

pursued more centralising policies and resorted to negotiations with the provincial ruling elites whenever possible in order to keep the party united, his successor Juárez Celman adopted a very different strategy. Far from advocating a *juarista* centralising leadership, Alonso argues persuasively that Juárez Celman favoured a decentralising exercise of power by leaving in the hands of his provincial allies and Congress decisions about the expansion of railway tracks and the printing of paper money ('placing economics at the service of politics'), a risky strategy that could only succeed in the context of a booming economy and favourable conditions in financial markets. Alonso also describes how modernist politicians and press, political heirs of *juarismo*, were keen to stress what differentiated them from the Juarista Partido Nacional, Roquismo and *mitrismo*: mainly a particular conviction regarding the importance of setting up party structures and the need to renovate political practices and respect party competition (p. 334). In Alonso's view, the defeat of modernism meant the failure of an alternative political discourse that promoted electoral federalism in opposition to a centralised party structure (p. 345).

Alonso chooses to focus her analysis mainly on a period in which the opposition press accused the national and provincial governments of manufacturing elections, and in which the struggle between leagues of governors within the PAN dominated national politics and backdoor agreements (the secret gardens of politics) were crucial in the process of presidential candidate selection. The book analyses the contribution of the political press in the activity of legitimation and counter-legitimation in which the national government and its opponents embarked in order to strengthen or undermine the legitimacy of those in power in a context of extended electoral malpractice. In so doing, Alonso's analysis shows how newspapers played a key role in defining the political discourse of party factions and contributed to some extent to the enlargement of the domain of national politics and public debate. However, their role in the process of legitimation and counter-legitimation of ruling groups seems most apparent in the city of Buenos Aires, where governments could not ignore public opinion (p. 180).

Alonso's exclusive focus on the presidential elections between 1880 and 1892 opens the door to further research on the relevance of the leagues of governors in the control of presidential successions in the following decades and could lead to further enquiries about the role of *gobiernos electores* in the process of presidential candidate selection in the 1890s, a period in which, as Alonso has suggested in previous works, party competition and electoral competitiveness in the city of Buenos Aires seemed to increase. Paula Alonso has produced an original and important account of the internal dynamics of the PAN that will contribute to our understanding of the long Argentine tradition of hegemonic political parties with low levels of institutionalisation.

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María Inés Tato and Martín O. Castro (eds.), *Del Centenario al peronismo: dimensiones de la vida política argentina* (Buenos Aires: Imago Mundi, 2010), pp. viii + 48, pb.

This collection of essays demonstrates the advances made by the new political history in Argentina. By broadening conventional understandings of what constitutes the

'political', researchers have shifted attention away from contests among ruling elites towards a much richer set of problems concerning citizenship, representation and the public sphere. Argentine historians have been at the forefront of this trend in Latin American studies, as witnessed by the path-breaking work of Hilda Sabato and others. The volume under consideration here adds to this literature, not primarily by introducing new interpretative paradigms, but rather by applying existing tools to shed light on early twentieth-century historical trends. These case studies will no doubt appeal to Argentina specialists and those interested in the evolution of republican politics in Latin America during this era.

The volume's chapters can be grouped into three pairs of essays, with each set addressing a different facet of the new political history. Sandra Gayol's piece on Bartolomé Mitre's funeral in 1906 and María Inés Tato's study on street rallies in Buenos Aires during the First World War share a common focus on politics as ritual. Stepping outside the familiar arena of electoral contests, these essays tease meaning out of public demonstrations of loyalty that accompanied widening popular participation in civic life. The authors investigate how rituals allowed the social majority to take part in Argentine politics in various ways, ranging from offering patriotic tributes to a fallen architect of state-building to mass movements staking out rival positions regarding the European war. A second pair of essays by Martín O. Castro and Gardenia Vidal examines the efforts of Catholic activists to challenge the perceived shortcomings of secular liberalism. These works follow in the footsteps of recent studies that have stressed the Catholic Church's increasing political influence in the interwar period. Castro's and Vidal's essays show, somewhat unintentionally, the limits of this project: for Catholic intellectuals involved in discussions of public education policy, nationalist concerns with incorporating 'unruly' immigrants often trumped righteous anger at state secularism; and Catholic attempts to create *círculos obreros* in Córdoba city attracted relatively few adherents, especially when compared to other forms of working-class civil society. The final pair of essays surveys debates surrounding industrialisation as a focal point of national progress. Once again, this is a topic that has attracted considerable attention, but the authors offer contributions that will add nuance to accounts by Fernando Rocchi and other scholars. Natacha Bacolla's chapter on the influential journal *Revista de Economía Argentina* and Claudio Belini's piece on the evolution of pro-industrialisation arguments highlight the pivotal role of social scientists such as Alejandro Bunge in reworking policy-making priorities.

The volume also includes an essay by María Silva Fleitas on the intense rivalry within the Radical Party in the province of Jujuy during the 1920s. Although this essay is something of an outlier (its focus on intra-party contests places it closer to the 'traditional' political history), it is among the strongest works in this collection. Fleitas' study represents a welcome departure from the main geographical focus of Argentine political studies (Buenos Aires and the Littoral), and it exposes tensions inherent in the Radical Party's modes of representation, which were rooted both in conservative elitism and the more 'populist' positions of provincial firebrands like Miguel A. Tanco. The latter styled himself as a supporter of the humble-born – 'el único y verdadero amigo del que usa apargata y ojota' (p. 145) – while his critics saw his mild reformism as unleashing the spectre of Bolshevik revolution in the province (thereby earning him the moniker 'Tancoff'). Prefiguring in certain respects the confrontations of the Peronist era, these clashes within the Radical Party exemplify the frictions that accompanied experiments with popular republicanism, a central problem considered by other chapters in this volume as well.

Despite their diverse areas of historical analysis, the essays in this collection all share a similar evidentiary base, namely periodicals and journals. The reliance on these materials reflects in part the political importance of the printed word in the era. The press not only reported on ideological and partisan contests, but also constituted a major arena of mass political contention. In addition, one suspects that the authors were restricted in their research by the impoverished state of archival holdings. Periodicals are among the few accessible sources from the period that survived the turmoil of the past century. The contributors to *Del Centenario al peronismo* have drawn significant insights from these materials, but at times the dependence on press coverage frustrates the goals of the new political history. For instance, key questions of how subaltern actors engaged with the openings offered by republican citizenship are under-examined in many of the essays, as political leaders and intellectuals remain the protagonists of historical analysis. Within these limitations, the contributors to this useful volume have expanded our knowledge of political practices in Argentina and the crisis of the nation's liberal order in the early twentieth century.

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Thomas Rogers, *The Deepest Wounds: A Labor and Environmental History of Sugar in Northeast Brazil* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), pp. xvi + 320, \$65.00, \$25.95 pb.

Thomas Rogers' *Deepest Wounds* undertakes a history of a 'laboring landscape' (p. 45), by which the author means a region's linked cultural and material environment. The focus is on changes in land use and labour for sugar production in Brazil's northeastern state of Pernambuco. Although Pernambuco has grown the crop commercially for close to five centuries, Rogers argues that its impacts on the 'laboring landscape' remained limited until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when progress arrived not so much as a consequence of the abolition of slavery, largely an economic non-event in the state, but with the new central mills, *usinas*, which promised mechanisation and new efficiencies – commitments left largely unfulfilled. In the 1930s and 1940s new cane varieties and agricultural sciences tempted some planters out of routine, and events in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s revolutionised the relations between employers and workers and between both and the land. By the 1980s a new world emerged, but still a world of sugar: even today 'cane dominates life so completely that [cooperative] workers, like their elite ancestors in the region, cannot imagine a future without sugar' (p. 215).

The author divides the book into three parts. After a brief but useful introduction and a first chapter that surveys the colonial history and the geography of the coastal *zona da mata*, the state's sugar-producing area, chapter 2 examines discourse on work and environment from around the turn of the last century. Not surprisingly, elite appraisals are easier to find. The memoirs of Joaquim Nabuco, for example, evidence a nostalgia for the paternalistic stability of the traditional estate, while the novels of José Lins de Rego bemoan land and labour degraded by capitalist efficiencies; Gilberto Freyre sees the *usinas* as an assault on a landscape already scarred by sugar and slavery at the same time as he rejects theories of cultural degradation rooted in race or climate. Workers' views of their 'laboring landscape' are harder to ascertain, but in both