

Banking, Immigration and Foreign Capital: the *Banco Frances del Rio de la Plata* 1886-1914

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The *Banco Frances del Rio de la Plata*, founded in 1886, was until 1914 one of the most important private banks in Argentina, in a period marked by a great expansion of the banking system and of the national economy in all. The *Banco Frances* was one of a group of establishments created in those years, based upon their close bonds with the main foreign communities in the country. In this paper, the participation of the members of the French mercantile colony in the setting up of the *Bank* and its management is studied, as well as its relationship with the metropolitan interests, both commercial and financial, through their presence in the Board of directors, in the capital stock and in the operations with Europe. It is the consolidation of a directive board of expatriates, based in the French colony but progressively differentiated from it, and the access to metropolitan financial market through the relations made there, the features that bring the context to the growth of the *Bank* in this period, and to the very special way to make banking that will be its distinctive brand.