measures of disease control, including the response of Indigenous peasants and urban dwellers who were subject to vaccination campaigns and other measures of plague control.

One of the book's central arguments is that, through the study of the dealings between Sanidad state officials and other groups, one can unveil processes of state formation and their consequences. In Ecuador, the climate of political and economic instability contributed to the difficulty of carrying out "technical" interventions in health and other areas pertaining to welfare. The expansion of hygienic control to the provinces also illustrates the tensions between central, municipal, and provincial levels of governance and the relative freedom with which each of these instances acted. The archive explores several dimensions of these tense relationships between different agencies and even within them. On the other hand, it reveals a degree of care and incorporation of some of the necessities of the Ecuadorian population. All these levels of analysis lay the basis to understand the scope, distribution, and limitations of public services in Ecuador, in the past and today.

Finally, it is understood that the projects of governance portrayed here generally act in favor of certain groups. The confabulation of trade, commerce, international relations, and the negative impact that the propagation of plague would have in Ecuador shaped the measures and the interest of the central government in the creation of the Sanidad. The ethnographic approach used in this book takes us back and forth between the localized, face-to-face interactions on the ground and the construction of the state's ideas and systems, reflecting on how several pairs of opposites like containment and care, rural and urban, coast and highlands contribute to explain the shape of the state's hegemonic projects which were built through everyday interactions.

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JACOB BLANC. *The Prestes Column: An Interior History of Modern Brazil.* DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2024.

Between 1924 and 1927, a ragtag army of rebel soldiers ranged across much of Brazil's national territory, skirmishing with regular troops and other pro-government forces, before a final retreat into Bolivia. Subsequently called the Prestes Column—after one of its young commanders, the army captain Luiz Carlos Prestes—, it became the starting point for several important political careers (not least that of its namesake, the longtime head of his country's Moscow-aligned Communist Party) and a powerful element in Brazilian national mythology.

In his new book, Jacob Blanc proposes a new approach to the history of these much-studied developments, "from the perspective of Brazil's interior" (p. 3), giving readers—in his titular term—an "interior history of modern Brazil" that purports to explain the fame of the roving rebels (despite their failure) and their identification with national inclusion (when, as Blanc points out, they did very little for the ordinary people they encountered on their marches).

This is a new, clever idea, applied to an engaging topic of interest to specialists that should also appeal to students. The cleverness carried through the conception of the manuscript—if only just—and combined with the book's other attractive aspects make it worthy of the attention of historians of modern Brazil. Historians specializing in other places and periods, however, will be poorly served, and to the flaws that make that so are added others that prohibit the book's adoption in any classroom.

Beyond the appealing subject matter and cleverness of approach, the attractive aspects of *The Prestes Column* include its long chronological span, stretching from the 1890s to late 2022, when Blanc spent several weeks visiting sites identified with the rebel march, the subject of the disarmingly personal travelogue that closes the book. The book's many maps are first rate. It is well-paced, with good, punchy chapter titles and subchapter headings (I especially liked "Rebellion and the Backlands" and "Failure in the Backlands," respectively). Here and there, particularly in tracing the rebels' routes, are arresting turns of phrase the likes of "topographical escape hatch" and "interior stories" (pp. 121 & 127). The bibliography is adequate and, while specialists can and will point to missing titles and authors, these lacunae may be charitably attributed to the unenviable circumstances of researching and writing a second book during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the book's arguments are above reproach: "almost *anywhere* is interior" in Brazil (p. 14, emphasis added); "*the interior* […] should more properly be referred to as *the interiors*" (p. 199, emphasis in the original). Among the welcome interventions is its highlighting of the appropriation by the rebels and their admirers of the mythos of the *bandeirante*, the colonial-era hunter of Indian slaves recast as proto-patriotic explorer, a recasting that was not the exclusive preserve of reactionaries in the 1920s and 1930s.

For all that, however, what one is left with is less than a new history of modern Brazil. Rather, the reader gets some new perspectives on the rebels, their marches, and their mythos, some old; "interior stories" jostle with just-so stories, and sometimes become them. Yes, the "fifteen-thousand-mile march across Brazil's interior gave birth to the mythic, unifying figure" of Prestes as the Knight of Hope, but the claim that the heroic narrative of the march "became an origin story for both Prestes and modern Brazil" (p. 214) is a wild overstate-

ment, as historians of modern Brazil well know and as some other readers may conclude by the end of Blanc's book.

Along the way, additional overstatements, clumsy locutions, mistranslations, and the resort to received wisdom and cliché overwhelm the book's attractive features, with factual errors lying in ambush for the uninitiated and sloppiness standing in the way of the book's use in the undergraduate classroom. Brazilian president Getúlio Vargas and Prestes were enemies in the 1930s, but they were in no sense rivals then or after, and so Blanc's references to them having had a "rivalry" (pp. 182-184) ring false, as does "the context of [Vargas's] standoff with […] Prestes" (p. 177), at a time when the latter was imprisoned. Within a page or two of each of the book's nice turns of phrase are constructions the likes of "latifundio plantation system" (p. 122, which might have been caught by a copyeditor) and "*cangaceiro* bandit" (p. 202, which would elude most Anglophone editorial workers). Mistranslations include "shantytowns" for *arraiais* (p. 97) and several lines in the cordel poem, "Os mais violentos dias do Paincó" (pp. 202-203). For cliché, there is "an emerging middle class" (p. 116), accompanied by "emerging nationalism" (p. 158), while the received wisdom of a supposed *café com leite* alliance in Brazilian politics is trotted out repeatedly (pp. 27, 106-107, 258n41), despite its thorough debunking by Cláudia Viscardi, among other scholars. The out-and-out errors range from the risible idea that "colonial-era explorers […] carried flags (*bandeiras*) on slaving expeditions into the interior" (pp. 9, also 52) to mischaracterizations the likes of *O Radical* as having been "one of the most consistent anti-Vargas newspapers," a claim belied by the reproduction of part of the cover of its April 18, 1935 issue on the following page, with its expression of "unbounded solidarity with the president of the republic" (pp. 169-170, see also Marieta de Morais Ferreira's entry on the newspaper in the *Dicionário histórico-bibliográfico brasileiro*, in either of its two print editions [1984, 2001] or online through the website of the Centro de Pesquisa e Documentação de História Contemporânea do Brasil). This latter case of inattention to detail forms part of a general pattern of sloppiness ranging from misspellings to the bibliography's identification of magazines as newspapers and published primary sources as secondary sources (including Elias Chaves Neto's *A revolta de 1924*, bizarrely listed as if Neto was a surname rather than a suffix). How to ask students to proofread or to distinguish between varieties of source material if they can reply, "But the book you assigned…"?

There are good reasons why so many historians never publish a second monograph. Even some who do will say that it was harder than the first, because the work is even more solitary for being entirely unsupervised, without its origins in a doctoral dissertation overseen by one or more senior scholars. In Blanc's case, such supervision was apparently integral to the production of a very fine

first book, the acknowledgements of which refer to a mentor's "tough-love approach" and "the instances […] when I had to be put 'in the doghouse' for being careless or sloppy in my work" (*Before the Flood: The Itaipu Dam and the Visibility of Modern Brazil* [Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019], p. xiii). If, on the one hand, the work under review suffered for want of such quality control, then, on the other, a second monograph is still a milestone. The third one is supposed to be easier—or so they tell me.

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SANDRA MCGEE DEUTSCH. ***GENDERING ANTI-FASCISM: WOMEN ACTIVISM IN ARGENTINA AND THE WORLD, 1918-1947.*** University of Pittsburgh Press, 2023.

When Prof. Deutsch announced that she was about to research the role of the Victory Board/Junta de la Victoria and other women-focused anti-fascist organizations in Argentina during World War II, several scholars who had never heard of the groups doubted that this was a viable topic. They were correct in estimating that, aside from participants in the group, few people did actually remember it, but how wrong they were in positing that it could not be studied, and Sandra was the only person who could accomplish this. Based on research in the Argentine interior, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, and the United States, Deutsch offers a major revisionist work on World War II that relies on extensive interviews with immigrants, elites, feminists, maternalists, communists, Catholics, Jews, and atheists. What a story it tells! The Victory Board and the subsequent Junta de la Victoria began as groups of diverse women who wanted to knit clothing for victims of the German attack on Russia in June 1941. Like the French women who knitted while elites were put to the guillotine in France during the revolution, the act of gathering women into knitting groups soon enabled conversations about a wide range of political and social topics, this time in a non-threatening environment.

The call to sew for the victims of World War II did not cause major disruptions in Argentine homes. Many women were still knitting layettes for babies, often made clothing for themselves, or worked as seamstresses at home and in store workshops. The arrival of department stores in Buenos Aires created a social demand for modern jobs for women as salespeople. Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant charities ran orphanages where more sewing and knitting occurred. This was a multi-class reality that wars and feminism transformed into political as well as social action. What is unusual about these anti-fascist groups was their