

development efforts in the northeast differed in content and scope from what Buckley analyses in her book, the choice to conclude her main analysis in 1964 seems like a missed opportunity to reflect on the multiple meanings of technocracy in Brazil, where it came to represent not only development or scientific technocracy, but geopolitical technocracy and the exercise of national security. Despite these quibbles, Buckley's study is a welcome addition and a timely parable on questions of technocratic development and the environment.

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Laura Caruso, *Embarcados: Los trabajadores marítimos y la vida a bordo: Sindicato, empresas y Estado en el puerto de Buenos Aires, 1889–1921* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Imago Mundi, 2016), pp. xxxv + 283, pb

With the turn towards Atlantic studies in recent years, scholars have increasingly examined connections across different spaces and oceans, as well as the people working the ships and ports necessary for these relationships. Much of this work focuses on the colonial and early republican eras in Latin America, with relatively little on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The change in era represents a shift towards steam, the rise of labour unions in the maritime world, and – in the case of Argentina – mass migration through the port of Buenos Aires. Laura Caruso takes on this era in *Embarcados*.

The book is split into five chapters, each of which examines a different aspect of the life and work circulating around the port of Buenos Aires. The first chapter is a broad look at work in the maritime world. Caruso details both the heterogeneity of work across different types of ships, national affiliation of workers, and the mixing of cosmopolitan experiences with nationalist politics. Importantly, Caruso details the specifics of work on board ships, a 'thick description' (p. xxx), complete with a chart showing which workers belonged to which section of the ship (p. 14). For some, this might read as unnecessary. But for Caruso the labour process is central in understanding how and why maritime workers organised the ways they did at certain times. Part of this work process, and the conflict and solidarity created on board, was the creation of what Caruso calls the 'FOM family' (Federación Obrera Marítima, Maritime Workers' Federation). Rather than challenging gender ideologies, the FOM family 'reaffirm[ed] a traditional model of domesticity' (p. 46).

In the second chapter Caruso focuses on the history of the Mihanovich shipping company, based in large part on the archive of the company. Mihanovich dominated the shipping industry in early twentieth-century Argentina, with ten times as much capital as the next largest company at the beginning of World War I, and modern and efficient boats compared to those of their rivals (pp. 51, 53). The company used their size and power to win favourable laws from regimes not only in Argentina, but also in neighbouring Uruguay and Paraguay. In Paraguay they even lent the state money.

Chapters 3 and 4 form a 32-year history of maritime-worker organising in Buenos Aires, from 1889 to 1921. The density of research, in different archives and through a variety of sources, shines in these two chapters. These chapters – and the book as a whole – also show that Caruso is keenly attuned to the maritime world. From an initial strike by crewmembers in 1889, pushing back the standard periodisation of

maritime worker organising from 1895, to the FOM's control over labour contracting as a result of the 1916 strike, Caruso narrates the ins and outs of various strikes, their outcomes, networks of solidarity with working-class neighbourhoods and international linkages. Throughout these labour struggles, Caruso skilfully incorporates all parts of the ship and labour hierarchy into the historical narrative – organising across job classifications was crucial for gaining and losing labour rights. Important here is the differentiation between anarchist organising and the syndicalist politics of the FOM (pp. 108, 128–9, 132, 170–1). Though Caruso writes that none of the political currents were neatly sealed off from the others (p. 92), at points the emphasis on difference might somewhat overshadow cross-political alliances. Still, the underlying arguments – that working-class consciousness and labour organising helped these men to develop what it meant for them to think of themselves as workers (and men), and that their continued fight for control over the labour process represented 'small daily and partial expropriations of the companies' power' (p. 163) – are both persuasive and refreshing for our understanding and interpretation of social and labour history.

In the final chapter, the lens of analysis moves towards the state. But instead of beginning with the perspective of the state, and particularly the state of Yrigoyen, Caruso starts with organised labour. By doing so, she centres the narrative on the ideas and politics of maritime worker unions in their choices to engage with the state and in what types of ways (p. 186). Instead of the state co-opting their movement, workers called upon the state in order to advance their aims or act on their behalf when negotiating with shipping companies. The state sometimes wanted to work with syndicalists, too, especially when one of the other major groups organising in Buenos Aires was the anarchists (p. 197). In some cases the FOM nominated state employees (from the Departamento Nacional del Trabajo [National Department for Work, DNT] or even the police) as mediators (p. 198, 202). Of particular interest here, too, is a discussion of the International Labour Organization, and the Argentine state delegates to it – including one representing maritime workers.

Throughout the book Caruso maintains a close view on Buenos Aires, allowing her to examine with great specificity labour struggles in the port. Nevertheless, she briefly allows the geographic scope to extend beyond Buenos Aires when this is necessary for understanding local conditions, and some readers may find their interest piqued by these excursions up river or across the Atlantic. So rather than being a shortfall of the book, these glimpses beyond Buenos Aires offer scholars routes for future research.

At its core, *Embarcados* is a social and labour history of maritime workers in Buenos Aires. Their lives, work and organising were key historical subjects of Argentine history (p. 247). The book brings to life what it meant to labour on a ship in Buenos Aires, and it shows the power of organised maritime workers to win gains that made a difference to their lives. It is also a work that pays attention to the discursive elements of politics, but with a heavy – and necessary – dose of the material formation of class. Anyone interested in working-class politics, labour organising, the state, or the history of capitalism will find plenty of interest in *Embarcados*.

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