-industrial Europe." *Past & Present* 70, no. 1 (1976): 30-75.

Brenner, Robert. "The Origins of Capitalist Development: A Critique of Neo-Smithian Marxism." *New Left Review* 104 (1977): 25-92.

Bunker, Stephen G. *Underdeveloping the Amazon: Extraction, Unequal Exchange, and the Failure of the Modern State*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985.

Burgin, Miron. *The Economic Aspects of Argentine Federalism, 1820-1852*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1946.

Burns, E. Bradford. *A History of Brazil*. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980b.

Burns, E. Bradford. *The Poverty of Progress: Latin America in the Nineteenth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980a.

Cady, John F. (John Frank). *Foreign Intervention in the Rio de La Plata, 1838-50: A Study of French, British, and American Policy in Relation to the Dictator Juan Manuel Rosas*. New York: AMS Press, 1969.

Cardozo, Efraím. *El Imperio del Brasil y el Río de la Plata: antecedentes y estallido de la Guerra del Paraguay*. Buenos Aires: Librería del Plata, 1961.

Centeno, Miguel Angel. *Blood and Debt: War and the Nation-State in Latin America*. University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002.

Chiavenato, Julio José. *Genocidio americano: la Guerra del Paraguay*. 1a ed. en castellano. Asunción: C. Schauman Editor, 1989.

Civitillo, Viviana. "La Guerra Guasu: El “deliberado exterminio” como forma de la violencia política." *Revista Interdisciplinaria de Estudios Sociales* 21 (2020): 97-126.

Cope, Zak, *The Wealth of (some) Nations: Imperialism and the Mechanics of Value Transfer*. London: Pluto Press, 2019.

Cox, Oliver C. (Oliver Cromwell). *Capitalism as a System*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1964.

Cox, Oliver C. (Oliver Cromwell). *The Foundations of Capitalism*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1959.

Crosby, Alfred W. *Ecological imperialism: the biological expansion of Europe, 900-1900*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Cueva, Agustín. *Teoría social y procesos políticos en América Latina*. 1. ed. México: Edicol, 1979.

Davis, Mike. *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World*. London: Verso, 2002.

de la Fuente, Ariel. *Children of Facundo: Caudillo and Gaucho Insurgency during the Argentine State-Formation Process (La Rioja, 1853-1870)*. Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 2000.

de Soto, Hernando. *The mystery of capital: Why capitalism triumphs in the West and fails everywhere else*. Basic Books, 2007.

de Soto, Hernando. *The Other Path: The Invisible Revolution in the Third World*. 1st ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1989.

Djenderedjian, Julio. "Expansión agrícola y colonización en Entre Ríos, 1850-1890." *Desarrollo Económico* (2008): 577-606.

Donghi, Tulio Halperín. "La expansión ganadera en la campaña de Buenos Aires (1810-1852)." *Desarrollo Económico* (1963): 57-110.

Emmanuel, Arghiri. *Unequal Exchange: A Study of the Imperialism of Trade*. Translated by Brian Pearce. New York: [Monthly Review Press], 1972.

Ferns, Henry S. "Investment and trade between Britain and Argentina in the nineteenth century." *The Economic History Review* 3, no. 2 (1950): 203-218.

Fradkin, Raúl, and Jorge Gelman. *Juan Manuel de Rosas: la construcción de un liderazgo político*. Primera edición. Buenos Aires: Edhasa, 2015.

Frank, Andre Gunder. *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969.

Frank, Andre Gunder. *ReOrient: Global economy in the Asian age*. Univ of California Press, 1998.

Galeano, Eduardo. *Las venas abiertas de América Latina*. 77. ed. México, D.F: Siglo Veintiuno, 2006.

Garay, Blas. *El Comunismo de Las Misiones: La Compañía de Jesús En El Paraguay*. Asunción del Paraguay: Librería la Mundial, 1921.

Gómez, Arnoldo. *Los Macri, la burguesía intermediaria y la dependencia argentina*. Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires: EA, Editorial Ágora, 2019.

Grabois, Juan. *Los Peores: Vagos, chorros, ocupas y violentos. Alegatos del humanismo cascoteado*. Sudamericana, 2022.

Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*. Edited by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith. New York: International Publishers, 1971.

Grandin, Greg. *America, América: A New History of the New World*. New York: Penguin Press, 2025.

Guerra, Sergio. *Paraguay, de la independencia a la dominación imperialista 1811-1870*. La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1984.

Haddad, Naief. “Ídolo de Bolsonaro, Duque de Caxias tem aura ambígua.” *Folha de S.Paulo*, November 26, 2018. https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2018/11/idolo-de-bolsonaro-duque-de-caxias-tem-aura-ambigua.shtml.

Harvey, David. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Heller, Henry. *The Birth of Capitalism: A Twenty-First-Century Perspective*. London: Pluto Press, 2011.

Hobsbawm, E. J. (Eric J.). *The Age of Capital, 1848-1875*. 1st Vintage Books ed. New York: Vintage Books, 1996.

Hora, Roy. *The Landowners of the Argentine Pampas: A Social and Political History, 1860-1945*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001.

Johnson, Chalmers. *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1982.

Knafo, Samuel, and Benno Teschke. "Political Marxism and the rules of reproduction of capitalism: A historicist critique." *Historical Materialism* 29, no. 3 (2020): 54-83.

Lacher, Hannes. *Beyond Globalization: Capitalism, Territoriality and the International Relations of Modernity*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2006.

Laclau, Ernesto. “Feudalismo y capitalismo en América Latina.” In *Modos de producción en América Latina*. Córdoba: Cuadernos de pasado y presente, 1973.

Landa, Ishay. *The Apprentice's Sorcerer: Liberal Tradition and Fascism*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

Leitner, Jonathan. "An incorporated comparison: Fernand Braudel's account of Dutch hegemony in a world-ecological perspective." *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* (2007): 97-135.

Lenin, Vladimir Il′ich. *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*. [2d rev. ed.]. Moscow: Progress publishers, 1967.

Leuchars, Chris. *To the Bitter End: Paraguay and the War of the Triple Alliance*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2002.

Losurdo, Domenico. *Liberalism: A Counter-History*. Verso Books, 2014.

Löwy, Michael. *The Politics of Combined and Uneven Development: The Theory of Permanent Revolution*. Chicago, Ill: Haymarket Books, 2010.

Lukács, György. *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*. Cambridge, Mass: M.I.T. Press, 1971.

Machado, Carlos. *Historia de los orientales*. Montevideo: Ediciones de la Banda Oriental, 1972.

Maestri, Mário. *La guerra en el papel: historia e historiografía de la Guerra en el Paraguay (1864-1870)*. Translated by Marcos Maiz Montanaro. Asunción, Paraguay: Arandurã Editorial, 2016.

Mariátegui, José Carlos. *7 ensayos de Interpretación de La Realidad Peruana*. Lima: Orbis Ventures, El Comercio, 2005.

Marini, Ruy Mauro. "La acumulación capitalista mundial y el subimperialismo." *Ola financiera* 4, no. 10 (1977): 183-217.

Marini, Ruy Mauro. *Dialéctica de la dependencia*. 5a ed. México: Ediciones Era, 1981.

Marx, Karl. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. Volume 1. Translated by Ben Fowkes, Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, 1990.

Mazzuca, Sebastián. *Latecomer State Formation: Political Geography and Capacity Failure in Latin America*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021.

McMichael, Philip. "Class Formation in a World-Historical Perspective: Lessons from Australian History." *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 9, no. 2 (1985): 275-303.

McMichael, Philip. "Incorporating Comparison within a World-Historical Perspective: An Alternative Comparative Method." *American Sociological Review* 55, no. 3 (1990): 385-397.

Medved, Mladen. "A combined argument: beyond Wallerstein?." *Historical Materialism* 26, no. 3 (2018): 125-142.

Mempel, Finn, Esteve Corbera, Beatriz Rodríguez Labajos, and Edward Challies. "From railroad imperialism to neoliberal reprimarization: Lessons from regime-shifts in the Global Soybean Complex." *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 7, no. 2 (2024): 559-582.

Moore, Jason W. "'Amsterdam is standing on Norway' part I: the alchemy of capital, empire and nature in the diaspora of silver, 1545–1648." *Journal of Agrarian Change* 10, no. 1 (2010c): 33-68.

Moore, Jason W. "Madeira, sugar, and the conquest of nature in the "first" sixteenth century: Part I: from "Island of Timber" to sugar revolution, 1420–1506." *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* (2009): 345-390.

Moore, Jason W. "Madeira, sugar, and the conquest of nature in the "first" sixteenth century, part II: From regional crisis to commodity frontier, 1506—1530." Review (Fernand Braudel Center) (2010): 1-24.

Moore, Jason W. *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital*. 1st edition. New York: Verso, 2015.

Moore, Jason. ""This lofty mountain of silver could conquer the whole world": Potosí and the political ecology of underdevelopment, 1545-1800." *The Journal of Philosophical Economics* 4, no. 1 (2010a): 58-103.

Niebuhr, Jorge. *Orígenes de La Dependencia Argentina: Algunas Razones Históricas de Nuestra Actualidad*. Prometeo Editorial, 2021.

Nkrumah, Kwame. *Neo-colonialism*. Nelson, 1965.

Otter, Chris (Christopher James). *Diet for a Large Planet: Industrial Britain, Food Systems, and World Ecology*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2020.

Panitch, Leo, and Sam Gindin. *The Making of Global Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Empire*. London: Verso, 2012.

Patnaik, Utsa, and Prabhat Patnaik. *A theory of imperialism*. Columbia University Press, 2016.

Peña, Milcíades. *Historia Del Pueblo Argentino: 1500-1955*. C.A.B.A. [i.e. Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires]: Emecé, 2012.

Pinker, Steven. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*. New York, New York: Penguin Books, 2011.

Polanyi, Karl. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Beacon Press, 2001.

Pomer, Leon. "El estado nacional argentino." *Revista de Historia de América* 105 (1988): 53-88.

Pomer, León. *Cinco años de guerra civil en la Argentina, 1865-1870*. Buenos Aires: Amorrortu Editores, 1985.

Pomer, León. *La Guerra Del Paraguay: Estado, Política y Negocios*. Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1987.

Quijano, Anibal. "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America." *Nepantla: Views from South* 1, no. 3 (2000): 533-580.

Ramos, Jorge Abelardo. *Revolución y contrarrevolución en la Argentina. 1: Las masas y las lanzas: 1810-1862*. Buenos Aires: Senado de la Nación, 2006.

Robinson, Cedric J. *Black Marxism: The Making of The Black Radical Tradition*. Chapel Hill, N.C: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.

Rock, David. *State Building and Political Movements in Argentina, 1860-1916*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2002.

Rock, David. *The British in Argentina: commerce, settlers and power, 1800–2000*. Springer, 2018.

Rosa, José María. *La guerra del Paraguay y las montoneras argentinas*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Huemul, 1965.

Rosa, José́ María. *Rosas, nuestro contemporáneo*. Buenos Aires: Editorial La Candelaria; [distribuidor exclusivo: Ediciones Theoria], 1970.

Rosenberg, Justin. *The Empire of Civil Society: A Critique of the Realist Theory of International Relations*. London: Verso, 1994.

Sarreal, Julia J. S. *Yerba Mate: The Drink That Shaped a Nation*. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2022.

Sarreal, Julia. "Disorder, Wild Cattle, and a New Role for the Missions: The Banda Oriental, 1776–1786." *The Americas* 67, no. 4 (2011): 517-545.

Scalabrini Ortiz, Raúl. *Política Británica En El Río De La Plata*. Barcelona: Editorial Sol 90, 2001.

Schmidt, Ray. "Canadian political economy: a critique." *Studies in Political Economy* 6, no. 1 (1981): 65-92.

Scobie, James R. *Revolution on the Pampas: A Social History of Argentine Wheat, 1860-1910*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1964.

Skocpol, Theda. "Wallerstein's world capitalist system: a theoretical and historical critique." *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 5 (1977): 1075-1090.

Smith, John. *Imperialism in the Twenty-First Century: Globalization, Super-Exploitation, and Capitalism's Final Crisis*. Monthly Review Press, 2016.

Stein, Stanley J, and Barbara H Stein. *The Colonial Heritage of Latin America: Essays on Economic Dependence in Perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Stern, Steve J. "Feudalism, Capitalism, and the World-System in the Perspective of Latin America and the Caribbean." *The American Historical Review* 93, no. 4 (1988): 829-872.

Szlajfer, Henryk. "Against Dependent Capitalist Development in Nineteenth-Century Latin America: The Case of Haiti and Paraguay." *Latin American Perspectives* 13, no. 1 (1986): 45-73.

Teschke, Benno. *The Myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics, and the Making of Modern International Relations*. London: Verso, 2003.

Thompson, E. P. (Edward Palmer). *The Making of the English Working Class*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1966.

Tilly, Charles. *Coercion, Capital, and European States, A.D. 990-1990*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1990.

Tomich, Dale W. *Slavery in the Circuit of Sugar: Martinique and the World Economy, 1830-1848*. Second edition. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2016.

Tomich, Dale. "Small islands and huge comparisons: Caribbean plantations, historical unevenness, and capitalist modernity." *Social Science History* 18, no. 3 (1994): 339-358.

Trías, Vivián, *El Paraguay: De Francia El Supremo a La Guerra De La Triple Alianza*. Buenos Aires: Crisis, 1975.

Trotsky, Leon. *The History of the Russian Revolution*. Translated by Max Eastman. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1957.

Tutino, John. *Making a New World: Founding Capitalism in the Bajío and Spanish North America*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011.

Uriarte, Javier. *The Desertmakers: Travel, War, and the State in Latin America*. Routledge, 2019.

van der Linden, Marcel. "Virdee's challenges." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38, no. 13 (2015): 2217-2224.

Wallerstein, Immanuel Maurice. *After Liberalism*. New York: New Press, 1995.

Wallerstein, Immanuel Maurice. *World-Systems Analysis: an Introduction*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

Wallerstein, Immanuel. *The modern world-system I: Capitalist agriculture and the origins of the European world-economy in the sixteenth century*. Vol. 1. Univ of California Press, 2011b.

Wallerstein, Immanuel. *The modern world-system III: The second era of great expansion of the capitalist world-economy, 1730s–1840s*. Vol. 3. Univ of California Press, 2011c.

Wallerstein, Immanuel. *The modern world-system IV: Centrist liberalism triumphant, 1789–1914*. Vol. 4. Univ of California Press, 2011a.

Warren, Harris Gaylord, and Katherine F Warren. *Paraguay and the Triple Alliance: The Postwar Decade, 1869-1878*. Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 1978.

Webber, Jeffery R. “Rebel Dawn.” *New Left Review* 91 (2015): 149-160.

Whigham, Thomas L. *The Road to Armageddon: Paraguay Versus the Triple Alliance, 1866-70*. University of Calgary Press, 2017.

Whigham, Thomas L., and Barbara Potthast. "The Paraguayan Rosetta Stone: New Insights into the Demographics of the Paraguayan War, 1864–1870." *Latin American Research Review* 34, no. 1 (1999): 174-186.

Whigham, Thomas Lyle. "The Iron Works of Ybycui: Paraguayan industrial development in the mid-nineteenth century." *The Americas* 35, no. 2 (1978): 201-218.

Whigham, Thomas. *The Paraguayan War: Causes and Early Conduct*. 2nd edition. Calgary, Alberta: University of Calgary Press, 2018.

Whigham, Thomas. *The Politics of River Trade: Tradition and Development in the Upper Plata, 1780-1870*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991.

White, Richard Alan. "The Denied Revolution: Paraguay's Economics of Independence." *Latin American Perspectives* 6, no. 2 (1979): 4-24.

White, Richard Alan. "The Political Economy of Paraguay and the Impoverishment of the Missions." *The Americas* 31, no. 4 (1975): 417-433.

White, Richard Alan. *Paraguay's Autonomous Revolution, 1810-1840*. 1st ed. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1978.

Williams, Eric Eustace. *Capitalism & Slavery*. Third edition. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2021.

Williams, John Hoyt. "Foreign Tecnicos and the modernization of Paraguay, 1840-1870." *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 19, no. 2 (1977): 233-257.

Williams, John Hoyt. "Paraguayan isolation under Dr. Francia: a re-evaluation." *Hispanic American Historical Review* 52, no. 1 (1972): 102-122.

Williams, John Hoyt. "The "Conspiracy of 1820", and the Destruction of Paraguayan Aristocracy." *Revista de Historia de América* 75/76 (1973): 141-155.

Williams, John Hoyt. *The Rise and Fall of the Paraguayan Republic, 1800-1870*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979.

Wood, Ellen Meiksins. "Horizontal relations: a note on Brenner's heresy." *Historical Materialism* 4, no. 1 (1999): 171-180.

Wood, Ellen Meiksins. *Democracy against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Wood, Ellen Meiksins. *Empire of Capital*. London: Verso, 2005.

Wood, Ellen Meiksins. *The origin of capitalism: A longer view*. Verso, 2002.