

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

and even political development of the entire country. Scarce national resources are poured into the region without the realistic prospect of any appreciable economic improvement. The political power of the interior has been used to loot national resources. The interior receives far more in wasted subsidies than it contributes to the government. The culture and politicians of the interior (including President Carlos Menem) retard the development of the Argentine nation. The interior has perpetuated the traditional maladies of corruption, nationalism, militarism, and authoritarianism in national political life.

What can be done? Sawers believes that Argentines must face up to the reality that Argentina is a developing country. Until now, “rural development programs in Argentina that are appropriate for developing countries have been unthinkable” (p. 268). The country has never experienced land reform, nor has it practiced large-scale community-based economic and social development programs. Swimming upstream perhaps, Sawers argues against sweeping privatization or doing away with “minifundistas” in the interior. The state does have a role in interior and national development, but its failure to think about the interior as a developing region has been a mistake.

The Other Argentina is accessible, riveting, and wisely synthetic. Those who do not know Argentina very well can benefit from it, as can those who thought they knew the country quite well. Both political and economic analyses are employed deftly, and the argument is usefully summarized for those who are less enamored of the discussion of agricultural economics. But the text also carries one essential argument farther than it can sometimes reach. Meanwhile, its bluntness and its fondness for terms such as *backwardness* may turn off some, even as it charms others. And one is left to wonder: is the “other Argentina” the real Argentina?

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Remaking the Argentine Economy. By FELIPE A. M. DE LA BALZE. New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1995. Graphs. Tables. Appendix. Notes. Glossary. Index. viii, 197 pp. Paper. \$14.95.

This book is alternately limited and ambitious. The author acknowledges that political factors important to Argentine economic performance are largely excluded from this analysis of the years 1870–1994 (p. 7). On the other hand, with the politics (and the social costs) of reform pushed aside, Felipe de la Balze focuses on a different challenging question: What combination of policies can produce sustained growth sufficient to bring Argentina into the group of advanced industrial societies?

While the book supports policies central to the “Washington consensus” on market-oriented structural adjustment, the author’s willingness in all four chapters to compare Argentina to both early- and late-industrializing nations, with their varied experiences, keeps him away from “one size fits all” prescriptions for all nations in all circumstances (for example, in relation to the economics of growth in chapter 1,