

# Adjusting the focus: Looking at Patagonia and the wider Argentine state through the lens of Settler Colonial Theory

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**ABSTRACT:** Notwithstanding predictions about the exhaustion of the so-called Myth of White Argentina, recent developments signal the continuing vitality of Argentina's European creation myth. How can it be that, despite the victories secured by more than three decades of Indigenous and Afrodescendant activism, it may prove so hard to topple? This article borrows insights from settler colonial theory to address the endurance of the Myth of Whiteness in Argentina not only as a discursive construction of racial domination but also as a fundamental structure that obscures the shady claims of the Argentine state to the land it occupies. As well as investigating the explanatory power of the analytical framework for the particular case, the article unpicks the layers contained in the narrative of White Argentina, drawing attention to the crucial role the European creation myth has played not only in Argentine history but most importantly in the current cycle of 'progressive neoextractivism'. Contextualising Argentina within settler colonial studies also contributes to debunking accounts of Argentinean exceptionalism by locating Argentina within global logics of settler colonial domination and providing a wider framework which may help identify illuminating commonalities in the international context.

**Keywords:** Argentina - settler colonial theory - Patagonia - Whiteness - Indigenous - neoextractivism

For some time now, scholars have been heralding the exhaustion of the so-called Myth of White Argentina, namely, the state's imaging of the nation as an exceptionally White haven of European civilisation and progress.<sup>1</sup> The acute 2001 economic, political and social crisis has been identified as a turning point in the growing awareness that Argentina may in fact be neither as uniformly White nor as European as it was meant to be according to its national self-narrative.<sup>2</sup> This recognition seemed to reach a milestone at the official celebrations of Argentina's Bicentennial in 2010, when Indigenous peoples, Afro-Argentines and immigrants from neighbouring countries were showcased as a sign of Argentina's recognition of its diverse and multicultural present, and a mestizo performer was deliberately cast to represent the Republic at the national parade which was to be the centrepiece of the festivities.<sup>3</sup> It seemed as if, at long last, Argentina was coming to terms with the fact that its exceptional European Whiteness had been but a product of the national imagination.

However, recent declarations by both current President Alberto Fernández and his predecessor, Mauricio Macri, seem to mark a retreat. The recent endorsement by Fernández of the old joke that, unlike Mexicans or Brazilians, Argentines descend from ships<sup>4</sup> concurs with earlier claims by former President Macri that 'in South America we are all of European descent'<sup>5</sup>, signalling not only that the Myth of Whiteness is striking back but also that it resonates with both sides of the political rift currently dividing the country.<sup>6</sup> Why is it that Argentina finds it so hard to let go of its European creation myth? Is it a coincidence that, despite several amendments and notwithstanding the fact that massive European immigration has long since come to an end, the National

Constitution still stipulates to this day that 'The Federal Government shall foster European immigration'?<sup>7</sup> How can it be that, despite the victories secured by more than three decades of Indigenous and Afrodescendant activism, such narratives may prove so hard to topple?

It is this article's contention that settler colonial theory may help shed light on the resilience of the Myth of Whiteness in Argentina, contributing valuable insights on nation-building and Whiteness as colonial domination in the country. Though the theoretical framework has been used to study the country in the past, previous analyses of Argentina as a settler colonial polity have focused primarily on its links with the United Kingdom as part of what has been called the 'British informal empire'.<sup>8</sup> Even when there was a sense that settler colonial theorisations offered potential for 'a reexamination of Argentina's forgotten subaltern alterities',<sup>9</sup> this potential has not to date been tapped.

This article addresses the gap by drawing on settler colonial theorisations in order to address the endurance of the master narrative of Whiteness in Argentina today, not only as a discursive construction of racial domination but also as a fundamental structure that obscures the shady claims of the Argentine state to the land it occupies. As well as investigating the explanatory power of the analytical framework for the particular case, the article aims to unpick the layers contained in the narrative of White Argentina, drawing attention to the crucial role the European creation myth has played not only in Argentine history but most importantly in the current cycle of 'progressive neoextractivism'.<sup>10</sup> Contextualising Argentina within settler colonial studies also contributes to debunking accounts of Argentinean exceptionalism by locating Argentina within global logics of settler colonial domination and providing a wider framework which may help identify illuminating commonalities in the international context.

The article starts with a brief discussion of the so-called 'Maldonado Case' before moving on to explore the Myth of White Argentina. Settler colonial theorisations are used in the second section to consider differences and similarities between immigrants and settlers, and to examine Argentina's settler colonial ethos. Subsequent sections look at how Argentina's master narrative obscures the foundational role of Indigenous elimination in its various guises and operates as a form of (settler) common sense. The final section shines a light on the key role the fundamental disavowal of Indigenous territorial rights plays in the present neoextractivist cycle, arguing that the foundations of Argentina's settler state would be eroded if it were to effectively accommodate Indigenous resurgence and enforce the special rights of Indigenous peoples as provided for in national and international legislation.

### *White Argentina and the 'Maldonado Case'*

Whilst other Latin American countries embraced rhetorics of racial democracy<sup>11</sup> and *mestizaje* (the celebrated Latin American variant of racial mixing<sup>12</sup>), Argentina's nation-building in the second half of the nineteenth century was shaped by a whitening drive which combined a rejection of the Indigenous and African elements of the population with an aggressive appeal for mass European immigration. Inspired by the North American model of the melting pot, the ruling elites sought to boost European immigration to such an extent that it would dilute the components deemed undesirable.

Leading intellectual Juan B. Alberdi explained the vision in a volume that would serve as the basis for Argentina's first Constitution (1853): 'From Babel, from the chaos [resulting from the intermixture of races and languages] will one day emerge brilliant and clear the South American nationality. The soil makes men its children, it sweeps them in, assimilating and appropriating them.'<sup>13</sup>The application of the principle of *jus soli* prepared the ground for that, as nationality was extended to anyone born in the country regardless of their ethnic origins. Argentina's enormously successful immigration policy attracted over four million arrivals between 1881 and 1914.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, it was not as a result of the dilution of its non-white populations but rather on the basis of their hegemonic invisibilisation that the country would eventually consolidate its self-image as homogeneously White in race and European in culture, which set it apart from its (darker) Latin American neighbours. Scholars have grappled with Argentina's whitening project and its mythical and ideological dimensions from a range of angles. Elaborating on a notion akin to what Rita Segato has termed 'ethnic terror' when referring to the panic elicited by 'any sign of difference within the population',<sup>15</sup> Gastón Gordillo has argued that White Argentina should be primarily understood as 'a geographical project and an affective disposition defined by the not always conscious desire to create, define, and feel through the bodily navigation of space that the national geography is largely European'.<sup>16</sup> When confronted with conflicting evidence, Gordillo argues, White Argentina feels besieged and its congregants are sent into a nauseous, visceral rage that clamours for violence against the offending dark-skinned bodies which act as a reminder of the haunted and ever-incomplete nature of the whitening project.<sup>17</sup>

The recent controversy around what has come to be known as 'the Maldonado Case' has afforded a glimpse into yet another iteration of the anxieties of White Argentina. Twenty-eight-year-old Santiago Maldonado was last seen alive on 1 August 2017 during a raid by the Argentine border police on a protest encampment set up by Mapuche rights activists on what they consider ancestral land.<sup>18</sup> The reporting of cases of Indigenous activists missing in action after altercations with the authorities was by no means unprecedented,<sup>19</sup> but the mysterious vanishing of non-Indigenous Maldonado captured public attention and monopolised media interest until his drowned body was found 78 days later in the nearby Chubut River.<sup>20</sup> The inquest into the circumstances surrounding his death found the corpse had sustained no injuries and concluded that Maldonado had succumbed to 'asphyxiation by immersion' aggravated by 'hypothermia',<sup>21</sup> a verdict greeted with disbelief by those who suspected he had been murdered by border police officers. To date, the Maldonado family's challenges to the ruling remain unanswered.<sup>22</sup>

In contrast with the murkiness around the Maldonado Case, one glaring result of it is a racist, reactionary backlash. Whereas the disappearance of Maldonado mobilised empathetic responses from the more progressive sectors of the population, it also prompted vilification on social media, including views that 'it served him right' for backing the Mapuche and suggestions that he may have been killed by them.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, the then Argentine Minister of Security and members of her party made hitherto unsubstantiated claims that Mapuche protests were funded by foreign groups like the IRA, the FARC, Kurdish rebels or 'an English organisation',<sup>24</sup> predictably enlisting considerable support by stoking nationalist sentiment. It was ironic that rather little was made of a *proven* foreign link: the fact that the lands claimed by the group Maldonado was supporting are part of a large estate acquired in 1991 by the Benetton

Group, by now the largest private landowner in Argentina.<sup>25</sup> No mainstream media outlets reminded the public about an earlier foreign link, however. In 1889 these very lands had been donated (not altogether legally) to the London-based Argentine Southern Land Company by the Argentine government as a token of gratitude for the monetary support lent by these British investors to the genocidal 'Conquest of the Desert' (1879-1884), the brutal military campaigns orchestrated by the Argentine government aimed at chasing Patagonian Indigenous populations away from their territories in order to extend the state's effective control of those lands.<sup>26</sup>

The Maldonado Case effectively revived the so-called 'Araucanisation' argument, a proposition that the Indigenous Tehuelche inhabiting Southern Patagonia would be the autochthonous 'Argentinean' natives. The Tehuelche would have been later beleaguered and eventually acculturated by the Mapuche (formerly called 'Araucanians', hence the term), who purportedly ventured across the Andes from what is nowadays Chile.<sup>27</sup> This variation of the well-known trope of the 'Vanishing Indian'<sup>28</sup> points the finger at the Mapuche for their lack of authenticity, either because they are seen as "Chilean impostors" or because they would have changed so much that they cannot be considered Indigenous any longer.<sup>29</sup> As for the Tehuelche, they are declared 'extinct' precisely as a consequence of Araucanisation, while their descendants are not recognised as "proper" Tehuelche on account of their alleged 'degeneration' as a result of miscegenation.<sup>30</sup> Choosing the allegedly 'extinct' Tehuelche as putative national ancestors thus results in a win-win situation for Argentina as it precludes their territorial claims (since they would have left no legitimate descendants) whilst simultaneously disavowing the rights of the Mapuche, who are deemed "inauthentic" and are held responsible for the presumed disappearance of the Tehuelche.

The Araucanisation narrative can be traced back to Argentine lawyer and politician Estanislao Zeballos' *La conquista de las quince mil leguas*, published in 1878, just before the launch of the above-mentioned 'Conquest of the Desert'.<sup>31</sup> Zeballos' judgement that the 'barbarous' Indigenous peoples inhabiting Patagonia at the time were originally from Chile was highly functional to white settlement and proved key for Argentina's territorial expansion. Araucanisation as a discursive formation was later enhanced and reinforced in academic circles and conveniently adopted by Argentina's official historiography and school curricula.<sup>32</sup> The notion that the Tehuelche had become extinct was also bolstered in popular culture, as illustrated by the publication from the early 1930s of a hugely successful comic strip portraying its iconic hero 'Patoruzú' as a fiercely patriotic though rather naive and infantilised Indigenous millionaire who was said to own 'half of Patagonia'. Falling back on the well-used trope, he happened to be *the last* of the Tehuelche.<sup>33</sup>

The revitalisation of the Araucanisation argument in the wake of the Maldonado Case has sparked widespread suspicion of any Indigenous resurgence in Patagonia, adding fuel to the rage of White Argentina in the face of yet another conflicting piece of evidence. Many deaf ears have been turned to repeated denunciations that Araucanisation claims constitute an essentialist attempt to artificially categorise and periodise practices of communalization for collective survival observed in the region as early as the thirteenth century.<sup>34</sup> After learning in textbooks that the Tehuelche have become extinct, it is difficult for successive generations of school-moulded Argentines not to doubt the legitimacy of any group identifying as Tehuelche. Equal mistrust is

evoked by the self-identification of some Patagonian groups as 'Mapuche-Tehuelche' in acknowledgement of their mixed belonging. As for the Mapuche, they are denounced as 'foreigners' on account of their 'Chilean' ancestry, in a foreignisation which reverses the otherwise universal principle of *jus soli* applied in Argentina.<sup>35</sup> Gainsaying Mapuche territorial entitlement is so entrenched among some circles in present-day Argentina that it has elicited comments on social media comparing them to the Falkland Islands' Kelpers,<sup>36</sup> or suggestions that even the Welsh settlers in Patagonia would be more Indigenous than the Mapuche.<sup>37</sup>

It is often assumed that Araucanisation is a specific Patagonian development and thus particular to the region. However, similar arguments have been put forward in New Zealand and Southern Africa, where alleged historical records of pre-settlement displacements and exterminations are used in the same way to discredit the putative autochthonousness of contemporary Indigenous populations, who are accused of having 'dispossessed the "true" indigenes'.<sup>38</sup> This narrative that discursively displaces Indigenous peoples to the exterior of the settler locale and treats them as exogenous Others is, indeed, a feature of a catalogue compiled by Lorenzo Veracini—a prominent theorist of settler colonialism—profiling settler strategies deployed in order to 'manipulate the population economy by discursively or practically emptying the Indigenous sector of the population system (or sections of it)'.<sup>39</sup> Veracini characterises this 'transfer by conceptual displacement' as an approach whereby 'Indigenous peoples are not considered Indigenous to the land and are therefore perceived as exogenous Others who have entered the settler space at some point in time and preferably after the arrival of the settler collective'.<sup>40</sup> This fits in well with other delegitimisation strategies described by Patrick Wolfe—often considered to be the initiator of settler colonial studies—such as the romantic stereotyping of what Indigenous people should (and should not) be like, which he calls 'repressive authenticity'.<sup>41</sup>

Contextualising the Araucanisation narrative within settler colonial theorisations thus exposes it as a standard argument deployed by settler states in order to disavow Indigenous territorial claims, and this is not the only exceptionalist account settler colonial theory may help challenge. As the following section argues, it may help improve understandings of the role of Argentina's mythical Whiteness as a cornerstone of the state and its significant implications today.

### *Immigrants versus settlers: Argentina's settler colonial ethos*

The racialising implications of Argentina's whitening project have often been seen not only as a legacy of the Spanish colonial period but also as a strategy for class differentiation that structured domination around racist nineteenth-century scientific paradigms.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, race and social class became intricately related in the dominant representation of the nation as uniformly White and European marginalised populations of Indigenous and African descent, an Othering that simultaneously invisibilised the matrix defining the norm.<sup>43</sup> This articulation of class difference through racial categories has underlain a good number of academic and non-academic discussions, and the entanglement has been reinforced by a long-standing reluctance to discuss race as such on the pretext of an alleged absence of distinct racial groups in Argentina.<sup>44</sup> The use of the analytical framework of settler colonialism in this section



will include considerations of race in Argentina with a view to unpicking the Myth of Whiteness and examining how, whilst 'encod[ing] and reproduc[ing] the unequal relationships into which Europeans coerced [non-white] populations',<sup>45</sup> this racial regime allocates different roles to these populations. Though it is not the intention of the present article to disregard the significance of any of the population groups marginalised by the master narrative or underestimate intersections with other identifications, the nature of settler colonial theorisations will inevitably bring the focus of the analysis onto Indigenous peoples.<sup>46</sup>

Argentina's territorial expansion looks like a textbook example of the kind of colonial regime which settler colonial theory examines, namely where access to land for exogenous settlement takes precedence over exploiting native labour.<sup>47</sup> Whilst all colonialisms are defined by exogenous domination, what distinguishes settler colonialism is its focus on territory, which in turn renders Indigenous populations an obstacle; for a settler society to be successfully established on the expropriated land, native societies need to be dissolved.<sup>48</sup> The Argentine case illustrates the two fundamental tenets of settler colonial theory. Firstly, that settlers 'come to stay' (and thus 'invasion is a structure not an event'). Secondly, that, since they obstruct settlers' access to land, Indigenous people must be eliminated.<sup>49</sup> However, as Wolfe clarifies, 'Settler colonialism is inherently eliminatory but not invariably genocidal.'<sup>50</sup> Rather than being circumscribed to physical annihilation, the settler colonial tendency that Wolfe calls 'logic of elimination,'

can include officially encouraged miscegenation, the breaking-down of native title into alienable individual freeholds, native citizenship, child abduction, religious conversion, resocialization in total institutions such as missions or boarding schools, and a whole range of cognate biocultural assimilations.<sup>51</sup>

With land occupation not a superseded event but rather a cornerstone of settler colonial polities erected on expropriated land, Wolfe argues, elimination becomes 'an organizing princip[le] of settler-colonial society'.<sup>52</sup>

Somewhat perplexingly, previous analyses of Argentina as a settler colonial polity have not focused on its formative endeavour to replace Indigenous society but rather on the country's membership of the 'British Informal Empire'.<sup>53</sup> Indeed, authors like Donald Denoon, Ricardo Salvatore, James Belich or Geoff Bertram are mainly interested in Argentina's 'settler economy' and its 'informal' links with Britain, that Belich characterises as 'about as close as one could get without speaking English or being part of Britain's unofficial or informal empire'.<sup>54</sup> This slant is surely due to the strong 'Anglo' influence with which the analytical framework is loaded, as it was developed largely out of the experience of the former British dependencies. It is precisely Argentina's economic 'failure' in contrast with these dependencies that has convinced those economic historians that the country lies outside the settler colonial paradigm.

It is also due to Argentina's divergences from the prototypical Anglo models that more contemporary scholars are not convinced that settler colonial theorisations may help account for the specificities of the Argentine case.<sup>55</sup> If, as Veracini affirms, settlers differ from migrants in that the former 'constitute sovereign regimes',<sup>56</sup> that was definitely not the case of Argentina, where all immigrants arriving after independence from Spain in 1816 were in principle expected to adhere to an already-constituted political order,

even when they may have benefitted from a high degree of de facto autonomy, as in the case of the Welsh settlement in Patagonia.<sup>57</sup> Indeed, Argentina's inception is given as an example of what A. D. Smith has termed the 'immigrant' nation-forming pattern, 'where small part-*ethnie* are beneficiaries of a state of their own [...] and they then seek to absorb and assimilate waves of new immigrants from different cultures into what becomes increasingly a territorial nation and a political community'.<sup>58</sup> Considering massive immigration did not occur until the end of the nineteenth century, is it appropriate to consider immigrants as settlers?

Responding to the challenge immigration poses to the inherently binary nature of settler colonial theory,<sup>59</sup> Veracini proposes a 'triangular understanding of the settler colonial situation' where the 'constitutive hegemony of the settler component' is exercised upon both Indigenous and exogenous subalternities.<sup>60</sup> Emphasising that 'Settlers are not Migrants', Veracini sees the latter as '*appellants*' facing a political order founded by the former, as "probationary" settlers waiting to be individually admitted into the settler body politic'.<sup>61</sup> Their inclusion depends on selective categorisation and 'a particular consciousness that allows specific migrants to embrace a settler colonial ethos'.<sup>62</sup>

If settlers are eminently 'made by conquest, not just by immigration' as Mahmood Mamdani has argued,<sup>63</sup> is it then inappropriate to apply that label to immigrants who mostly arrived after national consolidation and may thus not have directly participated in the process of conquest? The fact remains that embracing the 'settler colonial ethos' was an essential requisite for immigrants not only to be incorporated but crucially to be able to benefit from Indigenous dispossession. Even in the case of those who were driven to emigrate as a result of poverty or persecution, immigrants to Argentina may be seen as differently positioned but were still undeniably implicated in the occupation of Indigenous territories gained as a result of frontier expansion.<sup>64</sup> Or was it not the programmatic dispossession and displacement of Indigenous peoples that created attractive opportunities for immigrants in search of a better future?

In the event, Argentina's open-doors immigration policy produced disappointing results as to the kinds of individuals the country managed to attract. Rather than the highly-qualified, industrious and allegedly racially superior Northerners that the creole elites sought to attract, those heeding the call were largely uneducated poor migrants from Southern Europe as well as a number of Eastern European agitators.<sup>65</sup> Turn-of-century cultural nationalists would go to great lengths to expel the troublemakers and—given that the soil was taking longer to assimilate immigrants than Alberdi had predicted—have the foreign masses shed any ethnic traces and conform to an ideal national identity constructed in opposition them.<sup>66</sup>

Pivotal to the assimilation efforts was the state schooling system and its programme of patriotic education. Passed in 1884, the 'Law of Common Education' made primary-school education free and compulsory for the whole of the population, centralising, homogenising and disciplining schoolchildren across the length and breadth of the country.<sup>67</sup> Teachers were supported and controlled by a tight network of national inspectors who ensured all schools followed the guidelines and standardised curricula provided in the *Monitor de la Educación Común*, the official publication of the National Council of Education. As the liturgy of the civic religion was enforced in the young minds, so-called 'national contents' (i.e., 'patriotic history', national symbols and

commemorations, the 'national language') proved key to the building of both citizenship and nationality.<sup>68</sup>

In the long run, however, immigrants may be said to have lost the battle but won the war, as the notion that Argentina was the product of White, European immigration became central to what could be described as the country's 'mythomoteur' in the sense employed by Anthony Smith, namely a constitutive myth for the ethnic polity that provides 'an overall framework of meaning . . . which "makes sense" of [the community's] experiences and defines its "essence"'.<sup>69</sup> It is the nature of an ethnics' 'myth-symbol complex' (i.e., the myths and symbols as framed in the historical memories and central values) and how it is (not) sustained and passed on from one generation to the next that defines the character of an ethnic identity, Smith argues.<sup>70</sup> In the case of Argentina, its mythomoteur as a country of immigrants is key to the Mythical Whiteness which has defined it for such a long time and is still reproduced consciously and unconsciously by key leading figures and in the private sphere.<sup>71</sup> The European creation myth operates in this respect as a form of common sense that may be associated with Mark Rifkin's notion of 'settler common sense' whereby 'settlement is actualized, stabilized, and extended through modes of settler sensation'.<sup>72</sup> The endurance of Argentina's master narrative may thus be explained as a product of 'the normalized legalities and geographies of settler policy' which normalise and naturalise settler sovereignty by operating 'largely as backdrop, as the unacknowledged condition of possibility'.<sup>73</sup> The following section will outline how Argentina's Myth of Whiteness as national mythomoteur has naturalised, sustained and perpetuated the country's settler colonial ethos up until this very day.

### *Argentina's Myth of Whiteness as Elimination and Replacement*

After independence from Spain, Buenos Aires applied the *uti possidetis* principle to assert rights to all territories formerly under the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata. While it is true that the early revolutionary government's inclusive territorial view of national belonging encouraged equality between *criollo*<sup>74</sup> and Indigenous individuals<sup>75</sup>, the fact remains that Argentina's territorial claims rested on the previous colonial notion that America was *terra nullius*, and so not *properly owned* by its Indigenous inhabitants (who would have been incapable of proper ownership).<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, it is as true of the case of post-independence Argentina as it was of the case of Australia that the new nations needed to symbolically embrace indigeneity to differentiate themselves from their former mother countries.<sup>77</sup> Symbolically appropriating indigeneity was therefore key in the context of what Benedict Anderson has referred to as a 'creole stat[e], formed and led by people who shared a common language and common descent with those against whom they fought'.<sup>78</sup>

Beyond the symbolic, various approaches were favoured in dealing with Indigenous populations in the lead up to national consolidation in 1862, ranging from open confrontation to treaty-making (a strategy which implied a recognition that the land was not *terra nullius* and that these populations had sovereignty rights over the territories they occupied<sup>79</sup>) and even a proposed Inca-led monarchy.<sup>80</sup> Initially, the porous nature of colonial society had resulted in a degree of integration of the Indigenous presence into the demographic base.<sup>81</sup> The markedly inclusive nature of early notions of citizenship in the Buenos Aires district<sup>82</sup> was an early augury of the intensely territorial



basis of subsequent nation building processes in Argentina, culminating in the establishment of the *jus soli* principle and in the aspiration canonised in the National Constitution to provide for 'all men [sic] of the world who wish to dwell on Argentine soil' regardless of their ethnicity.<sup>83</sup> On account of its grounding on the national territory 'not only as a basis to define the limits of the sovereign community but as an operational principle for the integration of diversity', Mónica Quijada has termed this process of hegemonic identity configuration 'the alchemy of the land'.<sup>84</sup> Contrary to the metaphor of the 'melting pot', Quijada claims, the notion that the soil incorporates heterogeneous elements but does not merge them allowed Argentina to claim anyone born in or inhabiting the national territory, including the early 'natural' (Indigenous) inhabitants.<sup>85</sup> The rebellious Indigenous autonomies to which the phrase 'the indian problem' referred were therefore perceived as external to the nation.

As evolutionary views gained ground, however, Indigenous peoples were increasingly vilified as an obstacle to progress, a primitive, 'anachronistic space'<sup>86</sup> against whose 'object exogenous alterity' the nation was defined.<sup>87</sup> Notorious among supporters of Indigenous elimination was Domingo F. Sarmiento, later President of Argentina (1868-1874) and originator of what has been described as the civilisation-versus-barbarism constitutive dilemma of the national project.<sup>88</sup> Not one to mince words, Sarmiento remarked in 1844:

Will we manage to exterminate the indians? For the savages of America I can't help but feel an invincible repugnance. Their ilk are no more than disgusting indians whom I would have hanged if they reappeared. Lautaro and Caupolicán are just lousy indians, as they are all the same. [Since they are] incapable of progress, their extermination is providential and useful, sublime and great. They should be exterminated without even forgiving the young, since they already have within them an instinctive hatred of civilized men.<sup>89</sup>

Evoking the well-known trope of the Vanishing Indian, Sarmiento's use of the iterative prefix 're-' in 'reappear' suggests that Indigenous peoples have been effectively eradicated. Nevertheless, his exhortation to exterminate them betrays the fact that they are still seen as an obstruction to Argentina's access to land, hence why elimination becomes 'an organizing princip[le] of settler-colonial society'.<sup>90</sup>

The logic of elimination also emerges in Alberdi's work; the so-called 'Father of the Argentine Constitution' punctuates the crucial role of immigration 'in ensuring the very viability of the settler project'<sup>91</sup> as he proposes that 'to govern is to populate', namely to replace the 'defeated' Indigenous populations.<sup>92</sup> That these populations were far from defeated is evidenced by the great amounts of time and resources that successive governments would continue to devote to fighting Indigenous autonomy, which prevailed in about half of the total territory claimed by the country.<sup>93</sup>

Whereas in other settler colonial contexts settler righteousness was meant to stem from the sovereign entitlement of the settler collective,<sup>94</sup> in the case of Argentina the lack of sovereign entitlement was redeemed by mapping the righteousness/degradation dialectic onto perceptions of alleged civilisation/barbarity, as Alberdi explains:

In America everything that is not European is barbarous; there are no other divisions: 1<sup>st</sup>, the Indigenous, that is, the savage; 2<sup>nd</sup>, the European, that is, us, who have been born in America and speak Spanish, who believe in Jesus Christ rather than Pillán (Indigenous god) [*sic*]. There is no other division for Americans. ... As Americans today, we are Europeans who have swapped teachers: the Spanish initiative has been succeeded by those of the English and the French. But it is always Europe that is the maker of our civilisation.<sup>95</sup>

It is Alberdi's use of Indigenous peoples as constitutive Others that enables the conflation of the 'European' with what would nowadays be called the '*criollo*' in the context of 'America' (i.e., the American continent). Despite the disparate origins of its constituent parts, the creole state is unified by the European aspirations which shape Argentina's settler colonial ethos.

Indigenous dispossession intensified once a level of political stability was reached by 1862, as high demand for land for cultivation and the emphasis on export expansion accelerated territorial conquest. Progress provided the justification for the rational use of land and capital accumulation imposed by the settler state, and policy-makers looked to North America and French Algeria for inspiration.<sup>96</sup> Not everyone supported extermination, though; some preachers of "progress" maintained that Indigenous populations were not barbaric but just culturally underdeveloped —i.e., noble savages who could be redeemed.<sup>97</sup> Francisco 'Perito' Moreno, another Argentine founding father, wrote during his Patagonian explorations in 1876–77, just before the bloody Conquest of the Desert was launched:

It is commonly believed that for Patagonia to be populated it is necessary to extinguish the Indian. If the former, in his savage pride, does not ask from the land what she [*sic*] does not willingly give him, it is because he despises sedentary life ... because ambition is unknown to him and because he is content with having enough to cover and feed himself. The day when the Tehuelche – as well as other Pampa tribes – will get to know our civilisation before our vices and will be treated as our fellows, we shall have them working at the [Río] Gallegos estancias, providing the same service as our gauchos.<sup>98</sup>

Moreno's (markedly gendered) insight that it was not only Indigenous lands that should be put to use but also Indigenous bodies was meant to resolve the perceived problem of Indigenous indolence —another familiar trope. His vision would come true soon enough as Indigenous communities were dispossessed and many individuals became farmhands. Nevertheless, the enterprising Moreno would go on to find yet another service that Indigenous peoples could render when, as Director of the recently established La Plata Museum of Natural History, he kept Cacique Inakayal and some of his people as living exhibits at the Museum until their demise in the late 1880s, when their remains formally became part of the museum's collection.<sup>99</sup>

Moreno's suggestion raises an important point, namely the use of Indigenous labour. The exploitation of Indigenous peoples challenges the clear-cut distinction between land and labour that the settler colonial framework utilises as an analytical device, even though its existence in reality has been strongly contested.<sup>100</sup> Even within a

structure where access to territories for settlement took priority over extracting surplus value from the native workforce,<sup>101</sup> Indigenous removals furthered the logic of elimination both by 'vacating Indigenous country and rendering it available for pastoral settlement'<sup>102</sup> and by creating cheap or slave labour, a proposition which was especially appealing as the consequences of the 1853 National Constitution's official abolition of slavery were felt.<sup>103</sup>

Exploiting Indigenous labour fits the perspective of the settler state in two ways. On the one hand, it displays a notion of nature which understands not only the land but also Indigenous populations as resources, on which the state exerts its civilising violence. At the same time, disrupting Indigenous communities and depriving them of their livelihoods compelled them to enter the capitalist production system and rendered them available to the state *as individuals*. It is in this sense that incorporating Indigenous peoples into the nation as workforce partakes of the eliminatory logic of settler colonialism. Whether in order to render service to (non-native) Patagonian landowners or to take up other occupations, their displacement and dispossession implied their elimination *as Indigenous*, as the next section will outline.

#### *Of deserts and conquest: assimilation as elimination*

The 'Conquest of the Desert' led by General Julio Argentino Roca between 1879 and 1885 has been hailed as 'a Trope and Enactment of Argentina's Manifest Destiny'.<sup>104</sup> The violent campaigns designed to push the Southern frontier as far as Tierra del Fuego were the culmination of a change in government tactics that saw previous treaties with Indigenous groups repudiated and the military taking the offensive.<sup>105</sup> Replicating well-trodden settler notions of emptiness, the choice of the term 'desert' to refer to the Patagonian territories did not respond to any specific topographic qualities but rather to the persistence of Indigenous autonomy in those areas outside state control, which the national authorities construes as 'barbaric'.<sup>106</sup> The advancing of 'civilisation' was thus used to legitimise territorial advances over these areas, a moral, ontological and epistemological claim which bolstered the settlers' claim to righteousness.<sup>107</sup>

In contrast to the attempted obfuscation of violence in favour of notions of peaceful settlement typically found in North American settler state narratives,<sup>108</sup> the Argentine nation was forged '*through* its assault on the desert' and the proclaimed 'extermination' of its Indigenous populations; as Gordillo and Silvia Hirsch put it, '[t]he notion that the Indigenous past had been wiped out confirmed that Argentina had finally become a European nation emerging, like the Phoenix, from the purifying violence of the state.'<sup>109</sup> The 'Conquest of the Desert' became central to the self-representation of Argentina as White in race and European in culture, as it consolidated 'a national image based upon the negation of any Indigenous contribution to the configuration of Argentineness and Argentina itself',<sup>110</sup> and it is precisely this eliminatory narrative that renders a settler colonial analysis particularly productive.

Even though autonomous Indigenous populations in the Chaco region would not be subdued until after the Patagonian campaigns, the 'Conquest of the Desert' went down in history as the final step towards territorial integration for Argentina as a whole, swiftly gaining the then Minister of War Roca the Presidency of the country. Notwithstanding

the various shapes and forms adopted by both territorial expansion and Indigenous agency, Roca's military incursions were adopted as a foundational narrative to proclaim the end of the so-called 'indian problem' and pronounce the country 'indian-free'. It is partly the emblematic national standing of Patagonia that would pave the way toward its eventual imaging as a sublime embodiment of 'the very idea of the national State'.<sup>111</sup> Consonant with this is the subsequent view of the Tehuelche as 'the proud cornerstone of Argentina's "true" native populations' whose proclaimed extinction was proposed as a confirmation of the '[im]possibility of the existence of "true" Argentine Indigenous [peoples] in the twentieth century',<sup>112</sup> which clears Argentina's access to land by delegitimising any reassertion of Indigenous presence.

In the wake of conquest, Indigenous territories were expropriated and either turned into 'public lands' [*tierras fiscales*] or allocated to those who participated in or funded the military campaigns (like the British-owned Argentine Southern Land Company mentioned above). Whereas some policy-makers favoured a tutelary, paternalistic role for the state, there was a competing sense that Indigenous populations should be treated equally on the grounds of the *jus soli* principle, 'from the true perspective, considering indians not as such, as individuals of a different race and nature, but rather as Argentine citizens'.<sup>113</sup> Equally assimilatory was the perspective of those who maintained, as voiced by legislators in 1885, that 'all citizens of the Republic are Indigenous ... all of us, members of parliament, are Indigenous, as are members of the Executive Power'.<sup>114</sup> If claiming indigeneity had been key to Argentina's separation from the Spanish mother country in the early nineteenth century, indigenising the creole state now served to cement its legitimacy, reinforcing its 'sense of moral, spiritual and cultural belonging'.<sup>115</sup>

Notwithstanding discord in other matters, there was consensus among policy-makers that sedentarisation was instrumental to achieving "civilisation".<sup>116</sup> The 1884 law granting temporary right of usufruct of 'public land' not only to immigrants willing to gain Argentinean nationality but also to "landless Argentines" proved useful in the short term to anchor Indigenous populations to specific plots of land.<sup>117</sup> Ironically, these population centres were called '*colonias*' [settlements, colonies] —a term primarily used for immigrant settlements. Whether '*agrícolas*' [agricultural], '*pastoriles*' [shepherding] or simply '*rurales*' [rural] in character, these '*colonias*' illustrate the use of settlement as a technique of discipline and control by the settler state.

It is no coincidence that the above-mentioned 'Law of Common Education' prescribing free and compulsory primary-school education for the whole of the population was also passed in 1884. The schooling system was meant to play a key role in ensuring the national sentiment was instilled in the children of both Indigenous and immigrant populations.<sup>118</sup> The fact that the so-called 'Law 1420' was the brainchild of Sarmiento (who also founded the *Monitor de la Educación Común*) gives a sense of its spirit and the understandings of race underpinning it. As well as teaching all children that they were Argentinean through and through, schools showcased Roca's campaign as the ultimate solution to the 'indian problem', proclaiming that subjugated Indigenous populations had been assimilated into the melting pot and branding those who refused to integrate as 'enemies of the state, foreigners',<sup>119</sup> as in the Araucanisation argument.

Further assimilatory policies included dispersing Indigenous communities as well as coercing individuals to undertake work. Creating cheap labour did benefit the agro-

export model and was a specific policy in the Northern Chaco regions, but the main object of introducing Indigenous peoples into the workforce would have been to "civilise" them, even if offsetting costs associated with their maintenance was a factor.<sup>120</sup> Dispossessed Patagonian Indigenous populations were used as workforce not only in local *estancias* but also further afield. A good number of those taken prisoner after the extermination campaigns were transferred to concentration camps and subsequently handed out by the military.<sup>121</sup> The women became maids in wealthy households in Buenos Aires, whilst the men and children were sent to work in activities like sugar and cotton harvesting or logging in the North of Argentina, where the new workforce played a key role in sustaining these labour-intensive industries that European immigrants tended to shun. Indigenous boys and men also joined the ranks of the police, the army and the navy.<sup>122</sup> Religious confinement was not as popular in continental Patagonia as it was in Tierra del Fuego or the Chaco region, where conversion and resocialisation in missions or boarding schools played an important assimilatory role.<sup>123</sup>

If not in real life, the fantasy of a homogeneously White Argentina was achieved on the level of discourse. As Quijada explains, Indigenous peoples did not disappear but rather were 'reclassified'; their indigeneity was invisibilised as they were amalgamated 'into the legally undifferentiated collective of citizens of the nation'.<sup>124</sup> The national statistical system played a major role in buttressing the Myth of Whiteness in Argentina by invisibilising difference.<sup>125</sup> Under the pretext of adopting a "universal" approach that differed from population surveys in colonial times, questions regarding race or colour were not included in the first three national censuses (1869, 1895 and 1914), an omission which resulted in a statistical erasure of difference that affected both Indigenous populations and Afro-descendants.<sup>126</sup> The 1869 census channelled eugenicist evolutionism in heralding the imminent and inevitable disappearance of 'the indian' as a result of the state's 'suppression of the desert'.<sup>127</sup> This had not ensued by the time the second census was carried out in 1895, but the results reassuringly proclaimed that 'The issue of races, which is so important in the United States, does not exist in the Argentine Republic' before forecasting that 'before long the population will become completely unified, giving rise to a new and beautiful white race resulting from the contact of all the European nations impregnated in the American soil'.<sup>128</sup> The whitened population resulting from this particular Argentine version of the melting pot had not materialised either by the time of the third census in 1914. Although a lower proportion of the population was categorised as 'Indigenous', the drop appears to be due to the refusal of Indigenous individuals living in areas beyond state control to be included in the census (for fear of losing their wives and children), as well as the automatic subsuming of those residing in areas effectively controlled by the state under the category of 'Argentines'.<sup>129</sup>

The fashioning of the diverse nation as homogeneously White was facilitated by the expansion of the 'criollo' category to include *mestizo* individuals of mixed Indigenous backgrounds.<sup>130</sup> Even though many Indigenous individuals were (understandably) only too happy to avoid stigmatisation and discriminatory practices by passing as non-Indigenous, Indigenous assimilation may be equated to a symbolic elimination that supplements the countless killings perpetrated during the military campaigns themselves. As survivors were decoupled from their territories and the social relations and world views these supported, they were first eliminated as Indigenous before being re-placed on the land as settlers or in the labour force as (low-waged or coerced)



workers, in a manner consistent with the capitalist settler logic. Even when they were granted rights as Argentines, their transition into citizenship required them to forsake their indigeneity; they were to be integrated as an undifferentiated, invisibilised, 'non-ethnic' component.<sup>131</sup>

Invisibilisation did not eliminate difference, however, as the recurrent fits of rage experienced by White Argentina can attest. To explain how official racialisation mechanisms maintained Indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants and 'undesirable' immigrants as a separate, internal other, Claudia Briones has proposed the existence of a hidden, second melting pot operating in parallel with the well-known archetypal one. These two melting pots instituted different practices of racialisation and ethnicisation that resulted in differentiated alterities; whilst the main melting pot 'Europeanised Argentines by Argentinising Europeans', the alternative one lumped the subaltern groups together.<sup>132</sup> Although these darker populations would in the mid-twentieth century gain unprecedented visibility with the emergence of the *cabecitas negras* [little black heads] interpellated by Peronism, they would be treated as an 'anomaly' in Argentina's paradigmatic Whiteness.<sup>133</sup>

Even though the recurrent emergence of such 'anomalies' has since then given rise to counter-narratives of race and nation and even populist celebrations of *mestizaje* which have challenged whitening narratives to a certain extent, recent events have demonstrated the resilience of the mythomoteur of Argentina as 'a country of immigrants'. The following section will suggest that applying the settler colonial analytical framework to explore the Myth of White Argentina may explain its persistence by foregrounding a fault line among the racialised alterities it marginalises.

### *Progressive neoextractivism and White Argentina*

Whilst it is true that Indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants and 'undesirable' immigrants are brought together by their marginalisation from the whitening narrative, looking at this racialised othering through the lens of settler colonial theory reveals the different roles they play in the structure of Argentina's settler state. One revealing example is the critical reexamination triggered by the 2001 events known as the '*Argentinazo*', when the implosion of the economy caused massive impoverishment and catalysed into a multifaceted political and social crisis considered 'a watershed in national and regional history'.<sup>134</sup> It was assumed that the redefinition of the Argentine nation initially sparked by the crisis and then actively promoted by the progressive administrations of Néstor Kirchner (2003-2007) and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007-2011, 2011-2015) would tear down hegemonic discourses of Whiteness. Various scholarly studies observed how structural racism and coded references to race were superseded by an acknowledgement of Argentina's racial and cultural diversity, a vindication of Indigenous peoples, an empowerment of non-white alterities and even the resignification of previously stigmatized racialized images.<sup>135</sup> Following more than a decade of inclusive rhetoric and policy-making, the natural death of the Myth of White Argentina appeared inevitable. However, whilst whitening discourses were disrupted, the resilience of the myth of European creation suggests that there is something else at play here.

There is ample literature examining how the neoliberal multiculturalist cycle<sup>136</sup> enabled Indigenous activism to achieve many gains at the global level, most notoriously the ILO 169 Convention (Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP, 2007). In Argentina, a momentous victory was achieved in the shape of the inclusion in the reformed 1994 National Constitution of a recognition the rights of 'the ethnic and cultural pre-existence of Indigenous peoples of Argentina'.<sup>137</sup> Nevertheless, the very phrasing of the acknowledgement signals its fraught nature. How could Indigenous peoples be Argentine before Argentina had even been created? Interpreting the phrasing as denoting 'Indigenous peoples within the Argentine territory' does not resolve the issue either, as the rights enshrined in the constitutional amendment incorporate the territorial dimension in the reference to 'the lands they traditionally occupy'.<sup>138</sup>

Despite the victories multiculturalism has ushered in with regard to legislation and rights extensions, the recognition of diversity has in fact strengthened settler states and reasserted settler colonial privilege.<sup>139</sup> The Kirchner administrations and their inclusive rhetoric provide a good example of the so-called 'politics of recognition', a limited mode of recognition characterised by an attempt to reconcile Indigenous peoples' assertion of nationhood with settler-state sovereignty.<sup>140</sup> On the one hand, the redistributionist policies enabled by the commodities boom<sup>141</sup> and the populist rhetoric typical of the Pink-Tide governments of the time won over a large part of Argentina's Indigenous populations, including some prominent 'indios permitidos'.<sup>142</sup> Nevertheless, it also crystallised the limitations of a (however progressive) neodevelopmentalist model where Indigenous territories continue to be regarded as resources to which the state needs continued access.<sup>143</sup> It is one thing to embrace less racist notions of Argentina's self-image and come to terms with the fact that the country was never in fact as White as it was purported to be. However, effectively enforcing the special rights of Indigenous peoples is an altogether different proposition and may be too slippery a slope for Argentina, especially after the 1992 Mabo ruling.<sup>144</sup> Might this recognition by Australia's High Court of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's 'native title' to their land regardless of the annexation of Australia by the British Crown in 1788 establish a precedent? As a state predicated on Indigenous dispossession —and arguably genocide<sup>145</sup>—, the foundations of Argentina's settler state would be inexorably eroded if it were to effectively accommodate Indigenous resurgence.

The crucial role of Indigenous dispossession within settler states illuminates why, regardless of the various social inclusion and equality policies governments may implement, settler colonial structures are 'relatively impervious to regime change'.<sup>146</sup> A quick look at key moments of Argentina's history in the twentieth century is enough to confirm that the structural disavowal of differential rights for Indigenous peoples has, indeed, persisted across governments of all stripes. Whereas the infamous Napalpí Massacre (Chaco, 1924) took place with centre-right liberal Marcelo T. de Alvear as President, the Rincón Bomba carnage (Formosa, 1947) —recently recognised as crimes against humanity by the state after seven decades of campaigning<sup>147</sup>— happened with populist General Juan Domingo Perón as Head of State.<sup>148</sup> Whilst Perón's social justice policies effectively benefitted Indigenous populations, his abjuration of the renowned '*Malón de la Paz*' [Peace Raid] in 1946 prefigured his unwillingness to acknowledge racial difference among the working classes he claimed

to vindicate.<sup>149</sup> Not even the self-styled champion of the disenfranchised was prepared to imperil the sovereignty of the national (settler) state by advancing Indigenous rights *as such*. Even though he extended civil rights to historically disadvantaged sections of the population, Perón was a strong advocate for assimilation, claiming that 'the indian was the first proletarian in America and the first victim of foreign imperialism; as of today, the indian is just another Argentine, with the same duties and rights'.<sup>150</sup>

As a form of extractivism 'forged some 500 years ago',<sup>151</sup> Indigenous expropriation has been key to global processes of 'accumulation by dispossession'<sup>152</sup> and remains at the heart of the 'intensive occupation of territory and landgrabbing' that characterise current neoextractivist territorial dynamics.<sup>153</sup> Despite more or less symbolic gestures towards recognition and political inclusion, the fundamental denial of Indigenous entitlement and sovereignty has not been reversed. Indeed, the tendency to flout legal stipulations protecting the rights of Indigenous communities whenever they conflict with the interests of extractive industries and agribusiness emerges as a defining characteristic of the approach termed 'progressive neoextractivism', where the state uses the additional revenue to fund policies of poverty alleviation.<sup>154</sup> Addressing Indigenous dispossession is even more problematic now, as it may call into question the legitimacy of the state's territorial rights to the commons whose exploitation is key in securing much-needed foreign income. The expansion of the agricultural frontier that served as rationale for the 'Conquest of the Desert' has now been superseded by the expansion of the *extractive* frontier, but the key role of the state in determining which zones (and populations) will need to be sacrificed<sup>155</sup> for the greater good of the country remains the same. It is by no means a coincidence that, echoing Argentina's longstanding Civilisation versus Barbarism dichotomy, those who criticise the neoextractivist model are often accused of being irrational, anti-modern and opposed to progress.<sup>156</sup>

This article has argued that borrowing insights from settler colonial theory helps explain the endurance of Argentina's exceptional Myth of Whiteness as a framing national ideology both in historical perspective and at the present juncture. Emphasising the key role Indigenous dispossession plays in Argentina's settler state structure is key to understanding why better diversity management or anti-racist policies on their own will have limited efficacy in dismantling the country's mythical Whiteness. Whether the national imagination fully comprehends the dispossession on which the state has been configured or not will have no bearing on Indigenous peoples' long-standing struggle to defend their territories and rights. Rather, establishing a more accurate diagnosis may be of use in order to adjust the focus and attempt to defuse the recurrent fits of rage experienced by White Argentina.

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<sup>1</sup> Recent critical interrogations of whiteness in Argentina include Ezequiel Adamovsky, 'El color de la nación argentina. Conflictos y negociaciones por la definición de un ethnos nacional, de la crisis al Bicentenario', *Jahrbuch für Geschichte Lateinamerikas—Anuario de Historia de America Latina*, 49 (2012): 343–64; Teresa Ko Chisu, 'From Whiteness to Diversity: Crossing the Racial Threshold in Bicentennial Argentina', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37/14 (2014): 2529–46; Paulina Alberto and Eduardo Elena, eds., *Rethinking Race in Modern*

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*Argentina* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Ignacio Aguiló, *The Darkening Nation: Race, Neoliberalism and Crisis in Argentina* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> Aguiló, *Darkening Nation*.

<sup>3</sup> Adamovsky 'El color', 362.

<sup>4</sup> The full version of the joke proffers that, while Mexicans descend from the Aztecs and Peruvians descend from the Inca, Argentines descend from ship. Fernández resorted to the old trope several times during his first trip to Europe as a President in early 2020: 'Alberto Fernández, antes de su reunión con Francisco: "El Papa no le pertenece a nadie, ni a los peronistas ni a los no peronistas"', *Infobae* (online), 30 January 2020. Available:

<https://www.infobae.com/politica/2020/01/30/alberto-fernandez-antes-de-su-reunion-con-francisco-el-papa-no-le-pertenece-a-nadie-ni-a-los-peronistas-ni-a-los-no-peronistas/> (accessed 10 February 2020); 'Alberto Fernández junto a Angela Merkel: "Sabemos que la Argentina no está en una situación económica fácil"', *Primereando las noticias* (online), 3 February 2020. Available:

[https://www.primereando.com.ar/actualidad/alberto-fernandez-junto-a-angela-merkel---sabemos-que-la-argentina-no-esta-en-una-situacion-economica-facil-\\_a5e3879112dea3656ce130daf](https://www.primereando.com.ar/actualidad/alberto-fernandez-junto-a-angela-merkel---sabemos-que-la-argentina-no-esta-en-una-situacion-economica-facil-_a5e3879112dea3656ce130daf) (accessed 10 February 2020); 'Fernández de Argentina termina en Francia gira europea enfocado en la economía', *Voz de América* (online), 5 February 2020, Available:

<https://www.voanoticias.com/america-latina/argentina-fernandez-culmina-francia-gira-europa> (accessed 10 February 2020).

<sup>5</sup> 'En Sudamérica todos somos descendientes de europeos', *Página/12*, 25 January 2018. Available: <https://www.pagina12.com.ar/91480-en-sudamerica-todos-somos-descendientes-de-europeos> (accessed 19 June 2018). All translations from original Spanish texts are mine.

<sup>6</sup> As this article was finally going into production, Fernández backslid during a visit by Spanish President, Pedro Sánchez, misquoting Mexican litterateur Octavio Paz in his assertion that 'Mexicans come from the indians, Brazilians come from the jungle, but we Argentineans arrived in ships, and those were ships coming from Europe. And that is how our society was built'. 'Uproar after Argentina president says "Brazilians came from the jungle"', *The Guardian*, 9 June 2021. Available online: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jun/09/argentina-president-comments-uproar> (accessed 9 June 2021).

<sup>7</sup> *Constitution of the Argentine Nation*, First Part, Chapter I, Section 25.

<sup>8</sup> For discussions of Argentina as part of the British informal empire see, for instance, Matthew Brown, ed., *Informal Empire in Latin America: Culture, Commerce, and Capital* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2008); Andrew Graham-Yooll, *The Forgotten Colony: A History of the English-speaking Communities in Argentina* (Buenos Aires: L.O.L.A., 1999); Alistair Hennessy and John King, eds., *The Land that England lost: Argentina and Britain, a special relationship* (London: British Academic Press, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> Ricardo D. Salvatore, 'The Unsettling Location of a Settler Nation: Argentina, from Settler Economy to Failed Developing Nation', *South Atlantic Quarterly* 107, 4 (2008): 755–89, here 782–3.

<sup>10</sup> Eduardo Gudynas, 'Diez tesis urgentes sobre el nuevo extractivismo. Contextos y demandas bajo el progresismo sudamericano actual', *Extractivismo, política y sociedad* 187 (2009): 187–225; Maristella Svampa, 'Neoextractivism and development', in *Buen Vivir and the Challenges to Capitalism in Latin America*,



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ed. Henry Veltmeyer and Edgar Záyago Lau (New York: Routledge, 2020), 135–48, here 136.

<sup>11</sup> For a critique of Brazil as a 'racial democracy', see Desiree Poet's contribution to this special issue.

<sup>12</sup> As the manifestation of the inclusive, harmonious intermixture of Latin America's Indigenous, African and European populations, *mestizaje* has traditionally been regarded in a positive light. Maria Josefina Saldaña-Portillo warns against being overly celebratory of it, however, as it partakes of the logic of assimilation insofar as it subsumes whiteness, Indianness and blackness under a single, undifferentiated category. Ma. Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, "'How many Mexicans [is] a horse worth?' The League of United Latin American Citizens, Desegregation Cases, and Chicano Historiography', *South Atlantic Quarterly* 107, no. 4 (2008): 809–31, here 812–13.

<sup>13</sup> Juan B. Alberdi, *Bases y puntos de partida para la organización política de la República Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Francisco Cruz, 1915 [1852]), 102–3.

<sup>14</sup> Fernando Devoto, *Historia de la inmigración en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2003), 247.

<sup>15</sup> Rita L. Segato, *La Nación y sus Otros: Raza, etnicidad y diversidad religiosa en tiempos de Políticas de la Identidad* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2007), 238.

<sup>16</sup> Gastón Gordillo, 'The Savage Outside of White Argentina', in Alberto and Elena, *Rethinking Race*, 241–67, here 243.

<sup>17</sup> Gordillo's analogy with the angst evoked by the besieging the frontier Indigenous raids of yesteryear [*el malón*] is suggestive. Gordillo, 'Savage Outside', 245.

<sup>18</sup> 'Interpol se sumó a la búsqueda de Santiago Maldonado', *Telam*, 17 August 2017; available online: <https://www.telam.com.ar/notas/201708/198384-santiago-maldonado-interpol-busqueda-mapuche.html> (accessed 19 June 2018).

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, 'Otra muerte violenta de un chico de la comunidad Qom', *La Nación*, 11 January 2013. Available online: <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/1544689-otra-muerte-violenta-de-un-chico-de-la-comunidad-qom> (accessed 19 June 2018).

<sup>20</sup> Twenty-two-year-old Mapuche protester Rafael Nahuel was fatally shot by the military shortly afterwards, allegedly as a result of a confrontation, but the case did not attract as much attention and media interest dwindled. 'Se presentó el peritaje para identificar al autor del disparo al mapuche Nahuel', *La Nación*, 17 June 2018. Available: <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/politica/se-presento-el-peritaje-para-identificar-al-autor-del-disparo-al-mapuche-nahuel-nid2144721> (accessed 10 February 2020).

<sup>21</sup> 'Caso Maldonado: los peritos coinciden en que murió por "asfixia por sumersión" y que el cuerpo no estuvo en tierra', *La Nación*, 24 November 2017. Available: <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/politica/caso-maldonado-termino-la-junta-medica-conformada-para-establecer-como-y-por-que-murio-el-artesano-nid2085380> (accessed 10 February 2020).

<sup>22</sup> This was still the case as this article neared publication: 'A tres años de la desaparición de Santiago Maldonado, se duda del papel del Estado', *France24*, 2 August 2020. Available: <https://www.france24.com/es/20200801-argentina-santiago-maldonado-tercer-aniversario-caso> (accessed 2 August 2020).

<sup>23</sup> Comments to [name withheld], 'Timeline post', Facebook, 26 August 2017 (accessed 19 June 2018).

<sup>24</sup> 'Patricia Bullrich: "La RAM está financiada por una organización inglesa"', *Clarín*, 8 August 2017, available: [https://www.clarin.com/politica/patricia-bullrich-ram-financiada-organizacion-inglesa\\_0\\_H1RLCRvwb.html](https://www.clarin.com/politica/patricia-bullrich-ram-financiada-organizacion-inglesa_0_H1RLCRvwb.html); 'Para el PRO, kurdos y



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guerrilleros de Colombia e Irlanda apoyan al RAM', *En estos días*, 5 August 2017, available: <https://www.enestosdias.com.ar/1036-para-el-pro-kurdos-y-guerrilleros-de-colombia-e-irlanda-apoyan-la-ram> (all accessed 19 June 2018).

<sup>25</sup> Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales, *Informe FARN - Caso Benetton Mapuche* (Patagonia: FARN, 2006), 13. Available: [http://farn.org.ar/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/inf\\_mapuche\\_benetton\\_farn\\_es.pdf](http://farn.org.ar/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/inf_mapuche_benetton_farn_es.pdf) (accessed 19 June 2018).

<sup>26</sup> *Informe FARN*, 11.

<sup>27</sup> For a comprehensive explanation in English, see Axel Lazzari and Diana Lenton, 'Araucanization and Nation, or How to Inscribe Foreign Indians Upon the Pampas during the Last Century', in *Living on the Edge: Contemporary Perspectives on the Native Peoples of Pampa, Patagonia, and Tierra del Fuego*, ed. Claudia Briones and José L. Lanata (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), 33–46.

<sup>28</sup> The 'Vanishing Indian' is a recurrent trope dating back to the nineteenth century, when it was deployed as a background to U.S. expansion towards the West, portraying native Americans as 'last-of-their-race' noble savages tragically but inevitably destined to disappear as a result of progress and "civilisation", therefore absolving those settlers occupying their lands of any wrongdoing.

<sup>29</sup> Claudia N. Briones and Walter M. Delrio, 'The "Conquest of the Desert" as a Trope and Enactment of Argentina's Manifest Destiny', in *Manifest Destinies and Indigenous Peoples*, ed. David Maybury-Lewis, Theodore Macdonald and Biorn Maybury-Lewis (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009), 51–84, here 52.

<sup>30</sup> Mariela Eva Rodríguez has analysed the 'discursive formation of "extinction"' and how the idea of 'degenerative mestizaje' operates in Southern Patagonia in Mariela E. Rodríguez, '"Invisible Indians", "Degenerate Descendants": Idiosyncrasies of Mestizaje in Southern Patagonia', in Alberto and Elena, *Rethinking Race*, 126–54.

<sup>31</sup> Estanislao Zeballos, *La conquista de quince mil leguas* (Buenos Aires: La Prensa, 1878).

<sup>32</sup> Luis A. Romero, Néstor Cohen, Luciano de Privitellio, Silvina Quintero and Hilda Sabato, 'Educación e identidad nacional: la visión de Chile en el sistema escolar argentino (1940–1995)', *Anales Nueva Época* 2 (1999): 123–54, here 131.

<sup>33</sup> Much could be said about how Patoruzú (whose real, Indigenous name is proclaimed to be 'impossible to pronounce') came to represent nationalist, conservative values, and how his lineage was traced back to an Egyptian Faraoh ('Patoruzek I'), a convenient diversion of his ancestral territorial rights.

<sup>34</sup> Briones and Delrio, 'Conquest of the Desert', 63–4.

<sup>35</sup> Claudia Briones, 'Formaciones de alteridad: Contextos globales, procesos nacionales y provinciales', in *Cartografías Argentinas. Políticas Indigenistas y Formaciones Provinciales de Alteridad*, ed. C. Briones (Buenos Aires: Editorial Antropofagia, 2005), 9–36, here 24; Rodríguez, '"Invisible Indians"'.  
<sup>36</sup> La Batalla Cultural (2020) 19 October. Available at

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=3372465979510380&id=612818878808451&comment\\_id=3372779572812354&notif\\_t=feedback\\_reaction\\_generic&notif\\_id=1603169948702375&ref=m\\_notif](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=3372465979510380&id=612818878808451&comment_id=3372779572812354&notif_t=feedback_reaction_generic&notif_id=1603169948702375&ref=m_notif) (accessed 19 October 2020).

<sup>37</sup> Comments to [name withheld], 'Timeline post', Facebook, 10 August 2017 (accessed 19 June 2018).

<sup>38</sup> Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson, 'Settler colonies', in *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, ed. Henry Schwarz and Sangeeta Ray (Malden: Blackwell, 2000), 360–76, here 364.

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<sup>39</sup> Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 34.

<sup>40</sup> Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 35.

<sup>41</sup> Patrick Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native', *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (Dec. 2006): 387–409, here 402.

<sup>42</sup> See, for example, Enrique Garguin, "'Los Argentinos Descendemos de los Barcos": The Racial Articulation of Middle Class Identity in Argentina (1920–1960)', *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* 2:2 (2007): 161–84.

<sup>43</sup> Briones, 'Formaciones'; Segato, *La Nación*.

<sup>44</sup> Paulina L. Alberto and Eduardo Elena, 'Introduction: The shades of the nation', in Alberto and Elena, *Rethinking Race*, 1–22, here 3. This has certainly not applied to anthropological discussions of Argentina's diverse populations, nor to the recent analyses of whiteness mentioned above.

<sup>45</sup> Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination', 387.

<sup>46</sup> For discussions of how Afro-Argentines were invisibilised, see George Reid Andrews, *The Afro-Argentines of Buenos Aires, 1800–1900* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1980); Lea Geler, *Andares negros, caminos blancos. Afroporteños, estado y nación argentina a fines del siglo XIX* (Rosario: Prohistoria, 2010); Florencia Guzmán and Lea Geler, eds., *Cartografías afrolatinoamericanas: Perspectivas situadas para análisis transfronterizos* (Buenos Aires: Biblos, 2013); Florencia Guzmán, Lea Geler and Alejandro Frigerio, eds., *Cartografías afrolatinoamericanas II: Perspectivas situadas desde Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Biblos, 2016).

<sup>47</sup> Though heavily indebted to Patrick Wolfe's *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (London: Continuum, 1999) and his subsequent 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native', the most abridged introductions to settler colonial theory are probably Lorenzo Veracini's *Settler Colonialism and Settler Colonial Present* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

<sup>48</sup> Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination', 388.

<sup>49</sup> Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination', 388.

<sup>50</sup> Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination', 387.

<sup>51</sup> Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination', 388.

<sup>52</sup> Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination', 388.

<sup>53</sup> See endnote 8 above.

<sup>54</sup> James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 536; Geoff Bertram, 'A Comparative World-Systems Analysis of Settler Colonies in the Hispanic and Anglo Realms', *The Journal of New Zealand Studies* 11 (2011): 11–34; Donald Denoon, *Settler Capitalism: The Dynamics of Dependent Development in the Southern Hemisphere* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1983); Salvatore, 'The Unsettling Location'.

<sup>55</sup> Recognising the relevance of Indigenous dispossession and elimination and the centrality of land but highlighting the lack of a colonising metropole, the mostly urban nature of immigration and the high return migration rates, Michael Goebel concludes that the answer to whether settler colonialism may be a suitable analytical framework for the 'Western South Atlantic' (i.e., Southern Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina) 'will depend on which factors we privilege for a given society to fit the mould'. Michael Goebel, 'Settler Colonialism in Postcolonial Latin America', in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, ed.

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Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 139–51, here 147.

<sup>56</sup> Veracini *Settler Colonial Present*, 42.

<sup>57</sup> Even though their arrival predated effective occupation by the state, the Welsh in Patagonia were poignantly aware that the lands they were settling were part of Indigenous territories. Geraldine Lublin, *Memoir and Identity in Welsh Patagonia: Voices from a Settler Community in Argentina* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2017).

<sup>58</sup> Anthony D. Smith, 'State-Making and Nation-Building', in *States in History*, ed. John A. Hall, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 228–63, here 241.

<sup>59</sup> Patrick Wolfe, 'Recuperating Binarism: a heretical introduction', *Settler Colonial Studies* 3:3-4 (2013): 257–79.

<sup>60</sup> Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 18.

<sup>61</sup> Veracini, *Settler Colonial Present*, 32; *Settler Colonialism*, 3 & 26. In his 2015 volume, Veracini develops a semiotic square where he locates what he calls 'at least four settler antitypes' found in settler colonial situations. Veracini *Settler Colonial Present*, 5.

<sup>62</sup> Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 26.

<sup>63</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, 'When Does a Settler Become a Native? Reflections of the Colonial Roots of Citizenship in Equatorial and South Africa' (lecture, University of Cape Town, May 13, 1998) [available at [http://hrp.bard.edu/resource\\_pdfs/mamdani.settler.pdf](http://hrp.bard.edu/resource_pdfs/mamdani.settler.pdf) (accessed 19 June 2018)], cited in Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 3.

<sup>64</sup> Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 18.

<sup>65</sup> Fernando Devoto, *Historia de la inmigración en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2003).

<sup>66</sup> Jean H. DeLaney, 'Imagining "El Ser Argentino": Cultural Nationalism and Romantic Concepts of Nationhood in Early Twentieth-Century Argentina', *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34/3 (2002): 625–58.

<sup>67</sup> Though its official jurisdiction was circumscribed to Buenos Aires and the National Territories, it nevertheless had an indirect influence over education in the provinces. Roberto Marengo, 'Estructuración y consolidación del poder normalizador: el Consejo Nacional de Educación' in *Sociedad civil y Estado en los orígenes del sistema educativo argentino*, ed. Adriana Puiggrós (Buenos Aires: Galerna, 1991), 71–175.

<sup>68</sup> Lilia Ana Bertoni, *Patriotas, cosmopolitas y nacionalistas: La construcción de la nacionalidad argentina a fines del siglo XIX* (Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2001), 50.

<sup>69</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 24–5.

<sup>70</sup> Smith, *Ethnic Origins*, 15.

<sup>71</sup> Gordillo, 'Savage Outside', 243.

<sup>72</sup> Mark Rifkin, *Settler common sense: Queerness and everyday Colonialism in the American Renaissance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 17.

<sup>73</sup> Rifkin, *Settler common sense*, 16.

<sup>74</sup> The eventual extension of the semantic range of the term '*criollo*' [creole] from its original reference to Spaniards born on American soil to denote a range of ethnicities including not only Spanish descendants but also *mestizo* individuals of mixed Indigenous backgrounds is discussed below.

- <sup>75</sup> M. Cristina Seghesso de López, 'La Revolución de Mayo y los indígenas: vivencias y políticas vindicatorias', *Revista de historia del derecho* 39 (2010). Available: <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=5402488> (accessed 19 June 2018).
- <sup>76</sup> Carlos Martínez Sarasola, 'The Conquest of the Desert and the Free Indigenous Communities of the Argentine Plains', in *Military Struggle and Identity Formation in Latin America: Race, Nation, and Community During the Liberal Period*, ed. Nicola Foote and René Harder Horst (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2010), 204–23, here 207.
- <sup>77</sup> Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination', 389.
- <sup>78</sup> Benedict R. O'G Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 47.
- <sup>79</sup> Walter Delrio, 'El sometimiento de los pueblos originarios y los debates historiográficos en torno a la guerra, el genocidio y las políticas de estado', *Aletheia* 5 (2015). Available: [http://sedici.unlp.edu.ar/bitstream/handle/10915/51998/Documento\\_completo.pdf-PDFA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](http://sedici.unlp.edu.ar/bitstream/handle/10915/51998/Documento_completo.pdf-PDFA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) (accessed 19 June 2018).
- <sup>80</sup> Mónica Quijada, "'¿Hijos de los barcos" o diversidad invisibilizada? La articulación de la población indígena en la construcción nacional argentina (siglo XIX)', *Historia Mexicana* LIII, no. 2 (2003): 469–510.
- <sup>81</sup> Mónica Quijada, 'Indígenas: violencia, tierras y ciudadanía', in *Homogeneidad y nación con un estudio de caso: Argentina, siglos XIX y XX*, ed. Mónica Quijada, Carmen Bernard and Arnd Schneider (Madrid: CSIC, 2000), 57–92.
- <sup>82</sup> Mónica Quijada has highlighted the fact that citizenship was extended to 'all free men [*sic*] over 25 years of age' residing in the region. Mónica Quijada, 'Los límites del "Pueblo soberano": territorio, nación y el tratamiento de la diversidad. Argentina, siglo XIX', *HISTORIA Y POLÍTICA*, no. 13 (2005): 143–74, here 153.
- <sup>83</sup> *Constitution of the Argentine Nation*, Preamble.
- <sup>84</sup> Quijada, 'Los límites', 148.
- <sup>85</sup> Quijada, 'Los límites', 164.
- <sup>86</sup> Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), cited in Veracini, *Settler Colonial Present*, 74.
- <sup>87</sup> Veracini, *Settler Colonial Present*, 3.
- <sup>88</sup> Maristella Svampa, *El dilema argentino: Civilización o Barbarie. De Sarmiento al revisionismo peronista* (Buenos Aires: El Cielo por Asalto, 1994).
- <sup>89</sup> D. F. Sarmiento, *El Progreso* (27 September 1844), cited in Federico Finchelstein, *La Argentina fascista: Los orígenes ideológicos de la dictadura* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2012), 24.
- <sup>90</sup> Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination', 388.
- <sup>91</sup> Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 26.
- <sup>92</sup> Alberdi, *Bases*, 15–16 and 86.
- <sup>93</sup> For a detailed account of the varying policies of successive governments see Martínez Sarasola, 'Conquest'.
- <sup>94</sup> Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 18.
- <sup>95</sup> Alberdi, *Bases*, 84.
- <sup>96</sup> Quijada, 'Indígenas', 67.
- <sup>97</sup> See, for instance, Diana Lenton, 'Relaciones Interétnicas: Derechos Humanos y Autocrítica en la Generación del '80', in *La problemática indígena: Estudios*



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*antropológicos sobre pueblos indígenas de la Argentina*, ed. Juan Radovich and Alejandro Balazote (Buenos Aires: Cedal, 1992), 27–65.

<sup>98</sup> Francisco 'Perito' Moreno, *Viaje a la Patagonia Austral: 1876–1877* (Buenos Aires: Imprenta de La Nación, 1879), 453.

<sup>99</sup> For more on this story, see Irina Podgorny and Gustavo Politis, '¿Qué sucedió en la historia? Los esqueletos araucanos del Museo de La Plata y la Conquista del Desierto', *Arqueología contemporánea* 3 (1992): 73–9.

<sup>100</sup> As well as by other contributors to this special issue, the land/labour binary in the context of Latin America is challenged by Shannon Speed, 'Structures of Settler Capitalism in Abya Yala', *American Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (2017): 783–90.

<sup>101</sup> Quijada argues strongly that creating cheap labour was not the main objective in the Argentine context. Quijada, 'Indígenas', 74–5.

<sup>102</sup> Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation*, 29.

<sup>103</sup> Emancipation in Argentina took some time to take effect. Andrews, *Afro-Argentines*, 57–8.

<sup>104</sup> Briones and Delrio, 'Conquest of the Desert', 51.

<sup>105</sup> See, for example, the letters published in Chief Manuel Namuncurá, 'Letter to the President', in *The Argentina Reader: History, Culture and Society*, ed. Gabriela Nouzeilles and Graciela R. Montaldo (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002), 154–7; or Manuel Namunkura, 'Carta a fray Marcos Donati', in *Cartas mapuche: Siglo XIX*, ed. Jorge Pavez Ojeda (Santiago de Chile: CoLibris & Ocho Libros, 2008), 679–82.

<sup>106</sup> This point was made with particular clarity in Tulio Halperín Dongui, *Una nación para el desierto argentino* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1982).

<sup>107</sup> Veracini *Settler Colonialism*, 18.

<sup>108</sup> Veracini *Settler Colonialism*, 89.

<sup>109</sup> Gastón Gordillo and Silvia Hirsch, 'Indigenous struggles and contested identities in Argentina histories of invisibilization and reemergence', *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* 8, no. 3 (2003): 4–30, here 4 & 10–11.

<sup>110</sup> Briones and Delrio, 'Conquest of the Desert', 51.

<sup>111</sup> Gabriela Nouzeilles, 'Patagonia as borderland: nature, culture, and the idea of the State', *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 8, no. 1 (1999): 35–48, here 36–7.

<sup>112</sup> Rodríguez, 'Invisible Indians', 135.

<sup>113</sup> Cámara Nacional de Diputados, Sesiones del 19 y 26 de agosto de 1885, *Diario de Sesiones de la Cámara de Diputados*, Buenos Aires, 1886, 459–467 & 531–538, in Quijada, 'Indígenas', 73.

<sup>114</sup> Cámara Nacional de Diputados, Sesiones del 19 y 26 de agosto de 1885, *Diario de Sesiones de la Cámara de Diputados*, Buenos Aires, 1886, 460, in Quijada, 'Indígenas', 74.

<sup>115</sup> Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson, 'Settler colonies', in *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, ed. Henry Schwarz and Sangeeta Ray (Malden: Blackwell, 2000): 360–76, here 363–4.

<sup>116</sup> Quijada, 'Indígenas', 74.

<sup>117</sup> Inspired by the US Homestead Act, Law 1501 was also called 'Ley Argentina del Hogar'. Quijada suggests it was created with Indigenous populations in mind, a view countered by Walter Delrio. Quijada, 'Indígenas', 71; Walter M. Delrio, *Memorias de expropiación. Sometimiento e incorporación indígena en la*



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*Patagonia 1872–1943* (Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 2005), 123–4.

<sup>118</sup> As I have argued elsewhere, the Welsh in Patagonia serve as a good illustration of how even the 'desired' immigrant groups were as much under pressure to assimilate and how salient immigrant ethnicities were negatively racialised should they become unruly. Lublin, *Memoir and Identity*.

<sup>119</sup> Luis Alberto Romero, *La Argentina en la escuela: La idea de Nación en los textos escolares* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2004), 208.

<sup>120</sup> Offsetting costs was not a priority but Quijada cites a legislator's comment stating that by 1885 about 8,000 Indigenous families received maintenance subsidies. Quijada, 'Indígenas', 85.

<sup>121</sup> Enrique Mases, *Estado y cuestión indígena: El destino final de los indios sometidos en el sur del territorio (1878–1930)* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2010); Walter Delrio, Diego Escolar, Diana Lenton and Marisa Malvestitti, eds., *En el país de nomeacuerdo: Archivos y memorias del genocidio del Estado argentino sobre los pueblos originarios, 1870-1950* (Viedma: Editorial UNRN, 2018).

<sup>122</sup> Quijada, 'Indígenas', 82.

<sup>123</sup> Claudia Briones and Walter Delrio, 'Patria sí, Colonias también. Estrategias diferenciales de radicación de indígenas en Pampa y Patagonia (1885-1900)', in *Fronteras, ciudades y estados*, ed. Ana Teruel, Mónica Lacarrieu and Omar Jerez (Córdoba: Alción Editora, 2002), 45–78.

<sup>124</sup> Quijada, 'Hijos', 493.

<sup>125</sup> Hernán Otero, 'Estadística censal y construcción de la nación. El caso argentino, 1869–1914', *Boletín del Instituto de Historia Argentina y Americana "Dr. Emilio Ravignani"* 16 (1998): 123–49.

<sup>126</sup> Andrews, *Afro-Argentines*; Geler, *Andares*.

<sup>127</sup> Diego de la Fuente, *Primer Censo de la República Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Imprenta del Porvenir, 1872), LIV-LV, cited in Otero, 'Estadística censal', 129.

<sup>128</sup> Gabriel Carrasco, *Segundo Censo de la República Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Taller Tipográfico de la Penitenciaría Nacional, 1898), Tomo II, p. XLVIII, cited in Otero, 'Estadística censal', 135.

<sup>129</sup> Otero, 'Estadística censal', 133.

<sup>130</sup> In his analysis of how the myth of white Argentina has operated in the Northwest of Argentina, Oscar Chamosa has commented on the ambiguity of the racial connotations of the term 'criollo'. Oscar Chamosa, 'Indigenous or Criollo: The Myth of White Argentina in Tucumán's Calchaquí Valley', *Hispanic American Historical Review* 88, no. 1 (2008): 71–106, here 9.

<sup>131</sup> Different scholars have used different terms to refer to how Indigenous peoples were forcefully assimilated and invisibilised in a national narrative that imagined Argentina as homogeneously white and European; among others, Briones, 'Formaciones'; Diego Escolar, *Los dones étnicos de la Nación: Identidades huarpe y modos de producción de soberanía en Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Prometeo, 2007); Gordillo and Hirsch, 'Indigenous struggles'; Quijada, 'Indígenas'.

<sup>132</sup> Briones, 'Formaciones', 27.

<sup>133</sup> Briones, 'Formaciones', 28. For a historical perspective on the various uses of 'negro' in Argentina, see Ezequiel Adamovsky, 'Ethnic nicknaming: "negro" as a term of endearment and vicarious blackness in Argentina', *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* 12, no. 3 (2017): 273–89.

<sup>134</sup> Daniel Ozarow, Cara Levey and Christopher Wylde, 'Introduction: Revisiting the Argentine Crisis a Decade on: Changes and Continuities', in *Argentina Since the*

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2001 Crisis: Recovering the Past, Reclaiming the Future (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 1–19, here 2. The chapters of the volume provide a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted nature of the various dimensions of the crisis.

<sup>135</sup> Chisu, 'From Whiteness to Diversity'; Alberto and Elena, *Rethinking Race*; Aguiló, *Darkening Nation*/2018.

<sup>136</sup> Charles R. Hale, 'Does multiculturalism menace? Governance, cultural rights and the politics of identity in Guatemala', *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34, no. 3 (2002): 485–524.

<sup>137</sup> *Constitution of the Argentine Nation*, Second Part, Chapter IV, Section 75, article 17.

<sup>138</sup> *Constitution of the Argentine Nation*, Second Part, Chapter IV, Section 75, article 17.

<sup>139</sup> Charles R. Hale, 'Neoliberal Multiculturalism: The Remaking of Cultural Rights and Racial Dominance in Central America', *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 28, No. 1 (2005): 10–28.

<sup>140</sup> Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 3.

<sup>141</sup> Maristella Svampa, 'Commodities consensus: Neoextractivism and enclosure of the commons in Latin America', *South Atlantic Quarterly* 114, no. 1 (2015): 65–82.

<sup>142</sup> Charles R. Hale and Rosamel Millamán, 'Cultural Agency and Political Struggle in the Era of the *Indio Permitido*', in *Cultural Agency in the Americas*, ed. Doris Sommer (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), 281–304.

<sup>143</sup> Claudia Briones, 'Políticas indigenistas en Argentina: entre la hegemonía neoliberal de los años noventa y la "nacional y popular" de la última década', *Antípoda* 21 (2015): 21–48, here 38.

<sup>144</sup> This refers to the Mabo versus Queensland ruling in June 1992.

<sup>145</sup> Héctor Hugo Trincherro, 'The Genocide of Indigenous People in the formation of the Argentine Nation-State', *Journal of Genocide Research* 8(2) 2006: 121–37; Walter Delrio, Diana Lenton, Marcelo Musante, Mariano Nagy, Alexis Papazian and Pilar Pérez, 'Discussing Indigenous Genocide in Argentina: Past, Present, and Consequences of Argentinean State Policies toward Native Peoples', *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* Vol. 5: (2:3) 2010: 138–59. Available at: <https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/gsp/vol5/iss2/3> (accessed 19 June 2018).

<sup>146</sup> Wolfe, 'Settler Colonialism and the Elimination', 402.

<sup>147</sup> Adriana Meyer, 'El Estado deberá resarcir al pueblo pilagá por el genocidio de 1947', *Página/12*, 13 March 2020. Available: <https://www.pagina12.com.ar/252582-el-estado-debera-resarcir-al-pueblo-pilaga-por-el-genocidio-> (accessed 13 March 2020). To date, the State has not complied with the ruling.

<sup>148</sup> Héctor Hugo Trincherro, 'Las masacres del olvido. Napalpí y Rincón Bomba en la genealogía del genocidio y el racismo de estado en la Argentina', *Runa*, 30, no. 1 (2009): 45–60.

<sup>149</sup> Diana Lenton, 'The *Malón de la Paz* of 1946: Indigenous *Descamisados* at the Dawn of Peronism', in *The New Cultural History of Peronism*, ed. Matthew Karush and Oscar Chamosa (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2010), 85–111.

<sup>150</sup> Speech by Perón cited in José Marcilese, 'Las políticas del primer peronismo en relación con las comunidades indígenas', *Andes* 22, no. 2 (2011),

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[http://www.scielo.org.ar/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1668-80902011000200001&lng=es&tlng=es](http://www.scielo.org.ar/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1668-80902011000200001&lng=es&tlng=es) (accessed 19 June 2018).

<sup>151</sup> Alberto Acosta, 'Extractivism and Neoextractivism: Two Sides of the Same Curse' in *Beyond Development. Alternative Visions from Latin America*, ed. M. Lang and D. Mokrani (Amsterdam: Transnational Institute- Rosa Luxembourg Foundation, 2013), 61–87, cited in Svampa, 'Neoextractivism and development', 135.

<sup>152</sup> On the basis of arguments previously put forward by both Rosa Luxembourg and Hannah Arendt, David Harvey has coined this expression to refer to 'the "organic relation" between expanded reproduction on the one hand and the often violent processes of dispossession on the other', which he traces across 'the long historical geography of capital accumulation'. David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 141–4.

<sup>153</sup> Svampa, 'Neoextractivism and development'. Svampa had previously defined neoextractivist development as 'the pattern of accumulation based on the overexploitation of generally nonrenewable natural resources, as well as the expansion of capital's frontiers toward territories previously considered nonproductive'. Svampa, 'Commodities consensus', 66.

<sup>154</sup> Svampa, 'Neoextractivism and development', 136; Gudynas, 'Diez tesis'.

<sup>155</sup> The reference to 'sacrifice zones' is taken from Steve Lerner, *Sacrifice Zones: The Front Lines of Toxic Chemical Exposure in the United States* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010).

<sup>156</sup> Svampa, 'Neoextractivism and development', 145.