



This report was issued by TGS Buenos Aires, with inputs from Sydney M. It covers the period from 1868 to 1874.

I. HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

- A brief introduction to Domingo Faustino Sarmiento.
- Sarmiento's argument displayed in *Facundo*.
- Sarmiento's argument on the topic of Civilized versus Barbaric.
- How the discussion of Civilization versus Barbaric further explain the cultural complexity of Argentina.

II. Situation Overview

Domingo Faustino Sarmiento was the fourth president of Argentina, and he was in this role of authority from 1868 to 1874. During his term he elaborated on the education systems of Argentina, and as the book *Transforming Education: The Lesson from Argentina* states **he had a goal of educating everyone of every social class**. Essentially breaking down the barrier of upper class and lower class and creating a more modern way of learning.

In this attempt, areas of Argentina were exposed to a European influence. This allowed many cities throughout the country to become more civilized and to give up their once barbaric ways. However, a question was brought up around this time period on whether or not modernizing Argentina would replace and over rule their rich, barbaric culture.

Sarmiento shares his views about the debate between Civilization and Barbarism in his writings. Especially one in particular piece: *Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism*.

II. Sarmiento's argument displayed in *Facundo*

In *Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism*, Sarmiento expresses his disagreement with Rosas. **The book *Cultures and Customs of Argentina* states that *Facundo* “consists of a diagnosis of the ills of Argentine society under Rosas.”** Sarmiento expands on this idea by going into detail about the country wide controversy over civilization versus barbarism, and by looking at many other contrasting points: “good against evil, man versus nature, European versus indigenous/ gaucho, centralism versus federalism, <and> urban versus rural culture.”

This relates to how he disapproves of Rosas' rule, because this political group led the cities towards a more barbaric way of life, and even though Sarmiento knew that barbarism was apart of expressing the Argentina identity, he also thought that modernization of local areas would be a positive influence on the country and it would encourage his goal of spreading education. **The text *The Argentina Reader* explains, “For Sarmiento, Rosa's dictatorship was inevitable outcome of a cultural struggle in which local barbarism was temporarily prevailing over Western Civilization.”**

III. Civilization versus Barbarism

Once this insight was expressed, it is possible to differentiate the ideas of Sarmiento and Rosas on the topic of Civilization versus Barbarism. It appears that **Rosas favors the idea of keeping the culture of Argentina alive, and this would be through having a stronger barbaric influence. Sarmiento was working to create a better education system in the country of Argentina; therefore, he leaned towards the side of a more civilized environment in**

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comparison to a country full of barbarism. With the country being somewhat modern it allowed his ideas and plans on education to take place easier, but Sarmiento was not completely against barbarism. With barbarism come many cultural aspects of the identity of Argentina.

The vast differences between civilization and barbarism are great enough, but when one country has both it says a lot about their culture. Barbarism is expressed in the Argentine idol: the gaucho. If barbarism is chosen over civilization then the characteristics will continue to thrive and the way of life for a gaucho will become more common. However, with this way of life comes with less civilized societies, considering the gaucho lives alone. So, Argentina has the hard choice to make on whether or not to stay rich in their culture or to mimic the European ways in order to stay civilized; the same argument Rosas and Sarmiento were debating over one hundred years ago.

VI. Contacts



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