

These two books are of the ‘‘revisionist’’ school. Rosa’s work is the first of what he hoped would be a series aimed at an explication of the rise of European (especially British) intrusion in Argentine economic life. It is a strong condemnation of this penetration and of the policies and even personality of Rivadavia. Of the two books, it is by far the better written.

In fact El asesinato de Dorrego has little in its favor aside from an appendix of thirty-one documents covering about a third of the book. It is poorly written and incoherent. Moreover, the two authors, who incidentally have led an active life in the Movimiento Nacional Peronista, have the exasperating habit of citing references in parentheses immediately after almost every paragraph without giving the page numbers of the references cited. They sometimes even quote entire passages without any references whatsoever. To make their work even more unreadable they switch tenses in the same sentence (pp. 36-37), thus forcing the reader to return to what he has read. Perhaps the best indication, however, of what they are trying to say is illustrated by their attempt to equate the execution (they call it assassination) of Dorrego with the martyrdom of peronistas, the unitarians (doctores de casas negras to the authors) with the revolutionaries of 1955 against Perón, and the Revolución Libertadora of 1955 with the expedition of Lavalle against Rosas in 1840. Both of these last undertakings, they claim, had the single purpose of handing the fatherland over to international vassalage.

On the other hand, Rosa, dean of present-day nationalist and revisionist Argentine historians, writes as usual in a fluent, lively if at times virulent style. But this time I checked many of his over-abundant footnotes and found to my astonishment that they were often incorrect. So is most of what he cites or quotes in English.

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