

centers in the analysis, such as Recife and Salvador, is problematic, specifically due to the importance of Brazilian northeastern regionalism and intellectuals in the formulation of the “myth” of racial democracy.

Uneven Encounters is a well crafted study and will certainly provoke debate, since it takes historians and social scientists out of their comfort zone provided by nation-centered perspectives. The book can be assigned for graduate and undergraduate level classes (for undergrads, the chapters about coffee, dance, and music will certainly work better). *Uneven Encounters* will provide stimulating reading for students of race, ethnicity, and nation building in Latin America and in the United States.

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JAMES P. WOODWARD: *A Place in Politics: São Paulo, Brazil, from Seigniorial Republicanism to Regionalist Revolt*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009.

How is it that exclusionary political regimes are sustained for extended periods and then suddenly collapse without significant levels of resistance? The experiences pertaining to the regime known as the Old Republic (1889 to 1930) in Brazil provide an interesting case-study for revisiting this sort of theme. These experiences become particularly illuminating for such a revision when examined under the prism of the abundantly researched and elegantly written *A Place in Politics*.

Reinterpreting the political trajectory of São Paulo during the transformative years of the Old Republic, Woodward rebukes the prevailing historiography on the period for being excessively grounded either on the internal strife of regional political elites or on the tangential emergence of new social actors (e.g., the rise of a national middle class). For the author, neither position could aptly account for the abrupt collapse of São Paulo’s hegemony as the main power broker in Brazilian politics until, at least, the third decade of the twentieth century.

The book offers an inclusive look that is both localized (focused on local towns across the state of São Paulo) and multidimensional, as the book examines heretofore unknown but important political players. In fact, tagging along a new line of studies showing that the *Café com Leite* pact—the political alliance established between the two richest and electorally most important states, São Paulo and Minas Gerais—was much more difficult to maintain, Woodward ably demonstrates how the logic supporting the entire political system of the period operated on the basis of much deeper social roots spreading across several politi-

cal actors, such as small town politicians, university students, and members of the emergent urban labor movement. (For more on the *Café com Leite* pact, see Claudia M. R. Viscardi, *O Teatro das Oligarquias: uma revisão da “politica do café com leite”* [São Paulo: Com Arte, 2001]).

In his political analysis, Woodward resorts to a variety of sources traditionally used in examinations following a more cultural perspective. In fact, *A Place in Politics* scrutinizes the complexities involved in the emergence of a liberal public sphere and its impact in the political arena of São Paulo at the turn of the twentieth century. Regionalism is a central theme of the book and Woodward cleverly juggles between São Paulo as city and as state in order to broaden our understanding of the political culture of the time. The work largely follows a chronological order but is nonetheless grounded on some of the most important events of the period, which are examined as a way to present the notion that different views on how to preserve and/or implement the values of Classic Liberalism (often called “Republicanism” due to Brazil’s monarchic tradition) had always been part of the political, cultural, and intellectual debates of the time.

The book is organized in eight chapters, including the introductory and concluding sections. For the main purposes of the work, chapters two, three, and four seem to be particularly important as they demonstrate the breadth of actors involved in the complex political dynamics of early twentieth-century São Paulo. In chapter two, “A Republic of Layers,” Woodward presents a general view of the importance of the classic liberal notions of popular sovereignty in the political culture of the *paulista* (São Paulo-based) elites. São Paulo’s hegemonic ruling party throughout the Old Republic (the Paulista Republican Party) would manage to stay in power by rigging elections and controlling country-side voters. Different views about Republicanism were nonetheless always present in the debates that took place across the state throughout the period.

Chapter three, “War and the Health of the State,” examines the importance of World War I, the spread of the Spanish flu, and the emergence of an autonomous and assertive anarchic labor movement in São Paulo in renewing public debates on how to democratize local politics. This emerging public sphere was largely defined by the rise of numerous civic organizations that ran their own newspapers in several regions across the state. Chapter four, “Knaves, Pedants, and Rebels,” is focused on the military uprisings that shook up the state in the early part of the 1920s. It seeks to understand how these events marked a break in the consensus that allegedly defined *paulista* politics. This is the most innovative chapter where the author’s objectives are presented in the most eloquent fashion. The chapter clearly shows the various sorts of actors—students, local politicians, journalists, and organized workers across the state—who would take an active role in debating the military revolts and thus become participants

in (re)shaping the notions of Republicanism and, therefore, São Paulo's own political identity vis-à-vis the rest of the nation.

Woodward's work is extremely rich in source material, including legislative addresses, campaign materials, commercial and union-based newspapers, all of which are compiled to provide an original look into the different groups of *paulistas* who were involved in determining the course of local politics in the most influential federative entity during the early years of the young Brazilian Republic. Thus, *A Place in Politics* shows that São Paulo elites were more diverse than they had been portrayed in traditional historiography. Furthermore, the book shows that Republican ideals could carry different meanings to different social segments, both in the capital and in the interior portions of the state.

Among its many merits, the book shows that, beyond the traditional disputes over control of the State's resources, Republicanism was a political culture ingrained with constant debates that lay beneath the widening rifts that marked the period and played a central role in the debacle of the regime early in the 1930s. The work is only a bit lacking in providing sufficient information about how the internal dynamics of the *paulista* elites interplayed with the debates that took place at the national level. One only hopes this gap can be quickly filled in forthcoming works on the period.

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EZEQUIEL ADAMOVSKY: *Historia de la clase media en Argentina. Auge y decadencia de una ilusión, 1919-2003*. Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2009.

El presente volumen, fruto de diez años de investigación del autor, se centra fundamentalmente en la identidad de la clase media en la Argentina. El sólido análisis está basado en una diversidad de fuentes primarias. Cabe destacar no sólo la nutrida y abundante variedad de las mismas, sino su combinación, análisis y convergencia respectiva. A través de éstas, Adamovsky pone de manifiesto la naturaleza de la cultura argentina y sus particularidades: en especial la representatividad de lo local y el nacionalismo es tangible en el transcurso de todo el libro.

El extenso estudio de Adamovsky, compuesto por 16 capítulos, se divide en cuatro partes y revisa en detalle el desarrollo cronológico de la Argentina en general. Es un relato que posee claridad expositiva, escrito en un tono llano dirigido a un público amplio. Por lo mismo, sus explicaciones y justificaciones en ocasiones suelen ser clásicas y redundantes, lo que no va en desmedro de la investigación que lo cimienta.