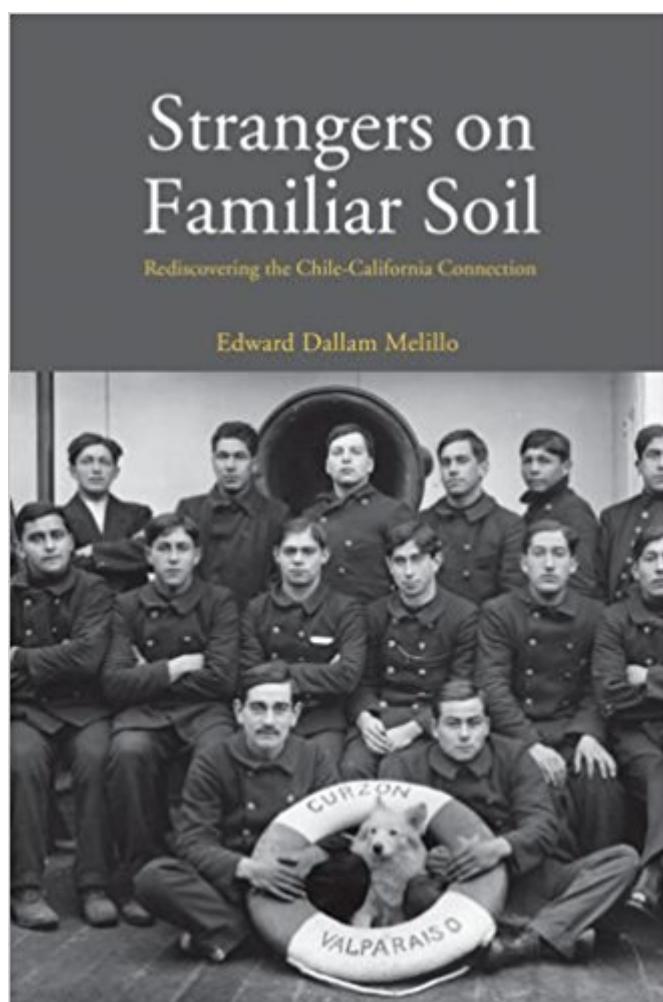


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# Strangers On Familiar Soil: Rediscovering The Chile-California Connection (Yale Agrarian Studies Series)



## Synopsis

A wide-ranging exploration of the diverse historical connections between Chile and California. This groundbreaking history explores the many unrecognized, enduring linkages between the state of California and the country of Chile. The book begins in 1786, when a French expedition brought the potato from Chile to California, and it concludes with Chilean president Michelle Bachelet's™ diplomatic visit to the Golden State in 2008. During the intervening centuries, new crops, foods, fertilizers, mining technologies, laborers, and ideas from Chile radically altered California's development. In turn, Californian systems of servitude, exotic species, educational programs, and capitalist development strategies dramatically shaped Chilean history. Edward Dallam Melillo develops a new set of historical perspectives—tracing eastward-moving trends in U.S. history, uncovering South American influences on North America's development, and reframing the Western Hemisphere from a Pacific vantage point. His innovative approach yields transnational insights and recovers long-forgotten connections between the peoples and ecosystems of Chile and California.

## Book Information

Series: Yale Agrarian Studies Series

Hardcover: 352 pages

Publisher: Yale University Press; 1 edition (October 20, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0300206623

ISBN-13: 978-0300206623

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 1.1 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #895,089 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #83 in Books > History > Americas > South America > Chile #2309 in Books > Business & Money > Biography & History > Economic History #7491 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Anthropology > Cultural

## Customer Reviews

“Melillo has written what could be called a double-helix history that reveals the environmental, social, and commercial bonds between Chile and California. It is a major contribution to the emerging field of Pacific World history.” Christopher Boyer, author of *Political Landscapes: Forests, Conservation, and Community in Mexico* (Christopher Boyer) “This is a gem of a book:

deeply researched, elegantly written, original in its conception, beautiful in its execution.â •â "Raymond Craib, Cornell University (Raymond Craib)â œAn empirically rich, well written, and wide-ranging history that provides a novel perspective on important transnational connections in the Americas.â •â "John Soluri, Carnegie Mellon University (John Soluri)â œMelillo's pithy book insightfully explores how California helped make Chile and how Chile helped make California over the past two centuries. Politically astute, ecologically attuned, and easy to read.â •â "J. R. McNeill, author of *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914* (J. R. McNeill)â œMelillo brilliantly centers this hemispheric history around Chile and Californiaâ "two places increasingly connected over the past 200 years by crops, technologies, people, and ideas. *Strangers on Familiar Soil* demonstrates the tremendous potential and necessity of transnational and comparative history. This is a stunning accomplishment.â •â "David Igler, author of *The Great Ocean: Pacific Worlds from Captain Cook to the Gold Rush* (David Igler)â œA fascinating story of how Chile and California, on separate continents, sharing comparable climates and geography, have had dramatic reciprocal social and environmental impacts, initially fueled by the California Gold Rush.â •â "Harold Mooney, Stanford University (Harold Mooney)â œBy paying attention to Chile and Californiaâ ™s mirror-image geographies as well as their long-term environmental and social connections, Melillo effectively recontextualizes the development patterns of the Americas.â •â "Publishers Weekly (Publishers Weekly)â œIn analyzing the spiritual parallels between Chile and California, Melillo excels. His writing is brisk and concise. . . . It is testament to Melilloâ ™s skill as a historian, and a service to Californians and Chileans alike, that he was able to uncoverâ "and preserveâ "this rich history.â •â "Benjamin Russell, *Americas Quarterly* (Benjamin Russell *Americas Quarterly*)â œThis wonderful book weaves together captivating anecdotes with analysis of environmental interactions and economic exchanges between California and Chile in order to reimagine the making of the Americas.â •â "Foreign Affairs (Foreign Affairs)â œStrangers on Familiar Soil, in its many excavations of the things that did and still connect Chile and California, will no doubt inspire future work in transnational history and the Pacific world.â •â "Lori A. Flores, *Agricultural History* (Lori A. Flores *Agricultural History*)Winner of the 2016 Caughey Western History Prize, given by the Western History Association. (Caughey Western History Prize Western History Association 2016-09-12)Named an Honor book by the Denver Public Library for the 2016 Caroline Bancroft History Prize. (Bancroft History Prize Denver Public Library 2016-11-04)"A pathbreaking environmental history of the long-standing connections between Chile and California."â "Thomas Klubock, *Journal of American History* (Thomas Klubock *Journal of American History*)

Edward Dallam Melillo is associate professor of history and environmental studies, Amherst College. He lives in Northampton, MA.

The book tells a story that deserves telling and hasn't been told before. Carefully researched and footnoted, the discussion builds speed as it moves along.

An extremely interesting historical association, written in a scholarly, yet entertainingly approachable, style. Melillo's enthusiasm for the subject makes the story come alive. It reads like an extended New Yorker article about a subject you would never think interesting (or even knew existed) but can't put down.

Melillo is a boss. Enough said.

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