

CHILE



URUGUAY



ARGENTINA



REFLECTIONS ON A RECENT VISIT TO 3 SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES

## INTRODUCTION

**Blanquamento**, the whitening of the population was official policy in all 3 countries and 95% of the population identify themselves as white. Each country has good education systems, high literacy rates, good life expectancy, as well as wildly oscillating economies and unstable political history.

The economies are based on a small number of mainly unprocessed commodity exports, the resources in the hands of a few historical families or foreign owners, and the influence of the conservative church makes participatory democracy difficult to achieve. A result of foreign ownership especially Pax Americana, has resulted in interference in the democratically elected governments, that appear to threaten the status quo, such as Salvador Allende, former President of Chile from 1970 to 1973.

Aping of European culture, especially French art and architecture, resulted in a stilted out of date cultural landscape. Literature which usually strives in at periods of national awakening is an exception. Contemporary art is often politically motivated and culturally specific. Brazil, which has a much more diverse ethnic mix, has attempted to develop a strong visual and cultural identity of its own.

There is a theory resulted from deeply held religious conviction that a messianic personality, such as Evita Peron, will be able to improve society and resolve conflicts.





CHILE

VIEW OF SANTIAGO DE CHILE AND THE ANDES FROM LA STARRIA



The coastline of present day **Chile** was sighted by Magellan in 1520 when he circumnavigated South America, but **when settlement came it was from the east** over the Andes Mountains. Most of South America was settled from the sea and centered on safe harbours. Initial settlement in the valley, near present day Santiago de Chile, was made after prolonged wars with the indigenous Mapuche Tribes. Eventually the Mapuche were driven south and in 1541 the town was laid out on a rectangular grid on the west side of the Mapuche River. A small settlement considered lawless and bohemian developed on the eastern side, present day **Bella Vista**, at the foot of the Andes.

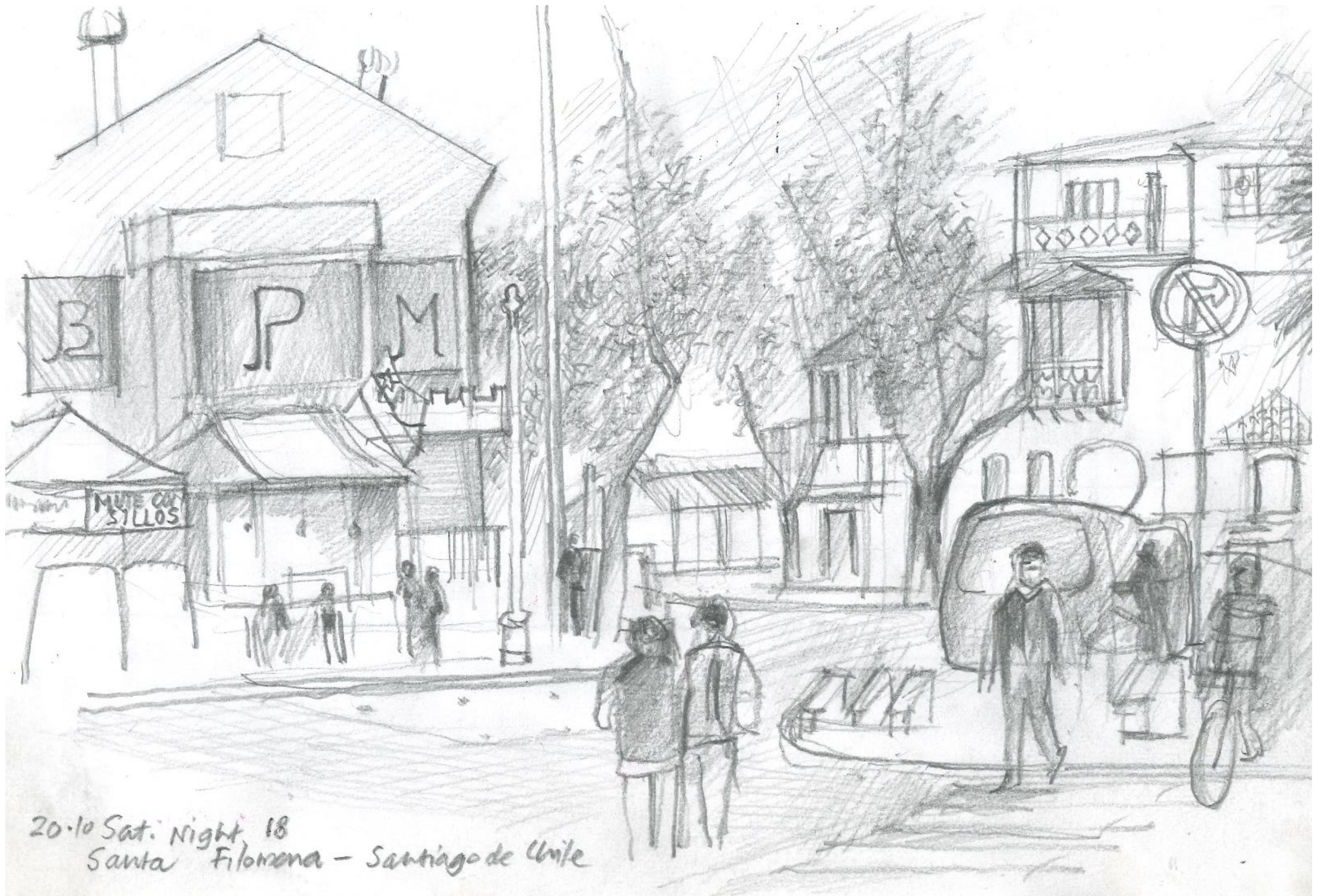


MODEL OF SANTIAGO DE CHILE



PORT OF VALPARAISO





NIGHTLIFE IN BELLAVISTA



The valley provided good prospects for agriculture, having reliable water supply and was initially the produce sent to the Vice Royalty of Peru. Although the land holdings were large and not prosperous until the 18<sup>th</sup> Century when demographic growth began. The indigenous population was not generally enslaved. Following the occupation of Spain by **Napoleon**, the Spanish Empire was in decline and independence movements throughout the Spanish Colonies saw the establishment of the independent republic of Chile. The royalist, including large landowners and the church were unsuccessful ousting the government. Following the discovery of Nitrates and Copper north of Chile, exports increased to supply raw materials in the industrial revolution and therefore a port was needed at the time, one being Valparaiso, which was a suitable port on the western coast of South America. The export of minerals provided a relatively stable base for the economy, however still subject to market price fluctuation.

Social problems remained unresolved in a stratified society of landowners, foreign owned mines, as well as the church. This was exacerbated by the restless native population to the south.



SALVADOR ALLENDE, 28<sup>TH</sup> PRESIDENT OF CHILE 1970 - 1973

The political system remained unstable, the distribution of income was uneven and it was difficult to find a centrist government. There was a growing middle class who were politically active, but were unable to lead the country.

Christian Democrats did little to solve the uneven income distribution. Groups of radicals, encouraged by Cuba's success, challenged the system and a Marxist Physician, **Salvador Allende**, after numerous attempts was narrowly elected President. He nationalised many institutions, as well as USA mining interests, resulting in a huge economic problems, such as high inflation, caused in part by the flight of foreign capital. The situation led to plots by the CIA amongst others to overturn the government, resulting in military intervention, the suicide of Allende, and 17 years of military dictatorship under **Auguste Pinochet**.





CULTURAL CENTRE BUILT BY ALLENDE BUILT IN 1972, REVIVED IN 2003.





AUBREY HOTEL BELLAVISTA OWNED BY AUSTRALIANS



Finally democratic elections were followed by National Commission of Truth, acknowledging the atrocities of the regime.

Monuments and museums were erected, and the cultural initiatives of Allende, including buildings were restored. The economy was the most stable in South America and the division of power between the President and the Executive helped avoid another dictatorship.

Investment and the prospect of economic stability encouraged the influx of foreign capital and tourist facilities, such as the Aubrey Hotel, developed by Australians. This hotel is a charming and sensitive adaptation of a merchants house from the 1920's and is very close to the Santiago house of the Noble Prize Laureate, poet **Pablo Neruda**, in the Bohemian area of BellaVista. The area outside of the grid was developed as a destination for the young, characterized by an abundance of bars and restaurants.



THE AUBREY HOTEL OWNED BY AUSTRALIANS.





LA CHASCONA, PABLO NERUDA SANTIAGO HOUSE, BELLAVISTA CHILE, 1953

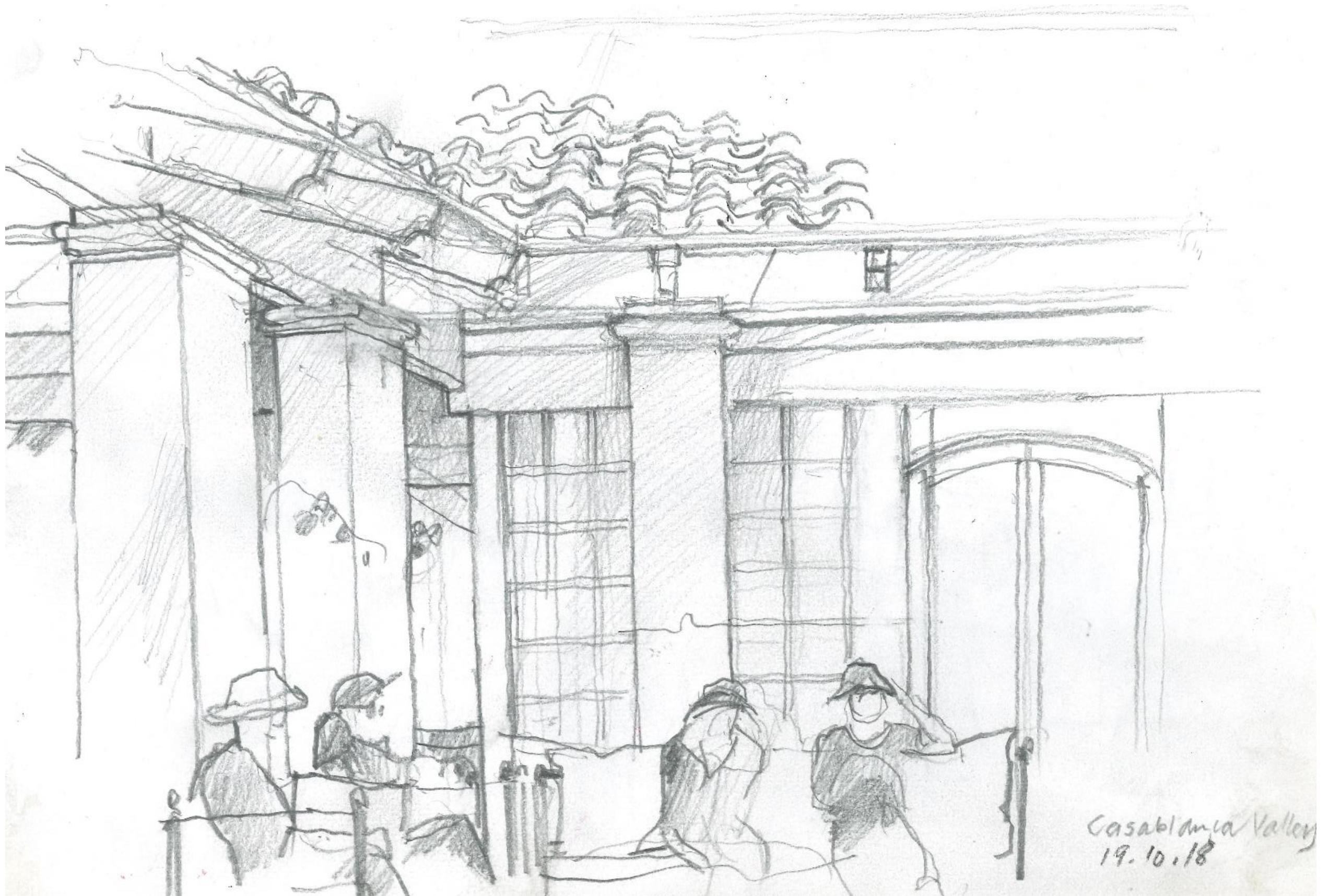




EXCLUSIVE SHOPPING CENTRE IN SANTIAGO DE CHILE WITH EXCEPTIONAL SECURITY.

The wine industry was developed to its dominant position by the mixture of foreign know how and investment. Some of the largest wineries in the world can be found in Chile, with an emphasis on its variety of native grapes, the unchanging climate allows uniform production without vintage variation. The sketch on the next page shows the winery Vina Casas del Bosque, in the Casablanca Valley.





Casablanca Valley  
19.10.18

CASABLANCA VALLEY





UNIVERSITY OF SANTIAGO UNFINISHED FACADE





URUGUAY

JULIUS BOKOR



Uruguay is an accidental buffer zone between Portuguese Brazil and Spanish Argentina, a result of the Treaty of Tordesillas. It changed ownership between the Portuguese, Spanish and British at various times. Captain Phillip was even involved as a mercenary. Called the Switzerland of South America, it has fertile agricultural land and a population of less than 4 million. Its capital Montevideo, along with Buenos Aires on the opposite side of the La Plata, was a major slave market, until the 1840's for the plantations of Brazil and central America. With a ranching economy, managed with a small labour force, slavery was never needed.

Once again the end of the Spanish Empire, which allowed for Uruguay, was able to become independent and a constitution separating the Presidency and the executive was adopted. The end of the Spanish domination of the oceans allowed the British to capitalise on trading opportunities and they established their presence in South America. Britain, as the largest Empire with superior naval capability until the 1930's, invested heavily in building railroads to open up the interior, while its aggressive trading policies allowed the produce to reach multiple markets.



MAP OF SOUTH AMERICA SHOWING URUGUAY.





BRITISH MERCHANTS HOUSE MONTEVIDEO, NOW "CASA ROBERTO" HOTEL.





CASA ROBERTO HOTEL

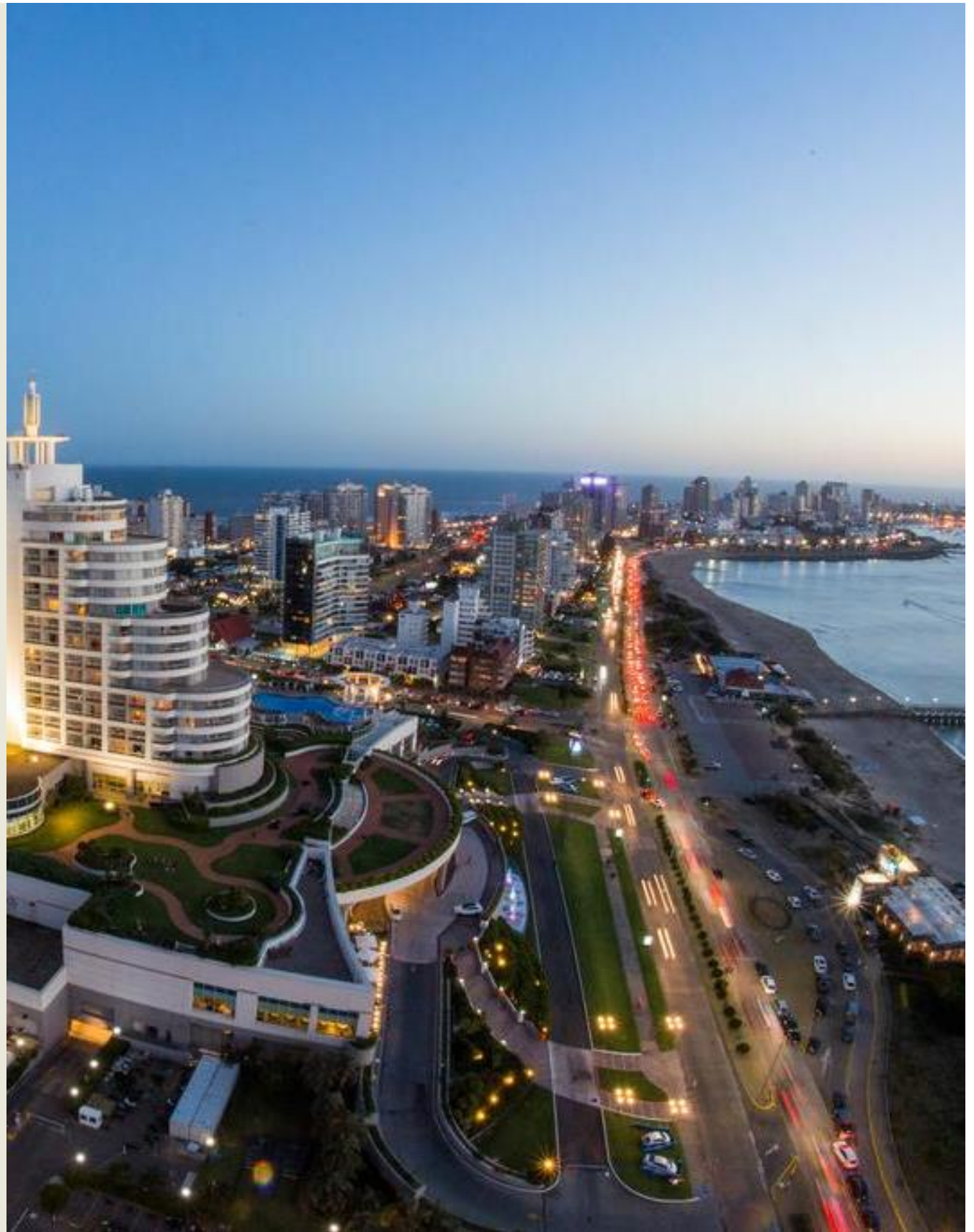
Casa Roberto Boutique Hotel is a faithfully converted British trader's house, almost completely intact, as are many buildings in Montevideo due to an oscillating economy based on demand for rural products.



Large scale immigration was encouraged in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, bringing white migrants who had high birth rates, but ideas of political change came at the same time. The trickle down economy and hereditary land ownership, resulted in a rich country with a great number of poor people. Attempts to promote industrialisation and import substitution did not succeed. The constant oscillation of the economy did not allow for a sustained well constructed social support system.

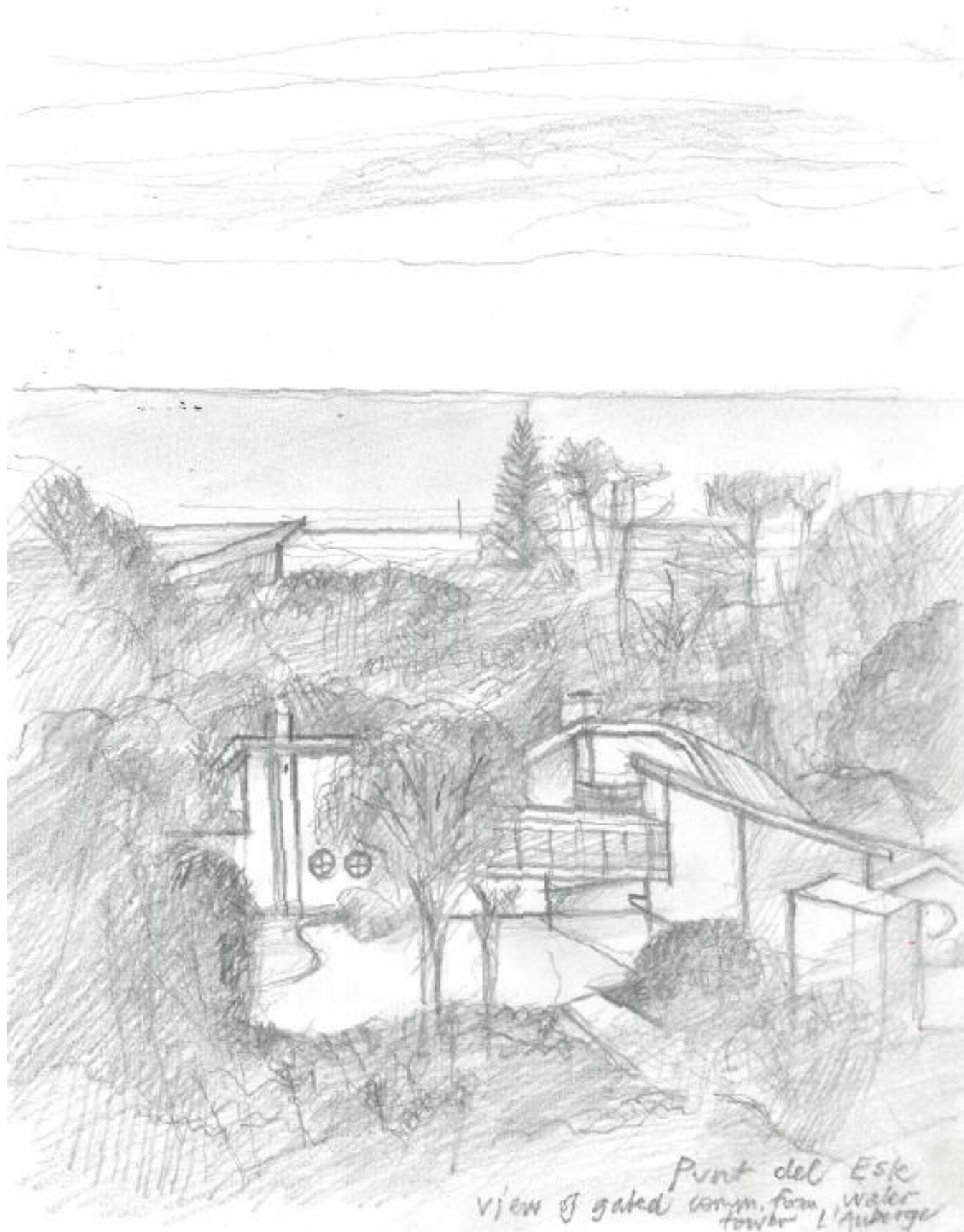
Urban guerillas, the Tupamaros, were a constant threat to security. The church always supported the status quo, as the left were seen as atheist, or at least godless.

The community of Punta del Este, a safe holiday playground of hotels and well defended private estates, is a sophisticated destination for the rich from Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina.



PUNTA DEL ESTE, URUGUAY





TYPICAL GATED COMMUNITY 'PUNT DEL ESLE'



SOPHISTICATED HOTEL. L'AUBERGE IN COVERED WA





ARGENTINA



Argentina is the largest of the 3 countries, and at one time the richest country in South America. It started in Buenos Aires, a small port that eventually became a megacity of 13 million. A natural outlet for the products of the ranchero economy of large estancias owned by the richest 200 families. The extinction of the original seminomadic inhabitants, and the subsequent large numbers of white immigrants from Italy and Spain, resulted in a country that was exclusively white and encompassed all aspects of European Culture, including British, through its buildings, including the Opera House and various other institutions. The port a major slave trading post had very little of this past evident, apart from the Tango and the romanticization of the gaucho. The large number of poor encouraged dictatorship of the left based on political personalities, personified in Peron and Evita, which was always followed by Military Dictatorship.

During economic prosperity, universal vote was given in 1912 to citizens over 18 years of age. Attempting to build a participatory democracy against a constantly changing economic conditions proved to be very difficult.



PHOTO OF PORT OF BUENOS AIRES



JOCKEY CLUB IN BUENOS AIRES







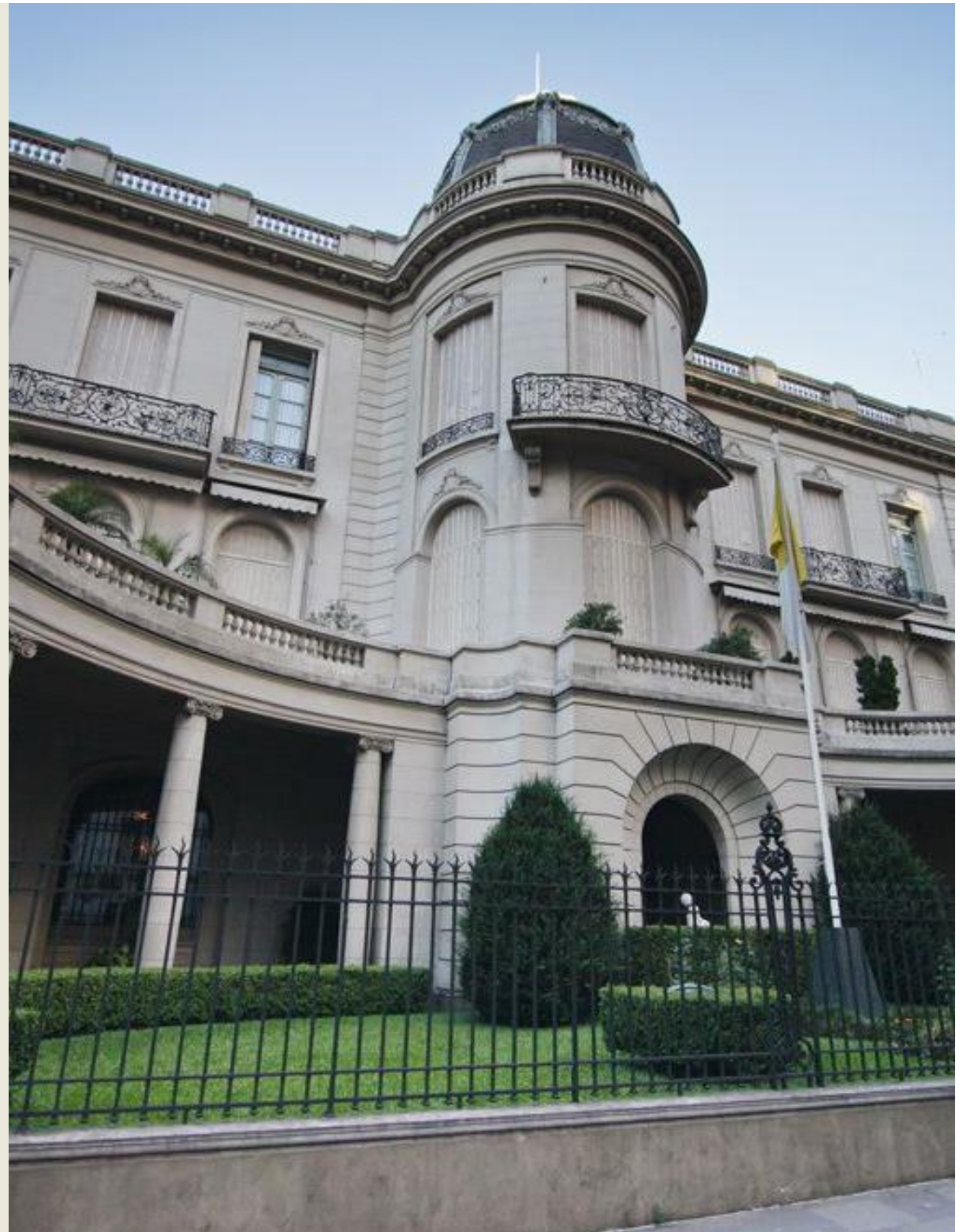


COLON THEATRE

It is common in these countries for the economic power to be held by a few hereditary families. Lack of industrialisation and trade stifled the rise of a politically active middle class. The immigrants, as well as bringing ideas of class warfare, in the end try to make a new life and tend to be conservative.

Any external threat such as the depression or the rise in the price of oil would trigger social upheaval.

Following the success of the Cuban revolution, the foreign owners of assets were worried by the potential for similar changes and the rise of communism. As Pax Americana settled on the region, political interference, overt and covert was commonplace to preserve the status quo.

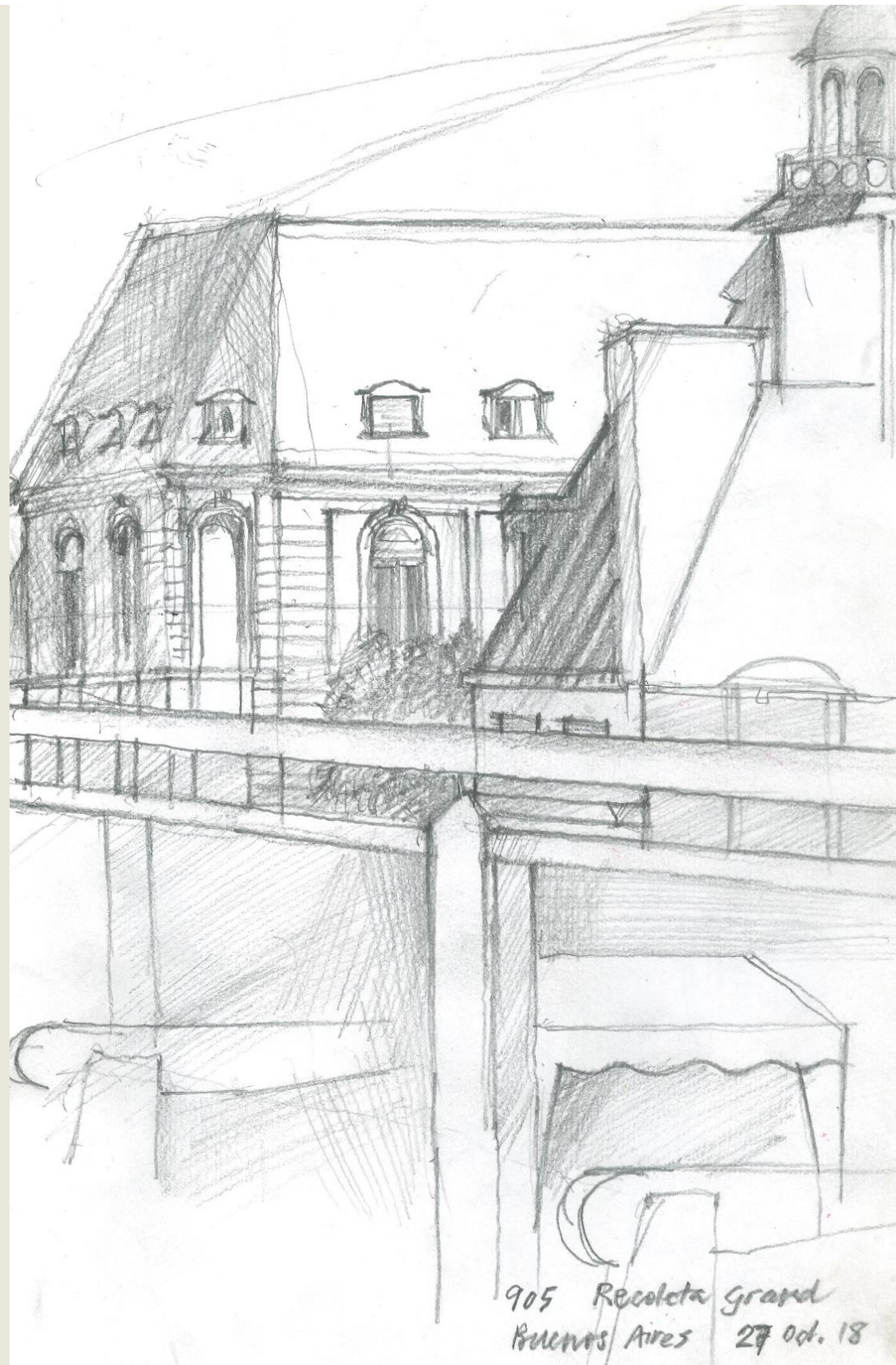


FERNÁNDEZ ANCHORENA PALACE





KAVANAGH BUILDING



THE QUASY EUROPEAN BUILDING IN BUENO AIRES