

company's relationship with the state, the public banks, and the government's macro economic policies were particularly intense during the years of Peronist government, but the truth is only in degree.

Rougier and Schvarzer document the history of a firm that, notwithstanding the political complexion of the government in power, increasingly relied on the state to salvage a market position and fend off threats coming from changes in the international economy and the country's extraordinarily volatile political life that were inexorably working against the company. There was no absence of entrepreneurship in this process and, indeed, SIAM demonstrated a remarkable energy in spinning off new companies and entering into licensing agreements to maintain its status as the country's premier industrial firm. There is an element of tragedy in SIAM's protracted demise. The authors certainly leave the impression that the onus for the firm's sad fate lies more heavily with the state than with SIAM. The firm responded and took advantage of opportunities presented by the country's economic policies but did not create them. The failure of the Argentine ruling class and public authorities to devise a coherent and sustainable project of industrial development, unlike the case of Brazil, explains why not just this firm but what was once Latin America's largest, most diverse and apparently most promising industrial economy lies in shambles today. Not just a book to be read by historians and scholars, it should be required reading for all those in Argentina's public life responsible for rebuilding the country and putting it on a solid economic foundation. It is a cautionary tale indeed, one that might provide some much needed careful reflection on the causes of Argentina's decline.

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JENS R. HENTSCHE (ed.): *Vargas and Brazil: New Perspectives*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

Getúlio Vargas dominated Brazilian politics during the middle of the twentieth century and cast his shadow on the country even after his death. After his rise to national power as a provisional ruler in 1930, he was transformed into an indirectly elected president in 1934; he ruled as a dictator from 1937 to 1945, and finally was a democratically elected populist president from 1951 until his death in 1954. In this excellent compilation, Jens R. Hentschke brings together a diverse group of scholars to shed light on some little studied aspects of the period. Supplemented by a helpful glossary of selected terms that appear throughout the book, this provocative volume invites further discussion on Vargas' role in Brazilian history.

Hentschke's opening chapter introduces major historiographic debates that offer a thematic rather than chronological organization to the volume and helpfully contextualizes the following chapters. Gunter Axt's contribution focuses on the pre-1930 *gaúcho* Vargas, who maintained contact with his opposition, created an interventionist state, passed tax reforms, and took loans to revitalize the paralyzed economy. Axt claims that Vargas' support of workers' organizations bypassed the representative political system and thus was the key to his later national level politics. Portraying the first Vargas years in Rio de Janeiro, Daryle Williams discusses changes and continuities in the city's *civicspace*, a term designed to "capture the overlapping categories of cityscape and civic space" (p. 79). A map of Rio's center would have been useful for readers less familiar with the "marvelous city."

Chapters 4 and 5 together provide two different explanations for what caused Vargas' 1937 self-coup. James P. Woodard convincingly argues that the historiographic tendency to focus on extremists (Communists and Integralists) overshadows Vargas' main adversary in the 1930s: the São Paulo elite. Analyzing this conflict, he asserts that Vargas was an able manipulator of regional identities—the *paulista* elite thus did not oppose Vargas because he was a populist, but rather Vargas chose to be a populist as a means to ally with the masses in order to confront the hostile elite. Frank D. McCann underplays the importance of the electoral campaign and points to the inter-military politics and Vargas' concerns regarding Governor Flores from Rio Grande do Sul as the source of the 1937 coup. Both scholars argue that Vargas knowingly fanned the flames of the regional tensions in São Paulo (p. 90) or in Rio Grande do Sul (p. 114) in the hopes of repressing the never consummated rebellions.

Chapters 6 through 8 offer social and cultural histories. John J. Crocitti examines Vargas' social policy through the question of nutrition. Crocitti argues that in spite of the regime's awareness of the problem, government policy failed for three reasons: an inability to identify malnutrition's causes, the technical need for better food and cooling devices, and the cultural change in the rhythm of working-class industrial life. Oliver Dinius analyzes the changing ways that the political police tried to control industrial labor by examining the tension at *Volta Redonda*, Brazil's first steel mill. Dinius guides the reader through the genealogy of the political policing agencies and the evolution of the term "subversive," so fundamental to the understanding of many Latin American authoritarian regimes from the 1960s to the 1980s. Students of the period will benefit from this chapter before they enter the labyrinth of Brazil's political policing agencies archives. Lisa Shaw asserts that propagandist newsreels and counter-cultural musical comedies (*chanchadas*) that were screened from the 1930s through the 60s moderated each other's message.

The final two chapters delve into the legacy of the Vargas era. Thomas D. Rogers carefully analyzes Vargas' suicide letter for its content, context, production, and meaning. This chapter can be nicely used at the undergraduate level by combining it with analysis of the actual text. Jerry Dávila's closing chapter can be read as an epilogue to the entire volume. He provides historiographic interpretations and scholarly debates about the Vargas era and shows how these changed and lingered over time. To examine the question of memory, Dávila uses textbooks, museum exhibitions, and songs.

Broad as the volume is, important themes have been inevitably excluded or marginalized. Although covering the Vargas Era, starting with its pre-1930 origins and ending with its legacy during the late twentieth century, the emphasis is still on the 1930s and the *Estado Novo*. Like the critiqued historiography, the volume leaves the populist phase under-explored and the 1945 to 1951 period ignored. The geographical coverage of the volume corresponds to the centers of national politics. Thus, as frequently happens in studies of "Brazil," Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Rio Grande do Sul overshadow the rest of the country.

*Vargas and Brazil* is an important contribution to the reconsideration of the Vargas Era and is useful to teachers and researchers alike. Teachers will find individual chapters helpful in teaching Latin American history of labor, authoritarianism, populism, and regionalism. Readers interested in mid-twentieth-century Latin American history and in populism and its legacy will enjoy an engaging and challenging volume that invites farther discussion. Finally, anyone who wishes to be updated on Brazilian modern history cannot afford to ignore *Vargas and Brazil*.

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JOCELYN OLCOTT, MARY KAY VAUGHAN, and GABRIELA CANO (eds.): *Sex in Revolution: Gender, Politics and Power in Modern Mexico*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2006.

The Mexican Revolution has fascinated historians and specialists of Mexico for years, but the role of women in the revolution has traditionally been absent except for some brief mention of *soldaderas* and *Adelitas*, female participants viewed as exceptional. *Sex in Revolution: Gender, Politics and Power in Modern Mexico* is an important set of essays that explores the dynamics of both sex and gender in Mexico before and after the revolution. The outcome of a conference held at Yale University in 2001, these fifteen essays give an overview of the revolution from a gendered perspective, concluding with an epilogue contemplating