On Borders and Zoning: The Vilification of the “Triple Frontier.”

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“This is one of the world's great centers of lawlessness.” (Brazilian Federal Police official) 1

“We are worried... not by the things we see, but by the things we do not see...” (Francis Taylor, U.S. official) 2

“With myth, everything becomes possible” (Claude Lévi-Strauss). 3

In February, 2002, Argentina was removed from the list of 28 countries included in the U.S. “Visa Waiver” Program, and now Argentine citizens are required to exhibit visas to enter American territory. The exclusion of Argentina from that list came in the immediate aftermath of the country’s default of its private debt, the devaluation of its currency, and the State confiscation of the people’s banking deposits. The ghost of the “triple frontier” surrounded the event, and served the United States to justify such a change in policy.

What is the “triple frontier,” and how is it influential? In the heart of South America, right next to the Iguazú Falls, 1400 km NE from Buenos Aires, the point of encounter between the Iguazú and the Paraná rivers defines the borders between Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil. Next to the magnificent Iguazú Falls, which 10,000,000 tourists visit every year, and with an area of 11.58 square miles, the “triple frontier” is delimited by the cities of Puerto Iguazú (Argentina), Foz de Iguacu (Brazil), and Ciudad del Este (Paraguay). Two bridges connect the cities: Ciudad del Este is linked to Foz do Iguacu through the “Bridge of Friendship,” and “Bridge Tancredo Neves” links Puerto Iguazú to Foz do Iguacu. Tens of thousands people cross those bridges everyday, having their homes and jobs in different countries. 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.

Point of passage of the main flow of smuggling in Latin America, this tri-border area has been also associated with counterfeiting and other illegal activities for decades. Shopping tours to the quarter were habitually organized with shoppers avid to acquire “imported” goods—such as American jeans, Japanese electronic products, or French perfumes. The beauty of the Iguazú Falls and other close touristic attractions combined with the offer of affordable commodities attracted peoples from the Southern Cone. Nonetheless, things clearly changed during the 1990s, when the area was repeatedly linked to the terrorist attacks against the Israeli Embassy (1992) and AMIA (1994) in Buenos Aires. The biggest attacks ever held against the Jewish Diaspora community in the Western Hemisphere after WWII appeared to have been planned on from the “triple frontier.” Increasingly, the spot started to be associated to the “new threats” to global security—drug and arm trafficking, money laundering, terrorism. Nonetheless, it was only after September 11, 2001, that the American government became seriously concerned with activities taking place in the “triple frontier.” Since then, the border appeared insistently indicated as being a haven for international terrorism. Now, spies and under-cover agents from Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, the U.S., Germany, Spain, Israel, and countries from the Middle East bloom into the

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Like Casablanca during WWII, the cities on the border have seen their atmosphere certainly rarefied, their population suspected, their businesses broke, their tourists gone. Recently, the “triple frontier” has been defined as a potential “war zone” only less dangerous than the Middle East and Colombia.

What is true about the “triple frontier” and what is just a part of a myth is certainly hard to establish. Perhaps the distinction is not even important after all: the fact is that the redefinition of spots such as the “triple frontier” as zones of danger allows to predict future intervention. After September 11, there was a visible proliferation of narratives about the dangers nested in the area, and such an accumulation of narratives is beginning to produce tangible effects—the definition of a “zone of war” in the heart of South America.

The increasing focus on the “triple frontier” as a security “hole” has consequences on the surrounding area. Thus, for instance, meanings of lawlessness traditionally associated to the “triple frontier” would stain the entire Argentine territory after December 2001 and threaten to extend throughout South America. Of course simultaneity is far from causation, but the timing of the Argentinean economic collapse after a prolonged crisis suggests the construction of zones of danger may also serve to channel the effects of global financial crises towards peripheral locations. With focus on the “triple frontier,” this paper aims to identify the discursive steps and strategies of constructing zones of exception, or the grammar of the process of zoning, and to interrogate the function of processes of zoning in the normalization of crises within the global scenario.

Zoning

The distinction between safe and unsafe areas is the primary activity of sovereign power. Through this distinction, a sovereign decision is made distinguishing between those territories and peoples that belong to the polity and thus must be protected, and those that do not and therefore are considered worthless. At least in the tradition developed in the West, lawless areas have been always located beyond the limits of the polity, in the outside or the realm of the Barbarian. Simultaneously, spatial distinctions have always involved moral, legal, and aesthetic judgments. Thus, the lawless outside naturally appears as the location of everything aesthetically ugly, morally bad, not completely human, and ontologically threatening.

Decisions are precisely what found and ground sovereign power according to Carl Schmitt, for whom sovereign is the one who “decides on the exception.” Whenever we face situations that are neither foreseen nor regulated by the existent legal arrangement, we are before the state of exception. The exception exposes the existence of a gap in the legal order that can only be bridged through a decision. According to Schmitt, being sovereign is both being able to define the existence of a situation that exceeds the previsions of the legal order, and to decide how to deal with such a situation. From that on, the sovereign decision grounds a legal order. Sovereign power is then foundational because it emerges from a decision made in a realm that is previous to the existence of law. Nothing but a decision ultimately supports the law, which is to say that the juridical order is ultimately grounded on the realm of the non-juridical.

Giorgio Agamben develops the notion of sovereignty further. On the one hand, he argues that the realm of the exception is not left behind or overcome through the sovereign decision, but
that it coexists with the realm of the law and is presupposed by it. Thus, for example, the
“normal case” can be perceived as “normal” only in contrast to something else that is not, the
exception, which is negatively present in the very concept of normalcy. Classical political
philosophers such as Hobbes thought of these situations as pre-legal, belonging to the state of
nature. However, the exception is not pre but extra-legal, and its definition is simultaneous to the
definition of the law. Agamben shows that there is exception because there are places that are
excluded from the rule of law, and the rule of law is visible and meaningful to the extent that
there are places where there is none. Both situations define the two sides of the same coin, the
coin of sovereignty.

On the other hand, Agamben argues that the decision that founds the sovereign order is a
decision on the status of life. The grammar of sovereign power, the decision made on the
exception, consists for Agamben in distinguishing between the life that deserves to be lived and
the life that does not. Whereas the first one is qualified as human and gets a juridico-political
status, bios; the life defined as worthless appears as a mere biological fact, zoe or bare life, that
remains outside the juridical order and whose annihilation does not constitute a crime.

Agamben bases his interpretation on Aristotle’s Politics, where the Greek philosopher
considers life as human only if developed within the polis. For Aristotle, individuals and groups
who are stateless on a permanent basis cannot be fully human. Instead, they can only be bad—
Barbarians—or “above humanity”—gods. To the extent that all of us belong to the same
biological species we are all zoe, but only those among us who are included in the political realm
through citizenship enjoy the rights associated with the recognition of humanity. There is nothing
we can do about our inclusion in the political realm, which entirely obeys to a sovereign
decision.

What clearly follows from this argument is that, far from being natural, our rights are
given to us as the product of a sovereign decision and can be taken away from us. The gradual
deprivation of citizenship and legal rights targeting the Jewish people and other groups such as
Gypsies in Nazi Germany privilegedly exemplifies this grammar, which happens to be the norm
and not the exception of the grammar of sovereign power in the West. The only natural thing all
of us human beings have in common is our biological life, zoe, but zoe is prior to the realm of
law, therefore its annihilation does not constitute a crime.

But Agamben goes beyond this distinction on the status of life, and shows the need for
zoe to exist as the hidden foundation that turns bios, the life invested with rights, meaningful.
Accordingly, “bare life has the peculiar privilege of being that whose exclusion founds the city
of men,” as well as the definition of zones of danger proves essential to sustain the existence of
zones of safety. Despite the (hidden) presence of zoe in the city, this form of life logically
Corresponds to zones of exception, and this is why forms of life considered worthless tend to be
thrown outside (think of illegal immigrants everywhere) and forms of life existing outside are
assumed to be zoe.

Zoning is then the spatial grammar that accompanies the decision about the status of life:
through their exclusion, both life and territories deprived of juridical recognition frame and
enhance the virtues of bios and the rule of law, and ultimately of the protection of sovereign
power.

From this, “normal” spaces are characterized for the preeminence of the rule of law,
whereas spaces excluded by sovereign power are zones in which the juridical order has been
suspended. Within *zones of exception* there is no law but the “law of the stronger,” which is not really a law but the direct expression of desires and caprices of those who are in conditions of imposing their changing will through violence, such as the despotism of the father in Freud’s *Totem and Taboo*, or guards in concentration camps. But, are *not their decisions sovereign*? Yes, they are. Sovereignty appears in its purest expression in the state of exception, therefore the importance of studying extreme phenomena such as the concentration camps—argues Agamben.\(^\text{17}\) Besides, contrasting to the recognizable patterns developed in “normal” areas, *zones of exception* are identifiable by the *absence of patterns* and by permanent crisis and corruption.\(^\text{18}\)

**Outsides?**

The binary grammar of sovereign power poses the need of defining outcasts and zones of exception as the necessary background to frame the bodies and spaces that are included in the polity. In all cases, the differentiation is made between an inside that appears safe and an outside with which danger is associated. Traditionally, everything undesirable and undeserving was located *outside*. Through history, different sovereign units—from the Ancient Polis to empires to city-states to nation-States—defined their inside on different scales, and also framed the outside differently. Yet, with the emergence and development of the world market and the nation-state, the entire Earth became subjected by capital already at the beginning of the 20\(^\text{th}\) century,\(^\text{19}\) when the limits of the geographical expansion of capitalism were reached.\(^\text{20}\) Soon, the entire world was organized in nation-states after WWII, which left us without any real outside. While the Soviet bloc performed the role of outside during the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union turned the world into a homogeneous scenario made of one single market and a multiplicity of states.

What dramatically defines the newness of our present world is that *there is no outside*, which stands as one of the main characteristic of globalization. What are the consequences of reaching the limits of geographical expansion for the grammar of sovereign power? Both capital and sovereign power grow and expand now towards the inside. While capital continues “freeing the factors of production”\(^\text{21}\) towards the inside of society, sovereign power also develops internal processes of zoning and differentiations.

Indeed, by the time the world map was all taken, zoning began to develop towards the inside. Nazi Germany and its concentration camps constitute a paradigmatic case to see this shift. Germany was one of the nations to which the lack of “empty” space to settle colonies led into WWII. With the concentration camps, says Agamben, the space of exception acquires for the first time a permanent location *within* the polity. The camp is “a piece of territory that is placed outside the normal juridical order [yet] it is not simply an external space,” because it actually belongs in the Polis.\(^\text{22}\) Through the camp, society excludes those defined as worthless towards the inside, or rather it locates the outside inside. Whereas concentration camps express the extreme manifestation of this trend, the previous formal delimitation of ghettoes in Nazi Germany, the informal definition of ghettoes and inner cities today, or refugee camps, all exemplify the same grammar. Therefore, we are witnessing an era in which sovereign power reproduces itself through more artificially than ever territorial distinctions between legal or “normal” and lawless or exceptional zones.

Zoning must now organize a more complex, fractal structure consisting of layers that reproduce the divide between safe and unsafe, law and exception, overlap and incorporate within
them other layers presenting the same structure. Thus, world regions, countries, cities, and neighborhoods, all are structured along the same lines and contain each other as Chinese boxes. Not fractals, but the Möbius strip is the form Agamben chooses to illustrate this dynamics by which the normal and the exceptional, inside and outside, and the very limits between them become gradually blurred. Eventually, this process is leading to the generalization of the state of exception and the confusion between zoe and bios all over, modeled upon the concentration camp, which paraphrasing Schmitt, Agamben characterizes as the new Nomos of the Earth.

Global Sovereignty

The maturation of the global order makes apparent today the nature of capitalism as consisting of a single economic unit politically fragmented in nation-states. Though markets existed long before capitalism developed, they were too fragile to survive. Immanuel Wallerstein sees the political division of the system into nation-states as one of the secrets of the success and strength of capitalism. The political fragmentation of one single market allows regulating and stabilizing the system, or the “world-economy,” which he defines as

[A] single division of labour within which are located multiple cultures—hence it is a world-system like the world-empire—but which has no overarching political structure. Without a political structure to redistribute the appropriated surplus, the surplus can only be redistributed via the ‘market’, however frequently states located within the world-economy intervene to distort the market.

Wallerstein’s description of the world seems adequate still today. However, globalization must be added to the picture. The informational revolution that began with the launching of the first personal computers in 1981 led to a dramatic acceleration in communications and the circulation of peoples, commodities, and money around the world. The addition of innovations plus the lifting of state controls catalyzed a financial system that for the first time looks really global, in which transnational corporations dispute the leadership with the main world powers.

In Empire, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri recognize the validity of Wallerstein’s approach but underscore the need of acknowledging the newness of global production and relations of power. For Hardt ad Negri, the present phase of development of capitalism cannot be subsumed as “more of the same.” Instead, they see the revolutionary shift in communications organizing “the movement of globalization,” by “multiplying and structuring interconnections through networks.” Decentralized global networks structure transnational corporations, and such is also the structure adopted by sovereign power. Hardt and Negri define Empire as a “decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers.” In a world in which capital becomes global, so does sovereign power, though Empire is not a supra-State modeled upon the nation-state but a network that takes up organizational elements from both the Roman Empire and the U.S. Constitution. In the scheme advanced in Empire, the U.S. is relevant to the point that performs the role of imperial police.

As capital does not destroy but subsumes and develops non-capitalist relations of production until exhausting them, so does Empire with nation-states. The nation-state will still stay with us for a long time; yet, it is neither the principal engine of sovereignty nor constitutes
the permanent location of sovereign decisions anymore. Among other things, globalization corrodes state sovereignty, and with it any remaining possibility of distinguishing between inside and outside.

The “global space of sovereignty… has no outside,” say Hardt and Negri, and such a loss carries with it an increasing assimilation between “military action (outside the space of sovereign authority) and police action (inside).” Global is therefore the scale in which present processes of zoning become intelligible and processes of zoning feed the reproduction of sovereign power.

(Virtual)Zoning and (Virtual) Capital

Global sovereign power defines processes of zoning on a global scale. Yet, the concrete features of what is captured under the protection of sovereign power and what is excluded matter little. What is crucial is that the distinction is made. Therefore, Aida Hozic argues that in the present world processes of zoning are about creating the illusion of differences, although in actuality there may be none. In this respect, the virtual production of differences and antagonisms through narratives appears crucial to the definition of safe and lawless zones. Zoning then turns into the critical task of recreating dangers and threats, and channeling peoples’ and investors’ moves in a world scenario in which state territories increasingly resemble its own borders, the social landscape of borders reemerges in metropolitan inner cities, and the exception stains irregularly but progressively the world map. Zoning then becomes the task of producing differences that are turned into tools of sovereign power.

This is not to deny the existence of differences within the global order: in fact, flows of global investment are “highly concentrated and distributed very unevenly around the globe.” Most of the activity subsumed under the label of globalization takes place in the U.S., Western Europe, and China, plus a few peripheral markets such as Brazil, Mexico, and some places in South East Asia.

But the point is that more than these differences explaining the logic of zoning, it is zoning what seems to produce and deepen such differences. Global flows of financial capital are directed not only in relation to the maximization of profit, but also looking for a safe return. Yet, there is no security but in relation to something that is defined as insecure. Processes of zoning then displace the instability of the system towards peripheral locations and to orientate flows of global capital out of them:

The sovereignty of Empire itself is realized at the margins, where borders are flexible and identities are hybrid and fluid. It would be difficult to say which is more important to Empire, the center or the margins. In fact, center and margin seem continually to be shifting positions, fleeing any determinate locations.

As never before, centers and margins need to be continually differentiated and (re)produced. And while zoning cannot explain the pace and forms of development of capital, it serves to channel its movements and redirect its flows. In the global scenario, zoning, a foundational sovereign decision about the status of a certain territory and the life it contains,
appear as a prerequisite to define the areas in which capital settles. In the jargon of global capital, the equivalent to bios and the rule of law are called “juridical security” and “property rights.” Investors go behind these securities, and avoid exposing their capital to an uncertain return, unless profit rates are extraordinary and returns fast, conditions that are only found in short-term financial investments. The definition of zones of safety and zones of exception orientate decisions on investment, and generate a recursive grammar by which sovereign decisions reinforced by all kinds of narratives produce concrete results and material differences which confirm the original distinctions made between safe and unsafe areas.

Furthermore, the systematic definition of zones of exception and lawlessness appears as needed in the global context to stabilize increasingly unsteady scenarios. These zones, which may or not coincide with the national boundaries, perform the role of security valves, which serve to transfer the effect of global crises to the periphery of zones of exception.

The “triple frontier” is being progressively defined as one of these zones. From being an area simply associated with loose custom enforcement, it is becoming a new “axis of evil.” The understanding of such a redefinition requires examining power relations in the global context. Yet, what kind of security is this redefinition of the triple frontier providing for? Whose safety needs the unsecuritization of the triple frontier? How does it relate to the present crisis in Argentina? In what follows, I survey the process of defining the “triple frontier” as a zone of exception.

**Attractions on the “Triple Frontier”**

The Iguazú Falls are the main touristic attractions next to the “triple frontier.” In the last years, the Iguazú Falls used to receive about ten million tourists every year. The spot consists of 275 falls distributed in a “U” form that reach up to 70 meters and are located on the border between Argentina and Brazil. Inaugurated in 1934 and designated a part of the Humanity Natural Patrimony in 1984, what is now Argentina’s Iguazú National Park was created by Argentinean landscape designer Carlos Thays. Wooden walkways allow people to look over and enjoy the natural beauty of the falls and the thick tropical jungle surrounding the area. Historical attractions such as the Jesuit Missions on the Argentinean side, or sources of entertainment made for tourists such as casinos, water sports such as kayaking and canoeing, and “safari” excursions to the nearby Argentinean jungle or visits to Indigenous reservations, compete against shopping for the tourists’ attention.

“In the world, Iguazú is synonym of Brazil” : although most of the falls are on the Argentinean side, the place is generally associated to Brazil, perhaps due to its cheaper hotels. In fact, it seems to exist some division of labor between the three cities. Traditionally, Foz do Iguaçu’s 25,000 hotel places have been more affordable than the 2,500 places in five stars hotels in Puerto Iguazú (Argentina). Furthermore, Ciudad del Este (Paraguay) attracts shoppers—and now also worries security agencies from all over the world.

The amount of trade taking place annually in Ciudad del Este makes the economy of the city probably more important than the Paraguayan economy considered as a whole. Only illegal trade amounts between $10 and $15 billion every year. The fame of the Paraguayan city is known beyond the region, to the point of having been labeled by Forbes magazine as the “third
commercial center in the world” after Hong Kong and Miami. Yet, legality is not Ciudad del Este’s main feature: the legend says that former dictator Alfredo Stroessner deliberately created it as a center of smuggling. Counterfeiting and pirate factories also reign in the city, defining a play of mirrors that recall the postmodern notion of simulacra.

What is legal and what illegal, what is authentic and what fake in Ciudad del Este? Among the glittering goods offered in hundreds of shops mushrooming in the city, it is almost impossible to tell which ones are genuine. Actually, most of the sophisticated goods offered there are fake, assembled in the area or brought from Asia. Perhaps it does not really matter to the tourists who are happy enough with exhibiting their newly acquired Rolex watches, exclusive sunglasses and French perfumes.

How did this calm provincial place always packed with tourists and shoppers in search of entertainment and duty free shops become one of the most dangerous “security holes” in the Americas, these days more and more insistently linked to Islamic terrorism?

Signs of Terror

Many Argentineans still do not understand why Buenos Aires was chosen as a target for terrorist attacks. Worse, it happened twice, in 1992 and 1994. In the first occasion, an explosion literally smashed the Israeli Embassy, killing 28 people and injuring 250. Less than two years later, on July 18, 1994, the building of AMIA—the Argentinean Israelite Mutual Association—was pulverized by another bombing. In the occasion, 116 people were killed and 120 wounded, in what came to be the biggest attack against the Diaspora Jewish community after the Holocaust.

The attacks are still being investigated, and despite lots of false testimonies and misleading evidences, Judge Galeano’s search headed to the “triple frontier.” A few detentions made among members of the large Middle Eastern community living in the area, mostly from Lebanese and Syrian origins, credited suspicion towards the existence of terrorist activities in the “triple frontier.” Two organizations, Hezbollah and Hamas, are thought get funding and strategic support from the area. In November 2001, after checking a series of phone calls made before the bombing, Galeano held Muslims residents in the “triple frontier” accountable for the attacks, and he is also exploring an Iranian connection to the events.

However, a few months after the 1994 bombing, the Argentinean government announced the introduction of high-tech passports, what led the U.S. Department of State to grant Argentinean citizens the exemption of visas to enter the country. Buth with the discovery in 1996 of a plan of bombing the U.S. Embassy in Paraguay, orchestrated in the “triple frontier,” both the FBI and the CIA began to pay special attention to the area.

Examining new trends in matter of terrorist strategies that were brought about by globalization, Paul Pillar underlines the importance of “cyberterrorism,” the “ease of movements across international boundaries,” and their growing potential to maneuver despite long distances. According to the author, the latter can be seen in the appearance of what he calls “ad hoc” terrorists, or networks that are organized for a particular, punctual purpose, and then dissolve. Also, Pillar says, international terrorist organizations have built “globe circling
infrastructures,” such as the one belonging to Islamic terrorists in the “expatriate community” existing on the borders between Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil.

The cells in such networks perform a variety of functions, including recruitment, raising of money, procurement, movement of operatives, and other support tasks such as production of false documents. The infrastructures are also available to support terrorist operations far removed from the home base.\(^{41}\)

With references such as Pillar’s, the notion of the “triple frontier” being a haven for international terrorism is reaching an academic status. After September 11, the “triple frontier” has been increasingly defined as a “war zone.” In the Iberoamerican Summit held in Lima in November 2001, Brazilian Minister of International Affairs Celso Lafer acknowledged the existence of sources financing international terrorism in the “triple frontier,”\(^{42}\) and in mid January 2002, U.S. congressmen visited Ciudad del Este for four days “to get a first-hand look at an area considered a ‘hot spot’ for terrorism in South America.”\(^{43}\) Meanwhile, the U.S. State Department warned Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil are not able to prevent terrorist attacks originating in Ciudad del Este in case the terrorist groups assumed to exist there decide to attack Israeli and U.S. targets in Latin America. Over the end of 2001, posters of the Iguazú Falls were found in a house used by Al Qaeda in Kabul.\(^{44}\) Also, Jack Sweeney explains that “crime syndicates from Colombia, Brazil, China, Lebanon, Italy, Russia, Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Ghana are known to be operating in Paraguay.”\(^{45}\)

In his meeting with the Argentinean President Eduardo Duhalde in March 2002, American President Bush’s emissary Mr. Grossman explained that the ongoing war on terrorism in Afghanistan and the Middle East could be prolonged in Colombia and the “triple frontier.” According to Grossman, together with Colombia the “triple frontier” defines the second tier of military targets of the U.S. A few months later, in the 5\(^{th}\) Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas in November 2002, US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld expressed the Bush Administration view on the importance of uniting efforts in combating drug trafficking, which they see finances terrorist activities. Secretary Rumsfeld also proposed joining efforts in matter of peacekeeping between the U.S. and the South American countries.

“The area… has all the ingredients for becoming a global hotspot when it comes to terror,” says Timothy Pratt from The Sunday Tribune. Pratt quotes Timothy Brown, a former U.S. diplomat who played a crucial role as liaison with the Nicaraguan Contras. Suspicion on the “triple frontier” does not surprise Brown, in whose opinion “The concept of having international terrorist groups in Latin America is consistent with the region.”\(^{46}\) Pratt also mentions Douglas Unger, another expert on South America who recalls the long history of guerrillas in the region, to conclude that it has “always been going on—so why would it be a surprise that a group of Arabs is training when you have 50 years of this kind of thing?”\(^{47}\)

Narratives like these are perhaps the most effective tool in the framing of zones. And the definition of zones of exception anticipates intervention. Precisely, security analyst Jack Sweeney argues for increasing U.S. military intervention in the “triple frontier” as an attempt to contain Paraguay, “an increasingly lawless state with a fragile economy, wobbly democratic institutions and deeply ingrained corruption,” and to avoid it being swallowed by international gangs. Actually, joint military exercises, training, and subtle forms of intervention proliferated after September 11. DEA forces are presently training Paraguayan soldiers in techniques to
combat drug smuggling that also include counterinsurgency training. By the time US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld attended the Americas Defense Summit, after having already sent DEA troops a number of times and a special mission to combat dengue in 2001, the U.S. was seeking authorization to station military forces in Argentina.

According to Hardt and Negri, moral intervention “prepares the stage for military intervention” which is presented as “internationally sanctioned police action.” Interestingly, terrorism and drug trafficking are the main targets of global forms of intervention, and the “triple frontier”—Ciudad del Este overall—reunites both.

Borders and States.

“Modern sovereignty resides precisely on the limit.”

Porous borders trigger all kinds of anxieties. With “some of the most porous borders—and busiest black markets—in the world,” the “triple frontier” offers many reasons for concern. The attempt to tighten borders and strengthen border policing becomes one of the features that accompany globalization. The world is then looking paradoxically like a “borderless economy and a barricaded border,” which NAFTA privilegedly exemplifying this trend. Thus, the North American Free Trade Agreement, a major step towards a North American Common Market, carried with it both the increasing manufacture of American goods in Mexican territory, and the building of a new “Berlin Wall” on the border. However, although divided by such a border, if seen from above El Paso (U.S.) and Ciudad Juárez (México) the two cities look like a single urban conglomerate, and the people who inhabit them look pretty much the same, too.

What lies behind the intensification of this tightening of borders, also clearly visible in borderline areas of the European Union?

Frontiers are the skin of sovereign power and play an especially important role in the production of the state. In a seminal article, Timothy Mitchell argues that what we call the modern “State” is an effect of the very institutional arrangements it is supposed to generate. According to Mitchell, the performance of spatially normalized practices and rituals produces “the abstract effect of agency, with concrete consequences.” Hence, far from being the source of these practices, the State results from them. Following Foucauldian insights, Mitchell shows how modern disciplinary techniques served to meticulously organize a diversity of practices according to “space, movement, sequence, and position” since the 18th and the 19th century. Schools, the army, the police, and government offices all result from the same forms of organization and all of them materialize the state.

Mitchell identifies the practice of establishing and patrolling frontiers as one of the main sources of production of statehood. Frontiers produce the State. Far from resulting naturally from any preexistent national essence, frontiers manufacture such an element:

By establishing a territorial boundary and exercising absolute control over movement across it, state practices define and help constitute a national entity.

Setting up and policing a frontier involves a variety of fairly modern social practices—continuous barbed-wired fencing, passports, immigration laws,
inspections, currency control and so on. These mundane arrangements… help manufacture an almost transcendental entity, the nation state.57

The definition and control of borders is essential to zoning, even if the artificially defined sides do not offer real differences to safeguard. Peter Andreas shows borders are fundamentally stages for politics, which construct symbolically the differences they are supposed to protect. Andreas characterizes border policing as a “ceremonial practice, not only a means to an end but an end in itself.”58 It is the delimitation of zones and their patrolling what produces (the State) sovereign power. Hence the efforts to make frontiers coincide with the lines that draws them on the maps.

But real frontiers are never linear. In his study of the frontiers in the Roman Empire, C.R. Whittaker concludes “Ancient limites were never linear but were always zones” (C.R. Whittaker, 71). Zones and not lines constitute a more accurate representation of borders, in spite of the illusion created by walls built by the Roman and the Chinese empires.59 In his study of the frontiers in the Roman Empire, C.R. Whittaker shows the layered structure of borders, in which military, political, economic, and cultural frontiers are mobile and do not coincide. The notion of linear limits is modern, and it actually corresponds to the ideological narratives of the nation state as developed in Great Britain during the 19th century. Whittaker demonstrates that Ancient history was represented for us through those ideological lenses.

Borders are expected to separate, yet is hard to tell to what extent they divide or unite peoples and territories. Every activity consisting of differentiating and separating elements—from border patrol to policing—necessarily enters in touch and partakes of the opposite that must be excluded. As a result, the very activity of keeping territories and beings separated ends by producing hybrid and mixed—“contaminated”—identities.

But this globalized world is all made of hybrid and mixed identities. Thus, what is the meaning of borders in a progressively borderless world-market? Former empires appear as adequate models to make sense of the need for borders, since the definition of larger territorial units does not eliminate the need for control though it changes their nature. Hence, national frontiers increasingly mutate into internal regulatory zones within the order or imperial sovereignty.60

The newness of the present scenario—and its similarity with Ancient Empires—is that these internal regulatory zones are not defined necessarily on borders, but on places where flows of peoples, commodities, and capital circulating at an ever-accelerating pace must be controlled. Gilles Deleuze’s concept of the “society of control” grasps adequately this dynamics. In the present society of control, power consists not of stopping but of encouraging while regulating the movements of peoples, commodities, and capital.61 The society of control grows modeled upon corporations, with a soul articulated by networks of computers. Control is not repressive, but normalizing, ever-present, and regulatory. The increase in freedom of movements and creativity is yet accompanied by a proliferation and sophistication of controls. In the present societies of control, all of us are always under surveillance. This is why the serpent is the animal that best embodies the attributes of subjects in present society for Deleuze: “the man of control is undulatory, in orbit, in a continuous network,”62 controlled by his or her debt and not through direct forms of repression. Therefore the need of reassuring mechanisms of control—either
reinforcing the traditional national tools or proceeding to establish international ones. Tightening borders belong to the first category, peacekeeping efforts to the second.

But capitalism maintains most of the population on earth in poverty, therefore Deleuze predicts “control will not only have to deal with erosions of frontiers but with the explosions within shanty towns or ghettos,” which reinforces a paradigm of security (Foucault, Agamben), confuses police and military functions from the inside, and gives rise to global intervention.

Golden Borders

Borders also settle opportunities for trade—legal and illegal. Peter Andreas shows limits are always and everywhere contested, and how the very definition of a perimeter also defines the strategies for its trespassing. The creation of a border and of the specific bans it carries with it create opportunities for trade and define the strategies to contravene them. The division of labor within the world market also encourages nations to specialize in illegal trade. In some cases—such as Great Britain in the past or Paraguay these day—“the smuggling-based part of the economy” grows to be the most relevant within the world-market.

What is going to be traded and what smuggled depends on what the countries that share the border decide to consider legal, that is trade relies on a sovereign decision. “Laws and consumer demand are the most basic determinants of what smugglers smuggle,” says Andreas. Smugglers are also businessmen, only that outlawed for reasons of State policy. Furthermore, changes in trade regulations determine changes in patterns of smuggling. Hence, during the decades of Keynesianism, Fordism, and import substitution in Latin America—between the 1930s and the 1970s—smuggling specialized in providing people with glittering imported goods such as whiskey, cigarettes, or perfumes. Nonetheless, state controls and regulations were lifted since the 1980s, consumer goods circulated almost freely, and smuggling started to explore other more dangerous areas. Drug trafficking, and the smuggling of arms and immigrants began to characterize the flows of illegal trade. Paraguay neatly exemplifies the trend. According to Jack Sweeney,

Over the past decade, Paraguay's entrance into the global economy has attracted international criminal syndicates and terrorist organizations that view the country as a safe location from which to conduct illegal operations. As a result, Paraguay today is a strategic South American hub for international drug trafficking, arms smuggling, money laundering and counterfeiting, among other crimes.

Yet, Paraguay was not always a synonym of illegality. On the contrary, it was the most developed nation in South America in the mid 19th century. The journey that separates these two images may be understandable if Paraguay is approached as an early case of global zoning. And perhaps it also serves to anticipate other nations’ fate.
Ciudad del Este, the Pearl of Lawlessnessland

Most of the crimes take place in Ciudad del Este, a lawless city of between 150,000 and 300,000 residents located at the confluence of Paraguay’s borders with Argentina and Brazil, in an area called the triple frontier. Ciudad del Este is also a regional center for drug trafficking and arms smuggling.\(^70\)

A mid-size city, with a population of 234,000, Ciudad del Este has been christened “the contraband capital of South America.” The emplacement of about a hundred clandestine landing-fields scattered through the next jungle credit such fame. According to stories told by locals, former Paraguayan dictator Alfredo Stroessner purposely created the city as a smuggling center. The city is now becoming the center of a myth. So for instance President Bush warned “Paraguay’s political institutions are increasingly at risk of being overwhelmed by powerful international criminal organizations.”\(^71\) Accordingly, the report by the Economist Intelligence Unit refers to the Paraguayan money-laundering industry, which flourished in the 1990s. In 1994 more than 66 billion dollars went through Paraguay’s financial system, amounting 8.5 times the country’s GDP. Despite U.S. pressures to promulgate internal laws to prosecute money-laundering, in 2000 about 4 billion dollars were laundered in micro-commercial operations held mostly in Ciudad del Este.\(^72\)

The report on Paraguay by the Economist Intelligence Unit also underlines the destabilizing effects of contraband for Mercosur—the South American Common Market—where between 1989 and 1999 “about 35% of all goods imported from Mercosur partners were smuggled,” a percentage which reached 80%\(^73\) in the case of imported alcoholic beverages. Furthermore, when a network of smugglers of false visas and passports in Ciudad del Este was discovered a few months after September 11, it was suggested that international terrorists have been entering the Americas through the “hole” opened in Paraguay. Since not only Paraguayan but also Argentinean IDs were sold, and Argentina enjoyed the privileges of the U.S. “Visa Waiver” Program, that meant that eventually anyone could enter the U.S. legally with illegally obtained Argentinean I.D.s made in Ciudad del Este.

Ciudad del Este represents some of the darkest facets of Paraguay, and Paraguay in turn may well represent some of the darkest facets of the modern Latin American history. Paraguay stands today as one of the most corrupt, unstable, and backward nations in the region, exactly the opposite of its relative position within the continent at the beginning of the 19\(^{th}\) century.

Since the beginning of the Independence process, Paraguay kept an autonomous stand. In 1810, Paraguayans repelled the army sent by Buenos Aires to “liberate” Asunción. Soon, Paraguay displaced Spanish officers and declared its independence. Dr. Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia emerged as the leader of this process and became Paraguayan president and dictator.\(^74\) De Francia developed a policy of isolation to resist pressures from its powerful neighbors, Brazil and Argentina, who controlled Paraguay’s outlets to the sea. The strategy of economic development followed by the Paraguayan government was one of state control, with the organization of state-owned farmers, the “estancias de la patria,” through which the diversification of agricultural and livestock production was enhanced.\(^75\) The system guaranteed the relative well-being of the population, many of whom owned small and medium-size farms. Most Paraguayans, even the poorer, were free workers, in contrast to the regional panorama.
After De Francia’s death in 1840, a triumvirate led by Carlos Antonio López took power. López made Paraguay’s government into a constitutional representative regime, and furthered De Francia’s strategies with base industrial development, such as an iron foundry and a ship factory, the most modern industry existing in Latin America by the time. Due to previous success, López expanded the number of state-owned farms to 64, which produced export crops such as yerba mate and tobacco, achieved Argentina’s recognition of its independence, and established diplomatic relations with the U.S., France, and England. López understood the importance of education for development, thus by the time of his death in 1862, Paraguay stood as one of the most developed Latin American nations, with 435 elementary schools attended by 25,000 students, which made Paraguay’s literate rates the highest in Latin America.76

The next move, though, would lead to the secular decadence of Paraguay, in hands of Francisco Solano López—López’ son. When Brazil intervened in Uruguay in 1864, Solano López expressed his concerns about losing access to the port of Montevideo. That event, and the refusal of Argentina of letting him cross his troops to Brazil, led López to declare war on Argentina in 1865. Although López’s well trained army of 70,000 outnumbered the forces of the allies, the combined powers of Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay—with British support and the military leadership of Argentinean Bartolomé Mitre—would finally reduce Paraguay’s resistance, energies, and population through time. After Francisco Solano López’s death in the battlefield in 1870, Paraguay was defeated, pieces of its territory were taken by Brazil and Argentina, and a puppet regime led by Brazilians took care of undoing all what had been done through generations of effort. The state-owned farms were dismantled, the land sold at ridiculously low prices to speculators, and Paraguay was irresponsibly opened to foreign concessions. With the 20% of its population lost and a structural demographic imbalance resulting from the war, Paraguay would never recover.77

In 1932, Paraguay waged the Chaco War against Bolivia. Although Bolivia was defeated, the aftermath of the war worsened instability in Paraguay and led to a civil war in 1947, and finally to General Alfredo Stroessner’s coup in May 1954. Stroessner stayed in power for 34 years, and was overthrown in 1989 with U.S. support. Struggling between dictatorships—such as Stroessner’s—and military coups or attempts of coup—45 in the past 100 years—Paraguay “is the most politically unstable country in Latin America’s southern cone.”78

During the 20th century, Paraguay played the only role that was allowed for it to play in world and regional markets, the role of smuggler.79 The EIU consigns that Brazil, Argentina, and the U.S.

Have put pressure on the Paraguayan government to clamp down on the contraband trade based around the border town of Ciudad del Este and… have called for trilateral police surveillance of the area, which they believe has been used as a safe haven by international terrorists. Brazil and Argentina are also worried about illegal traffic in small arms in the area, infringements of intellectual property rights and the smuggling out of Paraguay of a range of goods under a preferential tax regime for alleged resale to tourists.80

Paraguay’s traditional lawlessness seems to have developed in the last years into drug trafficking to Europe and money laundering. With the increasing global instability after the collapse of the Soviet bloc, smuggling also may now include terrorists and biological and nuclear weapons, traffic that clearly after September 11 must be stopped—or at least controlled—by the
main powers. Thus, Paraguay—as any other spot where overlooking legal trade arrangements is easy—becomes under suspicion. And Ciudad del Este is Paraguay’s doorkeeper, in the “triple frontier.” Is Paraguay’s historical journey unique and exceptional, or does it rather illustrate the fate of those locations subjected through zoning?

Concluding Remarks: Anxieties on the “Triple Frontier”

Once narratives of danger become embedded in a zone—and all kinds of narratives may be turned into tools of zoning—it is a matter of time for international forms of intervention to take place. In order to (re)stabilize strategic zones of safety shaken by an increasing indistinction between normality and exception spreading all over after September 11, global sovereign power represented by the U.S. proceeds through zoning.

Thus, the “triple frontier” continues being defined as a potential zone of war, and the media constantly informs us that according to the U.S. authorities the area is one of the “most dangerous” zones of the Americas, which could even destabilize democracies in the region. Meanwhile, the Argentinean government does not challenge the hegemonic narrative on the “triple frontier,” but it redirects the process of zoning against Paraguay, 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. Argentinean authorities blame Ciudad del Este: “In case terrorist activity exists, that must be investigated principally in Ciudad del Este and Foz de Iguazu. Our main task is to avoid filtrations into the country”—said the Argentinean Gendarmerie chief. Argentinean officers keep on clarifying that the “problems” in the area “are not located on the Argentinean side,” and they insist on the safety of Puerto Iguazú, “the safest Argentinean city.”

The Argentinean strategy has been in place for a while. So, for instance, in 1997, former Minister Corach voiced former President Clinton’s concerns about the dangers in the area in Ciudad del Este. Clinton had asked the Argentinean government to double their intelligence efforts because the Paraguayan authorities seemed not to care. Immediately after Corach’s speech, he was declared “persona non-grata.” Also, Argentina has launched some impressive operations in the area. In 2000, more than 1,000 troops were sent to the “triple frontier” and in a few months they recovered “more contraband than in the last four years combined.”

To what extent activities taking place in this spot are actually threatening democracies in the Americas—or rather “zones of exception,” “zones of war,” and “zones of danger” are just defined and constructed to justify intervention and regain stability in the centers—is difficult to establish. Those who argue that there is nothing in the “triple frontier” and see the U.S. promoting a campaign of defamation against the area to justify intervention, also suggest that the Argentinean interest in finding Islamic terrorists in the “triple frontier” aims to hide the complicity of Argentinean security forces in the 1994 bombing.

The fact is that a new amorphous and mobile zone of exception overflows from the security hole opened in the “triple frontier” to Argentina, and from it threatens to stain other areas in South America like a domino effect. If the economic collapse of the country was felt as terminal, decadence and decomposition do not announce extinction, but are systemic elements within Empire. Following Hardt’s and Negri’s insights, we should see the decadence,
decomposition, and corruption of national sovereignties as the motorizing force that impulses the further expansion of global sovereignty through intervention. The loss of protagonism in the world market is not the same that ceasing to exist. What changes is one’s own status: indeed, all of those spaces of modernity that collapse do not exactly disappear but become zones. The framing of the “triple frontier” as a zone of insecurity anticipates the “borderization” of Argentina, and both seem to contribute to stabilize the convulsed North. And, as it occurred to Paraguay before, Argentina seems to be entering a process of redefinition as a zone of exception, in the convulsed heart of South America.
### Triple Frontier, Overview of the Process of Zoning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Characterize the spot</th>
<th>Changes</th>
<th>Blame</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The U.S. The (American) Media</td>
<td>✓ “Porous common border,”</td>
<td>Islamic terrorists are fanning out to smaller towns and Sao Paulo</td>
<td>Hezbollah, Al Qaeda, Jihad, FARC, ETA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terrorist groups raise money and</td>
<td>✓ “Law enforcement is lax,”</td>
<td></td>
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<td>hide people in the “triple frontier.”</td>
<td>✓ “money laundering,” association between terrorist and criminal organizations”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ “terrorist sleeping cells,” terrorist “training camps,” “very complex and lucrative funding network for Hezbollah”</td>
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<td>✓ Together with Colombia, possible scenario for the continuation of the war on terrorism after Afghanistan and the Middle East (Grossman, from the Bush Administration)...</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ In 1997 in Buenos Aires, Former U.S. President Clinton warned about the “potential danger” for the continental security represented by the area.</td>
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<td>✓ “South America’s busiest contraband and smuggling center, a corrupt, chaotic place where just about anything from drugs and arms to pirated software and bootleg whisky are available to anyone who can pay the price.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ “Argentine and American officials describe the area, with its large Arab immigrant population, as teeming with Islamic extremists and their sympathizers”, “those businesses have raised or laundered more than $50 million in recent years for terrorist groups”</td>
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<td>✓ Of the three countries that converge here, only Argentina has been attacked by Islamic terrorist groups.</td>
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<td>✓ The Bush administration said today that it had grown increasingly worried about the activities of Islamic militants in the <strong>Triple Frontier</strong> region... and that it was stepping up efforts to stanch what it says is the flow of funds from the largely unregulated area to terrorist groups in the Middle East.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld expressed that Washington holds Latin American countries responsible for their part in the war on terrorism and drug trafficking.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ciudad del Este &amp; Paraguay</td>
<td>Considered “a center of smuggling, “arms and drug trafficking,” and commercialization of “false visas and passports.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Paraguay’s (un)rule of law and generalized corruption conspire against the anti-terrorist efforts.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Potential danger for the continental security.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Site of origin of possible Islamic terrorist actions.</td>
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- **Argentina:** supports the U.S.’ claims on the “triple frontier,” but making clear that all supposedly illegal activities take place on the Paraguayan and the Brazilian side of the border, not in Argentina.

- **Puerto Iguazu** is “the safest Argentinean city.”

- **Stigmatizes Ciudad del Este & Foz do Iguaçu.**
  The “population under suspicion” are concentrated in these cities: “teeming with Islamic terrorists,” **Ciudad del Este** was characterized as a “den of corruption” and “illegal sanctuary of impunity” by Carlos Corach in 1997.
  The authors of the bombings to the Israeli embassy (1992) and AMIA (1994) are supposed to have entered Argentina through the “triple frontier.”

- **Hezbollah, Hamas**
Brazil

Concerns for eventual terrorist activity in the area.
Call to join efforts to increase regional security.

Paraguay

But...
More evidence is needed.

Locals

Denounce to be victims of a witch-hunt.
Claim to be suffering from an unfair image ("there are no proofs"), ethnic discrimination, intolerance to ethnic and religious diversity.
We have nothing to do with Hezbollah here, and Hezbollah doesn't need money from the people here." "Their money comes from Iran, so they don't need to take anything from hungry merchants in a far-off place like this."91

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4 Relea, Francesc, “El País”, November 9, 2001
6 The crises of Enron, Worldcom, and Argentina hit the international banking system. Yet, it only led to collapse in Argentina, with $140 billion taken out of the country and about 60% of the population sinking into poverty, while signs of economic recovery soon appeared in the North. Branford, Becky, “Hunger Follows Crisis in Argentina,” October 16 2002/”Enron and Argentina Hit JP Morgan,” January 17, 2002/”Swiss Banking giant Sees Profit Fall,” March 12, 2002/ “Investors Count WorldCom Costs,” June 27, 2002, BBC (http://news.bbc.co.uk).
7 What is the distinction between civilization and barbarianism but the product of a sovereign decision?
8 The relationships between different hierarchical orderings—spatial, moral, aesthetic, bodily—is thoroughly examined by Peter Stallybrass and Allon White in The Politics and Poetics of Transgression, Cornell University Press, 1986.
9 Schmitt, Carl. Political Theology, the MIT Press.
10 Schmitt, op. cit., p. 6.
11 Schmitt, op. cit., p. 10.
13 “Hobbes, after all, was perfectly aware, as Strauss has underscored, that the state of nature did not necessarily have to be conceived as a real epoch, but rather could be understood as a principle internal to the State revealed in the moment in which the State is considered ‘as if it were dissolved’” (Agamben, op. cit., 36).
14 “It is evident that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal. And he who by nature and not by mere accident is without a state, is either a bad man or above humanity,”Aristotle, Politics, Book I, II
15 Agamben, op. cit., p. 7.
16 Agamben, ibidem.
17 The main difference between the legal order and the state of exception is that sovereignty in the first has framed and founds a mediated rational legal order which is suspended only before new exceptions.
18 “Corruption” is understood here following Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, as a “general process of decomposition or mutation…. We might think of corruption, then, as de-generation—a reverse process of generation and composition. A moment of metamorphosis that potentially frees spaces for change.” (Hardt, Michael, and Antonio Negri, Empire, Cambridge, Harvard University Press. 1998, 201).
19 “In the case of geographical expansion, these limits were largely reached at the beginning of the twentieth century,” Wallerstein, Immanuel, “A World-System Perspective on The Social Sciences,” British Journal of Sociology, Vol. 27, Number 3, September 1976, p. 351.
20 Wallerstein, op. cit.
21 “In the case of internal expansion, there is still much room. The world is probably halfway, more or less, in the process of freeing the factors of production. But here too the world eventually approaches an asymptote, at which point the possibility of resolving economic crises will largely disappear, and thereby we will enter into a true crisis of the system as such.” (Wallerstein, op. cit., ibidem).

23 Shapes containing substructures that reproduce the same shape, which in turn are made of substructures that reproduce the same shape, and go on “indefinitely like that, never bottoming out in ordinary curves, are called *fractals*” (Hofstadter, Douglas, *Metamagical Themas*, Bantam Books, published by arrangement with Basic Books, Inc., June 1986, 423).


25 The concept of “nomos of the Earth” is Carl Schmitt’s. Schmitt refers to the territorial strategies of taking, organizing, distributing, and exploiting the Earth by humans as “nomos,” and describes how the nomos of the Earth changes through history.

Wallerstein, op.cit., p. 348.


28 Hardt & Negri op. cit., p. 32.

29 Hardt, “Sovereignty.”

Hozic, 2002:4


33 Hardt & Negri op. cit., p. 39.

35 Hernando de Soto in his book *The Mystery of Capital*, presents a convincing argument centered in the crucial importance of property rights as the difference that explains the gap between developed and underdeveloped countries.

37 “Las Noches de Luna Llena, las Cataratas son más Misteriosas,” *La Nación*, 05/10/2002.

38 Juan Francisco Pérez Bretón, manager of teh Iguazú Grand Hotel Resort & Casino, qtd. by Alejandro Rebossio, “En el País Vecino Todo Está a Mitad de Precio. Brasil Gana en las Cataratas,” *La Nación*, 08/05/00.


40 “El triángulo de los fantasmas” *La Nación*, Buenos Aires, 10/19/1997.


42 Isaacson, “Preface” in Kierman, Sergio.

44 Definitions of globalization are numerous and diverse. In this paper, I understand globalization following Todd Landman as “the increasing interconnectedness of the world across all aspects of life. As a historical process, it is a pattern of relationships and trends in the evolution of nation states from the first empires to the present day. As an end-state, it is a world where all countries enjoy freedom, democracy, and wealth. As a cause, it accounts for disparities in wealth, dominance of capital, the erosion of local communities, the effective disenfranchisement of individuals, subordination, exploitation, and increasing levels of global inequality. As an effect, it is the world-wide spread of a homogeneous culture that celebrates the consumption of goods and products produced in the West” (Landman, Todd, *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics*, Routledge, 2000, p. 220.

46 On mid November, 2001, CNN transmitted a polemic image: the interior of a house in Kabul identified as a part of Al Qaeda’s headquarters appeared exhibiting a poster with the image of the Iguazú Falls. Immediately, rumors started to circulate about the links between Al Qaeda and the “triple frontier” (Andersen).

47 Pratt, op. cit.


50 Hardt and Negri, op. cit., p. 37.

51 Hardt and Negri, op. cit., p. 167.


60 Andreas, op. cit., p.152
Workers have more freedom than they used to have in Taylorist factories, but freedom is allowed to them to the extent it serves to increase productivity (so, for instance, the mythical tales about people informally dressed working for Microsoft in CA, or people taking breaks in Japanese corporations).

Deleuze, Gilles, “Postface for a Society of Control.”

Deleuze, op. cit.

Andreas, op. cit.

Andreas defines Paraguay as “a major smuggling transshipment hub, a distribution center for the smuggling of America’s cigarettes and other products into South America,” Andreas, 19.

Ibidem.

Andreas, 17.

“The U.S. State Department estimates that Paraguay moves 10 metric tons of cocaine annually to Europe and the United States. Other estimates, however, range up to 40 metric tons annually. Paraguay also produces some of the highest-grade marijuana on the continent and exports most of it to Brazil, which now ranks as the largest consumer market in Latin America for cocaine, heroin, marijuana and so-called ‘club drugs’ like Ecstasy. Criminal gangs in Paraguay also have ties to Colombia’s largest rebel group. Paraguayan officials arrested a Colombian citizen in Ciudad del Este last year as he tried to arrange a cocaine-for-weapons swap on behalf of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Links between crime syndicates in Ciudad del Este and the FARC date from the mid-1990s at least.” Sweeney, Jack

Ibidem.

Ibidem.


Ibidem.


Keen, op. cit., p. 198.

Keen, op. cit., p. 203.

Keen, op. cit., p. 204.

Bellos, Alex, “Paraguay’s fugitive general held in Brazil,” Guardian Foreign Pages, June 13, 2000.

Andreas, op. cit.

EIU, op. cit.

Washington will not be able to stop the spread of international criminal groups in Paraguay and may face increased attacks not only from criminal gangs, but also from Arab extremists living in Paraguay, if the Israeli-Palestinian conflict escalates into all-out war. Paraguay has long been a home to Arabs linked to the Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad militias.” Sweeney


“The idea that Argentina does not exist becomes more and more obsessive. Black stains grow in the world atlas. Sometimes, they cover entire countries, or cities that used to be brilliant and participate in the world’s life. Now, they are countries without production, without active population, without an organized economy… [and] its exemplary character is that it rapidly advances towards decadence and decomposition” Página12.


Dao, James.