

The Role of Mapping in the Formation of South America's Political Boundaries and Territorial Disputes

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Abstract

The purpose of the research is to analyze the political context in which maps were used in South America, from the colonial era of the 15th century to the 20th century. A main area of focus for the research will be to examine the political basis for South America's current territorial boundaries by illustrating the fragmentation of Spain's South American Empire through the use of historically accurate maps. Territorial disputes that arose following the collapse of Spain's South American Empire will be studied in order to determine the effects that mapping and diplomacy had in furthering rival boundary claims. Extensive literature exists concerning the regional disputes that dominated South America during the 19th and 20th century, however this research offers additional insight into the conflicts by analyzing how the use of mapping in territorial disputes changed from the 19th to the 20th century. The research was conducted by evaluating both written and cartographical references from academic professionals and accredited map collections. Initial findings indicate that the decentralization of Spain's colonial empire during the 18th century facilitated its fragmentation during the struggle for independence in the 19th century. Also a preliminary analysis of maps from professional academic collections conclude that the use of mapping to further territorial claims was more widespread during the regional conflicts of the 20th century. The use of mapping to further territorial claims was especially common in countries that exhibited no political authority over the disputed territory.

Keywords: South America, boundary disputes, maps

1. Introduction

Colonized by Europeans in the early 1500's, the continent of South America has witnessed numerous changes in its political boundaries. Most territorial disputes that arose in South America originated during the colonial era, with some boundary claims continuing to hamper bilateral relations between rival claimants well into the 20th century. The objective of the research project is to determine the effect that Spain's governing policies had in the fragmentation of Spain's South American Empire following the independence movement of the 19th century. After gaining a complete understanding of the boundaries that arose following independence from Spain and Portugal, a careful analysis was taken to determine the extent to which mapping and diplomacy were used to further territorial claims during the regional conflicts that dominated South America during the 19th and 20th century.

The territorial conflicts that arose in South America originated during the colonial era, when a majority of the continent was governed by two European monarchies: Spain and Portugal. Any analysis of South America's current political boundaries requires a detailed description of the historical basis for the territorial demarcations that became the subject of diplomatic dispute during the regional conflicts of the 19th and 20th century. Even though substantial European colonization of the continent didn't take place until the early 1500's, the region was divided by European powers in 1493. In his cartographical reference book *Mapping History: World History*, Dr. Ian Barnes provides a thorough description of the early political boundaries of South America. He states that the first European

demarcation of South America was drawn by Pope Alexander VI for the purpose of designating all newly discovered lands as either Spanish or Portuguese.¹ The original demarcation created by Pope Alexander VI left a relatively small section of South America to Portugal, so Portuguese and Spanish diplomats negotiated a different boundary treaty in 1494 known as the Treaty of Tordesillas.² The boundary treaty mandated that the border follow “an imaginary line through the mid-Atlantic and South America; Spain could have any unclaimed territory to the west of the line and Portugal could have any territory to the east”.³

Though the Treaty of Tordesillas established a simple geometric boundary between Spanish and Portuguese territory in South America, it nevertheless was unpractical since it attempted to delineate vast expanses of unexplored land in the Amazon Rainforest. In the tome *The History of Cartography Volume Three: Cartography in the European Renaissance Part I*, David Woodward and J.B. Harley acknowledge that “[t]he mapping of the [Amazon River] basin began in earnest at the end of the seventeenth century”, almost two hundred years after the signing of the Treaty of Tordesillas.⁴ The complications associated with accurately depicting a simple geometric boundary in unexplored territory resulted in the publication of maps which only illustrated the locations of major settlements. By utilizing the cartographical resources of the Spanish Empire’s premier cartographical authority, Casa de la Contratación, Diego Gutiérrez and Hieronymus Cock made a map of South America in 1562 that identified the positions of Spanish and Portuguese settlements.⁵ In adherence to the Treaty of Tordesillas, Spanish settlements were localized on the eastern coast of South America, however, as Gutiérrez and Cock’s map indicates there were no physical boundaries or markers separating Spanish and Portuguese authority in South America.⁶

The usefulness of having a boundary between Spanish and Portuguese colonies in South America became negligible soon after King Philip II of Spain ascended to the Portuguese throne and united both countries to form the Iberian Union. In his publication *A History of Brazil*, Professor E. Bradford Burns analyses the effects that the Iberian Union had in the political boundaries of South America and the of expansion of colonial Brazil into the Amazon Rainforest. “The union of the two Iberian crowns between 1580 and 1640 under the Spanish Philips eliminated the early rivalry between Spain and Portugal over the territory between São Vicente and the Río de la Plata”, so Portuguese colonists were free to settle unexplored lands that had previously been excluded to them by the Treaty of Tordesillas.⁷ Considering that the Iberian Union governed over all of Spain and Portugal’s settlements in South America, their colonies were now depicted as a single sovereign territory. Non-Iberian published maps, such as those created by Matthias Quad in his atlas *Facsimile: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum Fourth Series Volume VI*, recognized Iberian authority in South America by not differentiating between Spanish and Portuguese territory.⁸

Once the Iberian Union dissolved in 1640, it again became necessary to delineate the boundaries between Spain and Portugal in South America. The geometric boundary established by the Treaty of Tordesillas was officially nullified in 1750 after the passage of the Treaty of Madrid. Contrary to the Treaty of Tordesillas, the Treaty of Madrid created colonial boundaries based on continuous settlement of territory. Under the Treaty of Madrid, Spain was able retain its colonies, while Portugal was able to enlarge its colony of Brazil because of Portuguese colonization of the Amazon Rainforest. The territorial boundaries that came about after the passage of the Treaty Madrid were quickly applied to Spanish maps of South America, such as those created by the Spanish cartographer Juan de la Cruz Cano y Olmedilla. While working as a cartographer in London, William Faden published a recreation of Juan de la Cruz Cano y Olmedilla’s map, titled *Mapa Geografico de America Meridional 3rd Edition*, which illustrated the extent of Spain and Portugal’s colonial empire in South America.⁹

The Treaty of Madrid ensured the separation between Spanish and Portuguese colonies in South America, allowing each monarchy to pursue different governing policies for its respective colonial bureaucracies. Following independence in the 19th century, Spain’s South American Empire fragmented into numerous independent countries, while Portugal’s former colony remained intact. The research proposes that a major contributing factor to the dissolution of Spain’s colonial empire was the policy of bureaucratic decentralization that started in the 18th century. Following independence, the newly sovereign nations of South America argued against one another over ambiguous territorial claims that originated during the colonial era. The resolution of numerous boundary disputes relied on the use of diplomacy and mapping; however, the research predicts that these methods gained greater prominence in the territorial conflicts that arose later in the 20th century.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Fragmentation Of Spain's South American Empire

The modern political boundaries dividing South America originated from the colonial divisions of Spain and Portugal's South American Empire. Spanish South America's eventual fragmentation into nine separate countries was influenced in large part by the decentralization of the colonial bureaucracy in South America. In his book *A History of Brazil*, Professor E. Bradford Burns distinguishes the decentralized colonial government of Spain's colonies to the centralized control of Portugal's colony. The early years of Portuguese colonization of South America were defined by a decentralized political system in which "[b]etween 1534 and 1536, King João III divided Portuguese America into fifteen captaincies distributed among twelve donees".¹⁰ When most of the colonies fell into financial disaster, characterized by low levels of population growth and economic output, the government began the process of centralizing control over its settlements and forming a single colony, Brazil.¹¹

"During the passage of three centuries, the [colonial] government of Brazil gradually became more uniform as it also became more centralized", culminating in the transformation of Brazil from a colony to a kingdom within the United Kingdoms of Portugal, Brazil, and the Algarves.¹² Brazil's elevation of status to kingdom gave it the same political rights as Portugal, however Portuguese legislators resented this and "... refused to permit the establishment of a university [in Brazil], tried to limit its commerce and trade, and replaced the few Brazilians holding office with Portuguese."¹³ The multiple attempts to diminish Brazil's political status and revert it back into a subservient colony resulted in Brazil declaring independence from Portugal in 1822. With independence achieved in 1825, Brazil was able to avoid political fragmentation as a result of the centralized government established by Portugal during the colonial era.

Spain's South American Empire was divided into large political units known as Viceroyalties, which were governed by viceroys appointed by the Spanish monarchy. The political divisions of Spain's Viceroyalties are described by Rebeca Seaman in her book *Conflict in the Early Americas: An Encyclopedia of the Spanish Empire's Aztec, Incan, and Mayan Conquests*. Viceroyalties "... were further subdivided into around 10 to 14 Audiencias, which themselves were further divided into smaller units, such as municipalities".¹⁴ Audiencias were integral components of the Viceroyalties, with "... judicial, legislative, and administrative roles, [that] served as an important counterbalance to the viceroys and other imperial bureaucrats in the colonies".¹⁵ The "... multiple hierarchies of frequently overlapping responsibilities and jurisdictions" resulted in a decentralized colonial bureaucracy where the "[v]iceroyes governed alongside, and often coordinated, three other administrative hierarchies: the Judicial Audiencia, the Church, and the fiscal administration".¹⁶

The process of colonial decentralization in Spain's South American colonies is described by Professor Christine Hunefeldt in her book *A Brief History of Peru*. Created in 1543, the Viceroyalty of Peru encompassed the majority of Spain's settlements in South America.¹⁷ Political authority within the Viceroyalty of Peru was vested in the city of Lima, however, in the 18th century the Spanish empire began a process of political decentralization. The gradual process of political decentralization was done by Spain in an effort to reduce the burden of colonial administrations in governing far away settlements.¹⁸ By 1739, Spain sought to promote efficient governance over its vast territory on the continent by "divid[ing] its American colonies into three viceroyalties: New Spain, Peru, and New Granada [, which included Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, and temporarily Venezuela]".¹⁹ "As affairs in the colonies grew more complex and trade shifted to the Atlantic coast, a fourth viceroyalty, Río de la Plata [which included Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay, and Paraguay], was split off from the Viceroyalty of Peru in 1776", while the land encompassing Venezuela was separated from the Viceroyalty of New Granada in 1777.²⁰ Spain's South American colonies were further divided a year later when the territory forming modern day Chile was separated from the Viceroyalty of Peru. Both Chile and Venezuela were reorganized into autonomous districts known as Captaincy-Generals, which functioned as smaller versions of the Spanish Viceroyalties.

Reasons for independence from Spain were mainly political and economic in nature. Many Spanish settlements, such as Buenos Aires, resented the trade restrictions placed upon it by Spain and the inherent political power of the peninsulares, native born Spaniards. The fragmentation of Spain's empire wrought by the independence movement of the 19th century is clearly illustrated by professors Michael J. LaRosa and Germán R. Mejía in their publication *Colombia: A Concise Contemporary History*. Independence was accelerated by the collapse of monarchical authority in Spain following Napoleon Bonaparte's invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in 1808.²¹ French forces captured King Ferdinand VII and installed Napoleon's brother, Joseph Bonaparte, as king of Spain. "The response was immediate: the Spanish provinces [in Spain and South America] formed juntas, or governing bodies, that swore loyalty to Ferdinand VII at the same time that they, in his absence, provisionally took control of government until his return",

thus establishing self-rule in the colonies.²² Attempts to limit the autonomous governments taking shape in South America led to the creation of the Supreme Central and Governing Junta of the Kingdom, which worked to maintain Spanish unity and oppose Napoleon's forces.²³ "At the beginning of 1810, the Supreme Central Junta's function collapsed and was replaced by the Regency Council, which was made up of five members", however, its authority was questioned by most of the colonists in Spanish South America.²⁴

Conflict immediately arose throughout Spain's colonies between loyalists still devoted to the Spanish government and colonists seeking greater autonomy and Independence. "By 1814, however, King Ferdinand was back on the Spanish throne, and the rebellions in Peru [; the Viceroyalty of New Granada, Chile, and Bolivia] were successfully suppressed through military actions and their leaders publicly executed."²⁵ The Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata was able to maintain its autonomy, however, political disagreements over the formation of a centralized government based in Buenos Aires led to the loss of the provinces of Paraguay and Uruguay. Likewise military defeats against Spanish loyalist forces from the Viceroyalty of Peru resulted in the loss of Bolivia. An analysis of the fragmentation of the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata is given by Professor Colin M. MacLachlan in his book *Argentina: What Went Wrong*. Realizing that political control in Buenos Aires represented a continuation of the city's control over Paraguay's economy, "... Paraguay formed its own junta, repulsed [soldiers from] Buenos Aires twice, and went its own way".²⁶ "In the Banda Oriental [modern day Uruguay] a more complicated process led to the declaration in 1813 that Montevideo would join a larger union [with other Spanish settlements in the Banda Oriental], but only on the basis of complete autonomy within a federal structure", ideologically opposite to the centralized authority vested in Buenos Aires following the Viceroyalty's independence as the United Provinces of the Río de la Plata.²⁷

The disordered fragmentation of Spain's South American Empire during the independence movement resulted in the creation of maps that didn't accurately portray the constant territorial changes taking place. For instance, even though the United Provinces had lost all control of Paraguay, Uruguay, and Bolivia prior to its independence in 1818, some foreign maps reinforced its claims to the territory on the basis of its past association in the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata. The *Map of South America According To The Latest and Best Authorities* and *Carte générale de L'Amérique Meridionale et des îles qui en dependent* were written by the American and French cartographers Anthony Finely and Adrian Hubert Brué, respectively. Both maps depict the national boundaries of South America in 1826, however they illustrate Paraguay and Uruguay as territories of the United Provinces even though Paraguay had been an independent country since 1811 and Uruguay was annexed by Brazil in 1820.^{28, 29} Alexander Caldcleugh and John Walker's map of South America was incorporated into Caldcleugh's book *Travels in South America during the years 1819, 1820, 1821; containing an account of the present state of Brazil, Buenos Ayres, and Chile*. Published in London in 1825 their map, titled *Map of South America, extending from the equator to the parallel of 44 degrees*, accurately depicts Paraguay as a sovereign country and Uruguay as a region in Brazil.³⁰

The dissolution of the Viceroyalty of New Granada took place following the defeat of Spanish forces by Generals Simón Bolívar and Francisco de Paula Santander. "With victory in hand, the [Colombian] Congress issued the Fundamental Law of the Republic of Colombia on December 17, 1819", which ordained the creation of a centralized polity based on the former boundaries of the Viceroyalty of New Grenada.³¹ The union, which was later referred to as the Republic of Gran Colombia, incorporated the modern day territories of Colombia, Panama, Venezuela, and Ecuador. Similar to the dissolution of the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata, provinces within the Republic of Gran Colombia resented that "[a]ll power would be concentrated in Bogotá, and since Bogotá was located in New Granada [, modern day Colombia,], both Venezuela and Quito would be beholden to New Granada".³² In 1830 the republic of Gran Colombia disintegrated into three separate countries: Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador.

The final division of South America, prior to the regional conflicts that dominated the region in the 19th century, is excellently depicted by J.H. Colton in his map of the continent.³³ Following the independence movement of the early 1800s, all of Spain's former colonies were left with conflicting boundaries. Territorial confusion was especially prevalent in unexplored and sparsely settled areas such as the Pampas region and the Atacama dessert. As Robert Wilkinson's map of South America illustrates, the internal divisions of Spain's South American Empire were never clearly marked because they weren't meant to function as defined national boundaries.³⁴

2.2 19th Century Regional Conflicts

Throughout the 19th century, the nations of South America have been in negotiations with one another in an attempt to peacefully resolve their boundary disputes. Most boundary disputes on the continent have been resolved through bilateral negotiations or arbitration; however there have been multiple instances of gridlocked negotiations resulting in open conflict. The most far reaching boundary disputes resolved during the 19th century were the conflicting claims to Patagonia, the Tierra del Fuego islands, the Pampas region, and the Atacama Desert.

2.2.1 *patagonia and the tierra del fuego islands: 1881*

Of the three major territorial conflicts of the 19th century, the boundary dispute between Argentina and Chile in Patagonia and the Tierra del Fuego islands was the only one that was resolved peacefully. Patagonia is a vast plateau characterized by grasslands located east of the Andes Mountains, while the Tierra del Fuego islands are an archipelago situated below continental South America. An accurate boundary between Argentina and Chile was decided by the Boundary Treaty of 1881. An analysis of the boundary treaty is described by the United Nations Treaty Series article *Reports of International Arbitral Awards: Dispute between Argentina and Chile concerning the Beagle Channel*.

The boundary treaty established the border between Argentina and Chile in Patagonia as “[t]he boundary-line [that] shall run in that extent over the highest summits of the said Cordilleras [, the Andes Mountains,] which divide the waters, and shall pass between the sources (of streams) flowing down to either side”.³⁵ “In Tierra del Fuego a line shall be drawn, which starting from the point called Cape Espíritu Santo, in parallel 52°40', shall be prolonged to the south along the meridian 68°34' west of Greenwich until it touches Beagle Channel”, thus giving Chile the south western portion of the Tierra del Fuego islands and Argentina the north eastern portion.³⁶

The boundary dispute between Argentina and Chile originates from the colonial era. Spanish maps published during the colonial period depicted the regions of Patagonia and the Tierra del Fuego Islands as Indian territories that were not yet incorporated into either Spain or Portugal’s South American Empire. Following independence in the 19th century both Argentina and Chile claimed land in Patagonia and the Tierra del Fuego Islands, however, maps published in North America and Europe continued to depict the disputed area as neutral Indian territory. Prior to the Boundary Treaty of 1881, most foreign maps of South America resembled that of Samuel Augustus Mitchell and Wellington Williams. Their map of the continent continued the precedent established by Spain during the colonial era by depicting the disputed territory as a neutral region, not under the authority of Argentina or Chile.³⁷ Argentinian claims to the Tierra del Fuego islands are detailed in a government commissioned map created by A. de Seelstrang and A. Tourmente for the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. It supports Chilean claims to land in Patagonia west of the Andes Mountains, but it includes the majority of the Tierra del Fuego islands as Argentinian territory.³⁸

2.2.2 *war of the pacific: 1879-1904*

The boundary dispute between Bolivia and Chile in the Atacama Desert, which represented Bolivia’s coastline, came to be known as the War of the Pacific. In his book *The Ten Cents War: Chile, Peru, and Bolivia in the War of the Pacific, 1879-1884*, Bruce W. Farcau recounts the major factors that contributed to the conflict. Claims to the region occurred immediately after independence, however, it was largely perceived as unimportant due to its harsh environment.³⁹ In the Atacama Desert “... the average rainfall is less than half an inch per year” and there are vast deposits of guano, or bird droppings, near the coast.⁴⁰

A need to accurately delineate Chilean and Bolivian claims in the Atacama Desert arose “when [the French scientist Alexandre Cochet] published his findings in 1840, both on the extraction of nitrates from guano and for their effects on plant growth”.⁴¹ Following his publication, guano immediately became a valuable commodity for the production of fertilizers. In 1866 during negotiations with Bolivian President Mariano Melgarejo, “[Chilean diplomat Aniceto Vergara Albano] was able to obtain Bolivian cession of all territory in the Atacama south of the 24th parallel, while entering into a condominium with Chile to share in the proceeds of the minerals extracted between the 23rd and 25th parallels”.⁴² The treaty effectively divided the Atacama Desert and mandated joint economic cooperation in the territory.

Economic activities were further regulated in 1874 and it was decided that “... only the export of nitrates would result in shared duties”, but “... Chilean firms would not have to pay any additional taxes of any kind for a period of twenty five years.”⁴³ The imposition of a minor municipal tax on the Chilean Antofagasta Nitrate & Railway Company, or ANRC, led to a diplomatic dispute between Chile and Bolivia. Its refusal to pay the tax resulted in “[Bolivian

President Hilarion Daza] Daza declar[ing] that the contract for nitrate extraction of the ANRC was thenceforth cancelled and ordered all company property to be impounded by the state until it could be sold at auction, setting 14 February 1879 as the date for the sale”.⁴⁴

The actions against the ANRC resulted in a Chilean invasion of the Atacama Desert. Obligated by a mutual defense treaty, Peru assisted Bolivia in combating the invading Chilean forces. Losses against Chile resulted in the occupation of Bolivian and Peruvian land, which is depicted in a national map of Bolivia made by Eduardo Idiaquez for Bolivian President José Manuel Pando.⁴⁵ The War of the Pacific ended in 1904 with the defeat of Peru and Bolivia. Territorial losses in the war meant that Chile was able to acquire most of the territory it occupied. After signing a peace treaty with Chile “...Bolivia [had to] formally recognize Chilean ownership of the Atacama”, thus making it a land locked country.⁴⁶

The conflicts in Patagonia, the Tierra del Fuego islands, the Pampas region, and the Atacama Desert resulted in major alterations to the political boundaries in South America. George F. Cram’s map of South America illustrates the major boundary changes that occurred in the latter half of the 19th century.⁴⁷

2.3 20th Century Regional Conflicts

Most of the boundary disputes that occurred in the 20th century arose following independence from Spain, but they were left unresolved as a result of failed bilateral negotiations. The most far reaching boundary disputes resolved during the 20th century were the conflicting claims in the Beagle Channel, the Chaco Boreal, the Amazon Basin region, the Essequibo region, and the Falkland Islands. A defining characteristic of the boundary conflicts of the 20th century was the use of maps to legitimize territorial claims, especially following a military defeat.

2.3.1 boundary dispute between venezuela and guyana: 1962-present

Conflicting boundary claims between Venezuela and Guyana in the Essequibo region date back to the colonial era. The origin of the dispute is reported by Joshua R. Hyles in his analysis *Guiana and the Shadows of Empire: Colonial and Cultural Negotiations at the Edge of the World*. Dutch control over the land that would later become Guyana ended as a result of its alliance with Napoleonic France during the early 1800s. During the conflict between the United Kingdom and France, “the Dutch colonies in the Antilles and Guiana were captured by the British”.⁴⁸ Fighting ended in 1814, however “The Dutch lost [the colonies of] Berbice, Essequibo, and Demerara; these colonies were [then] consolidated under a central British administration and would be known after 1831 as British Guiana”.⁴⁹

British attempts to delineate the boundaries of its new colony are recounted by Dr. Jacqueline Anne Braveboy-Wagner in her book *The Venezuelan-Guyana Border Dispute: Britain’s Colonial Legacy in Latin America*. “In 1835, the Royal Geographical Society of London and the British Colonial Office authorized the Prussian naturalist Robert Schomburgk to explore the region and seek out convenient boundaries between [British] Guiana and Venezuela”.⁵⁰ His sketch maps of British Guiana expanded upon the former Dutch claims in the region and included territory that was also claimed by Venezuela, such as Point Barima. The boundary dispute between Venezuela and the United Kingdom was arbitrated by the United States and Russia in 1899.⁵¹

Both nations accepted the arbitration award, in which “...Venezuela received Point Barima and the Orinoco mouth, and some 3000 square miles of the interior, while Britain received some 50000 square miles of the territory in dispute”.⁵² Commissioners from Venezuela and the United Kingdom agreed upon a boundary in 1905, however, the territorial dispute was renewed by Venezuelan diplomats in 1962. “Early in 1965, a map of the Venezuelan republic indicating a “Zone of Reclamation” was published by the Venezuelan government” showing it in possession of Guyanese territory in the Essequibo region.⁵³ Along with revised maps, the Venezuelan government has approved the sale of cartographical stamps, such as those illustrated in the postage stamp albums of Professor Jack Child.⁵⁴ Since the independence of British Guiana in 1966, under the name of Guyana, the situation has remained unresolved with Venezuela continuing to “... [claim] some 50000 to 60000 square miles of territory now held by Guyana as a result of an arbitral award handed down in 1899”.⁵⁵

Guyana has consistently denied Venezuelan claims to the Essequibo region and has relied on diplomacy to further strengthen its claims. Press releases from the office of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) Secretariat illustrate Guyana’s use of diplomacy to counter Venezuelan claims to roughly half its national territory. Representing a political and economic institution between fifteen countries in the Caribbean, the CARICOM Secretariat has sided with Guyanese diplomats by passing a resolution that “... reiterated their unwavering support for and solidarity with the Government of Guyana in the face of the controversy [with Venezuela over the Essequibo region]”.⁵⁶ An analysis of the boundary dispute by Dr. Jose de Arimateria da Cruz, in the article *Strategic Insights:*

Guyana-Venezuela: The Essequibo Region Dispute, also elaborates on Guyana and Venezuela's use of diplomacy to defend their territorial claims. Lacking the wealth and resources of Venezuela, Guyanese diplomats have "... enlisted the assistance of the United States, Canada, Caribbean Community and Common Market (Caricom), the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC), the United Nations (UN) secretary General Ban Kin-Moon, as well as the Brazilian government" in the boundary dispute.⁵⁷ Along with producing maps that show the disputed zone as Venezuelan territory, Venezuelan diplomats have gained the support of "... another important regional organization in the Americas, Mercosur or Mercosul [which includes Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay], [that] has endorsed the territorial claims advanced by Venezuela".⁵⁸

2.3.2 falkland islands dispute: 1833-present

The last major territorial dispute to occur in the 20th century involves the conflicting claims that Argentina and the United Kingdom have in the Falkland Islands. In his book *The Falkland Islands/Malvinas: The Contest for Empire in the South Atlantic*, Professor Barry M. Gough recounts the history of Argentinian claims to the islands. "When the viceroyalty of [the Río de la Plata] had been established in 1775, the Malvinas lay within the region governed by the viceroy", so when Argentina declared independence in 1816 it included the Falkland Islands as part of its territory.⁵⁹ British claims to the islands are detailed by Professor Fritz L. Hoffman and Olga M. Hoffman in their book *Sovereignty in Dispute: The Falkland/Malvinas, 1493-1982*. The United Kingdom founded a settlement on the Falkland Islands in 1765, but they abandoned it in 1774 as a result of diplomatic protests from Spain.⁶⁰ British claims to the Falkland Islands were renewed in 1833 after British naval forces captured the islands from Argentina.

In 1910, the Argentine government attempted to combat British claims to the Falkland Islands by "[issuing new maps] in that country on which the Falklands were designated as a part of Argentina".⁶¹ "[O]n December 15, 1965 the Twentieth General Assembly of the United Nations adopted Resolution 2065, which ratified the resolution of the Committee of 24 inviting Argentina and the United Kingdom to start discussions leading to a peaceful [resolution of the boundary dispute]", but negotiations failed to resolve the dispute.⁶² War between Argentina and the United Kingdom broke out in 1982 with an Argentine invasion of the islands. The United Kingdom emerge victorious and continues to govern the islands, however Argentina continues to reinforce its claims by including the islands in government published maps.⁶³

Unable to annex the Falkland Islands militarily, Argentina has also relied on diplomacy to further its territorial claims. Argentina's use of diplomacy against the United Kingdom in the boundary dispute is illustrated by the United Nation's (UN) Meetings Coverage and Press Release's article *Special Committee on Decolonization Approves Resolution Reiterating Need for Negotiations to Resolve Falkland Islands (Malvinas) Question*. After hearing from Argentinian and British diplomats, The United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization continues to validate the assertion of Argentinian diplomats that the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands is disputed and requires a peaceful settlement.⁶⁴ Besides bringing the boundary dispute to the United Nations, Argentina has acquired substantial international support in favor of negotiations with the United Kingdom. "Many nations, including the 132 countries of the 'Group of 77' developing countries and China, had recognized Argentina's right to take [actions such as bringing the boundary dispute to the attention of the United Nations]."⁶⁵ Despite international opinion, the United Kingdom disagrees with the idea of negotiating over the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands with Argentina. Government published maps of the United Kingdom's overseas territories reflect the opinion of the British parliament by depicting all overseas territories as undisputed components the United Kingdom.⁶⁶

3. Discussion

The fall of Spanish and Portuguese authority in South America resulted in major changes to the geopolitical landscape of the continent. Whereas the former Portuguese colony of Brazil maintained political unity following independence, Spain's former South American colonies fragmented into nine smaller nations. The vast differences in political unity experienced by Portugal and Spain's colonies is the result of the distinct policies governing the colonial bureaucracies from the 15th to the 19th century. Portuguese policy in Brazil followed a gradual process of political centralization, which culminated in the elevation of colonial Brazil to the status of kingdom during the 19th. As a kingdom Brazil enjoyed the same powers as Portugal, however, independence was proclaimed following Portuguese attempts to revert it back to a colony.

Unlike Portugal, Spain gradually decentralized the colonial bureaucracy to facilitate governance over its expansive territories. Early Spanish colonies in South America were primarily governed from the city of Lima, located on the

central western coast of the continent. Prior to the 18th century, most of Spanish South America was organized into a single political unit known as the Viceroyalty of Peru, which was further subdivided into smaller provinces. At its greatest extent it governed over territory which later became Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina. Difficulty in governing far flung colonies from Lima, along with the shift of economic importance away from Lima towards Buenos Aires, resulted in the division of the Viceroyalty of Peru into five autonomous units. The northern colonies became the Viceroyalty of New Granada and the Captaincy General of Venezuela, the central colonies were left as the Viceroyalty of Peru, and the southern colonies became the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata and the Captaincy General of Chile.

The political separation of Spain's colonies facilitated the eventual fragmentation of Spain's colonial empire immediately after the wars of independence in the 19th century. Spain's contribution to the dissolution of its empire into numerous smaller states is evidenced in the states that arose following independence. A majority of the countries that arose following independence were integral political subunits within the viceroyalties. Decentralization facilitated the fragmentation of colonial South America because it resulted in the creation of autonomous systems of government throughout Spanish South America. Likewise intercolonial rivalries dissuaded the continuation of large bureaucracies that tended to favor the interests of larger colonies. The promotion of decentralization fostered by Spain facilitated the fragmentation of Spain's Empire into smaller states, which otherwise had similar histories, cultures, languages, and values. Facing similar circumstances to Spain, Portugal's adoption of centralization enabled the maintenance of unity in Brazil following independence.

The creation of new countries after the wars for independence exposed the problems of accurate mapmaking during the 19th century. Maps drafted by Anthony Finely and Adrien Hubert Brué in 1826 revealed the limited knowledge that European mapmakers had concerning the shifting political landscape in South America. A mistake made by both cartographers was to depict the territories of Paraguay and Uruguay as part of the United Provinces of the Río de la Plata, or the precursor state of Argentina. The errors regarding Paraguay and Uruguay are significant because Paraguay had been independent from Spain since 1811 and Uruguay was completely incorporated into Brazil in 1820. Early maps, such as Finely and Brue's, highlighted Argentina's later claims to territory in both Paraguay and Uruguay. Later maps resolved the inaccuracy, but it was the early maps that foreshadowed Argentina's territorial reasons for entering into the War of the Triple Alliance against Paraguay in 1865.

The fragmentation of Spain's South American Empire led to the need to transform ambiguous colonial boundaries into clearly defined international borders. A relatively small number of the territorial disputes that erupted in the 19th and 20th century resulted in prolonged warfare, such as the War of the Triple Alliance, the War of the Pacific, and the Chaco War. Fortunately, most boundary disputes in South America were resolved through the use of diplomacy and mapping. For instance, by 1881 most of the disputed territory in Patagonia and the Tierra del Fuego Islands was resolved by Argentina and Chile through the use of bilateral negotiations. Mapping played a significant role during the negotiation of boundaries as countries advocated their claims based on state published maps. Disputes between Argentina and Chile in Patagonia and the Tierra del Fuego Islands were resolved by compromising between Argentinian and Chilean maps. When competing maps could not be compromised, the issue was usually resolved by open conflict, such as between Bolivia and Paraguay for territory in the Chaco Boreal.

In conjunction with diplomacy, mapping gained greater prominence in the 20th century for its ability to argue against previously decided boundary claims. For example, Venezuela's claims to Guyana's Essequibo region and Argentina's claims to the British controlled Falkland Islands demonstrate this phenomenon. Both territorial disputes were previously resolved through conventional methods, with the Venezuela/Guyana dispute concluded through bilateral negotiations in 1899 and the Argentina/British dispute resolved after Argentina's military defeat in the Falkland Island War in 1982. After 1965, Venezuela reaffirmed its claims to land in Guyana by printing maps showing it in possession of the disputed territory. Argentina has also continued to print maps showing it in control of the Falkland Islands, even though they are under British authority. Maps published by state institutions, such as Venezuela's Dirección de Cartografía Nacional and Argentina's Chief of the Cabinet of Ministers, serve as a political tool to reaffirm claims to territory that is under the de facto control rival claimants.

The effectiveness of maps in arguing boundary claims in the 20th century has relied upon diplomacy. Venezuelan diplomats have successfully lobbied regional allies to support its claims, but Argentinian claims are the most legitimate and enjoy vast international support. The importance of diplomacy is evident in the United Nations published map, *The World Today*, which illustrates that the Falkland Islands are disputed between Argentina and the United Kingdom. Acknowledgement of the dispute by the United Nations is significant because their policy of neutrality means that most boundary disputes, like the one between Venezuela and Guyana, do not get official acknowledgement (Figure 1).⁶⁷ The boundary dispute reveals that maps can be used to argue previously resolved boundary claims, but their overall effectiveness relies on diplomacy to secure political support.



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.

*Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

**Appears without prejudice to the question of sovereignty.

***A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

The initials in parentheses refer to the administering Power or the Power involved in a special treaty relationship

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