Argentine National Identity and the War on Terror:

Civilization, Barbarism, and Rumors of Islamic Radicalism in the Tri-Border Area

by

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God is everywhere, but his office is in Buenos Aires.

– Argentine Proverb

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the nuanced relationship between Argentine national identity, or *argentinidad*, and the introduction of the War on Terror into the Tri-Border Area of South America. An isolated and ill-governed frontier zone shared by Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, the Tri-Border Area was commonly associated with various illegal economic activities for decades. However, following the September 11, 2001 attacks, the American government and media falsely vilified the region as a haven for terrorist groups. While Paraguay and Brazil were guarded in their responses to the negative discourse regarding the Tri-Border Area, Argentina readily accepted the possibility of terrorists on its northeastern frontier.

The project explains this behavior through examination of the influence of national identity on foreign policy. First utilizing the method of causal process tracing, the analysis demonstrates that Argentine national identity predominately accounts for Buenos Aires and the surrounding *pampas*. Consequently, this development created "negative spaces" within formal state boundaries. These areas are perceived as located outside of the sovereign and civilized state. Discourse analysis exhibits that the Tri-Border Area has traditionally been characterized as one such uncivilized space. Finally, reuse of discourse analysis reveals that American antiterrorism dialogue was particularly compatible with historical portrayal of the region. Therefore, Argentine political and media elites readily received and reproduced this negative narrative. This vague threat engendered a positive response from Buenos Aires to the global War on Terror.

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Introduction

Perceptions of the War on Terror commonly situate American-led military operations within the Middle East and South Asia. Coloring this popular account are conspicuous drone strikes in Yemen and Pakistan, elite counterterrorism raids, and the large-scale wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. But the international campaign is truly global in scope; formation of American counterterrorism in the early twenty-first century set no conceptual or territorial limits to defense.[1] Accordingly, potential threats have proliferated internationally and few stones are left unturned – especially in the Western Hemisphere.

Only weeks after the September 11, 2001 attacks, U.S. federal agents were probing an isolated area of South America due to its potential connections to Islamic terrorism.[2] Commonly known as the Triple Frontier or the Tri-Border Area (TBA), this interior region is positioned around the confluence of the Iguazú and Paraná rivers. Across these muddy waters stand the interconnected cities of Puerto Iguazú (Argentina), Ciudad del Este (Paraguay), and Foz do Iguaçu (Brazil). Notably, "with a population of approximately 700,000, representing 62 different countries and 22 religions, the 'triple frontier' defines a complex and strangely cosmopolitan border on the South American inland."[3]

Under the Stroessner dictatorship, Ciudad del Este was rapidly transformed into a significant center of global commerce.[4] Over time, the city, as well as the Tri-Border Area, have become notorious for international smuggling, drug trafficking, money laundering, bribery,

[1] Joseph Masco, *Theater of Operations: National Security Affect from the Cold War to the War on Terror* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 19.
[2] Larry Rohter, "Terrorists Are Sought in Latin Smugglers' Haven," *The New York Times*, September 27, 2001, accessed January 31, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/27/world/terrorists-are-sought-in-latin-smugglers-haven.html.
[3] Guillermina S. Seri, "On Borders and Zoning: The Vilification of the 'Triple Frontier'" (paper presented at the 2003 meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Dallas, Texas, March 27-29, 2003), 2.
[4] Daniel K. Lewis, *A South American Frontier: The Tri-Border Region* (New York: Chelsea House, 2006), 5.

forgery, and the counterfeit trade.[5] More recently, regional immigrants were feebly implicated in two bombings directed against Jewish targets in Buenos Aires.[6]

Largely ignored by state officials and security experts for decades, the area garnered limited Argentine attention during the 1990s.[7] Prior to 2001, the frontier zone also received minor attention from U.S. officials – mostly due to the prevalence of organized crime.[8] However, the Tri-Border Area has come under the extreme scrutiny of international security analysts and intelligence agencies only after the September 11 attacks.[9] Denunciations have since abounded; the Bush administration accused the large Muslim populations of Ciudad del Este and Foz do Iguaçu of harboring and supporting Hezbollah, Hamas, and even al Qaeda operatives.[10] Additionally, various American and European media outlets helped to produce a potent image of the area as a "terrorist hotspot."[11] Most drastically, in 2006 scholar Daniel K. Lewis observed that, "for many, the tri-border region now represents the gravest threat in the Western Hemisphere."[12]

Despite local inhabitants' persistent and vocal claims to the contrary, the Tri-Border Area was internationally vilified during the early twenty-first century; it was repeatedly portrayed as an unsafe, crime-ridden, and backwards region.[13] Of paramount importance, "the Argentine government [did] not challenge the hegemonic narrative on the 'triple frontier.'"[14] Such willing

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[5] Ibid., 7.
[6]. See Nathaniel Greenberg, "War in Pieces: AMIA and the Triple Frontier in Argentine and American Discourse on Terrorism," *A Contra Corriente* 8, no. 1 (2010): 61-93.
[7] Rohter, "Terrorists Are Sough in Latin Smugglers' Haven."
[8] Sebastian Rotella, "Jungle Hub for World's Outlaws," *The Los Angeles Times*, August 24, 1998, accessed January 31, 2017, http://articles.latimes.com/1998/aug/24/news/mn-16046.
[9] Louise Shelley and John Picarelli, "Methods and Motives: Exploring Links Between Transnational Organized Crime and International Terrorism," *Trends in Organized Crime* 9, no. 2 (2005): 60.
[10] Christine Folch, "Trouble on the Triple Frontier: The Lawless Border Where Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay Meet," *Foreign Affairs*, September 6, 2012, accessed January 31, 2017, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/argentina/2012-09-06/trouble-triple-frontier.
[11] John Tofik Karam, "Crossing the Americas: The U.S. War on Terror and Arab Cross-Border Mobilizations in a South American Frontier Region," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 31, no. 2 (2011): 252.
[12] Lewis, *A South American Frontier*, 6.
[13] Ieva Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier: Making News and Security on the Argentine Border* (Oakland, CA: University of California, 2015), 101-103.
[14] Seri, "On Borders and Zoning," 16.

acceptance of American discourse stands in sharp contrast to both the opportunistic response of Paraguay and the divergent view of Brazil.[15] In fact, despite the "widening gulf" between Washington and Buenos Aires following the 2001-2002 Argentine financial crisis, as well as persistent domestic concerns regarding sovereignty and autonomy, the Southern Cone state actively cooperated with the U.S. in the border region.[16] This coordination is best exemplified in the 2002 formation of the "3+1 Group on Tri-Border Area Security," consisting of the United States, Argentina, Paraguay, and a reluctant Brazil.[17]

Besides a few weak connections between Muslim-owned businesses in Ciudad del Este and the financing of Islamic terrorism, the threat was overwhelmingly unsubstantiated.[18] In fact, "after multiple meetings of the 3+1 Group and years of training and investigation, in 2005, the group announced that 'no operational activities of terrorism have been detected at the tri-border area.'"[19] Additionally, in July 2012 the U.S. State Department acknowledged a complete lack of credible evidence regarding training and operational activities by Islamic terrorists in the area.[20]

The Tri-Border Area was partially vindicated as a result. Yet an explanatory problem persists regarding official Argentine behavior in the region. Surely, Buenos Aires cooperated in counterterrorism efforts due to some plausible rationale. Local journalists and residents have presented unconvincing conspiracy theories; various scholars have argued that ulterior motives were concerned with the expansion of political, economic, and social control. Admittedly, the

[15] Ibid., 19. Also, in "Trouble on the Triple Frontier," Folch writes, "Asunción, interested in what it might gain (in prestige, skill, and resources), cooperated with Washington. Meanwhile, Buenos Aires accepted and reiterated the United States' claim. Brasilia, however, took the opposite view, denying that the region was a hotbed of Islamic terrorism and instead blaming the problem on the massive informal trade coming in from Paraguay."
[16] Jennifer Hoyt, "U.S.-Argentine Relations," *Oxford Research Encyclopedias*, August 2016, accessed February 14, 2017, http://americanhistory.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-357; Folch, "Trouble on the Triple Frontier."
[17] Folch, "Trouble on the Triple Frontier."
[18] Matthew Levitt, *Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2013), 101-103.
[19] Folch, "Trouble on the Triple Frontier."
[20] Levitt, *Hezbollah*, 107.

War on Terror has been utilized "by various state powers across the world to justify and strengthen their hold over respective territories and populations."[21]

However, the central government in Buenos Aires has conspicuously attempted to settle and develop Misiones Province – which contains the Argentine segment of the frontier – since termination of the War of the Triple Alliance in 1870.[22] More broadly, expansion of the Argentine state has been considerably influenced by ideas succinctly expressed in Juan Bautista Alberdi's famous nineteenth century dictum: to govern is to populate.[23] It does not appear reasonable to co-opt a controversial, ill-defined, and foreign counterterrorism campaign in order to actually pursue an accepted and well-established policy. Therefore, an account of Argentine participation in the early War on Terror based on considerations of raw power and territorial control is too crude and potentially ignores several important factors.

Given the apparent geopolitical importance of the Tri-Border Area within the Americas, and globally, it is especially disconcerting that the region is significantly misunderstood and oversimplified by Western journalists, scholars, security specialists, and intelligence analysts.[24] A continued lack of sufficient comprehension may lead to the implementation of myopic, unimaginative, and counter-productive policies by individual governments and intergovernmental organizations. Hopefully, this study contributes to a more realistic and impartial academic portrayal of the Tri-Border Area, and, subsequently, improved policy recommendations.

[21] Karam, "Crossing the Americas," 252.
[22] Robert C. Eidt, *Pioneer Settlement in Northeast Argentina* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1971), 8.
[23] Nicolas Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991), 147.
[24] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 104, 106; and Karam, "Crossing the Americas," 252.

This project also believes that it is necessary to account for the manner in which political, social, and economic idiosyncrasies contribute to state behavior internationally.[25] It is clear that the various state actors involved in the Tri-Border Area do not perceive the region uniformly. For example, the porous borders and abundant illicit trade in the area have long served the interests of a weak Paraguayan economy.[26] Conversely, the United States has viewed the frontier as a threat to its security and to the international economic order.[27]

Consequently, this thesis adopts an academic approach that recognizes the peculiar attributes and interests of a state – in this specific case, Argentina. Not only can this framework contribute to studies of Latin America and of the Southern Cone through increased comprehension of both national and regional dynamics. But also, it will build upon and help to expand liberal international relations theory concerning state preferences, as well as constructivist theory emphasizing identity formation and its influence on foreign policy.

Overall, then, the project explores the possibility of a tangible, nuanced, and historically rooted relationship between Argentine national identity, or *argentinidad*, and the quick decision by Argentine officials to engage in the worldwide antiterrorism campaign. Put differently, the research question for this study is the following: to what extent did internal notions of Argentine national identity contribute to the participation of Buenos Aires in the early War on Terror?

Ultimately, it is argued that domestic perceptions of argentinidad indirectly contributed to Argentine cooperation in the American-led global fight against terrorism. Briefly, the formation of national identity in Argentina allowed for "negative spaces" within formal state borders. These areas, including, most importantly, Misiones Province, are perceived as outside of the

[25] Kornely Kakachia and Salome Minesashvili, "Identity Politics: Exploring Georgian Foreign Policy Behavior," *Journal of Eurasian Studies* 6 (2015): 172.
[26] Lewis, *A South American Frontier*, 82.
[27] Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2006* (Washington, D.C.: United States State Department, 2007).

sovereign and civilized state. Therefore, international discourse characterizing the Tri-Border Area as exotic, dangerous, and terrorist-ridden was easily received and reproduced by political and media elites within Argentina.[28] Consequently, this vague threat contributed to an eager, genuine, and positive Argentine response to the global War on Terror.

Perhaps obviously, this argument is developed later in the thesis. First, however, it is necessary to examine the various explanations concerning the introduction of the international War on Terror into the Tri-Border Area. The literature review precisely accounts for the hegemonic global discourse, local counter-narratives, and more rigorous scholarly debate. Due to the inadequacy of these various explanations, an alternative approach to better understand the policies of Buenos Aires along its northeastern border is introduced. A brief explanation of methodology is followed by four chapters of empirical analysis.

[28] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 101-102.

Literature Review

The aforementioned research question is ultimately concerned with Argentine cooperation in the nascent War on Terror. Consequently, in order to present an adequate and coherent literature review, the following question is asked: how do various subsets within the relevant literature explain the introduction of the global antiterrorism campaign into the Tri-Border Area? Overall, the region occupies a considerably controversial position within journalism, academics, and government. Nevertheless, research indicates that the various explanations can be organized into three distinct typologies.

First, there is the dominant international discourse that innately justifies counterterrorism operations during the early 2000s. Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, this hegemonic dialogue increasingly characterized the region "as a peripheral, dangerous place, and, hence, a threat to security."[29] If supported by sufficient empirical evidence, this American-driven account would render the extension of the War on Terror into the Tri-Border Area as understandable, if not wholly logical, based on fundamental notions of domestic and international security. But despite the very real consequences of this narrative, it is not sufficiently supported by facts, and fails to realistically explain the contrasting reactions of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay to the apparent menace of Islamic terrorism.

Various local journalists, scholars, and officials in the Tri-Border Area eventually developed a counter-narrative to this negative global image. The second subset of relevant literature generally focuses on a lack of evidence concerning terrorism in the region, and attempts to present a more positive image of the frontier. Besides a far-fetched conspiracy theory

[29] Ibid., 96.

concerning the United States government and the massive Guaraní Aquifer, these sources do not present an actual rationalization for the War on Terror in the area.

The final sub-set of literature also disputes the presence of Middle Eastern terrorists in the Tri-Border Area. Differently, these academically rigorous sources provide more plausible explanations, arguing that the three relevant South American states have appropriated the prevailing discourse in pursuit of other interests. While this third category of literature contains high-level empirical analysis, it also neglects the particularities of the individual states. Put differently, it passively argues that Buenos Aires views the Tri-Border Area in a similar manner to Brazil, Paraguay, and even the United States. As a result, these sources present the *a priori* assumption that all the governments involved have analogous objectives in the region.

The following segments will present, analyze, and critique the different typologies in greater detail. This literature review then concludes with a brief discussion regarding the decision to adopt a "new" approach for analysis concerning the War on Terror in the Tri-Border Area.

The Dominant International Discourse

Indisputable evidence of terrorist activity in the Tri-Border Area would certainly serve as justification for the extension of the War on Terror into the region. The validity of this ominous narrative would also provide an explanation for Argentine cooperation in American counterterrorism efforts. A tangible threat to national security warrants a vigorous response.

The current section examines the emergence of this particular subset of literature on the Tri-Border Area. Eventually, the image created by these sources dominated global perceptions of the region in the twenty-first century.[30] American officials, along with various international

[30] Seri, "On Borders and Zoning,"16.

media outlets, were the primary architects of this discourse. But also, it is crucial to recognize that Buenos Aires did not object to the narrative.

Chronologically, the *porteña* scholar Carmen A. Ferradás observes that Argentine national security doctrine during the Cold War legally defined border areas as buffer zones; frontiers were consequently subjected to special surveillance measures.[31] In relation, John Tofik Karam notes that, "suspicions of 'terrorist connections' were first directed at Arabs in Foz do Iguaçu and Ciudad del Este in the early 1970s, when this trinational frontier zone itself gained a novel geopolitical importance (with the construction of the Itaipu Dam)."[32]

These two observations markedly overemphasize the past importance of the Tri-Border Area. Ieva Jusionyte remarks that Misiones Province is considerably isolated and has experienced state building as a long and tedious process.[33] Similarly, Ferradás concedes that most Argentines visualize the province as suffocating and impenetrable jungle.[34] From a slightly alternative perspective, Lewis writes of the "empty corner of Paraguay" prior to the development of Ciudad del Este.[35]

Realistically, the Tri-Border Area was a neglected backwater for the majority of the twentieth century. *New York Times* correspondent Larry Rohter noted in 2001 that state officials and security experts had ignored the porous and ill-governed border region for decades.[36] Importantly, the frontier region largely escaped official attention even after the increase of both

[31] Carmen A. Ferradás, "Environment, Security, and Terrorism in the Trinational Frontier of the Southern Cone," *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 11, no. 3 (2004): 421.
[32] Karam, "Crossing the Americas," 254.
[33] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 66.
[34] Carmen A. Ferradás, *Power in the Southern Cone Borderlands: An Anthropology of Developmental Practice* (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1998), 36.
[35] Lewis, *A South American Frontier*, 97.
[36] Rohter, "Terrorists Are Sought in Latin Smugglers' Haven."

legal and illegal transnational trade due to the impressive growth of Ciudad del Este and Foz do Iguaçu.[37]

In general, the early 1990s represents the nascent period of genuine governmental interest in the Tri-Border Area. This was due to the assumed involvement of regional residents in two bombings directed against Jewish targets in Buenos Aires.[38] The first attack targeted the Israeli Embassy on March 17, 1992; the second explosion struck the *Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina* (AMIA) building on July 18, 1994.[39] Despite widespread controversy and conspiracy surrounding ultimate culpability, the sizeable Arab community of the border region was accused of harboring and abetting the guilty Hezbollah operatives. Nathaniel Greenberg observes that this doubtful "theory was initially put forth by US and Israeli sources," only to be quickly seized by the Argentine government as *la historia oficial*.[40]

Attention slightly increased after the discovery in 1996 of a vague plot to bomb the American embassy in Asunción; the plotters were reported to be using the Tri-Border Area as a center for operations. Guillermina S. Seri reports that the FBI and the CIA both began to pay "special attention" to the area after this revelation.[41] Moreover, it is shortly after this period that the first major international newspaper published an exposé on the Tri-Border Area.

On August 24, 1998, *The Los Angeles Times* published an article by Sebastian Rotella entitled "Jungle Hub for World's Outlaws." Providing an overwhelmingly negative and anarchic image of the region, the reporter insisted that Lebanese terrorists, Colombian drug smugglers, yakuza hoodlums, and Nigerian con artists populated the area.[42] An anonymous U.S. diplomat is

[37] Lewis, *A South American Frontier*, 4-5, 82-83.
[38] Greenberg, "War in Pieces," 63.
[39] Folch, "Trouble on the Triple Frontier."
[40] Greenberg, "War in Pieces," 63.
[41] Seri, "On Borders and Zoning," 9.
[42] Rotella, "Jungle Hub for World's Outlaws."

quoted describing Ciudad del Este as, "a prototypical laboratory for developing a base for bad guys."[43] Most striking, Rotella writes that Louis Freeh, then Director of the FBI, labeled the region as, "a free zone for significant criminal activity, including people who are organized to commit acts of terrorism."[44]

Still, several scholars assert that the Tri-Border Area gained significant international notoriety only after September 11, 2001.[45] Josefina Lynn provides a succinct explanation of this nuanced shift in attention when she writes, "since the 2001 attacks, perceptions of security have changed, and from that date the Triple Frontier has been the object of the international press, who portray it as a haven for international terrorism."[46] Quite simply, the massive proliferation of speculative news articles and governmental reports following the attacks truly exacerbated any negative image of the Tri-Border Area, and led to vilification of the region.

Empirical evidence mainly supports this argument. For example, barely two weeks after September 11, Rohter portrayed the territory as "one of the world's greatest centers of lawlessness," and strongly suggested that Islamic terrorists were operating in Ciudad del Este and Foz do Iguaçu.[47] Later, on November 8, 2001, a CNN report insisted that, "[unidentified] sources told CNN that the tri-border region is being used as a refuge and supply base for terrorists."[48]

Such U.S.-based newspapers and television networks played an important role in the development and circulation of the global security discourse, and reports multiplied.[49] In Europe, the Spanish newspaper *El País* printed the headline "Terrorist 'commandos' take refuge in the

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[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.
[45] See Folch, "Trouble on the Triple Frontier;" Lewis, *A South American Frontier*, 6; and Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 102.
[46] Josefina Lynn, "La Triple Frontera y la amenaza terrorista ¿realidad o mito?" [The Triple Frontier and the terrorist threat: reality or myth?] in *Multidimensional Security in Latin America*, ed. Fredy Rivera Vélez (Quito: FLASCO, 2008), 67.
[47] Rohter, "Terrorists Are Sought in Latin Smugglers' Haven."
[48] Karam, "Crossing the Americas," 259.
[49] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 109.

triple frontier.'[50] Even *Vanity Fair* published an article in December 2002 highlighting the apparent existence of terrorist training camps in the Tri-Border Area. The American author, Sebastian Junger, claimed that al-Qaeda had connections to the sites, and that a jumble of groups – such as Hamas, Hezbollah, the Irish Republican Army, Colombian rebels, Basque separatists, and Aryan Nations – operated within a "nightmare alliance of terror."[51] *The Washington Post* went so far as to dubiously suggest that Osama bin Laden and Khalid Sheik Mohammed visited the Tri-Border Area in 1995.[52]

More regionally, Jusionyte observes that the Paraguayan press contributed "to creating and perpetuating the image of the Triple Frontier as a dangerous area."[53] Several Argentine national newspapers also clearly adopted the dominant global discourse. An October 2, 2001 headline of the widely circulated *La Nación* pointedly read, "There are terrorist cells sleeping on the border."[54] Similarly, the nationally syndicated *Clarín* plainly asserted on September 16, 2001 that Argentine intelligence had established connections between Arab residents of the Tri-Border Area and Osama bin Laden.[55]

This hegemonic discourse did not arise solely from investigative journalism. Several scholars agree that U.S. government influence was paramount to the development of the negative perception of the region. A 2003 congressional report by Rex Hudson overwhelmingly argued that jihadist operatives were present in the Tri-Border Area.[56] More guarded in its accusations, a

[50] Francesc Relea, "'Comandos' terroristas se refugian en la triple frontera," [Terrorist 'commandos' take refuge in the triple frontier,] *El País*, November 9, 2001, accessed February 27, 2017, http://elpais.com/diario/2001/11/09/internacional/1005260421_850215.html.
[51] Sebastian Junger, "Terrorism's New Geography," *Vanity Fair*, no. 508 (2002): 194-206.
[52] "Bin Laden Reportedly Spent Time in Brazil in '95," *The Washington Post*, March 18, 2003, accessed February 28, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2003/03/18/bin-laden-reportedly-spent-time-in-brazil-in-95/a068e3b0-33ef-435b-b404-514572f11090/?utm_term=.e63eb3c0870e.
[53] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 118.
[54] "Hay células terroristas dormidas en la frontera," [There are terrorist cells sleeping on the border,] *La Nación*, October 3, 2001, accessed February 27, 2017, http://www.lanacion.com.ar/340112-hay-celulas-terroristas-dormidas-en-la-frontera.
[55] "Las huellas de Bin Laden que la SIDE encontró en la Triple Frontera," [Traces of Bin Laden found by SIDE in the Triple Frontier,] *Clarín*, September 16, 2001, accessed February 27, 2017, http://edant.clarin.com/diario/2001/09/16/i-00815.htm.
[56] Rex A. Hudson, *Terrorist and Organized Crime Groups in the Tri-Border Area (TBA) of South America: A Report* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 2003).

2004 report by U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Philip K. Abbott suggested that Islamic terrorists at least received funding from Muslim businesses and organizations in Ciudad del Este and Foz do Iguaçu.[57]

Publically, the Bush administration accused the regional Shia community of harboring and supporting Hezbollah, Hamas, and al Qaeda operatives.[58] Additionally, Washington pressured Paraguayan officials to publicly admit that their country had become a front line in the international War on Terror.[59] Finally, Karam writes that, "the U.S. State Department distributed reports to U.S. and European media that alleged that Arabs in the tri-border area were in cohorts with terrorist networks."[60]

Plainly put, American officials "took the existence of terrorism in the region as a given rather than a hypothesis that needed to be proven."[61] Inevitably, this predominant discourse produced tangible results. Changes in the region were easily visible to inhabitants. Antiterrorism raids were conducted in Ciudad del Este and Foz do Iguaçu, everyday security increased, and the tourists disappeared.[62]

In time, many local residents, journalists, and scholars began to compellingly question the international discourse that justified introduction of the War on Terror into the Tri-Border Area. These actors were actually assisted by reports from the U.S. government. Frustratingly, though, this counter-narrative does not provide a satisfactory explanation for Argentine cooperation in counterterrorism efforts, itself.

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[57] Philip K. Abbott, "Terrorist Threat in the Tri-Border Area: Myth or Reality?" *Military Review* (September/October 2004): 51-55.
[58] Folch, "Trouble on the Triple Frontier."
[59] Lewis, *A South American Frontier*, 9.
[60] Karam, "Crossing the Americas," 252.
[61] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 130.
[62] Ibid., 100-101.

A Local Counter-Narrative of the Tri-Border Area

As late as 2015, Jusionyte comments that, "the Triple Frontier continues to be portrayed – in Argentina as in Brazil and Paraguay – as a backward corner of the state where insecurity and violence triumph over law and order."[63] Nonetheless, many local inhabitants of the Tri-Border Area have increasingly opposed the prevailing discourse. These actors emphasize the lack of evidence concerning the presence of terrorist groups and many contend that the United States has vilified the region in order to gain control of the valuable Guaraní Aquifer. This section first examines a few of the protests and proclamations of innocence put forth by regional citizens. It then explores the conspiracy theory that has gained prominence in the area. Unsurprisingly, this explanation is not sufficient in actually comprehending Argentine cooperation in the early War on Terror in the frontier zone.

The relevant literature demonstrates that there have been several notable local responses to the international disparagement of the Tri-Border Area. During her ethnographic fieldwork, Jusionyte attended the November 2010 First International Journalists Meeting of the Triple Frontier in Ciudad del Este. There, the *misionero* journalist Ricardo Arrúa exclaimed that, "investigations have not confirmed that [Arab] remittances were used to finance terrorism, nor have alleged sleeper cells or training camps been located."[64]

At the same conference, a panel entitled "Myths and Truths About the Alleged Financing of Islamic Terrorism from the Triple Frontier" featured Brazilian political scientist Arthur Bernardes do Amaral. Author of *A Tríplice Fronteira e a Guerra do Terror (The Triple Frontier and the War on Terror)*, Amaral admittedly possessed an ambiguous attitude concerning the validity of the assertions of terrorism in the Tri-Border Area. Still, according to Jusionyte, the

[63] Ibid., 65.
[64] Ibid., 103.

scholar suggested that the hegemonic discourse created damaging consequences for the region. The political scientist also hinted that various states might possess ulterior motives behind recent interest in the area.[65]

Although previously mentioned, the ultimate purpose of the article "Crossing the Americas," by John Tofik Karam, is to "trace how Brazilians and Paraguayans of mostly Muslim Lebanese origins responded to U.S. counterterrorism accusations."[66] The scholar himself adopts an extremely critical view of the hegemonic discourse, observing that it is unproven, before providing three examples of counter-narrative mobilization.[67]

The first case was the November 2001 "Peace Without Frontiers" movement. Participants proclaimed an unequivocally anti-terrorist stance, and also sought to repudiate the American-led suspicions alleging that the Tri-Border Area was a base for Islamic radicalism.[68] Secondly, various local actors united in November 2002 to file a defamation lawsuit against CNN due to the aforementioned report and other, related coverage. Border residents decried the characterization of the Arab community as "terrorist suspects," instead of as friends and neighbors.[69] Last, Karam shares that inhabitants more or less ridiculed the reports of Osama bin Laden visiting the Tri-Border Area; regional business-people, advertisers, and journalists actually developed a satirical tourism campaign utilizing the al-Qaeda leader as a poster boy for Iguazú Falls and the *Selva Misionera*.[70]

In sum, myriad actors within the region dismissed recent intelligence inquiries and security measures as little more than a "witch hunt."[71] The counter-narrative was undoubtedly

[65] Ibid., 125-126.
[66] Karam, "Crossing the Americas," 251.
[67] Ibid., 252.
[68] Ibid., 256.
[69] Ibid., 259-260.
[70] Ibid., 263.
[71] Rohter, "Terrorists Are Sought in Latin Smugglers' Haven."

bolstered by the fact that U.S. officials were ultimately unsuccessful in identifying and capturing any Islamic terrorists.[72] Yet this does not negate the real increase in regional surveillance, intelligence sharing, investigation of transnational crime, and implementation of antiterrorism measures following September 11.[73] These patterns of Argentine behavior were surely enacted for a legitimate reason.

Unfortunately, this specific body of scholarship does not provide any sufficient rationalizations for Argentine cooperation in the early War on Terror. Interestingly, though, a select number of sources believe that the official operations in the Tri-Border Area actually concern international competition over the massive Guaraní Aquifer. Both the *Centro de Militares para la Democracia Argentina* and some members of the *Iguazúnese* media have claimed, "that the real reason behind the United States construction of the region as a site of dormant terrorist cells is based on the wealth of [the Guaraní Aquifer Complex.]"[74] Similar in essence to theories equating the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq with a pursuit for oil, this argument is widely cited online, but lacks meaningful empirical evidence.[75]

Numerous scholars reject the dominant narrative on the Tri-Border Area and instead propose more plausible reasons for the assorted state actions in the region. The various explanations emphasize calculations of political, economic, and social power and control. Usefully, this body of scholarship provides a better foundation for a more academically rigorous exploration of the War on Terror in the frontier region. These sources will be examined and critiqued in the following section.

[72] Folch, "Trouble on the Triple Frontier."
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ferradás, "Environment, Security, and Terrorism in the Trinational Frontier of the Southern Cone," 434.
[75] Ibid., 434-435.

Academic Explanations

In recent years, a number of academic sources have been published that also dispute the dominant characterization of the Tri-Border Area. Unlike the literature produced by local residents of the region, this particular subset of work adheres to rigorous academic standards and is better supported by empirical evidence. In general, the various writings assert that Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay introduced the War on Terror into the Tri-Border Area in order to actually pursue other, self-interested goals.

To start, within her book, *Savage Frontiers: Making News and Security on the Argentine Border*, Jusionyte visibly rejects the international vilification of the frontier region. She argues that, "nearly every article reporting on Islamic terrorism in the Tri-Border Area is honeycombed with qualifying language," and sympathizes with a local journalist lamenting that, "every year the [U.S.] State Department repeats a prearranged script that the Islamic community in the Triple Frontier finances terrorism in the Middle East."[76] The anthropologist then claims that this media-assisted discourse allowed for the expansion of state control on the border.[77] However, Jusionyte does not meaningfully move beyond this extremely brief analysis of official motivation; her work is more concerned with the juxtaposition between international media and the local production of journalism in Puerto Iguazú.

A few academics more explicitly connect the increased state presence in the Tri-Border Area with concerns regarding the expansion of sovereignty. For example, Ferradás suggests in a 2004 article that the increase in the visibility of the Argentine government in Misiones Province

[76] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 106, 122.
[77] Ibid., 96.

is influenced by past failures in infrastructural improvement and population growth.[78] Heavily borrowing the concept of securitization from the Copenhagen School of international relations, the scholar then asserts that Buenos Aires recently commandeered the topical issues of environmental conservation and terrorism to increase military presence, and, therefore, sovereignty in the region.[79] However, based on the broader body of relevant literature, Ferradás perhaps allots too much emphasis on the artificial environmental concerns of Buenos Aires.

To continue, Seri largely agrees that Argentine participation in the early War on Terror was determined by considerations of sovereignty and political power. However, she situates this state behavior within the context of the 2001-2002 Argentine economic disaster. Frustratingly, the scholar does not sufficiently examine the underlying political, economic, and social dynamics influencing this policy. Presenting her paper in 2003, the political scientist only concluded that, "the Argentine government does not challenge the hegemonic narrative on the 'triple frontier'…in its own attempt to regain normality, stability, and credibility for the country, which were dramatically lost with the country's political and economic collapse after December 2001."[80]

Alternatively, other scholars have suggested that material considerations influenced official action in the region. Alejandro Grimson theorizes that Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay increased security in the Tri-Border Area to consolidate regional markets in the Southern Cone.[81] Similarly, Christine Folch suggests that Asunción cooperated with Washington due to any potential gains Paraguay might have received in resources, prestige, and skill.[82] This scholar also

[78] Ferradás, "Environment, Security, and Terrorism in the Trinational Frontier of the Southern Cone," 423.
[79] Ibid., 418-419.
[80] Seri, "On Borders and Zoning," 16.
[81] Alejandro Grimson & Gabriel Kessler, *On Argentina and the Southern Cone: Neoliberalism and National Imaginations* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 55.
[82] Folch, "Trouble on the Triple Frontier."

proposes that Brazilian implementation of stricter border controls was only ostensibly related to the early War on Terror; Folch suggests that, in reality, this policy is a portion of the larger scheme to convert Foz do Iguaçu into a hub for biotech and information technology.[83]

Quite obviously, these arguments do not focus exclusively on Argentina; but they do suggest a broader pattern of opportunism and competition in the region. In relation, Laura Gómez-Mera remarks that Mercosur, a sub-regional economic bloc containing the full members of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay, has frequently suffered from economic rivalry and power asymmetries.[84]

At first glance, then, an explanation of Argentine behavior in the Tri-Border Area based on a variety of political, economic, and social factors appears relatively plausible. Upon closer scrutiny, however, it appears very unreasonable that popularly acknowledged policies concerning political and social expansion in the region need to be explained through the American-led War on Terror. Also, the numerous measures implemented by Buenos Aires in Misiones Province have been largely counter-productive for economic growth and efficiency. In particular, increased militarization has depressed the tourism industry and Puerto Iguazú remains relatively poor.[85]

In sum, the growing counter-narrative on the Tri-Border Area is correct to emphasize the lack of credible evidence regarding terrorist operations in the region. Furthermore, a number of sources do provide moderately plausible alternative explanations regarding Argentine participation in the early War on Terror along its northeastern frontier. Nevertheless, the academic opposition to the hegemonic image of the Tri-Border Area fails to account for the

[83] Ibid.
[84] Laura Gómez-Mera, *Power and Regionalism in Latin America: The Politics of MERCOSUR* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), 2.
[85] Lewis, *A South American Frontier*, 100-101.

idiosyncrasies of the individual states involved in the region. This subset of the literature largely designates Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and the United States as "black boxes," all attempting to maximize similar interests in the Tri-Border Area.[86] But empirical evidence demonstrates that the three South American states did not act similarly following introduction of the War on Terror into the Tri-Border Area. Therefore, the current study suggests that domestic perceptions of the frontier must differ.

Consequently, this thesis adopts an academic approach that accounts for the idiosyncratic attributes and interests of a state – in this particular context, the Argentine Republic. Admittedly, the decision to move analysis away from a realist framework is anything but novel. In fact, as Kornely Kakachia and Salome Minesashvili observe, "the importance of ideology and identity in foreign policy orientation has been emphasized by many in the past."[87]

Accordingly, the study builds on a lively theoretical debate concerning identity and diplomacy, as well as numerous pertinent case studies. Ultimately, it is posited that a more specific emphasis on national identity as a determinant of foreign policy is extremely useful for understanding Argentine behavior during the early War on Terror. The following section provides the theoretical basis for analysis, drawing primarily from the liberal and constructivist paradigms of international relations theory.

[86] It should also be apparent that the quantity of these sources is fairly diminutive, especially given the recent prevalence of the Tri-Border Area in national, regional, and international discourse. In part, this thesis will attempt to occupy this scholarly dearth.
[87] Kakachia and Minesashvili, "Identity Politics," 172.

Theoretical Basis

This thesis argues that argentinidad indirectly contributed to the participation of Buenos Aires in the early War on Terror. At bare minimum, therefore, domestic identity hypothetically exerted influence on state behavior at the systemic level. To generate the basic theoretical foundation for this argument, it is imperative to answer the following question: how can the study adequately account for the internal variable of identity during analysis of state conduct in the international arena?

Overall, this project borrows theory primarily from the liberal and constructivist schools of international relations. More specifically, this thesis reiterates that states are not "black boxes," and also rejects the notion that foreign policy is solely a function of variation at the systemic level.[88] Rather, it adopts the liberal posture that there is dissimilarity in state preferences.[89] In relation, the study posits that these preferences are influenced by ideas and interests derived primarily, but not exclusively, from the domestic realm. Put differently, the constructivist stance that endogenous ideas and interests matter substantially in international relations is adopted. Next, it is asserted that a principal origin of these domestic interests is identity – and that its formation is influenced by a concept known as the "self/other" nexus and by geography. Because this thesis focuses on argentinidad, it further acknowledges that national identity is a relatively recent social construct. Generally, it is theoretically possible for national identity to foster cooperation and/or conflict at the systemic level.

[88] Andrew Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics," *International Organization* 4 (1997), 536.
[89] Ibid., 542.

The Choice of Paradigms

In order to justify emphasis on the liberal and constructivist paradigms, it is acknowledged that a tangible relationship between national identity and state behavior systemically is not universally accepted within international relations theory. Realism chiefly views the origin of state interests as exogenous due to systemic anarchy and the subsequent security dilemma.[90] Paul R. Viotti and Mark V. Kauppi remind us that this predominant school of thought is materially grounded, viewing ubiquitous state interests as survival, security, wealth, and power.[91] Andrew Moravcsik offers a similar account, noting that realists believe that the configuration of capabilities is what "matters most in world politics."[92] Thus, the scholar Paul A. Kowert observes that rationalist theories do not account for "who the actors are or how their interests are constituted."[93]

The constructivist Nina Tannenwald adopts a more conciliatory tone. She concedes that consensus regarding the primacy of either material or ideational factors within international relations is unlikely, but acknowledges that, "sophisticated realists in fact do not argue that ideas are totally irrelevant."[94] Nevertheless, this thesis finds that liberal and constructivist theories provide more useful analytical tools to explore the relationship between Argentine national identity and the introduction of the War on Terror into the Tri-Border Area.

Interestingly, Glenn Chafetz, Benjamin Frankel, and Michael Spirtas lament that the relevant scholarship, "does not go much beyond the mere assertion that identity is important, and that, somehow, in one way or another, it plays a role in how states define and pursue their

[90] Paul R. Viotti and Mark V. Kauppi, *International Relations Theory*, 5th ed. (Boston: Longman, 2012), 290.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously," 513.
[93] Paul A. Kowert, "National Identity: Inside and Out," in *The Origins of National Interests*, eds. Glenn Chafetz, Benjamin Frankel, and Michael Spirtas (London, Frank Cass, 1999), 2.
[94] Nina Tannenwald, "Ideas and Explanation: Advancing the Theoretical Agenda," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7, no. 2 (2005), 23-24.

national interests."[95] However, this assertion appears largely invalid. Since the early post-Cold War era, especially, a growing body of literature has indeed explored the specific ways in which domestic preferences – including identity – shape state behavior at the international level.

Domestic Preferences in Liberal Theory

Certain components of the broader liberal paradigm trace foreign policy preferences to the character of a state's underlying social orders.[96] For example, David Skidmore specifically utilizes the concept to analyze behavior internationally. Rejecting the assumption that state preferences are conditioned only by anarchic competition, he argues that, "state behavior is a function of interests and purposes generated by the broader social orders in which states are embedded."[97]

Most pertinent to this thesis is the reformulation of "liberal international relations theory in a nonideological and nonutopian form appropriate to empirical social science" by Andrew Moravcsik.[98] The scholar develops several core assumptions that underlie his theory; two are of paramount importance. First, Moravcsik asserts that, "the fundamental actors in international politics are individuals and private groups…who organize exchange and collective action to promote differentiated interests under constraints imposed by material scarcity, conflicting values, and variations in societal influence."[99]

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[95] Glenn Chafetz, Benjamin Frankel, and Michael Spirtas, "Introduction: Tracing the Influence of Identity on Foreign Policy," in *The Origins of National Interests*, eds. Glenn Chafetz, Benjamin Frankel, and Michael Spirtas (London: Frank Cass, 1999), vii.
[96] Kakachia and Minesashvili, "Identity Politics," 172.
[97] Ibid. See David Skidmore, "Introduction: Bringing Social Orders Back In," in *Contested Social Orders and International Politics*, ed. David Skidmore (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1997), 3-4. See also, David Skidmore, "Rethinking Realist Interpretations of the Cold War: Balance of Power or Competing Social Orders?" in *Contested Social Orders and International Politics*, ed. David Skidmore (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1997), 165-196.
[98] Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously," 513.
[99] Ibid., 516.

The second assumption claims that, "states represent some subset of domestic society, on the basis of whose interests state officials define state preferences and act purposively in world politics."[100] Therefore, foreign policy is constantly shaped and constrained by the identities, interests, and power of individuals and groups within a state.[101] As a whole, these two postulations imply that states do not automatically attempt to maximize fixed and homogenous conceptions of security, sovereignty, or wealth; instead, states pursue particular interpretations and combinations of these interests.[102]

Moravcsik continues to argue that his set of assumptions and their implications support several slight modifications of liberal theory. This thesis focuses primarily on the variant of ideational liberalism. Closely related to concept of "collective identity" as espoused by Peter Katzenstein, ideational liberalism views "the configuration of domestic social identities and values as a basic determinant of state preferences and, therefore, of interstate conflict and cooperation."[103] Crucially, Moravcsik does not offer a distinctive position on the origins of social identities.[104] Nonetheless, his article does provide several plausible sources, including political institutions (civic identity), economic status (class identity), and the nation (national identity).[105]

Identity in Constructivist Theory

While the liberal emphasis on domestic preferences is retained, the paradigm of constructivism provides more specific theoretical concepts concerning identity in international relations. Generally, this school of thought allocates considerable importance to the notions of

[100] Ibid., 518.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid., 519-520.
[103] Ibid., 525. See Peter Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).
[104] Ibid., 525.
[105] Ibid., 526-528.

ideas and identity.[106] Particularly, constructivism also stresses the endogenous origins of both the ideas and identities that ultimately influence state preferences.

Most constructivist scholars agree that, "interests and understandings of opportunities and threats are highly subjective."[107] As Ronald Jepperson, Alexander Wendt, and Peter Katzenstein maintain, these perceptions of a state depend "on a particular construction of self-identity in relation to the conceived identity of others."[108] Kakachia and Minesashvili undoubtedly agree, arguing for a theoretical framework that, "views foreign policy as a reflection of certain ideas and identities within a society and one in which the process of constructing the 'self' vis-à-vis an 'other' is an important component of foreign policy making."[109] Perhaps more straightforward, Kowert acknowledges that, "how states (usually, that is to say, their leaders) see themselves and other states is central to understanding what states actually do."[110]

Irrespective of this broad consensus, a lively debate focuses on the process of identity formation at the state level. This thesis embraces a theoretical concept espoused by Rodney Bruce Hall and various other scholars that is known as the "self/other" nexus. Borrowing heavily from Iver B. Neumann, Hall explains that, "the discursive construction of the other is essential to generating counterrepresentations of the self in the process of collective identity formation."[111] Neumann, himself, provides a particularly pertinent approach for the current study; the Norwegian political scientist is "predominately concerned with othering, or narrative

[106] Kakachia and Minesashvili, "Identity Politics," 172.
[107] Viotti and Kauppi, *International Relations Theory*, 290.
[108] Ronald Jepperson, Alexander Wendt, and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security," in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed. Peter Katzenstein (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 60.
[109] Kakachia and Minesashvili, "Identity Politics," 178.
[110] Kowert, "National Identity," 2.
[111] Rodney Bruce Hall, "Applying the 'Self/Other' Nexus in International Relations," review of *Between Sovereignty and Integration: German Foreign Policy and National Identity After 1989* by Jonathan P.G. Bach; *Where the World Ended: Re-Unification and Identity in the German Borderland*, by Daphne Berdahl; and *Uses of the Other: "The East" in European Identity Formation* by Iver B. Neumann, *International Studies Review* 3, no. 1 (2001): 104.

construction of representations of the out-group side of the self/Other nexus," within his post-Cold War book, *The Uses of the Other*.[112]

Similarly, Kakachia and Minesashvili that a "state's foreign policy preferences can be traced to how the society in question defines itself in relation to others."[113] Stated more simply, the pair of scholars insists that, "foreign policy expresses not only what one wants, but what one is."[114] Kowert even develops a dichotomy between "internal coherence" and "external distinctiveness." Summarizing, he contends that, "theories of internal coherence tell us whether or not (or to what extent) a state is able to act coherently (as a unitary actor). Theories of external distinctiveness, on the other hand, tell us something about whether a given state might want to act differently from other states."[115] In its entirety, adoption of the "self/other" nexus allows this thesis to account for both perceptions of argentinidad and for the exclusion of certain groups from this identity.

The relationship between geography and the generation of the "self" and of the "other " is also emphasized. Within his seminal book, *Geographical Imaginations*, Derek Gregory notes that, "geography has always been a thoroughly practical and deeply politicized discourse," while David Hooson writes that identity and geography are "inseparable."[116] More specifically, Frederick Barth and Anthony D. Smith argue that, "fundamental to states are physical boundaries. These serve not only to delimit territorial responsibility but also to develop the

[112] Ibid., 106. See Iver B. Neumann, *Uses of the Other: "The East" in European Identity Formation* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).
[113] Kakachia and Minesashvili, "Identity Politics," 172.
[114] Ibid., 171. See also Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security*; Audie Klotz, *Norms in International Politics: The Struggle Against Apartheid* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); and Vendulka Kubálková, Nicholas G. Onuf, and Paul A. Kowert, eds., *International Relations in a Constructed World* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1998).
[115] Kowert, "National Identity," 7. See also Kal J. Holsti, "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy," *International Studies Quarterly* 14, no. 3 (1970): 233-309.
[116] Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994), 8; and David Hooson, *Geography and National Identity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), ix.

collective identity of those within."[117] Marcelo Escolar, Silvina Quintero Palacios, and Carlos Reboratti largely agree when they write, "nation-states necessarily require a political geography."[118] In sum, geography is critical to identity formation because, "constitution of a national community requires a series of exclusions which will in turn differentiate between those on the 'inside' and those on the 'outside."[119] Due to the remote location of Misiones Province, and the Tri-Border Area, within Argentina, the role of geography within perceptions of argentinidad is consequently stressed during empirical analysis.

Thus far, this theoretical basis could potentially be applied to civic, class, or national identities. However, argentinidad is specifically a national identity. To better comprehend the nuanced formation of this particular identity, it is therefore necessary to provide theoretical concepts more so explicitly related to national identity.

National Identity Formation

"Since the end of the Cold War international security studies have had a new impetus to include societal factors."[120] As a result, there is anything but a dearth of scholarship concerning national identity. Importantly, even via cursory examination of the relevant literature, it is unequivocally clear that the primordial conception of national identity is academically rejected. National identities are not ancient things; they were created, and created recently. This consensus is readily apparent through the use of various terms, such as "the invention of tradition,"

[117] Rick Fawn, "Ideology and National Identity in Post-Communist Foreign Policies," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 19, no. 3 (2003): 13. See also Frederick Barth, ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969); and Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000).
[118] Marcelo Escolar, Silvina Quintero Palacios, and Carlos Reboratti, "Geographical Identity and Patriotic Representation in Argentina," in *Geography and National Identity*, ed. David Hooson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 346.
[119] Klaus-John Dodds, "Geography, Identity, and the Creation of the Argentine State," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 12, no. 3 (1993): 314.
[120] Fawn, "Ideology and National Identity in Post-Communist Foreign Policies," 12.

"production of a 'national myth,'" "fictional ethnicity," and "imagined communities."[121] The famed philosopher Ernest Gellner explained that, "nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist."[122]

Bill McSweeney agrees, writing, "we are who we want to be, subject to the constraints of history."[123] Several scholars explicitly denote a specific event or historical trend as the catalyst in the development of national identity. Fawn, for instance, reminds his readers that, "modern nationalism, like ideology, is usually dated to the French Revolution."[124] In slight variation, Gellner believes that national identity is associated with the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution, while Benedict Anderson and Karl Deutsch view its genesis in the "communication revolution."[125]

Most intriguing, Kowert observes that the prominent scholars Fernand Braudel, Charles Tilly, and Eugen Weber have claimed that national cohesiveness "was manufactured…by those in a position to do so because it served their interests."[126] While adopting a concurrent opinion, Anne Norton offers an important caveat: "elites' manipulation cannot proceed wholly arbitrarily; on the contrary, it has to stay within the parameters set by the idea of national identity against which the nation will measure the sovereign's appropriateness."[127]

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[121] Escolar, Quintero Palacios, and Reboratti, "Geographical Identity and Patriotic Representation in Argentina," 347. See Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Suzanne Citron, *Le myth national: l'histoire de France en question* (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières/EDI, 1989); Etienne Balibar, "The Nation Form: History and Ideology," in *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Ideas*, eds. Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, trans. Chris Turner, 86-106 (Paris: La Decouverte, 1990); and Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983).

[122] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6; see Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 169.

[123] Bill McSweeney, "Review: Identity and Security: Buzan and the Copenhagen School," review of *People, States, and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era* by Barry Buzan, *European Polyphony: Perspectives Beyond East West Confrontation* by Ole Weaver, and *The European Security Order Recast: Scenarios for the Post-Cold War Era* by Barry Buzan, *Review of International Studies* 22, no. 1 (1996): 90.

[124] Fawn, "Ideology and National Identity in Post-Communist Foreign Policies," 11.

[125] Kowert, "National Identity," 12-13.

[126] Ibid., 10. See Fernand Braudel, *The Identity of France: History and Environment*, 1st vol., trans. Sian Reynolds (New York: Harper & Row, 1986); Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of Nation States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975); and Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization o Rural France, 1870-1914* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976).

[127] Iver B. Neumann, "Review: Identity and Security," review of *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations* by William Bloom; *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes* by Michael A. Hogg and Dominic Abrams; and *Reflections on Political Identity* by Anne Norton, *Journal of Peace Research* 29, no. 2 (1992), 225. See Anne Norton, *Reflections on Political Identity* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 1993).

Notwithstanding these precise arguments, it is obvious that national identity is not antiquated, rather the concept is relatively novel. At the earliest, the idea of national identity emerged in the middle of the eighteenth century. Overall, the conceptual acknowledgement that national identity is consciously created is extremely useful to this thesis. These ideas concerning national identity formation stipulate for an in-depth exploration of the acrimonious debate within the nascent Argentine state regarding argentinidad. Additionally, this conceptual tool justifies, in part, utilization of a historical framework

Slightly more problematic is defining the term "national identity." The abundance of sources concerning the topic has led to numerous, yet comparable definitions. For example, Fawn views the concept as the "recognition, regardless of objective truth, of common features of belonging."[128] Only somewhat differently, Kowert claims that, "national identity is defined as similarity among individuals, manifest in their shared identification with the nation-state."[129] Moravcsik even offers his own definition, writing, "national identity may reflect a shared set of linguistic, cultural, or religious identifications or a shared set of historical experiences – often interpreted and encouraged by both private groups and state policy."[130] In large part due to the strong historical connotations that argentinidad imparts within Argentina even today, Moravcsik's definition is adopted for this project.

National Identity and Foreign Policy

In order to properly conclude this discussion on theory, it is crucial to elucidate on how national identity influences foreign policy. Tannenwald asserts that, "by themselves, ideas lack

[128] Fawn, "Ideology and National Identity in Post-Communist Foreign Policies," 11.
[129] Kowert, "National Identity," 7.
[130] Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously," 526.

mechanisms and need to be connected to political processes, organizations, and institutions both internationally and domestically."[131] Therefore, it is necessary to succinctly examine the various ways that ideas – or identity – shape interests, which in turn influence policy change.[132] For instance, Tannenwald maintains that ideas and identity can alter and define the meaning of material power.[133] A famous Cold War example of this concept is the observation that Americans viewed Soviet nuclear capabilities with alarm and participated in an arms race, yet they did not significantly fear British or French nuclear capacities in any significant way. Constructivists claim that this differentiation of policy is due, in part, to American identity and its affinity to Western Europe.

It is also acknowledged that, "not all expressions of nationalism are equal," and that, "the political aims of nationalism can range from seeking or safeguarding rights within an existing polity to seeking national self-determination."[134] More precisely, both Gellner and Moravcsik suggest that national identity can lead to conflict in the current international system. Gellner declares that there is a "desire for the nation and state to be congruent."[135] This declaration alludes to the possibility of aggressive and militaristic expansionism, secessionism, irredentism, civil war, and ethnic cleansing or genocide. Moravcsik develops a rough dichotomy, writing that, "where borders coincide with underlying patterns of identity, coexistence and even mutual recognition are more likely. Where, however, inconsistencies between borders and underlying patterns of identity exist, greater potential for interstate conflict exists."[136]

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[131] Tannenwald, "Ideas and Explanation," 13.
[132] Ibid., 18-19.
[133] Ibid., 21.
[134] Fawn, "Ideology and National Identity in Post-Communist Foreign Policies," 11.
[135] Ibid. See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 1.
[136] Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously," 526. See also Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); and Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989).

As noted above, Kowert presents his dichotomy of "internal coherence" and "external distinctiveness" within *The Origins of National Interests.* The scholar then proceeds to explain how these identities influence state behavior internationally. He explains that, "internal coherence facilitates orderly and efficient responses to external threats," while external distinctiveness allows a state to, "distinguish its 'friends' from its 'enemies.'"[137]

Somewhat differently, William Bloom asserts that domestic identity politics can be selfishly manipulated by elites, and have a number of consequences for international relations. Notably, "communications which threaten identity always provide the possibility for setting in motion domestic political processes which can overspill into international conflict."[138] Hall also views variation in state identities and interests as a tool for politicians who might like to pursue policies internationally; but he also concedes that such ideas can also have a constraining influence.[139]

Thus it is clear that various theoretical sources argue that national identity can potentially lead to conflict, and can be manipulated by political elites, as well. Conversely, various scholars also maintain that identity can also help to foster cooperation, coexistence, and constraint. Cumulatively, then, it is theoretically possible for national identity to foster peace and/or war. Overall, the thesis will utilize this broad parameter for state action influenced by national identity.

Perhaps it is appropriate to conclude with an idea shared by Harvard professor Alastair Johnston. The scholar observes that political elites socialized within different strategic cultures – and, intuitively, exposed to different forms of national identity – make different decisions in

[137] Kowert, "National Identity," 1.
[138] Neumann, "Review," 222.
[139] Rodney Bruce Hall, "Territorial and National Sovereigns: Sovereign Identity and Consequences for Security Policy," in *The Origins of National Interest*, eds. Glenn Chafetz, Benjamin Frankel, and Michael Spirtas (London: Frank Cass, 1999), 197.

similar situations.[140] In sum, national identity is important; it influences state behavior myriad ways at the systemic level. Before applying these concepts in empirical analysis, methodology must be discussed. This is addressed next.

[140] Alastair Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture," *International Security* 19, no. 4 (1995): 35.

Methodology

This thesis examines the nuanced relationship between argentinidad and the participation of Buenos Aires in the early War on Terror. Specifically, the project strives to answer the following research question: to what extent did internal notions of Argentine national identity contribute to the participation of Buenos Aires in the early War on Terror?

The answer put forth claims that argentinidad indirectly contributed to Argentine cooperation in the American-led global fight against terrorism. Formation of Argentine national identity allowed for "negative spaces" within formal state borders. These areas, including Misiones Province, are perceived as situated outside of the sovereign and civilized state. Therefore, international discourse portraying the Tri-Border Area as an ungoverned, dangerous, and exotic space was readily received and reproduced by political and media elites within the *República Argentina*.[141] Consequently, this indistinct, yet domestically compatible threat contributed to the positive Argentine response to the War on Terror.

This section explains the methods utilized to validate the aforementioned argument. Previously, several broad assertions were made that are critical for the justification of the current methodology. First, it was theoretically argued that the nation is largely a historical construction resulting from the invention of new tradition.[142] It was also concisely noted that this conception is extremely pertinent to the case of Argentina. Overall, following independence from Spain, the country experienced the "absence of an effective state able to centralize power and to impose its rule over a heterogeneous group of local autonomous areas with a confusing superposition of

[141] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontiers*, 101-102.
[142] Escolar, Quintero Palacios, and Reboratti, "Geographical Identity and Patriotic Representation in Argentina," 347-348.

identities."[143] Quite blatantly, the formulation of national identity in Argentina was a long and tedious process.

Importantly, the creation of argentinidad was also a well-recorded historical development. Throughout the nineteenth century, numerous Argentine writer-statesmen allotted considerable attention towards ascertaining the essence of their embryonic nation. A lively and markedly acrimonious debate concerning national identity in Argentina was the result. Such a profusion of documentation renders possible in-depth examination of identity formation.

Specifically, empirical analysis partially relies upon primary sources produced by various Argentine intellectuals and politicians, including Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, Juan Bautista Alberdi, Bartolomé Mitre, and José Hernández. A number of secondary sources are employed, as well. The two most important books utilized in this thesis are *The Invention of Argentina* by Nicolas Shumway, and *Argentina's Partisan Past: Nationalism and the Politics of History* by Michael Goebel.

Cumulatively, the first two chapters of analysis adopt a method known as causal process tracing. Succinctly, Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett define process tracing as a method that "attempts to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable."[144] In these initial chapters, the independent variables are the "two versions of argentinidad" and the dependent variable is "the perception of the sovereign and civilized state."

Overall, emphasis is placed on the historical evolution of Argentine national identity during the post-independence period. Particularly, the opening analytical chapter examines the

[143] Ibid., 348-349.
[144] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2005), 206.

creation of argentinidad during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The second chapter discusses more recent manifestations of this unique identity, importantly observing any continuity or change.

The third chapter attempts to demonstrate that Misiones Province is regarded as a "negative space" within the formal borders of the República Argentina. Therefore, analysis concentrates on domestic discourse concerning the Tri-Border Area over time. Particularly, the established narrative of the region is compared to broader themes and ideas present within the concept of Argentine national identity.

A method labeled as the discourse-historical approach is useful for examination of the empirical evidence within this chapter. As a derivative of a broader technique called critical discourse analysis, the discourse-historical approach is appropriate for this chapter because "in investigating historical, organizational, and political topics and texts, the…approach attempts to integrate a large quantity of available knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive 'elements' are embedded."[145] Basically, the method allows for analysis of the traditional Argentine discourse on the Tri-Border Area within the context of the historic and geographic dichotomy between civilization and barbarism produced by argentinidad.

Both primary and secondary sources are utilized in this third chapter. For instance, analysis relies partly upon first-hand accounts of early expeditions into the region. Empirical evidence is also derived from; *Pioneer Settlement in Northeast Argentina*, by Robert C. Eidt; *A South American Frontier: The Tri-Border Region* by Daniel K. Lewis; and *Savage Frontier: Making News and Security on the Argentine Border*, by Ieva Jusionyte. Finally, a select number

[145] Ruth Wodak, "The Discourse-Historical Approach," in *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, eds. Ruth Wodak and Michael Mayer (London: Sage, 2001), 65.

of porteño newspaper articles from the 1990s are analyzed to ascertain more recent perceptions of the frontier zone.

Another assertion previously established that the vilification of the Tri-Border Area occurred through public and private government documents, reports, and speeches, as well through the international media. Put differently, vilification occurred through discourse. Jusionyte is especially adamant about this process, observing that, "the media, especially U.S.-based newspapers and television networks, played an important role in the development and circulation of this [governmental] global security discourse, focusing on terrorist threats in the Triple Frontier."[146]

In order to sufficiently comprehend the Argentine reaction to this hegemonic discourse, the fourth chapter initially examines the introduction of the War on Terror into Latin America. Specifically, the opening section of this final chapter analyzes the particular language employed by U.S. officials to define the security threat in the Western Hemisphere. This section attempts to exhibit that the vilification of "empty spaces" such as the Tri-Border Area by the U.S. government was extremely compatible with preconceived perceptions of the region produced by argentinidad. Analysis employs a number of official American documents, such as the 2002 "National Security Strategy" and the State Department's *Patterns of Global Terrorism* reports. Several scholarly articles concerning the larger War on Terror are utilized, as well.

The second part of chapter four demonstrates that the international discourse portraying the Tri-Border Area as a lawless, ungovernable, and dangerous space was easily received and reproduced by Argentine politicians and journalists. Through the discourse historical approach, analysis uses "background and contextual knowledge and embeds the communicative or

[146] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 109.

international structures of a discursive event in a wider frame of social and political relations, processes, and circumstances."[147] This section exhibits that language related to argentinidad, and used historically to portray the Tri-Border Area, was comfortably utilized to describe a threat defined through the War on Terror. As a result, this vague, yet historically informed danger contributed to the positive Argentine response to the global antiterrorism campaign.

Unfortunately, the Argentine government does not release classified documents until thirty years after their creation.[148] Consequently, analysis primarily relies upon numerous articles from nationally syndicated Argentine newspapers, including *Clarín*, *La Nación*, and *Página/12*. The section also draws from a select number of speeches and documents publically released by the Ministry of Foreign Relations.

[147] Wodak, "The Discourse-Historical Approach,' 65.
[148] Hoyt, "U.S.-Argentine Relations."

Chapter 1: The Dual Formation of Argentinidad

The present-day Argentine Republic does not sit upon the ruins of any Amerindian empire. Unlike Mexico, Peru, and even Guatemala, Argentina lacks a historical antecedent for the founding of a nation.[149] The pampas were not completely devoid of indigenous peoples; yet, Argentina certainly did not possess a complex civilization analogous to the Aztecs or Incas. In fact, within the country, a well-known saying japes that, "the Argentines descended from boats."[150]

The colonial period failed to meaningfully generate a unique and independent sense of nationhood, as well.[151] Especially in comparison to Lima or Mexico City, Buenos Aires was an isolated and insignificant settlement within the Spanish Empire. The creation of the Viceroyalty of the *Río de la Plata* in 1776 left the port city in control over a mostly empty territory roughly equal in size to the eastern half of the United States.[152] "In no sense was the area unified by geography, politics, economics, or a particular version of national identity."[153]

As a result, the post-independent state was overwhelmingly responsible for the construction of the narratives that gave meaning to the term 'Argentina.'[154] Put differently, the Argentine nation was an 'imagined community,' consciously created by influential statesmen and intellectuals after 1810. This process was anything but simple; the country was plagued by violence, political fragmentation, and acrimonious debate regarding national identity throughout the majority of the nineteenth century.

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[149] Grimson and Kessler, *On Argentina and the Southern Cone*, 5.
[150] Kelsey Jost-Creegan, "The Argentines Descended from the Boats: Migration in Argentina," *The Argentina Independent*, September 4, 2012, accessed March 27, 2017, http://www.argentinaindependent.com/life-style/the-argentines-descended-from-the-boats-migration-in-argentina/.
[151] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 2.
[152] Ibid., 9, 12. On page nine, Shumway estimates that the entire Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata had a population of approximately 500,000 at the start of the 19th century.
[153] Ibid., 9.
[154] Grimson and Kessler, *On Argentina and the Southern Cone*, 6.

In order to lucidly comprehend this complex identity formation within the republic, it is necessary to ask the following question: what were the prevailing ideas pertaining to argentinidad during the 1800s? In general, thorough examination of both primary documents and secondary sources demonstrates that two types of national identity emerged during this tumultuous period.

First, the liberal construction was "cosmopolitan and depicts nationals as European peoples committed to progress."[155] This concept was unquestionably dominant throughout the nineteenth century, and juxtaposes the state of civilization centered in Buenos Aires with the savage life of the frontier.[156] As a result, Argentine liberalism typically confused the capital city with the entire country.[157]

In stark contrast, the early nationalist movement mainly connected identity with the gaucho culture of the pampas.[158] This second version asserted that, "the 'real' nation could be found in the untainted interior of the country, where Hispanic and Catholic traditions merged into a Creole identity."[159] Ultimately, the legendary gaucho was celebrated by nationalists as a "hero and civilizer" of the South American plains.[160]

Taken together, these ideas emphasizing the inevitable victory of civilization over barbarism loosely constitute the historical basis of argentinidad.[161] This is predictable, as the interplay between metropolis and frontier is at "the heart of the Latin American historical experience."[162] But the initial similarities between the two versions of argentinidad roughly cease

[155] Ferradás, *Power in the Southern Cone Borderlands*, 38.
[156] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 61-62.
[157] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 22.
[158] Ferradás, *Power in the Southern Cone Borderlands*, 38.
[159] Michael Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past: Nationalism and the Politics of History* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011), 5.
[160] Jeane Delaney, "Making Sense of Modernity: Changing Attitudes Toward the Immigrant and the Gaucho in Turn-of-the-Century Argentina," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 38, no. 3 (1996): 446.
[161] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 62.
[162] Alistair Hennessy, *The Frontier in Latin American History* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1978), 2.

here. In order to understand the inclusion of two different, specific geographic locations within broader concepts of Argentine national identity, it is necessary to examine these diametrically opposed versions separately. This is the purpose of the two following portions of the chapter.

Argentine Liberalism

The concept of argentinidad as espoused by adherents of nineteenth century Argentine liberalism is a paramount example of a "self/other" nexus significantly influenced by geography. Ultimately, the dream of these influential writer-statesmen was the recreation of Europe in the Southern Cone – Buenos Aires was to be the "Paris of the Pampas."[163] As stated by the massively influential Juan Bautista Alberdi, "all that is civilization on our soil is European."[164]

Much differently, in directing their attention towards the interior, these early liberals were, "ashamed of the backward Argentine provinces with their caudillo leaders and illiterate mix-blood gauchos."[165] For Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, the "empty" pampas were a source of evil.[166] Expressed more forcefully, to this future president, the Argentine interior was, "a land where death and uncertainty reign supreme, where mysterious electrical forces excite the human imagination and the land itself militates against European civilization."[167]

The dichotomy between civilization in the wealthy port city and barbarism in the destitute pampas has its origins in the 1810 *Revolución de Mayo*. This movement was the product of Buenos Aires, as porteño leaders unilaterally declared the independence of the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata from Napoleonic Spain.[168] From this moment forward, liberal

[163] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 108.
[164] Ibid., 141.
[165] Ibid., 44.
[166] Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Civilización y barbarie: Vida de Juan Facundo Quiroga*, ed. Raimundo Lazo [1845] (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1977), 19.
[167] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 134.
[168] Ibid., 22.

intellectuals and statesmen made little distinction between Buenos Aires and the patria.[169] Furthermore, this historical fact caused porteños to later characterize their city as an "exemplar, civilizer, and preceptor of the continent."[170] For example, a pompous 1825 article within *El Argo* asked, "What was South America before Buenos Aires raised its daring face on that day, making its voice resonate as eloquent thunder?"[171]

This porteño localism strongly contributed to profound political, economic, and social divisions within the former viceroyalty. Eventually, two preeminent political parties emerged in the early post-independence period. The Unitarian party favored a strong central government controlled by the porteño elite, while the Federalist party advocated for provincial autonomy and tended to be more populist in nature.[172]

Under the leadership of Bernardino Rivadavia, the liberals of the Unitarian party attempted to recreate European civilization in Buenos Aires during the 1820s. Collectively known as "Rivadavians," these members of the porteño elite essentially feared "the new, the unproven, or the non-European."[173] This group encouraged the production of Shakespearian theatre, read the epic poems of Antiquity, followed political events from across the Atlantic, and was generally fascinated with the culture of European aristocrats.[174]

In relation, the Rivadavians were enamored with the supposedly *laissez-faire* economics of Great Britain. These politicians pursued increased economic contact with London; but the unmatched industrial capacity of the United Kingdom essentially created a mercantilist relationship with Buenos Aires. While the British and their porteño collaborators benefited from

[169] Ibid.
[170] Ibid., 89.
[171] Ibid., 88.
[172] Ibid., 43.
[173] Ibid., 95.
[174] Ibid., 81-97.

this asymmetrical structure, the Argentine interior – which actually produced the exported raw materials – suffered economically.[175]

Overall, the Rivadavians attempted to create an outpost of European culture in South America. As a result, they also possessed a condescending indifference towards the popular and provincial culture of the gauchos, the mixed-blood lower classes, caudillo strongmen, and the Catholic Church.[176]

However, the liberals of Buenos Aires did not retain political power throughout the nineteenth century. From 1829 to 1852, the federalist dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas controlled Buenos Aires Province and a significant portion of the interior.[177] Though antipopular, Rosas provided for the poor through paternalistic impulse; this endeared him to both the gauchos and urban minorities.[178] Moreover, "Rosas resented those 'incompetent' city politicians whose bickering weakened the provincial government and prevented a coordinated defense against the Indian raids in the 1820s."[179]

Argentine liberals labeled Rosas, a successful provincial landowner, as their primary enemy.[180] In fact, the Rosas dictatorship indirectly exacerbated the liberal dichotomy between the civilized state and the barbaric interior. This development was tangibly produced by Sarmiento, Alberdi, and the "Generation of '37," a seminal collection of young men, who in 1837 organized a literary society to critique their country.[181] In part, the group attempted to identify the problems plaguing the nascent and turbulent state. By also providing various

[175] Ibid., 99.
[176] Ibid., 87, 109.
[177] Jonathan C. Brown, *A Brief History of Argentina*, 2nd ed. (New York: Checkmark, 2011), 122.
[178] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 120.
[179] Brown, *A Brief History of Argentina*, 124.
[180] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 113.
[181] Ibid., 112.

solutions, these Argentines significantly expanded upon the liberal version of argentinidad as espoused by the Rivadavians.

For the "Generation of '37," the instability of their era could be negated through the creation of a liberal republic.[182] But the necessary conditions for a republic were not present in the current polity. These intellectuals vehemently opposed the blatant dictatorial tendencies of the incumbent regime. Many within the liberal movement perceived Rosas as yet another disruptive caudillo of the Spanish authoritarian tradition. Political opposition also involved deep distrust of "the will of the people since the masses were solidly behind Rosas and the traditional authoritarianism he represented." [183]

The elitist intellectuals of Buenos Aires derided "what they perceived as the sources of Rosas' power: the land, the Spanish tradition, and the mixed-blooded poor consisting of gauchos, domestic servants, and common laborers."[184] The dictator and his destitute disciples of the vast interior were insufficient for the development of a democratic and modern republic. Nevertheless, Alberdi and his peers believed that deliberate measures could be taken to build a nation-state.[185] Most importantly, the "Generation of '37" advocated for European immigration as a solution to their political and social problems.[186]

All civilization was urban to the "Men of '37". The pampas were a negation of civil society – an empty space dictated by the brute force of the caudillos.[187] In order for the liberal porteños to overcome barbarism, the southern plains needed to be populated by the advanced peoples of northern Europe. Within his influential plan for the Republic of Argentina, Alberdi

[182] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 26.
[183] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 133.
[184] Ibid., 133.
[185] Ibid., 135.
[186] Ibid., 146.
[187] Hennessy, *The Frontier in Latin American History*, 121.

writes the following: "each European who comes to our shores brings more civilization in his habits, which will later be passed on to our inhabitants, than many books of philosophy."[188]

Rosas fled across the Atlantic after defeat in the 1852 Battle of Caseros. The dictator spent the remainder of his life exiled in Great Britain.[189] Following another decade of federalist rule and internecine warfare, Argentine liberals finally regained control of the state. During the presidencies of Mitre and Sarmiento, especially, governments adopted the political program espoused by the "Generation of '37." Objectives included; domination by the *europeizante* and enlightened elite of Buenos Aires; construction of a European-like society within Argentina; laissez-faire economics; and positive demographic modification through the infusion of northern European immigrants.[190]

Mitre also deserves emphasis for his contribution towards the early historiography of the Argentine independence era. The porteño historian's *Galería de celebridades argentinas* is commonly accepted as the basis for the official history of the Argentine state.[191] The multi-volume work concentrates on figures within the liberal pantheon, including revolutionary general José de San Martín, the porteño *libertador* Manuel Belgrano, and Bernardino Rivadavia.[192] Mitre unsurprisingly omits Rosas and other caudillos from his historical account. The liberal writer-statesman defined these provincial strongmen as, "the representatives of the domineering tendencies of barbarism…[the caudillos] can serve as a lesson for those to come for their crimes and unprecedented cruelties."[193]

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[188] Juan Bautista Alberdi, *Bases y puntos de partida para la organización de la República Argentina*, ed. Francisco Cruz [1852] (Buenos Aires: La Cultura Argentina, 1915), 89.
[189] Brown, *A Brief History of Argentina*, 127.
[190] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 164.
[191] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 29.
[192] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 191.
[193] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 29.

Consolidation of the porteño hegemony over the provinces was achieved by the late nineteenth century. After, the imagination of the liberal movement was captured by the "Conquest of the Desert" under General Julio Argentino Roca. A series of ferocious Indian wars in actuality, this prolonged military campaign removed "undesirable barbarians" from Patagonia and established the modern boundaries of the civilized Argentine Republic.[194]

Nonetheless, the southern pampas and Patagonia remain sparsely populated even today. Instead of the dissemination of civilization southward, nineteenth century Argentine liberalism is now associated with a blend of porteño centralism and a European-based cosmopolitanism.[195] The liberals of the Río de La Plata failed to re-create Europe in the Southern Cone. Importantly, though, Shumway notes that the Rivadavian dream of Argentina as "a showplace of Western Civilization, an exemplum of European culture in the Americas, Paris in the Pampas," continues to inform argentinidad in the twenty-first century.[196]

For many today, to be Argentine means to be a civilized and European citizen of Buenos Aires. The city continues to dominate the physical imagination of a large segment of the population. But this version of argentinidad is not unaccompanied. The following subsection explores the considerably different vision of Argentine national identity as adopted by early nationalists.

Argentine Nationalism

Argentine nationalism developed roughly parallel to liberalism during the nineteenth century. The deliberate formation of this version of argentinidad is also an example of the

[194] Dodds, "Geography, Identity, and the Creation of the Argentine State," 322-323.
[195] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 27.
[196] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 108.

"self/other" nexus. The geography of the nascent Argentine state influenced the creation of this national identity, as well.

Overall, Argentine nationalism is an ideologically messy, ill-defined, and often contradictory movement. It can be populist, reactionary, nativist, or genuinely federalist and progressive.[197] Helpfully, several common themes are found within the disheveled umbrella term. Foremost, this alternative vision of argentinidad presented several dichotomies, the most important of which economically juxtaposed the poor, exploited, and authentic interior against the arrogant and superficial oligarchy of Buenos Aires.[198]

This Argentine belief system embraced the caudillo as a genuinely popular and democratic leader, "whose alleged barbarism was the only recourse available to the provinces in their struggle against Buenos Aires."[199] Early nationalism also rejected the liberal obsession with the French, English, and American models of society and the state. Conversely, nationalists hailed the Spanish and broader Latin heritage of the Argentine interior. The mixed-blood rural poor and the gauchos of the pampas were glorified as the authentic essence of the nation.[200]

While liberals and official state history dismissed the gaucho as a lazy and uneducated thief, nationalists perceived the cowboy as "the mythical repository of the authentic Argentine spirit."[201] The adoption of this populist symbol occurred as early as the initial post-independence period. During these embryonic years of the Argentine state, a major hero for the federalist cause was the "gaucho" José Gervasio Artigas, caudillo of the *Banda Oriental*.[202] As a politician,

[197] Ibid., 214.
[198] Ibid., 216.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Ibid.
[201] Ibid., 67.
[202] The Banda Oriental, or "Eastern Bank," refers to the territory located east of the Uruguay River and north of the Río de la Plata. It roughly comprised the current state of Uruguay.

Artigas was among the first to articulate basic notions of Argentine populism. He supported both provincial equality and lower-class consciousness.[203]

The nationalist poet Bartolomé Hidalgo soon co-opted these ideas. Widely recognized as the father of the *género gauchesco*, Hidalgo "sought to affirm a place in the country's guiding fictions for the common folk, the rural poor, the mixed-bloods, the nonelite."[204] An elder Alberdi also conceded that the gauchos and their unique culture were an integral component of Argentine national identity.[205] Even so, the majority of nineteenth century Argentine intellectuals disparaged this legendary cowboy of the pampas. The Europeanized version of argentinidad generally occupied a hegemonic position during this period. Broader debates regarding the definition of Argentine national identity only emerged during the last two and half decades of the nineteenth century.[206]

The 1872 epic, *Martín Fierro*, by José Hernández is usually cited as a significant contribution to the idea of the gaucho as an essential element of Argentine national identity.[207] The eponymous hero of the poem is a prototype of "gaucho values:" honorable, lofty, noble, generous, and hospitable.[208] The extremely popular fiction additionally depicts the rural poor as dignified and moral, while urban businessmen and politicians appear as duplicitous and corrupt.[209]

The gaucho was increasingly embraced as a national symbol in response to the massive influx of European immigrants near the start of the twentieth century. Argentine nationalists regarded the immigrant as greedy, materialistic, and lacking of spiritual attachment to his

[203] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 67.
[204] Ibid., 68.
[205] Ibid., 183.
[206] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 29.
[207] Ibid., 36.
[208] Delaney, "Making Sense of Modernity," 456.
[209] Brown, *A Brief History of Argentina*, 155.

adoptive country.[210] In stark contrast to the tradition of Argentine liberalism, the European newcomer was the soulless barbarian; the gaucho was the rugged civilizer of the southern plains.[211]

Anti-immigrant attitudes contributed to the nationalist advocacy of colonial Spanish heritage, as well.[212] Understandings of national identity increasingly emphasized cultural traits, and Spain was predictably labeled as the "*madre patria*."[213] In a rather imaginative example, the poet Olegario V. Andrade situates the Argentine nation within a historical Latin lineage. Succeeding the ancient Greeks, the Romans, and the Spanish, Andrade proclaimed the Argentines as the contemporary manifestation of Latin civilizers.[214] This concept separated the nationalist intellectual from the "Generation of '37," for whom "Spain was a retrograde parent whose American children needed to adopt new models in northern Europe and Anglo-America."[215]

Nationalists correspondingly rejected extensive politico-economic relations with Great Britain.[216] The proponents of nationalism loathed the laissez-faire policies of Rivadavia and his liberal successors, and instead embraced protectionist and isolationist measures. Politicians that had pursued asymmetrical commercial contact with England and other Atlantic powers were labeled as *vendepatrias*, or country-sellers.[217] These men were the true enemies of the authentic Argentina. They had repeatedly betrayed their country for the latest ideological fad in Europe and the United States.[218]

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[210] Delaney, "Making Sense of Modernity," 436, 446.
[211] Ibid., 446.
[212] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 292.
[213] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past,* 29.
[214] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 245-246.
[215] Ibid., 247.
[216] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 30.
[217] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 108.
[218] Ibid., 275.

For nationalists, "the imaginary locus of Argentine national identity thus moved from the port city of Buenos Aires, with its overseas ties, into the untainted gaucho hinterland."[219] Furthermore, the populist sentiments of Argentine nationalism were legally bolstered through authorization of the Sáez Peña laws in 1912. Voting was made compulsory for all male citizens over 18 years of age. This enfranchisement of the native-born working and middle classes helped to generate the emergence of mass politics and professional politicians.[220]

An anti-liberal variety of Argentine history materialized within this context. Revisionist intellectuals of the "Centenary Generation," such as Leopoldo Lugones and Ricardo Rojas, further reevaluated the gaucho, rehabilitated the caudillo, and cautiously re-imagined the polemic Juan Manuel de Rosas. The nineteenth century dictator was guardedly characterized as a "restorer of laws" amid the chaos of incessant civil war following independence from Spain.[221]

This alternative form of argentinidad clearly emphasized popular politics and culture, in contrast to the Europeanized and elitist identity of Argentine liberalism. Logically, the tango was "eventually converted into the second major pillar of Argentina's imagined national identity" during the early twentieth century.[222] Admittedly, the dance emerged in the outskirts of Buenos Aires, and is therefore less associated with the rugged interior. But Goebel observes that the geographic origins of the tango ensured a unique mixture of immigrant and inland culture.[223]

Argentine nationalism visibly espouses an alternative perception of identity in comparison to nineteenth century liberalism. Crucially, this version of argentinidad also accounts for a specific geographic location: the pampas. The rural historian Emilio Coni went so far as to

[219] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 38.
[220] Brown, *A Brief History of Argentina*, 167; Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 32.
[221] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 35-36.
[222] Ibid., 38.
[223] Ibid.

lament that, "the ten-non Pampean and non-gaucho provinces count [for] nothing," in this particular conception of Argentine national identity.[224]

Cumulatively, the debate concerning Argentine national identity was clearly centered on Buenos Aires, its hinterlands, and a select number of pampean provinces, such as Santa Fe, Entre Ríos, and Córdoba.[225] These discussions did not account for the northwest Chaco region, the northeastern jungles of Misiones Province, nor the vast Patagonian lands to the south. Interestingly, the liberal and national versions of argentinidad synthesized during the latter twentieth century. As a result, "in Argentina's *imaginary*, one region has become the nation."[226]

Within the context of the historical narrative emphasizing the triumph of the civilized nation over barbarism, remote and relatively unknown areas within formal Argentine borders constitute uncivilized, "negative spaces." Misiones Province is a paramount example of this hypothetically wild frontier. However, before examining the compatibility between Misiones' imagined characteristics and the War on Terror, it is necessary to explore the more recent developments relating to argentinidad. This is the purpose of chapter two.

[224] Emilio Coni, *El gaucho: Argentina, Brasil, Uruguay* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Subamericana, 1945), 8.
[225] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 40.
[226] Ferradás, *Power in the Southern Cone Borderlands*, 36 (emphasis in original).

Chapter 2: The Synthesis of National Identity

National identities are not ancient artifacts. Quite differently, the phenomenon is a product of recent times. As social constructs, these identities are "invented," "produced," or "imagined."[227] Hence, this form of association is not inflexible. It is very possible that a particular conception of national identity can change over time. It is therefore inappropriate to strictly utilize the two traditional versions of argentinidad as possible causal explanations for state behavior in the twenty-first century.

Liberal and nationalist ideas regarding argentinidad continued to influence Argentine self-identification during the late twentieth century and beyond.[228] Notwithstanding, in order to sufficiently examine the influence of argentinidad on foreign policy after September 11, 2001, it is necessary to account for any changes – or continuity – of Argentine national identity.

This chapter addresses the following question: to what extent did the two historic versions of argentinidad evolve independently, meld, or further fissure by the late twentieth century? Despite intermittent years of dissonance, the liberal and national concepts of Argentine national identity roughly consolidated into a single vision around the start of the new millennium.

Realistically, complete rejection of the alternative dogma by liberals and nationalists was impossible. At the very least, both the official history of Mitre and the revisionism of the *Instituto Rosas* embraced the leading figures of the independence period.[229] Mass immigration during the early twentieth century also provoked the Argentine middle and upper classes to

[227] Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*; Citron, *Le myth national*; Balibar, "The Nation Form;" and Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
[228] Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, 297-299.
[229] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 52-53.

symbolically adopt the gaucho in an attempt to protect national identity.[230] Coni even argues that the legendary "gaucho-as-patriot" was a fiction created by the intellectual "gauchophiles" of Buenos Aires.[231] Overall, "even if the ethno-cultural nationalism that expressed itself in the glorification of the gaucho modified the predominately civic model of nationhood proposed by Mitre and Sarmiento, it was possible partially to weave the two strands."[232] The cowboy of the southern plains and the liberal pantheon of heroes tepidly coexisted. This fusion of the two differing versions of argentinidad only accelerated following the end of World War II.

Remarkably, this synthesis continued under President Juan Perón. An extremely controversial figure in recent Argentine history, Perón was a minor actor in the 1943 military coup that overthrew Ramon S. Castillo.[233] Rising quickly, the army officer served as the Argentine Minister of Labor from 1943 until 1945. The next year, Perón was elected president.[234] As executive, the colonel enjoyed the strong support of workers and their labor unions; he also gained the backing of many lower-middle-class citizens and industrialists.[235]

Liberal detractors criticize Perón as an authoritarian, a populist demagogue, and an acute nationalist.[236] Indeed, the president enacted various social measures to eliminate poverty, evenly distribute wealth, and enfranchise the growing class of urban industrial workers.[237] Still, the Peronism movement is historically complex in its ideas. Goebel describes the political

[230] Kathryn Lehman, "The Gaucho as Contested National Icon in Argentina," in *National Symbols, Fractured Identity: Contesting the National Narrative*, ed. Michael E. Geisler (Middlebury, VT: Middlebury College Press, 2005), 163.
[231] Ibid., 151.
[232] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 39.
[233] Brown, *A Brief History of Argentina*, 192-193.
[234] "Peronist," Britannica Academic, last modified March 11, 2016, accessed March 14, 2017, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Peronist.
[235] Ibid.
[236] Ibid.; Samuel Amaral, "Perón and Peronism," Oxford Bibliographies, last modified October 28, 2011, accessed March 13, 2017, http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766581/obo-9780199766581-0041.xml.
[237] Ibid.

phenomenon as, "the complementing of nineteenth-century republicanism with ethno-cultural elements rather than its replacement."[238]

Peronism admittedly represents a substantial shift away from nineteenth century liberalism. The polemic icon and his wife, Evita, embraced the gaucho, social Catholicism, class harmony, and anti-imperialism. The Peronist scheme also explicitly advocated for an "organized community" grounded in the authentic culture of the nation.[239]

However, the president disdained glorification of Rosas; his regime instead fancied historical figures of the liberal pantheon such as Rivadavia. "According to Mónica Esti Rein, Eva Perón took pride in her husband's occupation of 'Rivadavia's seat.'"[240] In truth, the expression *el sillón de Rivadavia* is commonly employed as a metonym for the presidency. The meaning of Evita's satisfaction could thus be interpreted in a more literal manner. Nonetheless, the phrase signifies that notions of legitimate state power under Perón relied on the liberal pantheon.[241]

Perón was ousted from power in 1955. Executive confrontations with the Catholic clergy incited a massive middle-class protest in Buenos Aires against the government; Peronist workers subsequently organized a counterdemonstration. As unrest built throughout the capital, several military officers mutinied and violence proliferated. The subsequent military coup, labeled as the "Liberating Revolution," sought to dismantle the Peronist regime. The president resigned and fled to neighboring Paraguay.[242] He would remain in exile until 1973.[243]

The years between this coup and the collapse of the 1976-1983 military regime contained intermittent debate regarding the two versions of argentinidad. The neo-revisionists of the period

[238] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 99.
[239] Ibid., 98.
[240] Ibid., 99.
[241] Ibid.
[242] Brown, *A Brief History of Argentina*, 213.
[243] "Peronist."

adamantly "accentuated the notion of two Argentinas, contrasting Buenos Aires (now not only the city but also the province) to the remoter interior of the country as the true repository of argentinidad."[244] The various factions of the nationalist movement vigorously re-embraced the caudillo, as well. Characterized as a charismatic and genuine leader of the people, this provincial strongman was defined as the authentic Argentine.[245] As Peronist intellectual Juan José Hernández Arregui wrote, "the country…is in the interior."[246]

The competing political actors of these decades largely eschewed democratic processes, and instead attempted to legitimate their rule through "invented traditions."[247] The military leaders of the 1955 coup, led by Pedro Eugenio Aramburu, equated themselves with liberal heroes such as Rivadavia, Sarmiento, and Mitre. The nascent government claimed to follow the political tradition of the *Revolución de Mayo* and the Battle of Caseros.[248] Accordingly, these officers denounced Perón as a despotic tyrant analogous to Rosas. The Aramburu regime further depicted "Peronism as a repetition of what Sarmiento had labeled the 'barbarism' incarnated in caudillos like Rosas or [Ángel Vicente] Peñaloza."[249]

Goebel claims that Aramburu exacerbated the liberal-nationalist dichotomy during his short tenure.[250] But this argument cannot be unconditionally accepted. Notably, the liberal rulers embraced Justo José de Urquiza. A caudillo from Entre Ríos province, Urquiza was instrumental in the uniting of provincial leaders to depose Rosas. The strongman then led an impressive force of gaucho ranch hands into Buenos Aires province and defeated the *rosismo* army at the

[244] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 111-112.
[245] Ibid., 112.
[246] Juan José Hernández Arregui, *Peronismo y socialismo* (Buenos Aires: Hachea, 1972), 70.
[247] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past,* 108.
[248] Ibid., 120-121.
[249] Ibid., 123.
[250] Ibid., 122.

aforementioned Battle of Caseros.[251] Official identification with this ostensibly anti-liberal figure suggests that the division between the two versions of argentinidad was not overwhelmingly acute during this period.

The Arturo Frondizi government of 1958-1962 accordingly pursued a policy of "integrationism."[252] This program was a genuine attempt to "overcome simultaneously the divide between nationalists and liberals and the partially overlapping division between Peronists and anti-Peronists by fashioning an integrationist synthesis."[253] Because the president was perceived as an intellectual with the support of the masses, "the theorem of the opposition between civilisation and barbarism [collapsed]. Synthesis [was] possible and realisable."[254] A particularly notable project was the endeavor by prominent ideologue Marcos Merchensky to "construe a 'synthesis' between Rivadavia, Rosas, and Sarmiento" – historical figures that were incompatible to both staunch liberals and nationalists.

Perón returned to Argentina in 1973 and was re-elected president. The politician was dead from heart failure a year later; his politically inexperienced third wife, Isabel, assumed control of the state.[255] The persistent incompetence and corruption of this new government eventually compelled the military to action in 1976. Afterward, the successful leaders of the coup instituted a pervasive program entitled the "Process of National Reorganization," or "El Proceso."[256] The junta then proceeded to detach itself from civil society and professional

[251] Brown, *A Brief History of Argentina*, 127.
[252] Ibid., 219-220; Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 126.
[253] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 126.
[254] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 127; Carlos Altamirano, *Arturo Frondizi: o, el hombre de ideas como político* (Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1998), 77
[255] Brown, *A Brief History of Argentina*, 237.
[256] Ibid., 240.

politicians, closed congress, and embarked on a ferocious campaign of state terror known as the "Dirty War."[257]

Aided by the tacit consent of the liberal press, these anti-Peronist military leaders "insisted that their aim was the restoration of Argentina's nineteenth century civic republicanism, alluding to the constitution of 1853 and to 'republican, representative, and federal democracy.'"[258] Adopting traditional state history, the military employed San Martín and Roca as official symbols. In addition, the use of vocabulary such as "reorganization" alluded to the liberal nation-building efforts of writer-statesmen such as Alberdi, Mitre, and Sarmiento.[259] The revisionist – or nationalist – view of two Argentinas, and its corresponding symbols, primarily remained a Peronist affair under the armed forces.[260]

Ironically, the military regime contributed to the increasing synthesis of Argentine national identity during the early 1980s. This development occurred due to rising sentiments concerning irredentism and the *Islas Malvinas* (or Falkland Islands). David Welch remarks that the Malvinas issue was part of a government plan to generate socio-political consolidation. As a result, state officials explicitly defined this territorial dispute with Great Britain as an issue of national identity; the aim was to cultivate a sense of "oneness" within Argentina.[261]

The authoritarian and insulated structure of the state facilitated the decision of military leaders to invade the island group. An enormous outpouring of chauvinism followed the start of hostilities on April 2, 1982.[262] Despite the humiliating defeat suffered by the Argentine Republic, the war is indicative of further fusion between the two alternative versions of argentinidad.

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[257] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 181.
[258] Ibid., 187.
[259] Ibid., 187, 191-193.
[260] Ibid., 191.
[261] David Welch, *Painful Choices: A Theory of Foreign Policy Change* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 82-83, 93.
[262] Ibid., 89; Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 195.

The Malvinas question became entwined with ethno-cultural perceptions of national identity.[263] This specific variant of irredentism derived inspiration from "the *gaucho* Rivero, a peon who had allegedly resisted the [original] British occupation of 1833."[264] The movement was also defined through opposition to Anglo-Saxon materialism and to British imperialism – both ideas are significant components of the traditional nationalist perception of argentinidad.[265]

However, the vast majority of "Kelpers," as inhabitants of the Malvinas label themselves, "are of British descent, have British manners and customs, speak English, and wish to remain British."[266] Consequently, demands for Argentine sovereignty were also founded on the basis of historic possession and on the *jus soli*. Potential citizenship for the "Kelpers" was disconnected from any ethnic, cultural, or even linguistic interpretation of national identity.[267] These emotions regarding the Malvinas visibly incorporate ideas of civic identity related to nineteenth century Argentine liberalism. "As a result…many of the most unwavering irredentists had also been the most dedicated defenders of Argentina's 'liberal' pantheon and civic-republican patriotism."[268]

The FIFA World Cups of 1978 and 1986 also united Argentines in distinction to an external "other."[269] Championship performances by the national team in both tournaments deluged the republic not only with a fierce popular pride, but also with a growing sense of a single argentinidad.[270] Cumulatively, the 1982 Falklands War and the dual victories of *La Albiceleste* significantly helped to "[whittle] away the plausibility of a binary opposition between the port city and the interior."[271]

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[263] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 196.
[264] Ibid. (emphasis in original).
[265] Ibid., 197.
[266] Welch, *Painful Choices, 74.*
[267] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past, 197.*
[268] Ibid.
[269] Ibid., 198.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Ibid., 199.

The return to constitutional rule in 1983 accelerated the fusion between the two renderings of Argentine national identity. Goebel suggests that the country was more concerned with the newly emphasized dichotomy between dictatorship and democracy.[272] A key development indicative of this protracted and fitful synthesis was "deflation of the formerly acrimonious polemics surrounding the figure of Rosas."[273] In reply to a 1986 interview question concerning the repatriation of Rosas' remains from Southampton, the federalist historian Armando Raúl Bazán exclaimed that, "the polemic between liberals and [nationalists] has become exhausted." Similarly, Enrique de Gandía, president of the Argentine Institute for the History of Ideas, asserted that, "no serious historian cared about the issue in any case."[274]

The apex of this grand process was produced under President Carlos Menem. Elected in 1989, this Peronist from the frontier province of La Rioja departed from the economic traditions of his movement, and instead implemented free market-oriented policies. These measures helped to expand the base of the *Partido Justicialista* – the sweeping Peronist party in Argentina – to include the wealthy and business classes.[275]

Symbolically, the Menem government authorized repatriation of Rosas' body from England. This action was portion of a larger policy known as "reconciliation and pacification." Menem was widely perceived as analogous to a caudillo – the man even grew out the historically stereotypical sideburns of the provincial leaders.[276] Yet the president strongly advocated for his fellow countrymen to "forget past fratricides rather than [revive] the divisions between two opposing models of nationhood."[277]

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[272] Ibid., 203.
[273] Ibid., 205-206.
[274] Ibid., 206. See Gerardo Bra, "¿Con Rosas o contra Rosas?" *Todo es Historia*, no. 227 (1986): 73-79.
[275] "Peronist."
[276] Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past*, 211-212.
[277] Ibid., 212.

Overall, the policy of "reconciliation and pacification" is best summarized within a speech given by Menem during the celebration of Rosas' return to Argentina:

> [O]ne cannot construe a real Fatherland upon the hatred between brothers. I know that the clamour of this time is to say no to revenge, no to division, no to resentment, no to sectarianism, no to ideological blindness, no to the arrogance of believing oneself to be the owner of the only truth, no to intolerance, not to the poison that comes from reviving our old mistakes, no to the spectre of reanimating our sad discords […]. By welcoming Brigadier Juan Manuel de Rosas we are saying goodbye to an old, wasted, anachronistic, absurd country.[278]

While it is unrealistic to assume that synthesis of the two competing national identities was serene, the Menem government significantly contributed to "overcoming 'the Manichean version of Argentine history.'"[279]

The fusion of the two national identities did not occur rapidly. Quite conversely, this chapter demonstrates that the process transpired for the better part of a century. Today, "although dominant constructions of Argentine identity might acknowledge the tremendous differences between the various parts of their country, they tend to identify the whole country with the *región pampeana*."[280] This is logical, as debate concerning identity historically emphasized the capital or the proximal pampas. Past Argentine writer-statesmen were not consciously creating a nation-state in Patagonia or in the Andes Mountains.

In sum, "although the liberal and conservative projects seem to contradict each other, in a short time both came to coexist quite comfortably: […] *gauchos* faces seemed to whiten, while the liberal-oriented school syllabus dictated the study of 'national dances' encompassing the folklore *pampeano*."[281] For the common Argentine, the country is Buenos Aires and the adjacent plains. Notions of argentinidad present at the start of the War on Terror continued to allow for

[278] Ibid.
[279] Ibid., 214.
[280] Ferradás, *Power in the Southern Cone Borderlands*, 36 (emphasis in original).
[281] Ibid., 39.

"negative spaces" within legal state boundaries. The next two chapters demonstrate that the Argentine perception of these "ungoverned" areas was extremely compatible with American dialogue during the early antiterrorism campaign.

Chapter 3: An Uncivilized Province

Cursory observation of Misiones Province demonstrates that, "a dense subtropical forest, known locally as the *Selva Misionera*, or simply the *Selva*, virtually covers the province."[282] Local inhabitants simply refer to the jungle as *el monte*, or the hills, due to respect and admiration.[283] Originally settled by the Guaraní, an aboriginal group, the province was later colonized by Jesuit missionaries in the sixteenth century.[284] Due to an emphasis on proselytizing activities, these religious men established a number of missions across the region.[285] Today, the buildings remain as abandoned and mystifying ruins; the awesome waterfalls of Iguazú only contribute to a potentially unfamiliar aura of Misiones.

However, it is erroneous to assume that Argentines perceive the province, as well as the Tri-Border Area, as an alien location. The previous chapters suggest that argentinidad creates "negative spaces" within the geographic limits of the Argentine Republic. To the average citizen, Buenos Aires and its adjacent pampas is the civilized state; Misiones Province is not. Yet this is simply theory. Thus, it is necessary to answer the following question: how is Misiones Province, as well as the Tri-Border Area, traditionally portrayed within Argentina? Evidence exhibits that Argentine national identity does indeed neglect the region. Misiones has been historically characterized as an uncivilized and anarchical location. Succinct examination of the area over time will demonstrate this argument.

The Tri-Border Area has been a contested region since the arrival of Europeans in the sixteenth century. Located away from the various centers of colonial power, the area was a minor

[282] Eidt, *Pioneer Settlement in Northeast Argentina*, 5.
[283] Ferradás, *Power in the Southern Cone Borderlands*, 39.
[284] Lewis, *A South American Frontier*, 34.
[285] Ibid., 44.

setting for the imperial rivalry between Spain and Portugal.[286] The Spanish Crown purposely ordered the Jesuit missionaries into the region in attempt to expand royal power. The several dozen missions created a more clear demarcation between Spanish and Portuguese territories. This gave monarchical agents expanded control over the "undeveloped and isolated frontier."[287]

After Latin American independence, the region was subject to combat during the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-1870), a devastating conflict fought between Paraguay and the allied bloc of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. The near destruction of the Paraguayan state designated Argentina as the dominant power within the area.[288] Misiones Province and the Tri-Border Area were incorporated into the Argentine Republic considerably after the 1810 Revolución de Mayo. The territory was designated as a legal province only in 1953.[289] Hence, the region was not accounted for throughout the primary stages of identity formation in Argentina.

Near the end of the nineteenth century, Argentine politicians became increasingly concerned about the lack of state authority along its northeastern border. Apprehension regarding lawlessness in the Tri-Border Area has been a conspicuous concern ever since. Buenos Aires moved to develop Misiones Province, yet the governmental scheme proved considerably unsuccessful.[290] As the province is located in a humid and subtropical zone, dangerous weather conditions abound. Hazards include frequent flooding, forest fires, extreme temperatures, and disease.[291] The "wasted" land is insufficient for large-scale agriculture, while the local "wandering peoples" were chastised as nomads without a sense of place.[292] Overall, the troublesome Selva Misionera created difficulties for both settlement and policing.

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[286] Ibid., 39.
[287] Ibid., 36.
[288] Ibid., 67.
[289] Eidt, *Pioneer Settlement in Northeast Argentina*, 10.
[290] Lewis, *A South American Frontier*, 67.
[291] Eidt, *Pioneer Settlement in Northeast Argentina*, 12-17.
[292] Ferradás, "Environment, Security, and Terrorism in the Trinational Frontier of the Southern Cone," 420.

The failure to develop the northeast frontier is symbolized by the fact that Puerto Iguazú is the smallest city in the Tri-Border Area by a large margin. This demographic is strongly compatible with perceptions of argentinidad because geographical zones significantly contributed to the formation of national identity. The temperate Río de La Plata estuary and the pampas are associated with white civilization.[293] Argentine scholar Luis Alberto Romero reveals that the idea of associating "grand civilizations" with cooler climates was a component of the national curriculum.[294] Empirical evidence demonstrates that this historic dichotomy between civilization and barbarism was applied to Misiones Province and the Tri-Border Area.

In 1883, President Roca commissioned a land surveyor named Rafael Hernández on an expedition into the newly acquired northeastern territory. Recording his experiences for a widely circulated porteño newspaper, Hernández wrote that, "an immense nomadic population inhabits the forests, poor, naked, barbaric, without knowledge of industry, sociality, patria, religion, this absolute source of all human legislation, nor of any other element useful for settling down and preparing the social, intellectual, and moral progress for the succeeding generation."[295] Perplexed, the man asked: "What is this? Who triumphs here? Civilization or barbarism? Between the man and the wild: who is the brute?"[296]

Alejo Peyret employed similar language during a parallel expedition to speculate on potential development in Misiones Province. Upon reaching the confluence of the Paraná and Iguazú, he wrote: "these big rivers run through the desert. We have not met, we will not meet any men during our excursion. Whose territory is this? It belongs to the tapir, to the toucan, to the dusky-legged guan, to the wild board, to the tiger and other animals. They are the

[293] Luis Alberto Romero, ed., *La Argentina en la escuela: La idea de nación en los textos escolares* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI Editores Argentina, 2004), 97.
[294] Ibid.
[295] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 60.
[296] Ibid., 61.

indisputable owners of this jungle."[297] These early images of Misiones Province in the Argentine press visibly emphasized its exotic and wild nature, untouched by development.[298]

This discourse is clearly compatible with the broader themes of Argentine national identity. The city on the pampas is civilized, while the jungle is an arena for backwardness and savagery. Such characterization of Misiones Province and the Tri-Border Area persisted throughout the twentieth century. The region was again isolated and stagnant by the 1930s.[299] As Robert C. Eidt observes, "by the modern period Misiones Province had fallen into disuse, and since its physical geography is so unlike the rest of Argentina's, it was purposely avoided by most citizens."[300]

Development of Ciudad del Este during the mid-twentieth century exacerbated the negative perceptions of the Tri-Border Area. Under the dictator Alfredo Stroessner, the Paraguayan state initiated the "March to the East," and established Puerto Stroessner on its eastern boundary.[301] Later renamed Ciudad del Este, the settlement was consciously designated as a center for state-sponsored smuggling in the frontier region.[302] Legal economic growth occurred, but the isolation of the Tri-Border Area and the traditional absence of clear borders heavily encouraged illicit trade.[303] By the late twentieth century, Ciudad del Este possessed a reputation as a global hub for contraband, corruption, and organized crime.[304]

An extremely vocal detractor of the Tri-Border Area around the start of the new millennium was Carlos Corach. As Argentine Minister of the Interior during the late 1990s, Corach publically criticized the region as an "enclave of impunity," as "outside of state control,"

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[297] Ibid., 68.
[298] Ibid., 69.
[299] Lewis, *A South American Frontier*, 77.
[300] Eidt, *Pioneer Settlement in Northeast Argentina*, 7.
[301] Lewis, *A South American Frontier*, 81.
[302] Ibid.
[303] Ibid., 82.
[304] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 120-121.

and as "a unique sanctuary of the world."[305] In the same way, Foreign Minister Guido di Tella suggested that, "there are some anomalous things that happen in the [Tri-Border Area] that we cannot identify specifically."[306] These concerns were not completely unfounded. Illegal activities such as money laundering, trade in counterfeit items, bribery, smuggling, and forgery occurred in the area at the time.[307] The Argentine state was also rightly concerned about the extensive trafficking of cocaine and marijuana across the porous border.[308]

Nonetheless, the dichotomy of national territory created through the historic formulation of argentinidad overwhelmingly informed domestic perceptions of the region at the start of the twenty-first century. The legible narrative of the Tri-Border Area continued to be based on, "the rhetorical opposition between civilization and barbarism, order and porous borders, state and frontier."[309]

Travel articles shared that, "everything is intense in the jungle," and that Misiones Province was replete with "mysteries" and "surprises."[310] Exposés shockingly revealed apparent epidemics, poverty, and criminality – all blatant aberrations to civilization and progress.[311] As Jusionyte crucially remarks:

> Although characters in news coverage change, the basic script only undergoes minor modifications: where once Hernández saw naked and illiterate savages, unfamiliar with the social norms of civil society, the Argentine metropolitan media now identifies marginal subjects who are incapable of following public health prescriptions and who cheat the state by trading in the informal economy.[312]

[305] "'Planea Hezbola atentados desde America' – Corach," ['Hezbollah plans attacks from America' – Corach,] *Reforma*, November 21, 1997, accessed March 14, 2017.
[306] Henry Raymont, "La 'Triple Frontera,'" [The 'Triple Frontier,'] *Reforma*, December 15, 1997, accessed March 22, 2017.
[307] Lewis, *A South American Frontier*, **7.**
[308] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 79.
[309] Ibid., 96.
[310] Ibid., 87.
[311] Ibid., 87-96.
[312] Ibid., 96.

Throughout history, "frontiers have encouraged dichotomies; they are invitations to Manichean schemes of thought."[313] Misiones Province and the Tri-Border Area are clear examples of this phenomenon. The province is simply not the port city on the pampas. "Anybody coming from Buenos Aires province is taken aback by the contrasts; they are assailed by fragrances and bright and shiny shades of green over an astonishingly red soil."[314]

Overall, Argentine national identity associates civilization with one, specific region. Hence, Misiones Province and the Tri-Border Area represent "negative spaces" within the polity. This chapter demonstrates that the region is subsequently characterized as ungovernable, barbaric, lawless, and mysterious.

The final chapter of this thesis utilizes the discourse-historical approach to establish that the international dialogue concerning the War on Terror was very compatible with domestic portrayal of the Tri-Border Area. As a result, the creation of a vague threat in the region contributed to the positive and genuine Argentine response to the global anti-terrorist campaign.

[313] Hennessy, *The Frontier in Latin American History*, 4.
[314] Ferradás, *Power in the Southern Cone Borderlands*, 39.

Chapter 4: Terror in the Tri-Border Area

On September 20, 2001, President George W. Bush stood before a joint session of Congress and announced initiation of the War on Terror. Within his address, the Texas politician presented a Manichean worldview: "every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists."[315] This rhetoric was met with uneasiness in Latin America.[316] Memories of recurrent American interference during the Cold War generated "considerable nervousness about the propensity of the United States to use force in a unilateral fashion." As a result, the War on Terror was not readily accepted by every state in the region.

Noticeably, the Argentine Republic was responsive to the American campaign. This is striking for a number of reasons. The South American state traditionally reacted sensitively to potential violations of its sovereignty and autonomy. More recently, U.S.-Argentine relations had weakened in the early twenty-first century. First, the Bush administration passively responded to the Argentine financial meltdown.[317] The message sent by U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Paul H. O'Neill "was essentially that the crisis [was] Argentina's fault and that the consequences of the financial collapse would be manageable."[318] Second, and soon after the collapse of the De la Rúa government, newly elected President Néstor Kirchner suspended the post-Cold War policy of automatic alignment with the U.S.[319]

In order to understand the aforementioned cooperation amid this visible dissonance, it is crucial to answer the following question: what were the factors that contributed to Argentine participation in the global War on Terror? Overall, empirical evidence indicates that the

[315] Michael J. Boyle, "The War on Terror in American Grand Strategy," *International Affairs* 84, no. 2 (2008): 191.
[316] Michael Shifter, "A Shaken Agenda: Bush and Latin America," *Current History* 101 652 (2002): 51.
[317] Ibid., 55.
[318] Ibid.
[319] Andrés Malamud, "Argentine Foreign Policy Under the Kirchners: Ideological, Pragmatic, or Simply Peronist," in *Latin American Foreign Policies: Between Ideology and Pragmatism*, eds. Gian Luca Gardini and Peter Lambert (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), 95.

international discourse of the antiterrorism campaign was very compatible with the characterization of the Tri-Border Area as generated by argentinidad. The political and media elites of Buenos Aires were thus easily convinced to cooperate with Washington.

An American Discourse on Terror

Following the strikes in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania, the United States crafted the War on Terror as a project to secure the American future. Consequently, unlimited time and space were allotted for potential military action.[320] The massive shock of the suicide-hijackings created the goal to produce and administer a "U.S.-centric" world, in which American interests could never be stunned by external events.[321]

In order to counter any catastrophic surprise, the opening decade of the War on Terror involved the creation of an "ever-expanding, always-on-alert, global security apparatus."[322] Attempting to anticipate the unknown, the global military campaign has been partially characterized by a series of "what ifs?"[323] Not-yet-visible threats were envisioned as constantly emergent and unlimited. Eventually such reasoning transformed the unknown into a space of terror.[324]

The 2002 "National Security Strategy" concretely identified weak states and anarchical environments as great dangers to U.S. interests.[325] Emphasizing rogue regimes, the report also stated that Washington would deny "further sponsorship, support, and *sanctuary* to terrorists by

[320] Masco, *Theater of Operations*, 1.
[321] Ibid.
[322] Ibid., 10.
[323] Ibid., 11.
[324] Ibid., 17.
[325] "National Security Strategy of the United States," The White House, September 2002, accessed March 21, 2017, https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/63562.pdf, 4.

convincing or compelling states to accept their sovereign responsibilities."[326] Finally, the document reveals that the Bush administration attempted to create the international norm of terrorism as illegitimate. The White House desired terrorism to be viewed "in the same light as slavery, piracy, or genocidal behavior that no respectable government can condone or support and all must oppose."[327]

This last quote particularly suggests that terrorism in the twenty-first century is uncivilized – or barbaric. In fact, American discourse after the September 11 attacks explicitly stated that terrorism was an affront to the civilized world. The 2001 *Patterns of Global Terrorism* report noted that, "leaders from around the world called the events of September 11 an attacked on civilization itself." The 2002 "National Security Strategy" stated that, "the allies of terror are the enemies of civilization."[328]

Plausibly, an original purpose of the War on Terror was to persuade "civilized" states to assume responsibility for vigorous "what if?" policing of terrorist groups within their borders.[329] This objective was certainly applied to Latin America following initiation of the antiterrorism campaign in the Western Hemisphere. Specifically, the United States was concerned with the absence of "effective sovereignty." Basically, U.S. national security was apparently threatened by the failure of Latin governments to exercise control over vast, yet obscure "ungoverned spaces."[330]

This policy was reinforced by then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, when he remarked, "terrorists and transnational criminals often find shelter in border regions or areas

[326] Ibid., 6 (emphasis added).
[327] Ibid.
[328] United States Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001* (Washington, D.C.: 2002).
[329] Boyle, "The War on Terror in American Grand Strategy," 193.
[330] R. Guy Emerson, "Radical Neglect? The 'War on Terror' and Latin America," *Latin American Politics and Society* 52, no. 1 (2010): 42.

beyond the effective reach of government."[331] These areas notably included the dense jungles common to many states throughout Latin America.[332] Abstractly, within these opaque forests and border zones, "a shadowy, faceless enemy [was] ready to strike at any moment, an enemy that is everywhere and nowhere at the same time."[333]

At the start of the War on Terror, Washington quickly alleged that Islamic terrorists had covertly infiltrated South America.[334] On December 19, 2001, Francis X. Taylor, then-counterterrorism coordinator at the State Department, declared the following: "it is no secret that you have, living in [the Tri-Border Area], more than 15,000 persons from the Middle East. Islamic extremist organizations such as Hizballah, Hamas, al Gamaat al Islamiyya, and others are using this vibrant area as a base from which to support terrorism."[335]

Importantly, a terrorist was not simply characterized as an apparitional menace possessing apocalyptic potential through use of weapons of mass destruction.[336] In 2004, General James Hill of the United States Southern Command asserted that, "terrorists throughout [Latin America] bomb, murder, kidnap, traffic drugs, transfer arms, launder money, and smuggle humans."[337] Cumulatively, the imagined threat was considerably vague and flexible.[338]

The United States emphasized a multi-faceted approach to combat the terrorist threat in Latin America. This program included intelligence sharing, enhancement of border security and law enforcement capabilities, combating terrorist financing, and military operations.[339]

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[331] Ibid.
[332] Weeks, Gregory, "Fighting Terrorism While Promoting Democracy: Competing Priorities in U.S. Defense Policy Toward Latin America," *Journal of Third World Studies* 23, no. 2 (2006): 62.
[333] "War on Terror: Target: Americas," The North American Congress on Latin America, accessed March 20, 2017, https://nacla.org/article/war-terror-target-americas.
[334] Cyril Mychalejko, "Dirty Business, Dirty Wars: U.S.-Latin American Relations in the 21st Century," *New Politics* 12, no. 2 (2009): 80-86.
[335] Emerson, "Radical Neglect?" 45.
[336] Masco, *Theater of Operations*, 27.
[337] Emerson, "Radical Neglect?" 42.
[338] James F. Siekmeier, "From the Cold War to the War on Terror: New Directions in Scholars on United States-Latin American Relations," *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 33, no. 65 (2008): 204.
[339] United States Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001*.

Washington also engaged in the training of militaries throughout the Western Hemisphere. Armed forces were instructed in counterinsurgency, urban warfare, psychological operations, and other tactics aimed at fighting internal enemies.[340]

Overall, "in Latin America, though with different levels of acceptance in each country, Washington…successfully implanted the omnipresent idea of 'new threats' and the proliferation of all kinds of dangers, including global terrorism, transnational organized crime, and international drug trafficking."[341] All of these villains operated in "empty spaces" where the state was absent or was markedly disappearing.[342] This narrative specifically portrayed the Tri-Border Area as exotic, lawless, crime-ridden, and, ultimately, dangerous. The U.S. government and global media outlets largely perpetuated an imprecise hypothesis that a plethora of terrorist organizations were operating in this frontier.[343]

Such international characterization is noticeably compatible with the historical Argentine depiction of the border region as barbaric and lawless. The following subsection demonstrates that the political and media elites of Buenos Aires, socialized through argentinidad, easily accepted the hegemonic discourse.

Welcoming the War on Terror

The Argentine government allows access to classified materials only thirty years after their creation.[344] As a result, it is not easy to ascertain the specific influences behind decision-making in Buenos Aires. This analysis relies on public speeches, documents from the Ministry of

[340] Weeks, "Fighting Terrorism While Promoting Democracy," 60.
[341] Juan Gabriel Tokatlian, "A New Doctrine of Insecurity? U.S. Military Deployment in South America," The North American Congress on Latin America, 2008, accessed March 20, 2017, https://nacla.org/article/new-doctrine-insecurity-us-military-deployment-south-america.
[342] Ibid.
[343] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 102.
[344] Hoyt, "U.S.-Argentine Relations."

Foreign Relations, and over thirty newspaper articles published within Argentina. Utilization of a discourse-historical approach situates this dialogue within the historical context of argentinidad, and within formulation of the War on Terror. Analysis demonstrates that Argentine officials and journalists utilized negative language traditionally applied to the Tri-Border Area in order to rationalize and reproduce the fight against an enemy defined by the United States.

An obvious traditional characterization of the Tri-Border Area situated in this domestic discourse emphasized the isolation and inhospitable geography of the region. The northeastern frontier was frequently cited as detached from significant Argentine settlements. On September 28, 2001, a *Clarín* article stated that Puerto Iguazú was located "1,639 kilometers from Buenos Aires and only 5 kilometers from the geographic center of the Triple Frontier."[345] Another article within the porteño newspaper similarly noted that the Tri-Border Area was "far from urban centers." A column within *Página/12* remarked that the region was a "gray area" within Argentina.[346]

Argentine journalists contrasted urban settings with a markedly different image of the Tri-Border Area. Andrés Oppenheimer, writing for *La Nación*, labeled the frontier as "unpopulated," and as an "empty space in the jungle."[347] A different story described the pursuit of "ghosts" through the "jungle of the Triple Frontier." The article also conceded that federal officials and the national security apparatus were "confused with the landscape of the area."[348] Because of this unfamiliarity, Argentine officials publically compared the Tri-Border Area to

[345] "Triple Frontera: Argentina se queja de Brasil y Paraguay," [Triple Frontier: Argentina complains about Brazil and Paraguay,] *Clarín*, September 28, 2001, accessed March 22, 2017, https://www.clarin.com/ediciones-anteriores/triple-frontera-argentina-queja-brasil-paraguay_0_S1aA1PeRFl.html.
[346] "La Triple Frontera, en el escenario de la guerra." [The Triple Frontier, scene of war,] *Clarín*, April 7, 2003, accessed March 14, 2017, https://www.clarin.com/opinion/triple-frontera-escenario-guerra_0_rk2-UyflCKx.html; "Triple Frontera, el mito de la tierra sin ley," [Triple Frontier, the myth of a lawless land,] *Página/12*, December 31, 2006, accessed March 26, 2017, https://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/sociedad/3-78457-2006-12-31.html.
[347] Andrés Oppenheimer, "La amenaza de las areas sin ley," [The threat of lawless areas,] *La Nación*, March 11, 2003, accessed March 14, 2017, http://www.lanacion.com.ar/479940-la-amenaza-de-las-areas-sin-ley.
[348] "Cómo combate la Argentina el terrorismo," [How Argentina combats terrorism,] *La Nación*, September 30, 2001, accessed March 22, 2017, http://www.lanacion.com.ar/210581-como-combate-la-argentina-el-terrorismo.

other far-flung and uncivilized regions of South America. These locations included as the remote jungles of western Brazil and the northern desert of Chile.[349]

The historic dichotomy between the civilization of Buenos Aires province and the barbarism of the frontier was also explicitly reproduced during the early days of War on Terror. In a compatible manner to the American discourse, domestic dialogue easily portrayed the Tri-Border Area as lawless, ungovernable, or anarchical. For example, a 2003 column within *Clarín* exclaimed that consecutive democratic governments had failed to expand into the northeast frontier after 1983.[350] The same article asserted that, "the Triple Frontier has become what is beginning to be defined as 'zones without law, without government, and without the state.'"[351] Oppenheimer similarly voices his shared concern with U.S. government officials over "the proliferation of 'non-government spaces' or 'lawless areas' in the region" such as the Tri-Border Area.[352]

A first-hand account of the region published in *La Nación* also characterized the region as lawless. After physically traveling between the three states, the author wrote that, "the border controls work the same as always, that is to say bad and little."[353] Emphasizing widespread corruption, the journalist sarcastically remarked that a traveler only needs two items to leave the Argentine segment of the frontier: pesos to bribe the gendarmes and a receipt from the Federal Administration of Public Revenue.[354] Another section of the report, entitled "No controls," particularly lambasted the apparent anarchy of Ciudad del Este.[355]

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[349] Mike Boettcher, "South America's 'Tri-border,' back on terrorism radar," CNN.com, November 8, 2002, accessed March 21, 2017, http://www.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/americas/11/07/terror.triborder/.
[350] "La Triple Frontera, en el escenario de la guerra."
[351] Ibid.
[352] Oppenheimer, "La amenaza de las areas sin ley,"
[353] "Nada se modificó en la Triple Frontera," [Nothing was modified in the Triple Frontier,] *La Nación*, September 17, 2001, accessed March 24, 2017, http://www.lanacion.com.ar/335915-nada-se-modifico-en-la-triple-frontera.
[354] Ibid.
[355] Ibid.

As late as 2004, reporter Daniel Gallo argued that the Tri-Border Area was the "weak point in the Argentine defensive chain."[356] Myriad Argentine officials agreed with this pronouncement. Employing discourse derived from both perceptions of argentinidad and the American discourse on terror, these elites were especially critical of border security. Juan Carlos López, Minister of Government for Misiones Province lamented that, "in Argentina, border controls do not work."[357] Interviewed by *Clarín* mere days after the terrorist attacks, an anonymous high-ranking Argentine source emphasized the "lack of border controls," and criticized past policies as "insufficient."[358] Somewhat differently, Hugo Miranda, then head of the Argentine Gendarmerie, criticized Brazil and Paraguay for a general absence of border security in the Tri-Border Area.[359]

Traditional portrayal of the Tri-Border Area as mystifying, lawless, and ridden with criminality suggests that Argentines easily accepted and reproduced the amorphous, yet multifaceted enemy in the War on Terror. In late September 2001, Inspector Jorge Palacios, head of the Department of Antiterrorist Investigations of the Federal Police, stated that, "terrorism is a ghost, it appears and disappears when it wants to."[360] Lacking tangible evidence of terrorist activities in the perplexing frontier zone, Argentine officials instead directed their attention towards mysterious "unknowns." Minister of the Interior Ramón Mestre believed that the border region, with its large Arab population, "may have dormant cells, as happened in (the German city of) Hamburg, where those who acted like pilots [on 9/11] had an absolutely normal life and

[356] Daniel Gallo, "Puede volver a ocurrir," [It can happen again,] *La Nación*, September 12, 2004, accessed March 24, 2017, http://www.lanacion.com.ar/635470-puede-volver-a-ocurrir.
[357] "Triple Frontera: Argentina se queja de Brasil y Paraguay."
[358] "Estados Unidos presiona por más control sobre la Triple Frontera," [The United States presses for more control in the Triple Frontier,] *Clarín*, September 20, 2001, accessed March 23, 2017, https://www.clarin.com/ediciones-anteriores/unidos-presiona-control-triple-frontera_0_rk7WZZwg0Fg.html.
[359] "Reforzan la seguridad en la zona de la triple frontera," [Reinforcing security in the Triple Frontier,] *Los Andes*, September 25, 2001, accessed March 27, 2017, http://www.losandes.com.ar/article/internacionales-22944.
[360] Cómo combate la Argentina el terrorismo."

nobody suspected that they could act."[361] An article within *Clarín* shared that Arab immigrants ridiculed the Argentines as crazy, but that "the federal government [supported] the hypothesis of the existence of dormant cells."[362]

Hidden Islamic extremists were not the only enemies that Buenos Aires was increasingly concerned about following introduction of the War on Terror regionally. Prior to 2001, the Tri-Border Area was already infamous for illegal endeavors. The inclusion of myriad illicit activities as threats to global security was therefore readily acknowledged in Argentina. State officials tentatively connected dishonest Arab businesses in the Tri-Border Area to terrorists groups such as Hezbollah, al Gamaat al Islamiyya, and Islamic Jihad. Often, these immigrant enterprises were merely associated with money laundering and fraud.[363] Yet this expansion of potential dangers eventually led to action. In 2004, it was reported that the activities of groups dedicated to money laundering were closely monitored because they were a potential source of terrorist financing.[364]

As a result of this symbiotic dialogue, the overall Argentine response to the early War on Terror was positive and proactive. The national media vocally and persistently advocated for more effective control of the northeastern border.[365] Within the government, Interior Minister Mestre admitted in 2001 that, "the axis between Puerto Iguazú (Argentina), Foz do Iguaçu (Brazil), and Ciudad del Este (Paraguay) is the *most worrying* item for the national government due to the *presumed* presence of militants, or adherents, of radical Islamic groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas."[366] More vaguely, Oppenheimer reported that, "according to Argentine

[361] "Triple Frontera: Argentina se queja de Brasil y Paraguay."
[362] "Los árabes de la Triple Frontera se burlan de las sospechas," [Arabs of the Triple Frontier laugh at the suspicions,] *Clarín*, September 16, 2001, accessed March 23, 2017, https://www.clarin.com/ediciones-anteriores/arabes-triple-frontera-burlan-sospechas_0_SyMi-PgCtg.amp.html.
[363] Mike Boettcher, "South America's 'Tri-border,' back on terrorism radar."
[364] Gustavo Carabajal, "Previsiones ante el riesgo de otro atentado," [Previsions before the risk of another attack,] *La Nación*, July 20, 2004, accessed March 24, 2017, http://www.lanacion.com.ar/620091-previsiones-ante-el-riesgo-de-otro-atentado.
[365] "Triple Frontera, el mito de la tierra sin ley."
[366] Jorge Elías, "Procuran activar una red antiterrorista," [Attempting to establish an antiterrorist network,] *La Nación*, September 26, 2001, accessed March 24, 2017, http://www.lanacion.com.ar/338128-procuran-activar-una-red-antiterrorista/amp/338128 (emphasis added).

intelligence officials, the Triple Frontier is a mecca of terrorism."[367] Accordingly, the De la Rúa government ordered security forces to allot "special attention" to the Tri-Border Area.[368]

Numerous sources from the Ministry of Foreign Relations demonstrate that Buenos Aires was generally concerned about terrorist financing.[369] The state subsequently attempted to increase its military and policing presence in the Tri-Border Area.[370] The 2005 *Country Report on Global Terrorism* reported that, "Argentine security forces were vigilant in monitoring illicit activity in the Triborder Area and potential support links to Islamic radical groups outside Argentina."[371] As stated by Magnus Ranstorp, a terrorism expert at the University of St. Andrews, "it's only the Argentines that are really dealing with it."[372] Perceptions of the Tri-Border Area fostered by argentinidad undoubtedly contributed to this behavior in the international arena.

[367] Andrés Oppenheimer, "El terrorismo islámico y la conexión latinoamericana," [Islamic terrorism and the Latin American connection,] *Los Andes*, November 18, 2001, accessed March 24, 2017, http://losandes.com.ar/article/opinion-26965.
[368] "Reforzan la seguridad en la zona de la triple frontera."
[369] "Argentina, Brasil, Paraguay, y EE.UU. trataran cuestión 'Triple Frontera,'" [Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and the United States address "Triple Frontier",] Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto, December 10, 2002, accessed March 27, 2017, http://www.cancilleria.gob.ar/argentina-brasil-paraguay-y-eeuu-trataran-cuestion-triple-frontera; "Argentina, Brasil, Paraguay y EE.UU. ('3+1') analizaron cuestión 'Triple Frontier,'" [Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and the United States ("3+1") analyze the Triple Frontier,] Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto, December 18, 2002, accessed March 27, 2017, http://www.cancilleria.gob.ar/argentina-brasil-paraguay-y-eeuu-31-analizaron-cuestion-triple-frontera; "Comunicado Conjunto: V Reunión Plenaria del Mecanismo '3+1' Sobre la Seguridad en la Triple Frontera," [Joint Communique: Fifth Plenary Meeting of the "3+1" Mechanism on Security in the Triple Frontier,] Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto, January 29, 2003, accessed March 27, 2017, https://www.mrecic.gov.ar/comunicado-conjunto-v-reunion-plenaria-del-mecanismo-31-sobre-la-seguridad-en-la-triple-frontera.
[370] "Ya instalaron en Posadas el radar para controlar la Triple Frontera," ["A radar to control the Triple Frontier is already installed in Posadas,"] *Clarín*, September 27, 2001, accessed March 14, 2017, https://www.clarin.com/ediciones-anteriores/instalaron-posadas-radar-controlar-triple-frontera_0_rJXZgDxRKg.html.
[371] Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2005* (Washington, D.C.: United States State Department, 2006).
[372] Jonathan Goldberg, "Blind Eye," *The American Prospect*, December 20, 2002, accessed March 19, 2017, http://prospect.org/article/blind-eye.

Conclusion

As a globally comprehensive military campaign, the War on Terror was transported to a plethora of countries on several continents. In select locales, such as Afghanistan, counterterrorism operations were authorized due to tangible threats. Differently, in the Western Hemisphere, the United States swiftly denounced the Tri-Border Area as an "ungoverned space" and a "terrorist haven" with minimal evidence. Nonetheless, Argentine political and media elites readily accepted and reproduced this dialogue. Consequently, the Southern Cone country participated in the early War on Terror.

This thesis argues that domestic perceptions of Argentine national identity, or argentinidad, indirectly contributed to the cooperation of Buenos Aires with American antiterrorism efforts. Evidence demonstrates that discourse stressing the inevitable triumph of civilization over barbarism constitutes the historical basis of argentinidad.[373] The two dominant constructions of Argentine national identity also emphasize either the cosmopolitan character of the hegemonic capital or the nearby pampas with its gaucho culture. More recently, these identities synthesized. Today, Argentines commonly associate the whole country with the región pampeana – which includes the central province of Buenos Aires.[374]

The powerful images associated with argentinidad do not account for remote Misiones Province. This northeastern territory is considerably isolated and has experienced challenges in regard to infrastructural development and settlement.[375] As a result, the average citizen visualizes

[373] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 62.
[374] Ferradás, *Power in the Southern Cone Borderlands*, 38.
[375] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 73.

Misiones as an uncivilized and impenetrable jungle.[376] The province is located outside of the sovereign and civilized state.

International discourse portraying the Tri-Border Area as exotic, dangerous, and lawless was thus compatible with argentinidad. This negative characterization of the region was therefore easily received and replicated by political and media elites in Argentina.[377] The possibility of a vague threat in the Tri-Border Area contributed to an eager and positive Argentine response to the American-led counterterrorism campaign.

The idea that national identity influences state behavior at the systemic level is significant for several reasons. It demonstrates that the idiosyncratic attributes of a state should be accounted for during the formation of both bilateral and multilateral foreign policy. Specifically, analysis demonstrates that programs related to the War on Terror must acknowledge state peculiarities in order to ensure cooperation and diligence. Conversely, recognition of national identity is also important for avoiding a "red herring" analogous to the Tri-Border Area.

To conclude, it is possible that a number of particular identities across the globe influenced reception of the War on Terror. In order to better comprehend the impact of national identity on this conspicuous, widespread, and lasting military campaign, it is recommended that an approach similar to the one adopted here be applied to other important actors in the early antiterrorism effort. Possible cases include Pakistan in the North-West Frontier Province and Russia in the Chechen Republic. The War on Terror will have consequences for decades to come. It is imperative to understand this historical process in its entirety.

[376] Ferradás, *Power in the Southern Cone Borderlands*, 36.
[377] Jusionyte, *Savage Frontier*, 101-102.

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