ruling coalition at the national level in the near future" (279). Despite the fact that the Workers' Party (PT) ruined this prediction by winning the presidency last year, Pereira's observations about organized labor's increased political clout help to explain the PT's success in last year's elections.

Most of the articles in Peloso's collection focus on the period before World War II, though the temporal coverage in the book reveals the arc of organized labor region-wide. The synthetic essays that end the book, by Kenneth Robertson and Michael Jiménez (the latter an elegant assessment of liberation theology), as well as Pereira's chapter on labor in Brazil, take up more current questions about the directions in which Latin America's working peoples are headed and the challenges they face. This will be a useful volume to assign to undergraduate classes, because of its temporal and geographic coverage (eleven different countries are discussed) as well as the willingness of many contributors to engage in ongoing debates about the relative importance of different aspects of identity construction and the relationship of individual subjects to mass politics. Peloso has also provided excellent suggestions for additional readings in the field.

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DIEGO ARMUS (ed.): ***Disease in the History of Modern Latin America: from Malaria to AIDS.*** Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.

This is a collection of articles by various researchers dealing with the vast field of health, disease, and sickness in Latin America. The editor, Diego Armus, who is also the author of one of the articles, lays in the introduction the historiographic foundation for this awakening field, known in the past simply as "the history of medicine in Latin America." Armus redefines the boundaries of the field, mainly by dividing it to three distinctive, but often interrelated, sub-fields – the history of medicine, the history of public health and the socio-cultural history of disease. The following articles serve as examples to support the newly constructed historiographic structure.

Gabriela Nouzeilles' article, "An imaginary plague in turn-of-the-century Buenos Aires: Hysteria, discipline, and languages of the body", deals almost entirely with an analysis of the discourse concerning hysteria. This discourse, led by physicians and politicians alike (all male of course) was primarily created as a response to a new social phenomenon in late nineteenth century Buenos Aires – the entrance of women into the public sphere and the beginning of their struggle for universal suffrage, higher education, and economic independence. This phenomenon also meant a more public expression of female sexuality,

which became an alarming problem for masculine hegemony and one that the new discourse was destined to face. One of the most effective ways of dealing with these rebellious women and their deviation from a supposedly normative social position was to classify them as suffering from hysteria, thus handing them over to the strict supervision of psychiatrists, who did not conceal that their goals were subordination and reeducation.

Hysteria is a fascinating research subject, among other reasons due to the fact that it has since long ago ceased to exist as an established organic disease. This was not the result of pharmaceutical efforts, but because radical changes in medical beliefs and conceptions of both physicians and lay people have sent it into oblivion. Another fact rendering hysteria a challenge for researchers is the elusive character of its epidemiology and consequences, making the very meaning of "hysterical epidemic" very different from that of other, more medically based epidemics, such as yellow fever or cholera. The imaginary aspect of hysteria and other diseases by no means implies that it is irrelevant to the field of the history of medicine. Rather, it focuses on the fact that in many cases, scientific and socio-cultural conceptions surrounding a disease are as important as its biologic consequences. However, a debate on conceptions and beliefs, through the analysis of historical discourse, cannot be complete without presenting a spectrum of discourses, corresponding to different social groups. This article fails to present other voices than the hegemonic one, those of women's organizations, feminists, anarchists – all mentioned as rising social elements in Buenos Aires at that period, in order to try to construct an alternative narrative to the one told by the physicians.

Deep into the 20th century, syphilis was still considered men's divine punishment for indulging in inappropriate behaviors, usually sexual conduct, similar to the role tuberculosis played for promiscuous women. In her article *"Between risk and confession: State and popular perspectives of syphilis infection in revolutionary Mexico"*, Katherin Bliss presents the changes that occurred in Mexico both in discourse and policy regarding syphilis, a disease mostly identified with workers in sex-related industry, during the first half of the twentieth century. The article compares between a conference held by a local physician in 1909 and a letter sent by a Mexican citizen to president Lázaro Cárdenas in 1940, in order to demonstrate the tremendous change that had taken place in the perceptions of Mexicans towards syphilis. The local physician primarily emphasized the importance his patients gave to privacy regarding their sexual habits and their extreme reluctance to let any medical or governmental authority participate in the management of their health. Due to the almost immediate connection made between syphilis and the use of sexual services, many Mexicans, men and women alike, failed to report their disease to any medical authority, a fact that according

to the local physician was a major obstacle to effectively controlling the disease. The letter to president Cárdenas in 1940 expresses very different perceptions and beliefs on disease and health. The worried author protested in his letter that his honorable guests from North America, to whom he had introduced the vibrant night life and brothels of the capital, were "rewarded" by being contaminated by syphilis, an embarrassing fact for which, in his opinion, the government was mainly to blame. It seemed that extreme openness regarding sexual habits and an acceptance of the role the state would play in managing one's medical condition had replaced the privacy of prior behavior.

Bliss even suggests that during the time lapse between the two events mentioned above, Mexicans had lost some of their sense of personal responsibility *vis-à-vis* health and instead they preferred handing over part of this responsibility to external agents. Changes in government policy towards syphilis during that period were no less impressive than those apparent in medical discourse. Legal and institutionalized prostitution had existed in Mexico, as in other countries, since the 19th century, and registered prostitutes were medically inspected on a weekly basis, as part of the effort to stop the spread of venereal disease. But the unrestrained growth of the non-institutionalized sex industry during the Mexican revolution rendered the governmental supervising institution irrelevant. This was one of the reasons for the drastic change in health policy during the second decade of the 20th century. Prostitution was outlawed and its supervision cancelled. Instead, emphasis was laid on sexual education programs for teenagers and attempts to change the sexual habits of adults – all in order to halt the spread of venereal disease. Moreover, those suffering with syphilis now became "criminals"; meaning that being contaminated with the disease became a legal violation. By presenting the discourse on syphilis and government policy side by side, Bliss raises the question of the interrelation between the two and the place assumed by the disease's medical and social reality in that equation.

Ann Zulawski's article, "Mental illness and democracy in Bolivia: The Manicomio," surveys the history of the only mid 20th century Bolivian institution devoted to the hospitalization and treatment of mental illness, the Manicomio. Contrary to most of the articles in this book, Zulawski relates the story of the Manicomio to the general medical psychiatric context, and does not limit herself to an analysis of discourses. Thus, the reader is presented with the limited incidence of mental illness in that period, the spectrum of diseases and their relative incidence, the typical treatments, and the fact that hospitalized patients belonged to all the social strata of the country. The nature of mental diseases described in the article, similarly to Argentina's hysterical epidemic as illustrated in Nouzeilles' article, gave medical authorities great power regarding the diagnosis and forced hospitalization of patients. The mentally ill were considered

"others," marginal to society. Therefore individuals whose behavior strayed from accepted social boundaries could quite often be categorized as mentally ill. The diagnosis of some of the Manicomio's patients with schizophrenia demonstrates this last point. Some examples are a woman who "talked rude and acted like a man", an Indian whose utopian vision depicted a world "upside down, where the enslaved Indian becomes master," and an Indian whose dress and behavior where of extrovert European character. The article further describes the different attitudes of the medical staff towards various patients on the basis of gender and racial bias, attitudes that supposedly reflected those of Bolivian society as a whole. However, the mid 20th century, the period dealt with in the article, saw the beginning of a democratization process in Bolivian society, a change which according to Zulawski's work does not seem to have been apparent in the Manicomio institution.

Despite the wide range of cases dealt with in this collection, the historiographic structure of most of the articles is identical. They mainly deal with discourse, without presenting an epidemiological or social analysis of the disease under discussion. Furthermore, despite some of the authors' promises that their articles would present diverse narratives and cultural perceptions, even in those articles where patients' actions and conceptions are mentioned, they are presented merely as a mostly economic reaction to the establishment's methods. One might have wished for works of a different kind as well, texts whose imaginary title could have been: "The failure of the yellow fever campaign: Massive immigration towards the Caribbean coast of Venezuela, 1909-1919", or "Traditional medicine on the Altiplano: Concerns and strategies towards infant mortality in Guatemala, 1920-1950" and even "The failure of a revolution: How malaria prevented the rise of a vast resistance movement within the Mexican peons of Chiapas, 1905-1910".

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ROSALIE SITMAN: ***Victoria Ocampo y Sur.*** Buenos Aires: Lumiere, 2003.

Este libro de Rosalie Sitman analiza la trayectoria de *Sur* en sus primeros veinticinco años de existencia, enmarcados entre dos hitos históricos de gran trascendencia en la realidad socio política argentina del siglo XX: los golpes militares que ponen fin a los gobiernos populistas de Hipólito Yrigoyen en 1930, y el de Juan Domingo Perón en 1955.

Se trata de un estudio de la historia literaria y cultural argentina en dicho período, con abordajes novedosos y prospectivos. Las nuevas miradas que se