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***Optimists in the Andes: The Impact of the
French Liberal School on Economic Education
in 19th Century Andean America***

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Department of Economics

OPTIMISTS IN THE ANDES: THE IMPACT OF THE FRENCH LIBERAL SCHOOL ON ECONOMIC EDUCATION IN 19TH CENTURY ANDEAN AMERICA

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Abstract

This paper examines the influence of the French liberal school in the formation of the Andean republics—Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, and Chile. Our primary focus lies on the teaching of political economy during the last two thirds of the 19th century. Our scrutiny to the chairs of political economy and a text mining analysis of their textbooks allows us to conclude that the French liberal school exerted a stronger influence compared to its British counterpart. In addition, the influence varied from the Chilean enthusiast reception to the political obstacles in the case of Colombia.

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I. INTRODUCTION

After the independence from the Spanish Empire in the early nineteenth century, the economic institutions that emerged in the newly formed republics were heavily influenced by external sources, as foreign experiences were adjusted to fit the national context (Coatsworth, 1998). Understanding the circulation of economic ideas and their transformation into institutions is thus crucial. In the case of Andean America, the initial liberal consensus faced challenges from emerging neo-mercantilist ideas. This led to the establishment of debates within each country that persisted until around 1890. It was during this period that the pursuit of external economic growth coincided with a gradual departure from the tenets of economic liberalism (Jacobsen, 2007). However, it is important to ask which specific strand of liberalism was being contested and redefined during this transformative era.

This investigation aims to illuminate the influence of the French liberal school (FLS hereinafter) in shaping the Andean republics' formation, a region characterized by a shared historical legacy, common governance structure during the colonial era, and geographical similarities that have fostered a distinct collective identity represented by modern alliances like the *Comunidad Andina de Naciones* (Prieto, 2016). The Andes Mountain range holds varying significance for different South American nations, acting as an endogenous feature crucial to their national history or as an exogenous skeletal backbone external to the core of the nation. In defining the region, we follow Henderson's (2013) approach, encompassing Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru, but deviate from excluding Chile as Johnson (1965) includes it as part of the region¹.

The FLS was a dominant force in French economic thought for much of the nineteenth century. This article excludes Say, instead considering only French liberal economists after his death, which marked the beginning of what has been qualified as a school, or a lobby (Le Van-Lesmele, 1980). Without the analytical interest of other colleagues, Jean-Baptiste Say's disciples as Frédéric Bastiat, Gustave de Molinari, Michel Chevalier, Jean Gustave Courcelle-Seneuil, or Paul Leroy-Beaulieu made significant contributions to both the field of economics and the institutionalization of political economy (Breton & Lutfalla, 1991; Sigot, 2010; Silvant, 2012; Potier, 2022). Although these liberal authors did not form a homogeneous group with well-defined boundaries, all of them believe that the results of the state intervention would be less effective to achieve economic and social development than those produced by free market conditions.

Despite the importance of the FLS, the study of its influence outside the borders of France focuses almost exclusively on Europe and the United States, leaving Latin America aside (Salerno, 1988; Augello & Guidi, 2001). However, there are clear evidences of the influence of the school in the region: (i) the leading role of the teaching work of Say in teaching in the region (Rieu-Millán, 1990; Couyoumdjian, 2015; Álvarez, Hurtado & Meléndez, 2017), (ii) Courcelle-Seneuil's stay in Chile (Briones, 2016; Vera, 2014) and Colombia (Álvarez and Correa, 2016), (iii) the influence of the FLS through Spanish authors, employed as referents for the creation of financial institutions in Peru (De Haro, 2013) and Colombia (Álvarez, 2016), and (iv) the formation and library of political elites, as it was the case of Antonio Flores, one of the country's most prominent legislators of Ecuador in the last decades of the nineteenth

¹ Focusing on countries where the Andes Mountains have significantly impacted historical development, this research excludes Venezuela, which directs its focus outward toward the Caribbean region Henderson (2013). Bolivia is not considered in this study due to a lack of access to digital archives.

century (Borja, 2022). All this evidence calls into question whether the growing commercial influence of Great Britain in Latin America — especially between the 1820s and 1880s — also carried with it the ideas of British economists. Even if the influence of classical British economics existed, we doubt that it was as important as the literature has traditionally assumed (Jones, 1992; Helleiner & Rosales, 2017).

In this research, our primary focus lies on the realm of higher education, specifically the courses of political economy offered within each country during the last two thirds of the century. Our attention is directed towards the individuals entrusted with the task of teaching these courses, as well as the ideas and doctrines they propagated. By doing so, our aim is to unravel the nature of the knowledge and intellectual tradition that was disseminated among students and subsequently permeated the wider population. Given that some countries boast multiple universities, we have dedicated our scrutiny to the most influential institutions within each respective nation in order to delineate the chairs of political economy and their textbooks. We also add a framework used in text mining based on word frequencies, to analyze how similar the texts used in the Andean republics are to the text written by authors from the FLS.

Our research uncovers compelling evidence that the FLS exerted a stronger influence compared to its British counterpart in the context of the teaching of political economy nineteenth-century Andean republics. We have identified the general use of six foreign textbooks in the Andean chairs of political economy —all of them belong to the French liberal school— and five national texts: *Tratado Elemental de Economía Política* (1863) by Miguel Cruchaga and *Tratado de economía política* (1894) by Zorobabel Rodríguez in Chile, *Curso elemental de economía política* (1860) by Felipe Masias in Peru, and Elias Laso's *notes* (1863) in Ecuador. The influence of the FPS varied from one country to the next, even varying within the period. The case of Chile, for instance, reveals a predilection for the French tradition over the British tradition as early as the 1800s, even prior to Courcelle-Seneuil's arrival. This preference paved the way for the dominance of his students, who would go on to become the foremost authorities in political economy within the country for the following half-century. Similarly, Peru showcases a significant impact of the FLS since its inception, despite the limited written records left by its professors. In Ecuador, a single professor held sway over the political economy chair at the country's major university for over four decades, as evidenced by the integration of FLS references and concepts into his writings. Furthermore, In Colombia, the enduring continuity of the political economy chair, dominated by French liberalism until the late 1870s and 1880s, demonstrates its lasting impact. We have also to highlight that the reception of the FLS was motivated by the desire in the Andean republics of a better relevant options —political economy was being taught in these countries from the first half of the nineteenth century. This was the reason for Courcelle-Seneuil's arrival in Chile and the presence of many Latin Americans in the teaching centers of Paris. Consequently, through a multidisciplinary analysis, encompassing historical documents, and text mining, we enrich the scholarly discourse on transnational intellectual networks and the dynamics of knowledge dissemination in the context of Andean America.

II. CHILE AND THE DECISIVE INFLUENCE OF COURCELLE-SENEUIL

In spite of English classical economic thought having arrived in the 1820's by the hand of Camilo Henríquez and José Joaquín de Mora—who had direct experience with English liberalism—, it has less of an influence within Chile than its French counterpart. The primary teachings in the early 19th century were derived from Say's revolutionary *Traité d'économie*

politique (Hederra, 1963; Edward, 2018). Despite the fact that the material was inadequately explained and scarcely comprehended, it still formed the basis of most economic instruction during that period (Chateau, 2012). It is worth noting the historical significance of political economy being taught at the National Institute of Chile as early as 1820. The course, which was a compulsory part of the Law degree curriculum, initially had a rather basic and repetitive reputation, students often had to memorize the lessons from Say's book. As early as 1848, the President of the University of Chile, Andrés Bello, expressed his dissatisfaction with the lack of a political economy text tailored to the Chilean context². Cristóbal Valdés, one of the University's scholar, criticized the persistent use of Say's text when there were other more relevant options available, such as Joseph Garnier's *Éléments d'économie politique*³. This would all change with the arrival of Courcelle-Seneuil, one of the schools more prominent names and uncompromising orthodox of the school (Marco, 1991).

The Chilean government later hired him to teach economics at the University of Chile in Santiago and be an official economic advisor. He remained in Chile for a decade and published his most ambitious economic work, the *Traité théorique et pratique d'économie politique* in 1858 (Hirschman, 1993), translated into Spanish the following year. This work had such importance that Schumpeter ([1954] 2006) considered highly representative and exemplary to books of its kind, that is the study manual or handbook. Courcelle-Seneuil's arrival mark the start of a more professional, systematic and methodical approach to the teaching of political economy in Chile through his role as the chair for that subject at Universidad de Chile (Barros, 1892). His contract would expire by 1864 but his chair would be taken up by long list of his students (table 1) and some would say, his disciples (Couyoumdjian, 2015). They should be given full credit for preserving French liberalism in Chilean shores after Courcelle-Seneuil's departure (Will, 1960).

Table 1: Students of Courcelle-Seneuil that held the chair of political economy at University of Chile

| Date | Professors |
|------|---------------------|
| 1856 | Courcelle-Seneuil |
| 1863 | Manuel Miquel |
| 1864 | Miguel Cruchaga |
| 1870 | Camilo Cobo |
| 1884 | Zorobabel Rodríguez |

Source: Couyoumdjian (2015)

The first one of Courcelle-Seneuil's successors was Manuel Miquel but his sudden death seems to have cut short the contributions many expected of him. What remains of the works of Manuel Miquel is enough to show that he was a distinguished man; but it is little compared to what those who knew him expected of him. Given his untimely death, the chair of political economy fell successively on two other of his disciples, Miguel Cruchaga and Zorobabel Rodriguez.

² See also the foreword of Juan Bello in his Spanish translation of Courcelle-Seneuil's treatise in 1859.

³ Garnier's *Éléments* was translated into Spanish under the title *Elementos de economía política* in 1848 with several later editions in 1861, 1864, and 1875.

II. 1. TEXTBOOKS BY COURCELLE-SENEUL'S SUCCESSORS

Cruchaga followed on the footsteps of his master (Hederra, 1963). He published *Tratado Elemental de Economía Política* (1867) that echoed of the work of the French professor to a great degree, including Cruchaga's own admission that « [h]e seguido en mucha parte el orden general de exposición adoptado por el distinguido profesor don Juan Gustavo Courcelle Seneuil en su *Tratado Teórico i Práctico de Economía Política* uno de los más metódicos a mi juicio de cuantos hasta hoy se han impreso » (Cruchaga, 1867, p. 14n)⁴. This manual would acquire great relevance—with two later editions in 1870 and 1928—, as it would be used, substituting Courelle-Seneuil's treatise, as the basic textbook for the political economy course for the following decades. As can be seen on table 2 the number of French authors cited in this work is an overwhelming majority, doubling the authors from the English School, being, as can be expected, amongst the most cited, Say, Bastiat and his old professor Courcelle-Seneuil.

Table 2: Economists cited in Miguel Cruchaga's textbook by country.

| Nationality | Authors | % | Citations | % |
|-----------------|---------|----|-----------|----|
| France | 18 | 53 | 40 | 60 |
| Great Britain | 8 | 24 | 19 | 28 |
| Germany/Austria | 2 | 6 | 2 | 3 |
| Spain | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Italy | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Others | 5 | 15 | 5 | 7 |

Source: Couyoumdjian (2015)

Cruchaga also founded the *Revista Economica*, a monthly issue that started in 1886 and run through 1891 modeled after the famed the *Journal des économistes* (Hederra, 1963). This journal was used to transmit the economic ideas of Courcelle-Seneuil's followers, and many times translated works directly from the *Journal des économistes* for local consumption⁵. It was, in Cruchaga's own words a journal « reservamos nuestra adhesión sin reserva y nuestra enterera consagración a la obra de la libertad » and declared that they has been « fieles servidores de una misma escuela : la de la libertad » (Cruchaga, 1886, p. 9)⁶. With all this in mind, Couyoumdjian (2020) concludes that Cruchaga's work and teachings showed a clear influence of the French classical school.

After Miguel Cruchaga, the chair of political economy was passed onto Camilo Cobo, but this research was unable to find any written record of his teachings. The next disciple of Courcelle-Seneuil to assume the chair and leave behind written documentation was Zorobabel Rodriguez. A man of profound intellectual prowess, possessing multifaceted talents in the domains of literature, poetry, philology, economics, and academia, while also serving as a diligent chronicler, parliamentarian, and political luminary, endeavored with extraordinary

⁴ « J'ai largement suivi l'ordre général de présentation adopté par l'éminent professeur don Juan Gustavo Courcelle Seneuil dans son *Traité théorique et pratique d'économie politique*, l'un des plus méthodiques à mon avis de tous ceux qui aient été imprimés à ce jour. »

⁵ See the first issue of *Revista Economica*.

⁶ « nous réservons notre adhésion sans réserve et notre consécration entière à l'œuvre de la liberté [...] les serviteurs fidèles de la même école : celle de la liberté ». It is interesting to note that Passy (2017) referred in these exact terms, the school of freedom, to the FLS.

persistence to fashion a programmatic synthesis between liberalism and Catholicism. Rodriguez’s espousal of liberalism emanated from his conceptualization of the economy as the paramount social science, endowed with the ability to discern the inherent laws governing society. Between 1884 and 1897, Rodriguez emerged as the eminent disseminator of classical liberalism, heavily influenced by the French school (Correa, 1997).

In 1894, Rodriguez published his *Tratado de economía política*. As can be noted in table 3, this book contains a less overwhelming, but still significant predominance of French authors cited in the work.

Table 3: Economists cited in Zorobabel Rodriguez’s textbook by country.

| Nationality | Authors | % | Citations | % |
|-----------------|---------|----|-----------|----|
| France | 69 | 41 | 181 | 45 |
| Great Britain | 24 | 14 | 98 | 24 |
| Germany/Austria | 19 | 11 | 27 | 7 |
| Spain | 11 | 7 | 17 | 4 |
| Italy | 5 | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| Others | 40 | 24 | 75 | 19 |

Source: Couyoumdjian (2015)

Although Rodriguez (1894) makes explicit in his introduction to the text that he has tried to do away with loyalties to one school or another, choosing instead to offer « the most authorized and secure » of doctrines to his students, Couyoumdjian (2015) shows that Rodriguez gives credence almost exclusively the work of French economists. Du Puynode (1895, p. 119) would comment on this textbook in the *Journal des économistes* saying that:

Le Traité d’économie politique de M. Zorobabel Rodriguez sera lu avec grand intérêt et grand plaisir par tout économiste, et surtout par tout économiste français. Il montre de façon fort heureuse que les enseignements de Courcelle Seneuil n’ont pas été stériles au Chili et qu’il y a laissé quelques disciples au moins très propres à découvrir et à réaliser les réformes qui restent à y accomplir.

The influence of Courcelle-Seneuil’s ideas on Rodriguez can also be delineated by means of his *Estudios economicos* (1893), a collection of three works. The first work focused on the customs tariff reform of 1892, while the second discussed trade and the advantages of eliminating tariffs among South American nations. The final piece was a review of Courcelle-Seneuil’s ideas, paying tribute to the late thinker’s contributions. According to Rodriguez, his most important contributions were the distinction between science and art, the definition of labor and his defense of free trade, free banking, and free labour. There was also room for an extensive critique of Courcelle-Seneuil’s ideas on moral, property and natural law.

2.II. TEXT MINING ANALYSIS OF THE FLS INFLUENCE

While the citation count provided by Couyoumdjian (2015) offers insights into the intellectual influences on Chilean professors, it is important to acknowledge that the mere number of citations does not necessarily imply approval; on the contrary, citations could be utilized to express disagreement or critique of a particular author’s ideas. Another, more

quantitative way to study of influence involves analyzing writings to identify the transmission of intellectual concepts through "distant reading," a data-based approach that identifies and interprets text patterns via statistical analyzes Moretti (2017), Hitchcock (2013), Ambrosino et al. (2018), Benoit (2020). This "quantitative turn" incorporates various methodological tools, including text mining, which employs software and hardware for semantic analyses of large text volumes Ballandonne & Cersosimo (2020), Edwards et al. (2018), Wiedemann (2016), Zong et al. (2021).

Table 4: Textual Cosine Similarity

| | Garnier (1848) | Colmeiro (1873) | Subercaseaux (1948) |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Rodriguez (1984) | 0,85 | 0,92 | 0,15 |
| Cruchaga (1867) | 0,33 | 0,23 | 0,92 |
| Masias (1860) | 0,81 | 0,87 | 0,29 |
| Colmeiro (1873) | 0,86 | - | 0,20 |
| Carreras y Gonzalez (1865) | 0,87 | 0,89 | 0,32 |
| Garnier (1848) | - | 0,86 | 0,28 |
| Subercaseaux (1948) | 0,28 | 0,20 | - |

Sources: Own elaboration.

One of these tools suggested by Silge & Robinson (2017) is to understand how similar two texts are by quantifying what words are used in a text and how often they are used within it — similar texts will use similar words and a similar number of times. According to Jo et al. (2019), cosine similarity is a widely adopted method for measuring text similarity. This approach involves converting each word in the texts into numerical vectors, representing term frequencies. The similarity score between these vectors is then computed using the concept of Euclidean distance, producing a value between zero and one. A cosine similarity value approaching one indicates a higher similarity between the two texts, signifying a stronger resemblance in content.

We have chosen to compare manuals utilized in Andean Universities, such as Rodriguez's *Tratado de economia politica* (1894), Cruchaga's *Tratado de economia politica* (1867), Masias's *Curso de economia politica* (1860), Carreras y Gonzalez's *Tratado de economia politica* (1865), with Subercaseaux's *Cuestiones Fundamentales de economia politica* (1948), Colmeiro's *Principios de economia politica* (1873), and Garnier's *Elementos de economia politica* (1848). We selected Subercaseaux as a counterfactual due to his departure from "librecambismo" and broader views, including significant references to the German historical school, as noted by Couyoumdjian (2015). Garnier was chosen because his *Elements* served as a widely used academic textbook and its 1848 Spanish translation was highly recommended in political economy (Hernández, 2019). To mitigate potential contamination by translators in the textual analysis using cosine similarity, we included texts by well-known members of the

Spanish economist's school who followed the FLS's principles: Colmeiro and Carreras y Gonzalez⁷.

As can be seen in table 4, Zorobabel Rodriguez's *Tratado de economia politica* is very similar to Manuel Colmeiro's *Principios de economia politica* and Joseph Garnier's *Elementos de economia politica*, while being very different from Guillermo Subercaseaux's *Cuestiones Fundamentales de economia politica*. Surprisingly, Miguel Cruchaga's *Tratado elemental de economia politica* is highly similar to our counterfactual. One possible explanation for this difference is that *cosine similarity* is only based on the frequency of use of the same word. A comparison between the structure of Rodriguez's work and Courcelle Seneuil's treatise shows the similarity between the two texts. Therefore, the results advanced by Textual Cosine Similarity could indicate that Rodriguez was trying to differentiate himself with the discourse claimed by Andrés Bello, that is, the one appropriate to the Chilean context, as Subercaseaux (1948) certainly did. These *cosine similarity* weaknesses could be leaving out *semantically similar* words that describe the same concept.

This issue is not uncommon, as Ash et al. (2022) argues while discussing the determination of the impact of economic ideas by measuring the use of economic language in a text. Counting the occurrences of words from a law-and-economics index in the text might fail to capture all meaningful variations expressing the same idea. To address this, the use of *word embedding*, a statistical approach to language modeling, has been suggested. *Word embedding*, as Hvitfeldt & Silge (2021) explain, encodes a word and its context as a vector with real values, capturing semantic similarities. By training a model to identify similarities not only in a word's location but also across multiple dimensions, word embedding creates vectors that represent the relationships between words. For instance, *economics* and *markets* tend to occur closely and nearer than *economics* and *constitution*. Furthermore, *economics* and *economy* are even more similar, sharing closer values for each dimension and being contextually used in more similar ways, resulting in a higher measure of similarity between their vector values, as illustrated by Ash et al. (2022). *Doc2vec*, an extension of word embedding, takes this statistical approach further by learning vector representations for semantic content in text chunks, such as sentences, paragraphs, and documents. Unlike word embedding, which builds word vectors based on word contexts from the entire corpus, *doc2vec* samples locally and confines contexts within individual documents, enabling the learning of both corpus-wide word vectors and vector representations for each document (Dierckx et al. 2021).

Again, as with cosine similarity, results are codified by values ranging from 0 to 1, where values closer to one represent a higher semantical similarity between the texts. The incorporation of document vector representation within the word embedding framework allows for a statistical prediction of semantically similar documents within the corpus (Alshammeri et al. 2021). Thus, we implement the *doc2vec* framework to a corpus composed by the texts mentioned in table 2.2 by using the algorithm proposed by Wijffels et al. (2022). As a result, we can see the Cruchaga is most similar to Colmeiro (0.625) and not as similar to Subercaseaux (0.504).

⁷ Colmeiro and Carreras y Gonzalez were selected because our subsequent sections will demonstrate their use as academic textbooks in Andean America.

III. COLOMBIA AND THE DECISIVE INFLUENCE OF CENSORSHIP IN THE 1880'S

The relationship between Colombia and the FLS is as old as the country itself. Much like in the other countries reviewed here, the first source for theory on political economy was Say's work, who the citizens of Colombia considered one of the most influential economist of the time. Say's *Traité* would in fact be mandated by the 1826 law as the compulsory textbook for political economy, and an integral part of the jurisprudence curriculum. Furthermore, the distinguished position of the chair of political economy remained a fixture in Colombia's academic landscape since 1821, with compelling evidence attesting to the enduring continuity of its subject matter and methodological approach, dominated by French liberalism well into the latter part of the 1870s. Unfortunately, the tumultuous period of civil war and regime changes in the late century led to centralized control and enforced methodological shifts within universities, altering the dynamics and diminishing the dominance of the FLS (Hurtado, 2016; Álvarez, Hurtado & Meléndez, 2017; Chaparro, 2020). In this section we will follow the chronology, works and evidence surrounding the most influential political economy professors in Colombia: Francisco Soto, Ezequiel Rojas, Santiago Pérez, and Manuel Ancízar, as a means to illustrate the preponderance of the FLS in Colombia's academic curricula as well as the shifts traversed by their educational system.

Francisco Soto was the first professor of political Economy as established by the 1826 education law, where Say's *Traité* was regimented as the compulsory text (Chaparro, 2020). De Iriarte (2008) shows how, in accordance to the 1826 education law, the students of political economy of *Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, where tested based on their knowledge of Say's book, also showing that these studies were a required course for all students in the fifth year of studies. Unfortunately, Francisco Soto's tenure as professor was short-lived as he faced accusations of involvement in an assassination attempt against Bolívar's life in 1828, ultimately leading to his exile.

Likewise, Soto's successor, Ezequiel Rojas, also faced condemnation and was compelled to seek refuge in Europe. Interestingly, this turn of events proved fortuitous as it afforded Rojas the opportunity to personally meet Say, a meeting that would profoundly influence his pedagogical approach, as Say, convinced Rojas of the merits of utilizing political economy as a means to preserve freedom (Hurtado, 2015). During Rojas's influential tenure as a professor, Colombia appeared to maintain a strong adherence to the principles of the FLS. Archival evidence, such as the program for the political economy course at Universidad del Cauca in 1839, provides valuable insights. In this program, Professor Domingo Medina meticulously outlines the subject matter his students were to learn in 1839. Notably, a striking example of FLS influence can be observed in the distinct treatment given to money and the representative signs of money. This concept, as indicated by Breton (1991), directly originated from Say, who espoused the belief that banknotes served as representative signs of money (Numa, 2017)⁸.

Roja's successor as professor of political economy was Santiago Perez. Chaparro (2020) analyzes archival evidence of Perez's tenure given by the notes taken by students of Santiago Perez at Universidad Nacional. His analysis points at the conclusion that both Bastiat and Say were heavily represented and studied during lectures both in structure and methodology as well as in its conceptual framework. Correa Restrepo (2001) also makes a detailed analyzes of the aforementioned notes. In his manuscript Correa uncovers how Perez defined political

⁸ Such an idea found support among esteemed economists like Coquelin, Chevalier, Molinari, Courcelle-Seneuil, Garnier, Alfred Jourdan, and Leroy-Beaulieu (Breton, 1991).

economy, mainly as ‘the science that expounds the natural laws according to which wealth is produced, distributed and consumed. As noted throughout our investigation, this same way to define political economy is used in Ecuador, Peru and Chile by followers and members of the FLS. Moreover, Perez taught that the act of exchanging something necessitates prior production which reflects an understanding of the Say’s law (Correa Restrepo, 2001).

Finally, according to Chaparro (2020), as Santiago Perez’s duties in politics drove him away from academia, Manuel Ancizar is named chair of political economy in 1873. Ancizar uses both Manuel Colmeiro’s *Principios de economía política* and Joseph Garnier’s *Traité d’économie politique Sociale ou Industrielle* as textbooks (Chaparro 2020). This would not be the first time Colmeir’s book was used as part of a school’s curriculum, as, for example, Universidad Católica announced it would be using Colmeiro’s book, but, given that Colmeiro’s was a prominent Spanish representative of the FLS, it shows that Colombia remains under the influence of the school (Álvarez, Hurtado & Meléndez, 2017).

As Chaparro (2020) shows, Ancizar continues the tradition of teaching that political economy was the science that explains the natural laws that regulate industry, geared towards the production, distribution, circulation, consumption and circulation of wealth. This is not the only thing that aligns Ancizar with the FLS. His teachings on utility, value, labor, capital, exchange, money and production squarely within the school’s influence (Chaparro, 2020). For example, Ancizar teaches that consumption is the destruction of health and that it can be unproductive or reproductive, a theme that often appears in writings by the school.

There was little national production of works on the subject. Constancio Franco, with no known institutional affiliation, published the *Tratado de economía política* in 1876 with a structure similar to that of the Courcelle-Seneuil’s *Traité théorique et pratique d’économie politique* (Álvarez, Hurtado & Meléndez, 2017). It is not yet clear if Franco’s publication was used as a textbook due to the radical change in the Colombian political context. As the decade of the 1870’s came to a close, civil strife began to make headway within the educational system and the central government started to directly supervise the materials professors would impart in the classroom. Censorship would take hold in the 1880’s and in 1886, a centralized political system emerged in Colombia with a single executive power and uniform legislation. From then on, the central government would control textbooks and chairs. French liberalism would all but disappear thanks to professors that transmitted the teachings from private universities which generally used Leroy-Beaulieu’s *Traité*.

IV. ECUADOR: ELIAS LASO’S CHAIR OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

The Ecuadorian context presents a distinctive scenario in the realm of higher education. Throughout the 19th century, the country boasted a single prominent institution, namely Universidad Central (Jimenez, 1894). This university had only two professors of political economy. The first luminary was Elias Laso, who occupied the esteemed chair from at least 1863, delivering the inaugural address for that academic year, until at least 1905 when he penned a critique of Leroy-Beaulieu’s *Precis d’Économie politique*. Remarkably, Laso’s contributions extended beyond academia, encompassing significant roles as a congressman, President of Universidad Central del Ecuador, and Minister of Public Education. Interestingly, during Laso’s tenure as Minister of Public Education, Dr. Aurelio Espinosa was hired as a substitute professor,

possibly do to the former's engagement in public office. Of the two chairs in political economy only Laso left a significant body of works written.

Laso's first appearance on the historical record was the delivering of the inaugural address for that academic year of 1863. During his captivating address, which offered a swift overview of the discipline's historical trajectory and contemporary advancements, Laso showcased a predilection for the FLS, which he hailed as the torchbearer of enlightenment. Notably, Laso asserted that Bastiat was the sole economist who truly comprehended value as service, encapsulating the essence of value as perceived by all other schools of thought (Laso, 1914).

As part of his political economy course, Laso meticulously transcribed a series of notes from his oral lectures, emphasizing their significance for student comprehension. Spanning over 60 lessons, these written transcriptions revealed a pronounced influence of the FLS. In Lesson 1, Laso cautioned his students by stating:

Las lecciones orales que vais a escuchar han sido tomadas en gran parte de Taparellii, Grimke, Bentham, Rossi, Comte, Filangieri, Constant, Montesquieu, Lerninier, Bastiat, Carreras González, Bandrillart, Lefort, Dalloz, Garnier, Guizot, Thiers, Balmes, Pacheco, Stuart Mill, Ahrens, César Cantú y a otros mucho escritos, a los cuales no citaré en los discursos para no cansar vuestra atención a pesar de que, a las veces, repetiré casi literalmente algunos trozos de sus discursos. (Laso, 1883, p. 60)⁹

Lesson 18 firmly situates Laso within the realm of the FLS as he proclaims freedom as a fundamental attribute within a state and commenting that the freedom of industry and the freedom of work have brought with it the appreciation of freedom as one of the necessary conditions of conservation and life. Lesson 59 on credit shares an interesting number of similarities with the chapter on the subject in Courcelle-Seneuil (1859). Both lessons also discuss instruments of credit in which they mention the bank note as an on demand liability through which savers give a loan to the bank. They both claim the bank note has no value in itself other than the value in metallic money it represents, thus, it does not substitute money. Lesson 63 delves into freedom of exchange, a flagship of the FLS. Lesson 64 for example is termed 'Consumption of Wealth', much like book III of Say's *Traité*. Laso claims that all consumption is a destruction of wealth, and divides consumption into productive and unproductive consumption, explaining it in an identical manner as did Say. Unsurprisingly this same definition of consumption can be found in Courcelle-Seneuil (1859).

In 1910, Laso announce that Paul Leroy-Beaulieu's *Précis d'économie politique* had been approved by the University and was being use as the manual for teaching political economy at the University¹⁰.

Another means by which we can know Elias Laso's economic thoughts, are through his writings in the *Revista Ecuatoriana*. On this literary journal, Laso published a series of articles under the title *Economic Laws*. In one of these articles, he describes what he accepts as a theory of value, aligning himself with Bastiat:

Los de la escuela de Smith confunden el valor con el precio y por esto se han visto obligados

⁹ « Les leçons orales que vous allez entendre sont largement tirées de Taparellii, Grimke, Bentham, Rossi, Comte, Filangieri, Constant, Montesquieu, Lerninier, Bastiat, Carreras Gonzalez, Bandrillart, Lefort, Dalloz, Garnier, Guizot, Thiers, Balmes, Pacheco, Stuart Mill, Ahrens, César Cantú et bien d'autres écrits, Balmes, Pacheco, Stuart Mill, Ahrens, César Cantú et bien d'autres, que je ne citerai pas dans les discours pour ne pas fatiguer votre attention, même si je reprendrai parfois presque mot pour mot certaines parties de leurs discours.»

¹⁰ *Anales de la Universidad Central, vol 15, 1901*. Leroy-Beaulieu's book was translated into Spanish in 1889 under the title *Compendio de Economía política*.

a descomponer el valor en *real y nominal*, apellidando real al que está en relación con el esfuerzo, ó lo que es lo mismo, con los gastos de producción y nominal al que está en relación con el servicio o escasez. [...] Carreras González asegura que Bastiat ha confundido el valor con el precio: pero no hay tal confusión, porque hay gran diferencia entre la relación de los servicios -valor- y la determinación del valor -precio. (Laso, 1894a: 152-153)¹¹

In other of these articles, Laso seems to take sides on what Hollander (2005) suggests was one of the main debates between Ricardo and Say, the land rent. Laso explains his thoughts as follows: « Pero nosotros que no admitimos la falsa y antieconómica teoría de Ricardo relativa á la renta de la tierra y sabemos que los agentes naturales prestan sus servicios al hombre no sólo en la industria agrícola, sino también en la fabril y mercantil» (Laso, 1894b: 152-153). This is evidence is crucial because the majority of educated decision makers had been students of Universidad Central, as Laso (1883-1892) notes, for example, most members of congress had been students of that institution.

V. PERU: THE CASE OF FELIPE MASIAS

Universidad de San Marcos is the oldest university in Latin America (founded in 1551) and the most important higher education institution in Peru in the nineteenth century, published its memoirs under the name *Anales*, with some regularity, starting in 1856. It is from this time that we have been able to establish a chronology however imperfect—given the lack of data—of professors that held the chair of political economy as is shown in table 5. This chronology notwithstanding, we have been unable to find written treatises by any of these professors except for one, Felipe Masias.

Masias was the chair of political economy in the famed Lima School *Colegio de San Carlos* starting in 1849, and starting in 1861 he was chair of the same subject in Universidad de San Marcos (Camacho, 1869; Giusti, 2014). In 1860, Masias publishes a book on principles of economics called *Curso elemental de economía política*, a book used by Masias in his classes (Garay, 2013).

Table 5: Chairs of political economy at Universidad San Marcos, Lima, Peru.

| Date | Professors |
|------|-----------------------|
| 1861 | Felipe Masias |
| 1877 | Teodomiro Cornejo |
| 1878 | Ysaac Alzamora |
| 1895 | José María Manzanilla |

Source: Own elaboration

¹¹ « Ceux de l'école de Smith confondent la valeur avec le prix, et c'est pourquoi ils ont été obligés de décomposer la valeur en réelle et nominale, appelant réelle celle qui est en relation avec l'effort, ou, en d'autres termes, avec les dépenses de production, et nominale celle qui est en relation avec le service ou la rareté. [Carreras González affirme que Bastiat a confondu la valeur avec le prix : mais il n'y a pas de confusion, car il y a une grande différence entre la relation des services - la valeur - et la détermination de la valeur - le prix. »

Masias' book does not contain a predominance of authors from the FLS, but the presence is significant nonetheless. First, the only referenced in its introduction is that of Courcelle-Seneuil:

Dos palabras para concluir. Al redactar este compendio he considerado que podría hacerlo en algún tanto recomendable una explanación detenida de las materias referentes a crédito, a vías de comunicación y a impuestos públicos; y en efecto, he dado a ellas el desarrollo compatible con la naturaleza del libro que las contiene y me complazco en manifestar, que muchas de las ideas que expongo sobre crédito son debidas a la interesantísima obra de Mr Courcelle Seneuil, titulada: *Tratado teórico y práctico de las operaciones de Banco*, a la que desde luego remito a todos cuantos quieran adquirir conocimientos numerosos y detallados en la difícil teoría del crédito. (Masias, 1860, p. ii)¹²

This is not the only coincidence with Courcelle-Seneuil. Consider for example the discussion of discussion of some methodological issues given by Masias in his chapter two is clearly based on the ideas of the French author (Courcelle-Seneuil, 1859, p.6). The structure of the text also shows the influence of Courcelle-Seneuil's *Traité théorique et pratique d'économie politique*. But in the chapters, the school is limited to the precise theme: Say in relation to free trade and Courcelle-Seneuil with credit —Robert Malthus for population, David Ricardo for land and Smith for public finance.

We could complete this connection with the results of our text mining analysis. From a cosine similarity perspective, as Table 4 shows, Masias is similar to other members of the school. This result is confirmed once we consider the doc2vec framework Masias shows a high degree of semantic similarity to Garnier (0.820) and low semantic similarity to Subercaseaux (0.276).

VI. FINAL REMARKS: SURFING ON THE WAVE OF A LATIN FRANCOPHILIA

Our investigation sheds light on the significant influence of the FLS in the formation of the Andean republics. Through our analysis, we have presented compelling evidence that highlights the prevalence of the French tradition over its British counterpart in shaping the intellectual and educational landscape of these nations. This influence of the FLS circumscribed within a period of special Francophilia in Latin America, especially in the second third of the 19th century. There are several causes for this special attraction that make the research task more complex but, at the same time, strengthen our conclusions.

A first explanation is the Francophilia of the Andean aristocracy, both for a sumptuous and ostentatious way of living and for the competition of opulence. The residences, the furniture, the carriages, the clothing, the fashion, the receptions, the service and the table, external signs of an imported luxury (González Errázuriz, 2003). The predilection for the French was dominant throughout Hispanic America, also in architecture and painting. This preference for the French was also due to the inclination to travel to France, an ideal realized by almost all the

¹² « Deux mots pour conclure. En rédigeant ce compendium, j'ai considéré qu'une explication détaillée des questions relatives au crédit, aux moyens de communication et aux impôts publics pouvait être quelque peu recommandable, et en effet je leur ai donné le développement compatible avec la nature du livre qui les contient et j'ai le plaisir de constater que nombre des idées que j'expose sur le crédit sont dues à l'ouvrage très intéressant de M. Courcelle Seneuil intitulé *Traité théorique et pratique des opérations bancaires* auquel je renvoie, bien entendu, à tous ceux qui souhaitent acquérir de nombreuses et détaillées dans la difficile théorie du crédit».

writers of the 19th century, as well as the publication of their books in France as a sign of consecration. In the same way, science and the university are impregnated by the French influence. The Latin American university sought inspiration from foreign models, and these were French: Napoleonic regulations for schools, the establishment of the baccalaureate and French bibliography - in philosophy, medicine, law and political science. In some cases, it was even nourished by European scientists - among them a good number of Frenchmen such as the geographers A.-J.-A. Bonpland and P.-J.-A. Pissis or Claude Gay (Blancpain, 2017).

A second element is the Latin American community in Paris. No other city hosted such a large and diverse Latin American community at that time. Intellectuals, artists, exiles, political activists and members of the elite lived together in the same urban microcosm, attended the same events and read the same newspapers and magazines (Streckert, 2019). It was in Paris where the idea of Latin America was created for the first time (Aillón Soria, 2009). The numerous Latin American students in Paris are joined by a network of translators, proofreaders and lexicographers working in publishing houses — the Garnier brothers, the Bouret and the Ollendorf — to drive an extensive socialization scenario, generating numerous associations and an overwhelming number of publications aimed at Latin Americans (Streckert, 2019). French publishing houses entered a previously closed market as was the American continent through which Latin Americans in the nineteenth century found themselves in their countries reading the *Revue de Deux mondes*. In our ongoing research, we embark on a new phase of investigation, delving deeper into the transmission of ideas from the French school through the educational experiences of Andean Americans. Specifically, we will focus on those students who ventured to France for their studies, unravelling the profound impact of this intellectual exchange.

Finally, the role of politics. The literature also identifies an active role of French foreign policy during the 19th century, exemplified by the French intervention in Mexico. As Michel Chevalier argued, non-Anglo-Saxon America represented a space where the recovery and strengthening of the Latin and Catholic world could be experienced under French leadership (Aillón Soria, 2009). From the Andean side, the Chilean political elites deliberately turned their backs on Spain, for being solely responsible for the evils accumulated during the struggles for Independence, to admire exclusively French mentors. In Colombia, the reading of certain types of French authors made liberalism be seen as a political current that could coexist with a Catholic profession. The economic liberalism that circulated in Colombian periodicals was added to the image of France as a Catholic religious nation. In fact, our investigation will extend beyond the realm of academia, exploring the transmission of ideas through political figures and the press. Through careful analysis of political discourse and media coverage, we seek to discern the ways in which French liberal thought permeated the broader society and influenced policy debates within the Andean republics.

This predilection began to diminish somewhat as a result of the adverse outcome for France in the war with Prussia in 1870-71, which highlighted the existence of a thriving German culture that began to attract the attention of politicians and intellectuals, with the emergence of Krausism and the Catholic school of economics at the end of the century. The active role of petty bourgeois intellectuals and the proletariat of revolutionary organization and orientation also multiplied at the beginning of the twentieth century.

In closing, our research contributes to a broader understanding of the intellectual history of the Andean republics, emphasizing the lasting impact of the French liberal tradition and urging

scholars to reassess the conventional narrative that emphasizes British economics as the predominant force in shaping economic thought in the region.

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