

grew spectacularly thereafter. Instrumental to this growth were Simón I. Patiño's mine acquisitions, bought from foreign investors and ultimately registered in Delaware as Patiño Mines. In 1924 Patiño bought Llallagua and started his credit deals with the Bolivian government, which, according to Contreras, played an increasing role in defining mining policy after the depression of the 1930s. Through taxes, exchange and hard currency controls, and the regulation of the international tin market, Contreras argues, the government gained influence in the mining industry, while the large, almost oligopolistic mining companies lost power. He also argues that Bolivian mining contributed to national development in larger proportions than previously thought.

Contreras clearly disapproves of the nationalization of Bolivian mines in 1952 and the establishment of COMIBOL because the mineral deposits were poor, large investments were needed to increase production and buy new machinery, and the tin market was unstable (p. 51). "Labor indiscipline was affecting production," furthermore, and labor costs were excessive (p. 49). Past, it seems, is the time when Bolivian mining development was seen through the key roles of workers and unions, à la Guillermo Lora. Contreras offers a new focus in which, for example, engineers and the engineering profession are crucial. The second essay, subtler and better documented, shows the preference for hiring foreign engineers in Bolivian mines, although Bolivians were also hired and had an increasing role in mining companies, particularly in medium-sized ones. In sum, Contreras' book is a good contribution with its own focus, preferences, and, of course, ideological viewpoints, to a growing field of research.

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Médicos, maleantes, y maricas: higiene, criminología, y homosexualidad en la construcción de la nación Argentina (Buenos Aires, 1871-1914). By JORGE SALESSI. Rosario, Argentina: Beatriz Viterbo, 1995. Photographs. Notes. Bibliography. 413 pp. Paper.

Among recent works considering the emergence of the legal-medical establishment as one of the pillars of the modern Argentine state, Jorge Salessi's book is one of the finest. This study shows, with abundant evidence, how medical and criminological knowledge managed to redraw the basic rationale of the Argentine state with an assemblage of new regulations aimed at controlling a set of fears created by those same sciences: the fear of epidemics, the fear of uncontrolled criminality, and the fear of increasing homosexual and anarchist activity. This series of shifting anxieties engendered an impressive apparatus of observation, classification, and separation through which different subaltern groups could be better controlled.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part, "Médicos," deals with the anxieties disseminated by the hygienists and urban planners from the outbreak of the yellow fever epidemic in 1871 to the turn of the century. The epidemic triggered

a widespread effort to redesign the city of Buenos Aires to control filth and contamination. The construction of a new port and a whole new sewage system and the removal of meat-salting plants set the stage for an ideal hygienic city based on the principle of separation of fluids. This ideal represented for reformers the end to an “era of convulsions” and “anarchy.” Soon, however, the fear of contagious diseases spreading through sewage (associated since Rosas’ time with the unclean and barbarous *mataderos*) was displaced by a new object of control: the mass of European immigrants crowding the city’s *conventillos*. As a consequence of this new concern, hygienists subjected immigrants to humiliating inspections and quarantines at the port of entry.

The second section, “Maleantes,” examines the efforts of a group of criminologists, police reformers, and social commentators to control the new “disease” brought about by the immigrant flow: criminality. Reformers (many of them physicians) managed to establish new policies for controlling delinquents, minors, and the mentally ill. Gradually, reformers gained access to centers of observation, detention, and treatment and produced a mass of new information about the Argentine working classes. In their broad view, itinerant workers, anarchists, con artists (*simuladores*), and sexual deviants (*invertidos*) become the main threats to the social order. Criminologists’ connections with institutions such as the university, the police, and the judiciary served to disseminate this vision of a social disease and gave a definite impulse to the development of sociology and psychology as well.

The book’s third part, “Maricas,” the longest and most innovative, analyzes the construction and dissemination of homophobia by the same group of reformers and intellectuals. Contrary to conventional wisdom, positivist reformers were quite interested in the question of homosexuality; indeed, they were obsessed by it. Men who acted like women and women who acted like men entered the physicians’ files mainly because, in the blurring of the sexual divide, they symptomized the degeneration of the whole body politic. In the reformers’ vision, many monsters appeared to threaten the young nation: feminists presented as sirens with insatiable appetites; girls from Catholic schools practicing *uranismo* and *fetichismo*; male schoolteachers enticing children into homosexual careers; men of the upper classes adopting “Chinoise” tastes; men and women of ambiguous sexuality socializing at bordellos, styling salons, and upper-class parties. It is curious that reformers located the “problem” of homosexuality in the houses of Argentina’s modern aristocracy as well as in elite institutions of social control (the army, the parochial schools, and the reformatories).

Through the writings of physicians and criminologists, Salessi reveals the existence of a “homosexual culture” in early twentieth-century Buenos Aires. The activities of defiant transvestites and male prostitutes caused great anxiety for scientists, influencing their research and discourse. Criminologists not only interviewed homosexuals but also corresponded with them and attended their parties. Such “research” produced important “results”: doctors constructed homosexuality as a moral disease, both congenital and acquired, which produced behavior that could be organized

around the polarity of active versus passive (or male versus female). In this construction, the body of the homosexual could be considered as a locus of infection no different from the sewage system or the *conventillo*.

An example of “cultural studies” at its best, Salessi’s book conveys its message through a barrage of minute details about how the members of a scientific and “progressive” culture produce and disseminate their “truths.” To build this vast interpretive view of the scientific and gender basis of the Argentine state, the author navigates through a variety of texts and authors (Carlos Octavio Bunge, Osvaldo Magnasco, José Ingenieros, Juan Bialet-Massé, Eusebio Gómez, Víctor Mercante, Francisco de Veyga, and others). Novels, scientific articles, and other forms of cultural production (maps, paintings, photographs) are all subjected to a thorough and penetrating analysis.

Though sometimes repetitive and inundated by the detail, the narrative is quite convincing. It demonstrates the emergence, between 1871 and 1914, of a substantial discourse of regeneration and degeneration based on notions of crime, disease, and homosexuality. These mechanisms of knowledge apparently had a great influence on major institutions and policies of the modern Argentine state. Beyond this important point, however, the book leaves an array of open questions. The use of the state bureaucratic machinery to promote a particular vision of society, the overlapping influence of intellectual and scientific elites, the consolidation of a clinical view of social problems, the peculiar struggles of gays to construct an alternative sexual identity, and many other issues are only touched on, suggested but not fully examined, as if initiating a conversation. Cultural and social historians should take these questions as challenges for further research. Salessi’s book has charted the path, tracing the major contours of an ideological framework and its functions. Before we start the journey, let us read it again. The wealth of ideas contained in this wonderful book deserves more than one reading.

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The Other Argentina: The Interior and National Development. By LARRY SAWERS. Boulder: Westview Press, 1996. Tables. Bibliography. Index. x, 325 pp. Cloth. \$64.00.

Argentina is not the country Argentines think it is. Until this self-concept is revised, Argentina will fail to grapple with its economic plight, according to Larry Sawers. Rather than a resource-rich, First World country, Argentina is really far more typical of Latin America. Its national development has been dominated and retarded by the interior. The interior lies to the west and south of the pampas, an economically depressed region poor in unequally distributed resources and saddled with a retrograde political culture. The agricultural resources are meager, the small landowners are inefficient and even harmful to the land, land tenure patterns point to inequality, and the region is plagued by anachronistic politics.

The interior’s “backwardness” (as Sawers calls it) is a major drag on the economic