

**PREDICTING ALLIANCES AMONG PROTO-STATE ACTORS IN
19TH CENTURY SOUTH AMERICA**

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Introduction:

Scholars of international politics focus a lot of attention on alliances. Realist theories portray alliances as prominent tools for balancing power (e.g. Morgenthau 1948:Chapter 10; Rosecrance 1963). Collective security theories give pride of place to alliances because a collective security system cannot exist without one (e.g. Claude 1962:Chapter 4). Liberal theorists care a lot about alliances too, because some critics have argued that democratic exceptionalism is caused by a heightened proclivity of democracies to ally with each other (e.g. Russett 1993:Chapter 4; Russett and Oneal 2001:Chapter 3; Reiter and Stam 2002:Chapter 4).

Given this wide range of theoretical rationales promoting the prominence of alliances in international politics, it is no surprise that the Correlates of War project has collected and maintained the Formal Interstate Alliance dataset (hereafter “COW”, see Singer and Small 1966; Gibler and Sarkees 2004). Nor is it surprising that a new data compilation, the Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions dataset (hereafter “ATOP”, see Leeds et al. 2002), has received substantial attention.

With so much well-documented, comprehensive, and readily-available data, it is natural that an enormous literature has been produced about alliance politics. As a result, we know something about which states are likely to ally (Lai and Reiter 2000), how long alliances will last (Morrow 1991; Bennett 1997), how allies share burdens within alliances (Palmer 1990), whether alliances increase the probability of war (Levy 1981; Oren 1990), how reliable alliances are (Leeds, Long and Mitchell 2000), how states trade off between alliances and substitutable alternate policies (Palmer and Morgan 2006:Chapter 7), about links between alliances and trade (Gowa 1994), and about interconnections between alliances and economic institutions generally (Powers 2004). Each of these references could be supplemented with many more; a large sub-literature exists for each aspect of alliance politics (recent general summaries of alliance research include Maoz 2000; Gibler 2000; Sprecher and Krause 2006).

If alliances are not the most-commonly studied aspect of international politics, they are near the top of the list. And so, a great deal of what we know about international politics is information uncovered during the course of analyzing alliances. Useful as this information is, the analysis of alliance politics has informed what we know about international politics only among *official state* members of the international system. Virtually all research in international politics, and certainly everything cited above, analyzes officially-recognized members of the interstate system. Only actors satisfying diplomatic recognition and/or minimum population criteria are included in past work on alliances specifically or international politics more broadly.

This is an unnecessary limitation. There is nothing implicit or explicit in any theory of international politics that restricts its empirical purview to the behaviors only of UN members. When creating neorealism Kenneth Waltz claimed “Balance-of-power politics prevail wherever two, and only two, requirements are met: that the order be anarchic and that it be populated by units wishing to survive” (1979:121). Legal recognition is not a requirement for realist theory. There is no convincing argument for restricting realism or any other theory of international politics to the subset of Autonomous Political Entities (APEs) that enjoy diplomatic recognition. Consequently, if we would evaluate theories of international politics against the behaviors of all relevant actors, we must study the interactions of state-like but unrecognized political entities along with the interactions of officially-recognized states (and, of course, we would study the interactions of officially-recognized states with unrecognized APEs as well).

A few students of international politics have published studies in which IR theories are evaluated against the behaviors of non-state actors (Ember, Ember and Russett 1992; Crawford

1994; Sobek 2003; and Bapat 2006). I contribute to this small body of literature with analyses of the alliance politics of a group of APEs that existed in the Rio de la Plata region of South America from 1810 through 1862. Some of these APEs enjoyed legal recognition by official states from Europe and elsewhere, but the bulk of them existed without such recognition. They, nevertheless, governed themselves independently, fielded armies, formed alliances, waged wars, and conquered or were conquered by each other. They were survival-oriented actors operating within an anarchic international sub-system. Their alliance behaviors conform closely with patterns established in studies of official states. And in addition, consideration of these unofficial APEs' alliances provides needed context to clarify why official state alliances in the region during this time period were formed.

As my empirical domain is likely unfamiliar to most readers, I begin with a brief history of the Rio de la Plata region during the first half of the 19th century. I particularly highlight alliances formed among APEs in the region, and compare these "unofficial" alliances with those among the area's recognized states, that is, with those few regional alliances already included in COW and ATOP databases. Then, in a replication of prominent official-state alliance research, I discover clear parallels between the correlates of official-state alliances and the correlates of alliances among these APEs. I elaborate on this close similarity by demonstrating that the alliances formed in the Rio de la Plata region were efforts to balance against the region's strongest actor and biggest threat, and thus that balance of power politics operated. Of course, this is precisely what Waltz's quote would lead us to expect since anarchy and survival-orientation characterized the regional system and its actors.

Historical Sketch:

The Rio de la Plata region of South America comprises modern day Uruguay and Argentina. Under the Spanish empire the area was a Viceroyalty, with Buenos Aires as the vice-regal capital. In 1810 rebellious elements took advantage of Spain's pre-occupation with the Napoleonic wars, and asserted independence. Their ensuing rebellion was quickly successful, but independence was far easier to achieve than was national unity, as the viceroyalty splintered in four. Buenos Aires predominated in the coastal and riparian areas, Cordoba controlled the center, the indigenous peoples were independent in the southern Pampas, and Salta dominated the west. Disagreements arose among Buenos Aires, Cordoba, and Salta over whether and how to reunify the region. Buenos Aires strongly favored re-establishing its traditional predominance over the other territories, while Cordoba and Salta favored autonomy. This Unitarian-Federalist division defied resolution for the next four decades. And in the ensuing years three of the four original APEs were so rent by secessions that from 1810 to 1862 as many as twenty APEs populated the geopolitical map of the region.

Historians specializing in the region and period are consistent in their descriptions of it as an international sub-system of autonomous political entities (see particularly: Criscenti 1961; Rock 1985, 2002; and Lynch 1993; although I draw on many additional sources). A representative illustration of this consensus depicts the region thusly:

“the term Argentina generally denoted during the first half of the nineteenth century a geographical area that was broken up into several quasi-independent provinces or states, each struggling to wrest power and wealth from its neighbors...With emancipation from Spain...the loosely governed viceroyalty began to break into sovereign states.” (Criscenti 1961:367-368).

Uruguay underwent a similar lengthy process of violent state making, closely connected to that in the future Argentina. Indeed, Banda Oriental/Uruguay was, in 1810, part of Buenos Aires, and Uruguayan and Argentine APEs allied with and warred on each other frequently. Ten wars were waged between local APEs during the time period (Rio de la Plata warfare is studied in Lemke 2006a). Secessionism resulted in new APEs from the territories of existing APEs (Rio de la Plata secessionism is analyzed in Lemke 2006b). Militarized struggles over the governance of the region persisted until 1851 when a coherent Uruguay emerged under Montevideo's control, and until 1862, when Buenos Aires established control over a unified Argentina. The rest of the region's APEs died in these violent struggles. They were conquered by and incorporated into the survivors (Rio de la Plata APE deaths are analyzed in Lemke 2006b).

I code new APEs as emerging in the Rio de la Plata region when their secessions or declarations of independence were sustained. Additionally, when at least one historian listed an APE as an independent participant in a war, or indicated that an APE signed a treaty of alliance with another, I treat this as evidence of the independent existence of that actor as an APE. Some Rio de la Plata APEs were more successful in augmenting local independence with foreign recognition. In the 1820s Buenos Aires and Montevideo/Uruguay secured recognition from France and Britain (although low population kept Montevideo/Uruguay from membership in the COW international system). Buenos Aires' fortunes waned considerably by the early 1850s, such that diplomatic recognition was transferred to an Argentine Confederation headquartered in Entre Rios. But Buenos Aires rebounded in the 1850s and reasserted itself such that in a war against Entre Rios and the combined forces of the other Argentine APEs from 1859-1862, Buenos Aires won and finally created a coherent Republic of Argentina.

A roster of Rio de la Plata APEs is presented in Table 1. In constructing this list, I included APEs if at least one historian cited them as having successfully asserted independence, or as having signed treaties with other independent APEs, or as having waged war with them.

TABLE 1: AUTONOMOUS POLITICAL ENTITIES IN THE RIO DE LA PLATA

Autonomous Political Entity	Years of Existence
Banda Oriental	1812-1819
Buenos Aires	1810-still in existence
Catamarca	1821-1862
Cordoba	1810-1862
Corrientes	1814-1819, 1821-1862
Cuyo	1813-1820
El Cerrito	1843-1851
Entre Rios	1812-1862
Jujuy	1834-1862
La Rioja	1820-1862
Mendoza (rump of Cuyo)	1821-1862
Misiones	1821-1826
Pampas Tribes	1810-1879
Salta	1810-1862
San Juan	1820-1862
San Luis	1823-1862
Santa Fe	1819-1862
Santiago del Estero	1820-1862

Tucuman	1814-1862
Uruguay	1829-still in existence

In addition to detailing when each of these APEs existed, the many historical sources I consulted made frequent (and consistent) mention of treaties of alliance signed among them. While I have not consulted actual texts of the treaties of alliance, I only include a pact among APEs as an alliance if at least one historian made explicit reference to the alliance having been agreed to by the member APEs. A list of alliances, including which APEs were members and the years of their inclusions, is presented in Table 2:

TABLE 2: ALLIANCES IN THE RIO DE LA PLATA

Alliance	Members	Years
Anti-Spanish	Banda Oriental, Buenos Aires	1812-13
Federal League	Banda Oriental (1814-19), Cordoba (1815-20), Corrientes(1814-19), Entre Rios, Santa Fe(1819-21)	1814-21
Quadrilateral Pact	Buenos Aires, Corrientes, Entre Rios, Santa Fe	1822-24
Anti-Unitarian Constitution	Catamarca, Cordoba, La Rioja, Santiago del Estero	1827
Unnamed #1	Corrientes, Entre Rios	1827
Unnamed #2	Cordoba, Santa Fe	1829-30
Unitarian League	Catamarca, Cordoba, La Rioja, Mendoza, Salta, San Juan, San Luis, Santiago del Estero, Tucuman	1829-31
Littoral League/Federal Pact	Buenos Aires, Corrientes (1831-40), Entre Rios, La Rioja (1831-40), Santa Fe (1831-40)	1829-40
Coalition of the North	Catamarca, Jujuy, La Rioja, Salta, Tucuman	1840-41
Anti-Rosas	Corrientes, Entre Rios, Santa Fe, Uruguay	1851-52
Argentine Confederation	Catamarca, Cordoba, Corrientes, Entre Rios, Jujuy, La Rioja, Mendoza, Salta, San Juan, San Luis, Santa Fe, Santiago del Estero, Tucuman	1853-62

I have combed a wide range of histories of the Rio de la Plata region covering the period from independence through national consolidation. I have coded that historical material into an electronic dataset of annual APE-dyad observations. This dataset represents which actors populated the region, indicates the wars they fought and the alliances they forged, and includes a few additional indicators of their dyadic relations. I describe these additional dyadic variables as they become relevant in the analyses to follow, but first compare the alliances in Table 2 with those listed by the COW and ATOP datasets.

Comparing Official State and APE Alliances:

The only Rio de la Plata actor included as a member of the COW interstate system during the first half of the 19th century is “Argentina,” from 1841 onward. No historical account I have consulted recognizes a single “Argentina” from that early date. I suspect the actor so identified was Buenos Aires, and further suspect that the designation “Argentina” switched from Buenos Aires to the Argentine Confederation centered in Entre Rios in 1851 when British and French recognition moved from Buenos Aires to Entre Rios. As mentioned above, although Montevideo/Uruguay enjoyed diplomatic relations with Britain and France from the 1820s, Uruguay is not included as a COW system member until 1882.

With only one local actor included as a member of the COW system, it is necessary the case that none of the alliances listed in Table 2 are included in COW's alliance dataset. There are, however, two COW alliances during the period that involve "Argentina." The first, COW alliance #2039, is a neutrality pact between the Argentine Confederation and Paraguay.¹ It persisted from 1856 to 1862. Considered with respect only to COW system members, the alliance lacks context. But consideration of the "international" politics among local APEs of the period suggests what the alliance's motive was. After 1851 the Argentine Confederation struggled to be a confederacy in any meaningful sense. Each constituent republic retained an independent military force, was ruled by its own caudillo, and maintained only tenuous ties with the Confederation (Criscenti 1961:408; Rock 1985:120-121, 125; Lynch 1993:39). Confronted with continuing opposition and resistance from Buenos Aires, the nominal leader of the non-cohesive Confederation, Urquiza, solidified his rear via an alliance with Paraguay. A plausible interpretation is that this alliance helped the Argentine Confederation, and perhaps more importantly Urquiza's Entre Rios (he was the caudillo of Entre Rios), balance the growing threat posed by a surging Buenos Aires. That the alliance terminated in 1862, when the Argentine Confederation was defeated by Buenos Aires, is also consistent with this interpretation.

The other COW alliance in the region is a defense pact (COW alliance #2040) between the Argentine Confederation and Brazil. Signed in 1859, this too is easy to interpret as a balancing effort by Entre Rios in particular and the Confederation more generally, to offset the Buenos Airean threat. The only surprise this time is that the alliance persists until 1870. Unlike the alliance with Paraguay that the now Buenos Aires-led "Argentina" allowed to lapse in 1862, this alliance must have been perceived to be valuable, as it was maintained after "Argentina"'s leadership changed. That the signatories found themselves on the same side of the Lopez War in 1865 suggests why COW considers the alliance to have persisted through the war's end in 1870.

The strategic logic of these two COW alliances is not apparent unless the unrecognized APEs of the area are taken into consideration. An alliance between the Argentine Confederation and Paraguay would not be particularly effective against Brazil, and certainly would not have improved either ally's chances in a war with extra-regional actors. But in competition with the local threat from Buenos Aires, this alliance, and the initial membership of #2040, make considerable good sense as efforts to balance.

The ATOP dataset records four alliances in the area. ATOP alliance #1200 is COW alliance #2039, and requires no additional discussion. ATOP alliance #1205 is COW alliance #2040. According to ATOP this alliance included Uruguay as well as Brazil and Argentina, and it terminated in late 1864 when Brazilian forces entered Uruguay. COW alliance #2040 excludes Uruguay and identifies termination in 1870.² ATOP alliances #1150 and #1155 are precursors of #1205, both involving Brazil and Uruguay. The ATOP documentation for #1155 interestingly indicates that Articles 14 and 15 of the treaty mention the "Argentine States" as possible future members of the alliance. The plural reference is consistent with historians' representations of the region being composed of multiple independent actors. They would not be listed as likely alliance partners if they lacked the ability to chart independent foreign policies.

¹ Douglas Gibler, the host and compiler of the updated COW alliance dataset, kindly provided a copy of the actual treaty of alliance. The treaty indicates that the Argentine Confederation pledged to ratify the treaty in the city of Parana. That this is the principal city of Entre Rios establishes that the alliance was between Paraguay and the Argentine Confederation, not between Paraguay and Buenos Aires.

² ATOP employs Gleditsch and Ward's (1999) expanded state list, which includes Uruguay from 1830. The two datasets have different coding rules for determining when alliances terminate.

ATOP alliance #1150 was signed between Brazil and Uruguay in May of 1851. At that time much of Uruguay was occupied by the army of Buenos Aires or by the Uruguayan APE El Cerrito. Thus, the “Uruguay” that signed this alliance was restricted almost exclusively to Montevideo and nearby territory, and was beset by two armies. Under these circumstances, Brazil would clearly be an attractive ally for the Montevideo/Uruguayans. In Table 2 I identify an Anti-Rosas alliance (Rosas lead Buenos Aires) between Entre Rios, Montevideo/Uruguay, and two other Argentine APEs, for 1851-52. The temporal coexistence of ATOP alliance #1150 and the Anti-Rosas APE alliance suggests they were not independent arrangements. The connections are further strengthened by the fact that Urquiza and the rest of the Anti-Rosas alliance invaded the parts of Uruguay controlled by Buenos Aires and El Cerrito in June 1851, and by September had cleared Uruguay of Buenos Airean forces. This was the death of El Cerrito, which was violently incorporated into a now-unified Uruguay. ATOP alliance #1155 (the one anticipating “Argentine States” as future members) was then signed between Uruguay and Brazil a month later, in October 1851. This alliance is treated as a new ATOP alliance because its status changed from that of a peacetime alliance to a wartime alliance. It became a wartime alliance because the now-unified Uruguay plus its allies – from both alliances, invaded Buenos Aires, defeated Rosas in war, and sent him into exile. The Argentine Confederation was constructed among the victorious Argentine APEs, and they eventually joined Brazil and Uruguay in ATOP alliance #1205 (a.k.a. COW alliance #2040) in January of 1859. As indicated above, the Confederation joined with Uruguay and Brazil in an effort to balance against a resurgent Buenos Aires.

The wars and alliances of the unofficial APEs of the Rio de la Plata provide missing information that renders official state alliance data complete. It is hard to understand why the Argentine Confederation formed alliances with neighbors to the north and east, or why the Uruguayans in Montevideo formed alliances with Brazil, without taking into account the survival of the fittest balance of power politics of the Rio de la Plata’s state making period. In these examples, data about the “international” behavior of unofficial APEs offer important insights into the power politics calculations of “official” states. I turn now to analysis of alliances among the Rio de la Plata’s unofficial APEs, that is, the alliances in Table 2.

Replicating “Official State” Research on Alliances:

Having data on Rio de la Plata APEs and their alliances and conflicts permits me to evaluate whether alliance politics among unofficial APEs resemble alliance politics among official states. To address that question, I replicate a well-known study predicting which official states will be allied, but do so using data on the unofficial APEs of the Rio de la Plata. If the empirical findings in my replication parallel those in the analysis of official state alliances, then it is fair to conclude alliance politics are similar across the official state/unrecognized APE divide. There are many hypotheses about alliance politics I could similarly evaluate. But I think the alliance study replicated here a particularly good place to start because the decision to ally or remain allied is of primary concern in arguments about alliances, and, as will become apparent as the analysis progresses, addressing this question allows me to say something more substantial about the balancing behavior of Rio de la Plata APEs sketched out in the descriptive section above. It would be interesting in future work to analyze whether APE alliance duration is similar to official state alliance duration, whether APE alliances have the same influence on the probability of war as do official state alliances, whether APE alliances are as reliable as official state alliances, etc.

Brian Lai and Dan Reiter's (2000) analysis of the correlates of alliances among official states is ambitious, comprehensive, competent and convincing. Of most interest to them is whether states with similar regime types, and particularly whether democracies, are more likely to ally with each other than are states of differing political regimes. They report that politically similar states are more likely to be allies than are dissimilar states (at least after World War II), but that among similar regime types there is no particularly democratic proclivity to ally. Lai and Reiter also determine that culturally similar states are more likely to be allies only when cultural similarity is indicated by dyad members speaking the same language. In my analyses I am unable to replicate their political and cultural similarity findings because there is insufficient variation on these variables in the Rio de la Plata. All but two APEs were unambiguously dictatorships, and all but one spoke Spanish as their primary tongue.

However, Lai and Reiter also include a series of "threat" variables to represent realist incentives for alliances, and a series of control variables suggested by common sense or past research. Unable to study the effect of regime type or culture, my replication analyzes the influence of the threat and control variables on the probability Rio de la Plata APEs were allied. Lai and Reiter analyze eight different probit models, varying the temporal or spatial domain, or the type of alliance. There is no obvious points at which to limit the spatial or temporal domains of the Rio de la Plata dataset. Additionally, the historical sources I consulted lack detailed information about whether Rio de la Plata alliances were defense or neutrality pacts or ententes. Thus, unlike Lai and Reiter I offer only one probit model. I compare it to Lai and Reiter's most comprehensive analysis, Model 2 of their Table 1 (2000:218-219).

The first of the threat variables is "Conflict Relations." This is a dummy variable indicating whether dyad members engaged in a Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) against each other in the past decade. Lai and Reiter hypothesize (and find) that recent enemies are unlikely allies. The second threat variable, "Joint Enemy," is a dummy variable equal to one if each state participated in a MID against the same third state sometime in the past decade. They anticipate (and find) a positive relationship between this variable and the probability the dyad was allied. The final threat variable, "Amount of Threat," indicates the number of MIDs each dyad member was involved in over the past ten years. They anticipate a positive coefficient for this variable, but report a statistically significant negative one instead. These three threat variables represent general realist arguments suggesting enemies are unlikely allies, states with common enemies are likely allies, and states individually facing a lot of threat (as indicated by frequent MID involvement) are more likely to ally.

Included in the histories of the Rio de la Plata region is a lot of detailed information about disputes and wars among the APEs. Culling the information across multiple sources (Best 1960, is particularly useful), I identified ten instances of militarized conflict between APEs in which at least 1000 battle fatalities occurred. In addition, there were eleven instances of hostilities in which battle fatalities occurred, but in which fewer than one thousand soldiers were killed. Designating the 1000+ fatality conflicts as the APE equivalent of COW wars and the <1000 fatality conflicts as the APE equivalent of fatal MIDs, I am able to code these three threat variables in the same way Lai and Reiter did for their official states.

Lai and Reiter include five control variables in their analyses. Three are included in my replication. The first is inter-capital distance. Lai and Reiter anticipate (and find) that distant states are unlikely allies. Like them, I measure the distance between APE capitals, using distance calculating software available on line. The second control variable is "Major Power Status." Lai and Reiter anticipate major powers to be more likely alliance partners, but find the

major power status of dyads unrelated to the probability they are allied. For Lai and Reiter major power status is conveniently defined by the Correlates of War Project. But in the Rio de la Plata there is no pre-existing consensus identifying local major powers. Nevertheless, the historical accounts agree on the especially-active roles played by Buenos Aires and Entre Rios. They were the most frequent war/MID participants. They took the lead in organizing the Unitarian and Federalist camps in the ideological struggle over the region’s future. Any dyad including either of these APEs was the Rio de la Plata equivalent of a Major Power dyad. Finally, Lai and Reiter raise the plausible concern that, since their dependent variable takes on a value of one for any year in which a dyad is allied, there is a significant threat of temporal dependence. To correct for this they include a lagged value of the dependent variable, and calculate robust standard errors. I follow their lead and also include an “Ally Lag Variable,” and employ robust standard errors.³

TABLE 3: ALLIANCES AMONG RIO DE LA PLATA DYADS

Variable	Expected	Coefficient	Lai and Reiter Result
Conflict Relations	Negative	-0.32***	Negative
Joint Enemy	Positive	-0.13*†	Positive
Amount of Threat	Positive	-0.06***†	Negative
Distance	Negative	-0.27***	Negative
Major Power Status	Positive	0.07	Insignificant
Ally Lag Variable	Positive	3.18***	Positive
Constant		0.17	
Number of Cases		5094	
Chi-square		2024***	
Pseudo R ²		0.67	

* = $p < 0.1$, ** = $p < 0.05$, *** = $p < 0.01$ standard errors are robust, significance tests are one-tailed. † = wrong sign.

Table 3 presents the coefficients estimated in a probit regression of Alliance against the six variables described above. The first column of the table indicates the expected relationship, as justified by Lai and Reiter. The second column reports the coefficients and significance levels for the variables in the Rio de la Plata dataset. The third column reproduces Lai and Reiter’s results with respect to these six variables. Boldface indicates comparability, in terms of direction and significance, between Lai and Reiter’s official states and the Rio de la Plata’s APEs.

The results reported in Table 3 strongly indicate that, at least with respect to these variables common to both studies, the correlates of Alliance among official states are similar to the correlates of Alliance among unofficial APEs. In only one instance is the estimated effect of a variable different for Lai and Reiter’s official states than for the Rio de la Plata’s APEs. Lai and Reiter estimate that the presence of a joint enemy increases the probability a dyad is allied. But, among Rio de la Plata APEs, the presence of a joint enemy decreases the probability of alliance. This is the only difference between the two analyses. This suggests that the same

³ The two excluded control variables are dyadic Trade and Learning. I have found some trade data for a few Rio de la Plata APEs with European or North American trading partners, but almost nothing indicating inter-APE trade. Lai and Reiter’s learning variable represents each state’s experience in the 20th century World Wars or in the Napoleonic Wars. None of the APEs in my dataset participated in the Napoleonic Wars, other than to take advantage of Spain’s tribulations therein to assert independence.

conditions are conducive to the presence of alliance whether one studies official states or unofficial APEs.

This general similarity in findings is supportive of claims that researchers interested in evaluating theories of international politics need not restrict themselves only to analysis of official states. Evidence supportive of democratic peace arguments has been reported among non-state cultural groups in the developing world (Ember, Ember and Russett 1992), among Iroquois tribes (Crawford 1994), and among Renaissance Italy's city states (Sobek 2003). Like those successful extensions of IR theory to non-state actors, the results reported in Table 3 provide evidence of the comparability of non-state behavior to that of the international system's official states.

Balancing in the Rio de la Plata:

More information can be extracted from the Rio de la Plata dataset to compare alliance behavior across the official state/APE divide. According to realist theories, alliances exist to balance against powerful foes, or to balance against threatening states (Walt 1985, 1988). If existence is not threatened, bandwagoning may occur (Schweller 1994). If an actor's survival is not assured, bandwagoning is seen as particularly disadvantageous because after a war in which the bandwagon wins, there is nothing to stop the stronger member of the bandwagon from turning on its weaker former partner(s).

In the Rio de la Plata APE existence was uncertain. All but two APEs were eventually incorporated into stronger local competitors. And one of the survivors, Montevideo/Uruguay, died in its earlier incarnation as Banda Oriental. It was conquered in 1819 and occupied until 1829. All of these "deaths" were violent. And they occurred frequently both early and late in the period. Thus, Rio de la Plata APEs had direct evidence of their neighbors' deaths. They surely knew that continued independent existence was never certain. Consequently, balancing would be privileged over bandwagoning.

In a section above, I compared APE alliances with the official state alliances included in COW and ATOP datasets. In that comparison I showed that the official state alliances are readily interpretable as balancing efforts by actors worried about the rising hegemony of Buenos Aires. This supports expectations of balancing as a primary motive for alliance formation in the region, but only for the alliances that included the region's official states. What about the alliances between and among the region's unofficial APEs? If evidence of balancing behavior is absent in analysis restricted to the alliances in Table 2, that would suggest there is something meaningfully different about the international political behavior of actors that receive diplomatic recognition and are admitted to the club of official states. That would contradict the evidence in favor of similarity in international behavior across the official state/APE divide reported in Table 3. But how to determine whether the Rio de la Plata's APE alliances were balancing efforts?

The answer is to be found by disaggregating the Major Power Status variable. The historical accounts are unified in their discussion of Buenos Aires as the strongest actor in the region and as the biggest threat to the other APEs. Nine of the ten wars included Buenos Aires as a participant. Buenos Aires's persistent preference for unified regional governance was a direct threat to the independence of the other APEs. Some of them had once been part of Buenos Aires, and remained within its sphere of influence. Finally, Buenos Aires consistently had the largest population of all the APEs, as well as the most wealth (due to its position as the hub for international trade between the region and the rest of the world), and the largest army. Whether one accepts the argument that balancing involves alignment against the strongest or against the

most threatening actor, Buenos Aires should have been the target and thus unlikely to be chosen as an ally. This suggests that a variable indicating whether Buenos Aires was a dyad member should be statistically significantly negatively related to the probability the dyad is allied.

The historical accounts further identify Entre Rios as Buenos Aires’s main competitor. Entre Rios was a strong proponent of the Federalist position favoring autonomy for the region’s APEs, and the consistently strongest APE of those favoring the Federalist position. Other APEs looking for the right partner to balance Buenos Aires’s potential hegemony would naturally, according to balancing power or balancing threat logics, have favored alliances with Entre Rios.

In Table 4 I present the results of a probit regression that is identical to the one presented in Table 3, except that the “Major Power Status” variable has been decomposed into two dummies: “Buenos Aires in Dyad” and “Entre Rios in Dyad.” If balancing was a prevalent motive for alliances among and between unofficial APEs in the region, then the coefficient for “Buenos Aires” should be negative and the coefficient for “Entre Rios” should be positive. This is exactly what I find. Not only do the two balancing variables have the anticipated signs, but they are roughly of the same magnitude (although the standard error for “Entre Rios” is quite a bit smaller). Arguably this suggests the push from Buenos Aires was equivalent to the pull toward Entre Rios. The other coefficients remain largely unchanged compared to their effects in Table 3, aside from tiny variation in their magnitudes. Re-specifying the probit regression in Table 4 excluding any or all of the other variables produces the same balancing effect with respect to the “Buenos Aires” and “Entre Rios” variables. This evidence in support of balancing expectations is robust across every possible model specification.

TABLE 4: BALANCING BEHAVIOR AMONG RIO DE LA PLATA DYADS

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Coefficient</u>
Conflict Relations	-0.30***
Joint Enemy	-0.14*†
Amount of Threat	-0.05***†
Distance	-0.26***
Buenos Aires in Dyad	-0.15*
Entre Rios in Dyad	0.22***
Ally Lag Variable	3.18***
Constant	0.06
Number of Cases	5094
Chi-square	2014***
Pseudo R ²	0.67

* = $p < 0.1$, ** = $p < 0.05$, *** = $p < 0.01$ standard errors are robust, significance tests are one-tailed. † = wrong sign.

These results suggest that Rio de la Plata unofficial APEs used alliances as tools to balance against the largest foe and against the biggest threat. The interpretations of Rio de la Plata alliances included in the COW and ATOP datasets suggest that the official states of the region used alliances as tools to balance too. Realists have long claimed, with varying evidence, that balancing is pervasive in the anarchical international system. The persistent evidence of balancing in the Rio de la Plata is thus supportive of both realist expectations and of claims that much is to be gained by expanding analysis of IR theories to include evidence about unofficial

APEs. Waltz's claim that balance of power logic applies in any anarchic system of survival-oriented actors is strongly supported.

It is important to note that the Rio de la Plata's APEs not only support realist expectations about balancing behavior, but also demonstrate that balancing is no guarantee of success. The APEs knew survival was uncertain. Consistent with realist logic, this made bandwagoning with Buenos Aires an unappealing prospect. Instead, they rather unambiguously balanced against Buenos Aires. Given that Buenos Aires's goal was to incorporate them within a unified Argentina, the other APEs were literally balancing against political extinction. Balance they did, but their balancing proved unsuccessful. In the end Buenos Aires unified Argentina under its central control. Balancing may be a logical choice, but it is no guarantee of success.

Conclusions:

In a provocative article about alliance formation in the 3rd World, Steven R. David writes: "Balance of power, the most widely used theory in international relations, is particularly inadequate as an explanation of Third World alignments because it does not take into account the distinctive characteristics of the Third World" (1991:233). He argues his theory of "omnibalancing" is needed as a replacement to explain why 3rd World leaders form the alliances they do. The "distinctive characteristic" David refers to is the fact that 3rd World leaders are far more threatened by internal than by external challengers. Only a handful of 3rd World leaders have been removed by foreign foes, while hundreds have been removed internally (p. 238). The alliance choices of 3rd World leaders are thus motivated by a desire to balance against internal threats rather than external ones, because the internal threats are so much more pervasive.

Read superficially, Professor David's claim that balance of power is an inadequate explanation of 3rd World alignment choices contradicts the evidence advanced above. But perhaps the Rio de la Plata (or the early 19th century) is unrepresentative of the 3rd World experience. If so, then neither my specific results nor his general claim would be wrong. In such an interpretation, the Rio de la Plata is an outlier at odds with experiences in the rest of the 3rd World. But I favor a more careful reading of Professor David's claim, because I think his article effectively argues that an analysis such as mine is the only way to use balance of power theory to understand 3rd World alliances – and that if we reproduce my efforts, we will uncover substantial support for balance of power arguments across the 3rd World in general.

Raising the stereotypical presentation of anarchy between states but hierarchy within them, David adds: "it is more accurate to consider Third World domestic politics as a microcosm of international politics. As a result, balancing to ensure survival is as critical for groups within states as it is between states" (1991:243). "Balancing within states," or more accurately "balancing within a territory as it becomes a state" is precisely what I have shown evidence of above. But it is impossible to test whether group A balances against group B within state X unless one has data about all of the autonomous groups within what is erroneously labeled as "state" X. I have disaggregated the X's of Argentina and Uruguay into the A's and B's and C's that were individually and independently trying to survive there. I find that these autonomous actors did balance. My reading of David's article suggests this is exactly what he would have anticipated. However, we lack the A, B, and C data about all the other "states" in the 3rd World. COW and ATOP datasets represent the Rio de la Plata region during the early 19th century as just "Argentina" and just "Uruguay," in spite of the fact that the historians specializing in the period see no coherent Argentina or Uruguay until much later. Using COW or ATOP data one cannot

find evidence consistent with balance of power expectations, because the actors being balanced against are systematically excluded from the dataset.

In order to address definitively whether I am correct that balancing and other “international” behaviors are common within the states-in-name-only of the developing world, we need datasets that include information about APEs currently incorrectly assumed to be parts of states in the 3rd World. APEs in the Rio de la Plata were not “part” of Argentina until 1862. Similarly, the Jaffna Peninsula is not an integrated part of Sri Lanka today, nor is FARCLand “part” of the Republic of Colombia. Many similar examples exist. If we would fairly test theoretical arguments about international politics, we must collect data on all these relevant actors. I share Kenneth Waltz’s conviction that anarchy and a desire to survive are the requisite characteristics for identifying the actors pertinent to IR theories. I find it very reassuring that Stuart Bremer (2003), the second director of the COW project, made similar demands for expansion of our datasets, and thus of the empirical realm against which IR theories are evaluated. When our discipline’s founding theorists and leading empiricists agree so clearly about how we should evaluate our arguments, we should pay attention to them.

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