
Arturo Alessandri, one of the most misunderstood figures in Latin American history, has been studied, examined, and dissected by Augusto Iglesias in this volume—the latest in a series of post mortem concerns this colorful figure. This volume had indications that it could have been the definitive study however, as the author had access to Alessandri’s papers and Alessandri himself co-operated with Iglesias in the writing and editing. The product is not quite as startling as might be expected. There are several basic weaknesses with the work. In the first place, the author spends entirely too much time on Alessandri’s ancestors. Several detailed stories of his grandparents and parents, while interesting, have little bearing on the development of the subject. The author, furthermore, embroils himself in examining minutely Alessandri’s childhood and early political life to the detriment of his later activities. Many Chilean authors already have covered the same period, 1900-1925, while few have written anything concerning Alessandri’s second term as president, 1932-1938. Iglesias makes the same error. This oversight could be remedied in a second volume. The author, lastly, has written the book to counteract Ricardo Donoso’s two volume polemic on Alessandri: Alessandri—Agitador y demoledor. Consequently, Alessandri appears in an extremely unfavorable light. Objectivity is sacrificed at times for effect.

This volume, nevertheless, is an important addition to modern Chilean studies. Although much of the material can be obtained in other sources, there are sections that are the product of extensive and original research. If Iglesias continues with his project and completes a survey of Alessandri’s career until his death in 1950, he will have performed a real service.

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THE PLATA REGION


Sostiene Abadie-Aicardi que la sobrevaloración de la obra de Echeverría—“hecha de soslayos, reticencias, consentimientos o exaltaciones”—se debe a “dos órdenes de consideraciones de tipo afectivo: la gravitación de la biografía—la personalidad de Echeverría—[el ‘‘mito del hombre’’], y la gratitud patriótica al prócer.” Analiza luego lo histórico-social en la obra echeverriana; da preeminencia estética a El matadero; señala contradicciones entre su contenido aristocrático-luminista y su prédica teórica de igualdad democrática. El autor ignora el estudio de Roger Labrousse, donde se expone un Echeverría que integra las ideas de la Ilustración con las aportaciones del socialismo romántico.

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BRAZIL


This is a memorial volume, in honor of the governor of Santa Catarina who was killed in an airplane crash near Curitiba in 1958, at the age of 44. Jorge Lacerda had already served as deputy in the federal congress. His first professional training was as a