

## Punitive Entanglements: Connected Histories of Penal Transportation, Deportation, and Incarceration in the Spanish Empire (1830s–1898)\*

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**ABSTRACT:** This article features a connected history of punitive relocations in the Spanish Empire, from the independence of Spanish America to the “loss” of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines in 1898. Three levels of entanglement are highlighted here: the article looks simultaneously at punitive flows stemming from the colonies and from the metropole; it brings together the study of penal transportation, administrative deportation, and military deportation; and it discusses the relationship between punitive relocations and imprisonment. As part of this special issue, foregrounding “perspectives from the colonies”, I start with an analysis of the punitive flows that stemmed from the overseas provinces. I then address punishment in the metropole through the colonial lens, before highlighting the entanglements of penal transportation and deportation in the nineteenth-century Spanish Empire as a whole.

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On 28 November 1896, two ships left the port of Havana in the midst of the cries, waved handkerchiefs, and threatening screams of the crowd on the dockside. More than one hundred men, chained in pairs, were being brought to the steamship *Ciudad de Cadiz* for deportation to various destinations across the Spanish Empire. They included two dozen “unfaithful” (*infidentes*) individuals allegedly involved in the Cuban War of Independence (1895–1898), seventy-four cattle rustlers (*cuatreros*), and a considerable number of *ñañigos*, or members of the Abakuá mutual aid society. The latter were primarily slaves and ex-slaves from West Africa. Manuel María Miranda, an anarchist who worked at the Don Quijote de la Mancha tobacco factory, was on board as well. A military court had sentenced him to deportation to Fernando Poo, a Spanish colonial possession in the Gulf of Guinea, for his opposition to the compulsory

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contribution for the Spanish navy during that time of war. In San Juan, Puerto Rico, twenty-five more deportees embarked on the *Ciudad de Cadiz*. In Spain, they were joined by Cuban, Filipino, and Spanish men destined for the Chafarinas Islands, Ceuta, and Fernando Poo. During his forced residence in Fernando Poo, Miranda worked for several landowners, including a man named Mellizo, a “criminal” from Cadiz.<sup>1</sup>

In order to unravel the complexity of punitive relocations such as those experienced by Miranda, we need to address the connected histories of punishment from an imperial perspective. To this end, I aim to foreground three levels of entanglement in punitive relocations across the Spanish monarchy during the nineteenth century. First, this article looks simultaneously at punitive flows stemming from the colonies and from the metropole. Second, it brings together the study of penal transportation and other forms of punitive relocation that originated from states of exception, that is, administrative deportation and sentences of transportation pronounced by military courts. Third, the article discusses the relationship between punitive relocations and imprisonment. Its ambition is to locate the contested rise of the penitentiary in the last third of the nineteenth century, within a broader picture of coexisting, conflicting, and related penal regimes.

The following sections are organized in such a way as to foreground the “perspective from the colonies”, and to allow a connected history of punitive relocations. I start by analysing the punitive flows that stemmed from the overseas provinces; I then address punishment in the metropole through the colonial lens, before going on to highlight the entanglements of penal transportation and deportation in the nineteenth-century Spanish Empire as a whole.

### COLONIAL PUNITIVE FLOWS

The Napoleonic Wars (1808–1814) and the related process of independence in Latin America (1810–1820s) created a deep discontinuity in the history of the Spanish Empire. The incipient liberalism that emerged from resistance to French occupation and that developed from the 1830s posed questions about the legal status of the monarchy’s subjects. It did so both within the Peninsula and in the remains of the overseas empire – the “system of the three colonies”, which included Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. The Constitution of Cadiz (1812) envisaged a path of legal convergence across the empire, but the preservation of slavery in the overseas provinces and the limitations imposed on the provinces’ representation in the metropolitan Cortes (the legislative assembly) clearly undermined that promise. By 1837, the new Constitution sanctioned the divergence of legal regimes, with article 2 stating that “The overseas provinces will be ruled by

1. Manuel María Miranda, *Memorias de un deportado* (Havana, 1903).

special laws”. In fact, the metropolitan authorities never created a coherent set of colonial laws. The legal framework for the overseas provinces depended on the old *Recopilación de las Leyes de Indias* (Collection of the Laws of the Indies), selected and filtered peninsular laws, and new laws issued for each colony. Furthermore, the Captains General were given “all-encompassing faculties” (*facultades omnímodas*). Indeed, the construction of their “supreme authority” (*mando supremo*) proved the basis of a new type of governance of the colonies. This presented relevant differences vis-à-vis the model inherited from the previous three centuries of colonial rule: as the Captain General had both military and civilian powers, the traditional role of the *audiencias* (Higher Courts) to check and balance the power of the first authority was substantially limited.<sup>2</sup>

The punitive regimes applied during the nineteenth century in the overseas provinces, and especially convict transportation and deportation, reflected that new mode of colonial rule. Convicts continued to be sentenced to transportation by local courts and the *audiencias*, as they had been in the past. However, the “all-compassing faculties” of the Captains General included the power to relocate colonial subjects by administrative order. Moreover, the broad militarization of the colonies allowed for the extensive use of military courts to legitimize exile, confinement, and deportation. Taken together, penal transportation, administrative deportation, and military relocation provided the authorities with a broad toolkit to maintain colonial order, discipline subaltern labour, and prevent or curb anti-colonial insurgencies. They formed a flexible instrument, which additionally allowed government to cope with the specific and changing circumstances of each province, and to differentiate repression by class, ethnicity, gender, and type of crime or disorder.

The case of punitive flows from Cuba is telling in this respect.<sup>3</sup> From the 1830s to 1868, the priority was to protect the thriving sugar plantations. In that context, sentences to transportation to Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo, and Ceuta complemented the planters’ use of “domestic” justice, including detention in public prisons and *depósitos* for the plantation workforce of African slaves and Chinese contract labourers. Free blacks based in the urban centres were the main targets of the brutal repression led by the military commission in the aftermath of the *Escalera* conspiracy of 1843. That institution, created in March 1824, additionally curbed the aborted secessionist expeditions that punctuated the 1850s and 1860s. Meanwhile,

2. Josep M. Fradera, *Colonias para después de un imperio* (Barcelona, 2005). See also Javier Alvarado Planas, *La Administración Colonial española en el siglo XIX* (Madrid, 2013).

3. For a detailed study of the Cuban case, and related information on primary and secondary sources, see Christian G. De Vito, “Punishment and Labour Relations: Cuba between Abolition and Empire (1835–1886)” (forthcoming).

exile and administrative deportation provided a swift means of expelling abolitionist agents from the surrounding British colonies, as well as those viewed as “internal enemies”. These included “incorrigible” vagrants and lumpenproletarians, and members of the Abakuá mutual aid societies. Fernando Poo, Ceuta, and the Philippines were the destinations of those convicts and deportees, while shorter-distance relocations headed to the Isle of Pines, located just to the south of Cuba.

The Ten Years’ War, which started in 1868, changed Cuba’s political and military situation, and the punitive strategies of its Spanish administration. Repressing the insurgents, isolating them from potential supporters in the rural areas, and preventing rebellion from spreading from the eastern to the western part of the island were the new priorities. Military courts sentenced many rebels to death and ordered the transportation of hundreds more to Hacho Castle in Ceuta. Preventive measures against civilians in eastern Cuba included “warnings” and administrative confinement on the Isle of Pines. Finally, urban supporters of the insurgency, or *laborantes*, were relocated administratively to the Peninsula, the Balears Islands, Ceuta, and Fernando Poo. A similarly repressive scheme was applied during the Little War (1879–1880) and in the course of the military conflict of 1895–1898. In the latter, anti-insurgency policies against civilians took on a mass scale: between February 1896 and November 1897 around 300,000 individuals were forcibly “re-concentrated” to fortified Spanish towns along the military lines. Between 155,000 and 170,000 of them died of starvation and epidemics.

The period between the Little War and the military conflict of 1895–1898 witnessed the abolition of slavery (1880) and the introduction of the *patronato*, or apprenticeship of emancipated slaves (1880–1886). The need to prevent ex-slaves from leaving the plantations and the imperative to discipline the workforce at large triggered anti-vagrancy laws that were applied to rural bandits and the urban unemployed and underemployed. The Isle of Pines was once again a site of confinement and, during the 1870s, of imprisonment in the Correccional de vagos (Reformatory for vagrants).

Punitive policy in other colonial territories followed different paths and had diverse chronologies, depending on different political circumstances and goals. Yet, there too, the flexible combination of penal and military transportation and administrative deportation proved to be a recurring feature of repression. In Puerto Rico, for example, a group of convicts was sentenced to penal transportation to the North African *presidio* of Peñon de la Gomera in 1865.<sup>4</sup> Two years later, in the aftermath of the mutiny among troops in the barracks of San Francisco, in San Juan, eighty military convicts were transported to Cuba. The Governor General

4. Archivo General Militar, Madrid [hereafter, AGMM], 5154.1, Real Orden 21 August 1865.

used those circumstances to also deport to Cuba fourteen “enemies of Spain, agitated and disturbing the public order”, in part for their abolitionist propaganda.<sup>5</sup>

Securing the colony was a central goal in the Philippines as well, and spatial relocation proved a key strategy in removing unwanted internal enemies. In the aftermath of the insurrection of Cavite of 20 January 1872, the War Council sentenced forty-one men to death and many others to transportation to the North African *presidios*, while the Governor General deported twenty civilians to the Mariana Islands.<sup>6</sup> The anti-colonial war of 1896–1898 also generated flows of military transportation and deportation from the Asian archipelago to various destinations across the empire. On 10 December 1896, for example, a group of 148 Filipinos temporarily held in Barcelona prison were redirected to Hacho Castle in Ceuta and to the islands of Chafarinas and Fernando Poo.<sup>7</sup>

In the Philippines, repression had other goals too: disciplining native rural labour; impressing Filipinos into the army; reducing overcrowding in the *presidios* of Manila and Cavite; and colonizing the southern islands of Mindanao and Jolo. Starting in 1871, those aims combined to produce one of the most significant institutional innovations in the field of punishment in the nineteenth-century Spanish Empire: military penitentiary colonies manned by the native troops of disciplinary battalions.<sup>8</sup> They represented the majority of the few penal colonies that the Spaniards ever set up in four centuries of empire, a departure from the mixed-populated military outposts (*presidios*) that had previously been the primary destinations of the convicts. The new agricultural penal colonies first emerged on the island of Paragua and in San Ramón (Zamboanga), and then spread to Balabac, Davao, Jolo, the province of Isabela de Cagayan, and Bonga (Cottabato). They also hosted non-military prisoners and “vagrants, useful beggars, moneyless orphans and those who reoffend in behaviours like drunkenness”.<sup>9</sup> In the 1890s, the total number of deportees in those destinations

5. Archivo Historico Nacional, Madrid [hereafter, AHN], Ultramar, 5110, exp. 23, Gobierno Superior Civil de la Isla de Puerto Rico, Secretaria oficial, Reservado, Puerto Rico, 14 July 1867. See also exp. 24.

6. AHN, Ultramar, 5230, exp. 36.

7. Lucía Segura and María Josefa Parejo, “Filipinas en el Archivo del cuartel general de la Región militar sur. Deportados y confinados (S. XIX)”, in *El lejano Oriente español. Filipinas (siglo XIX). Actas VII Jornadas Nacionales de Historia Militar, Sevilla, 5–9 de mayo de 1997* (Coslada, 1997), pp. 121–122.

8. See especially AHN, Ultramar, 456, exp. 13; AHN, Ultramar, 612, exp. 7; AHN, Diversos-Colecciones, 202, exp. 68. See also Alicia Castellanos Escudier, “Las Compañías disciplinarias en la colonización de Mindanao”, in *El lejano Oriente español*, pp. 541–554. See also Juan Salcedo, *Proyectos de dominación y colonización de Mindanao y Joló* (Gerona, 1891).

9. AHN, Ultramar, 5230, exp. 8, Gobernador Superior Civil of the Philippines to Ultramar, 1 March 1871.

ranged from a few dozen convicts in the Carolina Islands to almost 1,000 convicts in the disciplinary battalion of Mindanao. By then, secondary deportation served the purpose of disciplining convicts within that punitive network, as in the case of nearly 200 rebellious inmates of the disciplinary battalion of Mindanao who were deported for the second time to the Mariana Islands in December 1896.<sup>10</sup>

Disciplinary battalions, such as those created in the Southern Philippines and, to a lesser extent, in Cuba, clearly connected punishment to the military. Conversely, in the course of the nineteenth century, urban prisons in the overseas provinces increasingly became administratively independent of the military, though largely militarized as far as the personnel and the internal regime were concerned.<sup>11</sup> Yet, that (partial) transition from military to penal *presidios* did not anticipate the transformation of colonial prisons into penitentiaries, as penal reformists had hoped. The persisting connection between prisons and extramural forced labour prevented that from happening. Indeed, throughout the century the prisons of Manila, San Juan, Havana, Puerto Principe, and the Isle of Pines remained hubs of penal transportation for a flexible convict workforce used for public works.<sup>12</sup> In Puerto Rico, between 1857 and 1886, Chinese contract labourers and enslaved Africans from Cuba, military convicts from Spain, and local prisoners built the Carretera Central, the 134-kilometre-long road that connected the northern and southern parts of the island.<sup>13</sup> In Cuba, prisoners were used in the construction of the Havana-Guines railway during the 1830s and the railway between Cardenas and Tucano forty years later.<sup>14</sup> They worked in stone quarries and in the construction and repair of Havana's streets and buildings, sewers, and the aqueduct. Moreover, to a much larger extent than in Puerto Rico, from 1867 to 1887 the convicts of the three major penal institutions in Cuba were leased out to sugar planters to complement and partly replace enslaved workers.<sup>15</sup>

10. AGMM, 6309.7, Polavieja to Ultramar, 20 January 1897.

11. *Reglamento para el presidio de la Plaza de Puerto-Rico* (San Juan, 1850); *Reglamento que establece y manda observar en los presidios de la siempre fiel isla de Cuba* (Havana, 1858).

12. For Manila see, for example, AHN, 438, exp. 10.

13. AHN, Ultramar, 5104, exp. 10, *Memoria de la visita de inspección*; Joseph Dorsey, "Identity, Rebellion, and Social Justice Among Chinese Contract Workers in Nineteenth-Century Cuba", *Latin American Perspectives*, 31:3 (2004), pp. 18–47; Fernando Picó, *El día menos pensado. Historia de los presidiarios en Puerto Rico, 1793–1993* (Río Piedras, 1994); Kelvin Santiago-Valles, "Bloody Legislations, 'Entombment', and Race Making in the Spanish Atlantic: Differentiated Spaces of General(ized) Confinement in Spain and Puerto Rico, 1750–1840", *Radical History Review*, 96 (2006), pp. 33–57.

14. Manuel Moreno Fraguinals, *El ingenio. Complejo económico social cubano del azúcar* (Barcelona, 2001), pp. 241–242.

15. AHN, Ultramar, 1833, caja 1; AHN, Ultramar, 1833, caja 1, "Liquidación de los ingresos y gastos"; AHN, Ultramar, 1833, caja 2, exp. 451; AHN, Ultramar, 1927, caja 1. See also Balboa

## METROPOLITAN PUNISHMENTS

In the first two thirds of the nineteenth century, the prison system in Spain converged with that of the colonies in two key respects. First, a transition took place from military to penal *presidios*.<sup>16</sup> This emerged especially after the *Ordenanza general de los presidios del Reino* (General Order of the *Presidios* of the Kingdom) of 1834, but was part of longer-term trends. Indeed, the abolition of sentences to the mines of Almaden (1800), the galleys (1803), and the arsenals (1835) for non-military convicts were early steps in that direction. Second, due to the influence of penal utilitarianism, the prison system was strongly connected with extramural public works. In the 1830s, thousands of peninsular convicts worked on the Canal of Castile and in building new roads in Andalusia. This trend was confirmed in the *Reglamento de obras publicas* (1843) and the Penal Code of 1848. Extramural work did not start to decline until the 1850s, due to increasing competition from free labour and partly to changes in penological thought. Indeed, the penitentiary model implied the centrality of work within the walls of penal institutions. Artisanal and industrial workshops had opened in the prison of Valencia as early as the 1840s, under the direction of the prison governor and penal reformer Manuel Montesinos. However, this phenomenon remained localized, as did the diffusion of the penitentiary itself, due to a mix of budgetary and political reasons. As a result, in 1888, the first systematic prison statistics revealed the existence of only seventeen cellular penitentiaries and the persistence of fifteen *presidios* in a sea of 416 non-cellular local prisons, half of which were hosted in buildings described as “absolutely unreformable”.<sup>17</sup> The construction of cellular institutions in Spain, planned in the early 1870s, proceeded much more slowly than had been expected. Moreover, they were not altogether successful. If the “modern” penitentiary was never implemented in the overseas provinces, the situation towards the end of the century did not look much better in the metropole.

The limited dissemination of the penitentiary accentuated another important characteristic of the prison system, namely its marked connection with spatial relocation. In fact, the logic of the system linked distance to the perceived gravity of crime.<sup>18</sup> For this reason, prisoners awaiting trial and

Navarro, “Presidarios por esclavos. Mano de obra cautiva en la transición al trabajo libre”, in José A. Piqueras (ed.), *Trabajo libre y coactivo en sociedades de plantación* (Madrid, 2009), pp. 253–279.

16. On the prison system in nineteenth-century Spain, see Justo Serna Alonso, *Presos y pobres en la España del XIX. La determinación social de la marginación* (Barcelona, 1988); Pedro Trinidad Fernández, *La defensa de la sociedad. Cárcel y delincuencia en España (siglos XVIII–XX)* (Madrid, 1991); Fernando José Burillo Albacete, *La cuestión penitenciaria. Del Sexenio a la Restauración (1868–1913)* (Zaragoza, 2011).

17. Quoted in Burillo Albacete, *La cuestión penitenciaria*, p. 14.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 47.



those sentenced to up to six years' imprisonment remained within the jurisdiction of their place of trial. Those sentenced to between six and twelve years were sent to specific penal institutions across the Peninsula, and in the Balears and the Canary Islands. Men sentenced to imprisonment for life, or periods of twelve to twenty years, were sent to the *presidios* in North Africa. Indeed, the flows of convicts to Ceuta and the so-called minor *presidios* of North Africa – Peñon de Velez, Alhucemas, Melilla, and Chafarinas – were continuous and on a large scale. In the 1880s, as in 1901, those institutions hosted an average of 3,000 convicts out of a total male prison population in the peninsular system of approximately 20,000 individuals.<sup>19</sup>

The North African *presidios* had a peculiar status in the context of the Spanish punitive system. On the one hand, in those outposts located outside the Peninsula, extramural work for the state continued to be compulsory, and military authority was the rule. On the other hand, the North African territories were viewed as part of the metropolitan legal space, rather than as overseas provinces or “colonies”. For this reason, convict transportation from mainland Spain to those *presidios* was seen as an extension of the peninsular prison system.<sup>20</sup> Conversely, the spatial relocation of sentenced convicts from the metropole to the overseas provinces was discontinued during the nineteenth century. Penal transportation to Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines was first suspended by royal decree in December 1836, as a consequence of the “critical circumstances” experienced in those dominions. That prohibition remained in force throughout the rest of the century. Indeed, the plans of Positivist criminologists to extend again penal transportation from the metropole to the overseas space were repeatedly rejected in the final quarter of the century, on the grounds that this would have meant a unification of the legal regime across the empire.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, when several hundred peninsular prisoners were transported to the colonies, this happened under a different legal regime. Those metropolitan convicts formally “volunteered” to join the colonial army in the midst of the mass mobilization of troops at the time of the attempted reconquest of Santo Domingo (1861–1865) and during the Cuban War of Independence and the Spanish-American war (1895–1898).

19. *Ibid.*, p. 187; Trinidad Fernández, *La defensa de la sociedad*, p. 212.

20. The Canary Islands were similarly considered part of the legal region of the metropole, and the legislation accordingly allowed for penal transportation to those territories. However, no penal institution was ever activated in the Canary Islands for the purpose of receiving peninsular convicts.

21. On the debates in the 1870s, see Burillo Albacete, *La cuestión penitenciaria*, pp. 62–67; Luis Gargallo Vaamonde and Pedro Oliver Olmo, “Desarrollo y colapso del penitenciarismo liberal”, in Pedro Oliver Olmo (ed.), *El siglo de los castigos. Prisión y formas carcelarias en la España del siglo XX* (Barcelona, 2013), pp. 18–23.



The suspension of penal transportation from the metropole to the overseas provinces during the nineteenth century marked a major break with a tradition of relocating sentenced prisoners from Spain that began at the start of the Spanish Empire. The criminal justice system, however, was not the only source of punitive relocations. As in the colonial settings, in the Peninsula military justice and administrative power produced significant flows of convicts and deportees throughout the nineteenth century. Indeed, while the spatial scope of the penal flows from mainland Spain was now limited, military transportation and administrative deportation significantly expanded, both spatially and quantitatively.

This aspect has received insufficient attention in the scholarship so far. On the one hand, important research centred on the prison systems has marginalized the importance of military and administrative deportations.<sup>22</sup> On the other, those who have addressed deportations in detail have focused on specific events and groups, and even when they have provided a broader overview they have not discussed their connections with the legal and political systems.<sup>23</sup> Conversely, I would like to suggest the need to write back military and administrative deportations into the history of nineteenth-century punishment. In the case of Spain, this is especially important. Indeed, it foregrounds a fundamental aspect of the construction of the Spanish nation in the nineteenth century, which Manuel Ballbé and Eduardo González Calleja have described as the “permanent use of the technique of the declaration of the state of exception”, based on the “primarily military configuration of the bureaucratic organization of the national state”, especially in the realm of public order.<sup>24</sup> Declarations of the “state of siege”, the “state of war”, and the “state of prevention and alarm”, as well as the concession of “extraordinary powers” to prime ministers and local Captains General, accompanied all major events in the history of Peninsular Spain during the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. Frequently, the suspension of constitutional rights outlived specific events and lasted years, or the length of entire governments.

In other words, the exception was not only out there, in the colonial space. It was also a key feature of “normal” rule in the metropole. Indeed, the “norm” contained the “exception”.<sup>25</sup> The faculty to suspend

22. Burillo Albacete, *La cuestión penitenciaria*.

23. See the otherwise very important Pere Gabriel, “Más allá de los exilios políticos. Proscritos y deportados en el siglo XIX”, in Santiago Castillo and Pedro Oliver (eds), *Las figuras del desorden. Heterodoxos, proscritos y marginados* (Madrid, 2006), pp. 197–221, 211–221.

24. Manuel Ballbé, *Orden público y militarismo en la España constitucional (1812–1983)* (Madrid, 1983), p. 20; Eduardo González Calleja, “La política de orden público en la Restauración”, *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma*, 5:20 (2008), p. 94.

25. For important interventions on the role of states of exception in history, see Nasser Hussain, *The Jurisprudence of Emergency: Colonialism and the Rule of Law* (Ann Arbor, CT, 2003);

constitutional rights was inscribed in the liberal constitutions themselves. Its contents were further detailed in legislation such as the Law of 17 April 1821 and the public order laws of 20 March 1867 and 23 April 1870.<sup>26</sup> On that basis, depending on the circumstances, the scope of military justice was extended to include civilians, special courts were set up, and Captains General were entitled to take administrative measures. Besides the application of death sentences and temporary incarceration, intermittent, yet frequent and sometimes large, flows of deportation resulted. They were characterized by the sudden and collective nature of the initial relocation and by their relatively short duration, until the states of exception were discontinued and amnesties accorded. As in the colonies, their social and political targets were multiple, and single events often gave the authorities the opportunity to expel diverse groups by manipulating blurred categories.

In the aftermath of the mutiny of the gunners at the barracks of San Gil in Madrid on 22 June 1866, approximately 800 individuals were sentenced by military courts to six to ten years' *presidio* and impressment in the army.<sup>27</sup> Their destinations literally spanned the whole empire. The lists of deportees comprised soldiers directly involved in that attempt to replace the monarchy by a democratic regime. However, they also included a large group of men whose profiles included the following: Ramon Grebot, aka Bisbe, "great propagator of republican ideas in a revolutionary direction"; Romualdo Pipian Pepenim, aka Rampè, "vagrant, gambler, and of bad records"; and Agustín Torrens y Sala, "vagrant, undocumented, and with no fixed address, one of those who advise workers not to hire themselves unless they are given everything they ask for".

That variegated world of subaltern workers, lumpenproletarians, and "furious democrats" – in the words of the authorities – was the target of multiple political regimes throughout the century. It provided the bulk of the hundreds sentenced to death, imprisonment, and deportation by the provincial military commissions created under the monarchy of Ferdinand VII between 1824 and 1825 and re-established under the regents in 1836–1838. It offered the political prisoners and subversive republicans sent to the Philippines in revolutionary 1848. It also included the rural labourers who revolted in Loja on 28 June 1861 against their living and

Francesco Benigno and Luca Scuccimarra (eds), *Il governo dell'eccedenza. Poteri straordinari e di guerra in Europa tra XVI e XX secolo* (Rome, 2007).

26. Carmen Serván, *Laboratorio constitucional en España. El individuo y el ordenamiento, 1868–1873* (Madrid, 2005), pp. 271–295.

27. AGMM, 5936.1, *Relaciones de artilleros sentenciados por los sucesos del 22 junio de 1866 en Madrid*; Archivo General de la Administración, Alcalá de Henares [hereafter, AGA], 81.6941 (including the lists and profiles of deportees).

working conditions, and who were subsequently deported to Fernando Poo and elsewhere.<sup>28</sup> In 1873, it was the turn of the republican government, supported by generals with extensive colonial experience, such as Arsenio Martínez-Campos and Manuel Pavía, to curb the federalist revolts of Murcia and Cartagena. In that context, over 1,600 *cantonalistas* and *internacionalistas* were deported administratively, some to Ceuta and Fernando Poo, and the vast majority to the Philippines and the Mariana Islands.<sup>29</sup>

The state of exception declared by the republican authorities in the aftermath of the *cantonalista* revolt lasted until January 1877, well into the first Restoration government. Paradoxically, therefore, it was the leader of the Conservative Party, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, who amnestied the revolutionary leftists. In the northern provinces of the Peninsula, however, the suspension of constitutional rights was further extended in order to repress the insurrection of the traditionalist monarchists, or *carlistas*. Indeed, as in the 1830s and 1848, the 1870s witnessed the constant overlapping of deportation of members of conflicting groups that fell outside the spectrum of the liberal regimes.<sup>30</sup> In the course of the Third Carlist War (1872–1876), *carlista* prisoners of war were imprisoned in various peninsular institutions (Cartagena, Burgos, Santoña, Avila) and transported to the Balears and the Canary Islands, to Ceuta and Fernando Poo, to the Philippines and the Marianas.

Even beyond those periods of sustained political conflict and civil war in the Peninsula, administrative deportation from Spain had a broad reach. A rare overview issued by the Ministry of Overseas Territories in the early 1880s listed 1,181 peninsular deportees across the empire, including 134 in Cuba, forty-one in Puerto Rico, 130 in Fernando Poo, and over 800 in the Philippines and the Mariana Islands.<sup>31</sup>

## IMPERIAL ENTANGLEMENTS

When nineteenth-century penal transportations, military relocations, and administrative deportations stemming from the metropole and the colonies are visualized simultaneously, as in Figure 1 below, we see a thick network spanning the whole Spanish Empire.

28. Segura and Parejo, “Filipinas en el Archivo”, pp. 105–121; Gabriel, “Más allá de los exilios políticos”, pp. 211–212.

29. AGA, 81.6942, exp. 1; AHN, Ultramar, 5222, exp. 1.

30. AGMM: 5969.9; 5972.33; 5970.8; 5948.14; 7149.77; 6027.4; 6636.22. AGA: 51.53; AHN, Ultramar: 5227, exp. 56. On the deportation of over 1,600 *carlistas* to Cuba in the 1830s, see AHN, Ultramar, 4603, Havana, 6 October 1835.

31. AGA, 81.6946, exp. 13, *Resumen de deportados de la Peninsula*.

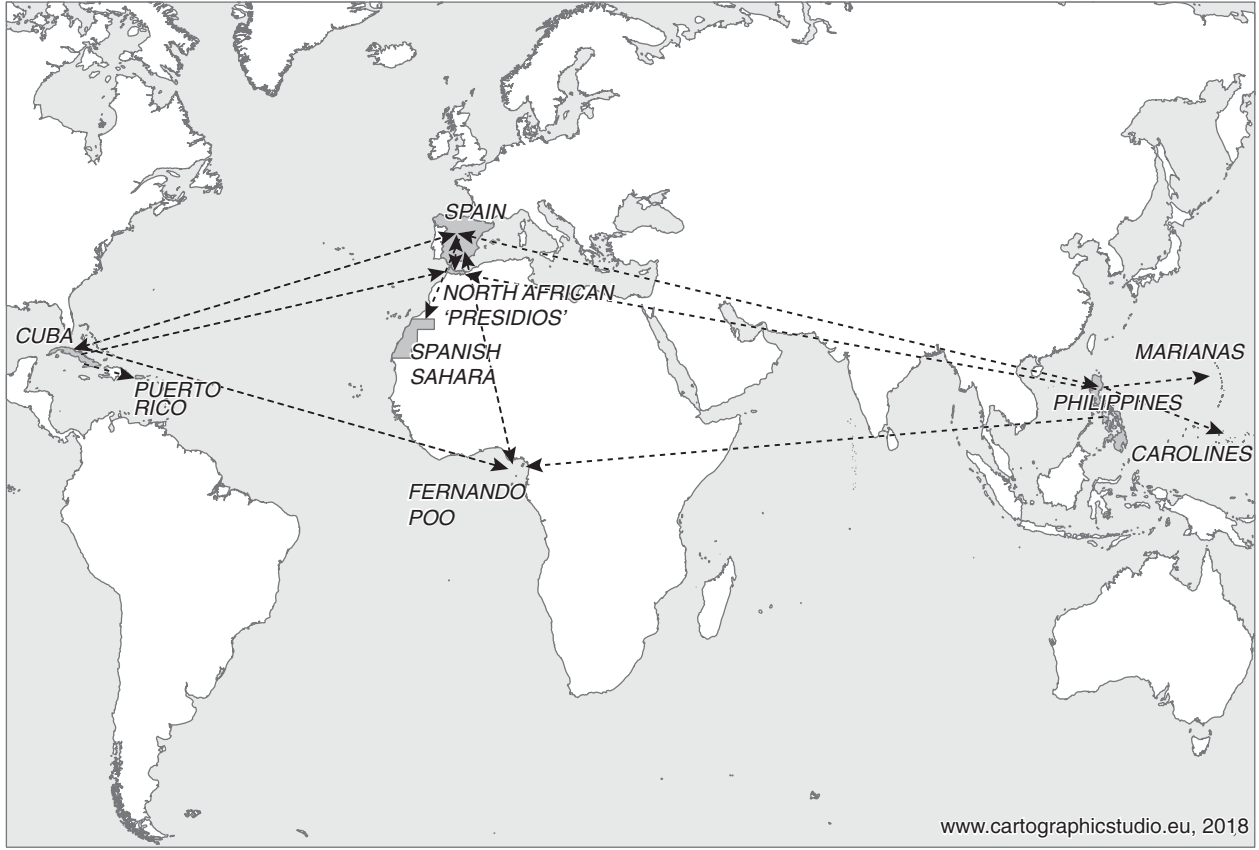


Figure 1. Punitive relocations in the Spanish empire, 1830s–1898

A key element in the construction of those punitive entanglements lay in the highly mobile careers of the imperial officials who decided upon them. Indeed, the lives of leading political and military figures of the nineteenth-century Spanish Empire were strongly intertwined with the history of penal transportation and deportation from both the metropole and the colonies. General Juan Prim y Prats, for example, took part in the First Carlist War (1834–1840), curbed the radical revolt of the *Jamància* during his charge as Governor of Barcelona (1843), was Captain General of Puerto Rico, contributed to the repression of the slave revolt on the nearby Danish colony of Saint Croix (1848), and then participated in the War of Morocco (1860), the Spanish expedition in Mexico (1861), and the Glorious Revolution of 1868 in Spain. At the same time, he was himself threatened with deportation to the Marianas for six years for his participation in a coup, confined in Eciija, and later exiled to Switzerland in connection with the insurrection of the gunners in June 1866. He was killed by a republican in 1870, when he was President of the Council of Ministries and Minister of War.

During their career, the same officials were often responsible for punitive relocations from several sites across the empire. General Camilo García Polavieja decreed the deportation of 265 *libres de color* (free blacks) to Fernando Poo when he was military commander and Governor of Santiago de Cuba in 1880; he ordered the imprisonment, confinement, and deportation of hundreds of civilians through the anti-banditry Gabinete Particular he set up as Captain-General of Cuba in 1890–1892; and then, as Governor General of the Philippines during the War of Independence, he oversaw the court martial of José Rizal and other Filipino insurgents and ordered administrative deportations to the Marianas, Spain, and Fernando Poo.<sup>32</sup>

Taking a perspective that spans the empire also reveals important features regarding the selection of destinations of punitive relocations. Indeed, while the expulsion of convicts and deportees from a certain territory emerged primarily from local circumstances, the logic that guided the choice of their destinations usually stemmed from broader imperial goals. Starting from the 1860s, for example, punitive flows of various types were consistently directed to sites of new colonization. It was part of the response of the Spanish monarchy to growing imperialist competition in the Caribbean, the Pacific, and Africa.

The attempt of the Spanish authorities to take advantage of the American Civil War and reannex Santo Domingo was accompanied by significant relocations of convicts and deportees. During the first years of operations

32. Archivo General de Indias, Seville [hereafter, AGI], Diversos, 8; AGA, 81/6942, exp. 7, 8, and 9; Camilo Polavieja y Castillo, *Conspiración de la raza de color descubierta en Santiago de Cuba el 10 de Diciembre de 1880* (Santiago de Cuba, 1880); AHN, Ultramar, L. 666.

(1861–1863), over 1,000 prisoners were “voluntarily” transferred from Spain, and various brigades of convicts headed there from Cuba in order to fortify Samaná Bay, build other infrastructure, and exploit the island’s coal mines and forests. Later on, hundreds of prisoners of war and deportees were relocated from Santo Domingo to Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Ceuta. Finally, following Spain’s defeat, in mid-1865 they were gathered in Puerto Rico and exchanged for Spanish POWs.<sup>33</sup> In the Pacific, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the occupation of the islands of Mindanao, Jolo, and Paragua in the Philippines, and the consequent punitive flows from Spain and the northern islands of that archipelago to the newly created penal colonies and disciplinary battalions. Similar developments took place in the Marianas, which attracted flows of deportees from the Philippines and Spain. From the same territories, individuals were deported to the disciplinary battalions created in the Carolina Islands from 1885 onwards, in order to cope with the growing German and US penetration in the region.<sup>34</sup> In North Africa, following the 1860 War of Morocco the Spanish sent convicts and deportees from Cuba and the Philippines to the Chafarinas Islands. After the peace treaty extended Spanish sovereignty to parts of the Western Sahara, deportees were sent to that region. Meanwhile, imperial efforts to colonize the island of Fernando Poo were supported by the deportations of rural labourers from Loja in 1861, the rebellious gunners of Madrid in 1866, Cuban *incoregibles* in 1866, and *laborantes* from the same island in 1868–1869.<sup>35</sup>

In those cases, convicts and deportees were viewed as useful agents of colonization, primarily as a temporary workforce for building infrastructures and to serve in the military, and at times as settlers. However, punitive relocations raised considerable problems. In fact, certain flows were carefully avoided, including those to Spain of sentenced slaves during the decades between the abolition of slavery in the Peninsula (1837) and its abolition in Puerto Rico (1873) and Cuba (1880): the legal discontinuity between the colonies and Spain would have entitled them to claim their freedom. Broader legal, political, and logistic difficulties emerged vis-à-vis the status of the deportees. A clear example lies in the administrative expulsion from Cuba in 1866 of hundreds of *incoregibles*, or individuals

33. AGMM: 5654.2; 5654.3; 5661.6; 5661.7; 5661.9; 5661.10; 5774.10.

34. Carlos Madrid, *Beyond Distances: Governance, Politics and Deportation in the Mariana Islands from 1870 to 1877* (Saipan, 2006); María Dolores Elizalde Pérez-Grueso, *España en el Pacífico. La colonia de las Islas Carolinas, 1885–1899* (Madrid, 1992). On the disciplinary battalions in the Carolinas, see AHN, Ultramar, 5365, exp. 1, and 5867.

35. Mariano L. de Castro and María Luisa de la Calle, *Origen de la colonización española de Guinea Ecuatorial (1777–1860)* (Valladolid, 1992); Ibrahim K. Sundiata, *From Slaving to Neoslavery: The Bight of Biafra and Fernando Po in the Era of Abolition, 1827–1930* (Madison, WI, 1996); Dolores García Cantús, “Fernando Poo. Una aventura colonial española en el África Occidental (1778–1900)” (Ph.D, Universitat de Valencia, 2004).

deemed by the local Captain General to be “incompatible with public tranquillity”, due to their repeated crimes and acts of insubordination. Wherever the group arrived, local authorities complained. In Spain, the President of the Section of Ultramar argued that “if there are justified reasons to expel the above individuals from that Antilles, similar reasons exist not to tolerate their presence in the Metropole”.<sup>36</sup> The Governor General of the Philippines was predisposed to temporarily incarcerate them in the prison at Bilibid and unsuccessfully tried to hire them out to the Navy and the tobacco manufactures; these rejected his offer for security reasons. The high officer was especially worried that the presence of those black and mulatto Cubans would threaten the “good opinion that Europeans, and especially all Spaniards, enjoy among these simple peoples, whose limited intelligence generally doesn’t reach beyond defining the deportees as *Peninsulares negros*”. Finally, he decided to re-deport each of them to a separate province of the archipelago.<sup>37</sup>

The Governor of Fernando Poo initially sought a similar solution for the dozens of deportees he received from Cuba, but relocation to the nearby Spanish islands of Annobón and Corisco was made impossible by the lack of effective colonization there.<sup>38</sup> During their two years of permanence on the island, the deportees were physically isolated from the rest of the population and detained as a single group in a prison hulk. When they left Fernando Poo in 1869, the problems they took with them transcended the boundaries of the empire. Re-labelled as voluntary exiles, most were able to reach the destinations they had selected, including Monrovia, Madera and Principe, Mexico City, and Montevideo. Their fluid legal status, however, caused a diplomatic clash with the British authorities, who refused to admit them in Sierra Leone and Nigeria: the governors general of the West African colonies and the British diplomatic officers assumed that those individuals must have been “great criminals” to deserve such a serious punishment. They consequently argued that, “since England has decided not to receive her own convicts and political prisoners in the Colonies, it would be inconsistent to accept or host those from other Nations”. For their part, the Spanish authorities first tried to highlight the legal difference between administrative deportation and penal transportation; then they opted for the easier solution of redirecting those *incoregibles* to new destinations of their own choice.<sup>39</sup>

36. AHN, Ultramar, 4718, exp. 5, Presidente Sección de Ultramar to Ultramar, Madrid, 26 June 1866.

37. AHN, Ultramar, 4718, exp. 5, Gobernador Superior Civil de Filipinas to Ultramar, n. 325, Manila, 16 September 1867.

38. AHN, Ultramar, 4718, exp. 5.

39. AHN, Ultramar, 4718, exp. 5, Fernando Poo to Ultramar, 26 October 1868; AHN, Ultramar, 4718, exp. 5, Ministro de Estado, 19 December 1868.



The convergence of penal, military, and administrative flows frequently transformed each destination into a contact zone, where individuals from various colonies and the metropole forcibly met. We know very little about the interactions among those groups. The memoirs of contemporaries tend to foreground distance and mistrust, if not open conflict. Juan José Relosillas, who served as inspector of works in Ceuta between April 1873 and August 1874, for instance, described four separate groups of prisoners. Two main factions (*bandos*) were represented by the dominant group of the *andaluces*, which included convicts from Andalusia and some of the Cubans, and the *aragoneses*, comprising prisoners from Aragon, Castile, Catalonia, Valencia, and the Basque countries. The black Cubans formed a third group, and the Chinese Cubans another. Relosillas wrote of the latter: “the rest of the confined look down on these poor people, but exploit their clear passion for gambling”.<sup>40</sup> In a similar fashion, Manuel María Miranda expressed admiration for the Filipino anti-colonial leader Rizal, but decided to search for work on the farms of Fernando Poo because of his “disgust” at having to share barracks with “such rude and uneducated people”.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, the anarchist activist described the *ñañigo* deportees as “odd” and their ritual singing as a “savage noise”, echoing the arguments concerning their supposed “barbarism” that were used by the Cuban authorities to legitimize their repression. Paradoxically, his exclusion from the amnesty of 17 May 1897, which incorporated many Cubans and Filipinos, was motivated by the belief that his presence in Cuba was “at least as harmful as that of the *ñañigos* and cattle rustlers, excluded from the amnesty”.<sup>42</sup>

While long-standing racial and class stereotypes proved difficult to break, punitive relocations strengthened the identity of each group and triggered processes that reached beyond the repressive settings. A fascinating example of this is their impact on members of the Abakuá societies. The Cuban *ñañigos* kept their rituals alive during their captivity, for example in Ceuta.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, their deportation to Fernando Poo brought them in close proximity to their homelands in Old Calabar. Their interactions with the local population produced an unexpected “return to Africa” of their rituals. Indeed, the deportees passed on to the local Creoles the use of the sacred drum named *Ékwe*, which reproduced the voice of the leopard and was central to their faith.<sup>44</sup>

40. Juan José Relosillas, *Catorce meses en Ceuta* (Ceuta, 1985), p. 40.

41. Miranda, *Memorias de un deportado*, quotes on pp. 15 and 29.

42. AHN, Ultramar, 5007, exp. 25.

43. Rafael Salillas, “Los *ñañigos* en Ceuta”, *Revista General de Legislación y Jurisprudencia*, 49:98 (1901), pp. 337–360.

44. Isabela de Aranzadi, “El viaje de un tambor. África de ida y vuelta en Annoboneses y Fernandinos. Instrumentos musicales de Guinea Ecuatorial”, *Revista valenciana d’etnologia*, 5 (2010), pp. 201–215.

Meanwhile, nineteenth-century penal and military transportations and administrative deportations introduced new forms of collective agency. This was the consequence of the primarily political nature of the punitive relocations of those decades. Traditionally, convict transportation in the Spanish Empire had been operated through, and legitimized by, the apparently neutral functioning of the criminal justice system. The growing recourse to exceptional measures during this period made it clear that those relocations were directly aimed at political repression. To be sure, the colonial and metropolitan authorities frequently denied the status of political prisoner to deportees and convicts, especially if they came from non-elite groups. However, their political goal could hardly be missed – and surely not by those who were targeted.

Corresponding to this politicization of repression was a politicization of convicts. This can be observed in the insurrections that took place at various sites during the second half of the nineteenth century, including Zamboanga in 1872, Ceuta in 1878 and 1880, Peñon de Velez in 1887, and on the Isle of Pines in July 1896. These were distinct from the joint revolts of convicts and (impressed) soldiers and sailors in the late eighteenth century, which had been primarily motivated by appalling living conditions. These new collectives of prisoners attempted coups to overthrow peninsular governments, launched insurrections shouting “Spain must die”, and wrote political manifestos with the slogans “God, Fatherland, People, and Freedom” and “Long Live the Spanish Brothers, Long Live the National Party”.<sup>45</sup>

Political networks within and beyond the punitive sites allowed deportees and convicts to escape, or at least to enhance their conditions. In January 1874, for example, Cuban military officers put the repeated escapes of *carlista* prisoners from the Castle of La Cabaña down to the existence in Havana “of a *junta* or Centre that facilitates [them], considering that these people are unfamiliar with the country, yet no deserter has ever been captured”.<sup>46</sup> In a similar fashion, the eleven *carlistas* who ended up in the Philippines in the late 1860s enjoyed the solidarity of the reactionary local clergy.<sup>47</sup> First housed in the local fort, they were soon moved to monasteries and allowed considerable freedom of movement within the city of Manila. Conversely, liberal activists built some support around the two Spanish republicans who were deported to the Philippines and then to the Mariana Islands in the same years.

The network of support around Cuban deportees was particularly extensive, for it included Cuban exiles in the US and in Europe. It was very significant within Spain, too, where the precise boundaries between

45. AGMM: 5321.6 and 5321.8 (Zamboanga); 5929.10, 5929.11, 5929.12, and 5931.5 (Ceuta); 5915.5 and 5914.1 (Peñon de Velez).

46. AHN, Ultramar, 4374, exp. 20, Estado Mayor, Havana, 15 January 1874.

47. Madrid, *Beyond Distances*, p. 37.

deportees and exiles were often blurred. Indeed, due to their higher social circumstances and their legal status as administrative deportees, elite *laborantes* were usually allowed to choose where they wanted to live and their occupations in the Peninsula; this gave them scope to establish contacts with other Cubans and even escape altogether. An intensification of surveillance, a prohibition on residence in coastal cities, and attempts to confine them in more isolated villages in the interior were as frequent as they were ineffective, given legal limitations and the lack of supervision.<sup>48</sup>

The networks established in support of anti-colonial prisoners and deportees sometimes overlapped with those of the freemasonry. Broad connections existed, for example, between the Gran Oriente Español (GOE) led by Miguel Morayta and the Filipino anti-colonial movement. In Madrid, the *La Solidaridad* lodge gathered the Filipino community of the Peninsula, including exiles and deportees, together with Spaniards, Cubans, and Puerto Ricans, with the specific goal of supporting the rights of the Filipinos. Starting in 1889, the influence of the GOE extended to the native population in the Philippines. Moreover, cultural and political organizations, such as the Asociación Hispano-Filipina and the Liga Filipina, provided platforms where Spanish freemasons and Filipino activists could meet, and actively promoted campaigns in favour of exiles and deportees.<sup>49</sup>

The anarchist movement was similarly involved in the support of Cuban and Filipino anti-colonial struggles, through the exchange of information and books, personal contacts, and shared political campaigns.<sup>50</sup> In addition, it mobilized transnationally to support its own activists in the frequent events of repression. In the aftermath of the bombing of the Corpus Christi procession in Barcelona on 7 June 1896, at least 300 anarchists, radical republicans, and progressive intellectuals were imprisoned in the local fortress of Montjuich. In the following months, a broad campaign was unleashed in Europe and across the Atlantic to secure their liberation. The Cuban Creole Fernando Tarrida del Mármol published several articles in Paris in which he compared the repression of Cánovas with that of the Inquisition.<sup>51</sup> In Britain, the “Spanish Atrocities Committee” organized a demonstration that attracted 10,000 people in Trafalgar Square, London, on 30 May 1897. The pressure exercised by the activists temporarily isolated

48. See especially AHN, Ultramar, 4777, exp. 1 and 2.

49. Maria Asunción Ortiz de Andrés, *Masonería y democracia en el siglo XIX. El Gran Oriente Español y su proyección político-social (1888–1896)* (Madrid, 1993), pp. 271–311.

50. Benedict Anderson, *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination* (London and New York, 2005), esp. pp. 169–233. See also Richard Bach Jensen, *The Battle against Anarchist Terrorism: An International History, 1878–1934* (Cambridge, 2014), pp. 111–113.

51. Fernando Tarrida del Mármol, *Les Inquisiteurs d'Espagne. Montjuich, Cuba, Philippines* (Paris, 1897).

the Spanish Prime Minister. However, it was unable to influence the military courts, which sentenced five individuals to death and nineteen to long periods of imprisonment. Although acquitted, sixty-three men were exiled or administratively deported to the Spanish possession of Western Sahara.

## CONCLUSION

Before the Napoleonic occupation of Spain and the independence of Latin America, penal transportation was the primary form of punitive relocation across the Spanish Empire.<sup>52</sup> In the context of a polycentric monarchy, regional systems of convict transportation emerged, consistently complemented by interregional flows of sentenced convicts that connected the empire at large. Penal transportation from the metropole played a fundamental role in those interregional relocations. The advent of liberalism in the Peninsula and the transition to the system of the three colonies changed the structure and nature of punitive relocations. Penal transportation took on an exclusively regional character. Convicts were still exchanged between the two Caribbean provinces, and transported separately within the Philippine archipelago (and to the dependent territories of the Marianas and Carolinas) and within the region including Peninsular Spain, the Balears (and, more rarely, the Canary Islands), and the North African *presidios*. Unlike the Portuguese and French empires, and as in the German Reich, in the case of the Spanish Empire penal transportation from the metropole no longer extended to the rest of the empire in the nineteenth century.<sup>53</sup> This was the consequence of the legal gap between the metropole, ruled according to liberal constitutions, and the overseas provinces, governed by “special laws”. Accordingly, plans to reintroduce penal transportation across the empire from the metropole were consistently rejected.

Military transportation and administrative deportation provided a solution where penal transportation was not permitted. These spanned the whole empire, with flows from the metropole and from Spain’s overseas provinces. They even prompted significant flows from the colonies to the metropole, albeit usually restricted to elite and explicitly “political” deportees: it was a feature seldom seen in the previous history of the Spanish Empire.

Military and administrative relocations stemmed from “states of exception”. These, in turn, reflected the limits of liberal citizenship in two

52. Christian G. De Vito, “The Spanish Empire, 1500 to 1898”, in Clare Anderson (ed.), *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies* (London [etc.], 2018), pp. 65–95.

53. For a comparative analysis, see the introduction to this special issue.

connected ways.<sup>54</sup> On the one hand, they excluded the slaves and natives of the colonies, by first denying and then limiting the representation of the provinces in the Cortes. The construction of the *mando supremo* and the related “all-compassing” punitive powers of the Captains General derived from that political choice made in the first few decades of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, in the metropole, members of the “dangerous” subaltern classes and advocates of “subversive” political alternatives were targeted through the repeated recourse to the states of siege, war, and alarm. Prime ministers and the Captains General of the peninsular provinces made extensive use of them to legitimize repression. That double exclusion produced the basis for broad networks of punitive relocations that spanned the whole empire. It also produced a significant shift in their nature: relocations based on states of exception explicitly politicized punishment and triggered (or perhaps responded to) the growing politicization of convicts’ collective agency.

Meanwhile, in the metropole, as in the overseas provinces, “exception” was never a synonym for illegality, or anti-legality. On the contrary, it was a way to govern political and social exclusion without breaching liberal legality. In fact, “exception” was embedded in the liberal constitutions and in specific laws. Military transportation and administrative relocation were therefore an integral part of the punitive system, not beyond it. For this reason, this article has argued for the need of an integrated study of all forms of punishment in the metropole and in Spain’s overseas provinces. In that connected perspective, I have also suggested that the history of the prison in Spain and its colonies should be rewritten in a way that questions the idea of the “birth of the prison” as a defining moment in the history of punishment, and of the nineteenth century as “the age of the triumphant prison”.<sup>55</sup> I have sought to show that, in the Peninsula, a strong continuity existed between military *presidios* and the prisons until at least the 1850s, and up to 1898 in the overseas provinces. In both cases, an increased discontinuity with the military took place, but the prison regime maintained a strikingly military character (and personnel) and a consistent connection with extramural work. For that reason, the penitentiary never became established in Spain’s overseas provinces. But even in the metropole, its emergence in the 1870s met with widespread criticism and its effective diffusion remained very limited by the

54. I follow here the general argument adduced by Josep M. Fradera, *La nación imperial (1750–1918)*, 2 vols (Barcelona, 2015), I (especially the introduction). See also *idem*, *Colonias para después de un imperio*. For a similar argument, see Stefan Berger and Alexei Miller, “Introduction: Building Nations In and With Empires: A Reassessment”, in *idem* (eds), *Nationalizing Empires* (Budapest and New York, 2015), pp. 12–13.

55. Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York, 1977); Michelle Perrot, “Délinquance et système pénitentiaire en France au 19<sup>e</sup> siècle”, *Annales ESC*, 30 (1975), pp. 67–91, 81; Rudolph Peters, “Egypt and the Age of the Triumphant Prison: Legal Punishment in Nineteenth Century Egypt”, *Annales Islamologiques*, 36 (2002), pp. 253–285.

end of the century. “Model” prisons also rapidly became unbearable and often deadly places for those who were incarcerated.

The relationship between penal transportation and the penitentiary model was ambivalent. Penal experts tended to view them as alternative institutions, both when they foregrounded the “modernity” of the penitentiary over the “backwardness” of convict transportation and when they praised the virtues of spatial relocation vis-à-vis overcrowding and the lack of work in the penitentiaries. Officials on the spot had more fluid perspectives, revealed by the fact, for example, that they used the term “penitentiary” (*penitenciaria*) to refer to institutions hosting transported convicts. That fluid interpretation reminds historians of the complex spatiality of imprisonment. Indeed, convicts were rarely immobilized in a single institution for the whole length of their sentence; more often, they were moved from one establishment to another across the prison system, often beyond their region of origin. Moreover, one could hardly define whether long prison sentences to the North African *presidios* were a form of imprisonment or penal transportation. Indeed, they were both, as were most punitive relocations in the colonies, where prisons were little more than deposits for the convicted workforce.

The legal status of one individual could also change across time. Prisoners of war could be imprisoned, then deported, and finally exchanged as captives. Convicts could be moved out of the penitentiaries and “voluntarily” impressed into the military in the event of colonial wars. And deportees could be detained in penal establishments, exiled, or relocated, and put under surveillance within a city or a province. From that perspective, too, penal transportation, military relocation, administrative deportation, and imprisonment in the Spanish Empire of the nineteenth century really do share a deeply connected history.