

LAWYERS: FROM THE STATE TO THE MARKET

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ABSTRACT

Lawyers have played a paramount role in the history of Chile. Since the mid eighteenth century they cultivated a strong relationship with the state, filling the majority of the highest offices. This relationship lasted until the first decades of the twentieth century. Throughout the twentieth century this linkage between lawyers and the state has lost strength, becoming very nebulous in the second half of the century. While the linkage between lawyers and the state has lost its former importance, the relationship between lawyers and the market has turned into a paramount issue to understand the current features of the legal community. This thesis, therefore, suggests that lawyers have transited from the state to the market. The methodology I have employed to bolster this statement is, following some sociology of professions' trends, to examine the relationships between lawyers and the legal education, lawyers and other professions, lawyers and the legal profession, and lawyers and the state. The thesis is divided in three chapters. In Chapter One I review how the linkage between the legal community and the state was created and why were lawyers so important for the state. Chapter two examines the peak of this relationships and the causes of its falling. Finally, Chapter three deals with the new scenario for the legal community in the market. The main intellectual contribution of this thesis is to explore a field up to this point unexamined: the history of lawyers in Chile; to suggest a formula to embrace the changes experienced by the legal community in Chile: from the state to the market; and to provide an analytical framework to understand these changes.

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