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# **Tourism and Immigration: The European Contribution to the Invention of Landscape and Hotel Industry in the Atacama Desert During the Nitrate Epoch, 1880–1930**

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Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

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## **Abstract**

This paper deals with the relation between European immigration and tourism industry in Atacama Desert. The period studied ranges from 1880 to 1930, coinciding with the greatest boom of the nitrate industry in Chile until the great nitrate crisis and world depression. Europeans arrived in Antofagasta Region between 1895 and 1920, developing different productive activities related to the nitrate exploitation and business, mainly by British, German, and Yugoslavian immigrants, and to a lesser extent by Spanish and Italians. The lodging industry, from hotels to boarding houses, grew tremendously owing to constant migration flows, both European and Latin American. As recreation sites were discovered on the coast, along with unexplored spaces in the hinterland, the possibility of a tourist landscape emerged and sustained by various European photo studios. The publicity of these recreation places was accompanied by gastronomy data and transportation by sea and earth, through different business guides issued since 1894.

This paper is based on documents from regional and national archives and also several secondary sources.

**Keywords:** immigration, European, hotels, tourism, desert

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## 1. Introduction

During the 1860s, the Chilean citizen, José Santos Ossa, discovered sodium nitrate in Atacama Desert. The discovery of this mineral, and later Caracoles silver mine in 1870, made a big change in the desert territory. The first effect was the consolidation of Antofagasta city, whose settlement began in 1866, its official foundation being in 1868. After a few years, its basic institutions had already been established: the City Hall and the fire station. After the Pacific War (1879–1883), Chilean dominion over the territory coincided with political and economic liberalism, along with the world directions that gave rise to the so-called “first globalization,” which historiography dates from 1880 to 1914, when three relevant factors came together: the increase of foreign trade, capital flow, and mass migration [1].

The first globalization was basically related to four factors of regional tourism, which are interesting to highlight. The first factor was the strong European presence in the region. The social capital was British. Germans established the main stores internationally connected and the most relevant investments in the nitrate industry. This strengthened Antofagasta as a cosmopolitan city combining elements converging in the globalization aforementioned and, at the same time, as the counterpart of an important population segment and labor market more peripheral to the positive effects of globalization. The second factor was the change of the natural space of its hinterland in a few decades. A natural, inhospitable, and unknown space gave rise to a cultural space in the intermediate depression where *the nitrate mines* and their mining camps settled, followed by *Chuquicamata*, the main copper mine in Chile and the continent, with a demographic relevance of about 100,000 inhabitants and a wide connectivity of roads, public and private railways both local and international, several paved roads, and paths. Air connection was established at the end of the nitrate cycle. The nitrate ports of Antofagasta, Tocopilla, and Taltal were essential for communication. They were connected to the nitrate cantons, that is, groups of the nitrate mines located in a certain geographic space. They were also located in Coloso and Mejillones. These places had a sudden change in port infrastructure—more piers, boats, and seamen—and also more shipping tons, steamships from different countries, and sailing boats that were used for cargo and passengers.

The third factor was the establishment of small hotels since the 1870s, involving greater complexity of services such as gastronomy, along with new restaurants and cafes to serve a floating population traveling to Bolivia or the nitrate and copper industry, with the specific need to learn about the landscape of the world’s driest desert and the purpose of providing it with the world’s most advanced railroad technology and metallurgical processes from the European industrial world.

The fourth factor was the presence of business communication elements. Since its beginning, Antofagasta counted on European and local photo studios which, together with those in Valparaíso, the administrative city for the main nitrate companies offered postcards of all the territory, posters, and pictures of famous characters at that time. Later, business guides were published on a local and regional basis. They included text and pictures related to hotels, restaurants, transportation, parity, money exchange based on sterling pounds, unknown places, others clearly identified owing to progress, and remote inaccessible places. These

guides contained information to influence the aesthetic and emotional sensitivity of tourists, travelers, or foreigners.

## 2. European immigration and its impact on the region.

The European presence became evident since the beginning of regional productive activity. Europeans came from the most industrialized nations of northern Europe. They were English, Germans, and Scandinavians and also from meridional countries such as Spanish, Italians, and Greeks. There were also French, Portuguese, and Polish.

The census in November 10, 1878 in Antofagasta [2] county refers to Chilean population hegemony (6554 out of 8507), 104 English, 47 Spanish, 40 French, 35 Italians, 32 Germans, 23 Austrians (mostly Croatians), 18 Scottish, 15 Portuguese, 7 Greeks, 3 Danish, 1 Swiss, 1 Irish, and 2 Norwegians.

Most of them lived in the city (5608), but there were meaningful groups in the hinterland, such as Carmen Alto (2297), where the biggest nitrate companies were located, Salar del Carmen (390), Salinas (160), Punta Negra (28), and Mantos Blancos (24).

The dispersion of European population between the city and mining companies in the desert can be clearly perceived toward begin of the twentieth century, as shown in **Table 1**.

Nationality	Total population	Urban population	Rural population
Germans	752	668	84
Austrians	651	548	103
Belgians	16	14	2
Spanish	919	662	257
French	252	216	36
British	1.422	1.226	196
Greek	114	110	4
Italians	695	590	105
Norwegians	109	107	2
Portuguese	22	14	8
Swedish	70	68	2

Source: [3].

**Table 1.** European population in the Department of Antofagasta in 1907.

The mass phenomenon of European immigration, which reaches its greatest expression on a regional and national basis in Census 1907, is shown in **Table 2**.

Nationality	Census 1895	Census 1907
Germans	137	1.178
Austrians and Slavians	227	890
Belgas	2	20
Danish	6	61
Spanish	230	1.198
French	76	328
Greek	13	116
Dutch	3	66
English	583	2.051
Italians	162	968
Norwegians	22	138
Portugueses	7	30
Russians	5	115
Swedish	–	86
Swiss	16	29

Source: [3,4].

**Table 2.** Europeans and their increased population in Antofagasta province.

But, from the 1920s, European population decreased as registered in Census1920 [5]. Data about the Department of Antofagasta reveal the following.

Foreigners in the Department of Antofagasta. Germans were 274 people (235 men and 39 women), Austrians 104 (67 men and 37 women), Danish 23 (19 men and 4 women), Slavians 2, Spanish 1,218 (954 men and 264 women), French 131 (103 men and 28 women), Greek 237 (210 men and 27 women), English 788 (611 men and 177 women), Italians 362 (257 men and 177 women), Norwegians 54 (52 men and 2 women), Swiss 34 (24 men and 10 women), Swedish 17 (16 men and 1 woman), Russians 70 (54 men and 16 women), Portuguese 16 men, and Finnish 25 men. The disintegration of the Austrian–Hungarian Empire made it possible for Slavish immigrants registered as Austrian citizens recover their nationality; Serbians totaled 993 inhabitants (720 men and 273 women); Montenegrins were 11 (8 men and 3 women).

Toward the end of the 1920s, the end of the nitrate industry crisis, mainly Shanks technology and the consequences of the world's economic crisis 1929–1930, had a greater impact on Chile and Antofagasta Region, as shown in the 1930 census [6].

Germans decreased to 216 people, Austrians to 12, Belgians to 3, Bulgarians to 5, Danish increased to 27, Spanish showed the greatest decrease to 453 inhabitants, and French totaled 13 people. This also affected the Greek colony, with 139 people. The decrease of commercial and industrial activity was shown by 238 British; Italians lost half of their colony with 119

people; Russians reduced to a third as compared with 1920; Swedish 9, Yugoslavians also decreased to 506; and Norwegians amounted to 35.

The European presence could be observed in different areas, mainly between 1895 and 1920. For example, German Nitrate Company, successors of Folsch and Martin, owned nine mines in Taltal canton in 1904, with a production quota of 11%, and the nitrate company owned by Henry Barens Sloman had five mines in Toco canton [7,8]. Since the nineteenth century, the main investments were British and increased during the early nineteenth century [9]. Pascual Baburizza, the Croatian investor that controlled a third of the nitrate production during the 1920s, appeared later [10], along with Spanish minor investments [11].

Europeans, mainly British, worked hard to spread the landscape and its change through letters, postcards, and, in several cases, established hotels or “guest houses” in the nitrate mines, which contributed to a unique architecture in certain buildings of Antofagasta, Tocopilla, and the nitrate pampa.

They also invested in certain hotels in Antofagasta city and consolidated commerce with restaurants, recreation venues, and cafes [12].

Apart from changing the desert landscape and contribute to road infrastructure and lodging, perhaps, Europeans also became the main tourists of the zone. Available statistics from the 1895 census shows that the floating population (travelers, tourists, etc.) in the territory included 326 British, 56 Germans, 59 Swedish and Norwegians, 48 French, 28 Italians, 26 Spanish, 11 Danish, 7 Austrians, 2 Dutch, 2 Swiss, 3 Belgians, and 4 Portuguese [4]. After 1930, European statistics tried to make a difference between tourists and other travelers [13].

### **3. From a natural scenario to the possibilities of a tourist image: The dialectics of host and guest**

The first maps of the desert were made by European scientists hired by the Chilean government, such as those of the German citizen Rodulfo A. Philippi in 1860 and the French citizen Pedro A. Pissis in 1877, and later, Alejandro Bertrand in the 1880s and Francisco J. San Román in 1892, who also established during his scientific mission in 1883 the toponymy of the main geographic accidents (from sierras to cordilleras, hills, and volcanoes) [14].

The impression of engineers Bertrand and San Roman about the indigenous populations of the pre-Andes was characterized by the ethnocentric optics of establishing primitive societies with barbarian customs. This led to the consideration of space in Antofagasta Region—that became a province in 1888—from three perspectives:

(a) The anthropological view of European explorers and travelers; (b) the archaeological vestiges of the region exhibited in different European museums, and (c) notes about the landscape.

Marc Boyer [15] pointed out that the British coined the neologisms “Tourist” and “Tourism,” deriving from the term “Tour” used by the aristocratic sectors of their society when traveling to Italy for educational purposes, Rome, and the centers that could feed natural curiosity about

the legacy of classical Old Times. Afterward, there were changes in goals, patrimony, the rescue of springs and swimming places, and sacred pilgrimage. In the early twentieth century, the seaside and the Mediterranean sun encouraged mass tourism.

Exploration trips to the New World were due to man's new sciences, archaeology, and anthropology. Amanda Stronza points out the different reasons that have made anthropologists get interested in tourist trips, new life styles, belief systems, shared experiences, the construction of the puzzles of different places, stories and, at the same time, reflected the deepest values of a society. Following Graburn, Stronza states that tourism is "as a kind of ritual process that reflects society's deeply held values about health, freedom, nature, and self-improvement" [16]. Several travelers who went through Atacama Desert mixed notes about indigenous population with impressions about the landscape, sometimes with Darwinistic underlying concepts in fashion or accepting definitions of culture, such as the one by Edward Tylor, which showed an ethnocentric view of civilization stages. The French citizen André Bresson, who experienced the impact of Caracoles mine on coast villages and the appearance of mining camps in the middle of the paramo in the 1870s, could not avoid making notes about indigenous changos on Paposos coast. "We could observe Indians from changos tribe, curious remnants of primitive population. Changos are all fishermen" [17]. Changos were those inhabitants who went around fishermen's wharfs to the north and south of Antofagasta during the nitrate cycle. An old neighbor of the city, Aníbal Echeverría y Reyes, reported that some changos were confused with the mythic "Chango López," Antofagasta's first citizen.

Bresson's observations were published in one of the French most popular magazines, *Le Tour du Monde*. Several writers/explorers sent their work to this magazine which, as Chaumeil pointed out, in mixing text and pictures "it became the most popular adventure newspaper of the time. Many travelers published here and were so successful that they were offered to publish their accounts in a book" [18].

The accounts about excavations by European scientific missions concerning the indigenous populations of the pre-Andes, Atacameños, and changos on the coast began to spread the area in the showcases of the main European museums. These were inaugurated before the time we are concerned about by the French citizen Alcides D'Orbigny, *L'Homme Americien*, in 1839. The German citizen Dr. Otto Aischel collected several archaeological pieces from the coast of Antofagasta city, exhibited his collection in Santiago in 1908, and donated it to Kiel Museum, where he was a director. The French citizen Barón Albert de Dietrich made excavations in Chiu Chiu in 1894 and donated the collection to the Musée d' Ethnographie du Trocadéro from Paris. This also occurred with the important "Mission Francaise dans le Désert d'Atacama," which explored the Atacama area during the first five years of the nineteenth century. The pieces were exhibited in the Palacio du Trocadero [19]. The so-called "Father of Andean Archaeology," the German citizen Max Uhle, explored Calama gentiles during the 1920s, donating the pieces collected to the recently created Museum of Natural History in Santiago in May 1911. Englishman Ricardo E. Latcham, who collaborated with Uhle, also made excavations, thus increasing the collection in Santiago museum.

The showcases displaying the archaeological pieces of Atacama Desert, both in Europe and Chile, opened the door of the so-called "cultural tourism." According to the evolution theories,

European museums exhibited the “samples” of the world’s peripheral cultures. There was eagerness to learn about “other cultures,” in a convergence between the exotic and the experiences of travelers from other parts of the world. There were all kinds of tourists who searched the desert, those who looked for the life styles of indigenous populations, and those who wanted to learn just for curiosity.

But the desert territory was also a three-dimensional place: On the coast, progress, positivistic mentality, and connectivity with the world. In the intermediate depression, the space for dominating, for being part of the world’s circuits with nitrate and copper, where nature adversity gave ground to culture, expressed in the materiality of industrial installations, human dwelling, and the account of events that told the story of those places—nitrate mines—and finally the pre-Andes, the Andean piedmont, where villages were unknown and space undiscovered.

Meanwhile in the cities, following Linde and Labob’s distinction mentioned by Certeau [20], urban ordering, blocks, and rules were a map for tourists. In the nitrate pampa, in the middle of Atacama Desert, it was necessary for the tourist to take a tour through ephemeral paths, roads, and cart tracks to find the nitrate mines. Antofagasta city map was clear and actually guided visitors/tourists. The map referring to pre-Andean locations and mining companies in the desert only contained references to the connections of telegraph posts belonging to the Antofagasta–Bolivia Railway network.

On the coast, foreigners started leaving testimonies of their experiences. In the main South American metallurgical complex of the late nineteenth century, Huanchaca, which operated between 1890 and 1902, located to the south of Antofagasta, the son of the Polish mining expert and second president of Universidad de Chile, Ignacio Domeyko, together with the German geologist Luis Darapasky, administrated this institution and could exhibit pictures. Its installations and machinery, designed by an American engineer, were presented in a geological congress in the USA, as reported by San Román. Darapasky published one of the most important achievements in Berlin in 1900: the **Department of Taltal**.

Further south, the Spanish citizen Matías Granja opened the port of Coloso and the railway to Aguas Blancas nitrate canton in the beginning of the twentieth century. Pictures of this minor port were widely spread abroad. Europeans such as Theodor Plivier, German, who visited the port, published one of the most appreciated novels about the place in the 1930s: **Revolt on the Pampas**. Meanwhile, an English descendant, Carmen Smith de Espinosa, married to the port administrator, evoked the experiences of a selected woman belonging to regional society and the opposing reality of the city and the territory in **My Memories**.

British immigrants inaugurated one of the most popular places between Antofagasta and Coloso, for both the mystery of what they used to do there and the fact that it was far from the world noise, “Gringos Beach,” frequently visited by travelers who stayed in Antofagasta–Bolivia Railway installations or in the different ranches they owned in the city.

The beginning of a kind of internal mass tourism was possible due to the concessions to European descendants for habilitating the first beaches in the city. José Sfeir, whose parents were German, was one of the main beneficiaries of these concessions, with Rhin Beach, along

with Jorge Sabioncello, a Croatian nitrate company owner and one of the main merchants of the city. Manzano Beach and Maury Hotel, whose fiscal sites were rented to Jorge Sabioncello from April 29, 1910 to October 1930 by the Marine Ministry, extended for 5 years due to a future expansion [21]. The so-called Danubio Beach was the most visited. Its concession finished in 1932 [22] and was later replaced by the City Hall Beach, built by Jorge Tarbuscovic, a descendant of Croatian immigrants, the most important colony outside Europe, together with that in Punta Arenas.

Also, companies undertook the change of beaches. Concessions favoring The Nitrate Agencies Limited in Antofagasta, located to the north of Sucre Street, whose site was 915 m<sup>2</sup> and Caleta del Cobre, 3 km to the north of Antofagasta, were renewed at the end of the 1930s [23].

The “incomparable beautiful” beaches and the “marvelous” climate were the main attractions published in the **Official Guide of the Industry, Art, and Commerce Exhibition and Fair**, during the first 5 years of the 1930s [24].

The marginality of modern life, poor houses, streets not included in the regulation map, poor people, and children going about the streets could be seen in the pre-Andes, nitrate pampa, and ocean cities because the law of compulsory primary education was passed in 1920. Some pictures and postcards briefly show this other reality, far from the central focus of the card, unlike letters and accounts about the socioeconomic reality of the territory. Was then a possibility of slumming tourism? A piece of data may be revealing. Englishmen had their own hospital and medical personnel in Antofagasta. When the Chilean State built a modern hospital with all the implements necessary for different operating rooms in 1912, the British colony refused to close the Antofagasta–Bolivia Railway hospital because a British citizen could not get involved with native population, let alone accept a non-British physician [25]. Probably, British and Germans, the colonies with the highest endogamy indexes in their social relations, may have taken the so-called “reality tours” or “social tours” that G. Weltz considered as “negative sightseeing,” a practice born in Victorian England “as a leisure activity pursued at the time by the upper and upper-middle classes” [26]. The recurrent crises of the nitrate industry affected the whole territory: The nitrate mines stopped working, hundreds of unemployed people were hosted in suburban sectors to later travel to the south of the country, etc. This panorama was published by the press in pictures that showed pain.

Every nitrate company, British, German, Yugoslavian, Spanish, and certainly Chilean, made their own maps of their belongings and also counted on the maps of the Nitrate Fiscal Delegation. Unprecise latitudes and longitudes were solved only in 1910 when there was support from the Astronomy Observatory in Santiago, operated by German scientists.

It is interesting to note that how Europeans, owners of the nitrate mines, hosted their visitors. Some letters reveal the pride of introducing the progress of modernity in the houses provided to the administration or in guest houses. Here, they recreated the same comfort as in their own countries and also showed productive process innovations. By contrast, this space thoroughly demarcated in the nitrate mines of the Shanks system and later in the American nitrate mines of the Guggenheim system, classical in character and sometimes confused with ethnical/classical, and had as a counterpart workers’ rooms without electricity, sewerage, and furniture

[27]. European pictures showed machinery, power plants, workshops, etc., and to a lesser extent, administrative personnel. They also enjoyed exhibiting the frenzy of pier work with ships at the ports of Antofagasta, Taltal, and Tocopilla, steamships, and the famous clippers, that is, sailing boats that made modern time stop to look at romantic times. The biggest and most famous of these clippers was *Preussen*, whose presence was frozen in a Tocopilla port postcard. There were many postcards and pictures about the nitrate mines and piers from the three first decades of the twentieth century [28,29].

There were some curious data about the space used by the nitrate industry in the varied technical books published in Europe from 1885 to 1910, particularly those of the German citizen Dr. Semper and Dr. Michel, such as three earthquakes every week, which were caused by volcanoes in the Andes [7]. In 1907, the great installation of the nitrate mines and the desert resettlement began, coinciding with the greater presence of immigrants in Antofagasta province.

A territory whose exploration began toward the end of the nineteenth century was the pre-Andes and the villages of San Pedro de Atacama, Chiu Chiu, Toconao, etc., which had been previously visited and reported by the French Jesuit Emilio Vaisse, particularly *Atacameños* and their Kunza language [30]. Then, it was time to look at oases space. The first **Antofagasta Guide**, in 1894, referred to the green oases, water currents, and peaceful life, far from the frenzy affecting men living on the coast. They were an idyllic image foreigners would reaffirm, but now in a relation between nature and man. If Alejandro Bertrand and Francisco San Román [31] made a comparison between civilization and barbarity, they also observed the relation of what anthropology has named the distinction between the host and the guest, established by Valene Smith [32,33]. The Andean towns near Vegas de Turi called Earl Hanson' attention was ruined in 1926. He pointed out that "lie the ruins of an old city of copper workers, in which the Spaniards had evidently built a few adobe houses. What do these ruins mean to the present population? Absolutely nothing, as far as I could find out" [34]. Other locations such as Toconce, Aiquina, and Caspana were "out-of-the-world villages."

The pre-Andes offered an adventure field. Hanson traveled in a car, but the Italian–Arabic engineer Luis Abd-El-Kader organized mule and horse caravans in 1907 to explore these towns, which he confused with Inca Empire ruins. The pictures that he showed in the **Antofagasta Business Guide 1907** [35] still refer to the anthropological dichotomy of civilized beings and men in an inferior state, denoting an asymmetric relation between the host and the guest, particularly when pictures give a testimony of the arrival at a predetermined tourist destiny and the contrast with native people. The English archaeologist Ricardo Latham had the same confusion about towns in the mid-1930s. He made observations and took pictures of his trips [36].

#### 4. From emerging lodging facilities to European-type gastronomy: Business guides—Photographers' work

Since its foundation, Antofagasta started establishing hotels when dividing the land. Entrepreneurs saw the need of lodging facilities due to the increasing number of people who began to arrive attracted by the nitrate discovery and later Caracoles silver. Antofagasta map, made by Adolfo Palacios in 1873 [37], shows Hotel Chile owned by José Tomás Peña, on one side of the main square, while Hotel Vidal owned by Augusto Vidal, a former government employee, was located close to the fiscal pier, being the first “business of this type founded in Antofagasta” [38].

However, **Antofagasta Guide 1894** published a piece of news about another hotel belonging to the first epoch: Hotel Sudamericano, founded in 1873, whose owner was Juan Delgado in 1894 [39]. The hotel had been established by the French citizen Eduardo Wolff, who transferred it to Delgado, according to Arce.

Arce [38], a witness of Antofagasta development, mentions Grand Hotel in the nineteenth century. It was located in front of Colon Square, on the north side of the Catholic temple. The Portuguese citizen, Antonio Magallanes, called his hotel María, to honor his daughter. Hotel Buenos Aires was established in the adjacent Street, Ayacucho (currently Baquedano). In the 1890s, Hotel de Francia e Inglaterra was established in Prat Street.

Simultaneously, photo studios appeared to give testimony of pioneers' stories who went into Atacama Desert and the construction of industrial facilities for the nitrate mines. But, there was a vision for starting registering urban progress, streets, buildings, piers, and pictures of people in transit in the city: Postcards and studio pictures of travelers appeared together with Antofagasta beginnings. In addition, the first tourist images appeared.

At that time, the inexistence of *marketing* made hotels offers their attractions directly to their guests in their ads [40]. These were based on a basic publicity criterion, that is, offering market differences.

Hotel Sudamericano indicated that all their apartments had ventilation and there were pool salons and a canteen well-stocked with the most “legitimate liquors.”

Grand Hotel Colón pointed out three outstanding aspects in its ads, papers, and stampers—there is a sample from 1904—revealing that its administration was in European hands: First, they spoke German, English, French, and Italian; second, they were located near banks, the telegraph, shopping stores, piers, and the railway station; and third, to a privileged view of the square and the sea, a varied cuisine, a bar with excellent liquors, and a bathroom were added, making it a first-class establishment.

Hotel del Comercio, owned by Marcos K. Tonsich, pointed out in ads in 1894 that the doors of its salons faced Plaza Colon and these, “May provide buffet services, be a brochure for travelers, and offer comfort for passers-by who could stop to rest for a while.”

It had special rooms, apartments for families at good prices, good wines, and all the liquors in the canteen are legitimately foreign [39].

In general, hotels began to be concerned about appearing in local business guides in 1894, pointing out the services they offered, and highlighting the comfort European tourists and travelers could enjoy. Some of them advanced in publishing pictures of their semi-public rooms—dining rooms—preventing themselves from publishing something they did not offer, that is, providing the data needed to meet the host's expectations, desires, and likes [41]. In the period studied, they were still far from the idea that the "tourist image" printed in the booklet or guide creates a tourist destinations [42], but the postcard did work, posing an aspect of the rural or urban landscape that could encourage visiting it. They still insisted in showing "something" genuine to the traveler, not the complexity of the "tourism world" [43]. There were possibilities to look for natural or cultural places at that time, not only through the opening of new routes or connections to the hinterland. According to Census 1885, there were 18 places among cities, towns, villages, and mining camps. They increased to 80 places, according to Census 1907.

Photographers played an outstanding role. On the 1873 city map, there is a photographer's studio located in a privileged place, at half a block from the square and hotels [37]. Among European photographers of the nineteenth century, we can mention the German citizen Enrique Dohrn and Cia with his business "German Studio" from 1878 to 1882 and Lassen Brothers in 1893 [44]. Other photographers were Bovek brothers from 1903 to 1905; Emilio Gutiez, Stephan and Bazar from 1910 to 1920, and Alberto Motta in 1930. **Guide 1894** [39] includes Lassen Hnos. in Prat Street, **Guide 1907** [35] still includes one of the Lassen brothers, and R. Boock, who took good pictures of picnics at the seaside for **The Illustrated Journal** of Antofagasta in February 1904 [45]. Most probably, he was the photographer who most insisted in "tourist shots" to show the relation between nature and recreation. The Spanish citizen N. García owned the studio "Modern Photography" in Calama. In 1911, Silva Narro wrote "It contains views of the nitrate mines of Bolivia and Aguas Blancas cantons... and also the seaside and public buildings of Antofagasta" [46]. In 1919, he moved to Matta Street in Antofagasta.

Nevertheless, there were slow changes, from "reporting" an exotic place surrounded by certain romanticism in describing the landscape—pre-Andean towns—in the **Guide 1894** to showing their "image" in **Guide 1907**, where adventure was strengthened, which may mean learning about other realities—people and culture—and getting personal experience. However, the next guides focused on hotel publicity, which lacked the main tourism component. What is going to be found in that landscape? What is the reason for choosing it as a tourist destination? [47].

Regulations about the functioning of hotels and stores for selling food and alcohol were in charge of the City Hall. In this way, the work of Antofagasta City Hall, since its creation in 1872, was directed by the members belonging to European colonies, British, German, and Spanish. Orders and regulations, after the 1880s, followed these rules, making Antofagasta the "lettered city" of all the Atacama Desert [48]. The State support to tourism began at the end of the 1920s. So, the fiscalization of tourism-related stores was done during those dates.

In 1894, the **Antofagasta Guide** of Mandiola and Castillo mentioned three first-class hotels, whose fees were 200 pesos per day: Grand Hotel de France et d'Angleterre, owned by Marcos Vuscovich, at 46 Prat Street; Hotel del Comercio, owned by Marcos Tonsich, at 114 San Martin

Street; Hotel Sudamericano, owned by Juan Delgado, at the corner of Prat Street and San Martín Street. And a second-class hotel, at 100 pesos per day: the one owned by Clara Clorinda Q. de Stanford, at 86 Prat Street [39]. So, the main hotels were owned by Europeans, mainly Croatians.

In 1907, **Antofagasta Business Guide** reported the existence of eight main hotels, more than half of which were owned/administrated by Europeans: Hotel Edén, on Brazil Avenue, owned by S. Ganci; Hotel Colón, at the corner of Sucre and San Martín Streets, owned by F. Siverio; Hotel Inglés, in Sucre Street, owned by Ramsay and Carter; Hotel Coloso, in Angamos Street, owned by Rivas & Co; and Hotel Central, in Latorre Street, owned by J. Pacci [35].

This quality manifested itself in European hands, between first-class restaurants: América, owned by Delissalde and Pray, at 59 Prat Street; Antofagasta, owned by P. Illich, in Sucre Street; Central, owned by J. Pacci, at 158 Latorre Street; El Rhin, owned by A. Córdova, located at *Rhin Beach*, by the piers; The Office, owned by F. Ansolda, at 34 Bolívar Street; and Casale Orchard, owned by C. Gallegos, in Uribe Street. The presence of Europeans in the 48 second-class restaurants decreased to 20%, including owners of other restaurants, such as José Pacci, with a restaurant next to the main one at 152 Latorre Street [35]. It is quite curious that hat stores were also owned by Europeans or their descendants such as: Capellaro Hnos, at 156 Angamos Street; Caffarena and Simonelli, in Prat Street, and Evans and James at 69/71 Prat Street. The same occurred with jewelries: All of them were located in Prat Street and in the same block such as: Nicolás Palaversic, Carlos Past, Arnoldo Dreyse, and Enrique Mosella.

Statistics from 1909 refers to the existence of 40 hotels in Antofagasta, 3 in Tocopilla, and 8 in Taltal [49].

The publication of **Antofagasta Business Guide Map** written by the Italian Roberto Bertini and with Italian–Argelian engineer and architect Luis Abd-el-Kader [50], one of the most influential city planners and builder of some of its emblematic buildings, included 18 hotels owned by Europeans, the main ones being Italian (6), Spanish (4), Yugoslavians (Croatians) (3), German (1) Greek (1), British (1), and French (2).



Plano Guía Comercial de la Ciudad de Antofagasta [51].

In examining the records of foreigners arriving from 1880 to 1930, most of them from 1910 to 1925, lodging preferences were hotels, residential homes, and boarding houses. The records include a list of them and the frequency of use, and the owner’s nationality being attractive for a local citizen. **Table 3** shows five European nationalities: German, British, Croatian, Spanish, and Italians and lodging establishments indicating the earliest and latest date of stay.

Establishment	German	British	Croatian	Spanish	Italian
Hotel Panamá	1915–1921	1888	1892–1929	1907–1918	1915
Hotel Londres	1912–1926	1926–1927	1910–1926	1923	1898–1926
Hotel Gran Avda.	1928		1922–1928		
Hotel Maury	1904–1930	1885–1925	1904–1917		
Hotel Roma	1927		–		1910–1924
Hotel Suizo/ Suisso	1923		1905–1930		1900–1905
Grand Hotel	1904–1925	1881–1926	1915–1924	1891	1929
Hotel Belmont	1911–1914	1886	1907–1926		1923
Hotel N. York	1923		1913–1921		1913
Hotel Esbis	1914				
Hotel Balkan	1930		1926–1929		1888–1924
Hotel Bs. Aires	1920	1890–1907	1921		1930
Hotel Central	1926	1881	1928	1912–1930	
Hotel Español	1917	1910–1929	1895–1921	1912–1928	1898–1914
Hotel Milano	1909	–	1922–1927	1928	1929
Hotel Iberia	1925		1925		1903–1927
Hotel Alemán	1930				
Hotel Royal	1912–1914				
Pensión Alemana	1928	1906–1930			
Hotel Francia				1922	1925
Hotel Plus Ultra				1928	1908
Pensión Española				1927	1927
Hotel Europa				1897	1927

Source: [52].

**Table 3.** European travelers and lodging establishments, 1880–1930.

Apart from the list of hotels used at some time by all Europeans, German travelers made exclusive use of the following establishments: Pensión Colón (1927), German Bank Ranch

(1923), Rancho Gildemeister (1912), Rancho Viña del Mar (1915), Rancho Mitrovich (1916), Club Alemán (1924), Quinta Montalbán (1905–1921), and Quinta Latrille (1914).

British travelers used the following exclusive lodging facilities: Casa del Ferrocarril de Antofagasta a Bolivia (1887–1929), Rancho Banco Anglo (1919–1929), Rancho Williams (1895–1897), Rancho Nitrate—also known as Lautaro Nitrate—(1891–1926), and Rancho Buchanan (1902).

Croatians preferred the following : Hotel Baquedano (1930), Hotel Rosales (1924), Hotel San Marino (1930), Hotel Aranda (1929), Hotel Bellavista (1900–1926), Plaza Hotel (1924), Hotel Washington (1911–1920), Hotel América (1929), Hotel München (1928), Hotel Barros Luco (1905), Hotel Aurora (1929), Hotel 21 de Mayo (1924), Hotel Araucano (1902–1914), Hotel Imperial (1930), Hotel Brasil (1929), Hotel Asgran (1910), Hotel Belga (1919), Hotel Splendid (1928), Hotel Renault (1924), Hotel Nacional (1928), Pensión Chillán (1929), Pensión Limache (1920), Hotel Italiano (1922), Rancho Lautaro (1906), and Residencial Marina (1924).

Spanish travelers chose the following lodging facilities: Hotel Prado (1916), Hotel California (1907), Hotel Antofagasta (1914), Hotel Portugués (1914–1929), Hotel Leber (1907), Hotel Colón (1920), Hotel Nuevo Norte (1896), Pensión Osorio (1924), Pensión El Prado (1927), Pensión Señorita Rosa (1919), Pensión La Estrella (1928), Pensión La Pajarita (1913), Pensión Las Heras (1928), Pensión Riojanita (1928), Pensión Flor de Lira (1916), Pensión Argentina (1918), Pensión Santa Rosa (1919), and Pensión Internacional (1928).

Italians preferred Hotel La Flora (1919), Hotel Centricia (1924), Hotel Yugoslavo (1928), Hotel Chile España (1927–1930), Hotel Oriental (1910), Hotel Palermo (1908), Hotel Sudamericano (1914), Hotel Concordia (1913), and Hotel Mejillones (1929–1930).

The list shows three realities: One of them is related to the economic status of the traveler, determining, as expected, the selection of the main hotels, regardless of owner or administrator and those located in places far from the symbolic-social center of the city; in the second one, lodging hierarchy is not only associated with its category—first or second class—but also its location related to a bigger urban space and its added value: The highest social sectors were located to the southwest in the following order: hotel, residential home, and boarding house. Some denominations are unique, for example, German Boarding House is a nice building located on the southwest sector, as compared with Pension Limache. The so-called *Ranches*, where people from Antofagasta–Bolivia Railway Co. or Lautaro Nitrate Company stayed, both British, are similar to other British institutions: shopping stores such as Buchanan, or Banks such as Banco Anglo. Guest House of Antofagasta–Bolivia Railway Co. was better than *Ranches* (Table 4).

In the nitrate pampa, there were also hotels with different capacities and comfort. In the 1920s, hotels were distributed as follows: Hotel Popular was located in Rica Aventura nitrate mine located in Toco canton. It offered plenty of food and recreation. There was a hotel in Chile nitrate mine in Taltal canton and Aguas Blancas canton; the only nitrate mine with a hotel was Rosario. The so-called Central canton concentrated the most nitrate mines with hotels such as: Lina, Araucana, Luisis, Cecilia, Arturo Prat, Aurelia, José Francisco Vergara, and Chacabuco with the best hotel [53].

During 50 years, there were changes in the Antofagasta lodging facilities. Some first-class hotels disappeared to give rise to urban remodeling processes. Others closed due to economic crises, and many others could not improve their services due to increasing City Hall fiscalization and sanitary demands, or maybe, they could not face the market competence of other hotels, etc.

In the fateful year 1929, the year of the world's crisis and the first signs of the nitrate crisis, sanitary reports made in the province and the city were issued after the fiscalization of all establishments related to tourism, from lodging to gastronomy. Reports pointed out the conditions of hotels, boarding houses, and restaurants. The number of hotels, their owners and addresses, and the general status of the property are stated in observations made.

Hotel names	Owner	Address	Observations
Hotel Francia	José Giménez	Baquedano 347	Bad conditions in bedrooms. They lack ventilation. It has one bathroom and is not clean. Solution: Closing.
Hotel Central	Gregorio Riaño	Baquedano 361	Excess number of beds. It lacks ventilation; the second floor is ruinous. Solution: closing.
Hotel Español	Ignacio Carold	Baquedano 433	Needs a bathroom on the first floor. Must install white floor in the kitchen. Solution: Repair.
Hotel Milano	José Camps	Baquedano 447	Must install bathrooms on the second floor. The kitchen is dark and not clean. Solution: Repair in a given time.
Gran Hotel	Gregorio Samani	Baquedano 559	Improve general cleaning; whitening personnel floor. Solution: Improvements.
Anexo Gran Hotel	Gregorio Samani	Baquedano 444	No observations.
Hotel Maury	Augusto Brubacher	Playa	No observations.
Plaza Hotel	Juan Simunovic	Prat 540	Install staircases inside; better ventilation in bedrooms and better lighting. Solution: Improvements.
Hotel Londres	Iván Razmilic	Latorre 447	Inadequate kitchen. It has no marble counter. Same thing in food storeroom.

Hotel names	Owner	Address	Observations
			Solution: Improvements.
Annex to Hotel Londres	Iván Razmilic	Prat 382	Change wall paper and paint. Solution: Improvements.
Hotel Portugués	Atilano Gonzalves	Condell 706	Install two bath tubs; Paint the staircase; put metallic grids in the kitchen. Solution: Improvements.
Hotel Europa	Fabián Becovich	Condell 551	Eliminate apartments on the first floor because they are unhygienic. Put metallic grids in the kitchen. Solution: Repairs.
Hotel New York	Emilio Mañey	Bolívar 240	Improve ventilation in some bedrooms and put wall paper. Solution: Improvements.
Hotel Panamá	Francisco Elezovic	Bolívar 274	Some bedrooms need painting. Change bathrooms and improve the conditions of personnel bedrooms. Solution: Improvements.
Hotel Suisso	Mateo Solic	Prat 730	Beds must be renewed. The kitchen is too narrow. Rooms on the first floor need better ventilation and skylights. Solution: Improvements.
Hotel Balkan	José Goles	Baquedano 652	Demolish rooms built for employees. Solution: Improvements.

Source: [54].

**Table 4.** List of hotels owned by Europeans and their status in 1929.

Sanitary reports reveal that some hotels had been sold, such as Hotel Suisso, owned by the German citizen Otto Kutz in 1914, the new owner being the Croatian citizen Mateo Solic, or Hotel Panamá, owned by the German citizen Titus Furray in 1914, which had been bought by the Croatian citizen Francisco Elezovic. Others, such as Gran Hotel was still owned by the Spanish citizen Gregorio Samaniego.

After the First World War, the German presence in the territory decreased due, in part, to British pressure to limit nitrate production, retaining German nitrate clippers in Chilean ports, thus influencing its commercial activities and migration flow. In addition, the sudden decrease of European migration during the second half of the 1920s also resulted in demographic stagnation in the city of Antofagasta: From the big jump in 1907 with 32,496 inhabitants (from

7588 in 1885 to 13,530 inhabitants in 1895), it decreased to 51,531 in 1920 and to 53,591 inhabitants in 1930 [6].

In the last, **Guide** published during this period on a national basis, **The Travelers's Friend in Chile. Modern Baedeker**, in 1925 [55], complained about the scarce publicity made by the country, unlike Argentina, Brazil, and México, with a private effort made by The National Society of Tourism, founded in Santiago on February 16, 1917, which was located in the National Library and wanted to support special guides describing the country [55]. This important guide gave little importance to lodging in Antofagasta: "It has splendid hotels whose prices range from \$14.00 to \$20.00" [55].

## 5. Connectivity in Atacama desert: Routes and means of transport

An important factor for such a distant landscape, at the end of the world, as geography texts indicated, was how to arrive there. Until the opening of Panama Canal, transport was provided via the Atlantic to the ports where ship companies arrived, mainly Valparaíso, and later Antofagasta or Iquique in the north.

Since the bay where piers were located—five of them at the end of the 1890s, one owned by The Pacific Steam Navigation Co. in 1910, and another one belonging to West Indian Oil in 1921—were shallow, boats and longboats (chalupas) were used for tendering passengers from the ships to the piers and vice versa. The construction of the fiscal port began in 1920. At the end of the decade, most of the carcass had been finished.

So, German, British, and Italian shipping lines stopped periodically, twice a month, in Antofagasta. The work done by longboats and freight boats was very important for this traffic until the fiscal port was finished. In 1919, these charged per passenger, either one-way or return tickets, or for a package, depending on size or weight [56].

As to railway connections, the network—Antofagasta–Bolivia Railway Co.—communicating Antofagasta with Potosi in Bolivia, went through Central canton. It left on Tuesday and Saturday and arrived on Thursday and Sunday. It stopped in Baquedano station, where it intersected the longitudinal railway belonging to the State Railway Company, created in 1919. This was the link between the central and southern provinces of Chile and Tarapaca in the north. Salinas station was the place for embarking and disembarking toward the pampa and Antofagasta. There were also connections to Aguas Blancas canton.

Roads were improved, coinciding with the introduction of mechanization in the nitrate mines and the expansion of copper production in Chuquicamata. Asphalt became a reality in the main road network of the territory [57].

The so-called "mass tourism" associated with seaside and seashore in Europe and the railway network in the USA in the period studied was not reviewed, as it was done in another source [58].

Concerning urban transport, ticket charges were based on the distance within urban perimeter, whether it was a work day or a holiday, and also according to the type of vehicle: 5-seat cars

or 7-seat cars. They ran to Coloso port along the paved road and “speed was 20 km, children paid half the fees” [56].

In this way, the so-called attraction places in Antofagasta could be accessible for travelers and tourists: La Chimba, Coloso, and Auto Club, which were quite far from downtown, and the different recreation orchards and rides to the seaside or the seashore.

## 6. Conclusions

European immigration in the city of Antofagasta and Atacama Desert meant that various elements fostering non-chimney industry got together during the nitrate cycle, 1880–1930. There were hotels, gastronomical venues, photo businesses, and studios, and also commercial guides and hundreds of postcards of the city. In addition, there was unique connectivity with the most relevant European ports due to the nitrate production for the Old World agriculture. This resulted in a significant flow of Europeans, considering that Chile was not a destination for European immigration. However, the crisis of the nitrate economy introduced a key of instability in economic activities, mainly services, affecting the hotel circuit and gastronomical venues. In addition, easy accessibility to certain geographic areas with tourist potential, such as the Andes, its hot springs, colonial towns, oases, material culture, was not possible at that time. The means, such as pictures, postcards, and irregular local guides used, did not help to establish clear tourist images of the good things for tourists. European immigrants made efforts to establish the attractive conditions of the Atacama Desert to meet the expectations of Europeans who had the same hopes as them to settle in Antofagasta, that is, a landscape that was daily built in a struggle with nature and also subjected to international market swings, concerning the main resource supporting its presence and life in the desert: nitrate.

## 7. Methods and sources

To establish the relation between European immigration and tourism, several sources were used so as to determine the elements that currently define tourism activities. One of the sources with the most data was the Archive of Foreign Affairs belonging to Antofagasta Civil and Identity Registrar Service containing thousands of European records, kept at the Historical Archive of the Catholic University of the North. The records of the five most numerous and influential European colonies in Antofagasta were reviewed: Great Britain (Record Boxes 129–138), Germany (Record Boxes 30–36), Yugoslavia, the most numerous (Record Boxes 12–29 plus another one not numbered), Spain (Record Boxes 102–116), and France (Record Boxes 127–128). The records contain personal and family data, place of birth, profession, date of immigration, and address. Statistics of subjects who stayed in hotels were done. These indicated their location and the year they stayed.

These data led to the Archive of Antofagasta Regional Government, kept at the National Archive in Santiago, to determine their owners and maintenance and sanitary conditions at

the end of the 1920s. This, together with the use of several business guides from Antofagasta and the country during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, reviewed at the National Library and the Congress Library, both in Santiago, allowed relating publicity, images, and the description of urban and natural places to the presence of European photo studios that spread postcards and diverse pictures in the guides. These libraries also provided data on means of transport and connectivity in Antofagasta Region. These data were complemented with the authors' specific work on the topic.

The revision of national population censuses 1885–1930 kept and digitalized by the National Institute of statistics was important to determine the occupations/professions related to tourism.

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