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Falklands: census, maps and memories

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ABSTRACT : The Falkland Islands are a British Overseas Territory (BOT) and have on the United Nations list of Non Self-Governing Territories (NSGT) since 1946. Argentina claims sovereignty over the archipelago and a number of other islands in the South Atlantic. The dispute led to the 1982 war when British forces regained control of the islands on which Argentine troops had landed a few weeks before. The dispute revolves around two conflicting principles: self-determination and territorial integrity. “All people have the right to self-determination” according to UN General Assembly Resolution 1514. However, there is no consensus on the definition of a people. This paper will analyse the recent developments of the dispute in the light of Benedict Anderson’s grammar of the imaginary. It identifies two parallel processes of imaginary creation at work in Argentina and the islands. This is likely to bolster an emerging proto-national feeling on the islands which could allow the inhabitants to claim peoplehood.

Keywords : Falkland Islands, Argentina, nationalism, imaginary, memory

Introduction

In his seminal work on nationalism Benedict Anderson proposed the following definition of a nation. “It is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (ANDERSON (1991), 6). The original book was published in 1980. Interestingly Anderson wrote additional chapters for the second edition which was released in 1991. One chapter entitled “Map, census and museum” is based on the author’s remarkable knowledge of Asian societies and targets what Anderson calls three institutions of power that helped create a classificatory grid which was used by the colonizers and by later post-colonial successor states.

Any student of the Falklands dispute realizes that cartography has played a crucial part in the history of the conflict. Over the last years, censuses have been drawn into dispute to support or counter the arguments of the opposing parties. Diverging memories materialize in the various museums that tend to be powerful tools in the hands of public authorities, especially in Argentina.

This paper will explore the grammar defined by Anderson in the case of the Falklands bearing in mind that their specificities place significant limitations.

First, whereas in the classic decolonization case a colonized population tries to reaffirm its identity in opposition to a distant colonizer, in the Falklands it is opposition to a third country, Argentina, that claims sovereignty over the archipelago, that plays the crucial role. This is compounded by a certain level of distrust that the Falkland Islanders harbour towards Britain which, some claim, might be tempted to sell away a small community in the pursuit of wider interests. It is therefore simplistic to view the Falkland Islanders as mere Britons, “implanted” on distant islands. This raises the question of whether the inhabitants are a nation or, more accurately, are engaged in a dynamic paving the way for nationhood. The difficulty of defining nation or nationalism was recognized by Anderson himself (Anderson, 1991). Smith defines nationalism as “ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population, deemed by some of its members to constitute and actual or potential “nation”” (A. Smith,. While this definition seems to be applicable in the case of Argentina, there is no evidence that there is such ideological movement among Falkland Islanders. Also, this paper does not seek to assess institutional processes leading to the creation of a new state. What matters is the way a human group defines itself, either directly or by the image that is reflected by the outside world. In the case of the Falklands, we assume that a powerful Argentine territorial nationalism is instrumental in fostering a national, or proto-national, feeling among Falkland Islanders and that Anderson’s three institutions of power are included in a process of combination and opposition that feeds the construction.

Second, one of Anderson’s postulates is that” the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them” (Anderson,, 1991, p 6). They emerge as a community because they imagine they are in communion. Providing an exhaustive critical analysis of Anderson’s views is beyond this paper’s ambition. A. Smith (A. Smith, 1991 a) for example contends that states continue to play a key role in shaping the nation. Other authors have pointed out how difficult it is to define imagination or to draw a clear line between the imagined and the real (Chivallon, 2007). In the case of the Falklands, it is likely that, because of the size of the population, a lot of people know each other on a face to face basis. Falkland Islanders may be seen as positioned in-between the primordial village and the “imagined community”. Apart from Stanley, most settlements are big hamlets or small villages. Also, it seems that many people see their community as a village and history shows that there are specific forms of sociability in connection with distance and the use of the radio (Bound, 2007 p 127)¹.

And finally, while Anderson limited his analysis to the role of the museum, this paper will take a broader perspective by including other vehicles of memory.

A short history of the dispute

The Falkland Island issue has marred Anglo-Argentine relations for decades. This is all the more surprising as the two countries had close economic ties as early as the 19th century. Witness the development of railways in Argentina with massive capital investment from Britain or the rise of meat exports to the United Kingdom after it had decided that food was best bought in world markets cheaply following the repeal of the Corn Laws. This was an early globalization within a formal or informal empire.

¹ John Smith explains that in 1982 medical advice to distant settlements was provided over the radio. Anyone could listen and know the condition of their fellow-members (J. Smith, 2002, p12)

Also British emigration to Argentina was significant giving birth to distinct communities like the so-called Anglo-Argentines in Buenos Aires, who have an identity of their own supported by specific institutions. Many Welsh also settled in the south creating a vibrant and dynamic subculture. British influence was also conveyed by potent cultural instruments like football, or rugby union among the upper classes.

A detailed account of the historical dispute would take too much time and only a few elements of context are presented below. When and by whom the islands were discovered is still the cause of a heated debate among historians. They became a major geopolitical issue in 1764, when the French explorer Bougainville established a colony on the eastern island in the wake of the Seven Years war and the treaty of Paris which had stripped France of most of its American colonies. In 1765 the British established a settlement on the Western Isle (Port Egmont), probably as a result of a reflection on the strategic value of the archipelago which can traced back to the 1740s. The two colonies seem not to have been aware of each other's presence. The French eventually sell their title to Spain which considered that the Falklands were in its legitimate zone of influence. Tensions rose between Madrid and London and the British were evicted forcefully by the Spanish. Faced with the prospect of a war, they eventually backed down and British occupation resumed. In 1774 Port Egmont was evacuated, officially for reasons of economy. They left a plaque claiming sovereignty. Spain remained the sole power with a human presence on the islands until 1810. In the meantime, they had established a small penal colony. The political turmoil which swept across the Spanish colonial empire in the early years of the 19th century saw a withdrawal of the token presence which had been left. The islands were unpopulated as they had been prior to the first European settlements fifty years before.

The provinces of the Rio de la Plata viceroyalty declared their independence in 1816. Confusion reigns supreme in the following years as regards the situation of the islands. Argentina claims that an expedition led by David Jewett, an American commissioned by the Buenos Aires government took position of the islands in 1820 on behalf of the United Provinces. Four years later, Louis Vernet tried to establish a permanent settlement with the consent of the Buenos Aires authority but failed and the few survivors had to repatriated to the continent. Vernet tried again in 1827 having secured approval from the British consulate. In June 1829, the civil and military command of the Malvinas islands was created by a government decree and Louis Vernet was appointed to the governorship. This prompted a official protest from the British government. In 1832 the American sloop Lexington carried out reprisals by destroying the Argentine settlement as a response to the arrest of sealers by the Argentines. In January 1833, the British landed in force and expelled a small Argentine party. Some gauchos were allowed to remain. This marked the beginning of British administration, which has been uninterrupted since except between 2 April and 14 June 1982 at the time of the Falklands war.

Showing and naming

As will often be the case in this paper, Argentina is the starting point of this section. Maps are not a mere objective representation of reality but they also have a prescriptive dimension based on the Weltanschauung of the human group that makes. Traditionally, map-making was a job for the military and the names still used in some countries for some maps (“carte d'état-major” in French, or Ordnance Survey in Britain) bear witness to their origin. In the case of Britain, the driving force behind the early modern map-making efforts was the need to know

and therefore to control Scottish territory (Hewitt, 2011). Remarkably, in 1982 there was no Ordnance Survey map for the Falklands².

Argentina is no exception to this rule and, until very recently, cartography was in the hands of the military. Only in 2009 did the *Instituto Geográfico Militar* become the *Instituto Geográfico Nacional*. The links with the Ministry of Defence have however not been completely severed. Representing the territory is therefore the responsibility of an official body and must be done according to stringent rules enshrined in successive laws³. The Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas) are obviously shown as Argentine territory. Recently, a new “bi-continental” map was produced by the IGN. Its use at all levels of the education system was made compulsory by law (*Ley 26.651*). Remarkably, the new map confirms a territorial claim to a part of the Antarctic and places the Falkland Islands at the very centre of the map, thus giving the archipelago a key position in the mental map of the reader.

For Carlos Escudé (Escudé, 2000), the penetration of a strong territorial nationalism into Argentina’s schools can be traced back to the 1940s and is attributable to a widespread belief that since its independence Argentina has lost territory at the hands of distant or neighbouring foreign powers (Escudé, 1988). Placing territory at the centre of identity was a way of uniting a national community based on massive immigration from Europe. Carla Lois (Lois, 2012) takes the same view of territorial nationalism as Escudé and adds that the first claims to Antarctica were made in the first Peronist period in the 1940s. Representing the national territory has become a fundamental aspect of a nationalist narrative which pervades many of the state’s institutions. It is not confined to land. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas, signed in 1982 in Montego Bay, defines the Economic Exclusive Zones and the continental shelf of coastal states and the economic rights attached to those areas. The EEZ can extend to as far as 200 nm from the coast but countries may be granted some economic rights over the seabed resources within the continental shelf off their coasts up to 350 nm. Claims could be made until May 2009. The reviewing process involves a technical committee of experts whose remit is to make technical recommendations. Clearly, there is a risk that zones claimed by two countries might overlap. In March 2016, the Argentine government announced that the committee had accepted their claim, increasing Argentina’s economic zone by 35 percent. Newspapers are quick to take the issue and claim that the United Nations has included the Islas Malvinas in the area. The implicit meaning is that the Argentinian position has been bolstered by a “United Nations decision”⁴. On March 28, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized a “presentation of the outside limits of its continental shelf”.

A detailed analysis of the issue shows that the committee was at pains not to be drawn into controversy by adding an important caveat to its report: it repeated the usual reservation included in most of the UN’s documents on the Falklands, namely that there is a sovereignty dispute between the UK and Argentina. The areas where the claims overlapped were simply left out.

That this somewhat minor decision by a technical committee of the United Nations could receive so much publicity prompting reactions in the Falklands and in the UK shows that, at least in Argentina, the national territory has acquired a value that goes beyond rationality.

² As shown is the answer given by Lord Skelmersdale to Lord Jenkins in the House of Lords after the war. *HL Deb 01 December 1982 vol 436 cc1236-7*

³ Several versions of the « ley de la carta » were enacted in 1941, 1971 and 1983.

⁴ <http://www.politicargentina.com/notas/201603/12741-las-malvinas-estan-dentro-de-la-gran-plataforma-argentina.html>.

Also, the territorial nationalism exhibited in Argentina in relation to the Malvinas issue seems to have unique characteristics

Smith (Smith, 1991) defines a typology of nationalisms with the following matrix

	Territorial nationalism	Ethnic nationalism
Pre-independence	Anti-colonial nationalisms	Secession/diaspora nationalisms
Post-independence	Integration nationalisms	Irredentist/pan nationalisms

In pre-independence territorial nationalism, ejecting foreign rulers is the first steps towards the creation of the new nation-state. In contemporary independent Argentina, public discourse is centred on the need to eject British rule from the national territory. We are therefore faced with a hybrid territorial nationalism which combines anti-colonialism with integration.

The role of maps is not confined to modern debates and suffuses the interpretation of older history. They tend to be presented as evidence, or partial evidence, that supports a country's or weakens the other party's position. One of the best examples is that of the so-called Latzina map, named after Francisco Latzina, a Hungarian born scientist, who became head of the Argentine Statistical Office in the second half of the 19th century. The map was massively printed in various languages and widely distributed from 1882 in the countries where there were potential immigrants. It shows the Southern tip of the continent and naturally includes the Falkland islands. Various shades of brown are used to represent Argentina and the neighbouring countries. A heated debate has erupted over the colour used for the Falklands. Is it the same as for Argentina or is it the lighter brown used, say, for Chile? In which case, this would be an admission that, at that date, Argentina did not recognize the islands as part of its territory, thus undermining its current position. Surprisingly, it seems difficult to come to a clear conclusion and accusations of tampering with the maps have emerged.⁵

Maps are one aspect. Names are another and the dispute not confined to the name used to refer to the archipelago. It extends to both landscape features and settlements.

Three names are in current use to designate the islands : Falkland Islands, Islas Malvinas and Iles Malouines. In the past, until the second half of the 18th century, they were often called Sebald Islands, after an early 17th century Dutch navigator. Older maps may bear this name. The French name is used in French speaking countries whereas the United Nations will use Falkland Islands (Malvinas) in official documents.

The origins of these names are well documented. The name Falkland was first given to the sound that separates the main islands by the English navigator to honour Viscount Falkland, commissioner and soon to become First Lord of the Admiralty. The Spanish name is a Hispanicized version of the French name, which specifically refers to the Breton town of Saint-Malo from which many who sailed the seas around the islands originated.

The toponymy of the islands is more complex and more likely to arouse debate. A quick glance at one of the British maps of the islands shows a blend of names of Spanish and English origins reflecting their troubled early history. Spanish influence is also perceptible in

⁵ See for instance an article on the Montevideo-based news website:
<http://en.mercopress.com/2015/11/06/falklands-maps-and-the-times-report-manipulated-in-argentine-embassy-pamphlets>, accessed 30 March 2016

some words used by the population like “the camp” that refers to the country in an obvious anglicization of “campo”. A more controversial case is that of the capital. Even in English, there seems to have been a doubt as both Port Stanley and Stanley have been used. Modern usage seems to favour the latter. Until 1982 Spanish speakers used the English name, sometimes in a hispanicized version “Puerto Stanley”, which was somewhat logical as the town had been created after 1833 at a location which provided better mooring facilities than the old capital Port Louis (Puerto Soledad). A fortnight after the Argentine forces landed on the islands on 2 April 1982 a decree by the military junta changed the name to Puerto Argentino⁶, which quickly gained currency in Argentina and most Spanish-speaking countries. The decree was not repealed after the fall of the military. The 1999 Joint statement by Britain and Argentina, signed at a period of détente included a rather vague and non-committing provision on the question of toponymy. Shortly after the signing of the agreement, a private member’s bill was presented by the justicialist deputy Fernando Maurette with a view to repealing the 1982 decree. Although the government of the day seems to have supported the bill⁷ nothing came out of Maurette’s initiative and the decree is still on the statute book.

Why the move was blocked remains unclear. Puerto Argentino has two major defects : it is in no way connected with the history of the islands before the British gained control in 1833 and it is too clearly connected with the ill-fated war of 1982 initiated by a military junta which is viewed in contemporary Argentina as illegitimate. This tends to fuel the suspicion harboured by the Falkland Islanders who view Argentina as unfriendly and unwilling to respect their identity in spite of public declarations to the contrary.

There are other aspects about toponymy, that are less controversial because their profile is lower. They arise from the vast corpus of war literature, essentially based on the memories of the veterans. Before 1982, few Argentines had set foot on the islands. The war brought more than 10000 soldiers, most of them conscripts who named the places where they were stationed and fought. Very often, they converted the English names into Spanish names by a simple process of translation when this was possible. Hence a hill near Stanley called Two Sisters is referred to as Dos Hermanas in war testimonies. In some cases translation was inadequate. Goose Green, where one of the major battles of the war took place, was called Ganso Verde in some early books, an obvious mistranslation. In other publications, Prado (or Pradera) del Ganso is used.

Remembering

That the memories of the British, the Argentinians and the Falkland Islanders show big differences will come as no surprise.

Institutional hypermnesia in Argentina

The place of the 1982 war in Argentine memory is a complex question which attracts recurrent debates within civil society and among the political elites. Central to the issue is a fundamental contradiction between what is perceived as a just cause by a significant part of Argentine society, sovereignty over the islands, and the means used by an illegitimate government, the military junta, to achieve a desirable result. This dilemma is famously encapsulated in the well-known formula: *una causa justa in manos bastardas*.

⁶ Decreto 757/1982, 16 de abril de 1982. The preamble to the decree stated that the former name was « alien to the history and traditions of our country »

⁷ La Nacion, 17 Julio 1999

Not only was the Junta guilty of goose-stepping the country to defeat in the war, but its hands were also red with the blood of the Argentine population, as a consequence of the so-called dirty war, a feature of which being the “disappearing” of political opponents. Also the return of democracy was one of the consequences of the war. This makes it difficult to include the war in a consensual memory. Needless to say, it’s even more difficult to integrate the collective memory of the Falkland Islanders into this picture.

In Argentina, the Federal government has played an important role in organizing a “memory policy”, and remarkably this role seems to have become even bigger over the past years. Creating a narrative is by no means an easy task as the choice of dates suggest. Another critical factor is the place of war in recent Argentine history. The country had not been involved directly in a major military conflict since the war of the Triple Alliance from 1864 to 1870. The 1982 war was therefore a unique experience, collectively for the nation, and individually for the thousands of men who served in the war zone.

A law passed under General Bignone, the last general who held power before the return of democracy and the election as President of Raul Alfonsín, made 2 April an official holiday⁸. This was not the only day connected with the Falklands as, since 1973, 10 June has been the day of Argentine sovereignty over the Islas Malvinas and the Antarctic sector⁹. The decision was made just weeks after the short-lived return of General Péron to office. In 1984, the newly-elected president, Raul Alfonsín, decreed that the *dia de las Islas Malvinas* would be celebrated on 10 June, thus combining the commemoration of the war and the reaffirmation of Argentine sovereignty. It probably seemed to a democratically elected president that 2 April was too controversial as it was the day of the Argentine landing and the use of force by the junta, in short, the date when Argentina started the war. In 1992 2 April made an unexpected return to the light under the new name of Veterans Day. Another change took place in 2000 with a slightly different name, Day of the Veterans and the Fallen. In addition, it became an official national holiday. Over 30 years 2 April has become the legitimate celebration day as 10 June has faded into quasi oblivion. How should this choice be analysed? First, 10 June had a major drawback. It was too close to 14 June when the Argentine garrison surrendered in 1982, a date celebrated in the Falklands as “Liberation Day”. Second, the new name puts the emphasis on the veterans, who are perceived as victims, not only of the enemy of the day, but also of the junta. There has been a renewed interest in the crimes committed against their own troops by Argentine officers. By focusing on the “boys”, the celebrations can leave aside the darker side of the date. Here, we have a way of reconciling collective memory and the questionable policy of the military junta for domestic purposes. Clearly, choosing 2 April sends a rather confusing message to the outside world and primarily to the UK and the Falkland Islanders.

Commemorations in Argentina

Commemorative rituals are centred around key dates, the most important of which remains April 2. Public authorities play a leading role at federal and provincial levels. Veterans organizations are also prominent in the ceremonies. The speech delivered by the president on the day has become a major political moment and is a way of keeping the claim alive both domestically and internationally. The ambiguity of 2 April is sometimes reinforced by rather surprising events like the mock landing staged in 2013 at Rio Grande by Navy commandos.

⁸ *Día de las Islas Malvinas, Georgia del Sur y Sandwich del Sur*

⁹ *Ley nacional 20.561/73 - Día de la Afirmación de los Derechos Argentinos sobre las Malvinas, Islas y Sector Antártico.*

Argentine places of memory

The major place is located on the islands. Darwin cemetery is the resting place of most of the Argentine soldiers who were killed in action in the various land battles that marked the final stage of the war. Most have been identified and named but some remain anonymous and fresh attempts to match mortal remains and names are under way. The history of Darwin cemetery is troubled and, unexpectedly, largely connected with the sovereignty dispute. The location was chosen in 1983. It is a secluded place, far from Stanley and close enough to Goose Green where one of the fiercest actions took place in the early days of the land campaign and claimed the lives of about fifty Argentine troops who were buried there. The first visits by families and relations were organized in 1991 only, following the Madrid agreement which sought to restore relations between Britain and Argentina. The 1999 Joint Statement by Britain and Argentina provided a framework for the running of the cemetery and the organization of visits by relatives and veterans. It remains under British jurisdiction, contrary to many military cemeteries of the two world wars in Europe. No Argentine flag may be flown. Visits have become common since regular flights connect the Islands and the continent. Keeping the mortal remains of their soldiers in the Malvinas was probably seen by Argentine authorities as a way of bolstering the territorial claim. Conversely, it seems that many Falkland Islanders would have liked the bodies to be repatriated for the same reasons. The visits take place in peaceful conditions, although there might be frictions, usually caused by the display of Argentine flags.

Institutional "malvinism"

Malvinism may be defined as a set of policies and attitudes that place the Malvinas question at the centre of the Argentine political stage. Analysing the whole of what Carlos Escudé, among others, termed "Argentine territorial nationalism, goes far beyond what this paper seeks to achieve. Yet, under the mandates of Presidents Nestor and Cristina Kirchner, the Question Malvinas was clearly a cardinal element of political discourse and action, reviving an official institutional malvinism.

After 1989 and the restoration of diplomatic relations between the UK and Argentina, the Falklands dispute was under a so-called "sovereignty umbrella" which allowed progress on questions of mutual interests like fishing rights and hydrocarbon exploration, while freezing the issue of sovereignty. In 2006, President Kirchner decided to drop the "sovereignty umbrella" principle and to adopt a tougher stance by having a more aggressive approach to what really mattered for Argentina, sovereignty. This new policy was translated into acts in 2007 when Argentina pulled out of the joint declaration provisions on fishing and oil exploration, laying the blame on the "unilateral actions" of the British. This was an about turn as the policies followed in the 1990s showed that Argentina was ready for a rapprochement with Britain without dropping the sovereignty claim¹⁰, in the hope they could coax the British to talks on the future of the islands. Clearly, some sections of Argentina's political élite came to the conclusion that this policy had failed and frustration grew. Contrary to what they expected, not only was Britain refusing to talk about sovereignty, but the islands, buttressed by military spending and income from fishing rights, were developing rapidly and growing richer.

The new policy sees Argentina become more strident in international forums, like the Committee of 24 of the United Nations, or regional organisations like Mercosur where it succeeded in convincing the member states to ban ships flying the Falklands flag from their

¹⁰ The claim had been enshrined in a provisional article of the 1994 constitution.

ports. Laws were also passed against companies with fishing licences from the islands or taking part in oil exploration activities. The success of these measures has so far been limited as Argentina has little leverage on many of the businesses targeted. The diplomatic efforts warranted a reorganization of the Foreign Affairs ministry and the appointment of a junior minister with specific responsibility for the Malvinas¹¹.

The renewed malvinist mantra was not confined to diplomacy. In addition to measures directed at the veterans like the pension increases, a whole range of initiatives were taken with the aim of raising awareness of the issue and targeting the general public.

First, the Federal Ministry of Education publishes books for pupils enrolled in secondary education like, for instance, *Pensar Malvinas*¹². These books, to which prominent scholars like Federico Lorenz contribute comply with the 2006 law on education that frames the national policy on school curricula. Under article 92, “curricula include the cause of the recovery of our Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands in compliance with article 1 of the provisional section of the constitution”. Provincial bodies may also produce teaching material to complement what is made available by the national government. Higher education is another area with a consistent policy seems been pursued. Several universities have created “observatories” (Lanus in 2009, Mendoza in 2013, and Patagonia in 2014) with support from the government.

Second, under Cristina Kirchner’s presidency a big museum was open in 2014 under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture and the Presidency of the Nation. The Museo Malvinas e Islas del Atlántico is located the former School of Naval Engineering of sinister fame as it was there that opponents were detained and tortured under the military dictatorship. The museum may also be viewed as pursuing an official policy as its role is to increase the public’s political awareness of the issue.

Third, other provisions were made to publicize the Malvinas among Argentinians. A fifty peso note featuring a map of the islands, Darwin cemetery, the ill-fated cruiser Belgrano and the Gaucho Rivero, considered as the first to resist British “usurpation” on the islands, was circulated in 2014. A federal law was carried in 2014 to make compulsory to display the slogan “ Las Malvinas son Argentinas” in public transport.

The elements above are evidence of a consistent and comprehensive state policy which goes beyond diplomacy. What’s at stake is the building of a mental landscape with which people can imagine the islands¹³. Education is obviously in the van but every citizen will be reminded of the importance of the cause when they draw a banknote from their wallets. What impact this policy is having or is likely to have is difficult to ascertain, especially in the short term. Benwell and Dodds contend that the reception of territorial nationalism is not uniform and depends on many factors like the “respondent’s geographical location, personal/familial relationships and generation, amongst other variables” (Benwell and Dodds, 2011).

The memory of the Islands

¹¹ Remarkably, the holder of the post was Daniel Filmus, a former education minister. The position disappeared following the election of a new president in 2015.

¹² http://www.educ.ar/recursos/ver?rec_id=92494

¹³ Significantly, the Buenos Aires museum allows visitors to have a « sensorial experience » of the islands.

The shock caused by the 1982 war to the small Falklands society was both deep and lasting. First, the civilians became but a small minority as Argentina built up its forces on the island, a rare occurrence in armed conflicts. The size of the population has also been a constraint on the production of institutional memory.

A Liberation monument was erected after the war and inaugurated on 14 June 1984 to commemorate the second anniversary of the surrender of the Argentine troops. There is also a little museum, opened in 1989, with several sections that cover human activities in a historical perspective (maritime, sheep,.....). Although the museum is more geared towards depicting the life of a small community and the preserving of its heritage, it has a department that covers the 1982 war. A new, bigger, site has just opened close to Stanley Harbour.

The 1982 war has produced a wealth of individual accounts in the form of books or documentaries. The voice of the inhabitants is either the main part of the work, like in John Smith's "An islander's Diary of the Falklands Occupation", first published in 1984, or included in more general volumes, like in McManners' "Forgotten Voices of the Falklands". They create a narrative, from which figures emerge and take a heroic dimension. A good example is Trudi Mc Phee, who guided and transported British troops with their kit on her tractor across the difficult Falklands terrain. Thus is built a positive collective memory that helps reinforce a feeling of belonging to a distinct community. It is also a memory that revives the traditional roles that WWII has turned into clichés: occupation, resistance, liberation. This may seem rather overblown given the limited dimension of the war. With hindsight it is easy to forget that there were genuine concerns among the Falkland Islanders as to what the future held for them. Even if orders had been given by the Argentine High Command to treat the population well, the population had no illusion as to the nature of the regime and the role that the military had played in the repression that had swept across Argentina.

There are not just mortal remains buried on the islands. Landmines are still a part of the landscape more than thirty years after the end of the war. The minefields were laid by Argentine troops to buttress their defences. Mine clearance started after the war but the efforts were hampered by inadequate resources and technical difficulties: plastic mines, migration in peaty soil. Some zones therefore remain no-go areas. According to information provided by Argentina after the war, about 20,000 landmines and 5,000 antitank mines had been laid. In 2009, certain sources estimated that between 16,000 and 18,000 mines were still left. The mine clearing campaigns mounted between 2009 and 2015 removed a further 8,000¹⁴. As is often the case in the Falklands, the issue of landmines is not purely technical, it has profound political implications. Under the 1999 Ottawa convention on the elimination of landmines clearing is the responsibility of the party that has jurisdiction or control of the territory. It seems that Argentina offered its services in the 1990s. The offer was rejected by the British who considered that it could be a precedent that could be used by Argentina to bolster its territorial claim¹⁵. The convention set a ten-year period for the clearing of all mines. Britain has therefore failed to comply with this provision.

When the clearing will be over is still unknown but landmines serve as a potent reminder of the violence past.

¹⁴ <http://en.mercopress.com/2015/04/18/making-the-falklands-safe-clearing-mines-from-the-1982-conflict>

¹⁵ <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/143706-malvinas-hay-cinco-zonas-de-campos-minados>

British memory or hypomnesia

Until 1982 the sovereignty dispute and the Argentine claim were, to say the least, a minor issue for British public opinion. Generally speaking, politicians concurred and the talks held before 1982 remained in the background of a geopolitical situation in which Germany and the European theatre of operations occupied centre stage. The name of Falklands was essentially known by military historians because of the battle fought in December 1914 when a British force destroyed the German eastern squadron that was trying to force its way northwards after having rounded Cape Horn. A monument was erected to commemorate the battle. History is also written into the landscape with Canopus Hill, named after an old pre-dreadnought battleship that fired the first shot of the action. Between 1914 and 1982, the islands fell into oblivion among the general public. The war changed the picture completely and the Falklands were the major story in the media for weeks. Very quickly however, they faded again into obscurity. Institutional memory is rather limited. A plaque bearing the names of the fallen was unveiled at Saint Paul's cathedral in London. In 2012 a monument was erected at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire in addition to private initiatives like the Falklands Chapel at Pangbourne College, an independent school where a significant number of veterans had been educated.

Schoolbooks provide an interesting insight into institutionalized memory. However, it should be noted that there are significant differences between the education systems of England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. In England and Wales, a National Curriculum was only introduced in 1989 in the wake of the 1988 Education Act. Traditionally, teachers and schools have enjoyed substantial freedom in the choice of teaching material and this rules out any strong control by Whitehall over schoolbooks. The National Curriculum provides very general guidelines. Comparative studies of schoolbooks (Soppelsa, 2011) show that the war and the Falklands in general have but a marginal place in teaching¹⁶, contrary to what is to be found in Argentina.

That the war has not been conducive to the production of a strong institutional memory does not mean that its impact on British society was marginal, Klaus Dodds (Dodds, 2002) thinks it had a profound influence on the redefining of British identity. The Falkland Islanders were depicted as a "island race" by the then Prime Minister, a term which echoed a classic vision of Britain (Dodds and Royle, 2003). Also, the war helped legitimize or re-legitimize the then Prime Minister, confirming that the Iron Lady was of Bismarckian stuff. How do we account for this marginal place? Arguably, the Falklands war was one of the many wars fought in the 20th century by Britain and the death toll was short in comparison with the Second World War and commensurate with the future wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which also proved more controversial in terms of legitimacy. Also, as noted above, there were common points with World War II which could explain that it was not seen as extraordinary. The plot of the war (initial defeat, occupation, landing and liberation), the enemy (a ruthless dictatorship), and geography (an island resisting the invader) conjure up to produce a narrative that is very similar to the experience of World War II.

Counting

Here the focus shifts to the Falklands as counting people requires control of the territory and Argentina only has the capacity to react to initiatives taken by the Falkland Islands Government or the administering power.

Censuses were the primary focus of Anderson's analysis but there are other ways of counting people, like polls and referendums.

The 2013 referendum

The referendum was announced on 14 June 2012. The date was chosen carefully as it was the 30 anniversary of the end of the war and the final surrender of the Argentine forces. It may be seen as a response to the diplomatic campaign staged by Argentina since the coming to power of Nestor and Cristina Kirchner. The question put to the Falkland Islanders was the following:

*Do you wish the Falkland Islands to retain their current political status as an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom? YES or NO*¹⁷

The referendum was held the following year on 10 March and the result was unequivocal:

Ballot papers issued	1,522
Votes cast at the referendum	1,518
Rejected ballot papers	1
Votes validly cast at the referendum	1,517
Turnout at the referendum	92%
“Yes” votes cast	1,513 (99.8%)
“No” votes cast	3 (0.2%)

The referendum was presented as an act of self-determination and Argentina was clearly targeted as the factor that presided over the decision to call voters to the poll. This paper is too short for a detailed analysis of the referendum and its organization¹⁸. Peter Willetts (Willetts, 2013) argues that it was more a political gesture as the legal validity of the exercise is doubtful at an international level.

As a public relations exercise, the referendum showed clearly what the population wants. By providing evidence that keeping the status quo is the preferred option, the promoters of the referendum intended to strengthen their case in international forums. The results received a warm welcome in the UK where the Foreign Secretary said that the referendum “was conducted in a free, fair and transparent way” and that he believed “believe that the result should be recognised by the whole international community as a definitive act of self

¹⁷ Source : Falkland Islands Executive Council, Agreement on question and date for referendum on political status, 21 November 2013. <http://www.falklands.gov.fk/assets/ExCo-272-12P.pdf>, consulté le 10 mai 2013.

¹⁸ See Marc Fourches (Fourches, 2016)

determination”¹⁹. The reaction in Argentina was understandably different. The referendum was dismissed as a mere attempt to "manipulate the issue" and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed its traditional stance that the islanders were a "transplanted population"²⁰.

The 2012 census

Censuses are carried out on a regular basis and the latest was conducted in April 2012 with preliminary results published in the autumn of 2012. The final report was released on 24 April 2013. The previous census dated back to 2006 and the six-month delay in renewing the exercise was reportedly due to financial difficulties.

The 2012 was remarkable as it included a new question of national identity, defined as “the cultural group that people most closely identify with”.

This was included to ascertain the cultural group that people most closely identify with (and need not be related to the person’s place of birth or citizenship). The results show that 59% of residents consider their national identity to be ‘Falkland Islander’. 29% consider themselves British; 9.8% St Helenian, and 5.4% Chilean. Comparison with data on place of birth reveals that some 16% of persons with Chilean nationality consider their national identity to be Falkland Islander, as do 6% of persons with St. Helenian nationality. This is indicative of long-term settlement of persons from these locations in the Islands. (Census, 2012:6)

Clearly the census was designed to provide statistical evidence that Falkland Islanders are a distinct group that is different from the British in an effort to counter the Argentine argument that they are no different from the mother country. Interestingly the wording of the question precluded double identity. The British and Falkland Islander categories are therefore mutually exclusive. What results might have been yielded by the census is a question based on Moreno’s approach of multiple identities had been included remain unclear. There was probably a good public relations argument to show that only a minority see themselves as British.²¹

Conclusion

It is not always easy to analyze the many initiatives that have cropped up over the last years in both Argentina and the Falklands but a picture seems to emerge, that of strategies planned by institutions with a view to furthering their respective claims. For the Argentine authorities, the revival of the *causa Malvinas* and its corresponding narrative has translated into frenzied diplomatic activity, albeit with limited success, and many domestic awareness raising measures with a view to reinforcing a national imaginary. In the Falklands, most certainly in response to Argentina’s policy, the authorities, in cooperation with the UK government, have promoted a referendum to strengthen the sense of belonging to a different community within the extended British family where multiple affiliations are possible. Falkland Islanders display specific attitudes shaped by isolation and unique living conditions. The war was in important

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-falkland-islands-referendum>.

Written statement to Parliament by the Foreign Secretary, 13 March 2013.accessed 19 May 2013

²⁰ <http://www.mrecic.gov.ar/es/un-intento-britanico-mas-de-manipular-la-cuestion-malvina>

, accessed 14 May 2013

²¹ Interestingly, the figures on citizenship that show that more than 90 percent of the respondents are British or British Overseas Citizens are consigned to the appendices.

factor. It revived a typically British narrative of the war in micro-society that remained both attached to and suspicious of the mother country. The reaffirmation of a distinct identity is directed at both Britain and Argentina. This would have been more difficult had Argentina not put so much effort in promoting its claim, domestically and internationally. The changing attitudes in the Falklands are evidence of a reactive protonationalism.

What's also remarkable is that the "tools" analyzed by Anderson have been used by both sides in a very consistent way. Arguably what was one a description may have become a prescription. If a community wants to achieve nationhood, it has to have museums, censuses and cartography. In the specific case of the Falklands, these tools have not been in the hands of just one party.

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